

Whatcom County Council

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



Action Summary

**Tuesday, July 28, 2026
6 PM**

Hybrid Meeting - Council Chambers

**HYBRID MEETING (PARTICIPATE IN-PERSON, SEE REMOTE JOIN
INSTRUCTIONS AT www.whatcomcounty.us/joinvirtualcouncil, OR CALL
360.778.5010); AGENDA REVISION 7.27.2026**

COUNCILMEMBERS

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

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Cathy Halka, AICP, CMC

COUNTY COUNCIL

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

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

FLAG SALUTE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

COUNTY EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. [AB2026-461](#) Ordinance granting Forged Fiber 37, LLC a non-exclusive franchise for the purposes of offering and providing telecommunications services

ADOPTED

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

Nay: 0

Enactment No: ORD 2026-035

PUBLIC HEARINGS (FERRY DISTRICT)

THE FOLLOWING FERRY DISTRICT FILES HAD ONE COMBINED PUBLIC HEARING (SEE HEARING AND DISCUSSION NOTES UNDER AB2026-520).

1. [AB2026-520](#) Resolution establishing a new Whatcom County Ferry District Fund (Council acting as the Whatcom County Ferry District Board of Supervisors)

PUBLIC TESTIMONY RECEIVED (file not final)

Enactment No: RES 2026-030

2. [AB2026-552](#) Resolution establishing an initial budget level for the Whatcom County Ferry District in the amount of \$5.7 million (Council acting as the Whatcom County Ferry District Board of Supervisors)

PUBLIC TESTIMONY RECEIVED (file not final)

Enactment No: RES 2026-031

3. [AB2026-521](#) Resolution establishing an initial budget for the Whatcom County Ferry District in the amount of \$5.2 million (Council acting as the Whatcom County Ferry District Board of Supervisors)

PUBLIC TESTIMONY RECEIVED (file not final)

4. [AB2026-522](#) Resolution establishing an initial budget level for the Whatcom County Ferry District in the amount of \$4.2 million (Council acting as the Whatcom County Ferry District Board of Supervisors)

PUBLIC TESTIMONY RECEIVED (file not final)

5. [AB2026-524](#) Ordinance adding the Ferry District Funds and Board of Supervisors to Whatcom County Code 10.34, Ferry Rates

PUBLIC TESTIMONY RECEIVED (file not final)

Enactment No: ORD 2026-036

6. [AB2026-525](#) Ordinance adding the Ferry District Funds and Board of Supervisors to Whatcom County Code 10.36.060, Ferry Multi-Ride Cards and Quarterly Passes, Replacement Appeal Procedure

PUBLIC TESTIMONY RECEIVED (file not final)

Enactment No: ORD 2026-037

PUBLIC HEARINGS (FERRY DISTRICT) CONSIDERED SEPARATELY

1. [AB2026-520](#) Resolution establishing a new Whatcom County Ferry District Fund (Council acting as the Whatcom County Ferry District Board of Supervisors)

APPROVED

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

Nay: 1 - Elenbaas

Enactment No: RES 2026-030

2. [AB2026-552](#) Resolution establishing an initial budget level for the Whatcom County Ferry District in the amount of \$5.7 million (Council acting as the Whatcom County Ferry District Board of Supervisors)

APPROVED

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

Nay: 2 - Elenbaas, and Stremmler

Enactment No: RES 2026-031

3. [AB2026-521](#) Resolution establishing an initial budget for the Whatcom County Ferry District in the amount of \$5.2 million (Council acting as the Whatcom County Ferry District Board of Supervisors)

NOT ACTED UPON

4. [AB2026-522](#) Resolution establishing an initial budget level for the Whatcom County Ferry District in the amount of \$4.2 million (Council acting as the Whatcom County Ferry District

Board of Supervisors)

NOT ACTED UPON

5. [AB2026-524](#) Ordinance adding the Ferry District Funds and Board of Supervisors to Whatcom County Code 10.34, Ferry Rates

ADOPTED

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

Nay: 0

Enactment No: ORD 2026-036

6. [AB2026-525](#) Ordinance adding the Ferry District Funds and Board of Supervisors to Whatcom County Code 10.36.060, Ferry Multi-Ride Cards and Quarterly Passes, Replacement Appeal Procedure

ADOPTED

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

Nay: 1 - Elenbaas

Enactment No: ORD 2026-037

PUBLIC HEARINGS (COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PERIODIC UPDATE)

THE FOLLOWING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FILES HAD ONE COMBINED PUBLIC HEARING (SEE HEARING AND DISCUSSION NOTES UNDER AB2026-553).

