

Whatcom County Council Special Committee of the Whole

**COUNTY COURTHOUSE
311 Grand Avenue, Ste #105
Bellingham, WA 98225-4038
(360) 778-5010**



Committee Minutes - Final

**Tuesday, April 7, 2026
9 AM**

Hybrid Meeting - Council Chambers

**HYBRID MEETING - RECESS FOR LUNCH FROM 12:00 P.M. TO 1:00 P.M. -
ADJOURNS BY 4:30 P.M. (PARTICIPATE IN-PERSON, SEE REMOTE JOIN
INSTRUCTIONS AT www.whatcomcounty.us/joinvirtualcouncil OR CALL
360.778.5010)**

COUNCILMEMBERS

Elizabeth Boyle
Barry Buchanan
Ben Elenbaas
Kaylee Galloway
Jessica Rienstra
Jon Scanlon
Mark Stremmer

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Cathy Halka, AICP, CMC

Call To Order

Council Chair Kaylee Galloway called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. in a hybrid meeting.

Roll Call

Present: 7 - Elizabeth Boyle, Barry Buchanan, Ben Elenbaas, Kaylee Galloway, Jessica Rienstra, Jon Scanlon, and Mark Stremmer

Announcements

Public Comment

1. [AB2026-271](#) Public comments on the draft Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan Chapter 10 (Environment), Chapter 12 (Climate), Appendices, and Foothills Subarea Plan Amendments

The following people spoke:

- Tamera Lienhart
- Laura Hanna
- Ryan Bowman
- Bill Geyer
- Darcy Jones

Hearing no one else, Scanlon closed the public comment session.

This agenda item was RECEIVED.

Committee Discussion

1. [AB2026-217](#) Discussion and preliminary Council direction on Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan Chapter 5, Utilities

Galloway stated that Comprehensive Plan Chapter 5 Utilities is on the agenda because of its reference to adjudication in the background paragraph.

Gary Stoyka, Public Works, stated that Public Works does not have any comments on the chapter.

Rienstra moved to request staff prepare Chapter 5 - Preliminary Council Draft dated 4.7.2026 as amended for inclusion in a future agenda bill file for Council introduction and public hearing.

Scanlon seconded the motion.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and Stremler

Nay: 0

This agenda item was DISCUSSED AND MOTION(S) APPROVED.

MOTION 1:

Motion approved to request staff prepare Chapter 5 – Preliminary Council Draft dated 4.7.2026 as amended for inclusion in a future agenda bill file for Council introduction and public hearing.

2. [AB2026-231](#) Discussion and preliminary Council direction on Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan Chapter 7, Economic Development

Galloway introduced discussion on Comprehensive Plan Chapter 7 Economic Development and remaining proposed amendments related to adjudication.

Gary Stoyka, Public Works, stated that there are questions about including discussion of water adjudication in the Comprehensive Plan given that it is a legal process. He stated that the administration is in favor of finding solutions to the water problem but does not want to be prescriptive because there is an active court case.

Elenbaas moved to approve Policy 7A-15 (in the Preliminary Council Draft for 4.7.2026).

Stremler seconded the motion.

Councilmembers discussed proposals for Policy 7A-15.

Scanlon moved to amend Policy 7A-15 along the lines of the text that Councilmember Galloway proposed so that it reads as follows:

Long term prosperity in Whatcom County depends on reliable access to water and fiscally responsible management of local resources. While adjudication may ultimately clarify legal rights, experience from other basins demonstrates that multi decade litigation can create uncertainty and imposes significant costs on water users and County government. The County should support a process and outcome that achieves water certainty faster, protects the economy, and relieves unnecessary strain on the County's justice system and taxpayers.

Boyle seconded the motion.

The motion to amend carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and Stremmler

Nay: 0

The motion to approve as amended carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and Stremmler

Nay: 0

Galloway turned discussion to Policy 7A-16.

Elenbaas suggested adding "including but not limited to" after "major water use sectors" in Galloway's Policy 7A-16.

Scanlon suggested amending Galloway's Policy 7A-16 so that it reads: "...mitigation, conservation measures, and long-term water solutions that sustain the county's economic base while protecting ecological resources."

Scanlon moved to approve Galloway's Policy 7A-16 (for inclusion in the Preliminary Council Draft) as presented so that it reads as follows:

Whatcom County supports adjudication or other negotiated or mediated water rights quantification and settlement process among all major water use sectors including but not limited to agricultural, municipal, industrial, tribal, and environmental. The County should provide leadership, facilitation, and technical support to help all parties reach consensus on allocation, mitigation, conservation measures, and long-term water solutions that sustain the county's economic base while protecting ecological resources.

Boyle seconded the motion.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and Stremmler

Nay: 0

Elenbaas moved to approve Galloway's version of Policy 7A-17 (for inclusion in the Preliminary Council Draft).

Boyle seconded the motion.

Councilmembers discussed the motion.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and
Stremler

Nay: 0

Galloway turned discussion to Policy 7A-18.

Elenbaas moved to include Elenbaas' Policy 7A-18.

Boyle seconded the motion.

Scanlon moved to amend Policy 7A-18 so that it reads as follows:

Recognizing that the State initiated the adjudication but does not fully fund its implementation, the County shall advocate for state reimbursement of adjudication-related costs including courtroom expansion, judicial staffing, administrative expenses, a negotiated or mediated water rights quantification and settlement process, and other ongoing expenditures.

Elenbaas seconded the motion.

The motion to amend carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and
Stremler

Nay: 0

The motion to approve as amended carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and
Stremler

Nay: 0

Elenbaas moved to approve Galloway's version of Policy 7A-19 (for inclusion in the Preliminary Council Draft).

Boyle seconded the motion.

