

# Island County Comprehensive Plan

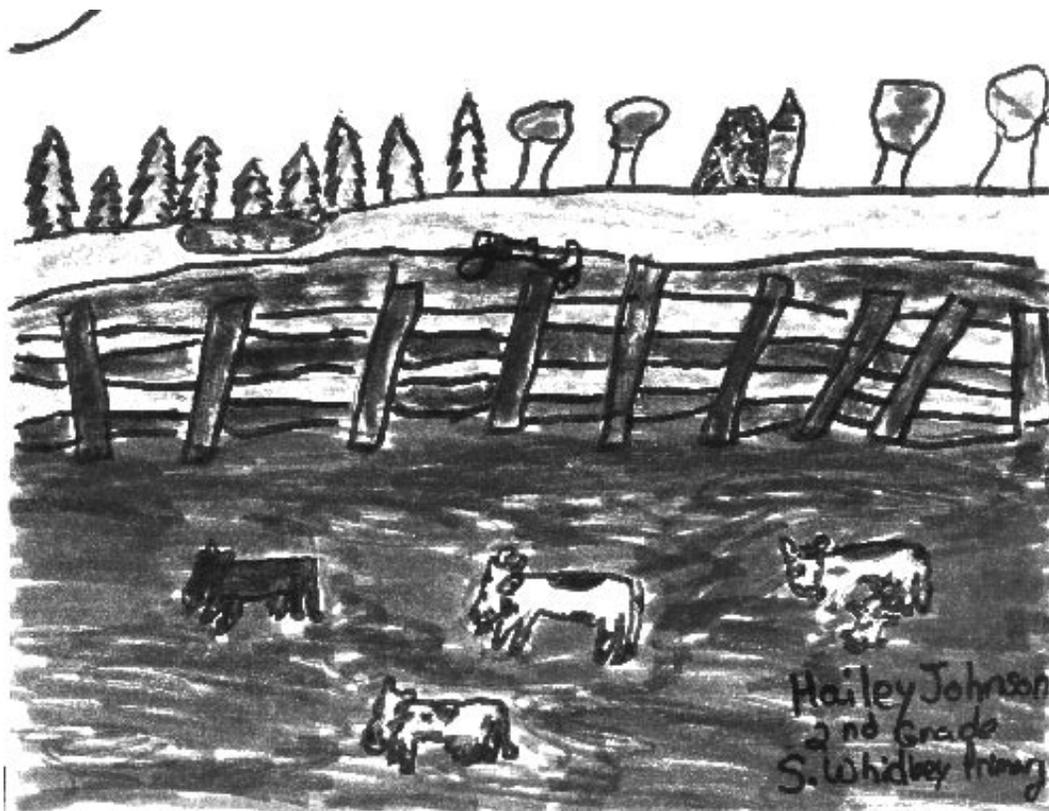


Adopted  
September 28, 1998

[Updated through Ord. C-46-11 (April 11, 2011)]

# *Island County Comprehensive Plan*

## **1. Policy Plan and Land Use Element**



*Hailey Johnson  
2nd Grade  
South Whidbey Primary*

**Adopted  
September 28, 1998**

1 ***ISLAND COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN***

2 Adopted  
3 September 28, 1998

4  
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Special thanks to Jeff Tate of the Island County  
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1                    **ISLAND COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ORGANIZATION**

2                    The Island County Comprehensive Plan is made up of ten elements.

3                    **1. Policy Plan and Land Use Element**

                      Island County Policy Plan/Land Use Element

4                    **2. Water Resources Element**

5                       Island County Water Resources Element

6                       Island County Ground Water Management Program

7                    **3. Shoreline Management Element**

                      Island County Shoreline Master Program Update

8                    **4. Housing Element**

9                       Island County Housing Element

10                   **5. Historic Preservation Element**

                      Ebey’s Landing National Historic Reserve Comprehensive Plan

11                   **6. Natural Lands Element**

12                       Island County Natural Lands Plan

13                   **7. Parks and Recreation Element**

                      Island County Parks and Recreation Plan Update

14                   **8. Transportation Element**

15                       Island County Transportation Plan Update

16                       Island County Non-Motorized Trail Plan

                      Six Year Road Program

17                   **9. Utilities Element**

18                       Island County Utilities Plan

19                   **10. Capital Facilities Element**

20                       Island County Capital Facilities Plan

                      Six Year Capital Facilities Improvement Program

1	<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	
2	<b>LIST OF MAPS</b> .....	5
3	<b>LIST OF TABLES AND CHARTS</b> .....	7
4	<b>LIST OF ACRONYMS</b> .....	9
5	<b>I. OVERVIEW</b> .....	11
6	ISLAND COUNTY VISION STATEMENT .....	11
7	Plan History .....	13
8	Overview of Work Plan .....	15
9	<b>PURPOSE AND COMPONENTS OF THE PLAN</b> .....	16
10	State Planning Goals .....	18
11	<b>MAJOR ISSUES</b> .....	20
12	Introduction .....	20
13	Population Growth .....	20
14	Housing Price and Availability .....	22
15	Measures to Protect Rural Character .....	24
16	Municipal Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) .....	25
17	Non-Municipal Urban Growth Areas .....	28
18	Areas of More Intensive Rural Development .....	29
19	Rural Densities and Clustering .....	30
20	Transportation .....	31
21	Economic Development .....	32
22	Airport and Aviation Impacts .....	35
23	Housing and Residential Development .....	41
24	Historic Preservation .....	42
25	Archeologically Significant Areas .....	43
26	Community Services and Facilities .....	43
27	Natural Lands .....	46
28	Resource Lands .....	47
29	Critical Areas .....	52
30	Shorelines .....	62
31	<b>II. EXISTING LAND USE ANALYSIS</b> .....	65
32	Introduction .....	65
33	1983 Land use inventory .....	65
34	1996 land use INVENTORY .....	66
35	<b>PLANNING AREA characteristics</b> .....	69
36	additional considerations .....	74
37	<b>III. FUTURE LAND USE</b> .....	77
38	Introduction .....	77
39	Land Use Plan Concept .....	77
40	Dispersed Growth .....	78
41	Integrating the Historical Development Pattern .....	78
42	Intent of Plan .....	80
43	Population Projections .....	80
44	Office of Financial Management Population Projections Series .....	80
45	Seasonal Population .....	81
46	Population Trends .....	81
47	Population Distribution .....	85
48	North Whidbey .....	89
49	Central Whidbey .....	90
50	South Whidbey .....	90
51	Camano Island .....	90
52	Rural and Urban Population Growth .....	90

1	Employment Forecasts.....	91
	Future Land Use Plan: Land Use Designations and Overlays.....	99
	Urban Element Designations .....	99
2	<i>Municipal Urban Growth Areas (UGAs)</i> .....	99
	<i>Non-Municipal Urban Growth Areas (NMUGAs)</i> .....	100
3	Rural Element Designations .....	100
	<i>Residential Areas of More Intensive Rural Development</i> .....	100
4	<i>Mixed-Use Areas of More Intensive Rural Development</i> .....	101
	<i>Non-Residential Areas of More Intensive Rural Development</i> .....	101
	<i>Rural Center Lands (RC)</i> .....	101
5	<i>Rural Village Lands (RV)</i> .....	101
	<i>Camano Gateway Village (CGV)</i> .....	101
	<i>Light Manufacturing Lands (LM)</i> .....	103
6	<i>Rural Service Lands (RS)</i> .....	104
	<i>Airport Lands (AP)</i> .....	104
7	<i>Rural Residential Lands (RR)</i> .....	104
	<i>Rural Lands (R)</i> .....	104
	<i>Rural Forest Lands (RF)</i> .....	104
8	<i>Rural Agriculture Lands (RA)</i> .....	105
	<i>Special Review District (SD)</i> .....	105
9	Resource Lands.....	105
	<i>Commercial Agriculture Lands (CA)</i> .....	106
10	<i>Mineral Lands Overlay</i> .....	106
	General Overlays and Critical areas .....	107
	<i>Potential UGA Expansion Areas Overlay</i> .....	109
11	<i>Wetlands Overlay</i> .....	109
	<i>Aquifer Recharge Areas</i> .....	109
12	<i>Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas Overlay</i> .....	109
	<i>Frequently Flooded Areas</i> .....	109
13	<i>Geologically Hazardous Areas (Steep/Unstable Slopes) Overlay</i> .....	109
	<i>Shorelines Overlay</i> .....	109
	<i>Airport and Aviation Safety Overlay</i> .....	110
14	Future Land Use Plan MAP.....	111
	<b>IV. GOALS AND POLICIES.....</b>	<b>121</b>
15	<i>Population Growth and Distribution</i> .....	121
	Urban Element Land Use Designation POLICIES.....	121
16	<i>Municipal Urban Growth Areas (UGAs)</i> .....	121
	<i>Existing Master Planned Resorts</i> .....	123
	Rural Element Land Use Designation POLICIES .....	123
17	<i>Areas of More Intensive Rural Development</i> .....	123
	<i>Rural Center Designation (RC)</i> .....	123
18	<i>Rural Village Designation (RV)</i> .....	124
	<i>Camano Gateway Village Designation (CGV)</i> .....	124
	<i>Light Manufacturing Designation (LM)</i> .....	125
19	<i>Rural Service Designation (RS)</i> .....	126
	<i>Airport Designation (AP)</i> .....	128
20	<i>Rural Residential Lands (RR)</i> .....	128
	<i>Rural Lands (R)</i> .....	128
21	<i>Rural Forest Lands (RF)</i> .....	130
	<i>Rural Agriculture Lands (RA)</i> .....	132
	<i>Special Review District (SD)</i> .....	133
22	Resource Land POLICIES.....	133
	<i>Commercial Agriculture (CA)</i> .....	133
23	<i>Mineral Lands Overlay</i> .....	135
	General Land Use POLICIES.....	137

1	<i>Joint Planning Areas</i> .....	137
	<i>Wetlands Overlay</i> .....	138
	<i>Critical Areas</i> .....	138
2	<i>Aquifer Recharge Areas</i> .....	134
	<i>Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas Overlay</i> .....	134
3	<i>Frequently Flooded Areas</i> .....	140
	<i>Geologically Hazardous Areas (Steep/Unstable Slopes) Overlay</i> .....	141
	<i>Shorelines Overlay</i> .....	142
4	<i>Airport and Aviation Safety Overlay</i> .....	142
	<i>Archaeologically Significant Areas</i> .....	144
5	<i>Historic Preservation</i> .....	145
	<i>Residential Development</i> .....	146
	<i>Economic Development</i> .....	147
6	<i>Small-Scale Recreation or Tourism Uses</i> .....	149
	<i>Isolated Non-Residential, Home Occupations and Home Industries</i> .....	149
7	<i>Essential Public Facility Policies</i> .....	150
	<i>Public Services</i> .....	151
8	<i>Environmental Quality</i> .....	151
	<i>Government</i> .....	153
9	<b>V. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES</b> .....	<b>155</b>
	A. <i>Clinton and Freeland Subarea Plans</i> .....	155
	B. <i>Continued Planning</i> .....	155
10	C. <i>Benchmark Monitoring</i> .....	156
	D. <i>County/Urban Growth Area Interlocal Agreements and Joint Planning Areas</i> .....	158
11	E. <i>Historic Preservation</i> .....	159
	F. <i>Economic Development</i> .....	159
12	G. <i>Public Services</i> .....	159
	H. <i>Environmental Quality</i> .....	160
13	<b>GLOSSARY</b> .....	<b>161</b>
13	<b>APPENDICES</b> .....	<b>173</b>
14	Appendix A. <i>Consistency Matrix - GMA Goals/requirements</i> .....	173
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

1 **LIST OF MAPS**

---

2 *Map A Island County Planning Areas*..... 23

3 *Map B Island County Joint Planning Areas*..... 27

4 *Map C Island County Aviation Impact Areas*..... 37

5 *Map E Island County Mineral Resources*..... 51

6 *Map G Island County Flood Plains*..... 55

7 *Map H Island County Steep/Unstable Slopes - RESERVED*..... 56

8 *Map I Island County Aquifer Recharge Areas* ..... 57

9 *Map J Island County Fish and Wildlife Habitat Areas - RESERVED*..... 58

10 *Map K Future Land Use Plan Map - North Whidbey* ..... 113

11 *Map L Future Land Use Plan Map - Central Whidbey*..... 115

12 *Map M Future Land Use Plan Map - South Whidbey*..... 117

13 *Map N Future Land Use Plan Map - Camano Island*..... 119

9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24



**LIST OF TABLES AND CHARTS**

1	Figure 1.1 Island County Population, 1900-1990.....	21
2	Figure 1.2 County-wide Growth, 1900-1990 .....	21
3	Figure 1.3 Proportionate Share of Population by Planning Area, 1970-1990.....	22
4	Figure 2.1 Existing Land Use Designations.....	65
5	Figure 2.2 Graphical Presentation of Existing Land Use Designations.....	66
6	Figure 2.3 Existing Land Use Characteristics .....	67
7	Figure 2.4 Existing Non-Conforming Unimproved Parcels.....	68
8	Figure 2.5 Existing Forest/Timber Land Use Summary.....	68
9	Figure 2.6 Existing Agricultural Land Use Summary.....	69
10	Figure 2.7 Existing Properties in the Open Space Tax Program.....	69
11	Figure 2.8 Existing Land Use Summary - North Whidbey.....	70
12	Figure 2.9 Pre-GMA Potential Dwelling Units - North Whidbey.....	70
13	Figure 2.10 Existing Land Use Summary - Central Whidbey.....	71
14	Figure 2.11 Pre-GMA Potential Dwelling Units - Central Whidbey.....	71
15	Figure 2.12 Existing Land Use Summary - South Whidbey.....	72
16	Figure 2.13 Pre-GMA Potential Dwelling Units - South Whidbey.....	72
17	Figure 2.14 Existing Land Use Summary - Camano Island.....	73
18	Figure 2.15 Pre-GMA Potential Dwelling Units - Camano Island.....	73
19	Figure 2.16 Population Capacity at Base Density at Existing Pre-GMA Zoning.....	74
20	Figure 2.17 Pre-GMA Potential for Additional Population - Unincorporated Area.....	74
21	Figure 3.1 Natural Change in Island County, 1960-2020 .....	82
22	Figure 3.2 Net Migration, 1960-2020.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
23	Figure 3.3 Selected Age Segments as Percent of Total Population, 1995-2020.....	83
24	Figure 3.4 Population Pyramids, 1995 to 2020.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
25	Figure 3.5 Planning Area Population Distribution as Percent of Total County Population, 1970-2020.....	85
26	Figure 3.6 Planning Area Population Distribution as Percent of Total County Population, Graphical Presentation.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
27	Figure 3.7 Planning Area Population Distribution of OFM High Series .....	86
28	Figure 3.8 Planning Area Population Distribution of OFM High Series - Graphical Presentation.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
29	Figure 3.9 Planning Area Population Distribution 10-Year Growth Rates.....	86
30	Figure 3.10 Planning Area Population Distribution 10-Year Growth Rates - Graphical Presentation.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
31	Figure 3.11 Planning Area Population Distribution Between Urban Growth Areas and Unincorporated Areas .....	88
32	Figure 3.12 Planning Area Population Distribution - Percent of Planning Area Population.....	89
33	Figure 3.13 Planning Area Population Distribution Between Urban Growth Areas and Unincorporated Areas - Graphical Presentation .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
34	Figure 3.14 Employment Forecast - Planning Area Distribution.....	91
35	Figure 3.15 Employment Forecast - North Whidbey.....	93
36	Figure 3.16 Employment Forecast - Central Whidbey.....	94
37	Figure 3.17 Employment Forecast - South Whidbey.....	95
38	Figure 3.18 Employment Forecast - Camano Island .....	96
39	Figure 3.19 Employment Forecast - Island County .....	97
40	Figure 3.20 Future Land Use Distribution by Acres.....	111



1 ***LIST OF ACRONYMS***

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2 **AICUZ:** Air Installation Compatible Use Zones

3 **APZ:** Accident Potential Zone

4 **BICC:** Board of Island County Commissioners

5 **CHAS:** Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy

6 **CWPP:** County Wide Planning Policies

7 **CWSP:** Coordinated Water Systems Plan

8 **DCTED:** Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development

9 **DNR:** Washington State Department of Natural Resources

10 **DOE:** Washington State Department of Ecology

11 **DOT:** Washington State Department of Transportation

12 **DU:** Dwelling Unit

13 **EDC:** Island County Economic Development Council

14 **ELNHR:** Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve

15 **FmHA:** Farmers Home Administration

16 **GMA:** Growth Management Act

17 **GWMP:** Ground Water Management Program

18 **ICC:** Island County Code

19 **ICPC:** Island County Planning Commission

20 **LID:** Local Improvement District

21 **LOB:** Logical Outer Boundary

22 **LOS:** Level of Service

23 **UGA:** Municipal Urban Growth Area

24 **NUGA:** Non-municipal Urban Growth Area

25 **OFM:** Washington State Office of Financial Management

26 **PDR:** Purchased Development Rights

27 **PRD:** Planned Residential Development

- 1 **PUD:** Public Utility District
- 2 **RAID:** Rural Area of Intense Development
- 3 **RCW:** Revised Code of Washington
- 4 **REET:** Real Estate Excise Tax
- 5 **RTPO:** Regional Transportation Planning Organization
- 6 **SEPA:** Washington State Environmental Policy Act
- 7 **SMA:** Shoreline Management Act
- 8 **SMP:** Shoreline Master Program
- 9 **TDM:** Transportation Demand Management
- 10 **TDR:** Transferable Development Right
- 11 **ULID:** Utility Local Improvement District
- 12 **USFWS:** United States Fish and Wildlife Service
- 13 **WAC:** Washington Administrative Code
- 14 **WDFW:** Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
- 15 **WUTC:** Washington Utilities Transportation Commission

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1 **I. OVERVIEW**

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2 **ISLAND COUNTY VISION STATEMENT**

3 **Allure of the County.** Island County’s natural beauty and unique character are powerful  
4 magnets. Many lifestyles mesh well in a cohesive rural environment. Residents comprise a  
5 diversified population representing many nationalities, spanning all age groups. Many local  
6 families have been part of the county for generations. Reflecting consistency and change at the  
7 same time is part of what makes Island County unique.

8 **Comprehensive Planning.** Through comprehensive planning, Island County has taken measures  
9 to manage growth. This will ensure that the quality of life, traditional values, desirable rural  
10 lifestyle, and small town character which have created a “feeling of community” throughout  
11 Island County for over a hundred years, are protected and maintained for current and future  
12 generations.

13 **Impact of Past Decisions.** Many of the options available to Island County have been shaped by  
14 the land use decisions made in the 1950s, 60s and 70s. Very few large parcels of land remain in  
15 the County. Parcel sizes are mixed, with smaller lots predominating along the shoreline - most  
16 of these small lots are developed. While the County has large areas that are forested and appear  
17 undeveloped with an average density less than one person per acre, the average County lot size is  
18 less than three acres. Thus, traditional zoning actions (such as large lot zoning) will be  
19 ineffectual in preserving rural character.

20 **Challenge.** Planning through the year 2020 poses a significant challenge: containing existing  
21 areas of more intensive development, experiencing continuous growth, and attempting to  
22 maintain rural character. The overall goals seek to preserve the historic rural economy and  
23 character, protect the environment, conserve critical areas, and to build a strong modern  
24 economy and provide for affordable housing—all while keeping government regulation from  
25 overwhelming private property rights.

26 Rural character is one of Island County’s most valued assets, providing diversity, a sense of  
27 community, and the quality of life desired by many island residents. Longtime residents and  
28 newcomers agree that a slow-paced, rural character has attracted and kept them here. Rural  
29 lifestyles provide privacy and individuality, allow people to set their own pace, bring people  
30 closer to nature and their neighbors, and offer the opportunity for family development in a safe  
31 environment. Many of the families who own and manage the county’s farms and forest  
32 properties hope to see their livelihoods continue for generations to come, but fear over-regulation  
33 will drive them out.

34 **The Future of Island County: A Vision for 2020.** Through planning, the County will take steps  
35 to ensure that Island County’s rural character and natural beauty is protected, while meeting the  
36 housing and service needs of both existing and future county residents. When traveling through  
37 Island County one will see forests, farmlands with crops and livestock, and open space that  
38 provides for varied wildlife and flora.

1 A safe transportation system will continue to be improved to first meet the needs of county  
2 residents as well as to provide for visitors. Two-lane roads that offer views of forests, farms,  
3 fields, snow capped mountains, and water characterize the transportation system in the rural area.

4 Farming plays a very important role in Island County, even though many farms are small in  
5 scale. Large or small, throughout both islands, all farms in Island County, including tree farms,  
6 have unique value by contributing to the County’s rural character.

7 Though it is hard to describe in words, “rural character” is a crucial element of the County’s  
8 economy and culture – and one of the few things virtually all residents agree is essential to the  
9 quality of life here. Rural character not only makes people “feel good” about the place where  
10 they live and provides a cultural connection to the County’s past – it also has a very clear  
11 dollars-and-cents benefit. Rural character (which would not exist without the County’s farms and  
12 forests) is the basis for the County’s important tourist industry. It is also a magnet for retirees  
13 and their dollars, as well as for businesses that consider locating here to provide a higher quality  
14 of life for their employees.

15 For all these reasons, it is important as a matter of policy for the County to help keep farmers  
16 here farming, including those on limited acreage, especially in the face of growing pressures for  
17 residential and commercial development. Tax incentives, extension programs and “Right-to-  
18 Farm” measures help. So too does a regulatory approach that protects the environment as  
19 mandated by the State’s Growth Management Act, but does so in fair, science-based ways that  
20 are flexible as the law allows, and that give farmers as much say as possible in the management  
21 of their lands.

22 Under zoning standards only farmland in the ag tax program is classified by the County as  
23 “commercial”. However, both commercial and noncommercial farming play an important role in  
24 preserving the rural character of Island County. Commercial farming can be either of long-term  
25 or local commercial significance to County residents. Noncommercial farming, including raising  
26 of livestock, continues to be a wide spread activity of local importance in the rural area of the  
27 County, providing a cultural connection to both the historic past and future of Island County.

28 Standards that protect wetlands, streams, steep slopes, beaches, wildlife habitat, and other critical  
29 areas have been implemented for rural development. Public beaches and forests, bicycle paths,  
30 hiking trails and other assets for low-impact recreation have been added. Public funding for  
31 open space acquisition has continued. Restoration and enhancement of important ecological  
32 features has occurred throughout the County, primarily along shorelines.

33 Island County successfully encouraged more growth in urban growth areas and defined areas of  
34 more intensive rural development with permanent boundaries. Langley and Coupeville have  
35 maintained their unique small town character and Oak Harbor has accepted the majority of UGA  
36 growth in Island County.

37 Island County has instituted measures which allow for the continuing utilization of existing lots  
38 without unnecessary sacrifice of rural character, a strong economy, and environmental  
39 protection. Island County’s tradition remains evident as new development occurs. Large tracts  
40 of land, providing wildlife habitat and assistance with aquifer recharge, surround compact,  
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1 dispersed settlements. Compact settlements are moderately dense and tend to reduce  
development pressure

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1 in more rural areas, which dominate the landscape while providing connectivity of natural areas  
2 for wildlife habitat.

3 Innovative affordable housing and clustering techniques allow for the efficient placement of  
4 services, protection of critical areas, and provide high-quality open space, while not detracting  
5 from the County’s rural character. Land use and housing policies, including affordable housing  
6 density bonuses provide for the development of housing units for that segment of the population  
7 which could otherwise be priced out of the County.

8 The County continues to diversify its economy while NAS Whidbey remains the economic  
9 engine of the County and light manufacturing increases as an important economic factor. The  
10 County has successfully expanded job opportunities so that more local residents have the  
11 opportunity to live and work in the County. These actions have helped to relieve the pressures in  
12 off-island transportation linkages. Island County has become increasingly attractive to  
13 low-impact, appropriately scaled manufacturing, professional and service businesses, and  
14 craftspeople and artists. New businesses fit easily into both urban and rural lifestyles and  
15 provide improved wages, advancement, and career opportunities for our youth.

16 Island County coordinates and cooperates with its incorporated towns. Regulatory and  
17 non-regulatory options and incentives that respect the property rights of owners as well as  
18 community needs are balanced.

19 (Ord. C-150-05 [PLG-021-05], May 15, 2006)

1 The greatest challenge facing Island County is to mesh this vision of the future with the county's  
2 past and the view we see today. The task is formidable, but nothing less will do.

### 3 ***PLAN HISTORY***

4 Island County's first comprehensive plan was completed in 1964 when the General Plan was  
5 published and adopted. This General Plan was followed by the adoption of an Interim Zoning  
6 Ordinance in 1966.

7 In 1973, efforts were begun to update the General Plan by conducting a two phased planning  
8 program. Phase I comprised a detailed analysis of natural and cultural characteristics of the  
9 County as well as documentation of features posing limitations for urban development. The  
10 expertise of several disciplines was drawn upon and referenced during formulation of the  
11 program's first phase. This basic inventory was completed in December, 1974, resulting in a  
12 publication entitled Phase I: Existing Conditions.

13 The planning program of 1975 focused upon maximizing community and local officials'  
14 participation in the planning process during composition of Phase II: Planning Policy.  
15 Community meetings were held throughout planning areas of the County, encouraging local  
16 citizens to become involved in the planning process. Major planning problems, issues, and  
17 desires were identified as the outcome of these meetings.

18 The County's Interim Zoning Ordinance was not amended or updated concurrently with the  
19 adoption of Phase II. The differences between the Optimal Land Use Map and the zoning  
20 designations, as well as the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Ordinance, were reconciled in  
21 favor of zoning.

22 In 1983-84, the County prepared and adopted a Planning and Zoning Strategy as a precursor to a  
23 plan amendment. The plan amendment and its implementing official controls (i.e. a performance  
24 based zoning ordinance supported by a Legislative Intent and Findings of Fact together with land  
25 development standards) were adopted in 1984. These 1984 amendments were a precursor to the  
26 State's Growth Management Act of 1990, as it embodied many of the basic principles used in the  
27 development of the Act. A significant public hearing and public participation process  
28 accompanied the plan amendment and official control adoption.

29 Work on the Island County Comprehensive Plan revision began immediately following the  
30 enactment of the State's Growth Management Act. Several ordinances were enacted by the  
31 county to establish compliance with respect to matters such as the County-wide Planning  
32 Policies and Critical Areas. In the course of preparing this plan 33 public workshop sessions  
33 were held by the Planning Commission during the period of February 1993 to May 1994.  
34 Subsequently, 10 public hearings with public input were held from May 1994 to July 1994. A  
35 first draft of a County Comprehensive Plan was sent to the Washington State Department of  
36 Community, Trade and Economic Development and distributed to other state government  
37 agencies for review and comment. Comments were received from DCTED and several of the  
38 other agencies. At that time, initial decisions were being made by the state Growth Management  
39 Hearing Boards relative to petitions filed in other jurisdictions. Most notably, the decisions of  
40 the Central Puget Sound and Western Washington Boards in the cases of Rural Residents vs.  
41 Kitsap County (93-3-0010), and the Port Townsend et. al. vs. Jefferson County (94-2-0006) had

1 a significant impact on Island County’s planning program. The implications related to the  
2 threshold densities allowable for development in the rural areas were of most concern. The  
3 Kitsap County decision indicated that densities of one dwelling unit per acre or greater were  
4 defined as urban densities which would not be permitted outside of the urban growth areas. The  
5 Jefferson County decision generally reflected that decision but indicated that the Western  
6 Washington Board would not establish the one dwelling unit per acre as a definitive policy and  
7 that a variety of uses and densities could be located in rural areas. The Board advised, however,  
8 that the counties would have to “show their work” and conduct detailed analyses to justify their  
9 decisions to locate such a variety of uses and densities outside of the UGAs. DCTED comments  
10 also noted a significant issue regarding the location of urban development in Island County  
11 outside of the incorporated areas.

12 After this evaluation of the plan as originally proposed, the Planning Commission instructed the  
13 Department of Planning and Community Development to revise the optimal land use plan. As  
14 part of this process the county planning department requested funding to assist in generating the  
15 maps and statistical information regarding existing land uses in the county that would be  
16 required in a detailed presentation of the county’s existing development pattern and justify the  
17 elements of a future land use plan.

18 The Board of Island County Commissioners subsequently authorized a mapping and database  
19 development program to be conducted by the Island County Assessor’s Office and the County  
20 Department of Central Services. In August, 1996, the Island County Assessor’s office and the  
21 Department of Central Services completed the revision of the master database containing  
22 information on all parcels of land in the County along with the development of a system to  
23 graphically portray this information on a County-wide base map. Shortly thereafter, the  
24 Department of Planning and Community Development presented the results of the preliminary  
25 existing land use analysis and a proposed future land use plan concept. The latter was presented  
26 to the Planning Commission on October 8th, 1996.

27 In the meantime, the Planning Commission began an in-depth review of the public comment on  
28 the initial draft and began revising the text portion of the Comprehensive Plan.

29 Citizen involvement has occurred at every phase of plan development, reference the Citizen  
30 Participation Summary Report, 1992. Workshop sessions have been informal to allow  
31 maximum citizen input. Written testimony has also been solicited, collected and considered.  
32 Public meetings have been held throughout the County, newspaper articles written and general  
33 input sought from every source.

34 A scoping notice for the Island Comprehensive Plan Environmental Impact Statement was  
35 published on January 11 and 12, 1994. A public hearing was held on February 3, 1994, to  
36 address the scoping document and receive public comment. The scoping document describes the  
37 programmatic non-project EIS (WAC 197-11-441) approach used to address the impacts of  
38 anticipated population increases in Island County consistent with GMA requirements. As a  
39 result of the Emergency Rule for SEPA (GMA Integration effective May 25, 1994), the SEPA  
40 EIS was integrated with the November 12, 1996 Staff Draft of the Policy Plan/Land Use  
41 Element.

1 SEPA comments regarding the integrated environmental analysis were received during  
2 November and December of 1996. Plan comments were accepted during the end of 1996 and all  
3 of 1997.

4 The Team Draft of the Policy Plan/Land Use Element represented a year of Planning  
5 Commission meetings on the Staff Draft for additional studies and suggestions for new policy  
6 language. During this time, there were changes to the GMA which substantially changed the  
7 manner in which the County could address the more densely populated residential areas. The  
8 GMA changes which allowed for identifying “areas of more intensive rural development”  
9 provided an opportunity to acknowledge existing development in a manner not available before.  
10 The reassessment of the entire plan was done from November 1997 through June of 1998. Major  
11 issues that were necessary to reassess in the comprehensive planning effort were identified, and a  
12 process of Planning Commission, Board of County Commissioners and extensive public  
13 involvement was undertaken. Issue papers were used as a method for the public, Planning  
14 Commission and Board of County Commissioners to better understand the key areas for further  
15 plan refinement. Between November 1997 and July 1998, 20 workshops, Planning Commission  
16 hearings and Board of County Commissioner hearings were held. The information presented  
17 and discussed during these workshops and public hearings has been an integral part of the  
18 overall planning process. During the latter part of 1997, a database of all items in the record for  
19 the Comprehensive Plan, dating back to 1994, was established so that queries could be  
20 performed by the public on a number of specific topics for which they might wish to further  
21 examine the documents. In addition, numerous studies have been undertaken during this  
22 planning process including: Camano Island Annex Non-Municipal Urban Growth Area Study;  
23 Camano Island Country Club Non-Municipal Urban Growth Area Study; Clinton Non-Municipal  
Urban Growth Area Study; Freeland Non-Municipal Urban Growth Area Study; Goldie Road  
Light Industrial/Business Park Area Study; Island County Commercial Agriculture Land Study;  
Island County Commercial Forest Land Study; Planned Residential Development Analysis;  
Potential Rural Service Lands Study; Site Plan Review Analysis; and Rural Residential and  
Rural Lands Analysis.

15 In the beginning of September 1998, the Planning Commission presented their final  
16 Comprehensive Plan recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners. The Board held  
17 two subsequent public hearings to allow for final plan refinements on key issues. This adopted  
18 Comprehensive Plan represents the culmination of years of hard work and will provide a sound  
19 basis for growth management in the years to come.

## 20 **OVERVIEW OF WORK PLAN**

21 The goals of the Planning Commission from the beginning of its work were to:

- 22 1. Solicit and capture citizen input in a “bottoms up” approach;
- 23 2. Plan in a coordinated fashion with other jurisdictions within the County; and
- 24 3. Meet State Growth Management Act requirements.

The existing comprehensive plan was carefully analyzed. Subcommittees were formed in such  
areas as economic development, airports, affordable housing and the potential use of TDRs to

1 ensure detailed review and study of options. To a substantial degree, this plan is a refinement of  
2 Island County’s current Comprehensive Plan. What emerged met the test of public discussion  
and debate, and fit with our collective vision for the future.

3 This Plan, and its attendant goals and policies and future land use plan, represent a balance of the  
4 views and opinions expressed by the many citizens who took time to participate in workshops or  
write letters for the record, and the goals outlined in the Growth Management Act.

5 **PURPOSE AND COMPONENTS OF THE PLAN**

6 This Comprehensive Plan has been developed in accordance with the State of Washington’s  
7 Growth Management Act (GMA), RCW 36.70A, to address growth issues in Island County. It  
8 represents the community’s policy plan for growth through the year 2020.

9 Formulation of a plan that is responsive to the future needs and challenges of Island County  
10 residents is the primary objective of this planning effort. The essence of policy planning is that it  
11 provides the community with an expressed set of statements defining the direction and character  
12 of future development which clearly integrate the goals and objectives of the Growth  
13 Management Act.

14 The benefits of a policy plan are as follows:

- 15 • Public understanding and participation in the planning process are facilitated by the  
16 uncomplicated character of the policy statements.
- 17 • Elected officials become closely involved in the planning process through definition of  
18 explicit policy statements.
- 19 • Several diverse agencies and interests making development decisions in the community  
20 may utilize the policy plan as a coordinating device.
- 21 • Policy planning provides stability and consistency in the planning program  
22 notwithstanding changes in conditions of a community.

23 The guiding functions of the policy plan are:

- 24 • Useful in the adoption of land use codes by legislative bodies.
- 25 • Applicable in the administration of development controls and incentives by responsible  
26 officials.
- 27 • Necessary to provide a reasonable and fair means of enacting legislation or controls  
28 which will be legally defensible in a court of law.

29 The role of this plan is:

- 30 • To set goals and policies to guide growth in the County through the year 2020;
- 31 • To develop future land use patterns and maps; and
- 32 • To establish a specific program for plan implementation.

1 The mandatory elements that shall be addressed in a comprehensive plan as stated in the RCW  
36.70A.070 are as follows:

- 2 • **Land Use Element:** Island County Policy Plan and Land Use Element
- 3 • **Rural Element:** Island County Policy Plan and Land Use Element
- 4 • **Housing Element:** Island County Housing Element
- 5 • **Capital Facilities Element:** Island County Capital Facilities Plan and Capital Facilities  
Improvement Program (under separate cover)
- 6 • **Utilities Element:** Island County Utilities Element
- 7 • **Transportation Element:** Island County Transportation Plan, Non-Motorized Trail Plan  
and Six Year Road Program
- 8 • **Shoreline Management Element:** Shoreline Master Program (under separate cover)

9 Optional planning elements that are part of this comprehensive plan are:

- 10 • **Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element:** Island County Parks and Recreation Plan
- 11 • **Natural Lands Element:** Island County Natural Lands Element
- 12 • **Historic Preservation Element:** Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve  
Comprehensive Plan (under separate cover)
- 13 • **Water Resources Element:** Island County Water Resources Element and Ground Water  
Management Program (under separate cover)

14 The goals and policies of all of the elements listed above, are incorporated into Chapter VI, and  
15 the associated implementation strategies are outlined in Chapter V.

16 Central themes that run throughout this plan are:

- 17 • Citizen input as an essential part of the comprehensive planning process. The process of  
publicly debating sensitive issues is valuable in forming a viable outcome. Citizen  
involvement engenders commitment and willingness to find solutions.
- 18 • Identification the historic development pattern has become more easily recognizable with the  
19 advent of new geographic information system capabilities and database query techniques.  
Carefully defining and containing this historic development pattern is now recognized by the  
20 Growth Management Act as a method for planning for “areas of more intensive rural  
development”.
- 21 • Housing and land prices have risen dramatically in Island County over the past 10 years to a  
22 point where affordable housing has become a scarcity. Providing incentives for the  
development of affordable housing for all County residents is a priority of this plan.

- 1 • Farm and forest lands are a valued resource for the County. The County is committed to  
2 provide planning options and incentives to help sustain the productivity and economic  
3 viability of farms and forests.
- 4 • Regulatory measures must be balanced with non-regulatory options and incentives. It is not  
5 easy to convince individual property owners or developers that they should put the interests  
6 of the County as a whole above their needs and interests. Finding ways to offer incentives  
7 and options is essential to bridging the gap between individual rights and community needs.  
8 It is important to develop innovative ways to create win-win situations. The presence of a  
9 critical area on private property must not be viewed by government or the property owner as  
10 a potential loss of property value or rights. These assets, under the owners control, must be  
11 recognized as features that enhance the value of the property.
- 12 • Clustering is the preferred alternative to large lot development in order to conserve open  
13 space in the rural area and to preserve the ability to expand urban growth areas in an orderly  
14 fashion in adjacent areas. Clustered residential development is a way to provide more  
15 affordable, easier to serve, less disruptive development that can preserve significant amounts  
16 of open space. Clustering can also be very effective in siting a development to protect  
17 critical areas. In-filling of development in existing built-up areas such as Urban Growth  
18 Areas (UGAs) or areas of more intensive rural development must be encouraged as another  
19 important tool for maintaining open space, limiting sprawl and protecting rural character.
- 20 • Job opportunities in the County are fairly limited in many areas. Providing employment  
21 opportunities for an increasing population which will also allow an increased percentage of  
22 residents to work in the County and not have to commute, is of great importance in this  
23 planning effort.
- 24 • The Navy is a very large part of the County's economic, social and cultural make-up. The  
County wants to do everything within its capabilities to assure that land use decisions it  
makes will not in any way conflict with on-going naval operations.
- Finally, as outlined in the County-wide Planning Policies, it is essential to successful plan  
implementation that the County continue to work closely with all jurisdictions and districts  
within its boundaries. Close coordination and cooperation is necessary to ensure effective  
land use planning and ensure full and efficient use of Urban Growth Areas.

25 County-wide Planning Policies (CWPP) establish the framework from which county, town and  
26 city comprehensive plans are developed and adopted. The CWPP provide the foundation for  
27 assuring that consistency criteria, required between county and city planning under the GMA are  
28 fulfilled. The CWPP were jointly and collaboratively developed and adopted by Island County  
29 and the cities of Coupeville, Oak Harbor, and Langley on June 22, 1992. The CWPP provided  
30 guidance in development of this Comprehensive Plan.

### 31 **STATE PLANNING GOALS**

32 The State of Washington's Growth Management Act sets forth statutory goals for the guidance  
33 of the cities and counties required to plan under the act in RCW 36.70A.020. In addition, RCW  
34 36.70A.480 states that the goals and policies of the state shoreline management act as set forth is

1 RCW 90.58.020 are added as one of the goals as presented in RCW 36.70A.020. A matrix  
2 identifying the location in the Plan or the accompanying volume of where the GMA goals, in  
3 addition to other requirements of the GMA, are addressed is provided in Appendix A. The  
4 Growth Management Act goals as presented in RCW 36.70A.020 and RCW 36.70A.480 are  
5 outlined below.

- 6 • **Urban Growth:** Encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities  
7 and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.
- 8 • **Reduce Sprawl:** Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into  
9 sprawling, low density development.
- 10 • **Transportation:** Encourage efficient multimodal transportation systems that are based  
11 on regional priorities and coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans.
- 12 • **Housing:** Encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of  
13 the population, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and  
14 encourage preservation of the existing housing stock.
- 15 • **Economic Development:** Encourage economic development that is consistent with  
16 adopted comprehensive plans, promote economic opportunities for all citizens, especially  
17 for unemployed and for disadvantaged persons, and encourage growth in areas  
18 experiencing insufficient economic growth, all within the capacities of natural resources,  
19 public services, and public facilities.
- 20 • **Property Rights:** Private property shall not be taken for public use without just  
21 compensation having been made. The property rights of landowners shall be protected  
22 from arbitrary and discriminatory actions.
- 23 • **Permits:** Applications for both state and local government permits should be processed  
24 in a timely and fair manner to ensure predictability.
- 25 • **Natural Resource Industries:** Maintain and enhance natural resource based industries,  
26 including productive timber, agricultural, and fisheries industries. Encourage the  
27 conservation of productive forest lands and productive agricultural lands, and discourage  
28 incompatible uses.
- 29 • **Open Space and Recreation:** Encourage the retention of open space and development  
30 of recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural  
31 resource lands and water, and develop parks.
- 32 • **Environment:** Protect the environment and enhance quality of life, including air and  
33 water quality, and the availability of water.
- 34 • **Citizen Participation and Coordination:** Encourage the involvement of citizens in the  
35 planning process and ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to  
36 reconcile conflicts.

- 1     • **Public Facilities and Services:** Ensure that those public facilities and services  
2       necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time  
3       the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service  
4       levels below locally established minimum standards.
- 5     • **Historic Preservation:** Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and  
6       structures that have historical or archeological significance.
- 7     • **Shorelines.** The goals and policies of the state shoreline management act (RCW  
8       90.58.020) are goals and policies of the Growth Management Act.

## 9     **MAJOR ISSUES**

### 10    **Introduction**

11    As Island County prepares its Comprehensive Plan, a number of critical issues stand out.  
12    The following discussion focuses on these issues, providing background and context for the  
13    County's future land use plan, and for the goals and policies that appear in later sections of  
14    the Plan.

### 15    **Population Growth**

16    Population growth in Island County has been driven largely by the in-migration of people  
17    from other sections of the state and country. Figure 1.1 displays the county's population  
18    growth from 1900 to 2000, while Figure 1.2 displays growth rates for each decade. Island  
19    County has experienced rapid population growth in every decade, except the years between  
20    1920 and 1930. The most dramatic increases occurred between 1940 and 1960, a result of  
21    establishing Whidbey Naval Air Station on North Whidbey; and between 1970 and 1980, as  
22    the Everett Boeing plant expanded within close commuting distance to South Whidbey.

23    (Ord. C-46-11 [PLG-012-11], April 11, 2011)

Figure 1.1 Island County Population, 1900-2000

Island County Population, 1900-1990											
Year	Total Pop.	Incorp.	%	Oak Harbor	%	Coupeville	%	Langley	%	Unincorp.	%
1900	1,870	-	0%	-	0%	-	0%	-	0%	1,870	100%
1910	4,704	310	7%	-	0%	310	7%	-	0%	4,394	93%
1920	5,489	954	17%	337	6%	343	6%	274	5%	4,535	83%
1930	5,369	907	17%	362	7%	277	5%	268	5%	4,462	83%
1940	6,098	1,039	17%	376	6%	325	5%	338	6%	5,059	83%
1950	11,079	1,999	18%	1,193	11%	379	3%	427	4%	9,080	82%
1960	19,638	5,130	26%	3,942	20%	740	4%	448	2%	14,508	74%
1970	27,011	10,392	38%	9,167	34%	678	3%	547	2%	16,619	62%
1980	44,048	13,931	32%	12,271	28%	1,006	2%	654	1%	30,117	68%
1990	60,195	19,398	32%	17,176	29%	1,377	2%	845	1%	40,797	68%
2000	71,558	22,477	31%	19,795	28%	1,723	2%	959	1%	49,081	69%

Figure 1.2 County-wide Growth, 1900-1990

Decade	10-year Growth
1900-1910	152%
1910-1920	17%
1920-1930	-2%
1930-1940	14%
1940-1950	82%
1950-1960	77%
1960-1970	38%
1970-1980	63%
1980-1990	37%

Since 1900, most of Island County’s population has resided in rural unincorporated portions of the county. Even so, the incorporated areas (until 1970) traditionally had attracted a larger share of in-migration than unincorporated areas. Between 1970 and 1980 this trend reversed. In the last three decades, unincorporated areas have maintained a constant 68% share of the total Island County population.

(Ord. C-46-11 [PLG-012-11], April 11, 2011)

Between 1980 and 2000, population in both the incorporated and unincorporated parts of Island County has increased by more than 50%. This is consistent with statewide trends of continued migration from more urban counties to rural counties.

**Housing Price and Availability**

Even if economic opportunity and high quality of life make an area a desirable place to move, in-migration will not occur if housing is not available or is too highly priced. Affordability is a serious problem in Island County. The County ranked second in the state to San Juan County in sales prices out of the range of affordability for most residents. Island County’s growing popularity for retirees and vacationers, and the amount of shoreline property available, has contributed to high housing costs, keeping a significant amount of the available stock off the market.<sup>1</sup>

**Planning Area Population Allocation**

For more accurate and useful population projections, the County has been divided into four planning areas: North Whidbey, Central Whidbey, South Whidbey and Camano Island (Map A). The division between North and Central Whidbey corresponds to census tract boundaries delineated by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. The division between Central and South Whidbey follows a voting district boundary requiring that one census block be divided between the two regions. After establishing the boundaries, each region can be analyzed to better prepare all parts of the county for expected growth demands. It is essential to understand where in the county growth is expected to occur. Planning area growth is predicted using the proportionate share method and growth rate method. By looking at what proportion of the total population each region has held in the past, a more accurate picture emerges of what the County will look like in the future.

