



**ISLAND COUNTY
PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

ISLAND COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

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~ FINDINGS OF FACT AND LEGISLATIVE INTENT ~

TO: Board of Island County Commissioners
FROM: Island County Planning Commission
DATE: October 26, 2020
REGARDING: Adoption of Section 2A, the Clinton Gateway Analysis, as a subsection of the Economic Development Element of the Island County Comprehensive Plan

SUMMARY

In December 2016, Island County adopted its updated Comprehensive Plan, which moved goals and policies related to economic development from the Land Use Element to a placeholder Economic Development Element, with a more intensive review and development of a full Economic Development Element deferred to a future docket in late 2019 or early 2020.

One of the components of the Economic Development Element Update project is a Gateway Study, which examines the seven key transportation gateways to the county to include Clinton, Camano Gateway, North Whidbey (Deception Pass area), Coupeville (Keystone Ferry terminal), as well as the three private airports.

Clinton was identified as the first gateway to be studied, and a consultant was contracted by the County to conduct an analysis of the gateway. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting disruption and delay to the Economic Development Element Update project, the Board of Island County Commissioners made the decision to focus on the Clinton Gateway Analysis, and work towards its adoption as a subsection of the Economic Development Element (Element 2) of the Island County Comprehensive Plan.

The Clinton Gateway Analysis subsection of the Economic Development Element of the Island County Comprehensive Plan focuses on:

- an inventory and analysis of existing and projected economic conditions and needs within the Clinton Gateway; and
- a list of priorities that have been developed by the Clinton community through an iterative process involving community outreach, public meetings, and governmental agency feedback.

Ultimately, the Economic Development Element serves as a guiding document and resource for the County to utilize in the development of regulatory updates, programmatic updates, public outreach, and new economic development related County initiatives. It unifies the many County departments behind a common approach and philosophy to economic development by establishing goals and policies for meeting the needs of our community. The Clinton Gateway Analysis Appendix serves as a supplement to the Economic Development Element and as a resource and guiding document for the County to use in developing initiatives within the Clinton gateway.

FINDINGS

1. Island County conducts planning activities in accordance with RCW 36.70, the Planning Enabling Act.
2. Island County is required to plan under RCW 36.70A, the Growth Management Act (GMA).
3. State law requires periodic updates of GMA comprehensive plans.
4. The Planning Goals outlined in RCW 36.70A.020 state that:
(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 for disadvantaged persons, promote the retention and expansion of existing businesses and recruitment of new businesses, recognize regional differences impacting economic development opportunities, and encourage growth in areas experiencing insufficient economic growth, all within the capacities of the state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities.
5. RCW 36.70A.070 requires counties and cities to develop an economic development element establishing local goals, policies, objectives, and provisions for economic growth and vitality and a high quality of life.
6. Island County contracted with Community Attributes, Inc. to conduct an economic analysis of the Clinton gateway. Their final report was presented to Planning staff on June 22nd, 2020.
7. During the first half of 2020, Island County consulted with the Clinton Community Council to develop Community Priorities to incorporate into the Clinton Gateway Analysis as part of the Economic Development Element Update project.

8. On September 14th, 2020 Island County presented the Draft Clinton Gateway Analysis to the Clinton Community Council.
9. On September 15th, 2020 and September 22nd, 2020 the Clinton Community Council held Public Workshops to gather community input on the Draft Clinton Gateway Analysis.
10. Island County Planning staff generated a Public Comment Matrix from feedback generated by the Draft Clinton Gateway Analysis Workshops and other public comment, and presented the matrix to the Clinton Community Council on September 28th, 2020.
11. On September 30th, 2020 a SEPA Determination of Non-Significance (DNS) was issued for the Clinton Gateway Analysis Appendix to the Economic Development Element of the Comprehensive Plan. The Public Comment period for the DNS was from October 7th, 2020 to October 21st, 2020. No public comments were received.
12. On October 8th, 2020 the Draft Clinton Gateway Analysis was sent to Commerce for review. Commerce review is still ongoing, with a completion deadline of December 6th, 2020.
13. On October 19th, 2020 a special workshop session of the Island County Planning Commission was held to discuss the Draft Clinton Gateway Analysis prior to the Planning Commission Public Hearing scheduled for October 26th, 2020.
14. In consideration of all public discussions and information gathered regarding this supplement to the Economic Development Element, the Planning Commission finds that it is in the best interest of the community to:
 - a. Recognize that as one of the main points-of-entry to Island County, the economic conditions in the Clinton gateway are crucial to the economic health and vitality of the County as a whole; and
 - b. Promote the economic growth, vitality, and high quality of life within the Clinton gateway.

CONCLUSION

The Island County Planning Commission has held a public hearing to review the proposed amendments to the Island County Comprehensive Plan and hereby recommends that the Board of Island County Commissioners adopt the Clinton Gateway Analysis Appendix to the Economic Development Element enclosed hereto as Exhibit "A".

Respectfully submitted through the Island County Planning Department to the Board of Island County Commissioners, pursuant to RCW 36.70.430, this _____ day of _____, 2020 by,

Darin Hand
Chair, Island County Planning Commission

Enclosures:

A – Section 2A Clinton Gateway Analysis subsection to the Economic Development Element