Elenbaas moved to amend Galloway's Policy 7A-19 as follows:

Adjudication or other negotiated or mediated water rights quantification and settlement should be used as a vehicle to invest in local economic infrastructure including but not limited to water storage, conveyance efficiency, and mitigation banking that benefits multiple sectors and offsets the costs of adjudication. The County shall seek state and federal partnership funding to implement such projects as part of any basin-wide agreement.

Stremmer seconded the motion.

Scanlon suggested replacing "economic infrastructure" with "water infrastructure" in Galloway's version of Policy 7A-19.

Elenbaas accepted the suggestion as a friendly amendment.

Galloway suggested keeping economic infrastructure but changing "water storage" to "water infrastructure."

Elenbaas accepted the suggestion as a friendly amendment.

The motion to amend carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and Stremmer

Nay: 0

The motion to approve as amended carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and Stremmer

Nay: 0

Elenbaas moved to approve Elenbaas' Policy 7A-20.

Stremmer seconded the motion.

Scanlon moved to amend Elenbaas' Policy 7A-20 by deleting "of both agriculture and housing" and replacing it with "of all users."

Elenbaas seconded the motion.

Scanlon amended his motion to delete "that negotiated or mediated" after "ensure" in the first sentence so that Policy 7A-20 reads as follows:

Ensure that negotiated or mediated settlement frameworks explicitly

address the water needs of all users acknowledging that stable water supply supports job creation, food security, and housing affordability. The County's facilitative efforts should aim to preserve the viability of existing farms while ensuring sufficient water resources for urban and rural housing consistent with Comprehensive Plan goals.

The motion to amend carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and Stremler

Nay: 0

Galloway moved to add "adjudication or other" after the word "ensure" in the first sentence.

Scanlon seconded the motion.

Kimberly Thulin, Prosecuting Attorney's Office, suggested changing the word "ensure," as neither Council nor Whatcom County can ensure that anything happens between the State and the Department of Ecology.

Galloway amended her motion to change the word "ensure" to "encourage."

Councilmembers continued to discuss the motion.

Galloway clarified that the motion on the table is to amend Policy 7A-20 as follows:

Encourage that adjudication or other negotiated or mediated settlement frameworks explicitly address the water needs of all users acknowledging that stable water supply supports job creation, food security, and housing affordability. The County's facilitative efforts should aim to preserve the viability of existing farms while ensuring sufficient water resources for urban and rural housing consistent with Comprehensive Plan goals.

The motion to amend carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, and Scanlon

Nay: 2 - Elenbaas and Stremler

The motion to approve as amended carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, and Scanlon

Nay: 2 - Elenbaas and Stremmer

Thulin asked the Chair to review the motion to amend and approve Policy 7A-20.

Scanlon moved that Council agrees that the vote on 7A-20 was according to Council's wishes.

Rienstra seconded the motion.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and Stremmer

Nay: 0

Rienstra moved to request staff prepare Chapter 7 - Preliminary Council Draft as amended on April 7, 2026 for inclusion in a future agenda bill file for Council introduction and public hearing.

Scanlon seconded the motion.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, and Scanlon

Nay: 2 - Elenbaas and Stremmer

This agenda item was DISCUSSED AND MOTION(S) APPROVED.

MOTION 1:

Motion approved to amend Policy 7A-15 (in the Preliminary Council Draft for 4.7.2026) along the lines of the text that Councilmember Galloway proposed so that it reads as follows:

Long term prosperity in Whatcom County depends on reliable access to water and fiscally responsible management of local resources. While adjudication may ultimately clarify legal rights, experience from other basins demonstrates that multi decade litigation can create uncertainty and imposes significant costs on water users and County government. The County should support a process and outcome that achieves water certainty faster, protects the economy, and relieves unnecessary strain on the County's justice system and taxpayers.

MOTION 2:

Motion approved to approve Policy 7A-15 as amended.

MOTION 3:

Motion approved to approve Galloway's Policy 7A-16 (for inclusion in the Preliminary Council Draft) as presented so that it reads as follows:

Whatcom County supports adjudication or other negotiated or mediated water rights quantification and settlement process among all major water use sectors including but not limited to agricultural, municipal, industrial, tribal, and environmental. The County should provide leadership, facilitation, and technical support to help all parties reach consensus on allocation, mitigation, conservation measures, and long-term water solutions that sustain the county's economic base while protecting ecological resources.

MOTION 4:

Motion approved to approve Galloway's Policy 7A-17 (for inclusion in the Preliminary Council Draft).

MOTION 5:

Motion approved to amend Elenbaas' Policy 7A-18 (in the Preliminary Council Draft for 4.7.2026) so that it reads as follows:

Recognizing that the State initiated the adjudication but does not fully fund its implementation, the County shall advocate for state reimbursement of adjudication-related costs including courtroom expansion, judicial staffing, administrative expenses, a negotiated or mediated water rights quantification and settlement process, and other ongoing expenditures.

MOTION 6:

Motion approved to approve Elenbaas' Policy 7A-18 (in the Preliminary Council Draft for 4.7.2026) as amended.

MOTION 7:

Motion approved to amend Galloway's Policy 7A-19 as follows:

Adjudication or other negotiated or mediated water rights quantification and settlement should be used as a vehicle to invest in local economic infrastructure including but not limited to water infrastructure, conveyance efficiency, and mitigation banking that benefits multiple sectors and offsets the costs of adjudication. The County shall seek state and federal partnership funding to implement such projects as part of any basin-wide agreement.

MOTION 8:

Motion approved to approve Galloway's Policy 7A-19 (for inclusion in the Preliminary Council Draft) as amended.

MOTION 9:

Motion approved to amend Elenbaas' Policy 7A-20 (in the Preliminary Council Draft for 4.7.2026) as follows:

Ensure that negotiated or mediated settlement frameworks explicitly address the water needs of all users acknowledging that stable water supply supports job creation, food security, and housing affordability. The County's facilitative efforts should aim to preserve the viability of existing farms while ensuring sufficient water resources for urban and rural housing consistent with Comprehensive Plan goals.