(Ord. C-46-11 [PLG-012-11], April 11, 2011)

Figure 1.3 Proportionate Share of Population by Planning Area, 1970-2000

Planning Area	1970	1980	1990	2000
North Whidbey	58%	58%	57%	49%
Central Whidbey	16%	14%	14%	13%
South Whidbey	17%	17%	17%	20%
Camano Island	10%	12%	12%	19%

<sup>1</sup> Housing Needs Assessment for Island County, by Judith Stoloff and Associates, 1992.

1 Map A Island County Planning Areas

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1       **Measures to Protect Rural Character**

2       Rural character is one of Island County’s most valued assets, providing the quality of life  
3       desired by many island residents. Rural areas simply have a different “feeling” than urban  
4       centers. Lacking the constant pressures that people experience in crowded urban areas, a  
5       rural atmosphere allows people to set their own pace. Spacious living environments foster  
6       privacy, individuality, and a sense of personal freedom while community centers, such as  
7       shops and convenience stores, provide places for spontaneous or planned visits with  
8       neighbors and friends. People in rural areas expect, tolerate, and prepare for the minor  
9       inconveniences that come with living in widely scattered and sparsely developed areas (e.g.,  
10       many homes have alternative heat and power sources).

11       Transportation patterns in rural areas are characterized by meandering two-lane roads that  
12       offer pleasant views of forests, farms, fields, and water. Travelers typically experience only  
13       short waits at stop signs while very few (or no) stop lights exist. Traffic flows smoothly with  
14       few delays and pedestrians walk on shoulders beside the road, rather than sidewalks.

15       Compact, dispersed settlements with many homes on small lots are surrounded by large  
16       tracts of land, much of which is undeveloped. Scattered convenience stores and small  
17       commercial centers serve these dispersed rural clusters. Small towns or cities exist nearby,  
18       and the attractions of metropolitan areas generally are within a 1½ hour drive or less.  
19       Although these compact settlements are moderately dense in scale, the surrounding rural  
20       areas dominate the landscape.

21       Wildlife sightings are common in rural areas. Bald eagles soar along the shorelines while  
22       deer feed in fields and gardens. Rabbits dart across open fields as raptors survey overhead.  
23       Racoons scavenge on the fringes of the forests and Great Blue Herons fish along the edges of  
24       large wetlands. Large, undeveloped areas provide habitat and assist with aquifer recharge.  
25       Lakes, ponds, wetlands, and streams are critical habitat areas as well as recreational  
26       amenities. Formal recreational facilities, such as ball fields, bowling alleys and golf courses,  
27       are fewer than informal facilities utilizing large open areas. Passive recreation takes the form  
28       of pedestrian and equestrian trails winding through private and public lands, and beaches.

29       Agricultural and forest lands, as well as undeveloped open space, contribute to rural  
30       character. This environment provides diverse and significant cultural/natural amenities.  
31       Views of old farm houses and barns, historic buildings, and the cultural landscape attract  
32       many tourists and please Whidbey and Camano residents. Island County’s heritage remains  
33       evident, even as new development mixes with existing homes.

34       The historical pattern of growth in Island County has led to very few remaining large parcels  
35       of land. Though since 1984, five acre lots have been required for new development in the  
36       rural portion of the county, much of the county was subdivided into much smaller parcels  
37       prior to 1984. Residential development encompasses much of the County’s shoreline.  
38       Communities comprising small lots are interspersed with areas of suburban-sized lots, as  
39       well as rural lots of 5, 10, and 20 acres. Although parcel sizes are widely mixed in the  
40       County, very small lots predominate in shoreline areas. This historical pattern satisfies the

1       desire of many to live along the shoreline while preserving a degree of rural character throughout.

2       Rural areas provide an opportunity for different life styles to exist side-by-side in security and privacy. Diversity in life styles and land uses is part of the rural character. Each landowner uses his/her property differently. Driving down a road, one might see hobby farms with large gardens and several animals (cows, horses, and goats) as well as home industries and residential estates. Private wells and small community water systems are the norm, as are individual septic systems.

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5       Island County’s historic development patterns—particularly along shorelines and other water bodies—are a product of local circumstance, inclined to differ from the State definition of rural character. Previous comprehensive planning efforts have characterized rural area development in Island County as traditional rural patterns, in which concentrations of population (or centers) are surrounded by working or natural open spaces. Towns and commercial centers have emerged at significant crossroads along highway corridors and shorelines. Some isolated businesses serve outlying neighborhoods. These centers are interspersed with areas of farming and forestry activities. More concentrated nodes of residential subdivisions occur on the peripheral shorelines. Within the island interior, a patchwork of open agricultural fields and forested hinterlands is punctuated by areas of more intensive development. Increasingly, as shoreline lands become scarce, these rural areas have been divided into small farms, wood lots, and large-lot residential estate development; estates often are constructed to obtain views of scenic vistas.

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12       Island County faces a dual challenge: contain its existing areas of more intensive development, while experiencing high growth rates, yet maintain a strong degree of rural character.

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14       ***Municipal Urban Growth Areas (UGAs)***

15       To meet GMA requirements, Island County must designate an Urban Growth Area (UGA) or areas in which urban growth shall be encouraged and outside of which only non-urban growth can occur. Municipal UGAs will contain each of the incorporated cities plus designated areas of unincorporated county adjacent to the cities.

16  
17       A key issue regarding the municipal UGAs is how large each area will be. Based on the GMA and Growth Management Hearings Board decisions, the size of the final UGAs is to be based on population, land capacity, fiscal impacts, and capital facilities. The population allocated by the County, in conjunction with the cities/town and overall County population, must be based on figures certified by the Office of Financial Management. For consistency, the County and cities must use the same OFM forecast, and the fiscal impact analysis must recognize the cost of providing facilities and services outside of municipal boundaries. One of the challenges is that Island County is planning for the year 2020. However, the cities has adopted their comprehensive plans to the year 2010 or 2013.

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22       Another issue involves developing appropriate land use designations and regulations for unincorporated portions of the Urban Growth Areas. The GMA indicates that Forest, Agriculture, and Mineral lands are not normally located within Urban Growth Areas. Open

1 space and green belts must be identified and mapped within the UGAs. Residential densities  
2 within UGAs should be consistent with urban growth. Major Industrial Developments may  
3 be located outside a UGA only if a detailed land inventory demonstrates that there is no land  
4 suitable to site the development within a UGA, and other requirements can be met. Although  
5 some rural land uses may be appropriate in the UGAs, careful analysis and a reason for  
6 including them within UGAs will be required.

7 Land use designations, densities, and regulations for all types of development must be  
8 formulated within the unincorporated UGAs. Both the Oak Harbor and Langley  
9 comprehensive plans contain proposed land uses and densities within the unincorporated  
10 UGAs. The County Wide Planning Policies (CWPPs) indicate that the County and Cities  
11 will conduct a joint development review of the unincorporated UGAs, with the County  
12 making the ultimate decision.

13 The GMA also indicates that it is up to local governments to establish which public facilities  
14 and services are needed to support development. Municipalities are assumed to be the  
15 logical urban services providers under GMA. Policies and regulations must be adopted to  
16 ensure that public facilities and services needed for urban development are adequate and  
17 available within appropriately specified (and financially feasible) time frames. The CWPPs  
18 state that, “It is the policy of the County and Municipalities to provide new municipal public  
19 works facilities only within, and not beyond Urban Growth Areas. Such facilities include:  
20 streets, bridges and sidewalks built to municipal standards, water storage, transmission and  
21 treatment facilities, and storm sewer collection and treatment facilities.” Provision of  
22 municipal water and siting essential public facilities are possible exceptions.

23 It has been suggested that the County establish “potential UGA expansion areas,” located  
24 adjacent to unincorporated portions of UGAs. These potential urban expansion areas would  
25 acknowledge that the UGAs may expand in the future and that development in these areas  
26 should reflect that possibility. The potential urban expansion areas would be specific  
27 locations within the larger joint planning areas as shown on Map B. As envisioned,  
28 development in these potential urban expansion areas would be clustered, with the remainder  
29 of each parcel placed in interim development reserve category for future development and  
30 greenbelts. This development reserve land could be subdivided later, at urban densities  
31 determined by the municipality, when the parcel is included within the amended UGA. The  
32 concept of potential urban expansion areas will be cooperatively developed with the  
33 municipalities during their comprehensive plan updates.

34 The joint planning areas are provided for joint consultation between the county and the  
35 municipalities regarding issues within these areas. For example, Coupeville expects to  
36 coordinate land use decisions in order to protect its well field which is located in a joint  
37 planning area. In fact, many areas around Coupeville are designated for preservation by way  
38 of purchase of development rights by the National Park Service.

1 Map B Island County Joint Planning Areas

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1        ***Non-Municipal Urban Growth Areas***

2        **Clinton and Freeland**

3        Both Clinton and Freeland have developed as unincorporated communities, generally with a  
4        full range of land uses. As such, they are logical choices for further growth and to  
5        accommodate some of the forecasted population and employment for the county as a whole.

6        This relates directly to determining how large each of these two UGAs should be, and what  
7        the logical boundaries are for this designation. Related issues include determining an  
8        appropriate mix of commercial, residential and other land uses; and what degree of autonomy  
9        Clinton and Freeland would have in making local land use decisions.

10        Probably the key issue in answering these questions is the availability of basic infrastructure,  
11        particularly sewer. In addition to sewer, the other major constraints to potential development  
12        in Freeland and Clinton is the lack of adequate surface water/storm drainage systems. Even  
13        if solutions to sewer are found, development will be constrained without the correction of  
14        surface water problems and the planning and construction of storm drainage systems. In  
15        Island County, more than most locations, availability of water and sewer (through septic or  
16        other systems) drives development, though water is not an issue in the potential development  
17        of Freeland or Clinton. Septic systems do not last forever; portions of Clinton are currently  
18        experiencing septic system failures. Many portions of Freeland do not “perk” and, without a  
19        public sewer, are undevelopable. Both Freeland and Clinton are very limited in the amount  
20        of additional growth they can absorb without public sewer and storm drainage improvements.  
21        The County recognizes that a sewer system and systems to manage stormwater are needed if  
22        these areas are to accommodate the densities associated with non-municipal UGAs.

23        Lack of infrastructure raises several issues: it forces the cost of residential development  
24        higher, with negative impact on affordable housing; limits business opportunities for people  
25        who live and work on the islands; constrains physical occupation of the property; and  
26        constrains the types of business which can locate there. It is recognized that Island County  
27        government has a central role in the provision of infrastructure for Freeland and Clinton.  
28        Citizens throughout the County share a common goal: to create more opportunities to live  
29        and work on the islands without compromising rural character.

30        Existing businesses, such as Nichols Brothers that try to be good neighbors and protect the  
31        shoreline, are an important resource. They should be encouraged to stay and grow in  
32        Freeland. Though Holmes Harbor’s sewer system is an untapped and under utilized, its  
33        roadway system and stormwater system needs improvement.

34        Freeland has a Public Water District with the authority to annex and create Utility Local  
35        Improvement Districts (ULIDs). It may also have the ability, through the state, to create a  
36        Public Sewer District. At present, there is no plan to create a Sewer District. The “core  
37        area” of Freeland is gathered around Main Street and is considered the “village” for about a  
38        mile in all directions. Public Water District boundaries should be considered when fixing  
39        Community boundaries. Holmes Harbor has existing sewer and water capacity for

1 residential development. There exists the potential of excess capacity which could be  
utilized by other residential development.

2 Clinton has a Public Water District, one of the largest systems in the south part of the  
County. Its “core area” is on both sides of Highway 525. Clinton has been experiencing  
3 major problems as septic systems age and collapse, as well as interrelated stormwater  
4 management and slope stability problems. Currently, a community effort is under way to  
begin the process of implementing a sewer system.

### 5 **Fully Contained New Communities**

6 The concept of Fully Contained New Communities pursuant to RCW 36.70A.350 was  
extensively discussed in public workshops and hearings and determined to be inappropriate,  
7 at this time, for inclusion in the County’s Comprehensive Plan and development regulations.

### 8 **Light Manufacturing/Light Industrial Developments**

9 The County has determined that provisions for Major Industrial Developments in rural areas,  
as allowed under the GMA under RCW 36.70A.365 should not be utilized at this time. The  
County’s needs for light manufacturing/light industry can be met by using the flexibility now  
10 allowed by RCW 36.70A.070 (5) for recognizing existing areas with logical outer boundaries  
and providing for their infill, development and redevelopment (See *Areas of More Intensive  
11 Rural Development*, following this section.)

12 The need for additional light industrial areas was discussed extensively during the public  
process. If provisions are included in the Comprehensive Plan for them, they must be tightly  
13 crafted to comply with the GMA.

14 If the County provides for light manufacturing/light industrial uses in defined existing areas,  
these might include general light manufacturing, assembling, fabrication, storage,  
15 wholesaling, distribution, auto repair/salvage, and related activities. Light manufacturing  
areas would not include heavy manufacturing, such as smelting, refining, stamping, or heavy  
16 equipment.

### 17 ***Areas of More Intensive Rural Development***

18 New under GMA, this designation permits the infill, development or redevelopment of  
existing rural areas which meet, at a minimum, a set of criteria contained in RCW  
36.70A.070(5)(d). Given Island County’s development pattern, this designation may prove  
19 particularly useful. In essence, it allows recognition and consideration of existing developed  
rural areas outside of the UGAs.

20 The County so far has identified three types of areas of more intensive rural development for  
possible inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan: 1) residential; 2) non-residential; and 3)  
21 mixed use. As with municipal and non-municipal Urban Growth Areas, the County must  
decide how large each area of more intensive rural development will be. The GMA requires  
22 the County to adopt measures to minimize and contain existing areas or uses of more  
intensive rural development. Lands included in existing areas or uses shall not extend  
23 beyond the logical outer boundary of the existing area or use, thereby allowing a new pattern  
24

1 of low-density sprawl. Existing areas are those that are clearly identifiable and contained,  
2 and where there is a logical boundary delineated predominately by the built  
3 environment—but that may also include undeveloped lands if they are limited as provided in  
4 this subsection. The County will need to establish the logical outer boundary of each  
5 designated areas of more intensive rural development, and should address the need to  
6 preserve the character of existing natural neighborhoods and communities; physical  
7 boundaries, such as bodies of water, streets and highways, and land forms and contours;  
8 prevent abnormally irregular boundaries; and provide public facilities and services in a  
9 manner that does not permit low-density sprawl.

10 While use of the area of more intensive rural development designation may be particularly  
11 appropriate for the County, clear policies must be established for its use.

### 12 ***Rural Densities and Clustering***

13 The GMA allows counties to use clustering, density transfer, design guidelines, conservation  
14 easements, and other innovative techniques to achieve a variety of rural densities and uses  
15 not characterized by urban growth, that are consistent with rural character.

16 The Growth Management Hearings Boards have ruled that any residential land use pattern of  
17 10 acres or larger is rural. Smaller lots in the rural area will be scrutinized to assure that they  
18 do not constitute urban growth; do not unduly threaten large scale natural resources or  
19 critical areas; will not thwart the long term flexibility to expand the UGA; and are not  
20 otherwise inconsistent with the goals and requirements of the GMA. They have also stated  
21 that a pattern of 1 and 2.5 acre lots is an urban land use pattern that constitutes sprawl, both  
22 inside and outside a UGA. As a general rule, lots of this size are prohibited as a residential  
23 development pattern in rural and urban areas. However, with recent amendments to the  
24 GMA, higher densities may be allowed in Island County than previously approved by the  
25 Boards, provided that sufficient measures are in place to protect rural character.

26 Clustered development is one tool that may allow higher rural densities while preserving the  
27 county's rural character. The GMA seems to favor clustered residential development,  
28 although it does not appear to favor any accompanying density bonuses. Clustered  
29 residential developments can keep land available for agricultural use, but usually they are not  
30 designed to support commercial agriculture. Developers or homeowners' associations  
31 generally own the protected land. However, homeowners may object to renting their  
32 property to farmers and ranchers because of the noise, dust, and odors associated with  
33 commercial farming. Even if the owners are willing to allow agriculture, undeveloped  
34 portions of a cluster subdivision may not be large enough for farmers to operate efficiently.  
35 Access can be a problem as well. For these reasons, clustering has been more successful in  
36 preserving open space or habitat or creating transitional areas between farms and residential  
37 areas than in protecting farmland.

38 The Planned Residential Development (PRD) subdivision process and criteria were  
39 established to allow landowners the flexibility and creativity to design subdivisions which  
40 vary in form and function from standard divisions of land. According to the Legislative  
41 Intent adopted with the Zoning Ordinance, the overall intent of the PRD process was to  
42 provide a better pattern of development. The Intent document further states that a better

1 pattern of development is one which allows for diverse housing options; contains clustered  
2 development; provides open space areas which enhance the living environment for the  
3 project residents and serve as an effective buffer to surrounding properties; and creates  
4 patterns which are compatible with surrounding rural lifestyles, agricultural, and forestry  
5 uses. The County should explore ways to improve the existing PRD process to more clearly  
6 refine the concept of clustered development in Island County. Some considerations could  
7 include: connecting open space tracts and allowing open space uses consistent with the  
8 character of the rural area and protection of wildlife habitat; dividing development into  
9 physically separated clusters with a maximum number of lots per cluster; physically  
10 separating the clusters using buffers of wind-resistant vegetation; and restricting placement  
11 of buildings on forested ridges or other prominent physical features.

### 7 **Transportation**

8 Transportation is a personal activity, a social service, and an industry. Island County  
9 recognizes the need to coordinate with industry, cities, towns, ports, neighboring counties,  
10 and State and Federal governments. Transportation systems must meet identified and  
11 projected transportation needs in a timely and cost effective manner. However, these  
12 systems must be compatible with the character of Island County.

13 The primary roadway circulation network of Island County must be evaluated to determine if  
14 it will be adequate to serve the future needs of local citizens. The Transportation Element  
15 has already done this for arterial routes and transit routes. Land use planning and  
16 transportation planning must be coordinated. For new construction, the County must fulfill  
17 Federal and State design requirements to be eligible for funding. Many county surface roads  
18 serve as scenic corridors, therefore, ground transportation enhancements must be tempered  
19 by the need to protect scenic vistas. Non-motorized multi-purpose trail systems will enhance  
20 safety and provide alternatives to on-road systems.

21 There is a need to expand the ferries' capacity and associated parking, together with satellite  
22 parking and transit connections. Evaluation of alternatives should be done using least cost  
23 planning methodology. Ferry service between Camano and Whidbey Island is needed. Such  
24 a service will require land support facilities, such as docks and/or marina improvements on  
25 both islands. Commuter oriented foot-passenger ferries from the County to urban  
26 workplaces in Snohomish and King Counties also are desirable. Park and ride development  
27 for Camano Island would help relieve congestion along the State highway corridor.

28 Whidbey Island's land connection to the mainland is State Highway 20 over Deception Pass  
29 Bridge at the extreme north end of Whidbey Island, then east through Skagit County. This  
30 bridge and the road across Fidalgo Island are serious transportation bottlenecks, given the  
31 population on North Whidbey, the presence of NAS Whidbey, Deception Pass State Park and  
32 the fact that SR 20 is on the Cascade Loop. Camano Island's land connection to Stanwood  
33 and Interstate-5 is State Highway 532 over Mark Clark Bridge near the northeast corner of  
34 Camano Island, then east through the City of Stanwood and Snohomish County. Congestion  
35 often occurs over through Freedomia in Skagit County and over the Mark Clark Bridge.  
36 Solutions to these current transportation system problems are needed.

1 The net effect of Island County’s special transportation needs is that the islands’ appeal to  
2 people who want to live somewhat out of the mainstream of urban or suburban life. That  
3 very appeal brings more people to Island County and is the source of a real contradiction.  
4 Protecting rural character while maintaining level of service (LOS), especially on the State  
5 system, are sometimes conflicting goals. The County has established LOS standards for  
6 arterials and transit routes and recommended LOS standards for State highways, State  
7 facilities and intersections of regional significance. Growth—and planning for it—is  
8 generally accepted. However, the type of growth that would change lifestyles too quickly is  
9 unacceptable. The array of transportation facilities and services in Island County must fit  
10 projected needs within the limits of its rural character. Safety and efficiency in a wide  
11 variety of transportation modes is essential. Urban convenience, in terms of fast-paced levels  
12 of transportation service, is not desired in non-urban areas.

### 7 *Economic Development*

8 Since its earliest settlement, Island County has experienced slow but unmistakable  
9 development. The 21<sup>st</sup> century will see this trend continue. Since economic factors  
10 significantly affect Island County’s quality of life, a critical issue is to establish an Island  
11 County economic development strategy that will encourage appropriate economic  
12 development, consistent with the County’s rural character and protective of its environment.  
13 The need for long-term economic vitality mandates a vision for Island County communities:  
14 one that allows flexibility while encouraging development consistent with their history,  
15 assets, and long-term goals. This Plan is intended to guide long-term improvements in the  
16 use of land, labor, and capital resources in Island County.

13 Adequate transportation, water, and sewer has been a limiting factor in the economic  
14 development of Island County for many years.

14 However, with proper planning and policies, Island County has qualities that can provide a  
15 strong economic future for its citizens. The county is remote enough from metropolitan areas  
16 to retain rural character, yet close enough to provide reasonable access to urban markets,  
17 business centers, and amenities. This strategic location, along with attributes of charm and  
18 quality of life, provides a setting for a diversified economy.

17 The scale, type, and intensity of economic development must be compatible with Island  
18 County’s basic assets, as well as particular regional differences. As the May, 1996 Island  
19 County Economic Development Council Report, Business Land Use Needs for Island  
20 County to the Year 2016 noted, “The rural quality is a direct economic asset. It is a major  
21 factor behind our tourism industry and serves to attract non-transportation dependent  
22 businesses that want a higher quality of life for themselves and their employees.  
23 Additionally, retirees are important to our economy as their incomes fuel much of our retail  
24 and service sectors. The goals of preserving rural lands and enhancing economic vitality are  
25 not mutually exclusive.” Appropriate development for North, Central and South Whidbey,  
26 and Camano Island will vary widely. Close coordination is crucial between these regions  
27 and the Cities, the Port, Water, Fire, School, Park and Recreation Districts, Ebey’s Landing  
28 National Historical Reserve, and the Public Transit Benefit Area. One of the issues that

1 needs to be addressed is the definition of appropriate small-scale and tourism uses that  
2 should be allowed to expand or locate in the rural area of Island County.

### 3 **Issues Affecting Existing Economic Activity**

4 The development of Island County's economy is crucial in determining the nature and  
5 pattern of overall development. Currently, the county's economic base depends on the  
6 Whidbey Naval Air Station and on commuter accessibility to mainland employment  
7 opportunities. In an era of defense budget downsizing, reliance upon the Whidbey NAS  
8 might be considered risky. Lack of a diversified economic structure makes the County  
9 over-dependent on a few employers. Continued reliance on off-island employment  
10 sources stresses the County's already limited transportation accessibility to the mainland.  
11 The lack of strong, county-oriented economic centers has fostered a unique dispersal  
12 pattern of small commercial centers with only marginal economic value and investment  
13 appeal.

### 14 **Issues Affecting New Economic Development**

15 If Island County truly is to diversify its economy, new business development is essential.

- 16 1. The County should strive to attract and site desirable business and commercial  
17 development that is best suited to the Islands' environment, given transportation, water  
18 and sewer limitations. In addition, the County should strive to attract and site business  
19 and commercial development that supports urban growth center development, provides  
20 living wage jobs, and provides locally needed goods and services. Examples include  
21 academic and research organizations, high tech companies, magazine or catalogue  
22 companies, light industries and financial service firms, as well as consultants, engineers,  
23 writers and artists operating by themselves or within small-to-medium-sized companies.
- 24 2. Changes in the workplace, such as advances in computer and telecommunications  
25 technology, will affect the County's economy. Telecommunications advances, making it  
26 increasingly feasible to work from home for at least a portion of the workweek, will also  
27 impact island life. The County should support changes that would make both islands  
28 more self sufficient and less subject to drastic change by outside economic interests.
- 29 3. As a haven for retirees, Island County should establish policies to promote suitable  
30 housing. including retirement hotels, congregate care, nursing homes, and Planned  
31 Residential Developments consistent with senior citizen needs.
- 32 4. "Primary" businesses that inject new money into Island County's economy, while  
33 helping stabilize and enhance economic opportunity, potentially could add new  
34 supporting businesses/job opportunities for low and moderate income families.  
35 Businesses that reduce commuting and make the Island economy less dependent on  
36 transportation should be encouraged. The County should promote activities that fit into  
37 the rural lifestyle, provide relatively high wages, and offer advancement and career  
38 opportunities.
- 39 5. Businesses and commercial developments designed to enhance and complement Island  
40 County's beauty, heritage, culture, and environment should be encouraged. Activities

1 that help preserve existing scenic highway corridors and vistas, and encourage air and  
2 water conservation should be pursued.

- 3 6. Island County can diversify its economy while protecting the environment and rural  
4 character by directing new business and commercial development into planned areas,  
5 where their benefits are maximized and negative impacts, if any, are minimized.  
6 Business parks, light industry and commercial areas should be designated where  
7 conflicts with adjoining areas can be minimized.
- 8 7. Currently, 50% of Island County's workforce commutes to a job outside the County.  
9 Diversifying and expanding job opportunities within the County can help reduce the  
10 congestion associated with work commute trips.

### 7 **Diversified Economy**

8 Any vision for a diversified economy must include partnerships among numerous public and  
9 private organizations. For example, new technical business enterprises require a well  
10 educated and trained work force. All Island County public schools, as well as Skagit Valley  
11 Community College, Western Washington University, and private schools and colleges play  
12 a vital role in this process. Mutual support, cooperation and participation between the  
13 schools and County cannot be overemphasized. Unified planning between the County,  
14 schools, and economic development agencies will assure a well-trained, capable work force  
15 able to turn ideas into competitive products.

16 Besides training and education, a diversified economy requires affordable housing consistent  
17 with job locations and wages, particularly when the County tries to expand its job base so  
18 that residents are not required to commute off-island for well-paying jobs. Housing itself is  
19 only one link in providing viable, sustainable communities that can furnish transportation,  
20 public safety, public works and public services to employers and employees alike.

21 This vision for Island County's economic future has enormous significance for land use,  
22 zoning, regulations, policies, and procedures. Mechanisms for encouraging and assisting  
23 desired economic activity urgently need implementation. A vital, resourceful economy is the  
24 only sure way to provide services, opportunities, and benefits for ourselves and our future.  
25 The Business Recruitment and Retention Plan (dated October 1997) submitted by the Island  
26 District Economic Development Council, should serve as a starting point for developing  
27 implementation strategies for assisting businesses and encouraging appropriate new  
28 businesses.

### 29 **Master Planned Resorts**

30 The concept of Master Planned Resorts pursuant to RCW 36.70A.360 was extensively  
31 discussed in public workshops and hearings and determined to be inappropriate for inclusion,  
32 at this time, in the County's Comprehensive Plan and development regulations.

1        ***Airport and Aviation Impacts***

2        Airports and related support facilities are an important part of the transportation network  
3        serving Island County. They range from the U.S. Naval Air Station to small private landing  
4        strips, and these airports provide public benefits to the community.

5        Island County aviation facilities represent a significant capital investment. Existing and  
6        potential economic benefits derived from these airports will be recognized. Negative  
7        impacts will be minimized and/or mitigated to the greatest extent reasonably possible.  
8        Future airport expansion and surrounding land development will have compatibility as their  
9        goal.

10       There are several classifications of airports, or aviation facilities, recognized by the Federal  
11       Aviation Administration. The ones currently sited in Island County include:

12                **Private:** General use by public at large prohibited, except in emergency or by specific  
13                authorization.

14                **Limited:** Intended for private use. Public not prohibited.

15                **Commercial:** Privately owned. Intended for general use by the public. (Wes Lupien  
16                Air Park, Whidbey Air Park, Camano Island Air Field)

17                **Military:** Owned and/or operated by the Federal Government. General use by the  
18                public is prohibited unless in an emergency or by specific authorization. (NAS  
19                Whidbey/OLF Coupeville)

20        Other aviation facilities not classified as airports include seaplane landing sites, heliports,  
21        and privately owned ultralight landing strips.

22        Airport facilities are described in Island County Transportation Plan Table V-9.<sup>2</sup>

23        The three commercial airports in Island County vary in size and intensity of use. They  
24        primarily serve the needs of the general, commercial and aeromedical aviation communities.

25        The two military airports in Island County also vary in size and use. Ault Field, the main  
26        airport complex for NAS Whidbey Island, is located north of the City of Oak Harbor. OLF  
27        Coupeville is a facility currently dedicated to Field Carrier Landing Practice (FCLP) and is  
28        located in central Whidbey Island southeast of the Town of Coupeville.

29        The use of private or limited civil airports, seaplane landing sites, private heliports, and  
30        private ultralight landing strips, where the property owner intends to use a landing area solely  
31        for his or her own personal use, could negatively impact residents of surrounding properties.  
32        Careful siting of such facilities is necessary to avoid conflicts with other permitted uses in  
33        rural areas.

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34        <sup>2</sup> See Transportation Element.

1 Island County recognizes the benefits and economic opportunities that airports can provide.  
2 The county also recognizes its responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of its  
3 residents while promoting compatible coexistence of airports with surrounding land uses.  
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1 Each airport in Island County has impacts on surrounding land uses that deserve special  
2 planning considerations. The three existing commercial airports require somewhat less  
special planning than military airports.

### 3 *Naval Air Station (NAS) Whidbey Island*

4 In 1942, a directive from the Chief Naval Officer was given to find an adequate location for the  
5 rearming and refueling of Navy patrol planes which were operating in defense of the Puget  
6 Sound area at the height of World War II. A suitable site was located just north of the City of  
7 Oak Harbor and construction began on this base in March of 1942. Ault Field was commissioned  
in September of that year. Ault Field first saw use as a site of recruit and officer training, torpedo  
8 overhaul, rocket firing training, and seaplane patrol operations, as well as a munitions and  
9 refueling station.

10 In September of 1943, Coupeville Outlying Field (OLF) became operational as an auxiliary air  
strip to Ault Field.

11 The combination of these two air fields is known as Naval Air Station (NAS) Whidbey Island  
12 and has become the premier Naval Air Station for electronic attack and patrol and  
13 reconnaissance squadrons. This is due to a multitude of factors, the most important being NAS  
Whidbey's location. The location of Ault Field just north of Oak Harbor, allows training to be  
14 carried out over the Pacific Ocean with little or no effect on civil aviation or civil transmissions  
(TV, Radio, etc.). NAS Whidbey Island manages hundreds of thousands of square miles of  
15 training airspace throughout Washington, Oregon and Nevada and in International airspace and  
waters off the West Coast of the United States.

16 NAS Whidbey Island also contains a FSQ Electronic Combat Warfare Threat Simulator, which,  
17 combined with the marginal amount of civil aviation and electronic frequency interference  
allows for optimal electronic warfare training in the immediate vicinity the air station.

18 The proximity of NAS Whidbey Island to the Bangor Submarine Base and the Bremerton Home  
Port also allows for optimized opportunities in deployment of electronic attack wings to aircraft  
19 carriers as well as providing real submarine and surface "targets" for training in Anti-Submarine  
and Anti-Surface Warfare.

20 Additionally, NAS Whidbey Island also contains the Naval Ocean Processing Facility (NOPF)  
Whidbey Island. This facility provides underwater surveillance of the North Pacific Ocean and  
works in conjunction with the Canadian Naval Forces.

21 NAS Whidbey has become an important military installation because of the advantages listed  
22 above. This has brought with it an increase in personnel which have had a considerable positive  
economic effect on Island County. In 1940, the population of Island County was 6,098 residents.  
23 In 1950, that population had jumped to 11,079 residents, an 80% increase over that 10 year span.  
As of 2003, NAS Whidbey Island directly employed approximately 10,066 people with a payroll  
of \$399.1 million. The total number of people employed by the base represents 68% of the total

1 employment in Island County while the payroll amount represents approximately 52% of all  
 2 countywide labor earnings.

3 Further direct impacts to the economy include \$91.1 million in military retiree pensions, \$14.1  
 4 million in health care payments to private providers, and \$12.2 million in contracts for goods and  
 5 services. \$22 million are spent at commissaries and base exchanges, however, these fees do not  
 6 benefit the State or Island County as they go to out of state vendors. Therefore the direct impact  
 7 to the state economy is \$494.5 million.

8 As of 2003, approximately 56.5% of the students enrolled in the Oak Harbor School District  
 9 were dependents of military personnel. Accordingly, the school districts of Island County  
 10 received \$4.5 million from NAS Whidbey Island for schooling dependents of military personnel.

11 It is also understood that NAS Whidbey Island contributes indirectly to the economies of both  
 12 Island County and the State of Washington. The Washington State Office of Financial  
 13 Management found that NAS Whidbey Island indirectly and directly accounts for 20,141 jobs  
 14 within the state of Washington. These 20,141 jobs accrue wages of up to \$775 million, which is  
 15 then redirected back into the economy.

16 The total impact of NAS Whidbey Island on Island County accounts for 17,500 jobs which  
 17 produce \$674 million in wages. This equals 88% of wage disbursements in Island County,  
 18 making it the most military-dependent county in Washington (Figure 1.4).

19 Figure 1.4 Total Labor Earnings due to Military Bases Compared to Wage and Salary  
 20 Disbursements by County ‡

	Home County Labor Earnings Total Impact, 2003 (\$ millions)	Wage and Salary Disbursements, 2002 (\$ millions)	Military Total Impacts as Percent of Wage and Salary Disbursements
Island	674	767	87.9%
Kitsap	1,756	3,236	54.3%
Pierce	2,867	9,417	30.4%
Snohomish	431	8,633	5.0%
Spokane	570	6,440	8.9%
Yakima	19	2,622	0.7%
Statewide	6,317	111,478*	5.7% †

21 \* Represents Countywide Wage and Salary Disbursements for the entire state

22 † Military Total Impacts as Percent of Countyside Wage and Salary Disbursements for the entire State

23 ‡ Table produced by the Washington State Office of Financial Management

1 It is readily apparent that NAS Whidbey is a dominant force in Island County. Because of this,  
2 Island County recognizes the impact that closure of NAS Whidbey would have on all aspects of  
3 life within the County. Not only would a closure of the base lead to the loss of 17,500 jobs and  
\$674 million in funds, but it would also lead to a loss of 20,000+ friends, neighbors, and  
relatives, which would be the most harmful impact to the Island County community.

4 It is also important that Island County's land use decisions are compatible with the retention and  
5 future use of NAS Whidbey Island not only for the reasons listed above, but because the Base  
has a strong relationship with the community and Island County, and that relationship should be  
maintained.

### 6 **Continuing efforts**

7 Historically, encroachment is one the major factors in base closures around the country. It is  
8 imperative that encroachment on NAS Whidbey Island is not allowed to compromise the future  
9 operation of the Base. For the last 25 years Island County has been at the forefront of  
10 Washington State Counties in protecting, through land use planning, the vital interests of NAS  
Whidbey. Over this period of time, and as the effects of encroachment have been better  
understood, Island County has continually enhanced regulations aimed at preventing  
encroachment issues.

11 These efforts have paid off! Island County now offers the United States a unique property in  
12 NAS Whidbey Island due to the few encroachment challenges it faces. While air bases across  
the nation are being closed or scaled back, NAS Whidbey has been recognized as a safe place to  
13 fly due, in part, to our proactive land use standards.

14 In 1998, Island County and NAS Whidbey Island worked in partnership to develop new zoning  
15 regulations aimed at greater protection of the Base. As a result, the County rezoned land  
surrounding NAS Whidbey Island and Coupeville OLF to limit future development so it would  
16 not exceed one house per 5 acres. The County also took a leadership role with the City of Oak  
Harbor by developing an Interlocal Agreement with the City that greatly strengthened noise  
17 attenuation standards for construction in Noise Zones 2 and 3. Today these standards are  
consistently and strictly enforced by both Island County and the City of Oak Harbor resulting in  
a minimum 25-dBA interior noise reduction.

18 Further, we require full noise disclosure notifying potential buyers *prior* to a sale of any property  
19 located in Noise Zone 2 and 3. If landowners, whose property lies in Noise Zone 2 or 3, want to  
rent they too must provide full disclosure to the future inhabitants.

20 Perhaps the most significant factor in protecting NAS Whidbey Island and Coupeville OLF, is  
21 the County's partnership with the Navy. We have a long history of working together with the  
NAS Whidbey Island Community Planning Liaison Officer, coordinating and providing  
22 information for any building and land use permits that may have an impact on the naval  
operations, and providing SEPA notices to the Navy. We look forward to continuation of the  
23 maintenance of this strong relationship. The County is committed to taking the necessary steps to

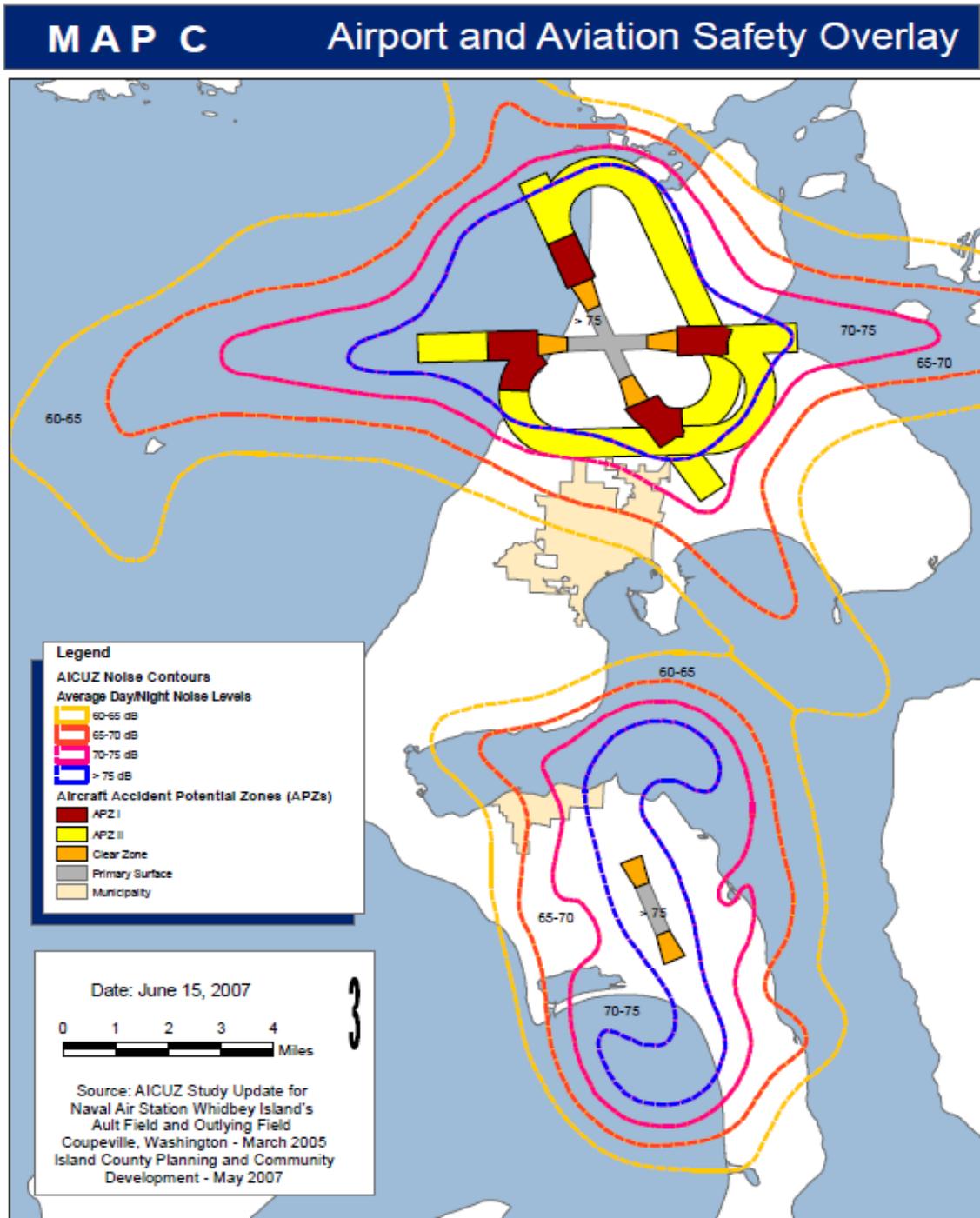
1 help ensure future operations of the Base for the continuing protection of the citizens of the  
United States.

2 It is in this spirit that we will be adding new Code in 2007 to further protect NAS Whidbey  
3 Island and the residents of Island County. As a display of continued cooperation this new code  
4 will regulate lands within the Aircraft Accident Potential Zones (APZ) by placing additional  
5 limitations on land use and base densities as recommended by the Navy for land development  
6 within the APZs. The new regulations will also go a step further than Navy recommendations by  
expanding the APZs to produce a ‘race track’ pattern. These new limitations, in combination  
with those regulations already in place for Noise Zones, will provide an enhanced level of safety  
for NAS Whidbey Island and County residents.

7 The Aircraft Accident Potential Zones (APZs) are areas extending from the end of the runways  
8 which have a higher potential for aircraft accidents. These zones are divided into three separate  
zones, a Clear Zone, APZ-I, and APZ-II. By limiting development in these areas, the potential  
human impact of an accident is minimized.

9 Map C, Airport and Aviation Safety Overlay, identifies noise zones and APZs within the  
10 County. Superimposed on the maps are overlays for the airport sound disclosure boundaries,  
11 sound attenuation building code boundaries, aircraft noise contours, military airport APZs.  
(Ord. C-87-07 [PLG-017-07] , March 8, 2008)

Map C Island County Aviation Impact Areas



(Ord. C-87-07 [PLG-017-07], March 10, 2008)

1        ***Housing and Residential Development***

2        The County’s housing stock is its largest long-term capital asset. Residential development is  
3        usually the predominant force in converting land, and residential property taxes are a primary  
4        source of local government revenue. Services to these residences and their inhabitants  
5        comprise a major portion of local government expenditures.

6        Island County’s residential development pattern focuses heavily on the shoreline. Visual and  
7        physical access to the water is especially desirable. Issues generated by this development  
8        pattern include determining appropriate densities to protect environmental resources, such as  
9        steep and unstable slopes, potable ground water, and safe access by emergency vehicles.

10        Lack of affordable housing is a significant challenge and has reached a critical stage.  
11        Numerous low-income households, including many elderly, the military, the disabled, and  
12        single parents, cannot afford adequate housing or find that their incomes, after housing costs  
13        are paid, are inadequate to buy other necessities. Moreover, many first-time home buyers  
14        cannot afford the down payment or qualify for a loan to purchase a modest home.  
15        Consequently, the primary housing issue for Island County is affordability.

16        Island County and the cities of Oak Harbor, Coupeville and Langley have agreed to share  
17        anticipated population growth and the housing needed to accommodate that growth. At this  
18        time, the three cities say they would accept 30% of the growth, while the County would  
19        accept the remainder. To accommodate more affordable housing, the County has a number  
20        of options. One of them is to encourage higher density. The County will need to define  
21        these higher density housing areas to meet the GMA goal of preventing sprawl.

22        One way to achieve higher densities would be to require cities and their UGAs to  
23        accommodate more of the growth. Difficulties related to this approach include limits on the  
24        cities’ capacity for water, sewer or other services and their reluctance to accept more growth.  
25        under GMA, the County has the authority to make the final decision. In practice, the County  
26        probably would also have to help fund infrastructure needed for municipal expansion.

27        Another approach to achieve higher densities would be to develop restricted areas within  
28        unincorporated Island County (called in the GMA “limited areas of more intensive rural  
29        development”) which can accommodate moderate levels of density. This solution would  
30        protect critical areas, be developed at densities which can support public services, provide  
31        quality affordable housing choices, and reduce the threat of suburban sprawl outside these  
32        defined areas. However, areas of more intensive rural development generally are limited in  
33        geographic scope and do not provide the opportunity for increasing density beyond current  
34        levels.

35        A third approach would be to develop non-municipal UGAs in Freeland and Clinton to  
36        provide land for low-income and special needs housing, emphasizing multifamily buildings.  
37        This approach would require the County to help fund needed infrastructure, principally sewer  
38        and storm drains.

39        A fourth approach would be to offer density bonuses for developers building affordable  
40        housing in the rural area, for example as PRDs. Some limitations to this approach are that it

1 may not be cost-effective to build low income housing in places far from existing centers of  
2 population and existing infrastructure, including public transportation.

3 Finally, the County will need to examine a variety of options for creating affordable housing  
4 that do not necessarily depend on increasing density. Some options, like self-help and  
5 “owner-builder” housing now play only a minor role but could be expanded. The County  
6 could offer more flexibility on types of housing allowed. Other options, for example, for  
7 housing subsidies and financing assistance have yet to be seriously examined here.

8 Housing is one of the most important elements in our lives and in our communities. Buying  
9 a house is the largest purchase made by most families. The housing industry is a major  
10 partner in the economic life of the community, both as a consumer of goods and services and  
11 as a producer of dwelling units, jobs, and income.

### 12 ***Historic Preservation***

13 Historic preservation of culturally important sites and buildings has been an integral part of  
14 Island County’s planning process since 1972. In October of that year, Island County  
15 Commissioners enacted legislation permitting the formation of historic preservation districts.  
16 Shortly thereafter, the Central Whidbey Island Historic Preservation District (HPD) was  
17 established by citizens and approved by the Board of County Commissioners. The entire  
18 District, and many homes, barns, and blockhouses within it, have been placed on the  
19 National Register of Historic Places. Island County Commissioners appoint the Central  
20 Whidbey Island HPD Citizens’ Advisory Committee to advise all County agencies and  
21 legislative bodies with respect to land division, land use, new construction, renovation of and  
22 addition to historic structures, archaeological sites, signage, and demolition of historic  
23 structures within the boundaries of the Historic District. In addition, the Board of County  
24 Commissioners designated this committee the Local Review Board for the Special Valuation  
of Historic Properties (mandated under RCW 84.26) for the entire county.

