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- The public is encouraged to comment via email to pced@anacorteswa.gov, via written comment addressed to PCED, P.O. Box 547, Anacortes, WA 98221. Public comments received prior to 3:00 p.m. the day of the meeting will become part of the record for the meeting, just as if presented in person.
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Anacortes Planning Commission
Municipal Building - Council Chambers
904 6th Street

September 10, 2025
6:00 PM

PRELIMINARY AGENDA
[Packet Materials](#) / [Watch Meeting](#)

1. **Roll Call**
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Minutes**
 - a. Minutes of July 9, 2025 and August 13, 2025 were submitted for approval.
4. **Public Comment**
5. **Public Hearings**
 - a. 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update - Continued public hearing on Draft 2025-2045 Comprehensive Plan
6. **Other Business**
 - a. 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update - Development Regulation Amendments (Discussion)
7. **Planning Department Update**
8. **Adjournment**

**Citizens wishing to comment on items not on the agenda may do so under Public Comment. Citizens wishing to comment during a public hearing may do so as those items are considered by the Planning Commission during the course of the meeting.*

The City of Anacortes is committed to making public meetings available and accessible to all members of the community. For assistance with special needs, please contact the City Clerk at 360-299-1960 in advance of the meeting.

Anacortes Planning Commission Minutes - July 9, 2025

Roll Call

Chairperson Linda Martin called to order the Anacortes Planning Commission meeting of July 9, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. Commissioners Jim Stoneman, Frank Jeretzky, Paul Ryan, Luke Currier, and Mike Mills were present. Jim Stoneman moved to excuse Will McCombs from the meeting. Luke Currier seconded. All ayes.

Pledge of Allegiance

Minutes

Minutes of February 12, 2025 and June 11, 2025 were submitted for approval.

The minutes for February 12, 2025 were submitted for approval. Frank Jeretzky moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Luke Currier seconded. All ayes.

The minutes for June 11, 2025 were submitted for approval. Jim Stoneman moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Paul Ryan seconded. All ayes.

Public Comment

Public comment received 7/2/25

No public comment received.

Public Hearings

Other Business

2025 Comprehensive Plan Update: Draft development regulation amendments addressing STEP housing (emergency Shelters, Transitional housing, Emergency housing, and Permanent supportive housing)

Libby Grage said she is presenting the draft code amendments for STEP (emergency Shelters, Transitional housing, Emergency housing, and Permanent supportive housing) housing tonight. She gave the background for STEP housing which is addressed by House Bill 1220 and recommendations in the Housing Action Plan (HAP) on integration. These types of housing are targeted towards addressing unique challenges of people who are at the greatest risk of losing their housing. She provided details on these 4 housing types.

Emergency shelters may include day and warming centers that don't provide overnight accommodations. These serve individuals and families who are currently homeless. There is no length of stay defined by state law. She reviewed the rules and services provided in emergency shelters. Transitional housing provides supportive services to facilitate moving from homelessness to permanent housing. Individuals and families that are currently homeless. The clients usually have up to 2 years for the length of stay. She reviewed the rules and services provided. Emergency housing includes temporary indoor accommodation that is intended to address individuals' basic health, food, clothing and personal hygiene needs. These serve individuals and families who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness. The stay is usually up to 60 days.

Permanent supportive housing is subsidized, leased housing with lower barriers to entry that would be typical for other subsidized and unsubsidized rental housing. This is for populations that need comprehensive support services to maintain housing. She moved on to HB 1220 which was passed in 2021 that required the city plan for and accommodate housing affordable to all income levels; assures enough land capacity is available for local housing needs; and specific zoning and development regulations for the 4 different housing types. The city must allow transitional housing or permanent supportive housing in any zone where residential dwelling units or hotels are allowed; it must allow indoor emergency shelters or indoor emergency housing in any zones in which hotels are allowed. The city may impose reasonable occupancy, spacing, and intensity of use requirements to protect public health and safety. She reviewed the projected housing needs by income. Anacortes needs 60 emergency housing units and 339 permanent supportive housing units in the low income bracket. She gave examples of local emergency shelters and

transitional housing in Anacortes.