MOTION 10:

Motion approved to amend Elenbaas' Policy 7A-20 (in the Preliminary Council Draft for 4.7.2026) as follows:

Encourage that adjudication or other negotiated or mediated settlement frameworks explicitly address the water needs of all users acknowledging that stable water supply supports job creation, food security, and housing affordability. The County's facilitative efforts should aim to preserve the viability of existing farms while ensuring sufficient water resources for urban and rural housing consistent with Comprehensive Plan goals.

MOTION 11:

Motion approved to approve Elenbaas' Policy 7A-20 as amended.

MOTION 12:

Motion approved that Council agrees that the vote on Policy 7A-20 was according to Council's wishes.

MOTION 13:

Motion approved to request staff prepare Chapter 7 - Preliminary Council Draft as amended on April 7, 2026 for inclusion in a future agenda bill file for Council introduction and public hearing.

3. [AB2026-250](#) Discussion and preliminary Council direction on Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan Chapter 8, Resource Lands

Galloway introduced discussion of Comprehensive Plan Chapter 8 Resource Lands and remaining adjudication-related amendments. She stated that Council will be working off of the Chapter 8 Preliminary Council Draft for 4.7.2026.

Scanlon asked if there was clarification around 8A-3(3)(a) regarding the capitalization of unique and prime farmland.

Lucas Clark, Planning and Development Services (PDS), stated that the terms do not need to be capitalized.

Galloway turned discussion to 8A-3(4)(d).

Scanlon asked about the impacts of including 8A-3(4)(d).

Clark stated that PDS still has questions about whether the policy refers to paper water or wet water.

Mark Personius, PDS, stated that the last ag census showed there are about 25,000 acres of ag land in the county that are not irrigated and rely on rainfall. He said the policy could have unintended impacts on those 25,000 acres of ag land.

Scanlon moved to approve Item 15 (from the Proposed Chart of Council

Changes for 4.7.2026) Policy 8A-3 as presented and delete 8A-3(4)(d).

Boyle seconded the motion.

Councilmembers discussed the intent of the amendment.

Kimberly Thulin, Prosecuting Attorney's Office, suggested adding the current date in case of any future changes to the WAC.

Personius suggested adding "as amended" after the reference to the WAC in the summary for Policy 8A-3.

Scanlon amended his motion to add "as amended" after WAC 365.190 at the end of the first sentence of Item 15.

Boyle suggested adding "as amended" to all other references to RCW and WAC.

Thulin stated that the "as amended" in the first paragraph applies throughout.

The motion to approve as amended carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and Stremmler

Nay: 0

Elenbaas spoke about conservation easements and conservation programs' impact on farmland. He suggested including language in Chapter 8 about these impacts.

Scanlon moved to approve Item 34 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026).

Boyle seconded the motion.

Boyle moved to amend Item 34 so that the next to last sentence reads as follows:

Whatcom County will seek reimbursement from the State of Washington on all adjudication related expenses including courtroom expansion, judicial staffing, administrative expenses, a negotiated or mediated water rights quantification and settlement process, and other ongoing expenditures.

Scanlon seconded the motion.

Councilmembers discussed the motion to amend.

The motion to amend carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and
Stremler

Nay: 0

The motion to approve as amended carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and
Stremler

Nay: 0

Scanlon moved to include Item 35 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026).

Rienstra seconded the motion.

Councilmembers discussed the motion.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and
Stremler

Nay: 0

Galloway asked a question about Policy 8F-3's reference to further discussion of adjudication in Chapter 10.

Personius stated that he does not believe the reference to Chapter 10 is needed in Policy 8F-3.

Galloway moved to strike reference to Chapter 10 in Policy 8F-3.

Scanlon seconded the motion.

Galloway suggested including a chart with cross references in the Comprehensive Plan's Appendices.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and
Stremler

Nay: 0

Scanlon moved to approve Item 68 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) and substitute the language from PDS for item 7 as follows:

Consider the likelihood of impacts on health and habitat from potentially harmful minerals such as Naturally Occurring Asbestos, Radon, and Mercury when designating MRLs.

Elenbaas seconded the motion.

Clark stated that PDS recommends inclusion of the language on screen.

Rienstra asked for clarification about the language.

Clark stated that PDS felt the previous language was too restrictive. He said that the Swift Creek site is different from hard rock mining where naturally occurring asbestos (NOA) occurs deeper.

Scanlon asked if PDS would coordinate with the health department on these matters.

Clark stated that they would coordinate with the health department if it were a new permit application.

Personius stated that the language would be applied to any potential expansions to mineral resource lands (MRLs) or new MRLs.

Rienstra asked about the impacts of the less prescriptive language in practice.

Personius stated that the first step would be to look at a geologic assessment of underground resources to determine the likelihood of significant amounts of NOA. If there was a likelihood of significant amounts of NOA, they would coordinate with the health department. He said that mitigation measures could be applied through the permitting process, but the Comprehensive Plan simply states that the lands are important for mineral extraction and must be protected under the Growth Management Act (GMA).

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and Stremmer

Nay: 0

Galloway stated that adjudication-related amendments are complete, so Council can turn to new amendments.

Scanlon moved to approve Item 89 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026).

Boyle seconded the motion.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and Stremmer

Nay: 0

Scanlon moved to approve Item 90 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026).

Boyle seconded the motion.

Scanlon amended his motion to add "nearby" before "farm workers and their families" in the final sentence of Item 90.

The motion to approve as amended carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and Stremmer

Nay: 0

Scanlon moved to include Item 91 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026).

Boyle seconded the motion.

Scanlon stated that Items 91 and 92 use similar language, but 91 uses the term "land designated as agricultural resource lands" while 92 uses the term "agricultural natural resource lands." He asked whether there is a difference between the terms.