At present, the Central Whidbey Island HPD is the only established historic district in the  
county. Boundaries of the District are based on historic land claims and correspond with  
boundaries of the Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve (ELNHR). One exception is  
the Town of Coupeville, which has a Design Review Board to deal with matters concerning  
historic structures within its incorporated boundary. The Central Whidbey Island HPD  
Advisory Committee’s “Statement of Purpose, Rules of Procedure, and Development  
Guidelines for the District,” has been approved by the Board of Island County  
Commissioners.

The Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve (ELNHR) was created by an act of  
Congress in 1978, “... to preserve and protect a rural community which provides an  
unbroken historic record from nineteenth century exploration and settlement of Puget Sound  
up to the present time ...” (Public Law 95-625, November 10, 1978). In July 1988, the  
National Park Service, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, Town of  
Coupeville, and Island County signed an interlocal agreement establishing the ELNHR Trust  
Board as a joint administrative board to oversee the Reserve. This agreement establishes the

1 Board membership, assigns it powers, and delineates the duties and responsibilities of the  
contracting parties.

2 Shortly after forming the Reserve, a local citizens' committee was formed by the Board of  
3 Island County Commissioners and the Town of Coupeville to develop a Comprehensive Plan  
4 for the Reserve. This plan was reviewed by the County Planning Commission and adopted  
5 by the Board of County Commissioners on May 19, 1980, as a component of the Island  
6 County Comprehensive Plan.<sup>3</sup> After adopting the Plan, the National Park Service and  
7 Washington State Parks began to implement it. They purchased outright several key parcels  
8 of land within the Reserve. However, in most cases, they purchased development rights and  
9 scenic easements on property which remained in private ownership. The intent of this  
approach was to keep most of the property in the Reserve on the tax rolls, allowing  
controlled development of land within the Reserve and encouraging local farmers to continue  
making productive use of the land. Federal or other funds have not been sufficient to  
complete the purchase of all scenic easements and development rights identified in the  
Comprehensive Plan. The County's role in the management of the Reserve is to enact  
appropriate land use regulations through zoning to protect the landscape of the Reserve, per  
the legislation of the Reserve.

#### 10 ***Archeologically Significant Areas***

11 The County has a long history of human settlement that began with Native American tribal  
12 communities and which later included European settlers in the mid-nineteenth century. Both  
13 cultures have contributed significantly to the historic and archaeological legacy of Island  
14 County. Preservation of historic sites associated with both cultures is essential in  
15 maintaining the cultural, social, educational, and scientific value of these resources. But  
16 while the European settlers and their history is relatively well documented, the Native  
17 American historic communities are much less so. There are documented known and  
18 suspected archaeological sites. However, it is quite likely that more such sites will be  
19 discovered as development continues to occur throughout the County. All currently known  
20 and newly discovered archaeological sites shall be preserved and protected.

#### 16 ***Community Services and Facilities***

17 As population growth continues, the County will need to increase expenditures for basic  
18 public facilities and services.

19 Public facility planning will focus on providing adequate public facilities and services  
20 required under the Growth Management Act. The County's Capital Facilities Plan will be an  
21 important tool linking land use and capital facilities planning with long-term fiscal planning.  
22 Participation by special purpose districts (pursuant to RCW 36.70.520) in this planning effort  
will be important to the county's future. Intensively developed residential areas with septic  
tank drainfields require close monitoring to protect water quality. Alternative sewage  
treatment solutions may be needed for areas where concentrations of septic tank failures

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23 <sup>3</sup> See Historic Preservation Element.

1 occur, yet population density will not support development of regionally centralized sewage  
2 treatment facilities.

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1 Public police, fire protection, and health services must be integrated into planning efforts.  
2 Population growth and aging of some school facilities will require building improvements  
3 and construction of new schools over the next 20 years. Independent public facility and  
4 service providers must conform to the Island County Comprehensive Plan by providing  
5 acceptable levels of service and anticipating future development.

6 Recreational opportunities were evaluated in the Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan,  
7 adopted in 1992 and revised in 1996. Adequacy of existing facilities, as well as indoor and  
8 outdoor recreation opportunities, will be further evaluated in the Capital Facilities Plan and  
9 annual updates of the Capital Improvement Program.

10 The State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) manages large areas of forest lands in  
11 Island County for the benefit of school and university trust accounts. However, due to recent  
12 management decisions, these lands have been designated as “urban transitional.” They will  
13 be sold in the near future and the capital reinvested in more productive forest lands outside  
14 Island County. This decision may cause significant loss of public-owned lands in Island  
15 County. The County will encourage transfer of DNR forest lands to other public agencies.

16 Under GMA, the Comprehensive Plan must include a process for identifying and siting  
17 essential public facilities. Essential public facilities include those that typically are difficult  
18 to site: airports, state education facilities, state or regional transportation facilities, state and  
19 local correctional facilities, solid waste handling, and inpatient facilities including substance  
20 abuse, mental health, and group home facilities.

21 The GMA provides some direction to what facilities and/or facility types will be identified  
22 and included as “essential” in the Comprehensive Plan. It generally defines the attributes  
23 and classes of facilities to be included. It also suggests taking the broadest view of what  
24 constitutes a public facility and that the Comprehensive Plan should contain local criteria for  
25 identifying these facilities. A starting point would be to create a facilities list based on  
26 information from the State Office of Financial Management (OFM) six-year capital facilities  
27 list and the County’s Interim Capital Facilities Plan (which also identifies non-county  
28 facilities and services). The GMA does not directly require that Federal facilities be included  
29 when identifying essential public facilities. Federal lands also are not subject to local land  
30 use regulations under GMA.

31 The Comprehensive Plan must include a general process for the siting of essential public  
32 facilities. The County may choose to establish one review/siting process that encompasses  
33 all facilities identified; or, it may split essential public facilities into two categories for  
34 regulatory purposes: one for facilities that represent clear difficulties to siting (e.g. land fills)  
35 and one for facilities that do not pose the same level of siting difficulty (e.g. group homes).  
36 In the latter case, the County may utilize an existing regulatory review/siting process. In  
37 addition, a general policy framework needs to be developed to guide decisions regarding the  
38 siting of identified essential public facilities. These policies will form the basis of future  
39 development regulations.

1        **Natural Lands**

2        Island County’s natural beauty has attracted residents and visitors for over a century.  
3        However, the same features that bring people to the region are diminishing. Particularly  
4        prior to adoption of the 1984 Island County Code, development has contributed to  
5        environmental impacts resulting in the loss or damage of agriculture and forest lands,  
6        wetlands, wildlife corridors, critical wildlife habitats, riparian ecosystems, significant  
7        watershed areas, and shoreline systems. The 1984 Code protected most wetlands, deepwater  
8        habitats and tributary streams, and protected species. These regulations could be improved  
9        by protecting all streams and near-shore shoreline habitats as well.

10       Data obtained from the County Assessor’s office indicates that parcels comprising nearly  
11       71% of Island County’s land area contain some form of development, with the parcels  
12       comprising the remaining 29% (38,630 acres) left in some form of open space.  
13       Approximately 75% of the 38,630 acres in open space is in “temporary” status. This  
14       includes lands owned by the Department of Natural Resources and forest/agriculture  
15       properties in an open-space tax deferral program. This means that, except for critical areas  
16       such as wetlands, deepwater habitats, tributary streams and their buffers, shorelines, habitat  
17       for protected species, and resource lands of long-term commercial significance, between 50%  
18       and 75% of lands in “open space” have the potential to be developed in the future. Roughly  
19       10% of the County’s land area represents publicly owned State and County parks and scenic  
20       easements (such as Ebey’s Landing) that is “protected” from future development. Note also  
21       that these calculations do not take into account open space areas in planned residential  
22       developments and in the incorporated areas.

23       In 1997, the Trust for Public Lands retained the services of a national public opinion research  
24       company to assess the attitudes of Island County voters on the issue of natural land  
25       preservation. The survey revealed strong support for increasing local taxes to pay for many  
26       types of open space preservation. Voters also gave high priority to protecting watersheds  
27       and drinking water sources, natural lands, farmland, and forests threatened by development.  
28       Similar sentiments have been expressed in letters sent to the County by residents and in  
29       recent workshops on the Natural Plan.

30       Protection of remaining Natural Lands appears to be an increasingly important issue for  
31       Island County residents.

32       At a minimum, Comprehensive Plan policies and implementation measures should address  
33       the GMA requirements and goals. The Comprehensive Plan currently contains policy  
34       language on several important elements including view sheds, habitat and critical area  
35       restoration, water and air quality, watershed management, and others. While these policies  
36       provide a solid framework, they fall short in defining how GMA goals and other open space  
37       requirements will be met. For example, the greenbelts and open space areas in Urban  
38       Growth Areas are a requirement of GMA. Therefore, existing policies should be further  
39       refined and detailed to ensure GMA compliance.

40       The Comprehensive Plan also should be clear on how the policies will be implemented. For  
41       example, development of a non-regulatory Natural Lands Plan (and how to implement it)  
42       would be one of the implementation measures. Implementation measures should address

1 regulatory and non-regulatory methods for achieving GMA goals. Under GMA, the Natural  
2 Lands plan should address other County plans and programs associated with the  
3 protection/conservation of open space and natural lands, such as the Comprehensive Plan,  
4 Shoreline Master Program, Critical Areas regulations, Parks and Recreation Plan,  
5 Conservation Futures Program, Non-Motorized Trails Plan, and Ebey’s Landing National  
6 Historical Reserve Comprehensive Plan. In many ways, the Natural Lands Plan will serve as  
an “implementation umbrella” for other plans with open space components in the County  
(and possibly the cities). The plan should address the relationship and coordination between  
programs, existing overlap and inconsistencies, and—most importantly—identify and  
prioritize sites that citizens have identified as important to protect. Further, the Natural  
Lands Plan will identify options for acquiring/protecting such areas.

7 Various methods can be used to protect natural lands. Such methods must be clearly defined  
8 and addressed in the Comprehensive Plan and the Natural Lands Plan. The most common  
9 methods are: 1) outright purchase of a property, the most expensive but provides the greatest  
10 protection; 2) purchase of conservation easements; 3) public purchase of development rights,  
11 which allows continued use of activities and can be transferred elsewhere; 4) regulation,  
including use restrictions, setbacks, and buffers; and 5) tax benefit programs. The Natural  
Lands Plan should address a range of acquisition methods for consideration by the County  
and its citizens.

### 11 ***Resource Lands***

12 In 1950, approximately 51,455 acres were farmed in Island County, according to census  
13 results reported in the 1958 SCS Soil Survey. As of this writing, approximately 79% of these  
14 lands are no longer being farmed. Approximately 11,245 acres remain in agricultural tax  
programs, although not all of that is actively farmed.

15 According to current tax records, approximately 14,090 acres of private land are managed for  
16 timber production. In addition, DNR owns 1,912 acres of forested land in Island County.  
Between 1993 and mid-1996, approximately 2,700 acres of previously forested land was  
approved for conversion to non-forestry uses under Class IV Forest Practice Permits.

17 Although both agriculture and forestry have become a minimal part of the Island County  
18 economy in their own right, the overall importance of natural resource lands to the economic  
19 and cultural character of Island County is not easily measured. Rolling farmlands and  
20 extensive forested tracts are important components of Island County’s rural atmosphere. The  
rural “feel” that will attract more residents and tourists may depend on the continued  
existence and maintenance of these lands. In addition to their aesthetic values, these lands  
also play important roles in air and water quality and wildlife habitat.

21 While the aesthetic and environmental benefits of mineral resource lands (such as gravel  
22 pits) are not on a level with agricultural and forested lands, extraction of mineral resources is  
important to the County’s economic stability and diversity.

23 Unfortunately, the influx of additional residents—with increased housing demands and  
frequent intolerance for the less appealing aspects of resource-based industries—may be

1 contributing to the disappearance of these lands. Forest lands in particular cannot have the  
2 sort of buffers from rural residential development in Island County which are critical to the  
3 success of the forest industry in areas where the industry is more successful. Preservation  
4 and long-term sustainable management of these lands, as envisioned by the GMA, may not  
5 be accomplished in Island County by guiding development away from such areas, because  
6 existing parcel and block sizes are so small.

### 7 **Agricultural Land Conservation**

8 Conserving productive agricultural soils and encouraging farming operations as  
9 economically viable activity (and as an accepted way of life) is a major challenge in Island  
10 County. According to the Island County Economic Development Council, less than 300  
11 persons are employed or depend on agricultural and forest lands in the county.

12 Significant efforts have been made to preserve agricultural lands of key aesthetic and  
13 historical significance, and where viable farming is continuing, through public purchase of  
14 view easements or of the land itself. In general, outside of those areas, farming activities are  
15 scattered and in comparatively small blocks. Much of the area which remains in production  
16 is not underlain by significant amounts of prime (Class II or III) soils. There are no unique  
17 soils in Island County as defined by the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service.  
18 Farming which occurs on blocks under one ownership of 40 acres or more includes dairy,  
19 beef raising, vegetable and berry production and commercial seed production. There is also  
20 a “micro-farming” industry which is growing up in Island County, where individuals conduct  
21 farming on parcels smaller than 20 acres in size, usually not deriving the majority of their  
22 income from that activity. Although the county wants to encourage such micro-farming  
23 activities, the scattered tracts on which it is occurring are not critical to its growth or  
24 continuance, since new entrants will select from the full range of rural parcels within the  
25 county, not simply from parcels currently in use for micro-farming. In light of the existing  
26 pattern of rural development in Island County and the remaining agricultural activities which  
27 continue in the county, the focus of agricultural protection must be on blocks within one  
28 ownership or management of 20 acres or larger. Of those lands, the issue becomes which  
29 lands are of long-term commercial significance and which are more appropriate for a rural  
30 agriculture designation, which will encourage agriculture to continue, but provide more long-  
31 term flexibility in the use of the land.

### 32 **Agriculture in the Rural Zone**

33 The Rural zone is the predominant zoning category in Island County, comprising  
34 approximately 60% of the County’s total land area. Most of the County’s farming activity  
35 occurs in the Rural zone. Albeit typically small scale and noncommercial in nature, farming  
36 in the Rural zone has and will continue to play a significant role in the cultural heritage of  
37 the County.

38 Livestock farming in the Rural zone ranges from a single animal raised as a 4-H project to  
39 the maintenance of livestock operations. Horticulture farming in the Rural zone can be for  
40 self-sufficiency; growing of organic produce sold at local farmers markets; or cultivation of  
41 specialty crops.

1 Rural zone farm land and activities do not meet the County’s criteria for commercial  
2 designations. However, these lands are crucial to the future viability of designated  
3 commercial agriculture in Island County. Many of these parcels are leased by commercial  
4 farmers to support their farming activities. Others provide a much needed buffer for these  
5 designated lands from more intense rural development. All of these smaller farming activities  
6 add substantially to the economic base of Island County as mainstays of the County’s “rural  
7 character” which in turn is a key magnet for the tourist and retiree dollars and for much  
8 needed new business.

5 While some Rural zone farming activities change in nature and scale with the evolving  
6 interests of the property owner, many have been maintained by a particular owner or family  
7 for many years. Deep attachments develop to the land and to the County’s agricultural  
8 heritage. These attachments are important elements of the County’s culture. Therefore, it is  
9 just as important for the County to recognize and protect the important contribution of these  
10 Rural zone farming activities to the rural character of Island County as it is to recognize and  
11 conserve lands of long term or local commercial significance.

(Ord. C-150-05 [PLG-021-05], May 15, 2006)

9 **Separating lands of long-term commercial significance from those more appropriate for**  
10 **rural agriculture designation.**

11 As of 1997 there were 622 parcels in an agricultural tax program in the county, totaling  
12 approximately 13,042 acres. Of those 13,042 acres, only 9,935 acres in the county were in  
13 parcels 20 acres or larger. Excluding from the total acreage in an agricultural tax program  
14 those lands which are either less than 20 acres in contiguous ownership or which are not  
15 underlain by any prime soils leaves a total of 7,454 acres (5.7% of the total acreage in the  
16 county) which were identified as being suitable for designation as either agricultural lands of  
17 long-term commercial significance or as rural agriculture lands.

18 Of the commercial products produced by Island County farms, dairy and livestock operations  
19 tend to be in significantly larger blocks of land under single ownership or management than  
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1 are vegetable, berry and seed production areas. In examining the minimum block size under  
2 a single management which is feasible for dairy or livestock, however, it appears that as  
3 small as 40 acres may be economically feasible. Similarly, vegetable, berry or seed  
4 production on blocks of 40 acres or more appears to be economically viable. (Micro-farming  
5 of vegetables or flowers may occur on significantly smaller tracts, but preserving those tracts  
6 as a land base for the industry does not appear to have any significant bearing on the future  
7 viability of such operations.) Given the existing parcelization of the rural areas of the  
8 county, there is a long-term need to preserve blocks of 40 acres or more which are in active  
9 commercial production and which have soil quality to give them long-term commercial  
10 significance for agricultural production.

11 Reviewing the blocks of land being actively farmed under single management in Island  
12 County disclosed that many of those farms are not underlain by 50% or more prime soils.  
13 Some commercial farms with relatively little prime soil have been in operation in Island  
14 County for many years. It is assumed, however, that where the farm does not have prime  
15 soils, the current status of the farm as a commercial operation may be more a result of the  
16 skill or commitment of the current operator than the long-term value of the land as a land  
17 base for commercial agriculture. As a result, the only farms that should be put in  
18 Commercial Agriculture designation automatically are those which meet three criteria: 1.  
19 The farm is a block of at least 40 acres in size, owned by a single farmer. 2. Fifty percent or  
20 more of the block is underlain by prime soils. 3. The block is in active commercial  
21 agricultural use. Farms which do not qualify for designation as Commercial Agriculture  
22 because of soil quality may volunteer to be put in that classification. All other parcels of 20  
23 acres or more, within the agricultural tax program should be treated as agricultural lands of  
24 local importance and designated Rural Agriculture.

Small farms are gaining increased importance in the County. Specialty crops may be  
cultivated on lands of a size and with underlying soils not normally associated with larger  
scale farming. It is important that the County recognize the changing trends of farming in the  
County and provide for the appropriate land use regulations to allow them to prosper.

Incompatible development adjacent to agricultural lands increases pressures to convert these  
properties. Pressure comes from demands to suppress the “nuisance” factors created by  
farms, such as prohibiting livestock raising or limiting the storage and use of fertilizers.  
Right-to-farm measures must be adopted to enhance the farm economy. Under GMA, the  
County must ensure that uses on lands adjacent to resource lands do not interfere with  
continuing well-managed agricultural activities on resource lands. This may be  
accomplished by establishing a rural zoning density surrounding the resource lands; and, as  
required per RCW 36.70A.060, adopting regulations requiring that all users of new  
development within 300 feet of the property be notified of the proximity and impacts of the  
ongoing agricultural activities. Rising taxation on adjacent land further accelerates  
conversion pressures. Farm land can be preserved as agricultural open space by  
implementing an array of programs, such as agricultural land zoning and placing the property  
in current use-tax programs.

1       **Forest Lands Conservation**

2       Forests in Island County are an important natural resource to land owners and local citizens.  
3       Forest lands contribute to the rural character, protect watershed functions, and provide  
4       wildlife habitat. Management of forest lands for timber production constitutes a valued  
5       element in the County’s renewable natural and economic resource base, although it forms a  
6       very minor part of the local economy. Development pressure and widespread antipathy to  
7       commercial forest practices threatens the viability of forestry as a self-sustaining local  
8       industry.

9       The remaining timber land in Island County is in small and scattered blocks. The largest  
10       contiguous blocks of timber are found in south Whidbey Island, and the largest block is only  
11       1,230 acres. That is significantly smaller than the minimum block sizes established by  
12       several Western Washington counties for forest lands of long-term commercial significance,  
13       and is much smaller than the blocks of commercial significance which exist in the counties of  
14       Western Washington where the forest industry is active. Although the most prevalent site  
15       index (the measure of productivity for forest lands) in Island County is DF 111 (the average  
16       dominant or co-dominant Douglas fir at age 50 is 111 feet tall), that is not a high site index in  
17       the Puget Sound basin. Island County has no lands designated as Land Grade 1 or Land  
18       Grade 2. Only 70.9% of the county’s lands are even Land Grade 3. There are few industrial  
19       foresters left in Island County. Trillium acquired 3,000 acres in Island County as part of a  
20       40,000 acre purchase from Georgia Pacific. It did not acquire the lands in Island County for  
21       long-term commercial production, and expects to sell all of the land eventually for  
22       development purposes. (Plum Creek and Crown Pacific have seed orchards on Whidbey  
23       Island, which they located there because unfavorable growing conditions increase stress on  
24       the seed trees, and maximize seed production. Those lands are in an agricultural tax  
25       classification.) The Department of Natural Resources owns 1,912 acres of trust land in  
26       Island County. The remaining forest landowners in Island County are non-industrial private  
27       forest owners (NIPF). Although a few of those owners actively manage their lands to  
28       increase growth and for continuous production, much of the land is subject to minimal  
29       management. There are no timber converting facilities on Island County. All timber which  
30       is harvested in the county is trucked off the islands for processing. According to the Island  
31       County Economic Development Council, as of 1997 there were only 20 forestry jobs, and 12  
32       logging contractors in Island County. There were only two local forestry consultants, six  
33       logging contractors and no local logging suppliers. Without a local forest industry  
34       infrastructure, the costs of operations for harvesting, hauling, marketing, replanting and  
35       silvicultural practices are increased.

36       As of 1995, there were 415 parcels in Island County in a timber tax program. While not all  
37       of these lands are being actively managed for industrial timber production, it is likely that all  
38       forest lands which do meet the definition are in a timber tax program.

39       One of the greatest obstacles to timber lands management is pressure from adjacent land  
40       uses. There are very few, if any, forest lands that are not adjacent to or within sight of  
41       existing plats, urban areas, or major transportation routes, some of which are scenic  
42       highways. Changing attitudes towards resource use have brought intense political pressure  
43       on elected

1 officials to limit the aesthetic and environmental consequences of timber management  
practices.

2 In light of all of these factors, and after a review of the specific criteria for designation of  
3 forest lands of long-term commercial significance established by the Growth Management  
4 Act, the county has concluded that the remaining forested areas in Island County do not  
5 qualify as forest lands of long-term commercial significance. The county wants to encourage  
existing forest owners to continue in commercial forestry for as long as possible. To do so it  
has designated all lands currently in designated forest (DF) or classified forest (CF) tax status  
in a “Rural Forest” classification.

## 6 **Mineral Lands**

7 The GMA calls for long-term conservation of mineral resource lands to ensure current and  
8 future supplies of sand, gravel, and non-renewable minerals. These lands must be protected  
9 from urban encroachment while ensuring environmental protection through appropriate  
10 siting, operation, and reclamation standards. Mineral resource lands include those lands  
devoted primarily to mineral extraction or that have a known potential for long-term  
commercial extraction of minerals. Map E shows both existing sites and areas with known  
potential mineral deposits based on USGS information. Minerals are defined as sand, gravel,  
and valuable metallic substances.

11 Surface mining is considered a zoning overlay, applicable within Agricultural, Forestry and  
12 Rural Lands. This precludes unnecessary rezoning of land for mining and related mine  
13 activities and maintains the Comprehensive Plan’s long-term land use vision beyond surface  
mining. However, as with agricultural and forest lands, GMA requires the County to  
establish designation and protective criteria for these lands.

### 14 *Existing Mineral Lands*

15 While designation of these sites is fairly straightforward, the issue of protecting them is  
16 more difficult. Existing sites have, however, already been permitted. Thus the  
17 conditions under which they operate have been established and are vested. Surrounding  
18 uses which grow up around existing sites can be assumed to have had fair warning of the  
19 existence of the site. Therefore, it is not clear that additional restrictions on surrounding  
20 lands are necessary. The county will require that all plats, short plats, development  
permits, and building permits issued for development activities on, or within three  
hundred feet of existing mineral lands contain a notice that the subject property is within  
or near designated mineral resource lands on which a variety of commercial activities  
may occur that are not compatible with residential development for certain periods of  
limited duration.

### 21 *Potential Mineral Lands*

22 Although the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) has identified broad areas of potential  
23 gravel deposits in Island County (shown on Map E), it is unreasonable to designate those  
entire areas. They are in large part already developed with small lot sizes and  
incompatible land uses for any new mineral extraction. The USGS designation also

1 provides no assurance that the land in fact has gravel under it, how deep such gravel  
2 deposits may be, or whether any gravel, if it exists, is present in commercial quantities.  
3 Thus restricting the use of land which may be in large enough undeveloped parcels to  
4 provide the ability to permit a new mineral extraction site, based on the USGS study, is  
5 unreasonable, because it is little more than speculative to suggest that the land has  
6 “potential” for mineral development. The state of Washington has committed to  
7 undertake a more thorough study of potential mineral sites over the next five years. The  
8 county will revisit the issue of designation of potential mineral sites at such time as it has  
9 information upon which to make a reasonable judgment about designation of potential  
10 sites. For now, a permitting system and land use standards for surface mining that allows  
11 new proposals to be considered, on a case by case basis, is the best interim course of  
12 action available to the County.  
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1 Map E Island County Mineral Resources

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1        **Critical Areas**

2        Critical areas are lands that possess certain development limitations, or that provide  
3        important public resources. However, a property owner cannot be deprived of all reasonable  
4        use and enjoyment of lands on which critical areas and their associated buffers, if any, are  
5        located.

6        Critical areas are:

- 7            A. Wetlands
- 8            B. Areas with a critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water
- 9            C. Fish and Wildlife habitat conservation areas
- 10           D. Frequently flooded areas
- 11           E. Geologically hazardous areas

12        Particularly prior to adoption of the 1984 Island County Code, many critical areas in Island  
13        County have been disturbed by past development, logging, or other human activity. Other  
14        critical areas are essentially in pristine condition, having recovered from logging or other  
15        activity which has occurred on or near them in the last century or so. Many of the County's  
16        most valuable critical areas lie in undeveloped rural areas and in resource lands. Efforts to  
17        protect critical lands will likely be more effective in rural areas than in urban areas. When  
18        goals intended to protect critical areas compete or conflict with goals for curtailing sprawl, a  
19        balance will be reached based on priorities outlined in updated development regulations. For  
20        example, some alteration to highly degraded wetlands within UGAs may be acceptable to  
21        discourage sprawl. Critical areas within areas of high development pressure, such as UGAs,  
22        will have different forms and levels of protection than critical areas within rural areas and  
23        resource lands.

24        Limited information is available on location and boundaries of many types of critical areas.  
25        The Critical Areas maps (Maps F through J), provide a generalized location based on  
26        authoritative studies, e.g., maps generated by the Washington Department of Fish and  
27        Wildlife (WDFW) Priority Habitats and Species Program; occurrence maps generated by the  
28        Washington Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) Natural Heritage Program; United  
29        States Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) National Wetland Inventory maps; DNR Water  
30        Type maps; maps of frequently flooded areas prepared by the Federal Emergency  
31        Management Agency; and maps of identified wetlands prepared for the County in 1990. In  
32        addition, the County currently is updating its maps of the shoreline areas to include  
33        commercial and recreational shell-fish areas; kelp and eelgrass beds; and herring and smelt  
34        spawning areas. These maps are intended for informational (but not necessarily regulatory)  
35        purposes. Detailed on-site inspections may be required to determine if an area meets the  
36        designation and classification criteria. These studies may take precedence over generalized  
37        mapping.

1 The County is ultimately responsible for updating and maintaining the maps on a regular  
2 basis, as additional information is developed through studies and subsequent determinations.  
3 Considerable progress can be made toward protecting some types of critical areas simply by  
4 making the information in these maps and other materials readily accessible to current and  
5 potential landowners, development interests, and the populace. Altering critical areas in the  
6 past has resulted more often from ignorance of the location, function, and value of a given  
7 critical area rather than deliberate intent to disturb it. However, other types of critical areas  
8 may be severely impacted by wide dissemination of their exact location. Island County will  
9 make the location of wetlands, streams and steep slopes publicly available but will not  
10 disclose the location of sensitive species when disclosure might harm those species or their  
11 habitat.

12 Effective enforcement is an important component of any critical areas protection program.  
13 The enforcement action and severity of any penalty must be proportionate to the nature and  
14 circumstances of the violation, and the damage or risk to private and public resources. When  
15 wetlands or fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas are damaged in violation of the law,  
16 restoration to at least pre-existing functional condition will be required.  
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1 Map F Island County Wetlands

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1 Map G Island County Flood Plains

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1 Map H Island County Steep/Unstable Slopes - RESERVED

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1 Map I Island County Aquifer Recharge Areas

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1 Map J Island County Fish and Wildlife Habitat Areas - RESERVED

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1       **Wetlands**

2       Island County contains a wide variety of wetlands, from salmonberry and alder swamps to  
3       lush bogs, thriving estuarine marshes, and broad wet meadows. Often these wetlands are  
4       fragile ecosystems that may serve important and beneficial functions. Wetlands can assist in  
5       reducing flooding, erosion, siltation, and ground and surface water pollution; help maintain  
6       ground water recharge and surface water flows; and provide wildlife, plant and fisheries  
7       habitats. Wetlands harbor plant and animal species with recreational, economic, and cultural  
8       importance. Many wetlands are essential components of the highly-valued visual landscape  
9       of Island County.

10       Wetlands historically have been treated as wasted land, to be reclaimed through draining and  
11       filling. Wetlands destruction, or impairment of wetland functions, may result in increased  
12       public and private costs or property losses. Only in recent decades has the economic,  
13       environmental, and cultural impacts of wetlands destruction been recognized and efforts  
14       made to reduce the loss of wetland functions and values.

15       Designation of wetlands and regulation of wetlands are separate issues. The economic,  
16       environmental, and cultural values that communities place on wetlands should be used to  
17       determine wetlands policy and regulation. Wetlands classification or ratings systems are  
18       used to define what regulatory standards apply and to establish priorities for non-regulatory  
19       mechanisms, such as acquisition and restoration.

20       Wetland functions typically refer to physical, chemical, and biological processes. Some  
21       functions, such as water quality and purification, flood attenuation, sediment trapping, and  
22       wildlife habitat, can be quantified accurately depending on level of study. Wetland values  
23       (aesthetic, cultural, educational, or recreational) generally refer to the importance or worth  
24       that society places on wetlands. As values by nature are subjective, they are difficult to  
25       measure.

26       Some wetlands have greater economic, environmental, or cultural value than others. In some  
27       instances, wetland alterations may be preferable to available alternatives. For example, a  
28       valuable mature forest may also have high habitat value. Altering or developing it may have  
29       greater environmental costs than altering a highly degraded, adjacent wetland with minimal  
30       function and value.

31       Since 1984, Island County has had wetland regulations in place. During public review, these  
32       regulations were determined to have met the GMA's substantive and procedural  
33       requirements. However, to improve the effectiveness of these regulations, the County should  
34       classify wetlands within the shoreline jurisdiction based on the characteristics of the  
35       wetlands rather than their location in the shoreline areas. In addition, the County should  
36       require the use of best management practices for existing agricultural uses and should not  
37       exempt new agricultural uses.

38       The County may also wish to allow certain low impact uses within the buffers and allow  
39       installation of infrastructure where there is no practical alternative location.

1       **Aquifer Recharge Areas**

2       Island County’s groundwater system is highly complex. Its aquifers are made up of multiple  
3       layers of unconsolidated sands and gravels capable of supplying water for human use. Mixed  
4       between these aquifers are layers of silt, clay and cemented till known as hardpan that pass  
5       water more slowly (aquitards). From place to place in Island County, aquifers and aquitards  
6       vary in thickness and depth below the surface making water resource availability assessments  
7       extremely difficult.

8       Due to the chaotic deposition of the county’s water-bearing formations, region-wide studies  
9       have not been able to accurately quantify available groundwater supplies. As more wells are  
10      drilled, information on local conditions improves; but county-wide, there is little  
11      predictability as to depth, quantity, and quality of groundwater. Gross water balance  
12      estimates suggest that in some areas ample groundwater exists, while in others there is  
13      imminent threat of exhausting “fresh” groundwater supplies. High chloride levels and low  
14      water elevations in groundwater often indicate seawater intrusion, plaguing many water  
15      systems along shoreline areas and even in some inland areas. Virtually impermeable layers  
16      of clay and hardpan (essentially worthless for groundwater extraction) can serve as protective  
17      barriers to vertical movement of surface contaminants. Groundwater contamination from  
18      surface activities is not widespread in Island County; however, some areas of elevated  
19      nitrates have been identified.

20      Approximately 72% of Island County residents depend on groundwater as a drinking water  
21      source. Exceptions include the City of Oak Harbor, the Whidbey Island Naval Air Station,  
22      and an outlying community near Deception Pass, which relies on Skagit River water piped to  
23      the City via the Anacortes treatment plant.

24      Rainfall infiltration into aquifers is the only source of renewing the county’s groundwater  
25      supplies. There is no evidence of any naturally occurring underground hydraulic connection  
26      to mainland sources of groundwater. Continued infiltration of fresh water is necessary to  
27      exclude intruding seawater from moving inland. Development is generally associated with an  
28      increase in impervious surfaces and may affect the recharge potential by clearing, grading,  
29      and removing vegetation. These impacts ultimately reduce the area available for rainwater  
30      infiltration and may cause rainfall to run off faster. Thus, less water reaches the aquifers for  
31      storage, and greater intrusion of seawater may result. Clustering and preservation of large  
32      open spaces can promote infiltration.

33      In February 1997, the Board of Commissioners contracted with the USGS to cooperate in a  
34      Water Recharge Study in Island County. The objectives of the study were to estimate the  
35      total amount and aerial distribution of recharge entering the groundwater system on Whidbey  
36      and Camano Islands and identify potential areas for using runoff to artificially recharge the  
37      groundwater system. The study complimented earlier USGS studies in Island County  
38      completed in the mid 1980s.

39      Through recent efforts of the county’s Water Resource Advisory Committee, data derived in  
40      the USGS study has been used to delineate critical aquifer recharge areas based upon high,  
41      medium and low susceptibility (Map X). This delineation provides useful and valuable

1 information for water resource planning efforts aimed at reducing risks of contamination due  
2 to human activity in susceptible recharge areas.

(Ord. C-83-05 [PLG-011-05], July 25, 2005)

### 3 **Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas**

4 Island County supports a variety of plant and animal species and contains several species  
5 listed by the federal or state government as endangered, threatened or sensitive. Many local  
6 species represent important economic, cultural, historical, and recreational resources. Their  
7 presence and viability (or lack thereof) can provide important information about the health of  
8 ecosystem components upon which they, and humans, depend. Plant and animal species  
found regularly or seasonally in Island County are integral to the natural setting that attracts  
the respect and reverence of County residents. Proactive efforts to maintain viable  
populations of listed species and providing a process to nominate habitats and species of  
local concern for protection, can help avoid economic and societal costs of restoration and  
crisis management.

9 The GMA explains that fish and wildlife habitat conservation involves managing land to  
10 maintain species in suitable habitats within their natural geographic distributions, so that  
isolated sub-populations are not created. This does not mean maintaining all individuals of  
11 all species at all times. Cooperative and coordinated land use planning for habitat  
conservation is critically important among County and adjacent jurisdictions.

12 Current County regulations generally fulfill the overall intent of GMA Fish and Wildlife  
13 Conservation Areas: 1) they designate protected species and “critical areas,” i.e., those areas  
where designated species reside, including wetlands, deepwater habitats, and tributary streams  
14 to wetlands; 2) they provide a process for protection; and 3) they provide buffers for  
regulated wetlands and tributary streams. However, expanding these regulations to protect  
15 all streams and near-shore marine habitats such as shellfish areas, kelp and eelgrass beds and  
herring and smelt spawning areas would more fully implement the GMA goals of protecting  
critical areas and protecting rural character.

16 Current regulations also would benefit from clarifying what habitat components should be  
17 protected. Currently, the simple presence of a protected species (as identified on the County  
list) appears to be the only criterion for protection. Because of this, vast areas of the County  
18 could be considered critical fish and wildlife conservation areas, since so many species are  
wide-ranging (e.g. bald eagle). Specific areas, such as nest sites or critical breeding areas,  
19 should be identified and protected.

20 Current regulations base buffer widths for streams on the stream location relative to the  
wetland(s). Stream reaches downstream of wetlands receive less protection (50-foot buffers)  
21 than stream reaches upstream of or between wetlands (100-foot buffers). While this system  
addresses water quality protection entering wetlands, it does not address other aquatic  
resources downstream of the wetlands, which may include anadromous fisheries resources.  
22 This stream buffer system should address current conditions, functions, and values of  
streams, and development needs.  
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1 An evaluation of stream systems on a subbasin-to-basin level identifying existing conditions  
2 and functions could be used to prioritize levels of protection that are relevant to the goals and  
3 objectives of the County. To meet the GMA's intent, the County should also address how to  
protect non-tributary streams. Many jurisdictions use the DNR stream typing system to  
develop a local classification system and to determine appropriate buffers.

#### 4 **Frequently Flooded Areas**

5 While lacking the major river systems that occur in mainland western Washington (where  
6 dramatic flooding has captured national attention) Island County is not immune to flood  
7 threats. Flooding generally occurs in the winter during intense storms, combined with high  
8 tides. Wind-generated waves frequently run up the beach and overtop many shore protection  
9 structures, damaging structures along the shoreline and flooding inland areas. Wave-tossed  
10 driftwood can threaten safety and property. Flooding less violent and severe, but perhaps  
more frequent, occurs around lakes and other low-lying areas during and following heavy  
precipitation. Development, creation of impervious surfaces, channeling of surface water  
flows, and loss of wetlands and extensive forest vegetative cover have increased the rate of  
runoff, decreasing the capacity of upland areas to retain moisture and exacerbating flood  
problems.

11 Individual residents, community associations, and diking districts have undertaken local  
12 flood protection efforts, including drainage improvements, tide gates, holding ponds, and  
shore protection structures such as bulkheads and rip-rap. Some of these facilities are  
maintained by the County.

13 The County has adopted a Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance (Chapter 14.02A ICC)  
14 which provides construction standards for frequently flooded areas, and stormwater  
regulations with required detention (Chapter 11.01 ICC).

#### 15 **Geologically Hazardous Areas**

16 Although Island County is characterized by a gentler landscape than much of the  
17 mountainous and river-torn Puget Sound mainland, the islands have been and continue to be  
18 buffeted by geological and climatological forces. Vertical bluffs, ancient landslides, slopes  
with groundwater seepage or springs can be found in Island County. Careless development  
in such areas can lead to loss of life and property, both on-site and to other properties. The  
County regulates grading and construction on all slopes greater than 15%.

#### 19 ***Shorelines***

20 Island County's Shoreline Master Program (SMP) is a policy plan and regulatory program  
21 designed to protect public resources, and guide future development within the coastal  
22 corridor and around large lakes and streams. This program is an element of the  
Comprehensive Plan.<sup>4</sup> The relationship between these two planning programs is evident in  
the intent of each plan. General planning goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan are

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23 <sup>4</sup> See Shoreline Management Element.

1 applicable to overall development of Island County. The Shoreline Program applies to  
2 development within 200 feet of large lakes (20+ acres), coastal areas, and associated  
3 wetlands.

4 The Island County SMP is based on guidelines of the citizen-initiated 1971 Shoreline  
5 Management Act (SMA). Responding to pressure from citizens concerned about shoreline  
6 utilization, protection, and restoration (and preserving the shoreline from ever-increasing  
7 development pressures) the State Legislature made an official finding declaring the  
8 shorelines of Washington State to be among its most valuable and fragile natural resources.  
9 This finding led to adoption of the SMA, giving Island County the necessary tools to develop  
10 and implement a Shoreline Master Program. In turn, the SMP established general policies  
11 for all activities that make use of shorelands and waters. Varying intensities of uses allowed  
12 on segments of the shorelines are mapped out based on existing development patterns,  
13 biophysical capabilities, limitations of shoreline areas, and the goals and aspirations of Island  
14 County citizens.

15 The SMP accomplishes this by designating one of six “environments” on all shorelines and  
16 water areas. The shoreline “environments” are classified as: Aquatic, Conservancy, Natural,  
17 Rural, Shoreline Residential, and Urban. The intensity of development allowed on a  
18 particular shoreline depends strongly on its “environment” classification.

19 The SMP contains eight Master Program “Elements,” providing the foundation for the plan’s  
20 long-range goals: Economic Development, Public Access, Circulation, Recreation, Shoreline  
21 Use, Conservation, Historical/Cultural, and Implementation. These elements are considered  
22 positive aspects of the plan, enabling the local community to improve the situation rather  
23 than react to individual applications for various kinds of shoreline development.

24 The SMP is also a standard-setting ordinance. Use regulations are included to control “Use  
25 Activities” within each environment and for those in Shorelines of Statewide Significance.  
26 The use regulations are intended to carry out the Policies of the Environments and the  
27 Policies for Use Activities. They also consider the varied impact of activities on different  
28 natural systems.

29 By developing and implementing the Island County SMP, county citizens recognize that the  
30 Whidbey and Camano Islands shorelines, in their natural state, are a scarce resource which  
31 should be managed and preserved for future generations. To preserve these shorelines and  
32 protect the habitats on which they depend, upland proposals must be compatible with  
33 shoreline plans and with the critical areas regulations protecting the near-shore habitats and  
34 streams (found in the Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas Overlay) and wetlands  
35 (found in the Wetlands Overlay). The Shoreline Master Program should also remain  
36 consistent with goals and policies of the Island County Comprehensive Plan. Shoreline areas  
37 exhibiting steep slopes, lakes, ponds, wetlands and streamways require sensitive planning to  
38 avoid degrading watershed characteristics. Additional planning is required to manage  
39 watershed drainage basins, which inevitably affect the coastal zone. The innumerable  
40 benefits deriving from shorelines can be preserved only if solutions are reached between man  
41 and the natural environment.

1 To understand the current situation on Island County’s 210 miles of shoreline, it is important  
2 to look at both developed and undeveloped areas. The parcels comprising nearly 80% of the  
County’s shoreline are developed, primarily with platted single-family communities.

3 Current shoreline density ranges from 3-5 units per acre (as at Tyee Beach) to 1 unit per 5  
4 and 20 acres. The average density in platted areas is approximately 2 units per acre (1/2 acre  
5 lots) and the average density in undeveloped shoreline areas is approximately 2.5 to 5 acre  
6 lots. The predominant zoning classification is Residential. Under SMA/GMA integration,  
future zoning classifications must be consistent with shoreline designations. This means that  
the zoning designation and/or permitted uses and land use standards must be consistent with  
the shoreline designation of any given property.

7 A comparative analysis between shoreline designations and development patterns is the first  
8 step toward GMA/SMA integration. Critical areas will be protected through the Wetlands  
9 Overlay, Fish and Wildlife Conservation Areas Overlay and Geologically Hazardous Areas  
Overlay (Steep/Unstable Slopes) Overlay, Ground Water Management Program and its implementing  
regulations, the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance, and the land Development Standards  
(Chapter 11.01 ICC) as well as by land use designations and use standards.

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**II. EXISTING LAND USE ANALYSIS**

**INTRODUCTION**

In 1995 and 1996, Island County performed a land use inventory based on the Island County Assessor’s records. The purpose of this inventory was to provide the County with a detailed description of existing land uses and where they are located. The data will assist in evaluating trends and patterns of land use to establish a direction for Island County’s future. Due to differing characteristics within the county, it was first divided into four regions, including North Whidbey, Central Whidbey, South Whidbey, and Camano Island. The data was broken out by zoning classification and corresponding characteristics of each parcel within that zone. These characteristics include acreage, improvements made, development limitations, and tax classifications for each parcel. The final results can be used as an element in Island County’s optimal land use map.