Ms. Grage stated that the current code does not address STEP housing. The HAP recommends specifically addressing the 4 housing types in code to avoid uncertainty and legal challenges; apply design standards for multi-family uses to each type of STEP housing; and parking, spacing and suggestions on operational plans. Commerce recommends against requiring operational plans as they can be a barrier for development and staff may not have the training to review them for completeness. She reviewed the summary table from the meeting packet. This describes the zones where each type of STEP housing is permitted; the development standards; parking and the review process for modifications. Emergency shelters and emergency housing have to be allowed in any zones where hotels are allowed. Transitional housing and permanent supportive housing need to be permitted in all residential zones along with CBD, C, CM, & MMU. She reviewed the proposed amendments to the permitted uses table (19.41.040) to add STEP housing types. All of these housing types need to comply with our multi-family development standards. Regarding parking, we are proposing that emergency shelters parking requirements are a Director decision. The Director can require a parking study. For the other 3 STEP housing types, staff is proposing that the parking requirement be the same as required for the proposed dwelling type. The applicant can submit a parking study to support a reduction to that requirement.

Libby Grage pointed out that Commerce recommends allowing administrative modifications of certain requirements to facilitate production of STEP housing. These could be modifications to setbacks, density limits, restrictions on supportive spaces inside buildings (ie: childcare), and public noticing (when such notice could compromise the safety of tenants). The review process is proposed to be the same as the underlying permit type. She gave the requirements for the 5 types of review.

Jim Stoneman referenced the parking, suggesting the language for emergency shelter be the same as the other 3. He feels this is basically the same except the applicant can provide parking study to request a modification.

Libby Grage clarified that staff intends to require a parking study for the Director's decision for emergency shelters. In AMC 19.64.040 there is clarifying language to require the parking study. The proposed change removes the option for the applicant to choose what to submit to support their request.

Paul Ryan asked if the Salvation Army provides emergency housing.

John Coleman said they don't. They explored it but their board did not support it. Instead, they provide the cold weather shelter in conjunction with the Anacortes Family Center. They provide vouchers that local motels accept for cold weather shelter.

Mike Mills circled back to parking. He wonders why this says "may be required" instead of "must".

Libby Grage said there could be situations where it doesn't make sense to always require it.

Mr. Mills suggested "may be required unless waived by the Director". Also have a general concern about decreasing parking. He understands that this type of housing would usually be less demand for parking. He expressed concern that once the buildings are built, the use of the buildings could change and it would be difficult to provide additional parking after the fact. Also the proximity of transit and parking to the development should be reviewed. He prefers to allow staff to have some discretion based on the actual proposal.

Ms. Grage stated that the requirements of a parking study may help with that concern.

John Coleman pointed out that we oversee housing affordability in this department. Parking is really expensive and a concern for builders of affordable housing. We don't want to drive those costs up; rather we want to strike a balance.

Libby Grage reviewed AMC 19.64.020 regarding parking studies.

Linda Martin asked if the Director would be able to grant a permit with zero parking requirements for these 4 housing types.

Libby Grage said that is a possibility. It would depend on the type of facility and its location and proximity to transit, with plenty of on-street parking in the area, etc.

Frank Jeretzky stated that the proposal is to have transition housing allowed in all residential zones. He asked what the off-street parking requirement would be if someone converted a 6 bedroom house to

transitional housing.

John Coleman all of the types of housing except emergency housing require that same parking requirements for typical housing for that site.

Mr. Jeretzky wondered if the parking requirement would be based on the new use.

Ms. Grage clarified it would follow the underlying zoning requirements.

John Coleman gave the example of Oxford housing. This is transitional housing for persons leaving a treatment facility. There could be 10 men living in a house. They are self-policing without staff on-site. We can't exclude them and they are allowed by law. That would not require additional parking requirements. If there was an organization wanted to do transitional housing with a caretaker on site, we may have to look at a Director's decision.

Frank Jeretzky pointed out that staff commented that parking limits affordable housing. He expressed his opinion that parking limits all types of housing.

