



Whatcom County

COUNTY COURTHOUSE
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Agenda Bill Master Report

File Number: AB2026-330

File ID: AB2026-330 **Version:** 1 **Status:** Substitute Approved
File Created: 04/16/2026 **Entered by:** aharris@co.whatcom.wa.us
Department: Planning and Development Services Department **File Type:** Resolution
Assigned to: Council Planning and Development Committee **Final Action:** 04/28/2026
Agenda Date: 04/28/2026 **Enactment #:** RES 2026-014
Related Files:

Primary Contact Email: aharris@co.whatcom.wa.us

TITLE FOR AGENDA ITEM:

Resolution approving recommendations on Open Space applications

SUMMARY STATEMENT OR LEGAL NOTICE LANGUAGE:

See attachments

HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE FILE

Date:	Acting Body:	Action:	Sent To:
04/28/2026	Council Planning and Development Committee	SUBSTITUTE RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL Aye: 7 Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremier Nay: 0	
04/28/2026	Council	SUBSTITUTE APPROVED Aye: 7 Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremier Nay: 0	

Attachments: Staff Memo, Staff Report, Proposed Resolution, Presentation, Substitute Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-014

APPROVING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OPEN SPACE LAND CLASSIFICATION

WHEREAS, RCW 84.34 and RCW 84.33 give counties authority to approve applications for current use tax classification for the following categories: Open Space Land, Open Space Farm & Agricultural Land, and Designated Forestland; and

WHEREAS, Pursuant to Whatcom County Code, Section 3.28.020, applications for the classification of Open Space Land are received and evaluated by staff at Whatcom County Planning & Development Services (PDS), and the results of these evaluations are then presented to the Whatcom County Planning Commission for their review and consideration in making recommendations to the County Council on whether to approve the applications in whole or in part; and

WHEREAS, Pursuant to RCW 84.34.055 and WAC 458-30-330, Whatcom County has adopted a Public Benefit Rating System (PBRs) by Ordinance # 95-040, which is used by staff to rate applications for Open Space Land; and

WHEREAS, Applications for Open Space Land and Open Space Farm & Agricultural Conservation Land are evaluated with the Public Benefit Rating System and assigned a PBRs score that results in a staff recommendation of approval or denial, with a score of 45 or above required for a staff recommendation of approval; and

WHEREAS, In accordance with the Whatcom County Open Space Policies and the PBRs, public access is a condition of approval for Open Space Land applications, except that this requirement may be waived by the Council when the purpose of the classification is for the conservation of wetlands or when there is a documented occurrence of a State or Federal Threatened Endangered Species, Federal Proposed Endangered or Threatened Species, or State Sensitive or Monitor Species, or when there is a known or potentially significant archaeological site; and

WHEREAS, Pursuant to RCW 36.70.390, the statutory requirements regarding legal notice have been met; and

WHEREAS, The County Council has approved the following Findings of Fact and Reasons for Action for the OSP2025-002 Lane application:

1. PDS received an application for OSL classification on a 38.64-acre parcel.
2. PDS staff conducted a site visit and evaluated the subject property according to the PBRs, which yielded a score of 58.64.
3. PDS policy dictates that scores over 45 receive a staff recommendation for approval, and therefore, PDS recommends approval of this Open Space application.
4. The Planning Commission reviewed the application and held a public hearing at their March 10, 2026 meeting. The Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of the application; and,


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Whatcom County Council that the OSP2025-002 Lane application is hereby approved for Open Space Land classification; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED by the Whatcom County Council that adjudication of invalidity of any of the sections, clauses, or provisions of this resolution shall not affect or impair the validity of the resolution as a whole or any part thereof other than the part so declared to be invalid.

APPROVED this 28th day of April, 2026

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL

ATTEST:


Cathy Halka, Clerk of the Council

WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON


Kaylee Galloway, Council Chair

STATE OF
WASHINGTON
APPROVED AS TO FORM

Approved by Greg Greenan via email on 4/28/26
Senior Deputy II, Prosecuting Attorney's Office