Figure 2.1 Existing Land Use Designations

Zone	Abbr.	Description
Residential Zone	RS	1 Dwelling Unit per 12,500 Square Feet
Rural Residential Zone	RR	1 Dwelling Unit per 5 acres
Agriculture Zone	AG	1 Dwelling Unit per 20 acres
Forest Management Zone	FM	1 Dwelling Unit per 20 acres
Non-Residential Zones	NR, NRF, NRC	Commercial and Industrial Uses
Split Zoned Parcels	SP, SP3	Two or more zoning classes on one parcel
Private Residential Communities	PRC	Planned Residential Developments and Subdivisions with 5 or More Lots
Government Lands	GV	Federal and State Holdings that are not Zoned
Municipal UGAs - Inc.	Inc. UGAs	Municipal Urban Growth Areas - incorporated portion
Municipal UGAs - Uninc.	Uninc. UGAs	Municipal Urban Growth Areas - unincorporated portion
Roads and Lakes	Rds & Lks	Roads, Lakes and Tidelands

**1983 LAND USE INVENTORY**

The last comprehensive land use inventory performed in Island County was in 1983. The methodology used then was quite a bit different than that of the current inventory. Still, it can be a useful guide illustrating how the land composition of Island County has changed over the past 13 years. The 1983 inventory did not use zones to categorize land use characteristics; rather, it showed the primary use of the land, regardless of its zone. For example, the only qualifying factors for considering a parcel as “residential” were if it was less than five acres and had a dwelling unit on it, or was located in a long plat. By that definition, there were only 19,070

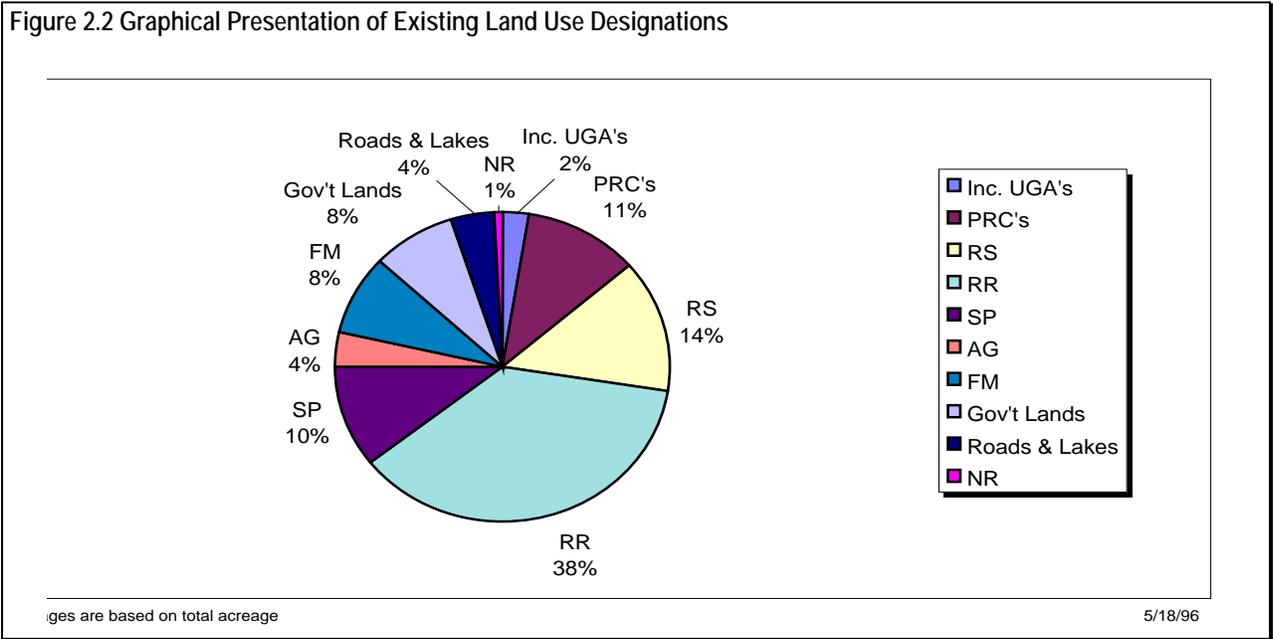
1 acres of residential lands in Island County. As a result, no direct comparison can be made  
2 between those lands zoned residential in 1983 and those that exist today.

3 One useful figure that can be compared directly to the current land use inventory is the amount  
4 of acreage located in long plats and the percentage that has been improved. In 1983, there were  
5 12,566 acres of long platted land (approximately 43% of which had been developed) compared  
6 to the current total of 14,479 acres (43% undeveloped). Data also can be extracted to identify  
7 the number of non-residential uses (commercial/industrial) both in 1983 and 1996. Among  
8 issues that were not addressed in 1983 are split zoned parcels, lands in tax programs, plats and  
9 parcels that had water/septic problems, and base density calculations.

6 **1996 LAND USE INVENTORY**

7 Island County has a total area of 130,779 acres (204 square miles). Included are the incorporated  
8 Urban Growth Areas of Oak Harbor, Langley and Coupeville, totaling 3,173 acres, and 10,573  
9 acres of government lands. Government lands are federal and state holdings that are not zoned,  
10 including state parks and Whidbey Naval Air Station. The remaining 111,733 acres fall within  
11 an array of zoning categories. These zones are intended to allow specific uses in pre-determined  
12 areas. Land consumption within residential zones (RS and RR) can be analyzed in even greater  
13 detail. A sub-category, Private Residential Communities (PRCs), has been identified  
14 representing all planned residential developments and subdivisions with five or more lots.

11 Figure 2.2 Graphical Presentation of Existing Land Use Designations



12 The majority of land in Island County (38%) is zoned Rural Residential (Figure 3.2). Within this  
13 zone there are 8,360 parcels (48,727 acres). Fifty-one percent of these parcels (28,870 acres)  
14 are considered to be unimproved (Figure 3.3). “Unimproved” properties are parcels that do not have  
15 a residence or business on them. While the majority of land is within the RR zone, the majority  
16 of parcels lie within PRCs. Most of the PRCs are zoned RS. There are 21,685 parcels located in  
17 PRCs, of which 9,221 (or 43%) remain undeveloped. The RS zone allows the highest density  
18 available at 3.5 dwelling units per acre. There are 6,171 parcels in the RS zone outside PRCs; of  
19

these, 2,714 are unimproved. As a whole, residentially zoned lands (RS and RR zones) make up 62% of Island County’s land composition, or 81,348 acres. Nearly 45% of all residential parcels are unimproved.

Figure 2.3 Existing Land Use Characteristics

LAND USE	UNIMPROVED		UNIMPROVED		% PARCELS UNIMPROVED
	ACRES	ACRES	PARCELS	PARCELS	
Residential (RS)	18,142	9,486	6,171	2,714	44%
Rural Residential (RR)	48,727	27,870	8,360	4,235	51%
Agriculture (AG)	4,601	2,727	333	190	57%
Forest (FM)	10,990	10,610	490	427	87%
Non-residential (NR)	1,079	492	330	149	45%
Non-residential (NRC)	0	0	0	0	0%
Non-residential (NRF)	67	13	18	6	33%
Split zoned (SP3)	606	301	33	13	39%
Split zoned (SP)	13,042	7,396	1,029	513	50%
PRC's	14,479	n/a	21,685	9,221	43%
Sub-total	111,733	58,895	38,449	17,468	45%
Government Lands	10,573	n/a	80	n/a	n/a
Incorporated UGA's	3,173	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Roads and Lakes	5,300	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	130,770	58,895	38,449	17,468	45%

Lands zoned Forest Management (FM) and Agriculture (AG) comprise a significant portion of land in Island County. These properties serve as the county’s resource land base. Lands designated FM and AG include 10,990 acres and 4,601 acres respectively. Combined, FM and AG lands make up 12% of all county lands. Approximately 77% of these parcels remain unimproved.

Split zoned parcels have two or more zoning classifications on one piece of property. Island County has many split-zoned parcels, covering 13,648 acres (approximately 10% of the county’s total acreage.). Thirty-eight percent of these parcels have more than half of their acreage in the AG or FM zone. At a minimum, an additional 668 acres of AG lands and 1,476 acres of FM lands are disguised as split zoned parcels. Approximately 50% of split zoned parcels are unimproved.

The final zoning class encompasses Commercial and Industrial uses (those classified as NR, NRF and NRC). These parcels account for a small, yet significant portion of the land composition. NR, NRF and NRC properties account for 1,146 acres or approximately 1% of the county. There are 348 parcels designated non-residential. Of these, 45% have not been developed.

The remaining lands in Island County include government lands (8%); roads, lakes and tidelands (4%); and incorporated Urban Growth Areas (2%).

Within each of the four primary zoning categories (RS, RR, AG and FM) there is an associated density and minimum parcel size (Figure 2.4). A significant number of parcels in Island County do not meet the minimum parcel size for their zone. This is due, in part, to down-zoning that has

1 occurred in the past. Further analysis was given to the number of non-conforming parcels that  
 2 have not been improved. Eighteen percent (2,754) of all parcels in Island County are  
 3 non-conforming in size.

4 Figure 2.4 Existing Non-Conforming Unimproved Parcels

ZONE	MINIMUM PARCEL SIZE	TOTAL PARCELS	UNIMPROVED	PERCENT OF	TOT, ACRE
			NON-CONFORMING PARCELS	PARCELS THAT ARE NON-CONFORMING	
Residential (RS)	12,500 sq. ft.	6,171	427	7%	62
Residential (RR)	5 acres	8,360	2,010	24%	4,86
Agriculture (AG)	20 acres	343	135	39%	90
Forest (FM)	20 acres	517	182	35%	1,80
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>15,391</b>	<b>2,754</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>7,63</b>

5/18/8

8 The number and size of parcels in specific tax programs is another point addressed in the land  
 9 use inventory. Forest management tax programs, agricultural tax programs and open space tax  
 10 programs have been established to provide incentives for land owners to refrain from  
 11 subdividing land or converting their property to a different use. Through a reduction in property  
 12 taxes landowners can reap financial benefit while preserving land and reducing overall  
 13 consumption. It is significant that not all of the FM and AG lands are in these tax programs;  
 14 while at the same time, not all lands in the tax programs are zoned FM or AG.

15 Three tax programs are designed to benefit forest/timber lands. These include classified forest,  
 16 designated forest and open timber tax programs. Of the 490 parcels zoned FM, only 330 are  
 17 taxed for such use. Four-hundred-fifteen additional parcels are not zoned FM but are taxed for  
 18 that use (Figure 2.5). It should be acknowledged that 55 of these parcels are split zoned,  
 19 including some land area zoned FM. Of the total parcels that are taxed for forest/timber use,  
 20 50% conform to the minimum lot size in the FM zone of 20 acres. In total, 15,750 (12%) acres  
 21 are in a forest/timber tax program.

22 Figure 2.5 Existing Forest/Timber Land Use Summary

	PARCELS			ACREAGE		
	ZONED FM	NOT ZONED FM	TOTAL	ZONED FM	NOT ZONED FM	TOTAL
<b>IN TAX PROGRAM</b>	330 parcels 221 > 20 acres 109 < 20 acres	415 parcels 164 > 20 acres 251 < 20 acres	745 parcels 385 > 20 acres 360 < 20 acres	8,012 acres	7,738 acres	15,750 acres
<b>NOT IN TAX PROGRAM</b>	160 parcels 32 > 20 acres 128 < 20 acres			2,978 acres		
<b>TOTAL</b>	490 parcels 243 > 20 acres 247 < 20 acres			10,990 acres		

23 Open agriculture tax programs are designed to encourage the preservation of agriculture lands.  
 24 In Island County, 573 parcels are in the open agriculture tax program, of which 180 are zoned  
 25 AG and 393 have other zoning. (Figure 2.6). Fifty-nine percent of these parcels are less than 20  
 26 acres in size, most of which are not zoned AG. One-hundred-seventy-four of the parcels which  
 27 are in the tax program but not zoned AG, are split zoned parcels in which a portion of the  
 28 property is zoned AG. The total 573 parcels in the tax program account for 11,245 acres (8.6%).

Figure 2.6 Existing Agricultural Land Use Summary

PARCELS				ACREAGE			
	ZONED AG	NOT ZONED AG	TOTAL		ZONED AG	NOT ZONED AG	TOTAL
<b>IN TAX PROGRAM</b>	180 parcels 83 > 20 acres 97 < 20 acres	393 parcels 148 > 20 acres 245 < 20 acres	573 parcels 231 > 20 acres 342 < 20 acres	<b>IN TAX PROGRAM</b>	3,735 acres	7,510 acres	11,245 acres
<b>NOT IN TAX PROGRAM</b>	153 parcels 8 > 20 acres 145 < 20 acres			<b>NOT IN TAX PROGRAM</b>	866 acres		
<b>TOTAL</b>	333 parcels 91 > 20 acres 242 < 20 acres			<b>TOTAL</b>	4,601 acres		

5/18/96

Another incentive to encourage land preservation is the open space tax program. Twenty-nine parcels (422 acres) are in the open space tax program. Lands in the open space tax program account for 0.4% of the Island County total (Figure 2.7).

Figure 2.7 Existing Properties in the Open Space Tax Program

	RS	RR	AG	FM
3	180	242	0	0
	11	18	0	0

### PLANNING AREA CHARACTERISTICS

The conclusions outlined above are derived from figures that represent the entire county. Each planning area within Island County has characteristics that make it different from the others. By looking at trends within each planning area, planning policies can better be applied to suit the county's diverse nature.

The graphs and charts below show how existing development compares with total buildout on unimproved parcels at base density, and the degree of resulting population growth. Improved parcels have not been included in calculating buildable lots, even though there is potential to further subdivide many of these lots. Thus, the figure representing additional potential units could be much greater. Currently, 16% of the county's total dwelling units are considered vacant, seasonal, or rental. The figures below have not been adjusted for vacancy rates or seasonal occupancy rates, and therefore indicate a 100% occupancy rate of all dwelling units as permanent residences. Population capacity figures should not be confused with population projection figures—but rather as a “what-if” scenario. Several variables affect what will happen over time, including zoning and average household size. These capacities are intended only as estimates of what could happen under specific conditions.

North Whidbey, characterized by its association with Oak Harbor and Whidbey Naval Air Station, is the most developed region. Thirty-three percent of the parcels in the North Whidbey region remain unimproved (Figure 2.8) compared with the overall Island average of 45%. At base density, North Whidbey has the lowest potential for additional parcelization and development. There are 4,324 developed parcels in the North Whidbey region but at base density there is potential for an additional 8,024 (Figure 2.9). If the North Whidbey population multiplier (3.1 people per dwelling unit) is then applied, this region has a potential population

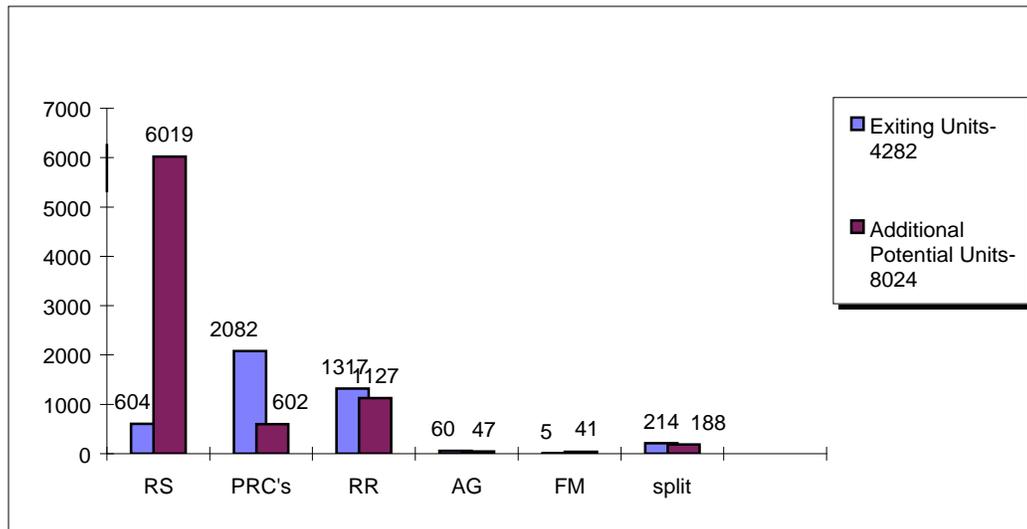
growth of 24,874 additional people. Of the nearly 36,000 acres in the North Whidbey region, 9,162 acres are government lands. This encompasses the majority of government lands in the county and includes Whidbey Naval Air Station and Deception Pass State Park.

Figure 2.8 Existing Land Use Summary - North Whidbey

UNIMPROVED PROPERTIES						
Land Use	Acres	Unimproved Acres	Unimproved Parcels	Unimproved Parcels	Septic Denials	% Parcels Unimproved
10 - RS	3,039	1,382	942	338	21	36%
20 - RR	10,978	5,280	2,154	837	12	39%
30 - AG	1,225	652	112	52	0	46%
40 - FM	684	656	30	25	0	83%
50 - NR	358	133	63	15	0	24%
60 - NRF	41	8	13	4	0	31%
70 - NRC	0	0	0	0	0	0%
80 - sp3	333	134	16	6	0	38%
split 2	4,494	2,109	373	159	0	43%
PRC's	1,727	n/a	2,551	602	114	24%
Total	22,879	10,352	6,254	2,038	147	33%
Gov't Lands	9,162	n/a	45	n/a	n/a	n/a
Inc. UGA's	1,952	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	33,994	10,352	6,299	2,038	147	33%

\*Does not include all government owned lands, only those lands that have not been placed in a zoning classification by the county

Figure 2.9 Pre-GMA Potential Dwelling Units - North Whidbey



\*Existing units is a conservative estimate that does not take into account multiple dwelling units

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Central Whidbey nearly mirrors the county-wide totals. Fifty-one percent of all parcels remain unimproved (Figure 2.10). At base density an additional 12,107 dwelling units could be

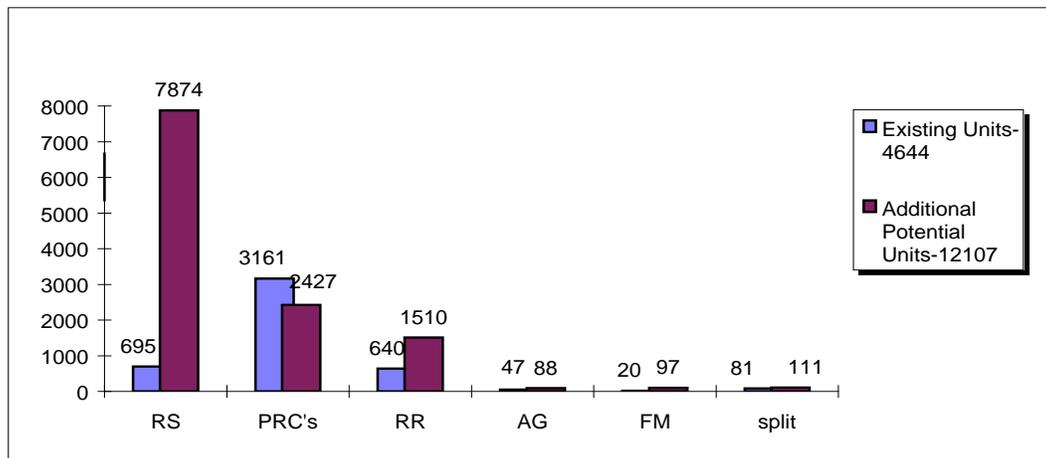
accommodated (Figure 2.11) translating into a population growth of 29,057 people (population factor of 2.4 people per dwelling unit). Lands in open agriculture and forest/timber tax programs are prevalent in the Central Whidbey region, totaling 7,785 acres. In association with the common water problems that occur in Central Whidbey, this region has the most septic denials (709) on record of the four planning regions.

Figure 2.10 Existing Land Use Summary - Central Whidbey

UNIMPROVED PROPERTIES						
Land Use	Acres	Unimproved Acres	Unimproved Parcels	Septic Denials	% Parcels Unimproved	
10 - RS	4,709	2,449	1,326	35	48%	
20 - RR	10,322	6,524	1,384	10	54%	
30 - AG	1,901	1,252	121	2	61%	
40 - FM	2,540	2,424	121	1	83%	
50 - NR	47	14	14	0	29%	
60 - NRF	1	1	2	0	50%	
70 - NRC	0	0	0	0	0%	
80 - sp3	19	6	3	0	33%	
split 2	2,642	1,732	149	0	46%	
PRC's	3,084	n/a	4,799	661	51%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,263</b>	<b>14,401</b>	<b>7,919</b>	<b>709</b>	<b>51%</b>	
Gov't Lands	1,073	n/a	31	n/a	n/a	
Inc. UGA's	721	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
	27,057	14,401	7,950	4,051	709	51%

\*Does not include all government owned lands, only those lands that have not been placed in a zoning classification by the county

Figure 2.11 Pre-GMA Potential Dwelling Units - Central Whidbey



\*Existing units is a conservative estimate that does not take into account multiple dwelling units 5/8/96

The South Whidbey region is the largest region and could experience tremendous growth under current zoning standards. At full parcelization, there is a potential of 15,627 additional dwelling

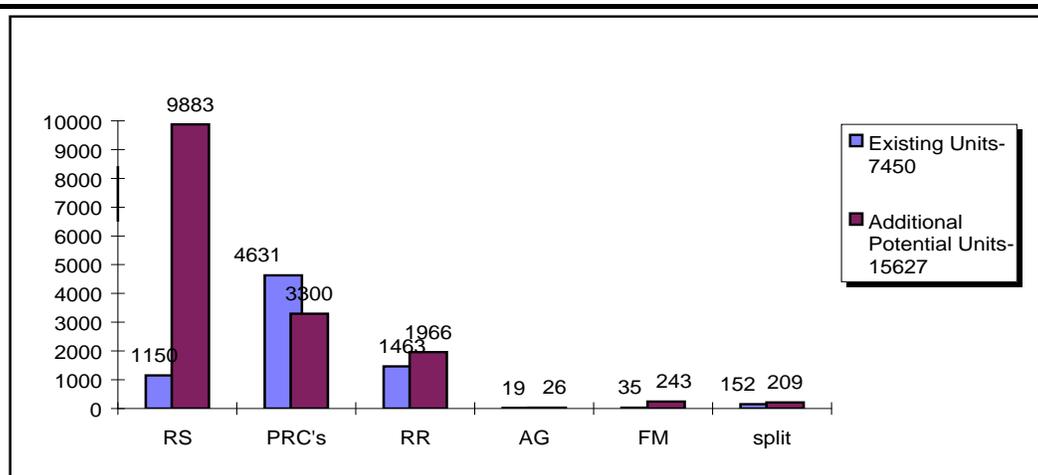
units (Figure 2.12) resulting in a potential population increase of 39,068 people (population factor of 2.5 people per dwelling unit). Private Residential Communities comprise 7,388 parcels (more than one-third of the county total) of which 3,300 remain unimproved (Figure 2.13). Consistent with county-wide figures, 46% of parcels in all zones are unimproved. Lands in forest/timber tax programs abound in South Whidbey. More than half of all parcels zoned FM are located here and account for 6,521 acres. When combined with those parcels that are in the forest/timber tax programs but not zoned FM, the total reaches 8,602 acres.

Figure 2.12 Existing Land Use Summary - South Whidbey

Land Use	UNIMPROVED PROPERTIES			Septic Denials	% Parcels Unimproved
	Acres	Unimproved Acres	Unimproved Parcels		
10 - RS	5,671	3,168	2,021	61	43%
20 - RR	18,359	10,096	2,790	27	48%
30 - AG	354	117	45	0	58%
40 - FM	6,521	6,291	298	1	88%
50 - NR	480	259	171	2	38%
60 - NRF	0	0	0	0	0%
70 - NRC	0	0	0	0	0%
80 - sp3	105	48	8	0	38%
split 2	3,610	2,150	295	1	48%
PRC's	5,057	n/a	7,388	538	45%
Total	40,156	22,130	13,016	630	46%
Gov't Lands	0	n/a	0	n/a	n/a
Inc. UGA's	500	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	40,656	22,130	13,016	630	46%

\*Does not include all government owned lands, only those lands that have not been placed in a zoning classification by the county

Figure 2.13 Pre-GMA Potential Dwelling Units - South Whidbey



\*Existing units is a conservative estimate that does not take into account multiple dwelling units

5/8/96

Camano Island is the most divergent region in Island County. Nearly 25% of Camano Island is in an open agriculture or forest/timber tax program. Sixty-five percent of the parcels zoned RR

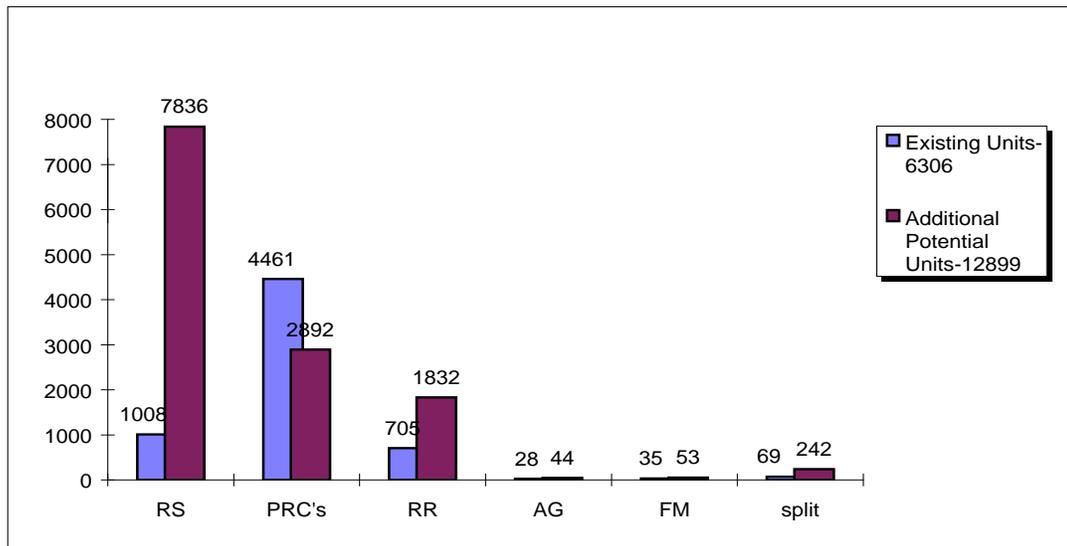
on Camano Island have not been improved, with a region total of 48% (Figure 2.14). PRC's contain 6,947 parcels (almost one-third of the county total) of which 42% are not improved. At base density, Camano Island can accommodate an additional 12,899 parcels (Figure 2.15) or a population of 29,668 people (population factor of 2.3 people per dwelling unit).

Figure 2.14 Existing Land Use Summary - Camano Island

UNIMPROVED PROPERTIES						
Land Use	Acres	Unimproved Acres	Unimproved Parcels	Septic Denials	% Parcels Unimproved	
10 - RS	4,722	2,275	1,882	874	45	46%
20 - RR	9,069	5,946	2,032	1,327	27	65%
30 - AG	1,121	1,240	55	38	0	69%
40 - FM	1,246	706	41	38	0	93%
50 - NR	193	65	82	65	3	79%
60 - NRF	25	5	3	1	1	33%
70 - NRC	0	0	0	0	0	0%
80 - sp3	150	56	6	3	0	50%
split 2	2,296	1,458	212	143	2	67%
PRC's	4,612	n/a	6,947	2,892	325	42%
Total	23,434	11,750	11,260	5,381	403	48%
Gov't Lands	338	n/a	4	n/a	n/a	n/a
Inc. UGA's	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	23,772	11,750	11,264	5,381	403	48%

\*Does not include all government owned lands, only those lands that have not been placed in a zoning classification by the county

Figure 2.15 Pre-GMA Potential Dwelling Units - Camano Island



\*Existing units is a conservative estimate that does not take into account multiple dwelling units

5/8/96

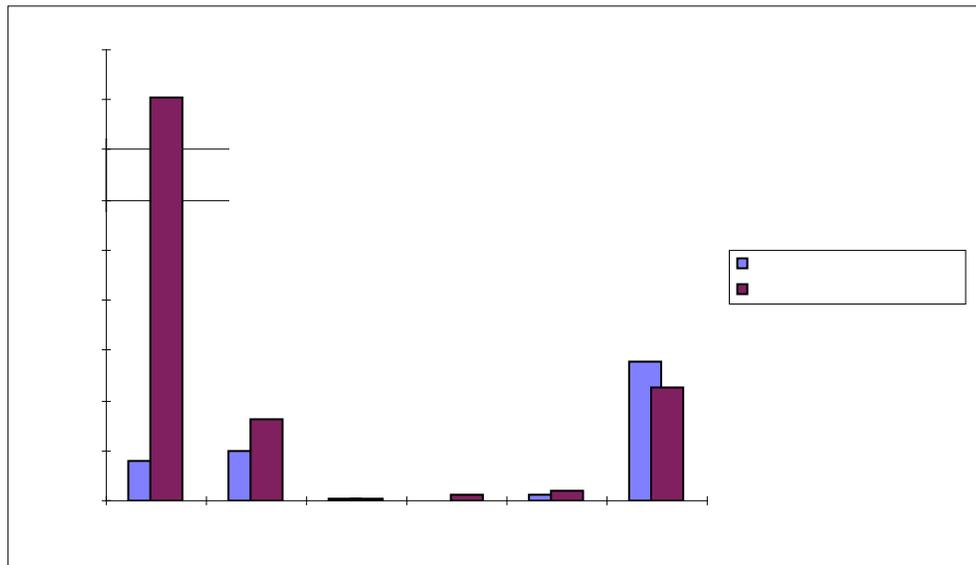
Based on current zoning and the base density allowed within each zone, a population capacity for the unimproved property in Island County can be calculated. The capacity for split zoned

1 parcels was calculated using the base density of the zone with the lowest density. The buildout, stated in terms of potential dwelling units, is calculated for individual parcels—not the total acreage. A population factor has been determined for each region in the county, which is multiplied by the potential dwelling units in that region. The totals are assembled in a county-wide table (Figure 2.16). Total dwelling units amount to 48,657, translating to an additional population of 122,667 people outside the incorporated municipalities. These are gross estimates that do not take into account a number of variables. For example, density bonuses could increase these estimates while water/septic limitations could reduce estimated buildout.

5 Figure 2.16 Population Capacity at Base Density at Existing Pre-GMA Zoning

Existing Land Use	Improved Dwelling Units (1996)	Existing Population (1996)	Potential Additional Dwelling Units	Potential Additional Population	Potential Total Dwelling Units	Potential Total Population
Residential (RS)	3,457	7,794	31,612	80,287	35,069	88,081
Rural Residential (RR)	4,125	10,103	6,435	16,246	10,560	26,349
Agriculture (AG)	143	369	205	523	348	892
Forest (FM)	63	141	448	1,123	511	1,264
Split zoned	536	1,376	736	1,895	1,272	3,271
PRCs	12,464	27,708	9,221	22,593	21,685	50,301
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,788</b>	<b>47,491</b>	<b>48,657</b>	<b>122,667</b>	<b>69,445</b>	<b>170,158</b>

11 Figure 2.17 Pre-GMA Potential for Additional Population - Unincorporated Area



21 **ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS**

22 Upon examining the data further, a number of variables can affect development and alter the total buildout. Limitations on development include septic denials and water moratoriums. A total of 1,887 unimproved parcels have septic denials on record in Island County. A septic

1 denial is based on site conditions and regulations in place when the soils are evaluated on a site  
2 registration. As sewage system technology improves, additional wastewater treatment options  
3 may become available. Currently, off-site septic drainfields are becoming more common.  
Wastewater treatment plants are an alternative for some areas that are unsuitable for subsurface  
sewage disposal.

4 Twenty-four water systems are currently under moratoriums, thereby preventing additional  
5 development until the particular water system problems are solved. Those water systems  
6 unlikely to resolve their problems within five-to-10 years were analyzed while collecting base  
7 data for Private Residential Communities. Although development on these properties is unlikely  
8 to occur within the next five-to-10 years, the lots are included as potential infill areas during the  
20-year planning period for the Comprehensive Plan. As solutions and new alternatives become  
economically viable, property owners may not be bound by such limitations. It should also be  
noted that many existing water systems could not meet the needs of a fully developed service  
area.

9 Island County, under the Growth Management Act, is required to establish policies and zoning  
10 that promote development at higher densities within urban areas and lower densities in rural  
11 areas. The base density for the existing RS zone is 3.5 dwelling units per acre, which is an urban  
12 density. 6,171 parcels (16%) in Island County are zoned at this density. The potential exists for  
13 an additional 31,612 parcels that could support a population of 80,287 people within the RS  
14 zone. Likewise, there are 2,754 unimproved parcels of land that are non-conforming in size.  
15 Four hundred-twenty-seven of these parcels are zoned RS and have a higher density than 3.5  
16 dwelling units per acre. Parcels zoned RR (and therefore less than 5 acres in size) amount to  
17 2,010. Developments proposing on-site subsurface sewage disposal must meet the minimum lot  
18 size or land area requirements per WAC 246-272. These requirements are based upon soil type  
and water supply.

19 The RS zone was established in 1966, and originally allowed a maximum density of 6 dwelling  
20 units per acre (1 dwelling unit per 7,200 sq. ft.). In 1977, this was reduced to 3.5 dwelling units  
21 per acre (1 dwelling unit per 12,500 sq. ft.). Although density has been changed before, the RS  
22 zone continues to occupy the same general geographic area as in 1966. To date, the RS zone  
23 covers a large part of the county's shorelines and numerous inland pockets. A significant portion  
of Island County's land composition, the RS zone (16% of the total number of parcels) supports  
about 12% of the population. If continued, those figures could rise to approximately 44% of all  
parcels and 46% of the population.

24 A large number of parcels are in forest management and open agriculture tax programs, but are  
not zoned for such purposes. Parcels in forest/timber tax programs not zoned FM number 415,  
accounting for 7,738 acres. Likewise, there are 393 parcels (7,510 acres) in the open agriculture  
tax program that are not zoned AG.



1 **III. FUTURE LAND USE**

---

2 **INTRODUCTION**

3 Island County is at a crucial period in the history of its growth and development. Set in the  
4 context of the urbanizing Puget Sound metropolitan region of the Pacific Northwest, the County  
5 is subject to the forces and dynamics of rapid development. It is important to assess in detail  
6 what has been happening in Island County: to improve our knowledge and understanding of the  
7 forces driving growth and development and to consider the specific impacts to our environment,  
8 open space and rural character.

9 Land use theories, policies and practices, like those in other arts and sciences, need to be  
10 constantly evaluated and worked on in order that they evolve to meet the changing needs and  
11 demands of our society. Without this on-going effort, and the detailed awareness of the  
12 activities and forces at work in shaping the future, Island County could face a future of  
13 environmental degradation, sprawl, congestion, loss of living amenity and fiscal crisis.

14 Island County proposes a definitive, effective growth management strategy that will fully  
15 implement all of the goals and policies set forth in the Washington Growth Management Act  
16 (RCW 36.70A) as well as respond to the unique developmental forces that have shaped the  
17 county's settlement pattern in the past, and that will continue to be the primary force for  
18 development over the foreseeable future. The County recognizes that the future well-being of its  
19 citizens and the wise conservation of the County's resources depends upon the decisions made  
20 today.

21 **LAND USE PLAN CONCEPT**

22 Literal interpretation of the Washington Growth Management Act presents a major issue for  
23 Island County. The GMA posits one, traditional model as the result of the dynamic forces and  
24 processes involved in the phenomenon of urban growth. This model, called the "concentric ring  
25 theory" of urban growth, assumes that the expansion of urban populations and land uses takes  
26 place in rings around existing dense urban centers. It further assumes that densities necessarily  
27 decrease as the distance from the urban center increases.

28 The concentric ring theory had a basis in the centralizing forces of the Industrial Revolution,  
29 forces that drove urban growth until the advent of the automobile. Today, however, many  
30 renowned urban and regional planners, planning theoreticians and historians have demonstrated  
31 that there are a variety of possible forms of urban expansion which can serve as a basis for  
32 effective growth management. Indeed, many experts have pointed out that the dynamic forces  
33 driving current urban expansion are powerfully in opposition to the concept of a city that simply  
34 continues to expand in concentric rings. Unlike Washington, several other states involved in  
35 growth management have acknowledged a variety of forms of urban and rural growth.

36 It has even been suggested that large central cities are no longer responsive to modern  
37 technological, social and economic forces. Our problems of urban congestion and pollution, our  
38 ineffectiveness in integrating the more disadvantaged segments of our populations, the  
39 increasing separation between the wealthy and the poor, the resultant inability to renew vast  
40

1 sectors of our older urban centers that have declined into slums, and an obsolete industrial plant  
2 call into question the future of the large city. Other models of managed growth may be more  
appropriate to specific settings and circumstances.

3 In particular, a concentric ring *urban* model does not appear to be appropriate for Island County.  
4 The traditional development of Island County displays aspects of linear growth, especially in the  
5 form of small nodes of commercial development serving the rural areas of the County, along the  
major state arterial routes on both Whidbey and Camano Island. On both islands of the County,  
there is also a significant amount of dispersed development in the form of isolated long plats and  
planned residential developments.

### 6 ***Dispersed Growth***

7 Today's technologies, most notably the automobile, television, communications, computers  
8 and the Internet are powerful forces that make dispersed forms of growth and settlement  
9 possible. Dispersion does not automatically produce sprawl and the resultant enormous  
10 infrastructure costs that sprawl generates. Density by and of itself also does not create  
11 sprawl. Sprawl results when density is permitted in an even and unbroken pattern across the  
landscape in a manner that ignores the underlying principles of land ecology and  
stewardship. This leads to environmental degradation and the destruction of the very natural  
resources that entice the movement of people into an area; be they forests, farmlands, views,  
waterfronts or other open space elements which humans appear to need as much as they need  
neighbors and villages.

12 Dispersed growth offers many potential benefits. Managed dispersion can even out and even  
13 diminish the costs of the provision of public utilities, facilities and services. A dispersed  
14 urban growth strategy can maintain the rural character of County infrastructure such as roads.  
15 It can provide more choices in the location of development, potentially allowing for more  
natural features and resources to be preserved in more places within the County. A dispersed  
urban growth strategy can also make the most efficient use of an already fragmented land use  
and ownership pattern.

16 A dispersed urban growth strategy may also provide a better means for preserving the natural  
17 features and rural character of the County. Island County is made up of two islands formed  
18 during the retreat of the glaciers at the end of the last ice age. As a result the geology, soil  
types, water resources, habitats, landforms and other natural features of the islands are also  
dispersed and intermixed. Planning for future growth must take these unique features of the  
islands into consideration.

### 19 ***Integrating the Historical Development Pattern***

20 In approaching the task of planning in accordance with the Washington Growth Management  
21 Act, Island County faces the challenge of integrating an historical development pattern of  
22 dispersed communities within the GMA-mandated model of centralized urban growth areas  
surrounded by rural areas and resource lands.

23 From the early 1900s, when the County had a population of only 1,870 to 1940 when the  
County population was 6,098 and the City of Oak Harbor's population was but 590, Island

1 County existed as a completely rural setting, its small resource based economy quite in tune  
2 with its rural character. World War II brought the establishment of the Whidbey Naval Air  
3 Station, which opened Whidbey Island up to a different kind of development. In response,  
4 the City of Oak Harbor, which previously had maintained a relatively small growth rate, only  
5 growing from 337 in 1920 to 590 in 1940, suddenly began to expand. Today, Oak Harbor's  
6 population is over 20,000. The growth rate for the County's other two municipalities,  
7 Coupeville and Langley, pretty much stayed the same. Coupeville's population has grown  
8 from 310 in 1910 to 1,610 in 1997. Langley has grown from 274 in 1920 to 1,000 in 1995.

9 The population of the unincorporated area of Island County also began to increase in the  
10 decade between 1940 and 1950 and has consistently outpaced the growth of the County's  
11 cities ever since.

12 Prior to 1966, land subdivision in Island County was not regulated in terms of lot size and  
13 density. During that period, 186 long plats were established on 18,329 acres creating 30,966  
14 lots. Lots ranged in size from 4,000 square feet to over 3 acres, with an average lot size of  
15 6/10th of an acre.

16 Since 1966, growth of the unincorporated portion of Island County has been directed in  
17 accordance with regulations established in the Island County Code. Long plats and planned  
18 residential developments approved between 1966 and 1984 number 150, with 7,342 lots on  
19 5,889 acres of land. Sizes ranged from 6,000 square feet to over 2.5 acres, with an average lot  
20 size of 8/10th of an acre.

21 Since 1984, the planned residential development process has been used a number of times in  
22 place of the long plat subdivision process. About 25 planned residential developments  
23 containing about 500 lots have been established on 934 acres of land at an average lot size of  
24 1.9 acres. (Ord. C-46-11 [PLG-012-11], April 11, 2011)

25 These regulations (the 1966 Interim Zoning Code and the 1984 Zoning Code) ended a system  
26 of land subdivision which had resulted in the platting and parcelization of many key areas of  
27 the County in a manner that greatly outstripped the demand for the lots created. Almost all  
28 of the waterfront property in the County was zoned at higher densities in 1966. More  
29 recently, the planned residential development provisions, enacted in 1984, did begin to  
30 integrate needed neighborhood-oriented amenities, and the protection of forested lands,  
31 agricultural lands and sensitive areas such as wetlands, floodplains and steep and unstable  
32 slopes was significantly improved.

33 Island County must now plan for growth in the context of a largely fragmented and dispersed  
34 land use and ownership pattern. This does not fit well within the framework established  
35 under the GMA. However, this does not necessarily mean that the County cannot meet the  
36 statutory goals established within the act. The 1997 GMA amendments contained in the  
37 rural element for defining existing areas of more intensive rural development provide the  
38 opportunity to acknowledge the land development patterns of the past in Island County,  
39 while not proliferating them.

40 Much of the anticipated population growth over the next 20 years will be originating from an  
41 urban or suburban setting and coming to Island County to seek a rural lifestyle. However,  
42 this population is not rural in the sense that rural populations are generally involved in the

1 primary resource sectors of the economy (i.e. industries of fishing, agriculture, forestry and  
2 mineral extraction). Island County’s rural population is largely oriented toward secondary  
3 and tertiary sectors of the economy which have traditionally located in and about urban  
4 centers. Although Island County does not have within its borders a mature urban economy in  
the classical sense, population growth has nevertheless increased in recent years due to the  
county’s accessibility to urban employment centers on the mainland, particularly in the  
Everett area of the Puget Sound metropolitan region.

5 To date, this “commuter accessibility” has worked, but the limitations on transportation  
6 access to and from the Islands are becoming increasingly restrictive. There are no firm plans  
7 in hand for the replacement and/or widening of the Deception Pass Bridge, the Mark Clark  
8 Bridge, or the state highways connecting North Whidbey and Camano Island to the  
mainland. Plans have been proposed for the improvement of ferry service between Clinton  
and Mukilteo by adding a third ferry, but no further changes are contemplated in the number  
or size of the boats serving Whidbey.

9 ***Intent of Plan***

10 The comprehensive plan concept groups our future growth and development within those  
11 presently developed urban and dispersed rural areas to conserve Island County’s natural  
resources, critical areas, open space, and rural characteristics. Our objective is to create  
efficient and attractive urban and rural communities while adhering to the goals and  
guidelines of the State Growth Management Act.

12 ***POPULATION PROJECTIONS***

13 The Growth Management Act states that the Office of Financial Management (OFM) shall  
14 provide 20-year population forecasts for counties, and requires counties and cities to create plans  
15 based on these forecasts. OFM provides a low, medium and high series of projections. OFM  
forecasts do not address the distribution of population within counties or the calculation of  
seasonal residents. These are the County’s responsibility in cooperation with the cities.

16 ***Office of Financial Management Population Projections Series***

17 In the 1998 Comprehensive Plan review cycle, the County adopted the high series OFM  
18 projections. Based on an analysis of building permit activity in the County from 1990 to  
1996, the County felt that the high series was the most appropriate projection at the time. In  
2004 the County reviewed the 2000 U.S. Census and recent trends in its population growth in  
accordance with RCW 36.70A.130. It was found that the County population was growing at  
20 a lower rate than had been projected in the 1998 Comprehensive Plan, but the amount of  
building permits remained the same. After these trends were discussed in the public hearings  
21 process, the County concluded that it was appropriate to adjust the twenty year projection  
22 down to a figure between the medium and the high series OFM projections. A lower  
population projection was clearly necessary to ensure efficient planning, yet the Planning  
Commission was hesitant to choose too low of a projection because of the robust state of the  
23 housing construction industry. Historical building permit activity that is trended out to 2025

1 combined with the countywide average household size yields a population very close to the  
2 medium/high projection of 110,050 residents in 2025. This projection results in an increase  
of 38,492 from 2000.

3 After the total population estimate for 2025 was arrived at, the County was broken into  
4 planning regions: North Whidbey, Central Whidbey, South Whidbey and Camano Island.  
5 This regional break-down is discussed further in the *Population Distribution* section below.  
6 The County then used historical permit data and census tract information to determine the  
population in each region and the respective growth rates. Two methods were then employed  
in this process. One has been termed the Proportional method, the other the Growth method.  
Both produce a growth projection every five years, starting with the known population in  
each planning area in 2000, through the end of the planning horizon in 2025.

7 The proportional method uses the proportion of the population that each region has  
8 historically hosted. The Growth method tracks the recent growth rate in each region using  
9 building permit data. The two methods produce a range of potential growth for each region  
(Figure 3.7). The results of the Proportional and Growth calculations are provided for all  
regional planning areas that indicate growth projections in five year increments.

10 (Ord. C-46-11 [PLG-012-11] , April 11, 2011)

11 .

1        **Seasonal Population**

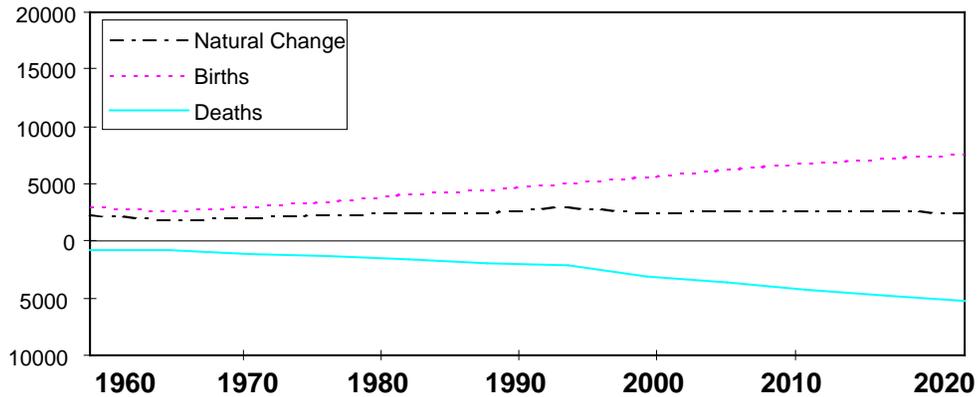
2        The County will not adjust the OFM medium/high population projection for a seasonal  
3        population at this time. In 1980, the County estimated that 4,289 of its 20,872 housing units,  
4        or 20.4%, were for seasonal use. By 1990, the seasonal housing estimate was 3,053 of the  
5        25,580 units, or 11.8%. However, in the year 2000, it is estimated that of the 32,378 housing  
6        units, 3,107 units or 9.6% are seasonal. From 1990 to 2000 there was a reduction of only  
7        2.2%. The decrease in the percentage of seasonal housing units by 10.8% (20.4% minus  
8        9.6%) from 1980 to 2000 illustrates two probable trends. The first is that seasonal homes  
9        are being converted to permanent residences as people near retirement. The second is that  
10       housing prices are becoming relatively more expensive in Island County than in other areas  
11       in the region where second homes or retirement homes may be purchased. Though the  
12       proportion of houses that are used seasonally is declining, the absolute number of seasonal  
13       homes has leveled off since 1996. This may be a temporary trend and will need to be studied  
14       again during subsequent Comprehensive Plan review cycles to determine if a true trend is  
15       emerging. The County surmises that if current trends continue, by the year 2025, the  
16       percentage of the County's housing units that are dedicated to seasonal residents will  
17       probably be a negligible amount (1 or 2%) that the County should not include in its  
18       population forecast at this time. Should the leveling-off of the number of seasonal residents  
19       continue, it may take a little longer before those residents reach the level of negligibility. (Ord.  
20       C-46-11 [PLG-012-11], April 11, 2011)

21  
22        **Population Trends**

23        Three components affect population size and distribution: Fertility (Births), Mortality  
24        (Deaths), and Migration. Age and sex-specific birth, death, and migration rates can be used  
25        to predict the future population, by age, for the county. These age-specific data sets are  
26        important because different age groups have different infrastructure and service needs. For  
27        example, a population with a large percentage of retired adults would require more medical  
28        and long term care facilities than a population consisting primarily of young adults.