Linda Martin referenced housing needs chart. Given the timeline of this we should have 5 years of current data. She wonders if we're meeting the yearly housing units

Libby Grage said we She clarified that the city is not required to build the housing, just to create the regulations and condition for when a developer wants to build them.

Mrs. Martin said she's always thought that these projections aren't realistic because they were not based on historical data. Back to the 6 unit home conversation. She wonders if the city is notified when an existing structure is switched to transitional housing.

Libby Grage said there's no requirement for notification for that change. We would likely find out about them if they needed permits for a remodel.

John Coleman clarified that the State is the one that provides the shelter info. Shelter providers work with the state. Permanent supportive housing may be difficult to track.

Linda Martin said that with no public notice requirement, she expressed concern about sex offenders, jail release, etc. It doesn't seem safe.

Ms. Grage said there are requirements for sex offenders that would apply.

Paul Ryan asked if transitional housing is considered a rental type of facility. If Anacortes had a rental registration program, we would be able to track them.

Libby Grage said that could be a way to track the rental itself, but not the person.

Linda Martin asked in which zones these 4 types of housing not be allowed.

Ms. Grage reviewed the zoning map. Light Industrial, Heavy Manufacturing and Manufacturing and Shipping are not compatible with residential use, so it's not allowed there.

Mrs. Martin asked what the zoning is for the City's property in Shapes Corner.

Libby Grage stated it is R4 and LM1 in that area.

Linda Martin asked if the affordable housing project is still moving forward in that area.

John Coleman pointed out that the city owns 12 acres there. We may be able to partner with other agencies to provide affordable housing, but did not discuss these 4 types of housing. We are still reviewing the possibilities for that area. There are some constraints in the area.

Linda Martin wondered if Habitat for Humanity is considered permanent supportive housing.

Mr. Coleman said it is not because they do not provide supportive services.

Linda Martin asked for staff to define intensity of use standards.

Ms. Grage clarified it is the density of people, transportation and/or services needed by participants. If the services needed are high, there could be more activity at that location that may impact the surrounding area. She asked the Commissioners if there are any other changes you'd recommend.

Mrs. Martin asked if there is anything in the proposed changes that goes above and beyond the state requirements.

Libby Grage said the state law does not dictate the parking requirements. It doesn't specify that the city has to allow for the applicant to request modifications to the standards; nor does it identify the review process. Staff's recommendations are based on Department of Commerce guidelines to help reduce barriers since we have a need in our community. The draft regulations have been modeled after that guidance.

Linda Martin pointed out that parking requirements is one barrier to this type of housing. The second barrier is onsite recreation and open space requirements. She was not sure that was modified.

Libby Grage stated that there are proposed changes to open space requirements. She reviewed the proposed changes

Mrs. Martin said the 3rd barrier is restrictions on support space, which is addressed via the Director discretion. The 4th barrier is clarifying where these types of housing are allowed, which was addressed also. Libby Grage- agreed.

Libby Grage provided an update on other projects. The full updated draft Comprehensive Plan will be published by July 16th. This will be all the elements, policies & goals. Notices will be mailed to all residents and property owners in the city. There will be a 30+ day comment period and then public hearings. In August and September, the development regulation amendments draft will be published; SEPA issued and public hearings. In October, the PC will make a recommendation and then City Council will begin the review. The deadline for adoption is December 31, 2025. We are canceling the July 23rd PC meeting.

Ms. Grage stated subsequent to the Planning Commission discussion on the future land use map (FLUM), there are a few more properties that staff will recommend changing the FLUM and zoning Staff is recommending changing the Olson building from MS to CBD; and the Anacortes Museum from OT to P. There will also be updated language to the goals and policies for FLUM designations to clarify. The Parks, Recreation and Open Space element will have an updated open space map along with the level of service for parks and recreation facilities. Staff will highlight those changes when they are presented. There was Planning Commission discussion to change the Climate element policies, so those will be integrated. Staff is also cross referencing Climate policies throughout the other elements.