Clark stated there is no difference between the two terms and they are both supposed to say "agricultural resource lands of long-term commercial significance."

Personius stated that PDS has a concern with Item 91 (Policy 8A-15). He

said that when ag lands are de-designated and converted to UGA, there must be a finding that they no longer meet the criteria. He stated that he recommends having further discussion on April 28 related to potential UGA expansions and ag land.

Councilmembers continued to discuss Policy 8A-15 with Director Personius.

Scanlon moved to hold Item 91 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) until April 28 (to be discussed during Committee of the Whole).

Personius suggested holding Item 92 as well.

Scanlon amended his motion to hold Items 91 and 92 until April 28.

Elenbaas seconded the motion.

The motion to hold carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, and Scanlon

Nay: 0

Out of meeting: 2 - Stremmer and Elenbaas

Scanlon moved to approve Item 93 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026).

Boyle seconded the motion.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, and Scanlon

Nay: 0

Out of meeting: 2 - Stremmer and Elenbaas

Personius stated that PDS has a concern about the use of "only agricultural uses" in Item 93, as there are essential public facilities that are not agricultural uses. He said the amendment could be inconsistent with current code.

Scanlon moved to reconsider the previous vote (Item 93).

Boyle seconded the motion.

The motion to reconsider carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, and Scanlon

Nay: 0

Out of meeting: 1 - Stremmler

Elenbaas moved to approve Item 93 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026).

Scanlon seconded the motion.

Rienstra moved to amend Item 93 as follows:

Reduce land use conflicts between Whatcom County's agriculture and non-agricultural landowners, ensuring that agricultural and supportive land uses are prioritized on agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance.

Elenbaas seconded the motion to amend.

The motion to amend carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Elenbaas

Nay: 0

Out of meeting: 1 - Stremmler

The motion to approve as amended carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Elenbaas

Nay: 0

Out of meeting: 1 - Stremmler

Personius stated that PDS has concerns about Items 94-98.

Thulin stated that she also has concerns with Items 94-98.

Scanlon moved to hold Items 94 through 98 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) until April 28 (to be discussed in Committee of the Whole).

Boyle seconded the motion.

Rienstra asked for clarification of Item 97's phrasing prior to April 28.

The motion to hold Items 94-98 carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, and Scanlon

Nay: 1 - Elenbaas

Out of meeting: 1 - Stremmler

Elenbaas moved to hold Chapter 8 open until April 28 (to be discussed in Committee of the Whole).

Boyle seconded the motion.

The motion to hold Chapter 8 open carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, and Scanlon

Nay: 0

Out of meeting: 1 - Stremmler

This agenda item was DISCUSSED AND MOTION(S) APPROVED.

MOTION 1:

Motion approved to include Item 15 (from the Proposed Chart of Council Changes for 4.7.2026), Policy 8A-3 as presented with the addition of "as amended" after WAC 365.190 at the end of the first sentence of Item 15 the deletion of 8A-3(4)(d).

MOTION 2:

Motion approved to amend Item 34 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) so that the next to last sentence reads as follows:

Whatcom County will seek reimbursement from the State of Washington on all adjudication related expenses including courtroom expansion, judicial staffing, administrative expenses, a negotiated or mediated water rights quantification and settlement process, and other ongoing expenditures.

MOTION 3:

Motion approved to include Item 34 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) as amended.

MOTION 4:

Motion approved to include Item 35 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026).

MOTION 5:

Motion approved to strike reference to Chapter 10 in Policy 8F-3.

MOTION 6:

Motion approved to include Item 68 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) and substitute the language from PDS for item 7 as follows:

Consider the likelihood of impacts on health and habitat from potentially harmful minerals such as Naturally Occurring Asbestos, Radon, and Mercury when designating MRLs.

MOTION 7:

Motion approved to include Item 89 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026).

MOTION 8:

Motion approved to include Item 90 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) with the addition of "nearby" before "farm workers and their families" in the final sentence so that it reads as follows:

Support the development of safe, affordable on-farm and near-farm housing for farmworkers and their families, and improve access to transportation and healthcare for both farmers and farmworkers in rural areas. Cities should plan for and remove barriers to more multifamily housing affordable to nearby farm workers and their families.

MOTION 9:

Motion approved to hold Items 91 and 92 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) until April 28 (to be discussed during Committee of the Whole).

MOTION 10:

Motion approved to include Item 93 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026).

MOTION 11:

Motion approved to reconsider the previous vote (to approve Item 93).

MOTION 12:

Motion approved to amend Item 93 as follows:

Reduce land use conflicts between Whatcom County's agriculture and non-agricultural landowners, ensuring that agricultural and supportive land uses are prioritized on agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance.

MOTION 13:

Motion approved to include Item 93 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) as amended.

MOTION 14:

Motion approved to hold Items 94 through 98 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) until April 28 (to be discussed in Committee of the Whole).

MOTION 15:

Motion approved to hold Chapter 8 open until April 28 (to be discussed in Committee of the Whole).

4. [AB2026-251](#) Discussion and preliminary Council direction on Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan Chapter 9, Parks and Recreation

Galloway introduced discussion of Comprehensive Plan Chapter 9 Parks and Recreation.

Rienstra moved to begin review of Chapter 9 using the Preliminary Council Draft dated 4.7.2026, which is the current version of the chapter with Planning Commission recommendations from January 2026 and additional edits proposed by councilmembers as listed in the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026.

Scanlon seconded the motion.

Councilmembers asked to consider the following items separately: 2 and 5.

Galloway stated they would also need to revisit Policy 9E-5.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and
Stremmler

Nay: 0

Galloway turned discussion to Item 2, which refers to proposed new Policy 9A-13.

Boyle suggested adding the following language to the end of Item 2: Work in partnership with tribes to identify where recreation can co-exist that could support cultural education, stewardship, and shared understanding.