29        *Natural Change.* The number of births and deaths is used to determine whether the  
30        population is naturally increasing or decreasing. Very little population growth in Island  
31        County can be attributed to natural change. However, there was a very slight, but steady,  
32        natural population increase between 1960 and 1995. While the number of births is expected  
33        to increase at a steady rate in the future, the number of deaths is expected to increase at a  
34        faster rate, resulting in a slight natural decrease in population over the next 20-25 years. This  
35        is due to the relatively high number of middle-aged and retirement aged people currently  
36        living in Island County who will be aging in the next 20-25 years. In addition, the significant  
37        in-migration of retirement age adults seen in the last decade is expected to continue, resulting  
38        in higher death rates. (Ord. C-46-11 [PLG-012-11], April 11, 2011)

Figure 3.1 Natural Change in Island County, 1960-2020



*Migration.* Migration refers to the number of people who move into and out of a specific area. Of all components of population change, migration is the most variable and difficult to predict because people move from one place to another for many different reasons. Economic opportunity, quality of life, and the price/availability of housing are major factors affecting migration patterns. More than two-thirds of Island County’s population growth is a result of in-migration. In the past, this was due to the military presence and the County’s proximity to major employers in Everett and Seattle. Increasingly, more people are moving to Island County to take advantage of its rural lifestyle, retirement, and recreational opportunities. Migration rates have varied, with spurts of higher migration roughly proportionate to increases experienced by the state as a whole in times of rapid economic growth. While a consistently high rate of migration covers all age groups, it is expected that adults over age 45 will account for a disproportionate share. This reflects the county’s appeal to higher income people and retirees.

Figure 3.3 further shows how the 65 and over population will be growing in a manner which will have it account for 22% of the total population in 2020, compared to 15% in 1995. This dramatic rise in the over 65 population (approximately 300% increase by 2020) requires special planning efforts for transportation, public services and housing, among others. A

(Ord. C-46-11 [PLG-012-11] , April 11, 2011)

1 discussion of the housing needs of the older population is presented in the Housing Element  
2 of this plan.

3 **Figure 3.3 Selected Age Segments as Percent of Total Population, 1995-2020**

<b>Age Segment</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2020</b>
0-19 as % of Population	28%	27%	27%	26%	25%	25%
20-64 as % of Population	57%	58%	58%	57%	56%	53%
65+ as % of Population	15%	15%	16%	17%	19%	22%

6 (Ord. C-46-11 [PLG-012-11] , April 11, 2011)

**Figure 3.4 Population Pyramids, 1995-2020**

(Figure 3.4 repealed by Ord. C-46-11 [PLG-012-11] , April 11, 2011)

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**Population Distribution**

Each of the four County planning areas is expected to accommodate a particular share of the County’s 38,492 person growth through the year 2025. The methodology for allocating population to the planning areas is based on an analysis of historical trends, available lands and anticipated areas of future growth. The historical trends for 1970 through 2000 are shown below along with the percentages for 2005 through 2025 in figure 3.5a and 3.5b. Figure 3.5a shows this distribution based on the Proportionate Share method; figure 3.5b shows the distribution based on the Growth Rate method. Special consideration is also given in defining population distributions for the unique characteristics of each planning area, and how people generally live to an area of the County that meets their desired living situation.

Figure 3.5 a Planning Area Population Distribution as Percent of Total County Population, Proportionate Share method 1970-2025

Planning Area	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
North Whidbey	58%	58%	57%	49%	48%	48%	46%	46%	45%
Central Whidbey	16%	14%	13%	13%	13%	12%	12%	12%	11%
South Whidbey	17%	17%	17%	20%	21%	21%	22%	22%	23%
Camano Island	10%	12%	13%	19%	18%	19%	20%	20%	21%
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Figure 3.5b Planning Area Population Distribution as Percent of Total County Population, Growth method 1970-2025

Planning Area	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
North Whidbey	58%	58%	57%	49%	48%	48%	48%	47%	47%
Central Whidbey	16%	14%	13%	13%	13%	13%	12%	12%	12%
South Whidbey	17%	17%	17%	20%	20%	20%	20%	21%	21%
Camano Island	10%	12%	13%	19%	19%	19%	20%	20%	20%
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

(Ord. C-46-11 [PLG-012-11] , April 11, 2011)

Figure 3.6a Planning Area Population Distribution of OFM High Series, Proportional method

Planning Area	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
North Whidbey	15,600	25,500	34,200	34,737	37,085	40,551	42,674	46,664	49,523
Central Whidbey	4,200	6,100	8,000	9,467	10,044	10,138	11,132	12,173	12,106
South Whidbey	4,500	7,300	10,000	14,007	16,225	17,741	20,409	22,317	25,312
Camano Island	2,600	5,100	8,000	13,347	13,907	16,051	18,554	20,289	23,111
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,900</b>	<b>44,000</b>	<b>60,200</b>	<b>71,558</b>	<b>77,261</b>	<b>84,481</b>	<b>92,769</b>	<b>101,443</b>	<b>110,052</b>

Figure 3.6b Planning Area Population Distribution of OFM High Series, Growth method

Planning Area	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
North Whidbey	15,600	25,500	34,200	34,737	36,858	40,642	44,093	47,958	51,795
Central Whidbey	4,200	6,100	8,000	9,467	9,865	10,605	11,456	11,984	12,823
South Whidbey	4,500	7,300	10,000	14,007	15,548	16,948	18,982	21,211	23,113
Camano Island	2,600	5,100	8,000	13,347	14,989	16,283	18,237	20,288	22,319
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,900</b>	<b>44,000</b>	<b>60,200</b>	<b>71,558</b>	<b>77,260</b>	<b>84,478</b>	<b>92,768</b>	<b>101,441</b>	<b>110,050</b>

The following figure displays the growth rates for each of the planning areas for the five decades encompassing 1970 to 2025.

Figure 3.9a Planning Area Population Distribution Growth Rates

Planning Area	1970-1980	1980-1990	1990-2000	2005-2005	2005-2010	2010-2015	2015-2020	2020-2025
North Whidbey	63.5%	34.1%	1.6%	6.8%	9.3%	5.2%	9.3%	6.1%
Central Whidbey	45.2%	31.1%	18.3%	6.1%	0.9%	9.8%	9.4%	-0.6%
South Whidbey	62.2%	37.0%	40.1%	15.8%	9.3%	15.0%	9.3%	13.4%
Camano Island	96.2%	56.9%	66.8%	4.2%	15.4%	15.6%	9.4%	13.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>63.6%</b>	<b>36.8%</b>	<b>18.9%</b>	<b>8.0%</b>	<b>9.3%</b>	<b>9.8%</b>	<b>9.4%</b>	<b>8.5%</b>

Figure 3.9b Planning Area Population Distribution Growth Rates

Planning Area	1970-1980	1980-1990	1990-2000	2005-2005	2005-2010	2010-2015	2015-2020	2020-2025
North Whidbey	63.5%	34.1%	1.6%	6.1%	10.3%	8.5%	8.8%	8.0%
Central Whidbey	45.2%	31.1%	18.3%	4.2%	7.5%	8.0%	4.6%	7.0%
South Whidbey	62.2%	37.0%	40.1%	11.0%	9.0%	12.0%	11.7%	9.0%
Camano Island	96.2%	56.9%	66.8%	12.3%	8.6%	12.0%	11.2%	10.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>63.6%</b>	<b>36.8%</b>	<b>18.9%</b>	<b>8.0%</b>	<b>9.3%</b>	<b>9.8%</b>	<b>9.3%</b>	<b>8.5%</b>

(Ord. C-46-11 [PLG-012-11], April 11, 2011)

1 The following figures present the population distributions for each of the planning areas split  
2 into the amount which is projected to occur in the three urban growth areas and the amount  
3 in the remaining rural areas. The adopted Comprehensive Plans for Oak Harbor, Coupeville  
4 and Langley project their populations to the year 2025 which is the same planning horizon as  
5 that established in this Plan. The 2025 benchmarks for population are contained in the  
6 adopted CWPPs. (Ord. C-46-11 [PLG-012-11], April 11, 2011)  
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Figure 3.11a Planning Area Population Distribution Between Urban Growth Areas and Unincorporated Areas, Proportion method

Planning Area	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	24-year Growth	Percent of Growth
<b>North Whidbey</b>	15,600	25,500	34,200	34,737	37,085	40,551	42,674	46,664	49,523	14,786	38%
Oak Harbor UGA	9,200	12,300	16,800	19,795	0	0	0	0	30,419	10,624	28%
Unincorporated	6,400	13,200	17,400	14,942	37,085	40,551	42,674	46,664	19,104	4,162	11%
										0	
<b>Central Whibey</b>	4,200	6,100	8,000	9,467	10,044	10,183	11,132	12,173	12,106	2,639	7%
Coupeville UGA	700	1,000	1,400	1,723	1,808	1,893	1,978	2,068	2,165	442	1%
Unincorporated	3,500	5,100	6,600	7,744	8,236	8,290	9,154	10,105	9,941	2,197	6%
										0	
<b>South Whidbey</b>	4,500	7,300	10,000	14,007	16,225	17,741	20,409	22,317	25,312	11,305	29%
Langley UGA	500	700	800	959	1,050	0	0	0	2,200	1,241	3%
Unincorporated	4,000	6,600	9,200	13,048	15,175	17,741	20,409	22,317	23,112	10,064	26%
										0	
<b>Camano Island</b>	2,600	5,100	8,000	13,347	13,907	16,051	18,554	20,289	23,111	9,764	25%
										0	
<b>Island County</b>	26,900	44,000	60,200	71,558	77,261	84,526	92,769	101,443	110,052	38,494	100%
UGAs	10,400	14,000	19,000	22,477	2,858	1,893	1,978	2,068	34,784	12,307	32%
Unincorporated	16,500	30,000	41,200	49,081	74,403	82,633	90,791	99,375	75,268	26,187	68%

Figure 3.11b Planning Area Population Distribution Between Urban Growth Areas and Unincorporated Areas, Growth method

Population Distribution											
Planning Area	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	24-year Growth	Percent of Growth
<b>North Whidbey</b>	15,600	25,500	34,200	34,737	36,858	40,642	44,093	47,958	51,792	17,055	43%
Oak Harbor UGA	9,200	12,300	16,800	19,795	0	0	0	0	30,419	10,624	27%
Unincorporated	6,400	13,200	17,400	14,942	36,858	40,642	44,093	47,958	21,373	6,431	16%
										0	
<b>Central Whibey</b>	4,200	6,100	8,000	9,467	9,865	10,605	11,456	11,984	12,106	2,639	7%
Coupeville UGA	700	1,000	1,400	1,723	1,808	1,893	1,978	2,068	2,165	442	1%
Unincorporated	3,500	5,100	6,600	7,744	8,057	8,712	9,478	9,916	10,658	2,914	7%
										0	
<b>South Whidbey</b>	4,500	7,300	10,000	14,007	15,548	16,948	20,409	21,211	25,312	11,305	28%
Langley UGA	500	700	800	959	1,050	0	0	0	2,200	1,241	3%
Unincorporated	4,000	6,600	9,200	13,048	14,498	16,948	18,982	21,211	20,913	7,865	20%
										0	
<b>Camano Island</b>	2,600	5,100	8,000	13,347	14,989	16,283	18,237	20,289	22,319	8,972	22%
										0	
<b>Island County</b>	26,900	44,000	60,200	71,558	77,260	84,478	94,195	101,442	111,529	39,971	100%
UGAs	10,400	14,000	19,000	22,477	2,858	1,893	1,978	2,068	34,784	12,307	31%
Unincorporated	16,500	30,000	41,200	49,081	74,402	82,585	90,790	99,374	75,263	26,182	66%

(Ord. C-46-11 [PLG-012-11], April 11, 2011)

Figure 3.12a Planning Area Population Distribution - Percent of Planning Area Population Proportion method

Planning Area	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	24-year Growth
<b>North Whidbey</b>										
Oak Harbor UGA	59%	48%	49%	57%	0%	0%	0%	0%	61%	72%
Unincorporated	41%	52%	51%	43%	100%	100%	100%	100%	39%	28%
<b>Central Whibey</b>										
Coupeville UGA	17%	16%	18%	18%	18%	19%	18%	17%	18%	17%
Unincorporated	83%	84%	83%	82%	82%	81%	82%	83%	82%	83%
<b>South Whidbey</b>										
Langley UGA	11%	10%	8%	7%	6%	0%	0%	0%	9%	11%
Unincorporated	89%	90%	92%	93%	94%	100%	100%	100%	91%	89%
<b>Camano Island</b>										
Camano Island	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Island County</b>										
UGAs	39%	32%	32%	31%	4%	2%	2%	2%	32%	32%
Unincorporated	61%	68%	68%	69%	96%	98%	98%	98%	68%	69%

Figure 3.12b Planning Area Population Distribution - Percent of Planning Area Population Growth method

Planning Area	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	24-year Growth
<b>North Whidbey</b>										
Oak Harbor UGA	59%	48%	49%	57%	0%	0%	0%	0%	59%	62%
Unincorporated	41%	52%	51%	43%	100%	100%	100%	100%	41%	38%
<b>Central Whibey</b>										
Coupeville UGA	17%	16%	18%	18%	18%	18%	17%	17%	17%	13%
Unincorporated	83%	84%	83%	82%	82%	82%	83%	83%	83%	87%
<b>South Whidbey</b>										
Langley UGA	11%	10%	8%	7%	7%	0%	0%	0%	10%	14%
Unincorporated	89%	90%	92%	93%	93%	100%	100%	100%	90%	86%
<b>Camano Island</b>										
Camano Island	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Island County</b>										
UGAs	39%	32%	32%	31%	4%	2%	2%	2%	32%	32%
Unincorporated	61%	68%	68%	69%	96%	98%	98%	98%	68%	69%

(Ord. C-46-11 [PLG-012-11], April 11, 2011)

The following figure shows the population increase for each of the four planning areas broken down by urban growth area population and unincorporated population.

1 The four planning areas have unique characteristics that are expressed in the manner that they  
2 are projected to grow over the next twenty years.

3 ***North Whidbey***

4 North Whidbey’s population share represents a decreasing percentage of the total Island  
5 County population: from 58% in 1970, to 51% in the year 2000—the direct result of a  
6 stabilized military population. The North Whidbey share of the total population is projected  
7 to fall to between 45 to 47% by the year 2025, depending on whether the Proportional or  
8 Growth method is used. Likewise, the population share in the Oak Harbor Urban Growth  
9 Area (UGA) has steadily decreased in relation to the rural portion. This trend, which has  
10 leveled in recent decades, is expected to increase slightly to somewhere  
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1 between 58 and 63% of the population located in the Oak Harbor UGA. North Whidbey is  
2 projected to grow by 14,786 to 17,058 additional people by 2025, or 38 to 44% of the  
County's projected growth.

### 3 ***Central Whidbey***

4 The proportionate share of population in the Central Whidbey region has held relatively  
5 steady over the years, at 13 to 14%, and is expected to decrease only slightly through the  
6 year 2025. Although a significant number of unimproved lands and Planned Residential  
7 Development exist, continued water problems in this region are expected to stabilize growth  
8 rates. By the year 2025, the Central Whidbey share of the County's population is projected  
9 to be 11 to 12%. Consistent with the rest of the county, Central Whidbey has experienced  
10 more growth in the rural area than in the Coupeville UGA. In 1970, Coupeville held 17% of  
the planning area's population, and in 2000 this figure had increased only slightly to 18%.  
By 2025 the Coupeville UGA is expected to make up 17% of the planning area population.  
Coupeville currently has no urban growth area outside of its current Town limits, so all new  
growth will be accommodated through infill development within the existing municipal  
boundaries. Central Whidbey is projected to show a population increase of between 2,639  
and 3,356 people through 2025, or 7 to 9% of the county growth projection to 2020.

### 11 ***South Whidbey***

12 In recent decades South Whidbey has held a steady 19% share of total county population.  
13 This share is predicted to increase between 21 and 23% in 2025 due to continued growth of  
14 employment opportunities in the Everett and Seattle areas within commuting distance. Since  
15 1970, rural population growth has outpaced the growth of the Langley UGA. Langley's  
16 share of population in the South Whidbey planning area was 11% in 1970, it has fallen to a  
1996 share of 7%. By 2025, the Langley UGA share is expected to increase slightly to 9%.  
A majority of new growth will be accommodated within the existing city limits. Projections  
for South Whidbey show growth between 9,106 to 11,305 people, or 24 to 29% of total  
county growth to 2025.

### 17 ***Camano Island***

18 With respect to the rest of the county, the Camano region has experienced the greatest  
19 increase in population share. Since 1970, Camano's share has increased from 10% to 16% in  
20 1996. This trend is expected to continue to rise as employment opportunities in Snohomish  
and Skagit county increase, making Camano Island attractive to commuters. Camano Island  
is projected to show an increase between 8,972 to 9,764 people, or 23 to 25% of the total  
county projection to 2025.

### 21 ***Rural and Urban Population Growth***

22 It is estimated that an additional 38,492 people will be added to the County's population by  
23 the year 2025. This represents an increase of 53% over the next twenty years, producing a  
total population of 110,050. The rural portion of the County will accommodate 26,182 to  
29,187 new residents, or 68% of this growth, while the urban growth areas will add 12,307

persons, or 32%. As one of the implementation strategies of this plan, the County has committed to studying the Freeland and Clinton areas for consideration as non-municipal urban growth areas. If these areas become non-municipal growth areas and the urban growth areas expand for Oak Harbor and Langley as shown on the future land use maps at the end of this chapter with cooperation of the municipalities, the rural/urban split of population growth would change dramatically; the estimated result would be a 50% growth in rural areas and 50% in urban areas from 1996 through the year 2020. The three existing Urban Growth Areas do not have the capacity to achieve the 50/50 urban/rural split. The City of Langley would like discussion of the 50/50 split deferred until NMUGA designations are presented. It is anticipated that a Freeland NMUGA designation will be before the Planning Commission for consideration in 2007. The City of Oak Harbor has said they currently lack the public facilities and services to accommodate the additional population associated with the 50/50 allocation. Coupeville is currently not considering expansion of its Urban Growth Area for residential purposes due primarily to water supply problems.

**EMPLOYMENT FORECASTS**

The following tables present employment forecasts prepared by the Island County Economic Development Council for the four planning areas of the County. The employment statistics presented are for the average annual jobs by the following employment sectors: farm; construction; manufacturing; transportation, communications and public facilities; wholesale trade; retail trade; finance, insurance and real estate; service; civilian government employment; military; and other. It is anticipated that the retail, service and manufacturing sectors will experience higher rates of growth than the other sectors. The EDC recently revised these employment forecasts based on the use of the high OFM population projections and an extension of the planning period through the year 2020.

Figure 3.14 Employment Forecast - Planning Area Distribution

Planning Area	Year				24-year Growth	Percent of Growth
	1996	2000	2010	2020		
<b>North Whidbey</b>	16,143	17,328	20,287	22,850	6,707	57%
Oak Harbor UGA	5,516	6,460	9,127	11,400	5,884	50%
Unincorporated Area	10,627	10,868	11,160	11,450	823	7%
<b>Central Whidbey</b>	2,287	2,419	2,910	3,551	1,264	11%
Coupeville UGA	1,537	1,656	2,072	2,378	841	7%
Unincorporated Area	750	763	838	1,173	423	4%
<b>South Whidbey</b>	2,708	2,967	4,191	5,634	2,926	25%
Langley UGA	486	584	872	1,290	804	7%
Unincorporated Area	2,222	2,383	3,319	4,344	2,122	18%
<b>Camano Island</b>	451	649	1,061	1,310	859	7%
<b>Island County</b>	21,589	23,363	28,449	33,345	11,756	100%
Urban Growth Areas	7,539	8,700	12,071	15,068	7,529	64%
Unincorporated Areas	14,050	14,663	16,378	18,277	4,227	36%

1 In total, Island County is anticipated to increase its total employment from 21,589 in 1996 to  
2 33,345 by the year 2020, representing an increase of 11,756 jobs (a 54% increase). Sixty-four  
3 percent of the projected new jobs are anticipated to be located in County's three Urban Growth  
4 Areas, and the remaining 36% in the unincorporated areas of the County. North Whidbey will  
5 account for 57% (or 6,707 jobs) of the County's projected employment growth through the year  
6 2020. Of this, 5,884 is anticipated to occur within the Oak Harbor UGA. Central Whidbey is  
7 projected to gain 1,264 jobs, with 841 occurring within the Town of Coupeville. South Whidbey  
8 is projected to increase by 2,926 jobs representing 25% of the County's 24-year growth, with  
9 Langley anticipated to increase by 804 jobs. The Camano Island planning area is expected to see  
10 the lowest percentage of the County's total growth with only 7% (or 859 jobs).  
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Figure 3.15 Employment Forecast - North Whidbey

Employment for Selected Sectors (in actual number of workers, average annual)	Year				24-year Growth
	1996	2000	2010	2020	
<b>Oak Harbor UGA</b>					
Farm	18	15	10	5	-13
Construction	266	300	385	460	194
Manufacturing	290	385	810	1,040	750
Transportation, Comm. & Public Utilities	107	145	215	300	193
Wholesale Trade	17	20	22	35	18
Retail Trade	1,612	2,105	2,540	3,260	1,648
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	485	510	580	670	185
Service	1,781	1,950	2,745	3,300	1,519
Government Employment (civilian only)					
Federal Civilian	22	25	35	50	28
State and Local	891	975	1,750	2,230	1,339
Other	27	30	35	50	23
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>5,516</b>	<b>6,460</b>	<b>9,127</b>	<b>11,400</b>	<b>5,884</b>
<b>Unincorporated Area</b>					
Farm	72	70	75	80	8
Construction	119	125	160	185	66
Manufacturing	45	40	86	110	65
Transportation, Comm. & Public Utilities	111	130	185	250	139
Wholesale Trade	28	35	68	80	52
Retail Trade	213	220	230	155	-58
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	40	65	80	115	75
Service	369	510	732	900	531
Government Employment (civilian only)	0	0	0	0	
Federal Civilian	1,499	1,525	1,315	1,400	-99
State and Local	105	113	180	120	15
Other	26	35	49	55	29
Military	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	0
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>10,627</b>	<b>10,868</b>	<b>11,160</b>	<b>11,450</b>	<b>823</b>
<b>North Whidbey (UGA and Unincorporated Area)</b>					
Farm	90	85	85	85	-5
Construction	385	425	545	645	260
Manufacturing	335	425	896	1,150	815
Transportation, Comm. & Public Utilities	218	275	400	550	332
Wholesale Trade	45	55	90	115	70
Retail Trade	1,825	2,325	2,770	3,415	1,590
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	525	575	660	785	260
Service	2,150	2,460	3,477	4,200	2,050
Government Employment (civilian only)					
Federal Civilian	1,521	1,550	1,350	1,450	-71
State and Local	996	1,088	1,930	2,350	1,354
Other	53	65	84	105	52
Military	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	0
<b>Planning Area Total</b>	<b>16,143</b>	<b>17,328</b>	<b>20,287</b>	<b>22,850</b>	<b>6,707</b>

Figure 3.16 Employment Forecast - Central Whidbey

<b>Employment for Selected Sectors</b>		<b>Year</b>				<b>24-year</b>
<b>(in actual number of workers, average annual)</b>		<b>1996</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>Growth</b>
<b>Coupeville UGA</b>						
Farm		1	1	1	0	-1
Construction		23	25	28	31	8
Manufacturing		10	15	25	35	25
Transportation, Comm. & Public Utilities		20	25	32	40	20
Wholesale Trade		2	2	3	4	2
Retail Trade		190	210	341	362	172
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate		12	13	14	16	4
Service		263	292	414	540	277
Government Employment (civilian only)						
Federal Civilian		15	15	18	25	10
State and Local		990	1,045	1,180	1,305	315
Other		11	13	16	20	9
<b>Sub-Total</b>		<b>1,537</b>	<b>1,656</b>	<b>2,072</b>	<b>2,378</b>	<b>841</b>
<b>Unincorporated Area</b>						
Farm		79	68	59	50	-29
Construction		52	55	62	69	17
Manufacturing		170	170	270	300	130
Transportation, Comm. & Public Utilities		12	13	14	15	3
Wholesale Trade		3	3	5	6	3
Retail Trade		90	99	0	172	82
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate		23	23	28	34	11
Service		161	179	254	370	209
Government Employment (civilian only)		0	0	0	0	
Federal Civilian		3	5	7	7	4
State and Local		148	140	130	140	-8
Other		9	8	9	10	1
<b>Sub-Total</b>		<b>750</b>	<b>763</b>	<b>838</b>	<b>1,173</b>	<b>423</b>
<b>Central Whidbey (UGA and Unincorporated Area)</b>						
Farm		80	69	60	50	-30
Construction		75	80	90	100	25
Manufacturing		180	185	295	335	155
Transportation, Comm. & Public Utilities		32	38	46	55	23
Wholesale Trade		5	5	8	10	5
Retail Trade		280	309	341	534	254
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate		35	36	42	50	15
Service		424	471	668	910	486
Government Employment (civilian only)						
Federal Civilian		18	20	25	32	14
State and Local		1,138	1,185	1,310	1,445	307
Other		20	21	25	30	10
<b>Planning Area Total</b>		<b>2,287</b>	<b>2,419</b>	<b>2,910</b>	<b>3,551</b>	<b>1,264</b>

Figure 3.17 Employment Forecast - South Whidbey

Employment for Selected Sectors (in actual number of workers, average annual)	Year				24-year Growth
	1996	2000	2010	2020	
<b>Langley UGA</b>					
Farm	0	0	0	0	0
Construction	10	15	20	25	15
Manufacturing	28	35	60	90	62
Transportation, Comm. & Public Utilities	7	10	18	30	23
Wholesale Trade	9	10	12	15	6
Retail Trade	208	245	360	550	342
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	17	22	35	50	33
Service	168	195	295	435	267
Government Employment (civilian only)					
Federal Civilian	5	12	15	20	15
State and Local	27	32	45	55	28
Other	7	8	12	20	13
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>486</b>	<b>584</b>	<b>872</b>	<b>1,290</b>	<b>804</b>
<b>Unincorporated Area</b>					
Farm	32	30	28	28	-4
Construction	115	120	142	185	70
Manufacturing	75	79	114	150	75
Transportation, Comm. & Public Utilities	105	113	165	235	130
Wholesale Trade	16	16	23	30	14
Retail Trade	742	775	1,105	1,345	603
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	78	83	93	116	38
Service	478	522	801	1,170	692
Government Employment (civilian only)	0	0	0	0	
Federal Civilian	10	5	15	25	15
State and Local	548	613	800	1,015	467
Other	23	27	33	45	22
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>2,222</b>	<b>2,383</b>	<b>3,319</b>	<b>4,344</b>	<b>2,122</b>
<b>South Whidbey (UGA and Unincorporated Area)</b>					
Farm	32	30	28	28	-4
Construction	125	135	162	210	85
Manufacturing	103	114	174	240	137
Transportation, Comm. & Public Utilities	112	123	183	265	153
Wholesale Trade	25	26	35	45	20
Retail Trade	950	1,020	1,465	1,895	945
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	95	105	128	166	71
Service	646	717	1,096	1,605	959
Government Employment (civilian only)					
Federal Civilian	15	17	30	45	30
State and Local	575	645	845	1,070	495
Other	30	35	45	65	35
<b>Planning Area Total</b>	<b>2,708</b>	<b>2,967</b>	<b>4,191</b>	<b>5,634</b>	<b>2,926</b>

Figure 3.18 Employment Forecast - Camano Island

Employment for Selected Sectors (in actual number of workers, average annual)	Year				24-year Growth
	1996	2000	2010	2020	
<b>Camano Island</b>					
Farm	25	20	20	25	0
Construction	105	115	185	175	70
Manufacturing	25	35	60	80	55
Transportation, Comm. & Public Utilities	26	35	70	100	74
Wholesale Trade	15	15	30	50	35
Retail Trade	58	195	300	350	292
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	82	85	125	150	68
Service	72	100	185	270	198
Government Employment (civilian only)	0	0	0	0	
Federal Civilian	0	0	0	0	0
State and Local	40	45	78	95	55
Other	3	4	8	15	12
<b>Planning Area Total</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>1,061</b>	<b>1,310</b>	<b>859</b>

Figure 3.19 Employment Forecast - Island County

Employment for Selected Sectors (in actual number of workers, average annual)	Year				24-year Growth
	1996	2000	2010	2020	
<b>Urban Growth Areas</b>					
Farm	19	16	11	5	-14
Construction	299	340	433	516	217
Manufacturing	328	435	895	1,165	837
Transportation, Comm. & Public Utilities	134	180	265	370	236
Wholesale Trade	28	32	37	54	26
Retail Trade	2,010	2,560	3,241	4,172	2,162
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	514	545	629	736	222
Service	2,212	2,437	3,454	4,275	2,063
Government Employment (civilian only)					
Federal Civilian	42	52	68	95	53
State and Local	1,908	2,052	2,975	3,590	1,682
Other	45	51	63	90	45
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>7,539</b>	<b>8,700</b>	<b>12,071</b>	<b>15,068</b>	<b>7,529</b>
<b>Unincorporated Area</b>					
Farm	208	188	182	183	-25
Construction	391	415	549	614	223
Manufacturing	315	324	530	640	325
Transportation, Comm. & Public Utilities	254	291	434	600	346
Wholesale Trade	62	69	126	166	104
Retail Trade	1,103	1,289	1,635	2,022	919
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	223	256	326	415	192
Service	1,080	1,311	1,972	2,710	1,630
Government Employment (civilian only)	0	0	0	0	
Federal Civilian	1,512	1,535	1,337	1,432	-80
State and Local	841	911	1,188	1,370	529
Other	61	74	99	125	64
Military	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	0
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>14,050</b>	<b>14,663</b>	<b>16,378</b>	<b>18,277</b>	<b>4,227</b>
<b>Island County (UGAs and Unincorporated Area)</b>					
Farm	227	204	193	188	-39
Construction	690	755	982	1,130	440
Manufacturing	643	759	1,425	1,805	1,162
Transportation, Comm. & Public Utilities	388	471	699	970	582
Wholesale Trade	90	101	163	220	130
Retail Trade	3,113	3,849	4,876	6,194	3,081
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	737	801	955	1,151	414
Service	3,292	3,748	5,426	6,985	3,693
Government Employment (civilian only)					
Federal Civilian	1,554	1,587	1,405	1,527	-27
State and Local	2,749	2,963	4,163	4,960	2,211
Other	106	125	162	215	109
Military	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	0
<b>Island County Total</b>	<b>21,589</b>	<b>23,363</b>	<b>28,449</b>	<b>33,345</b>	<b>11,756</b>

Most of the employment growth in Island County is anticipated to occur in the service (3,693 jobs), retail trade (3,081 jobs), state and local government employees (2,211 civilian jobs) and manufacturing (1,162 jobs) employment sectors. The assumption is that the military

1 employment shall remain constant at 8,000 through the year 2020. Only two employment  
sectors are

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1 anticipated to see a decrease in the actual numbers of workers over the 24-year planning period.  
2 The anticipated overall employment for farming is projected to decrease by 39 jobs and federal  
civilian jobs are expected to fall by 27.

3 The unincorporated portion of the County needs to plan for the anticipated 4,227 new jobs.  
4 Service (1,630 jobs) and retail trade (919 jobs) are the areas of the most growth, while  
5 construction (223 jobs), manufacturing (325 jobs), transportation, communications and public  
6 utilities (325 jobs), and state and local government employment (529 jobs) shall require special  
attention when allocating appropriate amounts of land during the formation of land use  
designation criteria and siting areas for new commercial, industrial and office development on  
the future land use map.

### 7 ***FUTURE LAND USE PLAN: LAND USE DESIGNATIONS AND OVERLAYS***

8 The future land use plan concept is based on an analysis that recognizes the dispersed nature of  
9 both the historical development and the natural features of Island County. As discussed earlier  
10 previous development trends and land use regulations fostered a dispersed and fragmented land  
11 use pattern that mixed both densities and locations. This has produced small pockets of  
12 development through out the County. However, since past development has not occurred in an  
even or uniform manner there is still an abundant amount of natural features, resource lands and  
other open spaces. The result has been that much of the County's rural character and lifestyle  
remains intact. The land use designations presented in this chapter will form the basis for a new  
zoning map. The overlays provide additional guidelines for development and use of land in  
addition to those required in the underlying land use designation.

### 13 ***URBAN ELEMENT DESIGNATIONS***

14 Currently, the only urban element designation in Island County is for the municipal Urban  
15 Growth Areas of Oak Harbor, Langley and Coupeville. Existing Master Planned Resorts may be  
designated as urban pursuant to the standards and criteria set forth in this section

#### 16 ***Municipal Urban Growth Areas (UGAs)***

##### 17 **Definition:**

18 Urban Growth Areas are designated pursuant to RCW 36.70A.110. UGAs are designated  
19 areas where urban growth will be encouraged and supported with urban levels of service.  
20 Urban growth makes intensive use of land for the location of buildings, structures and  
impervious surfaces to the degree that it is incompatible with agriculture, forestry and the  
extraction of mineral resources.

##### 21 **Designation Criteria:**

- 22 A. The area has adequate buildable land to meet projected 20-year urban land use and  
employment needs, while providing ample choice of locations for a variety of housing  
types and supporting uses.
- 23 B. Public facilities and services are in place or can be provided.

- 1 C. Natural features and land characteristics are capable of supporting urban development  
without significant environmental degradation.
- 2 D. The area does not have high current or future economic value for agriculture, forestry, or  
3 mineral production and should be able to develop without having a detrimental impact  
on nearby resource lands.
- 4 E. Opportunities exist for a local balance of housing, jobs and shopping.
- 5 F. The areas within the UGA boundaries for Oak Harbor, Coupeville and Langley as  
delineated during the formation of their comprehensive plans.

6 ***Non-Municipal Urban Growth Areas (NMUGAs)***

7 **Definition:**

8 Non-Municipal Urban Growth Areas are designated pursuant to RCW 36.70A.110.  
9 NMUGAs are designated areas where urban growth will be encouraged and supported  
with urban levels of service, but are not incorporated.

10 **Designation Criteria:**

- 11 A. The County has committed to further studying the Freeland and Clinton areas for  
potential designation as non-municipal urban growth areas.

12 ***Existing Master Planned Resorts***

13 **Definition:**

14 **Existing Master Planned Resort:** A resort that was in existence on July 1, 1990 and that  
15 met the definition of an Existing Master Planned Resort at that time. The resort is developed,  
in whole or in part, as a significantly self contained and integrated development that includes  
16 short-term visitor accommodations associated with a range of indoor and outdoor  
recreational facilities within the property boundaries in a setting of significant natural  
17 amenities. An existing resort may include other permanent residential uses, conference  
facilities, and commercial activities supporting the resort, but only if these uses are  
integrated into and consistent with the on-site recreational nature of the resort.

18 **Designation Criteria:**

- 19 A. Proposals for Existing Master Planned Resorts must conform to RCW 36.70A.362.
- 20 B. The proposed resort was in existence on or before July 1, 1990 and met the definition of  
an Existing Master Planned Resort at that time.
- 21 C. No new urban or suburban land uses are allowed in the surrounding vicinity of any  
22 Existing Master Planned Resort, except in areas otherwise designated for urban growth  
under RCW 36.70A.362.

- 1 D. For an Existing Master Planned Resort that is located on land that would otherwise be  
2 designated as forest land or agricultural land under RCW 36.70A.170, the County shall  
3 include a finding that the land is better suited, and has more long-term importance, for  
4 the existing resort than for the commercial harvesting of timber or agricultural  
5 production.
- 6 E. The resort master plan must be consistent with the development regulations for critical  
7 areas.
- 8 F. On-site and off-site infrastructure impacts are fully considered and mitigated.
- 9 G. The existing resort is significantly self contained and integrates development that  
10 includes short-term visitor accommodations associated with a range of indoor and  
11 outdoor recreational facilities within the property boundaries in a setting of significant  
12 natural amenities.
- 13 H. An existing resort may include other permanent residential uses, conference facilities,  
14 and commercial activities supporting the resort, but only if these uses are integrated into  
15 and consistent with the on-site recreational nature of the resort.  
(Ord. C-97-06 [PLG-010-06], August 21, 2006)

### ***RURAL ELEMENT DESIGNATIONS***

11 The rural element of Island County contains ten land use designations. They are: Rural Center;  
12 Rural Village; Light Manufacturing; Rural Service; Airport; Rural Residential; Rural; Rural  
13 Forest; Rural Agriculture; and a Special Review District. The three “areas of more intensive  
14 rural development” (residential, mixed-use and non-residential) that are discussed below are not  
15 technically land use designations, but rather were used to form logical outer boundaries to  
16 implement the 1997 changes to GMA to identify such areas.

#### ***Residential Areas of More Intensive Rural Development***

##### **Definition:**

16 Areas of more intensive rural development are designated pursuant to the guidelines  
17 established in RCW 36.70A.070 for establishing logical outer boundaries for existing  
18 areas of more intensive rural development. Lands within residential areas of more  
19 intensive rural development shall be designated as Rural Residential (RR).

##### **Designation Criteria:**

- 20 A. The general criteria for designation is Planned Residential Developments (PRDs) and  
21 long plats that were created prior to July 1, 1990 with an average lot size less than 2.5  
22 acres and that exceed ten lots with water system hook-ups; provided that those plats  
23 created prior to 1966 must be at least 40% developed and adjacent to other higher  
24

1 density development, and those plats created after July 1, 1990 must be adjacent to  
2 other plats conforming to the designation criteria and form a logical outer boundary.

3 B. Additional consideration shall be given to parcels that are adjacent to or between  
4 areas defined by designation criterion A., considering the need to preserve the  
5 character of existing natural neighborhoods and communities; physical boundaries  
6 such as roads, land forms and contours, and water bodies; the need to prevent  
7 abnormally irregular boundaries; and to use approved water and sewer service  
8 systems so that low density sprawl is avoided.

9 C. The logical outer boundaries for residential areas of more intensive rural development  
10 as established in this plan are non-expandable.

### 11 ***Mixed-Use Areas of More Intensive Rural Development***

#### 12 **Definition:**

13 Mixed-use areas or more intensive rural development are designated pursuant to the  
14 guidelines established in RCW 36.70A.070 for establishing logical outer boundaries for  
15 existing areas of more intensive rural development. All lands designated as mixed-use  
16 area of more intensive rural development shall be classified as either Rural Center (RC),  
17 Rural Village (RV), Camano Gateway Village (CGV), or Rural Service (RS).

#### 18 **Designation Criteria:**

19 A. The starting point for designation is the Business and Land Use Review Committee's  
20 recommended boundaries that accompany the Island County Economic Development  
21 Council report entitled Business Land Use Needs for Island County to the year 2016,  
22 May 17, 1996. In addition, uses in existence prior to July 1, 1990 and the provision,  
23 where appropriate, of sufficient land to provide a transitional buffer between  
24 mixed-uses and neighboring rural and single-family residential uses.

25 B. Additional consideration shall be given to parcels that are adjacent to or between  
26 areas defined by designation criteria A., considering the need to preserve the  
27 character of existing natural neighborhoods and communities; physical boundaries  
28 such as roads, land forms and contours, and water bodies; the need to prevent  
29 abnormally irregular boundaries; and to use approved water and sewer service  
30 systems so that low density sprawl is avoided.

31 C. The logical outer boundaries for mixed-use area of more intensive rural development as  
32 established in this plan are non-expandable. (Ord. C-102-09 [PLG-015-09], September 22, 2009)

### 33 ***Non-Residential Areas of More Intensive Rural Development***

#### 34 **Definition:**

35 Non-residential areas of more intensive rural development are designated pursuant to the  
36 guidelines established in RCW 36.70A.070 for establishing logical outer boundaries for  
37 existing areas of more intensive rural development. All lands within a non-residential

1 area of more intensive rural development shall be classified as either Light  
2 Manufacturing (LM) or Airport (AP).

3 **Designation Criteria:**

- 4 A. The starting point for designation is the Business and Land Use Review Committee's  
5 recommended boundaries that accompany the Island County Economic Development  
6 Council report entitled Business Land Use Needs for Island County to the year 2016,  
7 May 17, 1996. In addition, uses in existence prior to July 1, 1990 and the provision,  
8 where appropriate, of sufficient land to provide a transitional buffer between  
9 non-residential uses and neighboring rural and residential uses.
- 10 B. Additional consideration shall be given to parcels that area adjacent to or between  
11 areas defined by designation criteria A., considering the need to preserve the  
12 character of existing natural neighborhoods and communities; physical boundaries  
13 such as roads, land forms and contours, and water bodies; the need to prevent  
14 abnormally irregular boundaries; and to use approved water and sewer service  
15 systems so that low density sprawl is avoided.
- 16 C. The logical outer boundaries for non-residential areas of more intensive rural  
17 development as established in this plan are non-expandable.

18 ***Rural Center Lands (RC)***

19 **Definition:**

20 Rural Center lands are larger existing non-residential and mixed-use areas located within  
21 mixed-use areas or more intensive rural development and are intended for commercial,  
22 light manufacturing and multi-family development.

23 **Designation Criteria:**

- 24 A. Characterized by existing development that is predominantly mixed-use, multi-family  
25 and non-residential and meets the definition of Rural Center as stated above.
- 26 B. Located within a mixed-use area or more intensive rural development as established by  
27 forming a logical outer boundary.
- 28 C. Area must be served by an approved public water system.
- 29 D. In combination with other portions of an area of more intensive rural development, is at  
30 least 40 acres in size.

31 ***Rural Village Lands (RV)***

32 **Definition:**

33 Rural Village lands are smaller existing non-residential and mixed-use areas located  
34 within mixed-use areas of more intensive rural development and are primarily intended

1 for the retail sale of convenience goods as well as personal and business services needed  
2 to support the localized geographic area.

3 **Designation Criteria:**

- 4 A. The designation shall primarily be located on the periphery of residential neighborhoods.  
5 B. Area must be served by an approved public or private water system.  
6 C. In combination with other portions of an area of more intensive rural development, is  
7 larger than 5 acres in size.  
8 D. These areas are generally located along highways, major arterials and collector roads.  
9 E. Characterized by existing development that is predominantly non-residential and  
10 mixed-use.  
11 F. Located within a mixed-use area of more intensive rural development as established by  
12 forming a logical outer boundary.

13 **Camano Gateway Village (CGV)**

14 **Definition:**

15 Camano Gateway Village lands are smaller existing non-residential and mixed-use areas  
16 located within mixed-use areas of more intensive rural development and are primarily  
17 intended to provide commercial services that are limited in scale, intensity and size and  
18 that serve the local community and help support the broader local commerce of Camano  
19 Island. These areas are located along the SR 532 Highway corridor which provides good  
20 exposure for business because this is the only automotive route that serves Camano  
21 Island. This area provides limited vehicular access, and is congested during peak traffic  
22 hours.

23 **Designation Criteria:**

- 24 A. Area must be served by an approved public or private water system.  
25 B. Areas where business activity would not conflict with and may support conservation  
26 of Commercial Agriculture, Rural Forest or Rural Agriculture lands.  
27 C. Areas unsuited for, and well buffered from, residential and rural communities having  
28 adequate space for greenbelt screening, supportive parking and transport facilities.  
29 D. Characterized by existing development that is predominantly non-residential.  
30 E. Located within a non-residential area of more intensive rural development as  
31 established by forming a logical outer boundary.  
32 F. Clusters of existing commercial development that are located adjacent to the SR 532  
33 Highway corridor.

(Ord. C-102-09 [PLG-015-09], September 22, 2009)

1        **Light Manufacturing Lands (LM)**

2            **Definition:**

3            Light Manufacturing lands are located within non-residential areas of more intensive  
4            rural development and are intended primarily for light industry and manufacturing,  
5            assembling, fabrication, storage, wholesaling, distribution, auto repair/salvage and related  
6            activities which are clustered in a complex that provides adequate buffering and  
7            screening from surrounding land uses.