Planning Department Update

John Coleman said once the Comprehensive Plan is released, staff will be working on the development regulations, so there is a possibility for additional Planning Commission meetings. On Monday I'll be presenting to the City Council on the economic development strategic plan. Thai is available in the City Council packet.

Adjournment

Linda Martin adjourned the meeting at 7:36 p.m.

Anacortes Planning Commission Minutes - August 13, 2025

Roll Call

Chairperson Linda Martin called to order the Anacortes Planning Commission meeting of August 13, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. Commissioners Jim Stoneman, William McCombs, Frank Jeretzky, Paul Ryan, Luke Currier, and Mike Mills were present.

Pledge of Allegiance

Minutes

There were no minutes submitted for approval.

Public Comment

There was no comment received.

Public Hearings

Other Business

2025 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update - Introducing the Draft 2025-2045 Comprehensive Plan (Discussion)

John Coleman gave an overview of why Anacortes is updating the Comprehensive Plan. Per the Growth Management Act (GMA), Anacortes is planning for 20 years of projected population growth. This is to prepare Anacortes for expected growth based on prior growth patterns. The intent is to avoid the ills that can occur if growth happens without proper planning. We are trying to avoid being unprepared for additional traffic, increasing need for our utilities, etc. This helps shape how that growth will look. The Planning department sent an all-city mailer to all residents to help engage people in the Comprehensive Plan process. We will have a public hearing on the updated Comprehensive Plan draft scheduled for August 27th. Libby Grage gave the background of the Comprehensive Plan. It's the city's plan for growth for the next 20 years. We are updating the Comprehensive Plan and the Development Regulations which are the rules on what can be developed and how. There are some mandatory requirements from the GMA: 20-year growth projections, UGA boundaries; state law changes; internal consistency between the elements of the plan; and critical area & development regulations. In addition to those, City Council adopted a docket in August 2024 for format & organizational and policy changes; Future Land Use Map (FLUM) amendments; and development regulation updates that were requested by citizens, staff and community members. She reviewed the 2-phase public process. We completed phase 1 over the past year including public outreach, creation of the Climate Team, and released the draft preliminary goals and policies. We held public meetings, open houses and public hearings to review the proposed changes. We are now at phase 2, which includes the complete draft Comprehensive Plan including volume 1 & 2. The Planning Commission has reviewed all of volume 1 and just received volume 2 in tonight's packet. There will be public hearings, a Planning Commission recommendation to City Council, and City Council adoption by the end of 2025. She reviewed the public engagement that occurred over the past year. There is a public engagement summary report available at www.planacortes.org. Staff has received over 145 comment letters and emails to date. Staff is compiling a comment summary and brief staff response table. Many of the comments are well researched and thought out. The comment period is open until the Planning Commission meeting on August 27th. Staff will be recommending keeping the public hearing open. She reviewed how to access and review the elements of the Comprehensive Plan. There are also supplemental documents and appendices that can be downloaded. Overall, the approach to the update included: consolidating overlapping policies; increasing specificity to improve understanding and implementation; reflect status of policies that have been implemented; enhance readability and clarity; and integrate and address requirements of state legislation. Staff added a preface to the Comprehensive Plan to set the stage for the rest of the plan. We introduce the

GMA planning goals, countywide planning policies overview and Tribal coordination on planning issues. The next section is the introduction and vision section where we integrated language regarding climate and housing requirements; updated the community engagement summary and other plans.

Ms. Grage reviewed each element. In the Land Use element goals & policies staff carried over the changes the Planning Commission reviewed from phase 1. There are updates to the FLUM, updates to the land-use designation table, additional policies added to integrate the climate element, and integration of public and agency feedback. She reviewed the proposed changes to the FLUM that the Planning Commission already reviewed. There are 2 new proposed changes to the FLUM. The first is changing the land use designation and zoning for the Olson building from MS to CBD. The reason for this change is that the current use and proposed redevelopment is more in line with the CBD zone.

Linda Martin asked what can be developed in the Olson building if the zoning is changed to CBD that cannot be done with the current zoning.