1. [AB2026-553](#) Ordinance adopting amendments to the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan and Foothills Subarea Plan for the Growth Management Act Periodic Review and Update (for concurrent review with other Comprehensive Plan amendment proposals)

PUBLIC TESTIMONY RECEIVED (file not final)

Enactment No: ORD 2026-038

2. [AB2026-489](#) Ordinance adopting amendments to Whatcom County Code Title 20, Zoning, under the 2025-2026 periodic update of the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations, pursuant to the Growth Management Act (for concurrent review with other Comprehensive Plan amendment proposals)

PUBLIC TESTIMONY RECEIVED (file not final)

Enactment No: ORD 2026-039

3. [AB2026-490](#) Ordinance amending the official Whatcom County Zoning Map under the 2025-2026 Periodic Update of the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan under the Growth Management Act (for concurrent review with other Comprehensive Plan amendment proposals)

PUBLIC TESTIMONY RECEIVED (file not final)

Enactment No: ORD 2026-040

PUBLIC HEARINGS (COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PERIODIC UPDATE)
CONSIDERED SEPARATELY

1. [AB2026-553](#) Ordinance adopting amendments to the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan and Foothills Subarea Plan for the Growth Management Act Periodic Review and Update (for concurrent review with other Comprehensive Plan amendment proposals)

SUBSTITUTE ADOPTED

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

Nay: 2 - Elenbaas, and Stremmler

Enactment No: ORD 2026-038

Motion approved 5-2 to adopt and forward for concurrent review with other Comprehensive Plan amendment proposals (AB2026-489 and AB2026-490) scheduled later this evening.

Adopted the "Revised Substitute Ordinance for 7.28.2026 (corrected)."

2. [AB2026-489](#) Ordinance adopting amendments to Whatcom County Code Title 20, Zoning, under the 2025-2026 periodic update of the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations, pursuant to the Growth Management Act (for concurrent review with other Comprehensive Plan amendment proposals)

SUBSTITUTE ADOPTED

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

Nay: 2 - Elenbaas, and Stremmler

Enactment No: ORD 2026-039

Motion approved 5-2 to adopt and forward for concurrent review with other Comprehensive Plan amendment proposals (AB2026-553 and AB2026-490) scheduled later this evening.

Adopted the "Revised Substitute Ordinance for 7.14.2026."

3. [AB2026-490](#) Ordinance amending the official Whatcom County Zoning Map under the 2025-2026 Periodic Update of the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan under the Growth Management Act (for concurrent review with other Comprehensive Plan amendment proposals)

SUBSTITUTE ADOPTED

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

Nay: 2 - Elenbaas, and Stremmler

Enactment No: ORD 2026-040

Motion approved 5-2 to adopt and forward for concurrent review with other Comprehensive Plan amendment proposals (AB2026-553 and AB2026-489) scheduled later this evening.

Adopted the “Revised Substitute Ordinance for 7.14.2026.”

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PERIODIC UPDATE - CONCURRENT REVIEW

Motion approved 5-2 with Elenbaas and Stremmler opposed to approve the adopted items AB2026-553, AB2026-489, and AB2026-490 concurrently (see motion and votes on each individual file below).

1. [AB2026-553](#) Ordinance adopting amendments to the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan and Foothills Subarea Plan for the Growth Management Act Periodic Review and Update (for concurrent review with other Comprehensive Plan amendment proposals)

APPROVED CONCURRENTLY

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

Nay: 2 - Elenbaas, and Stremmler

Enactment No: ORD 2026-038

2. [AB2026-489](#) Ordinance adopting amendments to Whatcom County Code Title 20, Zoning, under the 2025-2026 periodic update of the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations, pursuant to the Growth Management Act (for concurrent review with other Comprehensive Plan amendment proposals)

APPROVED CONCURRENTLY

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

Nay: 2 - Elenbaas, and Stremmler

Enactment No: ORD 2026-039

3. [AB2026-490](#) Ordinance amending the official Whatcom County Zoning Map under the 2025-2026 Periodic Update of the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan under the Growth Management Act (for concurrent review with other Comprehensive Plan amendment proposals)

APPROVED CONCURRENTLY

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

Nay: 2 - Elenbaas, and Stremmler

Enactment No: ORD 2026-040

OPEN SESSION

CONSENT AGENDA

(From Council Finance and Administrative Services Committee)

1. [AB2026-555](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to relinquish a foot trail easement held by the Whatcom Land Trust, located within South Fork Park

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT

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

Nay: 0

2. [AB2026-563](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and the Attorney General's Office of Washington State to purchase an evidence refrigerator, in the amount of \$8,920

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT

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

Nay: 0

3. [AB2026-564](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement amendment between Whatcom County and Ferndale School District to fund mental health services for an additional year in the amount of \$300,530 for a total amended agreement amount of \$572,347

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT

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

Nay: 0

4. [AB2026-565](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract between Whatcom County and Chinook Enterprises to provide support services to eligible individuals with developmental disabilities, in the estimated amount of \$74,878

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT

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

Nay: 0

5. [AB2026-566](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and Island County for preventing the use of cannabis and commercial tobacco products by youth in the amount of \$37,000

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT

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

Nay: 0

6. [AB2026-567](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and North Sound Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization for behavioral health services in the amount of \$725,761

