

Whatcom County Affordable Housing Priorities

Mark Personius, Director

Whatcom County Planning & Development Services

Select New Housing Legislation Passed by 2023 State Legislature

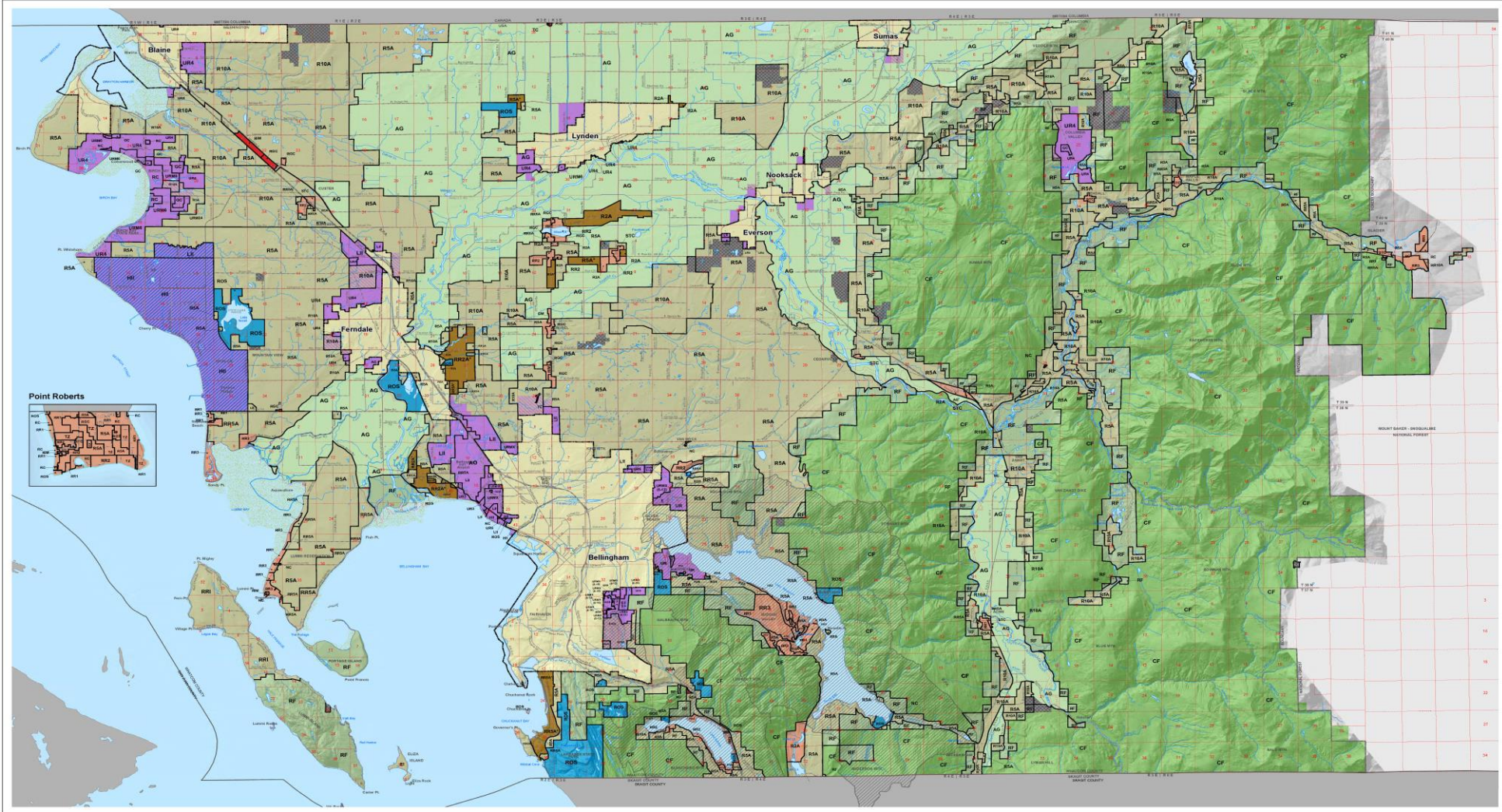
- E2SHB 1110—Middle Housing allowed in SFR zones in Larger Cities (B'ham)
- EHB 1337—ADUs must be allowed in cities and UGAs
- 2SSB 5290—Streamlining local project review processes

Whatcom County Council Affordable Housing Priorities—Resolution 2022-036

- Provide permanently affordable housing and home ownership opportunities for individuals earning between 50% to 120% of AMI.
- Provide a full range of affordable housing types ranging from multifamily apartments, condos, middle housing options, detached single family homes, ADU's, and tiny homes.
- Target an average rental vacancy of 5%, and available housing supply of 4- 6 months, for all income levels.
- Update, strengthen, and streamline land use codes, housing regulations, and permitting processes that further encourage, and where appropriate, require more affordable, dense, sustainable, low impact, and energy efficient development.
- Consider permitting and land use policies that increase affordable housing such as sustainable development incentives, expedited permitting and fee reductions, infill development, density bonuses, clustering subdivisions, urban villages, and farmland trusts.
- Consider County acquisition of land for permanently affordable housing development such as a community land trust or land bank model.