Libby Grage clarified that the type of use (retail on bottom and residential on top) is allowed outright in the CBD but is a conditional use in MS. Changing it makes redevelopment more straight forward.

Mrs. Martin expressed concern about creating a zoning island.

Libby Grage said other considerations are form and intensity standards for things like setbacks. The Olson building is currently an existing non-conforming structure, which can make redevelopment difficult.

Changing this would make it more straight forward to reconstruct what is currently there.

Paul Ryan asked if the Housing Authority is a government agency.

John Coleman clarified they are a non-governmental organization. They are non-profit. They have their own by-laws, which requires the Mayor to appoint the board members. They are not funded via the city general fund.

Linda Martin stated the point is changing this makes it easier to redevelop the Olson building by the Housing Authority. This makes it easier to permit and less fees.

Ms. Grage agreed. There is uncertainty when applying for a conditional use permit. The other new proposal is the Anacortes Museum property. It's currently OT and proposed to change to public designation. A museum is not a permitted use in OT, so it's currently a non-conforming use, which limits expansion. This aligns the land use designation with the current use of the parcel. The Museum has additional space needs, so making this change would allow that to occur.

Mike Mills asked if the setback requirements are different between OT and Public zones.

John Coleman said there are no minimum setbacks in the Public zone, but they are subject to block frontage standards and height requirements. It's a little more flexible in the Public zone. This change allows for the Museum to expand due to increased need for more room.

Libby Grage said she will look into this more and report back to the Planning Commission. She moved on to the land use designations stating there were some overarching updates made to this section. The changes add clarity to the intent of the section. Another change was to allow cottages in the RLD1 land use designation based on the Planning Commission discussion and to be consistent with HAP. The next change is in the OT designation. There was discussion to include cottages in this zone but due to the small lot size in OT it would be difficult to make a well-designed cottage development. For this reason, Makers recommended not including cottages in OT.

Linda Martin clarified that the Planning Commission recommendation was to make OT similar to R3 and R3a zones.

Libby Grage said another proposed change is under public use in the "special topics to explore" section to consider changing the designation of certain city and state-owned properties to Public. There are quite a few properties that the city owns where it would make more sense to make them designated as Public. There were also changes made in volume 2 to the land use background document to align with new state laws; addressing county-wide planning policies; update figures, stats & data; growth allocations & capacity and FLUM changes. She moved on to the housing element goals and policies stating staff carried over the Planning Commission reviewed changes from phase 1. There were no changes. The housing background information section was updated to be consistent with state laws; countywide planning policies; the

community profile, the HAP summary; housing inventory, production and cost trends; and analysis of housing and service needs. She moved on to the economic development goals and policies. Staff carried over the Planning Commission revised changes from phase one with no changes. There were quite a few changes to the Economic Development background. We integrated information from the Economic Development strategic plan; added a new section about the Anacortes Economic Development landscape; new sections describing other related plans; and local organizations involved in Economic Development. We updated the projected population and employment growth populations and add information about employment conditions; such as, employee travel patterns. The Transportation goals and policies had no changes. We updated the transportation background to update existing conditions data; new sections addressing active transportation and updated service standards; updated information on the inventory of public transit, air transport, and marine transport within the city; and an updated future needs analysis. She moved on to the Parks, Recreation & Open Space goals and policies. One update is an updated connectivity map showing all the areas with wetlands; steep slopes; stream corridors; schools; privately owned and dedicated open spaces; and city-owned open space & parks. There are many goals to maintain and enhance open space. In the background section of Parks & Recreation staff added a section discussing GMA requirements for that element; updated inventory of existing parks & recreation facilities; added a section on the Senior Center; updated level of service and funding information; and an updated list of recommended actions to make improvements to park facilities. There were no changes in the Environmental & Conservation goals and policies. We are choosing to retain some shoreline-related policies that were originally recommended to be removed because there is overlap with the Shoreline Master Program (SMP). In the background for the Environmental & Conservation element staff added a section discussing GMA requirements for protecting critical areas; expanded the inventory include elements of the environment (land, water, flora, fauna, and atmosphere); and minor updates to the critical areas section. In the Capital Facilities goals & policies staff carried over the Planning Commission review and there were no changes. In the background for that section, there are updates to the capital facilities inventory – including green infrastructure and city-owned marine infrastructure; updated future facility needs for water, sewer and storm; updated Fire/EMS and public schools sections; added a new section for other city buildings and services. The Utilities section goals and policies had no changes. In the Utilities section background the utility inventory and forecast of future needs was updated. In the Climate goals and policies staff carried over all the Planning Commission revised changes from phase 1. Updates included new policy to encourage industrial facilities to transition to low-carbon systems; support for transition of oil refining and gas manufacturing to low-carbon processes or industries; and adoption of regulations to ensure proper siting and design of renewable energy generation and storage facilities. The background is all new (as the element was not in the prior comp plan).