8            **Designation Criteria:**

- 9            A. Area must be served by an approved public or private water system.
- 10           B. Areas where light industrial or business activity would not conflict with and may support  
11           conservation of Commercial Agriculture, Rural Forest or Rural Agriculture lands.
- 12           C. Areas unsuited for, and well buffered from, residential and rural communities having  
13           adequate space for greenbelt screening, supportive parking and transport facilities.
- 14           D. Characterized by existing development that is predominantly non-residential.
- 15           E. Located within a non-residential area of more intensive rural development as established  
16           by forming a logical outer boundary.
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1        ***Rural Residential Lands (RR)***

2            **Definition:**

3            Lands located within defined boundaries of residential areas of more intensive rural  
4            development that are intended for infill development and limited subdivision at the  
5            prevailing residential density in the defined area.

6            **Designation Criteria:**

7            All lands within the logical outer boundaries of designated residential areas of more  
8            intensive rural development that are primarily made up of existing residential development  
9            or small portions of infill or vacant parcels which are not designated as Rural Forest (RF),  
10           Rural Agriculture (RA), or for a non-residential use.

11        ***Rural Lands (R)***

12           **Definition:**

13           Rural areas of the County not otherwise designated or within UGAs, areas of more  
14           intensive rural development, Rural Agriculture, Rural Forest or Commercial Agriculture.

15           **Designation Criteria:**

- 16           A. Areas where the land capability is unsuited for higher density residential development; or  
17           B. Areas outside of areas of more intensive rural development; or  
18           C. Areas that enhance rural character and living environment; or  
19           D. A buffer between Commercial Agriculture, Rural Agriculture and Rural Forest uses and  
20           urban uses.

21        ***Rural Forest Lands (RF)***

22           **Definition:**

23           Lands where forestry activities have been an important and valued use in the past, and  
24           will continue to be in the future, but do not meet the criteria for inclusion as lands of  
25           long-term commercial significance.

26           **Designation Criteria:**

- 27           A. The Rural Forest land use designation shall include lands which meet either of the  
28           following criteria:  
29           1. The tract or parcel is in the classified or designated forest tax classification at  
30           least 20 acres in size; or smaller contiguous parcels in a single ownership that, in  
31           combination, are at least 20 acres in size; or

2. The tract or parcel is at least 20 acres in size, owned by the County, State or Federal Government and managed for commercial forestry.

B. Designation is based, in part, on the analysis presented in the report entitled Island County Commercial Forest Land Study, Crescent Springs Management, January, 1998.

***Rural Agriculture Lands (RA)***

**Definition:**

Lands where agricultural activities have been an important and valued use in the past, and will continue to be in the future, but do not meet the criteria for inclusion as lands of long-term commercial significance.

**Designation Criteria:**

A. All lands which are 20 acres or larger in contiguous ownership and are in the agriculture tax status are designated rural agriculture if they are not given a Commercial Agriculture designation.

B. Designation is based, in part, on the analysis presented in the report entitled Island County Commercial Agriculture Land Study, Island County Department of Planning and Community Development, February, 1998.

***Special Review District (SD)***

**Definition:**

Areas defined during the comprehensive planning process that require special consideration for future development which a master plan allows.

**Designation Criteria:**

A. Shall be applied to large properties at least 150 acres in size, in single ownership and/or managed by a non-profit organization.

B. The Greenbank Farm is designated.

C. The Au Sable Institute

D. The Casey Conference Center is designated.

(Ord. C-166-01 [PLG-027-01], January 7, 2002), (Ord. C92-02 [PLG-015-02], December 16, 2002)

***RESOURCE LANDS***

The resource lands of Island County are defined by the Commercial Agriculture land use designation and the Mineral Lands Overlay. No forestry resource lands have been identified in this Comprehensive Plan based on the analysis presented in the report entitled Island County Commercial Forest Land Study, Crescent Springs Management, January, 1998.

1           **Commercial Agriculture Lands (CA)**

2           **Definition:**

3           Areas that meet the definition of RCW 36.70A.030(2): “land primarily devoted to the  
4           commercial production of horticultural, viticultural, floricultural, dairy, apiary, vegetable,  
5           or animal products or of berries, grain, hay, straw, turf, seed, Christmas trees not subject  
6           to the excise tax imposed by RCW 84.33.100 through 84.33.140, or livestock, and that  
7           has long term commercial significance for agricultural production”.

8           **Designation Criteria:**

9           A. Lands which meet the following criteria have been designated as agricultural lands of  
10           long-term commercial significance.

- 11           1. The farm unit is at least 40 acres in size; and
- 12           2. At least 50% of the farm unit is comprised of Prime soils; and
- 13           3. The farm unit is primarily devoted to active commercial production through  
14           cultivation or management; or
- 15           4. The farm unit qualifies for designation, except for meeting the minimum coverage of  
16           Prime soils, and the owner of the farm unit requests designation.

17           B. Designation is based, in part, on the analysis presented in the report entitled Island  
18           County Commercial Agriculture Land Study, Island County Department of Planning  
19           and Community Development, February, 1998.

20           **Mineral Lands Overlay**

21           **Definition:**

22           Those lands primarily devoted to the extraction of minerals or that have a known  
23           potential for long-term commercial extraction of minerals. Minerals are defined as sand,  
24           gravel, and valuable metallic substances.

25           **Designation Criteria:**

- 26           A. The Mineral Lands Overlay shall contain the existing mineral operations which have  
27           final use and site plan approval, conditional use permits, or certificates of zoning  
28           compliance.
- 29           B. Map E shows existing areas of surficial sand and gravel deposits.
- 30           C. There are no known deposits of valuable metallic minerals in Island County.

**GENERAL OVERLAYS AND CRITICAL AREAS**

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In addition to the Mineral Lands Overlay for resource lands, Island County has other overlays and critical areas designations to serve various purposes. They are the: Potential UGA Expansion

1 Areas Overlay; Wetlands Overlay; Aquifer Recharge Areas; Fish and Wildlife Habitat  
2 Conservation Areas Overlay; Frequently Flooded Areas; Geologically Hazardous Areas  
(Steep/Unstable Slopes) Overlay; Shorelines Overlay; and Airport and Aviation Safety Overlay.

3 ***Potential UGA Expansion Areas Overlay***

4 **Definition:**

5 Potential UGA Expansion Areas are those lands in the rural area of the County adjacent  
6 to municipal UGAs where future expansion of the UGA is likely to occur. This is  
7 necessary because the Oak Harbor and Langley Comprehensive Plans currently extend  
through 2013 and 2010, respectively. Standards for development in the potential UGA  
expansion areas shall allow future urban growth to occur more efficiently than if  
potential UGA expansion areas were not defined.

8 **Designation Criteria:**

- 9 A. Adjacent to the existing municipal UGAs of Oak Harbor and Langley. Coupeville has  
10 indicated that there UGA will not expand during the next planning period except for  
unforeseen circumstances (which may include expansion for the Coupeville School  
District).
- 11 B. Based on the anticipated growth in expanded UGAs through the year 2020 for Oak  
12 Harbor and Langley.
- 13 C. Underlying future land use designation of Rural (R).
- 14 D. Areas determined appropriate for future urban-level development.

15 ***Wetlands Overlay***

16 **Definition:**

17 Pursuant to RCW 36.70A.030(20), wetlands means areas that are inundated or saturated  
18 by surface water or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and  
19 that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted  
20 for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs  
21 and similar areas. Wetlands do not include those artificial wetlands intentionally created  
from nonwetland sites, including, but not limited to, irrigation and drainage ditches,  
grass-lined swales, canals, detention facilities, wastewater treatment facilities, farm  
ponds, and landscape amenities, or those wetlands created after July 1, 1990, that were  
unintentionally created as a result of the construction of a road, street, or highway.  
Wetlands may include those artificial wetlands intentionally created from nonwetland  
areas to mitigate the conversion of wetlands

22 **Designation Criteria:**

- 23 A. All wetlands and deepwater habitats are designated.

1 B. The best available science and commonly accepted methodologies, using objective  
2 measurable standards and empirical data, will be used to determine if a given area  
3 meets the above definition. Wetland determinations will be made using the criteria in  
the Wetlands Delineation Manual adopted by the Department of Ecology pursuant to  
RCW 90.58.380.

4 C. Existing studies prepared by State and Federal agencies, such as the National  
5 Wetlands Inventory, soil surveys, maps, and other information, will be used to help  
6 identify potential wetland areas.

7 D. Site-specific data will be kept and maintained to help identify and protect wetlands.

### ***Aquifer Recharge Areas***

#### **Definition:**

8 Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas are those areas that do not possess geologic and  
9 hydrogeologic characteristics that limit surface contaminants from entering groundwater  
10 systems. Critical aquifer recharge areas also include areas where an aquifer that is a  
11 source of drinking water is vulnerable to contamination that would affect the potability of  
the water.

#### **Designation Criteria:**

12 Low, medium and high susceptibility.  
13 (Ord. C-83-05 [PLG-011-05], July 25, 2005)

### ***Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas Overlay***

#### **Definition:**

14 Land management for maintaining species in suitable habitats within their natural  
15 geographic distribution so that isolated subpopulations are not created.

#### **Designation Criteria:**

16 A. Areas with which species listed as endangered, threatened, and sensitive by federal or  
17 state government have a primary association.

18 B. Streams.

19 C. Commercial and recreational shellfish beds.

20 D. Kelp and eelgrass beds.

21 E. Herring and smelt spawning areas.

22 F. State natural area preserves and natural resource conservation areas.

23 G. In addition, habitats and species of local importance may be nominated and designated.

1           ***Frequently Flooded Areas***

2           **Definition:**

3           Lands in the floodplain subject to a one percent or greater chance of flooding in any  
4           given year; these areas include, but are not limited to, streams, lakes, coastal areas, and  
5           wetlands.

6           **Designation Criteria:**

7           100-year floodplains as listed and mapped by the Federal Emergency Management  
8           Agency and the National Flood Insurance Program.

9           ***Geologically Hazardous Areas (Steep/Unstable Slopes) Overlay***

10          **Definition:**

11          Areas not suited to siting of commercial, residential, or industrial development consistent  
12          with public health or safety concerns due to their susceptibility to sliding or other slope  
13          failures, erosion, or other geological events.

14          **Designation Criteria:**

15          A. Areas indicated within the Washington Department of Ecology’s Coastal Zone Atlas of  
16          Island County, dated April, 1979 as having recent or historical slide activity and/or  
17          indicative of unstable slope conditions.

18          B. Areas with slopes 40% or greater and with a vertical elevation change of at least ten feet,  
19          except areas of consolidated rock.

20          ***Shorelines Overlay***

21          **Definition:**

22          **The Shorelines Overlay protects lands which are required to be protected by the  
23          State’s Shoreline Management Act.**

24          **Designation Criteria:**

25          A. The Shorelines Overlay shall encompass all lands which are either adjacent to or within  
26          200 feet of any of the following and their associated wetlands:

- 27           1. All marine waters; or
- 28           2. Lakes and reservoirs 20 acres or larger.

1            ***Airport and Aviation Safety Overlay***

2            **Definition:**

3            **The Airport and Aviation Safety Overlay represents the high noise zone areas of**  
4            **Island County where special land use controls are necessary to assure public health,**  
5            **welfare and safety.**

6            **Designation Criteria:**

7            Map C, identifies lands as being contained by Accident Potential Zones or AICUZ Noise  
8            Contours. (Ord. C-87-07 [PLG-017-07] ,March 10, 2008)

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1 **FUTURE LAND USE PLAN MAP**

2 The maps on the following pages describe the future land use plan for Island County. The land  
3 use plan is based on the major issues as identified in Chapter I, the existing land use analysis in  
4 Chapter II, and the goals and policies that will be used to guide and accommodate future growth  
5 as presented in Chapter IV. Detailed atlases (at 1 inch = 200 feet) which more clearly delineate  
6 the Urban Growth Areas and areas of more intensive rural development and future land use  
7 classification may be viewed at the Island County Department of Planning and Community  
8 Development in Coupeville. Detailed maps of the defined areas of more intensive rural  
9 development depicting the Rural Residential, Rural Center, Rural Village, Rural Service, Light  
10 Manufacturing and Airport land use designations may be found in Appendix A of the Island  
11 County Zoning Code, chapter 17.03 ICC.

7 The following is a summary of the acreages portrayed in Figure 3.20 for each of the future land  
8 use designations. The municipal Urban Growth Areas of Oak Harbor, Coupeville and Langley  
9 comprise 5,825 acres, with the potential municipal future land use designations as given by Oak  
10 Harbor and Langley shown on the land use map for the unincorporated portion of their UGAs.  
11 The UGAs for Oak Harbor and Langley are surrounded by Joint Planning Areas, within which  
12 future land use decisions are managed to not preclude UGA expansion. These areas comprise  
13 5,725 acres for Oak Harbor and 733 acres for Langley. The Coupeville UGA also has a  
14 surrounding Joint Planning Area, but land use is not managed for UGA expansion because  
15 Coupeville has elected to not permit any expansion of its UGA. The Rural land use designation  
16 is by far the largest in the rural area at 78,490 acres. The Rural Agriculture and Rural Forest  
17 make up 6,080 and 13,990 acres respectively, while the Commercial Agriculture designation  
18 encompasses 4,680 acres. The County has also designated 1,580 acres of land as mineral lands of  
19 long term commercial significance. The Rural Residential land use designation comprises 9,270  
20 acres. The remaining lands are comprised of 1,210 acres for non-residential and mixed-uses, 150  
21 acres in the Special Review District of Greenbank Farm, 4,980 acres of parks or public  
22 ownership and 7,880 acres of federal lands.

16 Figure 3.21 classifies rural area acreage by minimum lot size. Slightly over 44,000 acres of the  
17 County are already divided into lots that are smaller than the 5-acre minimum lot size. Hence,  
18 these lands have no potential for further subdivision. They account for 40% of the rural area of  
19 the County. Almost 25,000 acres (22% of the rural area) have a minimum lot size of 10 to 20  
20 acres. Therefore, approximately 34,000 acres (30% of the rural area) could theoretically be  
21 subdivided into 5-acre lots.

19 (Ord. C-135-99 [PLG 042-99], April 10, 2000)

Figure 3.20 Future Land Use Distribution by Classification

Proposed Future Land Uses	Island County	
	Acres	Percent
<b>RAID</b>		
Rural Center (RC)	560	
Rural Village (RV)	225	
Light Manufacturing (LM)	120	1.0%
Rural Service (RS)	25	
Airport (AP)	280	
Rural Residential (RR)	9,270	7.0%
<b>Rural (R)<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>78,490</b>	<b>58.6%</b>
<b>Rural Forest (RF)</b>	<b>13,990</b>	<b>10.0%</b>
<b>Rural Agriculture (RA)</b>	<b>6,080</b>	<b>4.4%</b>
<b>Special Review District (SD)</b>	<b>150</b>	
<b>Federal Lands</b>	<b>7,880</b>	<b>6.0%</b>
<b>Parks or Public Ownership</b>	<b>4,845</b>	<b>4.0%</b>
<b>Resource Lands</b>		
Mineral Lands <sup>2</sup>	1,580	1.0%
Commercial Agriculture (CA)	4,680	4.0%
<b>Subtotal Rural, Resource and Public</b>	<b>128,175</b>	<b>96.0%</b>
<b>Urban Lands</b>		
Municipal Urban Growth Areas (UGAs)	5,825	4.0%
<b>Total Acres -- County-wide</b>	<b>134,000</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

1. 6,458 acres of the lands classified Rural are located within Joint Planning Areas (“JPAs”) and Managed to allow for UGA expansion.
2. All Mineral Lands have an underlying zone of Rural.  
(Ord. C-135-99 [PLG 042-99], April 10, 2010)



Figure 3.21 Rural Area Lot Size

Minimum Lot Size	Zone	Acres	Percent
20 Acre	CA	4,680	4%
10 Acre	RA, RF	20,070	18%
5 Acre	R	33,970	30%
14,500 SF to 2.5 Acres	RR	9,270	8%
Lots Smaller than Minimum Lot Size	R	44,520	40%
Total Rural Area		112,510	100

NOTES:

1. Rural Area total excludes designated Mineral Lands, UGA's, NR RAIDs and lands in public ownership. 6,458 acres in the Rural Area are located within Joint Planning Areas ("JPAs") and managed to allow for UGA expansion.
2. Includes lands classified Rural that are in lot sizes of 9 acres and larger.

(Ord. C-135-99 [PLG-042-99], April 10, 2000)

1 Map K Future Land Use Plan Map - North Whidbey

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1 Map L Future Land Use Plan Map - Central Whidbey

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1 Map M Future Land Use Plan Map - South Whidbey

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1 Map N Future Land Use Plan Map - Camano Island

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1 **IV. GOALS AND POLICIES**

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2 Application of the Comprehensive Plan concept to the long-range needs of Island County is  
3 accomplished by the formation of specific planning goals, policies and implementation  
4 strategies. Goals represent the ideals of the community. Policies provide guidance in daily  
5 decision-making defining the route being taken to achieve the goals. Implementation strategies  
6 represent the method in which action may be taken to further the goals and policies of the plan.  
7 Measures to implement the goals and policies in this chapter are presented in Chapter V.

8 ***Population Growth and Distribution***

9 **Goal:**

10 **Achieve a staged, orderly and distributed development pattern to foster a high  
11 quality living environment for all persons while conserving our rural lifestyle,  
12 conserving natural resources, conserving historic properties and achieving the goals  
13 of growth management.**

14 **Policies:**

- 15 A. Accommodate the projected full-time resident population for the County of 118,800  
16 by the year 2020 in a manner which protects the established character of  
17 neighborhoods, preserves rural and environmental quality, and allows for the  
18 efficient, orderly economic growth of the community.
- 19 B. Guide urban growth into areas where planned public facilities and services will  
20 adequately support that growth.
- 21 C. Encourage infilling of subdivided lands and the logical expansion of urban areas.

22 **URBAN ELEMENT LAND USE DESIGNATION POLICIES**

23 ***Municipal Urban Growth Areas (UGAs)***

24 **Goal:**

**Provide areas where urban land use activities may be concentrated in a manner  
which enables the efficient provision of public facilities and services.**

**Policies:**

- A. Island County will encourage development in urban areas where adequate public  
facilities or services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.
- B. It is the policy of the County and the municipalities that development within the  
unincorporated portion of municipal UGAs will be coordinated between the County,  
City, and Town governments and utility service providers through the following  
development guidelines:

- 1           1. The first preference for urban development is within municipal boundaries. The  
2           second preference is for urban development to occur after annexation to a City or  
3           Town. The third preference is in the unincorporated portion of the municipal  
4           UGA;
- 5           2. Non-urban development in the UGA should only be allowed if it will be  
6           compatible with future urban development;
- 7           3. Through interlocal agreements, governing entities shall require development in  
8           the unincorporated area of the municipal UGA to comply with the following:
  - 9           a) If the area is contiguous to the municipal boundary to:
    - 10           (1) Annex to the municipality, or
    - 11           (2) If authorized by the municipality,
      - 12           (a) Execute an annexation/development agreement prior to development  
13           approval, and
      - 14           (b) Develop at urban density or uses, and
      - 15           (c) Submit a site development plan showing ultimate development of the  
16           lot or parcel(s) consistent with the applicable potential municipal  
17           zoning and development standards.
  - 18           b) If the area is not contiguous to the municipality:
    - 19           (1) Execute an annexation/development agreement prior to development  
20           approval,
    - 21           (2) Develop at the densities and uses established in the interlocal agreement  
22           adopted by the municipality and the County, and
    - 23           (3) Submit a site development plan showing ultimate development of the lot  
24           or parcel(s) consistent with the applicable potential municipal zoning and  
25           development standards.
- 26           4. Non-contiguous annexation, shall be avoided within the UGA;
- 27           5. Urban development patterns will minimize the fiscal and environmental impacts  
28           of growth.
- 29           6. When possible, the edges of major features, such as drainageways and sensitive  
30           lands, should be used to help provide a clear and natural boundary between urban  
31           and rural areas.
- 32           7. Interlocal agreements shall be used as a method to guide development in the  
33           unincorporated portions of Municipal Urban Growth Areas.

1           8. Open space corridors for the Urban Growth Areas are required under the GMA  
and are shown in the Natural Lands Element of this plan.

2           9. The County shall identify in its Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map lands within  
3           unincorporated portions of Municipal UGAs with the applicable Municipal Land  
Use designation.

4           10. The County shall identify in its Zoning Atlas lands within unincorporated  
5           portions of Municipal UGAs with the applicable municipal zoning classification.

6           C. Overall growth and development within the municipal boundaries of Oak Harbor,  
7           Coupeville and Langley must be in conformance with their adopted comprehensive  
plans, within the framework provided by the jointly adopted County Wide Planning  
Policies.

8           ***Existing Master Planned Resorts***

9           **Goal:**

10           **Provide a method to recognize and support the planned development of Existing**  
11           **Master Planned Resorts that are significantly self-contained and have integrated**  
12           **development that includes short-term visitor accommodations associated with a**  
13           **range of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities within the property boundaries**  
14           **in a setting of significant natural amenities.**

15           **Policies:**

16           A. The Island County Comprehensive Plan and development regulations shall define and  
17           create a process for the designation of Existing Master Planned Resorts. The approval  
18           of an Existing Master Planned Resort shall be processed as a Type IV decision  
19           pursuant to Chapter 16.19 ICC.

20           B. Existing Master Planned Resorts shall be recognized by the County, provided that the  
21           facility meets County development standards and an approved master plan for the  
22           facility is approved the Board of Island County Commissioners.

23           C. Designation of an Existing Master Planned Resort must preclude new urban or  
24           suburban development in the surrounding vicinity of the existing resort, except in  
areas otherwise designated for urban growth under RCW 36.70A.110 and  
36.70A.362, as per RCW 36.70A.362, the state code governing Existing Master  
Planned Resorts.

25           D. The designation process for Existing Master Planned Resorts must comply with all  
26           conditions stipulated in RCW 36.70A.362.

(Ord. C-97-06 [PLG-010-06], August 21, 2006)

1 **RURAL ELEMENT LAND USE DESIGNATION POLICIES**

2 ***Areas of More Intensive Rural Development***

3 The policies for the Rural Center, Rural Village, Light Manufacturing, Airport, Rural  
4 Service and Rural Residential land use designations are patterned for lands that are  
5 within defined areas of more intensive rural development characterized by predominantly  
6 the built environment.

7 ***Rural Center Designation (RC)***

8 **Goal:**

9 **Provide for the commercial, light manufacturing and higher density residential  
10 needs of the rural population wherein development exist in an attractive setting that  
11 is pedestrian oriented and served by public transit.**

12 **Policies:**

- 13 A. Rural Centers are designated mixed-use areas of more intensive rural development with a  
14 non-expandable logical outer boundary.
- 15 B. All uses within the Rural Center designation must comply with rural design guidelines to  
16 assure compatibility with adjacent uses.
- 17 C. The Rural Center designation shall provide for appropriately categorized permitted and  
18 conditional uses that include accessory uses, churches, schools, banking and financial  
19 institutions, communication towers, day care centers, eating and drinking establishments,  
20 entertainment uses, essential public facilities, fire stations, government services, group  
21 homes, health care services, light manufacturing, mixed-uses, multi-family, office uses,  
22 overnight lodging, research and development uses, retail sales and services, storage,  
23 major utilities, minor utilities, veterinary clinics, warehouses, and water tanks.

- 1 D. The preferred type of development shall include clustering of uses, whose compact  
design fosters a communal atmosphere or orientation.
- 2 E. It is intended that Rural Center highway shopping and service centers be developed as a  
3 unit, and in a compact manner, in order to prevent highway sprawl.
- 4 F. Rural Center development should have appropriate landscaping, screening, signing and  
shielded lighting to provide for rural compatibility.
- 5 G. Structures located within the Rural Center designation should share water and any  
applicable waste water services with adjacent structures in the same designation.
- 6 H. Mixed uses, residential and commercial, especially with living accommodations above  
7 or over business activities are encouraged.
- 8 I. Site design within the Rural Center designation will facilitate pedestrian access through  
the use of common areas, public transit, extensive landscaping, clustering, small parks  
9 and a compact design.
- 10 J. Rural Center parcels must consolidate access to the highway with adjacent Rural Center  
parcels in order to minimize disruption of highway traffic.

11 ***Rural Village Designation (RV)***

12 **Goal:**

13 **Provide for the retail sale of convenience goods as well as personal and business  
services needed to support persons residing in the rural area.**

14 **Policies:**

- 15 A. Rural Villages are designated mixed-use areas of more intensive rural development with  
a non-expandable logical outer boundary.
- 16 B. All uses within the Rural Village designation must comply with rural design guidelines  
to assure compatibility with adjacent uses.
- 17 C. The Rural Village designation shall provide for appropriately categorized permitted and  
18 conditional uses that include accessory uses, banking and financial institutions, day care  
centers, eating and drinking establishments, essential public facilities, fire stations,  
19 government services, health care services, mixed-uses, office uses, retail sales and  
services, single family residential, minor utilities, veterinary clinics, and water tanks.
- 20 D. The preferred type of development shall include clustering of uses, whose compact  
design fosters a communal atmosphere or orientation.
- 21 E. Mixed uses, residential and commercial, especially with living accommodations above  
22 or over business activities are encouraged.
- 23
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- 1 F. The designation is intended to facilitate pedestrian access by encouraging common areas,  
2 public transit, extensive landscaping, clustering, small parks, and a compact design in  
3 order to foster a communal atmosphere or orientation.
- 4 G. Uses should be developed in a manner which protects environmental quality, rural  
5 character, special scenic features and important community amenities and values.
- 6 H. Landscaping along street frontages will provide an harmonious transition to surrounding  
7 properties, respecting any special scenic features in the area.
- 8 I. Rural Village properties should share common water and any applicable water waste  
9 disposal systems.
- 10 J. Utilize local knowledge, experience and preferences of the rural community residents  
11 and business owners to establish the character of the Rural Village Areas.
- 12 K. A proactive planning approach shall be used for access management onto State  
13 Highway. Possible consolidation of access points should be explored.

### 14 *Camano Gateway Village Designation (CGV)*

#### 15 **Goal:**

16 Provide for village or town-like commercial services that are limited in scale, intensity  
17 and density that are intended to serve the local community and help support the local  
18 commerce and rural Northwest island vision of Camano Island residents. Emphasis  
19 should be placed on uses, programs and policies that help alleviate traffic congestion by  
20 avoiding the concentration of activities that occur primarily during peak traffic hours.  
21 Proprietors are encouraged to participate in an economic development strategy that  
22 promotes Camano Island events, attractions, and businesses.

#### 23 **Policies:**

- 24 A. The Camano Gateway Village consists of areas designated as mixed-use areas of  
25 more intensive rural development with a non-expandable, established logical outer  
26 boundary.
- 27 B. The intensity, scale and appropriateness of uses are based on the needs of the  
28 community, preservation of rural village character, availability of infrastructure that  
29 does not adversely impact off-site properties, and protection of resources.
- 30 C. The designation is intended to facilitate pedestrian access by encouraging common  
31 areas, public transit, extensive landscaping, clustering, small parks, and a compact  
32 design in order to foster a communal village atmosphere or orientation.
- 33 D. Utilize local knowledge, experience and preferences of a diverse representation of  
34 rural community residents and business owners to establish the character of the  
35 Camano Gateway Village Areas.
- 36 E. Uses should be developed in a manner which protects environmental quality, rural  
37 character, special scenic features, and important community amenities and values.

- 1 F. Establish sustainable building practices, use of low impact development, reduction in  
2 water consumption, sensitive design, minimizing bulk and mass, participation in  
3 local economic development strategies, and reduction in traffic. Incentives should be  
4 provided to developers so that the benefits outweigh the costs.
- 5 G. A proactive planning approach should be used for access management into State  
6 Highway 532. Possible consolidation of access points shall be explored consistent  
7 with Island County Code and Washington State Department of Transportation  
8 regulations.
- 9 H. Development should include clustering of uses, whose compact design fosters a  
10 communal Northwest island village atmosphere or orientation.
- 11 I. All uses within the Camano Gateway Village designation shall comply with rural  
12 design guidelines to assure compatibility with adjacent uses.
- 13 J. Landscaping along road frontages will provide a harmonious transition to  
14 surrounding properties, respecting and complementing any special scenic features in  
15 the area.
- 16 K. Signage should be visible to pedestrians and automobiles yet attractive, low in  
17 profile, architecturally integrated, functional, and unobtrusive.
- 18 L. Lighting should emphasize and enhance architecture, landscaping, and safety.  
19 Lighting shall not spill onto adjacent properties, roads or beyond the buildings and  
20 signs that the lighting is intending to highlight.
- 21 M. Removed for possible conflict with other sections of Code.
- 22 N. Mixed Uses involving a combination of Residential and Non-Residential components  
23 are encouraged, especially with long-term village residence above business activities  
24 or that are detached but functionally and physically connected to each other.
- 25 O. Fire stations are an important and essential community asset that requires a  
26 dramatically different set of needs than typical commercial uses. Special standards  
27 are necessary that allow fire stations to provide necessary services to the community,  
28 training opportunities for first responders, and community meeting space. At the same  
29 time, fire stations should be designed to fit into the community, be attractive in  
30 appearance, and sensitive to the environment.
- 31 P. The Camano Gateway Village designation shall provide for appropriately categorized  
32 permitted and conditional uses that include accessory uses, banking financial  
33 institutions, day care centers, eating and drinking establishments, fire stations,  
34 government services, health care services, Small Scale Overnight Lodging, mixed-  
35 uses, office uses, small scale retail sales and services, lumberyards, minor utilities,  
36 veterinary clinics, and water tanks.
- 37 Q. Overnight lodging shall be designed to fit into and enhance the rural island landscape  
38 through effective design, orientation, siting, signage, lighting and landscaping.  
39 Overnight Lodging should be designed in a manner that does not utilize and distribute  
40 water resources beyond the capacity of the resources available in the RAID.  
41 (Ord. C-102-09 [PLG-015-09], September 22, 2009)

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***Light Manufacturing Designation (LM)***

**Goal:**

**Provide for light industry and manufacturing, assembling, fabrication, storage, wholesaling, distribution, auto repair/salvage and related activities that do not entail frequent visits of customers or clients where glare, noise, pollution, odor, open storage and similar undesirable affects are controlled, contained or screened so as not to detract from surrounding uses.**

**Policies:**

- A. Light Manufacturing lands are designated non-residential areas of more intensive rural development with a non-expandable logical outer boundary.
- B. The Light Manufacturing designation shall provide for appropriately categorized permitted and conditional uses that include accessory uses, communication towers, essential public facilities, fire stations, government services, light manufacturing, research and development uses, storage, major utilities, minor utilities, warehouses, and water tanks.
- C. Light Manufacturing developments shall be designed and built in a manner which will have minimal environmental and community impact, including low levels of air, light, noise, odor and water pollution. Environmental and community impacts shall be mitigated by the developer.
- D. Utilize local knowledge, experience and preferences of the rural community residents and business owners to establish the character of Light Manufacturing Areas.
- E. Cluster structures within Light Manufacturing Areas and provide adequate expansion space for a variety of compatible economic activities.

- 1 F. Common arterial accesses and developed internal circulation systems will be required.
- 2 G. Provide adequate buffers of landscaping, compatible land use and open space to protect  
surrounding land areas from the adverse effects of development.
- 3 H. Protect existing Light Manufacturing areas from encroachment by incompatible land  
4 uses.
- 5 I. A proactive planning approach shall be used for access management onto rights-of-way.  
Possible consolidation of access points should be explored.

6 ***Rural Service Designation (RS)***

7 **Goal:**

8 **Provide for the identification of existing commercial activities associated with the  
provision of daily convenience goods and services for rural area populations.**

9 **Policies:**

- 10 A. Rural Service lands are designated mixed-use areas of more intensive rural development  
with a non-expandable logical outer boundary.
- 11 B. All uses within the Rural Service designation must comply with rural design guidelines  
12 to assure compatibility with adjacent uses.
- 13 C. The Rural Service designation shall provide for appropriately categorized permitted and  
conditional uses that include accessory uses, day care centers, fire stations, mixed-uses,  
14 retail sales and services, and water tanks.
- 15 D. Provide for the conditional expansion of existing businesses in a manner which protects  
environmental quality, rural character, special scenic features and important community  
amenities and values.
- 16 E. Change in use would not be allowed at a greater intensity than the existing use.
- 17 F. Utilize local knowledge, experience and preferences of the rural community residents  
and business owners to establish the character of Rural Service Areas.
- 18 G. On a case by case basis, landscaping and other improvements shall be required for the  
19 change of use or expansion of existing use so that rural character is not adversely  
impacted.
- 20 H. Lands may not be rezoned to the Rural Service land use designation.
- 21 I. Mixed use buildings (living accommodations above or over business activities, are  
22 encouraged)

1           **Airport Designation (AP)**

2           **Goal:**

3           **Expand job opportunities for Island County residents by providing areas for light**  
4           **industrial<sup>7</sup> and manufacturing uses surrounding commercial airport facilities<sup>8</sup> and**  
5           **their existing uses.**

6           **Policies:**

- 7           A. Airport lands are designated non-residential areas of more intensive rural development  
8           with a non-expandable logical outer boundary.
- 9           B. The Airport designation shall provide for appropriately categorized permitted and  
10           conditional uses that include accessory uses, airport facilities, airport support facilities,  
11           eating and drinking establishments, essential public facilities, fire stations,  
12           junkyard/salvage yards, light manufacturing, research and development uses, single  
13           family residential, storage uses, major utilities, minor utilities, warehouses, and water  
14           tanks.
- 15           C. Uses shall be compatible with existing uses in Wes Lupien Air Park, Whidbey Air Park  
16           or Camano Island Air Field.
- 17           D. Development shall be designed and built in a manner which will have minimal  
18           environmental and community impact. Environmental and community impacts shall be  
19           mitigated by the developer.
- 20           E. Utilize local knowledge, experience and preferences of the rural community residents  
21           and business owners to establish the character of Airport Areas.
- 22           F. Cluster structures within Airport areas and provide adequate expansion space for  
23           compatible economic activities.
- 24           G. Common arterial accesses and developed internal circulation systems will be required.
- 25           H. Site development standards shall be developed according to the needs of each site.
- 26           I. Provide adequate buffers of landscaping, compatible land use and open space to protect  
27           surrounding land areas from the adverse effects of industrial development. Give  
28           particular attention to protecting critical lands, residential, rural and resource areas
- 29           J. Protect existing Airport areas from encroachment by incompatible land uses.
- 30           K. A proactive planning approach shall be used for access management onto rights-of-way.  
31           Possible consolidation of access points should be explored.

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32           <sup>7</sup> Light manufacturing development includes manufacturing, assembly, fabrication, warehouses, and storage and  
33           distribution.

34           <sup>8</sup> Commercial airports are privately owned and intended for general use by the public.

1           **Rural Residential Lands (RR)**

2           **Goal:**

3           **Provide for the infill, development, or redevelopment of existing residential areas**  
4           **which have been identified as residential areas of more intensive rural development**  
5           **pursuant to RCW 36.70A.070(5)(d).**

6           **Policies:**

- 7           A. Infill development is permitted on existing platted lots.
- 8           B. Base density is either 3, 2, 1 or 0.4 dwelling units per acre as determined in item C.
- 9           C. Subdivision of Rural Residential (RR) parcels shall be allowed at the average existing  
10           parcel size of all existing parcels 5 acres or smaller within each area of more intensive  
11           rural development, provided that for those areas with an average parcel size less than  
12           14,500 square feet, the minimum parcel size shall be 14,500 square feet or the minimum  
13           required by County health requirements, whichever is greater. The allowable minimum  
14           parcel size for each area of more intensive development shall be either 14,500 square  
15           feet, 0.5 acres, 1 acre, or 2.5 acres, however, potential subdivision may be limited by  
16           applicable shorelines regulations, critical areas regulations, County health requirements,  
17           public facility limitations, and other land use or zoning limitations. The minimum parcel  
18           size for each area of more intensive rural development shall not change over time and  
19           shall be indicated in the development regulations.
- 20           D. Rural Residential areas with established sewer districts at the time of adoption of this  
21           plan will be capable of subdivision and development at 3 dwelling units per acre only if  
22           remedial action is taken to address any storm drainage problems associated with existing  
23           development. Further, these areas may subdivide and develop at up to 6 dwelling units  
24           per acre if a long-term storm drainage plan is developed with an implementation  
25           schedule approved by the County.
- 26           E. Lot size averaging shall be allowed for subdivision provided the base density threshold is  
27           met.
- 28           F. The Rural Residential designation shall provide for appropriately categorized permitted  
29           and conditional uses that include single family detached dwellings, duplexes, triplexes,  
30           fourplexes, accessory uses, agricultural products (growing, harvesting, managing and  
31           selling), bed and breakfast inns, bed and breakfast rooms, boat launches, day care  
32           nurseries, fire stations, guest cottages, home occupations, livestock husbandry, minor  
33           utilities, mobile homes, and water tanks.
- 34           G. All non-residential uses within the Rural Residential designation must comply with rural  
35           design guidelines to assure compatibility with adjacent uses.
- 36           H. Raising of large livestock shall be provided for conditioned on the approval of an Animal  
37           Management Plan.

- 1 I. A proactive planning approach shall be used for access management onto State  
2 Highway. Possible consolidation of access points should be explored.

3 ***Rural Lands (R)***

4 **Goal:**

5 **Maintain low residential densities to preserve rural character and to provide  
6 buffers between urban activities and agricultural and forestry uses.**

7 **Policies:**

- 8 A. Minimum parcel size is five acres. The base density is one dwelling unit per five  
9 acres.
- 10 B. Lot size averaging shall be allowed for subdivision of parcels ten acres or greater in  
11 size, provided minimum and average parcel size and density thresholds are met as set  
12 forth in the development regulations.
- 13 C. Preference shall be given to PRD cluster development consisting of either attached or  
14 detached housing in the event subdivision of land occurs. A density bonus should be  
15 granted proportional to the size of the PRD and the Open Space Ratio and there are  
16 no adverse impacts to critical areas or natural resource conservation areas. PRDs  
17 located in the unincorporated portion of a municipal Urban Growth Area shall be  
18 given a maximum 200% density bonus if lots are limited to 12,500 square feet, or the  
19 minimum required to meet health requirements. PRDs located outside the  
20 unincorporated portion of a municipal Urban Growth Area shall not be approved  
21 unless it can be determined affirmatively that the need for future urban services is  
22 precluded and that the PRD will provide a better opportunity to protect rural character  
23 than a traditional subdivision or short subdivision.
- 24 D. Encourage diverse economic opportunities and uses compatible with and supportive  
of a rural way of life as outlined under the goals and policies in this chapter for *Home  
Occupations and Home Industries in the Rural Area*.
- 25 E. The Rural designation shall provide for appropriately categorized permitted and  
conditional uses that include single family detached dwellings, accessory uses,  
agricultural or forest products processing agricultural products (growing, harvesting,  
managing and selling), bed and breakfast inns, bed and breakfast rooms, boat  
launches, campgrounds and recreation vehicle parks, churches, communication  
towers, country inns, day care centers, day care nurseries, small day care center,  
equestrian centers, essential public facilities, farm/forest produce stands, fire stations,  
forest products (growing, harvesting, managing and selling), group homes, guest  
cottages, gun clubs and shooting ranges, home industries, home occupations, kennels,  
livestock husbandry, major utilities, minor utilities, mobile homes,  
mobile/manufactured home parks, planned residential developments, schools,  
seasonal sale of farm produce, small scale recreation uses, small scale tourist uses,  
storage facilities, surface mining, and water tanks.

1 F. Residential development near designated Commercial Agriculture lands must be  
2 designed to minimize potential conflict and prevent unnecessary conversion of farm  
land.

3 G. Minor or small scale agriculture activities are consistent with rural areas, support  
rural character, and should be protected and encouraged.

4 H. All non-residential uses within the Rural designation must comply with rural design  
5 guidelines to assure compatibility with adjacent uses.

6 I. All structures and uses within a PRD, except access roads, must be screened from the  
view of adjacent properties and public roadways.

(Ord. C-134-99 [PLG-041-99], November 22, 1999)

7 ***Rural Forest Lands (RF)***

8 **Goal:**

9 **Create an area where rural forestry activities are encouraged to occur with  
10 residential uses while preserving rural character and maintaining open space as the  
dominant characteristic.**

11 **Policies:**

12 A. Minimum parcel size is 10 acres. Base density is one dwelling unit per 10 acres.

13 B. Preference shall be given to PRD cluster development consisting of either attached or  
14 detached housing on parcels at least 20 acres in size in the event subdivision of land  
15 occurs. A density bonus should be granted proportional to the size of the PRD and the  
16 Open Space Ratio, and there are no adverse impacts to critical areas or natural  
resource lands. PRDs located outside the unincorporated portion of a municipal  
Urban Growth Area shall not be approved unless it can be determined affirmatively  
that the need for future urban services is precluded and that the PRD will provide a  
better opportunity to protect rural character than a traditional subdivision or short  
subdivision.

17 C. Right-to-farm and forest measures shall protect the right to pursue farm and forestry  
18 activities.

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D. The Rural Forest designation shall provide for appropriately categorized permitted and conditional uses that are compatible with the surrounding area and include accessory uses, bed and breakfast rooms, boat launches, campgrounds and recreation vehicle parks, communication towers, equestrian centers, essential public facilities, farm/forest produce stands, forest products (growing, harvesting, managing, processing and sale), guest cottages, gun clubs and shooting ranges, home industries, home occupations, kennels, minor utilities, planned residential developments, single family dwellings, surface mining, and water tanks.

- 1 E. Measures shall be used to support silviculture industries.
- 2 F. Encourage the conservation of lands suitable for forestry use and support forestry as an  
activity valued in the County.
- 3 G. Cluster development or encourage low intensity uses to minimize site clearing and  
4 maintain future forestry use options
- 5 H. Encourage forestry landowners to retain their lands in timber production and to utilize  
tax incentive programs.
- 6 I. Support innovative public and private programs that provide foresters incentives to stay  
on the land.
- 7 J. Encourage selective clearing and logging, as opposed to clearcutting, if forest harvesting  
8 is done in the Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve.
- 9 K. Reclassification from RF to R shall be granted if requested by the owner when the owner  
cannot make reasonable economic use of the parcel for commercial forestry, considering  
10 all relevant factors. Provided, that the determination of whether the owner can make  
reasonable economic use of the parcel for commercial forestry shall not involve  
consideration of the personal circumstances of any particular owner.
- 11 L. All structures and uses within a PRD, except access roads, must be screened from the  
12 view of adjacent properties and public roadways.  
(Ord. C-133-99 [PLG-040-99], November 22, 1999), (Ord. C92-02 [PLG-015-02], December 16, 2002)

13  
14 ***Rural Agriculture Lands (RA)***

15 **Goal:**

16 **Create an area where rural agricultural activities are encouraged to occur with  
residential uses while preserving rural character and maintaining open space as the  
dominant characteristic.**

17 **Policies:**

- 18 A. Minimum parcel size is 20 acres. Base density is one dwelling unit per 20 acres.
- 19 B. Preference shall be given to PRD cluster development consisting of either attached or  
20 detached housing on parcels at least 20 acres in size in the event subdivision of land  
occurs provided that at least 50% is allocated for permanent open space , of which no  
21 more than 15% can be allocated to community area as defined in chapter 16.17 ICC,  
and there are no adverse impacts to critical areas or natural resource conservation  
areas.
- 22 C. Upon adoption of this plan, Rural Agriculture landowners will be allocated Earned  
23 Development Units based on the time of commitment of their conservation easement

1 in a Farm/Forest Management Plan. A schedule for the allocation of Earned  
2 Development Units shall be shown in the development regulations with a clear  
relationship between number of earned units and time of commitment of conservation  
easement.

- 3 D. Earned development units may be used pursuant to an adopted Farm/Forest  
4 Development and Management Plan through boundary line adjustment, land division  
or PRD with a maximum lot size of 2.5 acres. No PRD density bonus shall be given  
5 to PRDs created as part of a Farm/Forest Plan. The plan will cover such items as the  
6 general location of earned development units, identify action to strengthen the farm  
or forest unit, shall encompass the entire farm or forest unit, shall commit at least  
7 75% of the farm or forest unit to a conservation easement for no less than 10 years,  
and must protect the most productive portions of the farm or forest unit and enhance  
8 commercial productivity. All uses allowed in the Rural land use designation shall be  
allowed in the remaining 25%. Earned development units may be used only on land  
9 that does not contain prime soils or is otherwise not suitable for farming. Earned  
development units may be located on the Farm unit or other Rural, Rural Agriculture,  
10 Rural Forest or Commercial Agriculture lands owned by the farm or forest operator  
provided that at least 75% of the Farm unit is kept in a conservation easement.
- 11 E. Right-to-farm and forest measures shall protect the right to pursue farm and forestry  
activities.
- 12 F. The Rural Agriculture designation shall provide for appropriately categorized  
permitted and conditional uses that are compatible with the surrounding area and  
13 include accessory uses, agricultural products (growing, harvesting, managing,  
processing and sale), bed and breakfast rooms, communication towers, equestrian  
14 centers, essential public facilities, farm/forest produce stands, farm worker dwellings,  
forest products (growing, harvesting, managing, processing and sale), guest cottages,  
15 gun clubs and shooting ranges, home industries, home occupations, kennels, minor  
utilities, planned residential developments, seasonal sale of farm produce, single  
16 family dwellings, surface mining, and water tanks.
- 17 G. Measures shall be used to support roadside stands or farmers' markets which may  
help farmers who wish to directly market products to nearby residential areas.
- 18 H. Encourage the conservation of lands suitable for agricultural use and support farming  
as an activity valued in the County.
- 19 I. Cooperative agricultural production and marketing will be encouraged.
- 20 J. Encourage agricultural landowners to retain their lands in agricultural production and  
to utilize tax incentive programs.
- 21 K. Support innovative public and private programs that provide farmers incentives to  
22 stay on the land.
- 23
- 24

1           ***Special Review District (SD)***

2           **Goal:**

3           **Provide for unique areas in the County where special review shall be required**  
4           **through the master plan process to protect lands and structures that have historical,**  
5           **archaeological or environmental significance.**

6           **Policies:**

- 7           A. A master plan shall be required for all developments.
- 8           B. Protect lands and structures that have historical, archeological or environmental  
9           significance while allowing a unique combination of uses that enhance, conserve or  
10           highlight these features of significance.
- 11           C. Encourage diverse economic opportunity which is complimentary to protecting the  
12           historical, archaeological or environmentally significant features and which allows the  
13           Special Review District to remain economically viable.
- 14           D. Preserve viewsapes and natural landscapes.
- 15           E. Encourage clustering of structures.
- 16           F. Must ensure protection of Rural Character.
- 17           G. Au Sable Institute
- 18           1. Design, color, architecture and materials should be integrated within the entire site  
19           and should recognize the historical style.
- 20           2. Protect existing and rehabilitated prairie lands through habitat and ecological  
21           restoration efforts.
- 22           H. The Greenbank Farm shall comply with the provisions and intent of the approved Master  
23           Plan.
- 24           I. Casey Conference Center.
- 25           1. Provide for a continuation of the adaptive re-use of the historic Fort Casey structures  
26           and parade ground as a conference center in a manner that preserves and highlights  
27           features of historical significance.
- 28           2. Provide for expanded conference center activities while conserving lands that have  
29           environmental significance, including Crockett Lake and its associated wetlands, the  
30           beachfront and bluff areas, and substantial forested areas.