Whatcom County Administration Priorities to Provide More Affordable Housing

- Funding and Advocacy
- Implement HB 1220
- Support our Cities to Provide Additional Growth & Density
- Promote Annexations
- Implement the Buildable Lands Report (BLR)
- Evaluate UGA Land Capacities to Identify Housing Infill and Expansion Opportunities
- Use EDI Program Funds to Help Finance UGA Infrastructure Gaps
- Create an Offsite Wetland Mitigation Program



WHATCOM COUNTY Title 20 Zoning & Comprehensive Plan Designations

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DESIGNATIONS

- Incorporated City Limits
- Urban Growth Area
- Urban Growth Area Reserve
- Major/Port Industrial UGA
- Rural
- Rural Neighborhood
- Rural Community
- Rural Business
- Agriculture
- Rural Forestry
- Commercial Forestry
- Mineral Resource Lands
- Public Recreation

TITLE 20 ZONING DESIGNATIONS

- ### URBAN RESIDENTIAL
- URMX Urban Res.-Mixed Use
 - URMX10-24 Urban Res.-Mixed Use 10-24 Units/Acre
 - URMX6-12 Urban Res.-Mixed Use 6-12 Units/Acre
 - URMX8-10 Urban Res.-Mixed Use 8-10 Units/Acre
 - URM24 Urban Res.-Medium Density 24 Units/Acre
 - URM18 Urban Res.-Medium Density 18 Units/Acre
 - URM12 Urban Res.-Medium Density 12 Units/Acre
 - URM6 Urban Res.-Medium Density 6 Units/Acre
 - URS Urban Res.-5 Units/Acre
 - UR4 Urban Res.-4 Units/Acre
 - UR3 Urban Res.-3 Units/Acre

- ### RESIDENTIAL RURAL
- RR3 Res. Rural -3 Units/Acre
 - RR2 Res. Rural -2 Units/Acre
 - RR1 Res. Rural -1 Unit/Acre
 - RR5A Res. Rural -1 Unit/5 Acres
 - RR10A Res. Rural -1 Unit/10 Acres
- ### RURAL RESIDENTIAL
- RRI Rural Residential Island
 - TZ Transitional-R5A/RR1
- ### RURAL
- R2A Rural-1Unit/2 Acres
 - R5A Rural-1 Unit/5 Acres
 - R10A Rural-1 Unit/10 Acres
- ### RESOURCES
- AG Agriculture
 - CF Commercial Forestry
 - RF Rural Forestry
 - MRL Mineral Resource Lands (Overlay Zone)

- ### COMMERCIAL
- RGC Rural General Comm.
 - GC General Commercial
 - TC Tourist Commercial
 - NC Neighborhood Commercial
 - STC Small Town Commercial
 - RC Resort Commercial
- ### INDUSTRIAL
- HII Heavy Impact Industrial
 - LII Light Impact Industrial
 - GM General Manufacturing
 - RIM Rural Ind. Manuf.
 - AO Airport Operations

RSA*, RRSA* - Rural Residential Density Overlay
 - Title 20.20.32.252
WR Water Resource Protection Overlay District
 - Title 20.20.20.71
TRDRs Transferable Development Rights (TRDRs)
TDR Transferable Development Rights - All URMX Zones except Bennett Dr.
TDR Sending Areas - Lake Whatcom Watershed (same boundary as Lake Whatcom portion of Water Resource Protection Overlay Zone) excluding Sudden Valley

See Ord. 2015-001

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Whatcom County/Cities 2025 Comprehensive Plan Updates

- Countywide Planning Policies (CPPS) review
- Scope of Work for Consultant services/City-County cost sharing agreements/Contracting
- Population and Employment Allocations for the Next Twenty (20) Years from 2025-2045—75%/25% share of growth between the seven (7) cities and the county, respectively
- Land Capacity Analyses for Cities and UGAs—Can the cities and county accommodate the next twenty years projected urban growth within existing UGAs or do we need to expand?
- Transportation Model (WCOG)
- Housing Element Updates
- Capital Facility Plans
- New Climate Change & Resiliency Element Required—must reduce GHGs and VMT
- SEPA EIS Likely
- Everson/Nooksack/Sumas Flood-impacted UGA Analysis & Recommendations
- Final UGA Recommendations for all Seven (7) Cities and Ten (10) UGAs

2025 Comp Plan Update—Public Involvement

- Prepare Public Participation Plan—identify opportunities for public involvement in the process (e.g., commenting on draft doc's/workshops/hearings, etc.)

Must include specific outreach to **vulnerable populations** and **overburdened communities** as part of the new Climate Change & Resiliency Element of the Comp Plan

- Coordination with City/County Planner Group and City/County Elected's for each jurisdiction
- Coordination with County Advisory Committees—at least a dozen advisory committees to consult and coordinate with through the process
- Tribal participation, per HB 1717
- Planning Commission Review & Recommendations
- County Council Review and Final Decision

Other County Actions to Address Affordability

- Adopted Density Bonus Provisions in Birch Bay
- Amended PUD Provisions to Allow Duplexes in all SFR Zones
- Adopted Tiny Homes and Tiny Home Village Provisions in Zoning Code
- Require Minimum Densities in Non-Municipal UGAs (Birch Bay and Columbia Valley)
- Amend ADU Regulations to Implement HB 1337 as part of 2025 Comp Plan Update
- Council Docketed PLN2021-0007 to specifically evaluate the North Bellingham UGA Reserve for designation as UGA in the 2025 Comp Plan Update
- Using Public Land for Affordable Housing (Forest Street Property Converted to Senior Housing)

Other PDS Actions to Improve Permitting Efficiency

- Enacted Kaizen (LEAN) Based Work Flow Processes
- Enacted Digital Permitting Tracking System
- All Digital Submittals Reduces Paperwork
- Re-training Staff (and Customers) to Shift to Digital Work Flows
- Public-Facing Web-Based Portal Coming
- Customer Service Training/Instituted Staff Engagement Process to Breakdown Silos and Provide More Cross-Training Opportunities/Improve Consistency
- Regular Feedback Meetings w/ BIAWC
- Executive/Council Approved Two (2) New Positions—1 for Critical Areas & 1 for Comp Plan Update + On-Call 3rd Party Outside Consultant Budget to Help with Critical Area Reviews