

Whatcom County Council Special Committee of the Whole

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



Action Summary

**Tuesday, June 2, 2026
1 PM**

Hybrid Meeting - Council Chambers

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVIEW - HYBRID MEETING - ADJOURNS BY 4:30
P.M. (PARTICIPATE IN-PERSON, SEE REMOTE JOIN INSTRUCTIONS AT
www.whatcomcounty.us/joinvirtualcouncil, OR CALL 360.778.5010); AGENDA
REVISED 5.27.2026**

COUNCILMEMBERS

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

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Cathy Halka, AICP, CMC

Call To Order

Roll Call

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

Announcements

Public Comment (Comprehensive Plan)

1. [AB2026-422](#) Public comments on all items related to the draft Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan

RECEIVED

Committee Discussion

1. [AB2026-186](#) Discussion and preliminary Council direction on Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan Chapter 2, Land Use

DISCUSSED AND MOTION(S) APPROVED

MOTION 1:

Motion approved to begin review of Chapter 2 using the Preliminary Council Draft dated 6.2.2026, which is the current version of the chapter with Planning Commission recommendations from January 2026 and additional edits proposed and motions passed by councilmembers as listed in the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 6.2.2026.

MOTION 2:

Motion approved to include Item 171 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 6.2.2026) as amended and assign it a place in the Comprehensive Plan per PDS staff's recommendation, to be determined.

MOTION 3:

Motion approved to include Item 172 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes) as presented to be placed pursuant to PDS staff's recommended placement, to be determined.

MOTION 4:

Motion approved to hold Chapter 2 as amended open until the next meeting.

MOTION 5:

Motion approved to reconsider the previous motion.

MOTION 6:

Motion approved to hold Chapter 2 as amended open until a future meeting.

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

DISCUSSED AND MOTION(S) APPROVED

MOTION 1:

Motion approved to begin review of Chapter 5 using the Preliminary Council Draft dated 6.2.2026, which is the current version of the chapter with Planning Commission recommendations from January 2026 and additional edits proposed and motions passed by councilmembers as listed in the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 6.2.2026.

MOTION 2:

Motion approved to include Items 31-34 as presented on screen.

MOTION 3:

Motion approved to add Items 171 and 172 (from the Chapter 2 Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 6.2.2026) to Chapter 5 Utilities under Goal 5H as Policy 5H-15 and Policy 5H-16.

MOTION 4:

Motion approved to request staff prepare Chapter 5 - Preliminary Council Draft as amended on June 2, 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

DISCUSSED AND MOTION(S) APPROVED**MOTION 1:**

Motion approved to begin review of Chapter 8 using the Preliminary Council Draft dated 6.2.2026, which is the current version of the chapter with Planning Commission recommendations from January 2026 and additional edits proposed and motions passed by councilmembers as listed in the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 6.2.2026.

MOTION 2:

Motion approved to approve Policy 8Y-6 (Item 99 in the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 6.2.2026) as amended and presented on screen so that the policy reads as follows:

The County may consider limited siting of non-carbon or renewable energy facilities or associated infrastructure on or near designated resource lands when all the following conditions are met:

- the location may be dependent upon the underlying resource,
- alternative locations may not be feasible,
- impacts to long-term commercial resource use are minimized,
- environmental impacts are mitigated,
- and the proposal is consistent with applicable state and federal law.

MOTION 3:

Motion approved to hold Chapter 8 as amended open until a future meeting.

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

DISCUSSED AND MOTION(S) APPROVED

MOTION 1:

Motion approved to begin review of Chapter 10 using the Preliminary Council Draft dated 6.2.2026, which is the current version of the chapter with Planning Commission recommendations from January 2026 and additional edits proposed and motions passed by councilmembers as listed in the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 6.2.2026.

MOTION 2:

Motion approved to include Item 83 (from the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 6.2.2026) as amended in a location to be determined by PDS.

MOTION 3:

Motion approved to hold Chapter 10 as amended open until a future meeting.

5. [AB2026-419](#) Discussion and preliminary Council direction on Urban Growth Area (UGA) and Rural Lands Zoning Map amendments

DISCUSSED AND MOTION(S) APPROVED

MOTION 1:

Motion approved to begin review of the draft ordinance of the Urban Growth Area (UGA) and Rural Lands Zoning Map using the Planning Commission recommendations from April 23, 2026.

MOTION 2:

Motion approved to request that staff prepare the draft ordinance the UGA and Rural Lands Zoning Map amendments – Preliminary Council Draft as amended – for Council introduction and public hearing.

Items Added by Revision

1. [AB2026-188](#) Discussion and preliminary Council direction on Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan Chapter 3, Housing

DISCUSSED AND MOTION(S) APPROVED

MOTION 1:

Motion approved to begin review of Chapter 3 using the Preliminary Council Draft dated 6.2.2026, which is the current version of the chapter with Planning Commission recommendations from January 2026 and additional edits proposed and motions passed by councilmembers as listed in the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 6.2.2026.

MOTION 2:

Motion approved to approve changes to the Housing Needs Table in Chapter 3 as recommended by Planning Commission.

MOTION 3:

Motion approved to hold Chapter 3 as amended open until a future meeting.

2. [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

DISCUSSED AND MOTION(S) APPROVED

MOTION 1:

Motion approved to begin review of Appendix I - Housing Needs Analysis (as updated 5.20.2026), which is the current version of Appendix I with additional edits by PDS as approved by the Planning Commission.

MOTION 2:

Motion approved to amend Appendix I by replacing the version from March 30, 2026 with the version updated on May 20, 2026.

MOTION 3:

Motion approved to request that staff prepare all Appendices, including Appendix I as amended on June 2, 2026, for inclusion in a future agenda bill file for Council introduction and public hearing.

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

DISCUSSED AND MOTION(S) APPROVED

MOTION 1:

Motion approved to begin review of Chapter 7 using the Preliminary Council Draft for 6.2.2026, which is the current version of the chapter with Planning Commission recommendations from January 2026, additional edits proposed and motions passed by councilmembers, and additional edits by PDS as listed in the Chart of Proposed Council Changes for 6.2.2026.

MOTION 2:

Motion approved to hold Chapter 7 as amended open until a future meeting.

4. [AB2026-249](#) Discussion regarding schedule for Council review of the comprehensive plan update

DISCUSSED AND MOTION(S) APPROVED

MOTION 1:

Motion approved to add a Special Committee of the Whole meeting on June 16 from 9:00 a.m. to noon and 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

MOTION 2:

Motion approved to add Chapter 12 to discussion on June 16 for Special Committee of the Whole.

Other Business

Adjournment