Scanlon moved to include Item 2 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) as presented so that the final sentence reads as follows: Work in partnership with tribes to identify where recreation can co-exist that could support cultural education, stewardship, and shared understanding.

Boyle seconded the motion.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and
Stremmler

Nay: 0

Galloway turned discussion to Item 5 regarding Policy 9C-23 and the recommendation to strike reference to Point Whitehorn Road because it is a vacated road.

Rienstra moved to include Item 5 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) as amended so that it strikes reference to Point Whitehorn.

Boyle seconded the motion.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and

Stremmler

Nay: 0

Galloway asked whether there are any items the Parks and Recreation Department would like to discuss.

Bennett Knox, Parks and Recreation, stated there were not.

Galloway turned discussion to Policy 9E-5.

Elenbaas moved to delete Policy 9E-5.

Stremmler seconded the motion.

Councilmembers discussed the motion.

The motion failed by the following vote:

Aye: 2 - Elenbaas and Stremmler

Nay: 5 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, and Scanlon

Galloway moved to amend Policy 9E-5 to strike the word "ensure" and replace it with "manage."

Scanlon seconded the motion.

Councilmembers discussed the motion.

Tamera Lienhart, BP, stated that the property owner has no intention of removing public access on the property. She said she does not have concerns with the proposed language "encourage the management of."

Councilmembers continued to discuss the motion.

Elenbaas suggested replacing "manage" with "encourage the management of."

Galloway accepted the suggestion as a friendly amendment so that Policy 9E-5 reads as follows:

Recognizing the long historical use for shoreline recreation and boat launching, and the historical and cultural significance to the Lummi Nation of the area at the end of Gulf Road at Cherry Point, the County should work with Lummi Nation, DNR, and the industrial

land owners in that area to encourage the management of ongoing recreational use of the shoreline in that area while permanently protecting the cultural and ecosystem significance of both the shoreline and the associated near upland areas.

The motion to amend carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and Stremmler

Nay: 0

Scanlon asked a question about the Comprehensive Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan (CPROs).

Knox provided information about the Parks and Recreation Department's approach to the current Comprehensive Plan update and the upcoming CPROs Plan.

Scanlon asked if it would be beneficial for people who want to consider additional trails to engage in the CPROs process.

Knox stated that the CPROs process would include outreach to the trail community.

Scanlon spoke about trail corridors and the possibility of partnering with other agencies or non-profits to invest in trail building. He asked about changes to updated Map 9-2.

Knox stated that the Planning Commission asked staff to identify "constructed" trails and segments that were constructed since the last update. He said that staff reached out to other jurisdictions to make sure they were okay with the county presenting trails as completed, and the updated map reflects those conversations.

Boyle moved to request staff prepare Chapter 9 - Preliminary Council Draft April 7, 2026 as amended for inclusion in a future agenda bill file for Council introduction and public hearing.

Scanlon seconded the motion.

Elenbaas stated that if land back policies are being considered, he would like to see that incorporated into the Parks and Recreation chapter.

Galloway stated that land back references are included in Chapter 2 and

Chapter 3 goals.

Councilmembers discussed the motion.

Boyle withdrew her motion.

Scanlon moved to add a new Policy 9A-14 to read as follows:

In partnership with Tribes, consider land back and/or co-management opportunities on county-owned or managed lands.

Boyle seconded the motion.

Councilmembers discussed the motion.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, and Scanlon

Nay: 2 - Elenbaas and Stremmler

Boyle moved to request staff prepare Chapter 9 - Preliminary Council Draft dated 4.7.2026 as amended for inclusion in a future agenda bill file for Council introduction and public hearing.

Scanlon seconded the motion.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, and Scanlon

Nay: 2 - Elenbaas and Stremmler

This agenda item was DISCUSSED AND MOTION(S) APPROVED.

MOTION 1:

Motion approved to begin review of Chapter 9 using the Preliminary Council Draft dated 4.7.2026, which is the current version of the chapter with Planning Commission recommendations from January 2026 and additional edits proposed by councilmembers as listed in the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026.

MOTION 2:

Motion approved to include Item 2 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) as presented with the addition of the following new final sentence: Work in partnership with tribes to identify where recreation can co-exist that could support cultural education, stewardship, and shared understanding.

MOTION 3:

Motion approved to include Item 5 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) as amended so that it strikes reference to Point Whitehorn.

MOTION 4:

Motion approved to amend Policy 9E-5 to strike the word “ensure” and replace it with “encourage the management of” so that the policy reads as follows:

Recognizing the long historical use for shoreline recreation and boat launching, and the historical and cultural significance to the Lummi Nation of the area at the end of Gulf Road at Cherry Point, the County should work with Lummi Nation, DNR, and the industrial land owners in that area to encourage the management of ongoing recreational use of the shoreline in that area while permanently protecting the cultural and ecosystem significance of both the shoreline and the associated near upland areas.

MOTION 5:

Motion approved to add a new Policy 9A-14 to read as follows:

In partnership with Tribes, consider land back and/or co-management opportunities on county-owned or managed lands.

MOTION 6:

Motion approved to request staff prepare Chapter 9 - Preliminary Council Draft dated 4.7.2026 as amended for inclusion in a future agenda bill file for Council introduction and public hearing.

5. [AB2026-261](#) Discussion and preliminary Council direction on Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan Chapter 10, Environment

Galloway introduced discussion of Comprehensive Plan Chapter 10 Environment.

Rienstra moved to begin review of Chapter 10 using the Preliminary Council Draft dated 4.7.2026, which is the current version of the chapter with Planning Commission recommendations from January 2026 and additional edits proposed by councilmembers as listed in the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026.

Boyle seconded the motion.

Scanlon asked if staff have any concerns regarding the chapter.