(Ord. C-166-01 [PLG-027-01], January 7, 2002), (Ord. C-91-02 [PLG014-02], December 16, 2002), (Ord. C-49-04 [PLG-038-03] April 12, 2004)

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**RESOURCE LAND POLICIES**

**Commercial Agriculture (CA)**

**Goal:**

**Reserve lands which because of their size, soil type, and active management are part of an essential land base to continued commercial agriculture, and assure their continued viability to serve as a resource for food, fiber, feed and forage.**

**Policies:**

- A. Minimum parcel size shall be 40 acres. Base density is one dwelling unit per 40 acres.
- B. Preference shall be given to PRD cluster development consisting of either attached or detached housing on parcels at least 40 acres in size in the event subdivision of land occurs, provided that at least 50% is allocated for permanent open space, of which no more than 15% can be allocated to community area as defined in chapter 16.17 ICC, and there are no adverse impacts to critical areas or natural resource conservation areas.
- C. Upon adoption of this plan, Agricultural Resource landowners will be allocated Earned Development Units based on the time of commitment of their conservation easement in a Farm/Forest Management Plan. A schedule for the allocation of Earned Development Units shall be shown in the development regulations with a clear relationship between number of earned units and time of commitment of conservation easement.
- D. Earned development units may be used pursuant to an adopted Farm/Forest Development and Management Plan through land division or PRD with a maximum lot size of 2.5 acres. No PRD density bonus shall be given to PRDs created as part of Farm/Forest Plan. The plan will cover such items as the general location of earned development units, identify action to strengthen the farm or forest unit, shall

1 encompass the entire farm or forest unit, shall commit at least 75% of the farm or  
2 forest unit to a conservation easement for no less than 20 years, and must protect the  
3 most productive portions of the farm or forest unit and enhance commercial  
4 productivity. All uses allowed in the Rural land use designation shall be allowed in  
5 the remaining 25%. Earned development units may be used only on land that does  
6 not contain prime soils or is otherwise not suitable for farming. Earned development  
7 units may be located on the Farm unit or other Rural, Rural Agriculture, Rural Forest  
8 or Commercial Agriculture lands owned by the farm or forest operator provided that  
9 at least 75% of the Farm unit is kept in a conservation easement.

6 E. The Commercial Agriculture designation shall provide for appropriately categorized  
7 permitted and conditional uses that include accessory uses, agricultural products  
8 (growing, harvesting, managing, processing and sale), bed and breakfast rooms,  
9 communication towers, equestrian centers, essential public facilities, farm/forest  
10 produce stands, farm worker dwellings, forest products (growing, harvesting,  
11 managing, processing and sale), guest cottages, gun clubs and shooting ranges, home  
12 industries, home occupations, kennels, minor utilities, planned residential  
13 developments, seasonal sale of farm produce, single family dwellings, surface  
14 mining, and water tanks.

11 F. Achieve agricultural preservation through:

- 12 1. Right-to-farm and forest measures which protect the right to pursue farm and  
13 forestry activities.
- 14 2. Support the continuation of preferential tax programs.

14 G. Encourage an effective stewardship of the environment to conserve and protect  
15 Commercial Agriculture lands.

- 16 1. Prevent or correct agricultural practices that produce non-point source pollution  
17 of surface and groundwater.
- 18 2. Take measures to minimize adverse impacts of agricultural activities.

17 H. Protect agricultural operations from incompatible uses by using measures including,  
18 but not limited to:

- 19 1. Ensuring that uses on adjacent lands do not interfere with continuing agricultural  
20 good management practices on resource lands;
- 21 2. Setbacks and buffer strips should be on land within the development unless an  
22 alternative is mutually agreed on by adjacent landowners; and
- 23 3. Public education concerning resource activities and the common benefits derived  
24 from them.

24 I. Protect and promote related development such as farmers markets and roadside  
stands, cooperative marketing, and value-added products, etc.

- 1 J. Strengthen public disclosure of current adjacent agricultural activities by means of a  
"right to farm" notice on the deed, area maps, etc.
- 2 K. Support the continued existence of agricultural lands by means of tax incentives or  
other appropriate financial aid or incentives.
- 3 L. Coordinate agricultural land preservation policies with other jurisdictions, special  
4 districts and their respective programs.
- 5 M. Coordinate agricultural land preservation policies with other County-wide Planning  
Policies through:
- 6 1. Correlating agricultural land preservation policies with Urban Growth Area  
7 policies and with public facility and service provision policies to prevent the  
extension of urban services to areas intended for continued agricultural use;
- 8 2. Ensuring that public facility and service extension, even if not directly serving the  
9 agricultural lands, do not stimulate the conversion of agricultural land or make its  
preservation and protection more difficult.
- 10 N. In order to assure the rights of agricultural land owners and to provide them  
11 reasonable flexibility to modify classification of their land, owners of agricultural  
land may request change of agricultural lands classification under certain  
circumstances.
- 12 O. Cooperative agricultural production and marketing will be encouraged.

13 ***Mineral Lands Overlay***

14 **Goal:**

15 **Conservation of long-term of mineral lands to ensure current and future supplies of**  
16 **sand, gravel, and non-renewable minerals, and the protection of mineral lands from**  
17 **urban encroachment while ensuring environmental protection through appropriate**  
18 **siting, operation, reclamation standards and groundwater protection measures.**

19 **Policies:**

- 20 A. Maintain and enhance natural resource based industries.
- 21 1. Assure conservation of mineral resource lands.
- 22 a) Assure that the use of lands adjacent to mineral resource lands do not interfere  
23 with the continued use, in accordance with best management practices, of lands  
designated for the extraction of minerals.
- 24 b) Assure that the excavated land will have an ultimate economic use which will  
complement and preserve the value of adjoining land.
- 25 c) Maintain the contribution of mining and processing operations to the Island  
County employment base.

1           2. Island County will provide for title or plat notification for property owners within  
2           300 feet of an existing approved mining operation.

3           3. Regulate surface mining operations to minimize land use conflicts through the  
4           conditional use process.

5           4. Apply standards which consider noise levels, light pollution, dust, visual  
6           screening, transportation impacts, hours of operation, water quality and  
7           groundwater protection and consumption, to new and expanding mine operations.

8           5. Encourage the purchase of development rights, by the mine developer, of the area  
9           within 300 feet of the proposed mine, thus limiting use within that area to  
10          forestry, agricultural or designated open space, for the life of the mining  
11          operation.

12          B. Allow extractive industries to locate where prime natural resource deposits exist,  
13          provided these sites are separated by buffers from existing residential areas and  
14          restored for appropriate reuse after removing the resource material.

15          C. Discourage new residential uses from locating near active extractive sites, unless the  
16          residential developer provides adequate buffering.

17          D. Operation of new and expanding sites will be regulated by land development  
18          standards to ensure proper siting and to minimize environmental impacts during  
19          operation.

20          E. There is no minimum parcel size for existing operations. Future commercial sites  
21          generally should be 10 acres or greater to provide for adequate screening. Future  
22          small scale operations such as borrow pits may be less than 10 acres.

23          F. On sites with disturbed areas of three acres or less, site reclamation will be carried out  
24          as soon as practical, as phased operations are completed, to prevent erosion and water  
25          quality degradation, and to return the site to a natural state. Reclaimed sites can be  
26          used for any of the uses permitted in the underlying land use designation.

27          G. Surface mining is not considered to be a permanent use of the land. The land should  
28          be utilized consistent with the long-term plans of the community, and mining allowed  
29          based upon performance standards.

30          H. Overlay policies and development regulations shall be implemented in addition to  
31          those associated with the underlying land use designation. When there is a conflict in  
32          policy statements or development regulations, the more restrictive shall apply.

33          I. Island County shall notify adjacent landowners of the existence of a surface mine and  
34          to the extent known, undeveloped mineral resources, acknowledging that surface  
35          mining is market-dependent, and operations may be intermittent and more or less  
36          intense at times.

1 **GENERAL LAND USE POLICIES**

2 ***Joint Planning Areas***

3 **Goal:**

4 **Joint Planning Areas are intended to provide for coordinated planning and**  
5 **development of areas of special interest to the municipalities including principal**  
6 **municipal entrance roads and adjacent areas, well fields, and open space corridors**  
7 **shared by the County and the Municipalities. Joint Planning Areas also are**  
8 **intended to preserve the potential to expand UGAs if expansion is needed in the**  
9 **future.**

10 **Policies:**

11 A. Joint Planning Areas shall be designated jointly by the County and the Municipalities  
12 and shall include but not be limited to:

- 13 1. Potential UGA Expansion Areas to accommodate urban growth not otherwise  
14 accounted for in current municipal comprehensive plans.;
- 15 2. Scenic Corridors;
- 16 3. Open Space Corridors; and
- 17 4. Coupeville Water Resource Protection Areas.

18 B. Joint Planning Areas shall be illustrated in the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map  
19 and show in the Zoning Atlas.

20 C. Municipal and County Land Use and Capital Facility Plans shall be coordinated  
21 within Joint Planning Areas.

22 D. Cities, Towns and the County shall jointly develop implementation strategies for the  
23 Open Space Corridors identified within Joint Planning Areas in the Natural Lands  
24 Element of the County Comprehensive Plan.

25 E. Land development decisions shall be managed in Joint Planning Areas to not  
26 preclude the future expansion of UGAs.

(Ord. C135-99 [PLG-042-99], April 10, 2000)

27 ..

1        **Wetlands Overlay**

2            **Goal:**

3            **To protect wetlands from a net loss in functions.**

4            **Policies:**

5            A. Protect, preserve, and enhance wetlands with the intent to achieve no net loss of  
6            wetland functions.

7                1. Implement non-regulatory wetlands protection measures such as acquisition and  
8                incentive programs and the public benefit ratings system.

9                2. Provide continuity of natural systems by establishing protected corridors of native  
10                vegetation between wetlands systems using buffer averaging, density incentives,  
11                land acquisition, site design and other techniques.

12            B. Consider economic, environmental, and cultural costs when evaluating proposals for  
13            wetland alterations, and recognize instances where development or alteration within  
14            or adjacent to wetlands may be acceptable.

15            C. When reasonable and practical, development will be located away from regulated  
16            wetlands by use of buffers and PRDs.

17            D. Maps, site-specific studies, and information collected by other agencies available for  
18            public review will be made readily accessible to aid in the protection of these areas.

19            E. Adverse Alteration of wetlands will be permitted only after careful consideration of the  
20            function of the area, the sensitivity of the area to disturbance, and the intensity and  
21            potential risks associated with a proposed land use.

22            F. When a violation of regulations is identified, the enforcement action and severity of any  
23            penalty will be proportional to the nature and circumstances of the violation and the  
24            damage or risk to wetland.

(Ord. C-02-08 [PLG- 011-07], March 17, 2008)

25        **Critical Areas**

26            **Goal:**

27            **Maintain healthy, functioning ecosystems to benefit the residents of the County  
28            through the protection of critical areas.**

29            **Policies:**

30            A. Development regulations to protect critical areas should be adopted after considering  
31            scientific information judged by the County to be the best available at the time of  
32            enactment.

- B. To the fullest extent possible, the protection of critical areas should be accomplished through the voluntary cooperation of land owners and should minimize the burdens imposed on land owners.
  - C. To the fullest extent possible, any regulation adopted to protect critical areas should be based on and adapted to the local circumstances unique to Island County.
  - D. When reasonable and practical, except when critical area regulations deny reasonable use of property, impacts from new uses or activities to critical areas or critical area buffers should be avoided.
  - E. When alteration of a critical area or critical area buffer by a new use or activity will adversely affect the critical area and cannot be reasonable and practically avoided, then the alteration should be reduced.
  - F. When alteration of a critical area or critical area buffer by a new use or activity will adversely affect the critical area and cannot be reasonably and practically avoided or reduced, then the alteration should be restored.
  - G. When alteration of a critical area or critical area buffer by a new use or activity will adversely affect the critical area and cannot be reasonably and practically avoided or reduced or restored, then the alteration should be compensated for through mitigation.
  - H. Generally, on-site mitigation for the adverse alteration of a critical area or critical area buffer should be preferred. Off-site mitigation should be preferred when on-site mitigation is not feasible, not practical or provides greater protection to critical areas. When neither on-site nor off-site mitigation is feasible, practical or provides greater protection to critical areas, then compensation for the adverse alteration of a critical area or critical area buffer may occur through the payment of a fee in lieu of mitigation.
  - I. Regulations to protect critical areas:
    - 1. Should not make any existing parcel or lot unusable;
    - 2. Should not prevent the provision of needed public transportation and utility projects;
    - 3. Should be sufficiently flexible to be adjusted on a case-by-case basis to meet site-specific conditions; and
    - 4. Should utilize review processes that are proportional to the scope or scale of the proposal and or alteration under review.
    - 5. When considering reasonable use of property, modifications of other regulations that may avoid or reduce the alteration is preferred before modifying critical areas standards.
  - J. Any changes to policies and regulations to protect critical areas should be applied in a fair and equitable manner based on a predictable process to allow property owners to transition from old to new rules and standards.
  - K. Development proposals that affect wetlands should incorporate measure and practices that reduce the quantity and improve the quality of storm water runoff by controlling pollutants at their sources and retaining natural vegetation, soils and drainage patterns
- (Ord. C-02-08 [PLG- 011-07], March 17, 2008).

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***Aquifer Recharge Areas***

Goals and policies for aquifer recharge areas may be found in the Water Resources Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

***Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas Overlay***

**Goal:**

**To protect fish and wildlife habitat areas.**

**Policies:**

- A. Develop specific criteria and processes to nominate, designate and classify habitats and species of local importance.
- B. Periodically review and update designations as new information on species viability and habitat needs becomes available.
- C. Conserve habitats necessary for continued reproductive success of designated species.
  - 1. Protect elements necessary to the survival of designated species, including habitat areas such as nests, breeding areas, nurseries from disturbance during critical life cycle periods.
  - 2. Encourage enhancement of degraded habitat areas.
  - 3. Based on the recommendations of Biological Site Assessment or Habitat Management Plan, provide physical buffers or timing restrictions around specific habitat areas used by designated species commensurate to the seasonal use of the area (where that is the case), the sensitivity of the species and habitat, the relative importance of the species and habitat, and the intensity of proposed and actual uses.
  - 4. Landscaping, screening, or vegetated buffers required through development review should retain, salvage, or re-establish native vegetation.
  - 5. Discourage use of non-native or invasive plant species.
  - 6. Encourage the provision of corridors and networks of native vegetation between protected habitat areas to minimize isolating and fragmenting designated wildlife

1 habitat. Incorporate natural resource lands supporting uses such as forestry and  
2 agriculture into wildlife corridors and networks.

3 7. Consult with state and federal agencies when making wildlife management and  
4 protection decisions.

5 8. Develop and implement programs to restore, rehabilitate, and acquire important  
6 habitat areas.

7 D. Protect all streams.

8 E. Protect near-shore habitats, including commercial and recreational shellfish areas; kelp  
9 and eelgrass beds; herring and smelt spawning areas.

10 1. The design of new and replacement on-site sewage systems shall meet the  
11 minimum requirements outlined in ICC 8.07C.

12 2. Require buffers for new development adjacent to streams and marine habitats.

13 3. Require preparation of farm plans for new agriculture uses in the Commercial  
14 Agriculture land use district.

15 4. Require implementation of best management practices for new and existing  
16 agricultural activities.

17 F. Maps, site-specific studies, and information collected by other agencies available for  
18 public review will be made readily accessible to potential and existing landowners,  
19 interested citizens, and development interests to aid in the protection of these areas.

20 G. Regulation of these areas will take into consideration the function of the area, the  
21 potential environmental costs of alterations, the sensitivity of the area to disturbance, and  
22 the intensity and potential risks associated with a proposed land use.

23 H. When a violation of the policies and regulations of this area is identified, the  
24 enforcement action and severity of any penalty will be proportional to the nature and  
25 circumstances of the violation and the damage or risk to private and public resources.

26 I. Overlay policies and development regulations shall be implemented in addition to those  
27 associated with the underlying land use designation. When there is a conflict in policy  
28 statements or development regulations, the more restrictive shall apply.

### ***Frequently Flooded Areas***

#### **Goal:**

**To protect the public health, safety and welfare, and to minimize public and private losses due to flood conditions in frequently flooded areas.**

1           **Policies:**

- 2           A. Reduce the potential for physical injury and damage to public and private property  
3           from flooding by minimizing impacts of upstream land uses.
- 4                 1. Protect natural water storage areas and drainage systems, including wetlands,  
5                 streams and lakes, to reduce downstream flooding.
- 6                 2. Ensure new development above identified thresholds minimizes additional runoff  
7                 by limiting impervious surfaces, unnecessary grading and compaction of soils,  
8                 and preserving areas of undisturbed vegetation.
- 9                 3. Ensure new development above identified thresholds is accompanied by  
10                appropriate stormwater facilities, such as detention ponds, infiltration facilities,  
11                and other measures to maintain rates of runoff at pre-development levels.
- 12                4. Impose standards for construction in frequently flooded areas to minimize the  
13                potential for physical injury and property damage.
- 14           B. Maps, site-specific studies, and information collected by other agencies available for  
15           public review will be made readily accessible to potential and existing landowners,  
16           interested citizens, and development interests to aid in the protection of these areas.
- 17           C. When a violation of the policies and regulations of this area is identified, the  
18           enforcement action and severity of any penalty will be proportional to the nature and  
19           circumstances of the violation and the damage or risk to private and public resources.
- 20           D. Development regulations shall be implemented in addition to those associated with the  
21           underlying land use designation.
- 22           E. Regulations for frequently flooded areas are contained in the ICC 17.02.

23           ***Geologically Hazardous Areas (Steep/Unstable Slopes) Overlay***

24           **Goal:**

25           **To protect the public health, safety and welfare from threats resulting from  
26           incompatible development being sited on or near steep and/or unstable slopes.**

27           **Policies:**

- 28           A. Minimize damage to life, health, property, and natural resources caused by geological  
29           processes.
- 30                 1. Require thorough geotechnical investigation of localized conditions during the  
31                 review of proposed development within areas of steep/unstable slopes. The  
32                 amount of information required will be proportionate to the severity of the  
33                 geologic hazard and the susceptibility of the proposed development.
- 34                 2. Encourage, and where appropriate, require use of special engineering, site design,  
35                 and modified construction practices.

1           3. Prohibit activities and land uses which cause or exacerbate existing hazardous  
2           geological conditions.

3           B. Maps, site-specific studies, and information collected by other agencies available for  
4           public review will be made readily accessible to potential and existing landowners,  
5           interested citizens, and development interests to aid in the protection of these areas.

6           C. Regulation of these areas will take into consideration the sensitivity of the area to  
7           disturbance, and the intensity and potential risks associated with a proposed land use.

8           D. When a violation of the policies and regulations of this area is identified, the  
9           enforcement action and severity of any penalty will be proportional to the nature and  
10          circumstances of the violation and the damage or risk to private and public resources.

11          E. Overlay policies and development regulations shall be implemented in addition to those  
12          associated with the underlying land use designation. When there is a conflict in policy  
13          statements or development regulations, the more restrictive shall apply.

14          F. Steep and unstable slope regulations are contained in ICC 17.02.

### 15          *Shorelines Overlay*

16          Goals and policies for the Shorelines Overlay may be found in the Shoreline  
17          Management Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

### 18          *Airport and Aviation Safety Overlay*

#### 19          **Goal:**

20          **Ensure that future development in the Airport and Aviation Safety Overlay protects  
21          public health, safety and welfare.**

#### 22          **Policies Applicable to NAS Whidbey Island and All Civilian Airports:**

23          A. Ensure that the permitting process for any new or expanding airport is subjected to a  
24          thorough review. Potential benefits will be carefully considered as will potential  
25          adverse impacts.

26          B. Ensure that public or private development around existing airports allows the  
27          continued use of that facility as an airport. Land within aircraft approach and  
28          departure zones will be protected from inappropriate development.

29          C. Ensure that new land uses which would attract or accommodate large concentrations  
30          of people will not be permitted to locate within approach or departure zones and/or  
31          Accident Potential Zones of existing airports.

32          D. Help to minimize the number of people exposed to very high aircraft noise levels in  
33          areas near airports through compatible land uses. In the highest airport noise level  
34          areas open/undeveloped space will be encouraged and land use densities shall remain

1 low. The objective is to achieve the greatest degree of compatibility and the least  
2 public annoyance which can be attained.

3 E. Preserve the right of airport owners and operators to continue present operations and  
4 allow for future air transportation and airport facility needs. It is also important to  
5 consider the present and future use of private property and the rights of private  
6 property owners.

7 F. New dwellings in moderate and high aircraft noise areas will be built to a noise level  
8 reducing standard that is higher than that which is obtained by building to current  
9 minimum building code standards. Structural noise attenuation standards in the  
10 higher noise areas (NAS/OLF) will be greater than that required in moderate aircraft  
11 noise areas.

12 G. Island County will notify the airport operator, state and federal aviation agencies, at  
13 the time of initial application, of any proposed actions or projects, which would lead  
14 to development near an airport that is not compatible with the airport's operations.  
15 The airport operator shall notify Island County, and potentially affected citizens, of  
16 any proposed operational changes which would have a significant impact on existing  
17 land uses.

18 H. Land use proposals, structures, or objects that would interfere with the safe operation  
19 of aircraft will be examined for compatibility as defined in CFR Title 14, FAR Part  
20 77 and FAA Terminal Instrument Procedures (TERPS) Chapter 12, and WA 31. The  
21 object is to permit land uses which allow safe aircraft operations as defined in the  
22 documents referenced above. **Obstructions that would require alterations in flight  
23 paths will not be permitted.**

24 I. A public site plan review is required in the event airport operations exceed an  
25 operational growth rate of 30% in 3 years which necessitates expansion of existing  
26 airport boundaries.<sup>9</sup>

27 J. Island County will require a Comprehensive Plan Amendment for the establishment of  
28 any proposed new airport.

29 K. Require advance notification of future owners or renters of properties within noise  
30 impact areas of potentially significant noise impacts.

31 L. Overlay policies and development regulations shall be implemented in addition to those  
32 associated with the underlying land use designation. When there is a conflict in policy  
33 statements or development regulations, the more restrictive shall apply.

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34 <sup>9</sup> Take-offs and landings as referenced in Island County Transportation Plan Table V-9.

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**Policies Applicable to NAS Whidbey Island Only:**

M. Island County will discourage residential development in Aircraft Accident Potential Zones (APZ). To protect the ongoing and future operational use of NAS Whidbey Island, Island County will ensure that future development in APZs around Ault Field

1 and Outlying Field Coupeville is at the lowest possible density consistent with the  
2 underlying land use designation.

3 N. If the Department of Defense should declare surplus any portion of NAS Whidbey  
4 Island, the County will work closely with federal and state officials, the City of Oak  
5 Harbor, and other appropriate entities to ensure that the base capital facilities are put  
6 to the best economic use, consistent with city and county comprehensive plans.

7 O. Island County will continue to work with NAS Whidbey Island to ensure land use  
8 will remain compatible with the changing needs and uses of NAS Whidbey Island.  
9 (Ord. C-87-07 [PLG-017-07], March 10, 2008)

### 10 *Archaeologically Significant Areas*

#### 11 **Goal:**

12 **To identify Island County’s archaeological resources, and to protect and preserve  
13 the cultural, historical, social, educational, and scientific value of these resources in  
14 a manner that respects their cultural significance.**

#### 15 **Policies:**

16 A. The County will prepare and maintain a current inventory of all known and suspected  
17 historic and archaeological sites in cooperation with the State Office of Archaeology and  
18 Historic Preservation and officials from the affected Indian tribe. This inventory will be  
19 kept in a secure location and used by County staff only for the purpose of verifying the  
20 presence of an archaeological site on a subject property. The County shall update its  
21 inventory of archaeological sites by incorporating information contained in the  
22 archaeological reports required by Section D below. Additionally, should any new  
23 archaeological site be discovered during development or otherwise, the County shall also  
24 incorporate information obtained from the newly discovered site in its inventory and  
25 shall forward or cause to be forwarded this information to the state Office of  
26 Archaeology and Historic Preservation and the affected Tribe.

27 B. The County will prepare and implement procedures identifying and protecting  
28 archaeological sites within its jurisdiction. The County shall provide the affected Tribe,  
29 the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, the Trust Board of the Ebey’s  
30 Landing National Historical Reserve and the Island County Historical Society with a  
31 copy of these procedures and any amendments hereto.

32 C. The County will ensure that affected tribal organization(s) and the Office of Archaeology  
33 and Historic Preservation are involved in the review of projects having potential impacts  
34 on archaeological sites by, at a minimum, providing the affected Tribe, organization and  
35 agency with a copy of the permit application for all such projects and notifying the  
36 owner or project proponent of his/her responsibility to consult with the affected Native  
37 American Tribe.

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D. Where a proposed development is located on or near an archaeological site, the County will require the property owner or project proponent to engage a qualified professional archaeologist to investigate and report to the County upon the location, condition, extent of the site and any recommendations in regard to treatment. Such report shall include consultation with the affected Indian tribe on proposed measures to avoid, protect, or

1 mitigate the impacts of the proposed project on the archaeological site. The report shall  
2 include a section describing the consultative process with the affected Tribe, setting forth  
3 the affected Tribe's comments on any findings and recommendations proposed by the  
4 archaeologist on behalf of the property owner or project proponent, any changes made to  
5 those findings and/or recommendations as a result of the consultation , and any contrary  
6 findings and/or recommendations of the affected Indian Tribe on avoidance or mitigation  
7 of the proposed project's impacts. The report shall be performed in accordance with the  
8 best available technology and techniques commonly accepted as standards in the  
9 profession of archaeology. A copy of the archaeologist's report shall be provided to the  
10 affected Tribe and the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.

6 E. No permit for an application requiring an archaeologist's report will be issued prior to  
7 the receipt by Island County of a required archaeological report and any comments  
8 submitted to the County by the Tribes. Based on the information contained in the written  
9 report of the qualified professional archaeologist, including the recommendations of the  
10 affected Indian Tribe on avoidance or mitigation of the proposed project's impacts  
11 obtained during the consultation process, the County will condition and balance project  
12 approval in a manner to avoid or minimize impacts to the site consistent with federal and  
13 state law. Avoidance and conservation of the site is the preferred treatment.

10 F. The County shall require property owners or project proponents to immediately halt  
11 work if, during the course of development, and particularly during actual construction,  
12 human remains or archaeological resources are encountered. The property owner or  
13 project proponent shall be required to contact the affected Native American Tribe, the  
14 County and the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. This contact shall  
15 initiate a consultation process for determining subsequent actions.

14 G. The County will work with affected Tribes and others to protect Native American  
15 artifacts and sites of significance, and other archaeological and cultural resources as  
16 mandated by RCW 27.53.

### 16 *Historic Preservation*

#### 17 **Goal:**

17 **To identify Island County's historic resources, and to protect and preserve these**  
18 **resources in a manner that respects their importance.**

#### 19 **Policies:**

19 A. Encourage management and preservation of Island County's historic resources.

20 B. Adhere to the standards of the Comprehensive Plan for Ebey's Landing National  
21 Historical Reserve as set forth in the Interlocal Agreement with the National Park  
22 Service, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, and Town of Coupeville.

22 C. Continue to support and strengthen the functions of the Central Whidbey Island  
23 Historical Preservation District Advisory Committee.

- 1 D. Development in the Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve or other scenic and/or  
2 historic areas will be designed to protect identified historic sites, structures, and  
3 panoramic vistas. Vegetative screening, setbacks, exterior design measures, view  
4 corridor protection and other suitable forms of mitigation will be used to lessen the  
5 impact of development within such areas.
- 6 E. Provide technical assistance to citizens in other parts of the County in forming local  
7 historic preservation districts.
- 8 F. Encourage the preservation and restoration of historic structures by continuing to provide  
9 special tax valuation for historic structures as directed by RCW 84.26.

### Residential Development

#### Goal:

10 **Encourage clustered residential development where appropriate. All residential**  
11 **development should preserve the community feel of an area and further the**  
12 **protection of rural character in Island County**

#### Policies:

- 13 A. Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density  
14 development.
- 15 B. Standards for subdivisions and planned residential developments shall encourage  
16 clustering and avoid or minimize the adverse impacts to the visual or physical  
17 environment while still fostering rural lifestyles and rural character.
- 18 C. In a cluster development, lots should be grouped on a limited portion of the site and  
19 should be smaller than those in a conventional subdivision. As a result, part of the site  
20 shall remain undeveloped while retaining the same overall number of units.
- 21 D. Greater density bonuses shall be available in cluster developments for providing the type  
22 of land and open space amenities which the community most values.
- 23 E. Provide locational criteria for cluster subdivisions.
- 24 F. Provide for flexible building envelopes.
- 25 G. Provide for varied spacing between buildings. In some cases allow “zero lot lines” for  
26 single family residential developments. In other cases, such as co-housing projects,  
27 provide for greater spacing in clusters to foster rural living and privacy on individual lots  
28 as well as within clusters.
- 29 H. Planned Residential Developments shall require a landscaping plan that requires the  
30 retention of existing native vegetation.
- 31 I. Minimize impervious surfaces.
- 32 J. Planned Residential Developments require identification of dedicated open space areas.

- 1 K. Permit the use of open space areas in Planned Residential Developments for off-site  
2 wells, septic systems, trails and walkways, and, where desired by applicants, permit trail  
3 systems through open space areas to neighboring properties as connections to other trail  
4 systems.
- 5 L. Develop guidelines which require Planned Residential Developments be separated from  
6 lands designated Commercial Agriculture and Mineral Resource by dedicated open  
7 space areas or by other buffering measures. Buffers do not always mean trees, but may  
8 also be just a distance.
- 9 M. Conserve the County's rural and open space character by directing and supporting  
10 residential growth within defined areas and by maintaining low density rural areas.
- 11 N. Provide for duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes in the Rural Residential land use district.
- 12 O. Both attached and detached housing units will be provided for in Planned Residential  
13 Developments with conditions which preserve rural character.
- 14 P. Provide for a variety of residential densities.
- 15 Q. Limit overall area which can be developed for large lot residential development.
- 16 R. Street yard setbacks shall be based on road classifications.
- 17 S. Innovative development concepts will be encouraged to buffer agricultural and mineral  
18 resource lands from development.
- 19 T. Lot size averaging is allowed in subdivisions and short plats.
- 20 U. Designate the siting of water storage facilities by public water systems as permitted in all  
21 land use designation subject to screening requirements.

### *Economic Development*

#### **Goal:**

**Encourage diverse economic development consistent with adopted comprehensive plans, especially opportunities for unemployed and disadvantaged residents and in areas experiencing insufficient economic growth, within the capacities of natural resources, public services and facilities. Strive to increase locally based non-military jobs from the current 50% of the County labor force to 60% of the labor force by the year 2020 (this would result in a 4,000 job increase above the 1996 level of locally based jobs). The focus of job development should be the retail, service and manufacturing sectors.**

#### **Policies:**

- 22 A. Encourage a diversity of economic activities within appropriate areas of Island  
23 County. These may include tourism, agriculture, professional, information  
24 processing, forestry, fisheries and commercial development. These economic  
25 activities should reflect the distinctive characters of the four County planning areas.

- 1 B. Acknowledge as a basis for planning that the goals of preserving rural lands and  
2 enhancing economic vitality are complementary and not mutually exclusive. The  
3 County’s rural character is a direct economic asset. It is a major factor behind the  
4 tourism industry and a major attraction for retirees and new businesses that want a  
5 higher quality of life for themselves and their employees.
- 6 C. Overall economic development with regional orientation will be pursued in  
7 cooperation with local government and the private sector, targeting specific projects  
8 aimed at diversifying and stabilizing the economy.
- 9 D. Retain existing businesses in the region and minimize obstacles to their expansion,  
10 where appropriate.
- 11 E. Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density  
12 development.
- 13 F. The development of “living wage” employment opportunities is actively encouraged  
14 to reduce off-island commuting and provide career opportunities.
- 15 G. Pursue the development of a diversified economy that attracts business activities that  
16 inject “new money” into the local economy (i.e. academic and research organizations,  
17 light industries, financial services, information processing, engineers, and home  
18 businesses) and includes appropriate service industries such as health care and  
19 professional services.
- 20 H. Commercial developments must be designed and located to provide goods and  
21 services in a convenient, safe, attractive and environmentally responsible manner.
- 22 I. Regional shopping centers must locate within municipal UGAs.
- 23 J. Marinas and water-related commercial uses will develop in accordance with the SMP.
- 24 K. Encourage and support public/farmers markets and small-scale farming operations.
- 25 L. Encourage and support efforts to enhance the profitability of agriculture and forestry  
26 operations with value-added and specialty products and cooperative marketing  
27 programs.
- 28 M. Encourage the development of appropriate support facilities and programs for the  
29 retirement industry.
- 30 N. Encourage home occupations and home industries.
- 31 O. Existing businesses that serve municipal UGAs will be encouraged to remain within  
32 these areas and expand as needed.
- 33 P. Contain isolated non-residential uses.
- 34 Q. Island County’s land use decisions will support the retention and future use of NAS  
35 Whidbey, including OLF Coupeville and the Seaplane Base for use by military  
36 aviation. In the event that any military facilities are removed, downsized or closed,

1 the County will promote the future use of these facilities for aviation-related  
2 activities. Should this not be economically viable, Island County will aggressively  
3 work to convert these capital assets into comparable economic benefits for the  
4 County and adjacent developed areas.

- 3 R. Encourage agricultural and forestry land uses that help farmers and foresters stay on  
4 the land thus protecting the County's rural character, which in turn, attracts other  
5 economic activities.

### 5 *Small-Scale Recreation or Tourism Uses*

#### 6 **Goal:**

7 **Pursuant to RCW 36.70A.070(5)(d)(ii), provide the opportunity for the**  
8 **intensification of development on lots in the rural area containing, or new**  
9 **development of, small-scale recreational or tourist uses, including commercial**  
10 **facilities to serve those recreational or tourist uses, that rely on a rural location and**  
11 **setting, but that do not include new residential development**

#### 10 **Policies:**

- 11 A. Provide for Small Bed and Breakfasts (1 to 2 rooms) in the Rural Residential, Rural,  
12 Rural Forest, Rural Agriculture and Commercial Agriculture land use designations.
- 13 B. Provide for Bed and Breakfast Inns (3 to 12 rooms) in the Rural Residential and Rural  
14 land use designations.
- 15 C. Provide for Country Inns (13 to 40 rooms) in the Rural land use designation, with  
16 appropriate screening, setbacks, and open space area requirements. For developments in  
17 the shoreline areas, the visual impact from the water shall be considered.
- 18 D. Provide for other small-scale recreation and tourist uses in the Rural land use  
19 designation, such as golf courses, model hobby parks, restaurants, wineries and  
20 breweries on parcels of an appropriate size. Provided, all activities shall be screened  
21 from the view of adjacent neighbors and the use shall not disrupt the character of any  
22 surrounding permitted uses. Residential development around golf courses, if any, must  
23 meet all requirements for residential development in the Rural land use designation.

### 18 *Isolated Non-Residential, Home Occupations and Home Industries*

#### 19 **Goal:**

20 **Pursuant to RCW 36.70A.070(5)(d)(iii), provide the opportunity for the**  
21 **intensification of development on lots in the rural area containing existing isolated**  
22 **non-residential uses or new development of isolated cottage industries and isolated**  
23 **small-scale businesses that are not principally designed to serve the existing and**  
24 **projected rural population and non-residential uses, but do provide job**  
25 **opportunities for rural residents.**

1           **Policies:**

- 2           A. Isolated Non-Residential. The intensification of development on lots in the rural area  
3           containing existing isolated non-residential uses shall be permitted according to  
4           development standards which address impacts on surrounding properties.
- 5           B. Home Occupations. Allow the intensification or development of home occupations in  
6           the Rural Residential, Rural, Rural Agriculture, Commercial Agriculture or Rural Forest  
7           land use designations.
- 8           C. Home Industries. Allow the intensification or development of home industries in the  
9           Rural, Rural Agriculture, Commercial Agriculture or Rural Forest land use designations  
10           taking into account the size the parcel it is permitted and the associated impacts of the  
11           use. Provided that if a home industry grows too large or adversely impacts neighbors, it  
12           shall be required to relocate to a non-residential or mixed-use land use designation.

13           ***Essential Public Facility Policies***

14           **Goal:**

15           **Provide for the siting of essential public facilities.**

16           **Policies:**

- 17           A. Provision shall be made in the development regulations for siting important and  
18           essential public or quasi-public facilities of County or State-wide significance.  
19           Examples include, but are not limited to, airports, state education facilities, solid  
20           waste handling facilities, and public and private utilities.
- 21           B. Siting requirements will be important factors in determining whether essential public  
22           facilities will be located in urban, growth or in rural areas. Siting requirements for  
23           County facilities within UGAs will be jointly and cooperatively established with the  
24           municipalities.
- 25           C. Essential public facilities should not be located in Resource Lands and Critical Areas  
26           unless there is a demonstrated need and no alternative siting options are  
27           reasonable/feasible. Siting of essential Public Facilities within Resource and Critical  
28           Lands must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plans of the County and  
29           Municipalities and must be compatible with adjacent land use and consistent with  
30           development regulations adopted pursuant to RCW 36.70A.
- 31           D. Essential public facilities sited outside of urban and urban growth areas must be self-  
32           supporting and not require the extension of Municipal urban services and facilities.
- 33           E. The siting of major energy facilities, including throughput transmission facilities,  
34           shall not be considered essential public facilities and therefore, comprehensive plans,  
35           development regulations and local policies will apply to the siting of such facilities.
- 36           F. Essential public facilities shall not be sited in the Commercial Agriculture land use  
37           district.

1        **Public Services**

2        **Goal:**

3        **Ensure that those public services necessary to support development shall be**  
4        **adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for**  
5        **occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally**  
6        **established minimum standards.**

7        **Policies:**

- 8        A. Promote the adopted emergency services plan. The objective is to avoid duplication,  
9        foster rapid efficient communication and insure prompt delivery of emergency  
10       services.
- 11       B. Promote the development of a comprehensive social and health service delivery  
12       program focusing on the identification of valid social and health needs and  
13       implementation of action programs.
- 14       C. Coordinate and plan for the provision of public services, and their related facilities, in  
15       the most cost effective manner incorporating both the public and private sector.

16       **Environmental Quality**

17       **Goal:**

18       **Safeguard the natural environment as an integrated system where the land, water**  
19       **and air resources interact creating a balanced environment for all life on the**  
20       **islands.**

21       **Policies:**

- 22       A. Preserve Island County's environmental quality through the careful use of land, water  
23       and air resources.
- 24       B. Preserve a high level of air quality.
- 25           1. Emphasis will be given to alternative forms of transportation (public transit, car  
26           pools, bicycle and pedestrian trails) decreasing dependency on the single  
27           occupant automobile.
- 28           2. Promote non-polluting alternatives to wood burning, such as solar heating and  
29           chipping instead of burning slash.
- 30       C. Encourage sound use of land resources.

- 1           1. Infilling of developed lands, Urban Growth Areas and areas of more intensive  
2           rural development will be encouraged in order to provide public facilities and  
3           services in the most efficient manner.
- 4           2. Extraction of mineral resources must minimize detrimental effects to the  
5           environment.
- 6           D. Conserve energy by encouraging efficient consumption and proper land use  
7           management.
- 8           1. Government must provide leadership and education in employing energy  
9           conservation practices and the use of renewable energy technologies.
- 10           a) Recycling of wastes and use of recycled or reused materials will be  
11           encouraged.
- 12           b) Use of gray and treated black water will be encouraged, provided treatment  
13           design meets public health standards.
- 14           2. Transportation systems and land use patterns must be designed to consider  
15           conservation of energy. Primary employers, commercial users and population  
16           centers will be clustered where possible to minimize worker, service and  
17           consumer travel.
- 18           3. Government services will be sited to minimize consumer travel.
- 19           E. Implement the existing Coordinated Water System Plan to effectively guide the  
20           development, expansion, combination and coordination of water systems in the  
21           County.
- 22           F. When converting land to a use that requires water availability, Island County will  
23           prohibit major alterations to the land beyond the minimum necessary to do soil and water  
24           testing prior to the issuance of a water right or other state or local authorized evidence of  
25           adequate potable water.
- 26           G. Island County will encourage developments and structures with energy conservation  
27           technologies.
- 28           H. High intensity lighting is discouraged, but where necessary will require that it must be  
29           shielded from adjacent properties and roads and shielded and directed down to reduce  
30           impacts to the dark sky.
- 31           J. Ensure that regulations to protect the environment are fair, flexible and scientifically  
32           based.
- 33           I. For agricultural activities, to protect environmental quality, utilize management practices  
34           that are tailored to the level and intensity of the agricultural activity and meet the  
35           requirements of the Growth Management Act.  
(Ord. No. C-150-05 [PLG-021-05], May 15, 2006)

1           **Government**

2           **Goal:**

3           **Assure general public health, safety and welfare without unduly jeopardizing the**  
4           **rights of individuals.**

5           **Policies:**

6           A. All levels of government will coordinate planning and decision making to ensure  
7           consistency.

8                 1. County-wide planning policies will be given priority when conflicts arise between  
9                 jurisdictions.

10                2. Comprehensive planning must be adaptable to changing conditions.

11                3. There should be efficient inter-departmental coordination on all major programs  
12                and projects to minimize unnecessary delays in public decision making.

13           B. Private property will not be taken for public use without just compensation having  
14           been made. The property rights of landowners shall be protected from arbitrary and  
15           discriminatory actions.

16           C. Applications for County permits should be processed in a timely and fair manner to  
17           ensure predictability.

18           D. Land use planning and decision making should be closely coordinated with federal,  
19           state and local agencies to achieve the County's overall goals.



1 **V. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

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2 Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan is an ongoing process involving all sectors of the  
3 community. Changes in legal codes, capital improvements and everyday decisions which affect  
4 the quality of life on the Islands will greatly depend on the desires and level of citizen support  
5 given to the planning effort. The effectiveness and value of this Plan will only be measured over  
6 an extended period of time when citizens and local officials have an opportunity to achieve  
7 common objectives.

8 The general goals and policies should first be viewed as an overall framework for future decision  
9 making. Public and private interest must carefully examine this statement of comprehensive  
10 planning policy to ensure cooperation and coordination in meeting common objectives.

11 Beyond revisions to development regulations, it is necessary for public and private interests to  
12 work in a spirit of cooperation to implement the Plan. Policies within the plan provide overall  
13 guidance for decision making, offering flexibility to developments and innovations which  
14 achieve common objectives. The Plan has been intentionally formulated to provide guidelines  
15 for future development which foster a high quality living environment for all citizens at the  
16 lowest possible public cost.

17 The following is an outline of general areas of implementation strategies. For this  
18 Comprehensive Plan to succeed, it is of utmost importance to proceed on schedule to accomplish  
19 all of these items.

20 **A. Clinton and Freeland Subarea Plans**

- 21 1. Island County will establish one sub-area planning group for Clinton and one for Freeland to  
22 further explore the opportunity of becoming a non-municipal urban growth area, the criteria  
23 for the planning groups to be determined. The initial study area for Clinton is defined as the  
Clinton Water District, and the initial study area for Freeland is defined as the Freeland  
Water District and the Holmes Harbor Water District. The studies shall be initiated prior to  
the end of 1998. It is anticipated that if the areas desire to become non-municipal UGAs, a  
UGA amendment will be ready for action prior to the County's second annual review of its  
Comprehensive Plan. Clinton Chamber of Commerce would like the study area to include  
Ken's Corner, Campbell's Glen and the development around Deer Lake.

24 **B. Continued Planning**

- 25 1. Amendments may be made to the Comprehensive Plan once a year only after careful  
26 analysis of developing trends and a finding that the proposed amendment is in the common  
27 interest of the people of Island County. The Plan shall be reviewed at least every five years  
28 by the Planning Commission in making recommendations to improve the entire Plan.  
29 Timely and thorough review of the Plan will assist in keeping it responsive to the needs of  
30 local citizens.
- 31 2. Island County will support an on-going comprehensive planning process with sufficient  
32 resources, staff, training and equipment.