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT

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

Nay: 0

7. [AB2026-568](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract between Whatcom County and PeaceHealth to provide two years of funding for a Perinatal Patient Navigator, providing mental health services for marginalized, disadvantaged, and medically complex pregnant patients in the amount of \$180,000

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT

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

Nay: 0

8. [AB2026-569](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract between Whatcom County and SCS Engineers to prepare an updated Comprehensive Solid and Hazardous Waste Management Plan, in the amount of \$138,894

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT

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

Nay: 0

9. [AB2026-570](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and United General District 304 to reduce the use of cannabis and tobacco by youth in the amount of \$79,000

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT

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

Nay: 0

10. [AB2026-574](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract amendment with the Washington State Department of Commerce to increase the total grant amount for the state fiscal year 2026 Domestic Violence Victim/Witness Grant in the amount of \$50,000 for a total amended contract amount of \$74,218

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT

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

Nay: 0

11. [AB2026-575](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement to pass-through funds from the Washington State Military Department to the City of Bellingham for the operations of What-Comm in the amount of \$93,500 for fiscal year 2027

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT

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

Nay: 0

12. [AB2026-576](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement with the City of Bellingham for the pass-through of grant funds from the Washington State Military Department for fiscal year 2027 for What-Comm operations in the amount of \$93,500

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT

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

Nay: 0

OTHER ITEMS

(From Council Climate Action and Natural Resources Committee)

1. [AB2026-526](#) Ordinance amending Whatcom County Code 16.20, Whatcom County Shellfish Protection Districts

SUBSTITUTE ADOPTED

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

Nay: 0

Enactment No: ORD 2026-041

2. [AB2026-556](#) Joint resolution of the Bellingham City Council and the Whatcom County Council adopting the Lake Whatcom Forest Management Plan

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

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

Nay: 0

Motion approved 7-0 that they hold until they can get a recommendation or review from the Forest Advisory Committee.

(From Council Finance and Administrative Services Committee)

3. [AB2026-508](#) Resolution amending the 2026 Flood Control Zone District and Subzones Budget, request no. 4, in the amount of \$34,830 (Council acting as the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors)

APPROVED

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

Nay: 0

Enactment No: RES 2026-032

4. [AB2026-530](#) Ordinance closing the Central Plaza Tenant Improvement Fund

ADOPTED

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

Nay: 0

Enactment No: ORD 2026-042

5. [AB2026-534](#) Ordinance amending the 2026 Whatcom County Budget, request no. 10, in the amount of \$252,250

ADOPTED

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

Nay: 0

Enactment No: ORD 2026-043

6. [AB2026-550](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and the U.S. Department of Transportation for the Lummi Island Ferry Replacement and System Modernization Project, in the amount of \$25,000,000

AUTHORIZED

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

Nay: 0

7. [AB2026-582](#) Resolution designating an authorized representative and alternate authorized representative of Whatcom County to obtain federal and/or state emergency or disaster assistance funds on behalf of Whatcom County

APPROVED

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

Nay: 0

Enactment No: RES 2026-033

(From Council Public Works and Health Committee)

8. [AB2026-504](#) Ordinance amending Whatcom County Code 24.03, Food Service Rules and Regulations (Council acting as the Health Board)

NOT ACTED UPON

(No Committee Assignment)

9. [AB2026-501](#) Resolution establishing regular Whatcom County Council meeting dates for 2027

APPROVED

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

Nay: 0

Enactment No: RES 2026-034

CONFIRMATION OF EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS TO ADVISORY GROUPS

1. [AB2026-551](#) Request confirmation of the County Executive's appointment of Alex Durney to the Conservation Easement Program Advisory Committee

CONFIRMED

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

Nay: 0

ITEMS ADDED BY REVISION**INTRODUCTION ITEMS**

1. [AB2026-499](#) Review final project performance on the 2025-2026 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Public Services grant and proposed activities for the 2026-2027 CDBG Public Services grant

INTRODUCED FOR PUBLIC HEARING

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

Nay: 0

2. [AB2026-557](#) Resolution to sell tax title property by public auction, Mounces First Addition

INTRODUCED FOR PUBLIC HEARING

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

Nay: 0

3. [AB2026-559](#) Ordinance amending Whatcom County Code 24.03, Food Service Rules and Regulations

INTRODUCED

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

Nay: 0

4. [AB2026-580](#) Ordinance establishing the Criminal Justice Sales Tax Fund - RCW 82.14.345 and establishing an initial budget for the Criminal Justice Sales Tax Fund - RCW 82.14.345

INTRODUCED

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

Nay: 0

5. [AB2026-581](#) Ordinance amending the 2026 Whatcom County Budget, request no. 11, in the amount of \$3,658,280

INTRODUCED

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

Nay: 0

COMMITTEE REPORTS, OTHER ITEMS, AND COUNCILMEMBER UPDATES

ADJOURN