Mark Personius, Planning and Development Services (PDS), stated that there are concerns from PDS and Public Works staff on several items. He stated that staff requested additional time to review the proposed amendments, and said they would like to initially flag items 25, 32, 36, 37, 38, 40 41, 42, 50, 56, 57, 59, 60, 65, 66, 67, 69, 70, and 71.

Elenbaas stated he would also like to consider Item 26 separately.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, and Scanlon

Nay: 2 - Elenbaas and Stremmler

Galloway turned discussion to Item 25, which would add a new Policy 10E-16.

Elenbaas asked if there is a definition in Whatcom County Code regarding forested and wildfire hazard areas.

Galloway stated she believes the proposed language came from the Planning Unit.

Personius stated that the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has been charged with developing a wildfire hazard map and standards, which will be adopted into the state building code and the international fire code.

However, DNR is not anticipated to complete the map until mid-2027.

Personius stated that Council could add "consider adopting" to the start of the policy to reflect the fact that the map is not yet complete.

Scanlon moved to include Item 25 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) as amended so that it states:

Consider adopting National Fire Protection Association wildfire safety construction standards for new construction in forested and wildfire hazard areas to reduce risk to current and future development and loss of life and property.

Boyle seconded the motion.

Councilmembers discussed the motion.

Scanlon asked if it would be best to hold the rest of the chapter for additional PDS and Public Works review.

Personius stated that items regarding stormwater inspections and marine resource and water quality monitoring may need more time.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon

Nay: 2 - Elenbaas and Stremmler

Scanlon moved to include Item 26 (from the Chart of Proposed Council

Changes for 4.7.2026).

Boyle seconded the motion.

Elenbaas asked if the county funds the Firewise program.

Kayla Schott-Bresler, Executive's Office, stated that Whatcom County funds a portion of the program.

Councilmembers discussed the motion.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 1 - Elenbaas

Scanlon moved to hold remaining items (Items 32, 36, 37, 38, 40 41, 42, 50, 56, 57, 59, 60, 65, 66, 67, 69, 70, and 71 in the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) until April 28.

Boyle seconded the motion.

Councilmembers discussed the motion.

Kiana Oos, Council Staff, stated that Chapter 10 is scheduled for further discussion on April 14. She asked whether Council would like to move that discussion to April 28 or keep it on April 14.

Scanlon amended his motion to hold until April 14 or April 28.

Councilmembers continued to discuss the motion.

The motion to hold carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Boyle, Buchanan, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 2 - Elenbaas and Galloway

This agenda item was DISCUSSED AND MOTION(S) APPROVED.

MOTION 1:

Motion approved to begin review of Chapter 10 using the Preliminary Council Draft dated 4.7.2026, which is the current version of the chapter with Planning Commission recommendations from January 2026 and additional edits proposed by councilmembers as listed in the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026.

MOTION 2:

Motion approved to include Item 25 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) as amended so that it states:

Consider adopting National Fire Protection Association wildfire safety construction standards for new construction in forested and wildfire hazard areas to reduce risk to current and future development and loss of life and property.

MOTION 3:

Motion approved to include Item 26 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026).

MOTION 4:

Motion approved to hold remaining (Chapter 10) items (Items 32, 36, 37, 38, 40 41, 42, 50, 56, 57, 59, 60, 65, 66, 67, 69, 70, and 71 in the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) until April 14 or April 28.

6. [AB2026-262](#) Discussion and preliminary Council direction on Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan Chapter 12, Climate

Galloway introduced discussion of Comprehensive Plan Chapter 12 Climate.

Rienstra moved to begin review of Chapter 12 using the Preliminary Council Draft dated 4.7.2026, which is the current version of the chapter with Planning Commission recommendations from January 2026 and additional edits proposed by councilmembers as listed in the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026.

Scanlon seconded the motion.

Councilmembers asked to consider the following items separately: 5, 18, and 29.

Scanlon asked if staff would like to consider any items separately.

Lauren Clemens, Public Works, stated that Public Works' proposed amendments are included in the Chart of Proposed Council Changes.

The motion failed by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Boyle, Galloway, Rienstra

Nay: 3 - Elenbaas, Scanlon, and Stremmer

Out of Meeting: 1 - Buchanan

Elenbaas stated he would like to review items 12, 19, 20, 22.

Scanlon stated he would like to review item 10.

Galloway moved to begin review of Chapter 12 Climate using the Preliminary Council Draft dated 4.7.2026, which is the Planning Commission version from January 2026 and additional edits proposed by councilmembers as listed in the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026 with separate consideration of items 5, 10, 12, 18, 19, 20, 22, and 29.

Scanlon seconded the motion.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon

Nay: 2 - Elenbaas and Stremmler

Galloway turned discussion to Item 5.

Scanlon moved to include Item 5 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026).

Boyle seconded the motion.

Elenbaas stated that he believes the 2050 statewide net zero greenhouse gas emissions target will change. He stated that the electrical infrastructure is not equipped to facilitate policy mandates regarding electric vehicles, utilities, etc., and they should be proposing policy goals that help solve these problems.

Stremmler asked how many battery electric vehicles (BEVs) are currently in Whatcom County.

Clemens stated that the county is required to have a greenhouse gas emission sub-element and the Department of Commerce recommended that the county set emissions and VMT per capita targets. The bullet points in Item 5 reference existing statewide projections. Clemens stated that there are only 5,382 battery electric vehicles and 1,729 hybrid vehicles in the county, partly because the federal rebate was removed seven years early.

Stremmler asked about the impact on the local power infrastructure of setting a target of 45,174 BEVs.

Clemens stated that the state's EV Coordinating Council forecast revised their estimate for Whatcom County, reducing the forecast by 14%. The intent is to provide flexibility and not commit to a particular outcome; rather, the bullet points provide a basis for tracking data.

Elenbaas asked if it would be possible to make it clear that the goals are stated for compliance tracking purposes. He suggested removing the bullet points.