- 1 3. Island County will conduct a review every two years of the Planned Residential  
2 Development program and an analysis of development patterns within designated areas of  
3 more intensive rural development.
- 4 4. The County has the necessary information systems, databases and mapping capabilities  
5 required for effective long-range planning.
- 6 5. The Planning Commission be representative of the community and well trained for their  
7 positions.

### 8 **C. Benchmark Monitoring**

- 9 1. Island County will work with the cities to set benchmarks for population and employment  
10 growth so that an annual monitoring process may be established with a detailed evaluation  
11 every five years. The first annual review would be done in 2001, so that the year 2000  
12 census data may be used.
- 13 2. Prior to the end of 1998, Island County will work with the cities to establish and adopt  
14 countywide benchmarks, so that measurable goals can be established to determine progress  
15 in implementing the Growth Management Act. The benchmarks will form a basis for the  
16 long-term monitoring and evaluation program required by the CWPPs.
- 17 3. Island County will work with the cities to establish a long-term monitoring and evaluation  
18 program for urban growth areas that is modeled after the process set forth in RCW  
19 36.70A.215. The long-term monitoring program shall commence with a first annual review  
20 in 2001 and then every five years thereafter.
- 21 4. **Preliminary List of Benchmarks.** Island County will use a benchmarking system to  
22 measure its performance on Comprehensive Plan goal and policies. Each benchmark will  
23 have progress indicators for comparison against stated goals.

#### 24 **Growth and Development**

- 25 a) *Population Growth:* Population growth by UGAs, areas of more intensive  
26 development and remainder of rural area.
- 27 b) *Development Activity:* New lots created, lot combinations, building permits,  
28 conditional use permits, shoreline and critical area permits
- 29 c) *Enforcement:* Number of enforcement cases, major issues

#### 30 **Urban Growth**

- 31 a) *UGAs Annexations:* Amendments to UGA boundaries, and location, acreage, and  
32 populations annexed
- 33 b) *Public Facilities:* Transportation, water, sewer improvements
- 34 c) *Commercial/Industrial Development:* Location, development intensity
- 35 d) *Clinton and Freeland Subarea Plans:* Status, reports, recommendations

1           **Transportation**

- 2           a) *General Transportation Indicators:* Level of service, average daily traffic, accidents,  
3           road approach permits by road type, transit ridership, non-motorized improvements

4           **Affordable Housing**

- 5           a) *Affordable Housing Supply:* Supply of affordable housing, new construction, mobile  
6           home parks, use of affordable housing density bonus
- 7           b) *Affordability:* House purchase affordability gap for buyers, home ownership rate,  
8           trend of housing costs as compared to median income, rental vacancy rate, housing  
9           affordable to low income households

10          **Economic Development**

- 11          a) *Employment:* Jobs growth, on-island employment, per capita income, poverty rate  
12          percentage of population, unemployment rate
- 13          b) *Business Growth:* Building starts or improvements
- 14          c) *Regulatory Framework:* Timeliness of permit process; improvement to process

15          **Property Rights and Permits**

- 16          a) *Development Regulations:* Land use decisions, permit review process
- 17          b) *Comprehensive Plan:* Amendments, changes to regulations

18          **Rural Lands**

- 19          a) *Rural Lands:* Residential or non-residential land development, land divisions,  
20          acreage and locations
- 21          b) *Residential Areas of More Intensive Development:* Additions, deletions, acreage,  
22          building permits, undeveloped vs. developed
- 23          c) *Measures to protect rural character:* Status, changes, gains, losses, PRDs, overall  
24          effectiveness
- 25          d) *Production:* Agricultural production, timber harvest production; small farms;  
26          employment

27          **Resource Lands**

- 28          a) *Production:* Agricultural production, timber harvest production; employment
- 29          b) *Conversion:* Residential or non-residential land development, small farms, Class IV  
30          Forest Practice Permits – acreage and location
- 31          c) *Earned development units:* Number of development units used, number of approved  
32          farm/forest plans
- 33          d) *Minerals:* Extraction - quantities, sites, etc.
- 34          e) *Forest and agriculture land taxation:* Changes and additions
- 35          f) *Measures to protect rural character:* Status, changes, gains, losses, PRDs, overall  
36          effectiveness

1           **Open Space and Recreation**

- 2           a) *Natural Lands and Open Space:* Additions, deletions, locations, acreage, innovative  
3           development activities/options, corridor protection  
4           b) *Public Benefit Rating System:* Number of properties, additions, deletions, acreage,  
5           locations  
6           c) *Parks and Recreation:* Acreage, deletions, additions, operating budget

7           **Natural Environment**

- 8           a) *Fish and Wildlife:* Health of fish and wildlife stocks  
9           b) *Wetlands and Streams:* Loss, gain, enhancements - locations and acreage  
10          c) *Ground Water:* Results of studies on quantity and quality  
11          d) *Shorelines:* Number/type of permits, enhancements, impacts (natural or other)  
12          e) *Floodplains:* New development within flood hazard zones  
13          f) *Geologic hazards:* New development within geologically hazardous areas

14          **Historic, Cultural and Archaeological Resources**

- 15          a) *Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve:* Review and updates of the ELHR  
16          Comprehensive Plan  
17          b) *Sites:* New site locations, acquisitions, alterations or losses of significant resources  
18          c) *Regulations:* New regulations (e.g. demolition ordinance), effectiveness of existing  
19          regulations, permit review findings

20          **Public Facilities and Services**

- 21          a) *Capital Facilities:* Current service levels, capital budget; 6-year financing plan  
22          b) *Utilities:* New electric service areas, telecommunication improvements - locations,  
23          types

24          **D. County/Urban Growth Area Interlocal Agreements and Joint Planning Areas**

- 25           1. The County will work with the Oak Harbor and Langley to form interlocal agreement to  
26           assist in guiding development in the unincorporated portions of the Urban Growth Areas.  
27           2. Working with the municipalities, the County will establish procedures to assist in  
28           coordinated review of land use and capital projects in Joint Planning Areas (shown on Map  
29           B).

1 **E. Historic Preservation**

- 2 1. The County will be supportive of the Congress appropriating funds to the National Park  
3 Service for the continuation of the Land Protection Plan for the Ebey's Landing National  
4 Historical Reserve until all key parcels are protected.
- 5 2. The County will participate in periodic reviews and updates of the Comprehensive Plan for  
6 Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve.
- 7 3. The County will develop a demolition ordinance for the protection of significant cultural  
8 resources.
- 9 4. The County will complete the Historic Overlay section (17.02.110.H) of the Island County  
10 Zoning Code in cooperation with the Trust Board of Ebey's Landing.

11 **F. Economic Development**

- 12 1. The County will encourage the Island County Economic Development Council, in  
13 cooperation with business associations, and the Port Districts to facilitate business training  
14 targeted to support incubator businesses.
- 15 2. Island County will work closely with Port Districts to provide small business facilities,  
16 training, promotion and marketing assistance.
- 17 3. Island County will include supporting infrastructure and transportation links for Airport  
18 areas consistent with the priorities established in the Capital Facilities and Transportation  
19 plan. Airport areas will have coordination with Port Districts, utility districts, etc., in order to  
20 provide infrastructure and transportation.
- 21 4. Island County will support marketing research and strategies by the Island County Economic  
22 Development Council for development in the Airport zone.
- 23 5. The County will develop standards for planned industrial parks in the Airport zones.
- 24 6. Design review standards shall be developed for all non-residential projects outside of UGAs  
which shall have for their primary purpose the avoidance or minimization of adverse visual  
and physical impacts on the environment and the protection of the rural character and  
surrounding lands. Specific design guidelines may be developed for subareas.  
(Ord. C-45-04 [PLG-034-03], May 10, 2004)

25 **G. Public Services**

- 26 1. Island County will inventory all social and health service programs within the County to  
27 identify possible gaps and duplications in the delivery of services.

- 1           2. Island County will participate in the planning and decision-making processes of regional  
2           health planning agencies to assure efficient delivery of health care services.

3           ***H. Environmental Quality***

- 4           1. Island County will work with other governmental agencies to encourage the establishment of  
5           effective air pollution control standards.  
6           2. Island County will include the use of energy and water conserving technology in its building  
7           standards.

- 1 3. Island County will conduct watershed-scale planning and cumulative impact analysis to  
2 assist in conservation of water resources.
- 3 4. For existing agricultural activities, Island County will develop and apply site specific  
4 measures to protect environmental quality that constitute best available science and are fair,  
5 flexible and tailored to the level and intensity of the agricultural practices and meet the  
6 requirements of the Growth Management Act.
- 7 5. Island County will develop a water quality monitoring program to help identify adverse  
8 impacts of land activities on critical areas.  
9 (Ord. No. C-150-05 [PLG-021-05], May 15, 2006)

6 **I. Rural Character**

- 7 1. Island County will work with the real estate community, landowners and other parties to  
8 ensure that everyone is aware of the various development options that exist on a given  
9 parcel. Of particular importance is to make everyone aware that PRDs are one development  
10 option.
- 11 2. Planning and Community Development will work with other County departments to  
12 continually refine and improve the PRD development concept in order to ensure that it is  
13 achieving its intended goals of preserving rural character and that it is a viable development  
14 alternative on eligible lands. Beyond density bonuses, incentives should be incorporated  
15 which encourage use of the PRD development option, including streamlining the permit  
16 process and improving development standards that may cause a reduction in development  
17 COSTS. (Ord. C-44-04 [PLG-033-03], April 12, 2004)

13 **J. Non-Residential Design**

- 14 1. Island County will develop an illustrative guidebook with specific design criteria for non-  
15 residential development. The illustrative guidebook will be continually updated and  
16 improved to include drawings and pictures that better define the desired styles of non-  
17 residential development. The guidebook should be made available to all owners and  
18 developers of commercial property.
- 19 2. Island County will develop a monitoring program for non-residential design projects in order  
20 to better evaluate whether or not the completed project meets the goals, policies and  
21 objectives within the pertinent zone.
- 22 3. The County will devise a strategy for recognition of projects that meet and/or exceed the  
23 goals and standards of the non-residential design guidelines. (Ord. C-45-04 [PLG-034-03], May 10, 2004)

20 **K. Best Management Practices**

- 21 1. Island County will conduct a review every five years of the Best Management Practices  
22 program. This review should, among other things, identify the effectiveness of specific  
23 BMPs as well as the effectiveness of the overall program.

- 1 2. Island County will continue education and outreach programs that inform farmers,  
homeowners, contractors, road departments, real estate agents and any other applicable  
2 parties as to what requirements exist and the benefit they provide.
- 3 3. A monitoring program should be developed that evaluates compliance, and effectiveness of  
BMPs once installed. Information should be provided which describes when certain  
4 temporary BMPs should be removed and how to maintain the viability of any long term,  
permanent BMPs. The monitoring program should include randomly revisiting parcels  
5 where BMPs were required to be installed to see if they are accomplishing their intended  
purpose. (Ord. C-46-04 [PLG-035-03], April 12, 2004)

6 ***L. Earned Development Unit Program***

- 7 1. Island County will conduct a review every five years of the Earned Development Unit  
program to determine if the program is meeting its intended purpose and goals.
- 8 2. Island County will develop an outreach strategy that is targeted at properties that are eligible  
for use of the program. Once the properties have been identified, Planning and Community  
9 Development will develop an informational brochure which describes the program and that  
will be mailed to all owners of the identified properties. (Ord. C-47-04 [PLG036-03], April 12, 2004)
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1 **GLOSSARY**

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2 **Accessory Dwelling Unit:** A second dwelling constructed within an existing single family  
3 home, usually for use as a rental unit. An “Accessory Unit” is a separate dwelling, including  
4 kitchen, sleeping, and bathroom facilities. Also known as “in-law apartment”.

5 **Accident Potential Zone (APZ):** Potentially hazardous areas beyond the ends of a military  
6 runway where lessening degrees of concern are a function of the distance from that runway.

7 **Act:** The Growth Management Act as enacted in chapter 17, Laws of 1990, 1st Ex. Sees., and  
8 chapter 32, Laws of 1991, 1st Special Session, State of Washington, and as subsequently  
9 amended.

10 **Adequate Public Facilities:** Facilities which have the capacity to serve development without  
11 decreasing levels of service below locally established standards.

12 **Affordable Housing:** Safe and sanitary owner occupied housing that is obtainable for 30  
13 percent of monthly gross income of a household.

14 **Air Installations Compatible Use Zones (AICUZ) Program:** A comprehensive study  
15 prepared for military air installations to identify existing and compatible land use problem areas,  
16 and to formulate courses of action to promote compatible development near the air facilities. The  
17 AICUZ Study generally contains aircraft noise contour maps, Accident Potential Zone (APZ)  
18 designations, and recommended land use matrices for land areas within those noise zones and/or  
19 APZs.

20 **Aircraft** (Federal Air Regulations Part 1): A device that is used or intended to be used for flight  
21 in the air.

22 **Airport** (Federal Air Regulations, Part 1, Definitions and Abbreviations): An area of land or  
23 water that is used or intended to be used for the landing and takeoff of aircraft, and includes its  
24 buildings and facilities, if any.

25 **Airport Operations:** A takeoff and a landing.

26 **Annexation:** The act of incorporating an area into the domain of a city.

27 **Areas of More Intensive Rural Development (RAID):** Pursuant to RCW 36.70A.070(5)(d),  
28 rural development consisting of the infill, development, or redevelopment of existing  
29 commercial, industrial, residential, or mixed-use areas. The County’s interpretation of the  
30 statutory designation criteria is contained within this plan.

31 **Assisted Housing:** Owner-occupied or rental housing which is subject to restrictions on rents or  
32 sales prices as a result of one or more project based government subsidies. Assisted housing  
33 does not include holders of non-project based Section 8 Certificates.

34 **Available Public Facilities and Services:** Facilities or services which are in place or that a  
35 financial commitment is in place to provide the facilities or services within a specified time.

1 **Best Management Practices (BMP):** Conservation practices or systems of practices and  
2 management measures that: (1) control soil loss and reduce water quality degradation; and (2)  
3 minimize adverse impacts to surface water and ground water flow, circulation patterns, and to  
4 chemical, physical, and biological characteristics of wetlands.

5 **Buffer:** A separation designed to absorb potential conflicts between differing land uses, or to  
6 protect critical areas or significant natural features.

7 **Cluster Development:** A development design technique that concentrates buildings in specific  
8 areas on a site to allow the remaining land to be used for open space.

9 **Commercial Uses:** A business use or activity involving retail or wholesale marketing of goods  
10 and services.

11 **Compatible:** To exist harmoniously together; in agreement; congruous.

12 **Comprehensive Plan:** A legal document adopted by local officials establishing policies that  
13 will guide the future physical development of the community. It will be used by local officials,  
14 planning commissions, private firms and individuals when making decisions about land use  
15 development or changes, capital improvements programming, and the enactment of development  
16 regulations and related growth management legislation

17 **Conservation Uses:** Land uses which conserve or protect natural resources or environmental  
18 quality within areas designated for flood control, protection of quality or quantity of groundwater  
19 or surface water, floodplain management, fisheries management, or protection of vegetative  
20 communities or wildlife habitats and similar uses meant to protect natural resources of the  
21 county.

22 **Conserve:** Use in a manner that maintains sustainability.

23 **Consistency:** When features of a plan or regulation are compatible with one another.

24 **Contiguous Land:** Land adjoining and touching other property including lands separated from  
25 each other by a private road or private right-of-way.

26 **Cooperative Housing:** Separate self-sustaining clustered dwelling units which are augmented  
27 with community owned and maintained facilities

28 **Coordination:** Timely consultation and cooperation among jurisdictions.

29 **County-wide Planning Policies:** As required by GMA, the Board of Island County  
30 Commissioner's adopted a series of policies which embody a vision of the future of Island  
31 County. These policies are intended to guide the development of communities in the county.

32 **Critical Areas** (as required by GMA): Critical areas include: wetlands; areas with a critical  
33 recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water; fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas;  
34 frequently flooded areas; and geologically hazardous areas.

35 **Cultural Resource:** An archeological, historical, or other feature important to the character of  
36 Island County.

1 **Density:** A measure of the intensity of development, generally expressed in terms of dwelling  
2 units per acre. It can also be expressed in terms of population density (i.e. people per acre or  
3 other units per acre).

4 **Development Standards:** Minimum standards for new development required by local  
5 governments for the provision of public facilities and the maintenance of public safety.

6 **Domestic Water System:** Any system providing a supply of potable water which is deemed  
7 adequate pursuant to RCW 19.27.097 for the intended use.

8 **Dwelling Unit:** Any building, or portion thereof which contains living facilities for not more  
9 than one family. Living facilities include provisions for sleeping, cooking, and sanitation, as  
10 required by Island County.

11 **Earned Development Unit:** The dwelling unit or fraction thereof that is granted to a farm or  
12 forest owner after the approval of a Farm or Forest Management Plan.

13 **Economic Development:** An activity that provides jobs, produces goods or services, and  
14 promotes economic health.

15 **Essential Public Facilities:** Essential public facilities include those facilities that are typically  
16 difficult to site, such as airports, state education facilities, state or regional transportation  
17 facilities, state and local correctional facilities, and solid waste handling facilities. Throughput  
18 transmission facilities are not considered essential public facilities.

19 **Existing:** Unless otherwise expressly stated, existing or vested on the effective date of this  
20 Comprehensive Plan, December 1, 1998.

21 **Existing Building:** A structure, or portion thereof, which meets the definition of existing and  
22 was lawfully erected and maintained including those which, because of the enactment of this  
23 Comprehensive Plan, no longer conforms to the land use designation in which it is located.

24 **Existing Lot:** A lot or parcel of land which meets the definition of existing and was also of  
25 record and lawfully established and maintained including those which, because of the enactment  
26 of this Comprehensive Plan, no longer conforms to the land use designation in which it is  
27 located.

28 **Existing Master Planned Resort:** A resort that was in existence on July 1, 1990 and that met  
29 the definition of an Existing Master Planned Resort at that time. The resort is developed, in  
30 whole or in part, as a significantly self contained and integrated development that includes short-  
31 term visitor accommodations associated with a range of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities  
32 within the property boundaries in a setting of significant natural amenities. An existing resort  
33 may include other permanent residential uses, conference facilities, and commercial activities  
34 supporting the resort, but only if these uses are integrated into and consistent with the on-site  
35 recreational nature of the resort. (Ord. C-97-06 [PLG-010-06], August 21, 2006)

36 **Existing Use:** A use which meets the definition of existing and was lawfully established and  
37 maintained including those which, because of the enactment of this plan's accompanying

1 development regulations, no longer conforms to the land use standards or use regulations of the  
land use district in which it is located.

2 **Farm/Forest Management and Development Plan:** A master plan for an entire farm or forest  
3 unit approved by the Island County Board of Commissioners that establishes both the planned  
4 location for earned development units and the specific actions to be taken by the County to  
strengthen and enhance the viability of the farm or forest unit.

5 **Farm or Forest Unit:** Tracts or parcels of land that are actively managed in agricultural or  
forest uses that are in one contiguous ownership..

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1 **Flight Track:** The normalized track on the ground of an aircraft's path of flight over the  
ground.

2 **GMA:** Growth Management Act (36.70A RCW), as amended.

3 **Greenbelts:** An open area that may be cultivated or maintained in a natural state surrounding  
development or used as a buffer between land uses.

4 **Growth Management:** A method to guide development in order to minimize adverse  
5 environmental and fiscal impacts, and maximize the health, safety, and welfare benefits to the  
residents of the community.

6 **Impact Fee:** A payment of money imposed upon development as a condition of development  
7 approval to pay for public facilities needed to serve new growth and development, and that is  
8 reasonably related to the new development that creates additional demand and need for public  
facilities, that is a proportionate share of the cost of the public facilities, and that is used for  
facilities that reasonably benefit the new development.

9 **Incentive Zoning:** Zoning that grants density bonuses in exchange for amenities that would not  
normally be provided through traditional zoning regulations.

10 **Inclusionary Housing:** An affordable housing strategy which seeks to provide a specified  
11 number of affordable and/or low income units within new housing developments. Inclusionary  
units are generally provided through density bonus incentives, requirements for cash  
12 contributions to a pool, or minimum percentages of affordable units, or combinations of  
requirements and incentives.

13 **Inclusionary Zoning:** Zoning which provides incentives to developers for including a specified  
14 percentage of lower cost than project standards building lots or dwelling units.

15 **Infill Development:** Development of vacant or underutilized parcels of land in otherwise  
built-up areas.

16 **Infrastructure:** Streets, water and sewer lines, utilities, and other public facilities basic and  
necessary to the functioning of an urban area.

17 **Inter Jurisdictional:** Relationships between governmental jurisdictions such as city, county,  
18 state, federal government agencies, special purpose districts, (i.e. schools, water, fire, port  
districts.)

19 **Land Bank:** Acquisition of land for the purpose of reserving it for specified future development  
20 types. The land bank concept can include management of existing publicly owned lands, with  
designated reservations or restrictions for future uses.

21 **Land Development Regulations:** Any controls placed on development or land use activities by  
22 a county or city, including, but not limited to, zoning ordinances, subdivision ordinances,  
rezoning, building codes, sign regulations, binding site plan ordinances, or any other regulations  
controlling the development of land.

1 **Land Trusts:** A land trust is an organization created to own and steward land for the purpose of  
2 preserving lands of historical significance, agricultural value, archeological significance, or open  
3 space.

4 **Land Use Inventory:** The catalog of the types, extent, distribution, and intensity of the uses or  
5 activities found on parcels of land or in spaces within a building.

6 **Land Use:** A term used to indicate the utilization of any piece of land.

7 **Large Lot Zoning:** Large minimum lot sizes which restrict the density of development.

8 **Level of Service (LOS):** A measure of the capacity of public facilities, services, and  
9 transportation.

10 **Logical Outer Boundary:** A term described in RCW 36.70A.070 and used by Island County to  
11 define the permanent outer limit of the Rural Residential, Rural Center, Rural Village, Rural  
12 Service, Light Manufacturing and Airport land use designations.

13 **Long-Term Commercial Significance:** As defined by GMA, long-term commercial  
14 significance includes the growing capacity, productivity, and soil composition of the land for  
15 long-term commercial production in consideration with the land's proximity to population areas  
16 and the possibility of more intense use of land.

17 **Low-Income Household:** Households whose income does not exceed 80 percent of the median  
18 income for the area, as determined by HUD.

19 **May:** Optional and permissive, and does not impose a requirement.

20 **Minerals:** As defined by GMA (36.70A.030 RCW), include sand, gravel, and metallic  
21 substances.

22 **Minimum Lot Size:** The smallest parcel of land which can be created by subdivision within a  
23 given zone.

24 **Mitigation:** Mitigation means (1) Avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action  
25 or parts of an action; (2) Minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action  
26 and its implementation, by using appropriate technology, or by taking affirmative steps to avoid  
27 or reduce impacts; (3) Rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected  
28 environment; (4) Reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance  
29 operations during the life of the action; (5) Compensating for the impact by replacing,  
30 enhancing, or providing substitute resources or environments; and/or (6) Monitoring the impact  
31 and taking appropriate corrective measures.

32 **Mixed Use:** A development involving a combination of residential and non-residential uses.  
33 Typically, a mixed use structure may have non-residential uses at street level with residential  
34 uses on the second floor.

35 **Mixed Use Area:** Specific areas established pursuant to RCW 36.70.A.070 as areas of more  
36 intensive development. The Rural Center, Rural Village and Rural Service land use designations  
37 are used for these areas.

1 **Municipal:** Pertaining to a legally incorporated or duly authorized association of inhabitants of  
limited area for local government or other public purposes.

2 **Native Wetland Species:** Wetland species which are indigenous to Island County. Such  
species are defined in Flora of the Pacific Northwest (C. Leo Hitchcock and Arthur Cronquist,  
3 University of Washington Press).

4 **Natural Resource Lands:** Agricultural, forest, and mineral resource lands which have  
long-term commercial significance.

5 **Non-Native Wetland Species:** Wetland species which have been accidentally or purposefully  
introduced into Island County. The development regulations contain a list of the principal  
6 non-native wetland species.

7 **Non-Residential Areas:** Specific areas established pursuant to RCW 36.70A.070 as areas of  
more intensive development. The Light Manufacturing and Airport land use designations are  
8 used for these areas.

9 **Open Space Public Benefit Rating System:** A tax reduction program for parcels which contain  
open space, or defined by RCW 84.34-020-1, the preservation of which, in its present use, serves  
10 a public purpose as defined by RCW 84.33 and RCW 84.34

11 **Open Space Taxation Program:** Forest, agricultural, and open space land valuation for tax  
purposes.

12 **Open Space:** Areas of a site designated and permanently committed as undisturbed areas or  
community area; committed to community use or committed to farm or forest use.

13 **Overlay Zones:** Additional land use regulations that guide development beyond the underlying  
14 zone.

15 **Owner:** Any person or persons, having legal right or interest such as a fee owner, contract  
purchaser, mortgagor or mortgagee, option or optionee, and beneficiary or grantor of a trust or  
16 deed of trust, but not including the grantee of an easement.

17 **Parcel:** A unit of land with legally defined boundaries.

18 **Parcelization:** Dividing or combining of land into new parcels.

19 **Performance Standards:** Standards used to regulate development based on the permissible  
impacts of a proposed use.

20 **Performance-Based Zoning:** A system which measures individual projects against clearly  
stated criteria, such as traffic impacts, neighborhood compatibility, infrastructure capacity, etc.

21 **Phasing of Development:** The gradual progression of new development outward from existing  
developed areas, supported by necessary public facilities and services.

22 **Planned Residential Development (PRD):** A Cluster residential project approved by the Board  
of Commissioners pursuant to Chapter 16.17 ICC. A PRD may include detached or attached  
23 dwelling units.

1 **Planning Period:** The 20-year or greater period established by the state as an initial planning horizon.

2 **Policy:** An agreed course of action adopted and pursued by decision makers for achieving one or several goals and objectives and used as a guide for formulating programs.

3 **Preserve:** To maintain unchanged; to keep or maintain intact.

4 **Primary Land Use:** The primary activity or structure for which a site is used.

5 **Project Improvements:** Site improvements and facilities that are planned and designed to provide service for a particular development project and that are necessary for the use and convenience of the occupants or users of the project, and are not system improvements. No improvement or facility included in a capital facilities plan approved by the governing body of the county shall be considered a project improvement.

8 **Proportionate Share:** That portion of the cost of public facility improvements that are reasonably related to the service demands and needs of new development.

9 **Public Facilities:** Capital facilities owned or operated by government entities: (a) Public streets and roads; (b) publicly owned parks, open space, and recreation facilities; (c) school facilities; and (d) fire protection facilities in jurisdictions that are not part of a fire district.

11 **Public Service Obligations:** Obligations imposed by law on utilities to furnish facilities and supply service to all who may apply for and be reasonably entitled to service.

12 **Public Services:** As defined by GMA (36.70A.030 RCW), the full range of services traditionally provided by local government including police and fire protection, roads, utilities, schools and parks.

14 **Public Utilities:** Enterprises of facilities serving the public by means of an integrated system of collection, transmission, distribution, and processing facilities through more or less permanent physical connections between the plant of the serving entity and the premises of the customer. Included are systems for the delivery of natural gas, electricity, telecommunications services, water, and the disposal of sewage.

17 **Purchased Development Rights (PDR):** Purchased of less than fee interest by a government or a non-profit public trust to protect open space, scenic, or historic areas.

18 **Real Estate Excise Tax (REET):** A tax levied on the sale of real property. The amount of the tax is determined as a percentage of the sales price.

20 **Regional Transportation Plan:** A transportation plan for the regionally designated transportation system which is produced by a Regional Transportation Planning Organization.

21 **Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO):** The voluntary organization conforming to RCW 47.80.020, consisting of local governments within a region containing one or more counties which have common transportation interests.

1 **Right-to-Farm/Right to Practice Forestry Ordinance:** Legislation protecting farmers'/timber  
2 growers' rights to conduct normal agricultural and silvicultural practices, and providing  
3 protection against nuisance lawsuits.

4 **Rural Character:** From 36.70A.030(14): Rural character refers to the patterns of land use and  
5 development established by a county in the rural element of its comprehensive plan: (a) In  
6 which open space, the natural landscape, and vegetation predominate over the built environment;  
7 (b) That foster traditional rural lifestyles, rural-based economies, and opportunities to both live  
8 and work in rural areas; (c) That provide visual landscapes that are traditionally found in rural  
9 areas and communities; (d) That are compatible with the use of the land by wildlife and for fish  
10 and wildlife habitat; (e) That reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into  
11 sprawling, low-density development; (f) That generally do not require the extension of urban  
12 governmental services; and (g) That are consistent with the protection of natural surface water  
13 flows and ground water and surface water recharge and discharge areas.

14 **Rural Governmental Services:** Public services and public facilities historically and typically  
15 delivered at an intensity usually found in rural areas, and may include domestic water systems,  
16 fire and police protection services, transportation and public transit services, and other public  
17 utilities associated with rural development and normally not associated with urban areas. Rural  
18 services do not include storm or sanitary sewers, except as otherwise authorized by RCW  
19 36.70A.110(4).

20 **Rural Lands:** All lands which are not within an urban growth area and are not designated as  
21 natural resource lands having long term commercial significance for production of agricultural  
22 products or timber.

23 **Sanitary Sewer Systems:** All facilities, including approved on-site disposal facilities, used in  
24 the collection, transmission, storage, treatment or discharge of any waterborne waste, whether  
25 domestic in origin or a combination of domestic, commercial or industrial waste.

26 **Scenic Corridor:** The viewshed generally visible to the public traveling on routes characterized  
27 by unusual natural, historic, or cultural significance.

28 **Scenic Highway:** A federal definition based upon the interim scenic byway guidance. A road  
29 that has been designated through some legislation or some other official declaration for its  
30 scenic, historic, recreational, archaeological, or cultural values.

31 **Service Area:** A geographic area defined by a county or intergovernmental agreement in which  
32 a defined set of public facilities provide service to development within the area. Service areas  
33 shall be designated on the basis of sound planning or engineering principles.

34 **Shall:** Mandatory and imposes a requirement

35 **Shoreline Public Access:** A means of physical approach to and along the shoreline available to  
36 the public.

37 **Should:** Insofar as is practical.

38 **Sole Source Aquifer:** An aquifer which supplies at least fifty percent of the drinking water  
39 consumed in the area overlying the aquifer.

1 **Small Scale:** Of a size or intensity which has minor impacts on the surrounding area and which makes minor demands on existing public facilities and services.

2 **Solid Waste Handling Facility:** Any facility for the transfer or ultimate disposal of solid waste, including land fills and municipal incinerators.

3 **Sound Attenuation:** The ability of a building's structure (roof, walls, foundation, doors, windows, vents, etc.) to prevent exterior noise from entering the interior. A measure of the lack of acoustical connection between the outdoor and indoor noise environments expressed as the amount of difference (in decibels) between the spatially averaged sound levels outdoors to indoors.

6 **Special Needs Housing:** Housing for those who face serious impediments to independent living and who require special assistance and services in order to obtain appropriate housing on a permanent, long term or transitional basis.

8 **Sprawl:** Spread out awkwardly. Development responding only to market forces, usually unplanned or poorly planned, causing rural land use change to more dense uses.

9 **State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA):** RCW 34.21 and its implementing regulations, WAC 197-11. The state law passed in 1971 requiring state and local agencies to consider environmental impacts in the decision-making process. A determination of environmental significance must be made for all non-exempt projects or actions which require a permit, license or decision from a government agency. If the action does not have significant adverse environmental impacts, a Declaration of Non-Significance (DNS) is issued. If the action or project could have major impacts, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required. The Act requires consideration of alternatives and mitigation of environmental impacts for major public and private projects and programs.

14 **Steep Slopes:** Refers to WAC 365-190-080, or those lands which have a slope greater than 40 percent.

16 **Stormwater:** Channeled water that is generated by precipitation and is often routed into drain systems in order to prevent flooding.

17 **Streams:** Those areas where naturally occurring surface waters produce a defined channel, bed, bank or side, and where there is clear evidence of the passage of water such as bedrock channels, gravel beds, sand and silt beds and defined channel swales. The channel or bed need not contain water year-round. This definition is not intended to include irrigation or drainage ditches or swales, canals, storm or surface water run-off devices or other artificial watercourses unless they are used by salmonids or to convey streams naturally occurring prior to construction of such watercourses.

21 **System Improvements:** Public facilities that are designed to provide service to service areas within the community at large, in contrast to project improvements.

22 **Taking:** The appropriation by government of private land for which fair and just compensation must be paid. Under the U.S. and State Constitutions property cannot be condemned through eminent domain for public use or purpose without just and fair compensation.

1 **Transfer of Development Rights (TDR):** A program in which the unused portion of a  
2 “sending” property’s zoned capacity - one of the separable rights of property - is sold to the  
developer of a “receiving” site, who is allowed to add the capacity to the zoned limit of that site.

3 **Transitional Housing:** As defined by the Federal McKinney Act, transitional housing means a  
4 project (a) that is designed to provide housing and appropriate supportive services to homeless  
5 persons, including (but not limited to) de-institutionalized homeless individuals with mental  
6 disabilities and other homeless individuals with mental disabilities, and homeless families with  
children; and (b) that has as its purpose facilitating the movement of homeless individuals to  
independent living within 24 months, or within a longer period determined by HUD as necessary  
to facilitate the transition.

7 **Transportation Demand Management Strategies (TDM):** Strategies aimed at changing travel  
8 behavior rather than at expanding the transportation network to meet travel demand. Such  
strategies can include the promotion of work hour changes, ride-sharing options, parking  
policies, telecommuting.

9 **Urban Growth Areas (UGAs):** Areas which counties designate, in consultation with cities and  
10 towns, where urban growth will be encouraged and supported with urban levels of services. The  
11 urban growth areas are to include areas and densities sufficient to permit the urban growth that is  
12 projected to occur in the county for the succeeding 20-year period. Urban growth refers to  
growth that makes intensive use of land for the location of buildings, structures, and  
impermeable surfaces to such a degree as to be incompatible with the primary use of such land  
for the production of food, other agricultural products or fiber, or the extraction of mineral  
resources.

13 **Urban Growth Boundary:** The boundary or line marking the limit between the UGAs and  
14 other areas.

15 **Urban Services:** Services, utilities, and facilities historically and typically delivered by cities  
and towns.

16 **Urban Sprawl:** Scattered, poorly planned urban development that occurs particularly in urban  
17 fringe and rural areas and frequently invades land important for environmental and natural  
resource protection.

18 **Urban:** Characteristic of a city; commercial, residential, and industrial, containing or requiring  
a complete infrastructure (sewers, water, etc.)

19 **Very Low Income:** Income that does not exceed 50 percent of the area median income.

20 **Watershed:** The geographic region within which water drains into a particular stream, or body  
of water. A watershed includes hills, lowlands, and the body of water into which the land drains.

21 **Wetlands:** Pursuant to RCW 36.70A.030(20), wetlands means areas that are inundated or  
22 saturated by surface water or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and  
23 that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life  
in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs and similar  
areas. Wetlands do not include those artificial wetlands intentionally created from nonwetland

1 sites, including, but not limited to, irrigation and drainage ditches, grass-lined swales, canals,  
2 detention facilities, wastewater treatment facilities, farm ponds, and landscape amenities, or  
3 those wetlands created after July 1, 1990, that were unintentionally created as a result of the  
construction of a road, street, or highway. Wetlands may include those artificial wetlands  
intentionally created from nonwetland areas to mitigate the conversion of wetlands.

4 **Zoning:** A police power measure, enacted by local government, in which the community is  
divided into districts or zones within which permitted and special uses are established as are  
5 regulations governing lot size, building bulk, placement, and other development standards. The  
Zoning Ordinance consists of two parts, the text and the map.

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**APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX A. CONSISTENCY MATRIX - GMA GOALS/REQUIREMENTS**

GOALS/REQUIREMENTS	LOCATION IN PLAN
<b>A. PLANNING GOALS RCW 36.70A.020</b>	
1. Urban growth - Encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities or services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Municipal Urban Growth Areas
2. Reduce Sprawl - Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Commercial Development and Residential Development
3. Transportation - Encourages efficient multi-modal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Transportation, and Transportation Element -
4. Housing - Encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Housing, and Housing Needs Assessment
5. Economic development - Encourage economic development throughout the state that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plans, promote economic opportunity for all citizens of this state, especially for unemployed and disadvantaged persons, and encourage growth in areas experiencing insufficient economic growth, all within the capacities of the state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Economic Development
6. Property rights - Private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation having been made. The property rights of landowners shall be protected from arbitrary and discriminatory actions.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Government
7. Permits - Applications for both state and local government permits should be processed in a timely and fair manner to ensure predictability.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Government
8. Natural resource industries - Maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries, including productive timber, agricultural, and fisheries industries. Encourage the conservation of productive forest lands and productive agricultural lands, and discourage incompatible uses.	Policy Plan/ Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Rural Forest Lands, Rural Agriculture Lands, Agricultural Resource Lands
9. Open space and recreation - Encourage the retention of open space and development of recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Natural Lands and Parks and Recreation, and Parks and Recreation Plan
10. Environment - Protect the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality and the availability of water.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Environmental Quality
11. Citizen participation - Encourage the involvement of citizens in the planning process and ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Government, and Technical Appendix Record of Public Participation
12. Public facilities and services - Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Public Facilities and Public Services, and Capital Facilities Element
13. Historic preservation - Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures that have historical or archaeological significance.	Policy Plan/ Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Historic Preservation, Natural Lands Element and Ebey's Landing Historical Preserve Plan

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<b>B.</b>	<b>DEFINITION OF TERMS</b>	Glossary
<b>C.</b>	<b>REQUIRED PLAN ELEMENTS</b>	
1.	Land Use Element	
a.	Identification of relevant urban growth area(s)	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter III Future Land Use - Urban Element Designations
b.	Integration of relevant county-wide policies.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter III Goals and Policies - Government
c.	Designation of the general distribution and general location and extent of uses of land, where appropriate, for agriculture, timber production, housing, commerce, industry, recreation, open space, public utilities, public facilities, and other land uses.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter III Future Land Use - Rural Element Designations and Future Land Use Plan Map
d.	Population densities, building intensities, and estimates of future population growth.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter III Future Land Use
e.	Provisions for protection of the quality and quantity of ground water used for public water supplies.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Environmental Quality
f.	Review of drainage, flooding and stormwater run-off in the plan area and nearby jurisdictions, and guidance for corrective actions for discharges that pollute.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Environmental Quality
g.	Future Land Use Map (or maps)	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter III Future Land Use - Future Land Use Plan Map
2.	Housing Element	
a.	Integration of relevant county-wide policies	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter III Goals and Policies - Housing, and Housing Needs Assessment
b.	Inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs	Housing Needs Assessment
c.	Statement of goals, policies and objectives for the preservation, improvement and development of housing.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Housing and Residential Development
d.	Identification of sufficient land for housing, including but not limited to, government assisted housing, housing for low-income families, manufactured housing, multi-family housing, group homes, and foster care facilities.	Housing Needs Assessment
e.	Adequate provisions for existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Housing and Residential Development
3.	Capital Facilities Element	Capital Facilities Plan and Capital Improvement Program
a.	Integration of relevant county-wide policies.	Policy and Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Public Facilities and Government, and Capital Facilities Plan and Capital Improvement Program
b.	Inventory of existing capital facilities owned by public entities, showing the locations and capacities of the capital facilities.	Capital Facilities Plan and Capital Improvement Program
c.	Forecast of the future needs for such capital facilities.	Capital Facilities Plan and Capital Improvement Program
d.	Proposed locations and capacities of expanded or new capital facilities.	Capital Facilities Plan and Capital Improvement Program
e.	Six-year plan (at least) that will finance such capital facilities within projected funding capacities and clearly identifies sources of public money for such purposes.	Capital Facilities Plan and Capital Improvement Program

1	f. Requirement to reassess the land use element if probable funding falls short of meeting existing needs and any other measures to ensure that the land use element, capital facilities plan element, and financing plan within the capital facilities plan element are coordinated and consistent.	Capital Facilities Plan and Capital Improvement Program (Revenues Requiring Referendum)
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3	4. Utilities Element	Island County Comprehensive Plan Utilities Element
4	5. Transportation Element	Island County Transportation Element
5	a. Integration of relevant county-wide policies.	Island County Transportation Element
6	b. Land Use assumptions used in estimating travel.	Island County Transportation Element, Chapters III and VI
7	c. Facilities and service needs, including:	
8	(i) Inventory of air, water and land transportation facilities and services, including transit alignments, to define existing capital facilities and travel levels as a basis for future planning.	Island County Transportation Element
9	(ii) Regionally coordinated level of service standards for all arterials and transit routes to serve as a gauge to judge performance of the system.	Island County Transportation Element
10	(iii) Identification of specific actions and requirements for bringing into compliance any facilities and services that are below an established level of service standard.	Island County Transportation Element
11	(iv) Forecasts of traffic for at least ten years based on the adopted land use plan to provide information on the location, timing and capacity needs of future growth.	Island County Transportation Element
12	(v) Identification of system expansion needs and transportation system management needs to meet current and future demands.	Island County Transportation Element
13	d. Finance, including:	
14	(i) Analysis of funding capability to judge needs against probable funding resources.	Island County Transportation Element
15	(ii) Multi-year financing plan based on the needs identified in the comprehensive plan, the appropriate parts of which shall serve as the basis for the six-year street, road, or transit program required by RCW 35.77.010 for cities, and RCW 36.81.121 for counties and RCW 35.58.2795 for public transportation systems.	Island County Transportation Element
16	(iii) If probable funding falls short of meeting identified needs, a discussion of how additional funding will be raised, or how land use assumptions will be reassessed to ensure that level of service standards will be met	Island County Transportation Element
17	e. Intergovernmental coordination efforts, including an assessment of the impacts of the transportation plan and land use assumptions on the transportation systems of adjacent jurisdictions.	Island County Transportation Element
18	f. Demand management strategies.	Island County Transportation Element
19	6. Rural Element (counties only)	
20	a. Delineation of area to which rural element applies (lands not designated for urban growth or as agriculture, forest or mineral resource lands of long-term significance.)	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter III Future Land Use - Rural Element Designations and Future Land Use Map
21	b. Land uses permitted that are compatible with the rural character of such lands and provide for a variety of rural densities.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Rural Residential, Rural Center, Rural Village, Business/ Office Park, Light Manufacturing, Rural Service, Rural, Rural Forest and Rural Agriculture
22	<b>D. URBAN GROWTH AREAS</b>	
23	1. Area designated (if any) outside or incorporated city boundaries already characterized by urban growth or adjacent to territory already characterized by urban growth which is designated as urban growth area(s), shall include urban densities, greenbelts, and open areas.	none identified
24	2. Role of county-wide policies in designating urban growth areas(s).	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Non-municipal Urban Growth Areas
25	3. Provisions adopted for joint county and city planning within urban growth area(s).	Policy Plan and Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Urban Growth Areas
26	<b>E. SITING PUBLIC FACILITIES</b>	

1	1. Process or criteria for identification of essential public facilities, including those facilities that are typically difficult to site, such as airports, state education facilities, state or regional transportation facilities, state and local correctional facilities, solid waste handling facilities and in-patient facilities including substance abuse facilities, mental health facilities and group homes.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Economic Development, Public Facilities, Public Services, and Transportation
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3	2. Process for siting essential public facilities.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Economic Development, Public Facilities, Public Services, and Transportation
4	3. Provisions which address the situation dictate that no comprehensive plan may preclude the siting of essential public facilities.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Economic Development, Public Facilities, Public Services, and Transportation
5	4. Integration of relevant county-wide policies.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter IV Goals and Policies - Economic Development, Public Facilities, Public Services, Transportation
6	<b>F. REVIEWS</b>	
7	1. Natural resource lands - Review of designations and regulations for consistency with comprehensive plans. Natural lands include agricultural lands, forest lands, and mineral resource lands.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter III Future Land Use - Rural Agricultural Lands and Mineral Lands Overlay and Chapter IV Future Land Use - Rural Agricultural Lands and Mineral Lands Overlay
8	2. Critical areas - Review of designations and regulations for consistency with comprehensive plans. Critical areas include: (a) wetlands, (b) aquifer recharge areas, (c) fish and wildlife conservation areas, (d) frequently flooded areas, and (e) geologically hazardous areas.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter III Future Land Use - Wetlands, Aquifer Recharge Areas, Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas, Frequently Flooded Areas and Geologically Hazardous Areas (Steep/Unstable Slopes) and Chapter IV Future Land Use - Wetlands, Aquifer Recharge Areas, Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas, Frequently Flooded Areas and Geologically Hazardous Areas (Steep/Unstable Slopes)
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11	<b>G. INVENTORIES</b>	
12	1. Identification of open space corridors within and between urban growth areas, including lands useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails and connection or critical areas.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter III Future Land Use and Natural Lands Plan (to be completed late 1998)
13	2. Identification of lands useful for public purposes, such as utility corridors, transportation corridors, landfills, sewage treatment facilities, stormwater management facilities, recreation, schools, and other public uses.	Transportation Element and Capital Facilities Plan
14	<b>H. CONSISTENCY</b>	
15	1. Internal - Plan provisions, if any, which describes how parts of the plans fit together, such as consistency of plan elements and future land use map, consistency of land use and capital facilities elements.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element, Chapter I Overview - Purpose and Components of the Plan
16	2. Interjurisdictional.	Policy Plan/Land Use Element
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