Clemens provided background on the purpose of Item 5. She stated that they submitted a notice of intent to the state saying they would submit the chapter for Department of Commerce review. The Department of Commerce recommended that the final climate element include an emissions target and a VMT target. The four bullet points provide specificity regarding anticipated outcomes in the next five years based on state law.

Councilmembers continued to discuss Item 5 with Lauren Clemens.

Rienstra moved to amend Item 5 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) to add "to monitor progress towards the" after "performance indicators" so that it reads as follows:

Consistent with the 2050 statewide net zero greenhouse gas emissions target set by the Washington State Legislature in RCW 70A.45.020 and adopted in Whatcom County Countywide Planning Policy T3, Whatcom County sets the following interim performance indicators to monitor progress towards the 2030 Climate Element implementation progress report:

Galloway seconded the motion.

The motion to amend carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Elenbaas

Nay: 1 - Stremmer

Scanlon stated that the funding model for EV infrastructure has changed, as businesses and developers have shown interest in making those investments. He asked if the intent of Item 5 is to plan for the infrastructure for the 45,000 vehicles, or to put factors in place for the private sector to do that work.

Clemens stated that there are several different service delivery models. She stated that the intent is to determine what changes might be needed in the future.

Scanlon moved to amend Item 5 (from the Chart of Proposed Council

Changes for 4.7.2026) to add ", in partnership with the private sector and developers and subject to consumer demand and economic conditions" so that the third bullet point reads as follows:

By 2030, target 45,174 registered battery electric vehicles (BEVs) and plug-in hybrid electric passenger vehicles (PHEVs) registered in Whatcom County, consistent with the Washington State Electric Vehicle Coordinating Council forecast, in partnership with the private sector and developers and subject to consumer demand and economic conditions.

Boyle seconded the motion.

Councilmembers discussed the motion.

The motion to amend carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and Stremler

Nay: 0

The motion to approve Item 5 as amended carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, and Scanlon

Nay: 2 - Elenbaas and Stremler

Scanlon moved to include Item 10 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026).

Boyle seconded the motion.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and Stremler

Nay: 0

Galloway turned discussion to Item 12 regarding Policy 12.7.4.

Clemens provided background information regarding a comment letter from Cascade Natural Gas which clarified the county's role in coordinating with existing utility-run programs.

Scanlon moved to include Item 12 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026).

Boyle seconded the motion.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and Stremler

Nay: 0

Scanlon moved to include Item 18 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026).

Rienstra seconded the motion.

Councilmembers discussed the motion.

Clemens stated that Council might consider moving this item to Chapter 10 under goal 10L for salmon recovery with other related policies.

Galloway moved to amend Item 18 as follows:

Work with the State, Tribes, and other stakeholders to evaluate a voluntary, incentive-driven framework and strategy for achieving restoration and enhancement of salmon and other aquatic species habitat.

Scanlon suggested including "public and private projects" at the end of Item 18.

Galloway accepted the suggestion as a friendly amendment so that Item 18 reads as follows:

Work with the State, Tribes, and other stakeholders to evaluate a voluntary, incentive-driven framework and strategy for achieving restoration and enhancement of salmon and other aquatic species habitat for public and private projects.

Councilmembers discussed the proposed amendment.

Galloway explained her intent in including Item 18 in Chapter 12.

Clemens stated that there are a couple of places where the item might be well-suited, such as the ecosystem section of the resilience sub-element. Another option would be to move it to Chapter 10.

Galloway stated she likes the idea of including Item 18 under the ecosystem section under resilience.

Galloway moved to amend Policy 12.11.7 (Item 18 from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) to retitle it as a new Policy 12.16.9 that reads as follows:

Work with the State, Tribes, and other stakeholders to evaluate a voluntary, incentive-driven framework and strategy for achieving restoration and enhancement of salmon and other aquatic species habitat for public and private projects.

Boyle seconded the motion.

Scanlon asked where the item could be placed in Chapter 10.

Clemens suggested 10L around fish and wildlife population habitat.

Scanlon stated he likes the idea of moving the language to Chapter 10.

Galloway stated that habitat restoration does relate to mitigating climate impact and natural hazards, but she is open to including the language in both chapters.

The motion to amend carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, and Rienstra

Nay: 3 - Stremmler, Elenbaas, and Scanlon

Scanlon moved to approve Item 19.

Rienstra seconded the motion.

Councilmembers discussed the motion.

Scanlon withdrew his motion.

Kimberly Thulin, Prosecuting Attorney's Office, stated that Council needs to return to Item 18 because there was a motion on the table to include Item 18.

The motion to include Item 18 as amended carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, and Rienstra

Nay: 3 - Elenbaas, Scanlon, and Stremmler

Scanlon moved to include Item 20 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026).

Rienstra seconded the motion.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and Stremmler

Nay: 0

Scanlon moved to include Item 22 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026).

Rienstra seconded the motion.

Elenbaas asked if the language coincides with Cascade Natural Gas' letter.

Clemens stated that it is a new policy in response to the Cascade Natural Gas letter specific to adapting their infrastructure to be more adaptive.

Scanlon moved to amend Item 22 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) to add "and franchisees" after "utility providers" so that the policy reads as follows:

Coordinate with utility providers and franchisees to identify safe, feasible adaptation measures (e.g. elevated piping, reinforced casing, floodproofing) in floodplains, consistent with state pipeline safety standards.

Elenbaas seconded the motion.

Elenbaas asked who grants the authority for a utility to cross the river.

Clemens stated that would be a question for Planning and Development Services (PDS).

Mark Personius, PDS, stated that they are working with Trans Mountain to grant an emergency exemption to do repairs to the existing pipeline.

The motion to amend carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and Stremmler

Nay: 0

The motion to include as amended carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, Elenbaas, and
Stremler

Nay: 0

Scanlon moved to approve Item 29 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026).

Rienstra seconded the motion.

Councilmembers discussed the motion.

Scanlon stated that the county has agreements in place with Lummi Nation that the ferry can be used if Lummi Nation needs to evacuate parts of Gooseberry Point.

Stremler asked if Public Works tracks ferry outages.

Elizabeth Kosa, Public Works, stated that the department tracks ferry outages and tide events.

Galloway asked if there is a plan in place for various extreme weather events.

Kosa stated that they do annual planning based on the tide charts and planning for extreme weather events on a more ad hoc basis.

Scanlon withdrew his motion.

Galloway clarified that no action means the item will not be included. She stated that additional amendments are due Friday, April 10 by noon for Chapters 10, 12, and the appendices.

This agenda item was DISCUSSED AND MOTION(S) APPROVED.

MOTION 1:

Motion approved to begin review of Chapter 12 Climate using the Preliminary Council Draft dated 4.7.2026, which is the Planning Commission version from January 2026 and additional edits proposed by councilmembers as listed in the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026 with separate consideration of items 5, 10, 12, 18, 19, 20, 22, and 29.

MOTION 2:

Motion approved to amend Item 5 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) to add "to monitor progress towards the" after "performance indicators" so that the first paragraph reads as follows:

Consistent with the 2050 statewide net zero greenhouse gas emissions target set by the Washington State Legislature in RCW 70A.45.020 and adopted in Whatcom County Countywide Planning Policy T3, Whatcom County sets the following interim performance indicators to monitor progress towards the 2030 Climate Element implementation progress report:

MOTION 3:

Motion approved to amend Item 5 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) to add ", in partnership with the private sector and developers and subject to consumer demand and economic conditions" so that the third bullet point reads as follows:

By 2030, target 45,174 registered battery electric vehicles (BEVs) and plug-in hybrid electric passenger vehicles (PHEVs) registered in Whatcom County, consistent with the Washington State Electric Vehicle Coordinating Council forecast, in partnership with the private sector and developers and subject to consumer demand and economic conditions.

MOTION 4:

Motion approved to include Item 5 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) as amended.

MOTION 5:

Motion approved to include Item 10 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026).

MOTION 6:

Motion approved to include Item 12 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026).

MOTION 7:

Motion approved to amend Policy 12.11.7 (Item 18 from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) and re-title it as a new Policy 12.16.9 that reads as follows:

Work with the State, Tribes, and other stakeholders to evaluate a voluntary, incentive-driven framework and strategy for achieving restoration and enhancement of salmon and other aquatic species habitat for public and private projects.

MOTION 8:

Motion approved to include Item 18 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) as amended.

MOTION 9:

Motion approved to include Item 20 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026).

MOTION 10:

Motion approved to amend Item 22 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) to add "and franchisees" after "utility providers" so that the policy reads as follows:

Coordinate with utility providers and franchisees to identify safe, feasible adaptation measures (e.g. elevated piping, reinforced casing, floodproofing) in floodplains, consistent with state pipeline safety standards.

MOTION 11:

Motion approved to include Item 22 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 4.7.2026) as amended.

7. [AB2026-263](#) Discussion and preliminary Council direction on Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan Appendices (Appendix A: Glossary, Appendix B: Acronyms, Appendix D: Bibliography, Appendix E: 20-Year Capital Facilities Plan, Appendix G: Airport Overlay Zones, Appendix H: Airport Imaginary Surfaces, Appendix I: Housing Needs Analysis, Appendix J: Subsidized Housing Needs and Funding) and Foothills Subarea Plan Amendments

Galloway stated that there was not enough time to discuss AB2026-263, so it would be referred to Council's Committee of the Whole meeting on April 14.

This agenda item was DISCUSSED.

8. [AB2026-249](#) Discussion regarding schedule for Council review of the comprehensive plan update
- Galloway stated that there is no meeting scheduled on April 21. At the April 28 Committee of the Whole meeting, Council will discuss Chapter 2 and urban growth areas (UGAs), as well as Chapters 8 and 10. A Special Committee of the Whole meeting is also planned for May 5, which will include a discussion of the Comprehensive Plan Preface. Remaining items will be discussed on May 12 during Committee of the Whole, including review of the draft ordinance and related zoning ordinances, depending on Planning Commission review. She stated that the goal is to introduce the Comprehensive Plan ordinance on May 26 with final action and a public hearing on June 9.

Scanlon stated that on May 5, Council will conduct an analysis for the health department's budget to help inform the overall county budget. Council will also complete part two of their own strategic planning work.

This agenda item was DISCUSSED.

9. [AB2026-276](#) Discussion of an ordinance submitting to the qualified voters of Whatcom County a proposition authorizing a sales and use tax of one-tenth of one percent (0.1%) for criminal justice purposes, as authorized by RCW 82.14.345

Scanlon stated that all options for the potential criminal justice sales tax will be discussed during the Finance and Administrative Services

Committee meeting on April 14 with a public hearing scheduled at the 6 p.m. Council meeting.

This agenda item was DISCUSSED.

Items Added by Revision

There were no agenda items added by revision.

Other Business

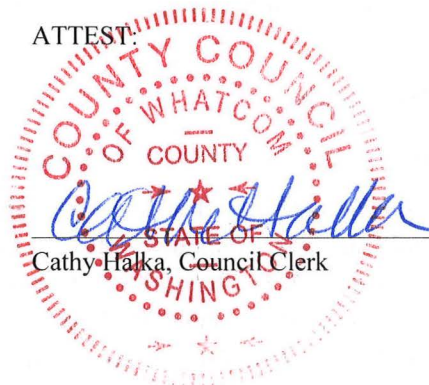
There was no other business.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:23 p.m.

The County Council approved these minutes on May 12, 2026.

ATTEST:



WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Kaylee Galloway, Council Chair

Meeting Minutes prepared by Jenna Gernand