Ms. Grage moved on to the appendices. This will include the land capacity analysis & adequate provision checklists; climate vulnerability and risk assessment report; GHG emission inventory report; and racially disparate impacts analysis. She reviewed the next steps and upcoming meetings. At the August 20th meeting, staff recommends discussion of the development regulations. Then on August 27th there will be a public hearing on the draft Comprehensive Plan. Staff recommends keeping that hearing open so that the public can continue to provide comments. September 10th would be a continuation of the public hearing on the Comprehensive Plan. We may need an additional special meeting on September 17th. Then on September 24th the plan is to hold deliberations and make a recommendation on the Comprehensive Plan, which may be continued to October 1st if needed. The October 8th meeting would be a public hearing on the development regulations, which may also need a second meeting so we are holding October 15th. Staff will also be bringing development specific projects to the Planning Commission during this time.

Planning Department Update

John Coleman said there is no department update.

Linda Martin asked if there is an updated on the UGA request we submitted to the County.

John Coleman said the County officially approved their Comprehensive Plan and associated Development Regulations. That officially expanded the Urban Growth Area to include the city-owned land. They will

probably be annexed next year.

Adjournment

Linda Martin adjourned the meeting at 7:23 p.m.



Planning Commission Agenda Bill

Meeting Date: September 10, 2025

Agenda Item: 5.a.

Subject: 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update - Continued public hearing on Draft 2025-2045 Comprehensive Plan

Staff Contact: Libby Grage

Approved for Submittal to Commission by

Libby Grage
John Coleman

Action Type

Public Hearing

Summary Statement: The public hearing on the Draft 2025-2045 Comprehensive Plan remains open.

Background:

Previous Action:

Competing Viewpoints Considered:

Recommended Motion: Staff recommend keeping the public hearing open through September 24, 2025.

Alternative Actions:

Attachments (listed in order presented):

1. Written Comments - Received 8/23/25-9/8/25 8am

Public Comments Received
from 8/23/25 through 9/8/25 8am
(#161-#213)

From: Ian Munce <ianmunce@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 6, 2025 1:14 PM
To: Comp Plan; Libby Grage
Cc: Matt Miller; City Council
Subject: Comments for the September 10, 2025 Planning Commission Meeting

***** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *****

Dear Planning Commissioners

Public Participation

In order to comply with the public participation requirements of the Growth Management Act and your adopted public participation plan, the Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulation Public Hearings/Comments Periods need to be extended until:

1. the Draft Stormwater Plan is finalized and the Sewer Plan is publicly released, subject to public comment, and finalized by the City Council, with substantive issues identified in both addressed by you in your Comprehensive Plan recommendations
2. these plans, together with the 'Housing Action Plan', are the subject of an environmental analysis under the State Environmental Policy Act, an analysis that you carefully review with a mind to mitigating conditions
3. the Planning Commission explicitly address, deliberates on, and reaches conclusions on proposals submitted in response to your calls for public input

Someone will undoubtedly point out that there is no way to follow this standard, mandatory procedure and complete your CP/DR updates by the end of this year. They are correct. However, this is not on you but City leadership. They had the budget and the time.

Substantive Issues

- The Draft Stormwater Plan explicitly documents that the current stormwater system is woefully inadequate and the City has no realistic capital program to address it before allowing major infill development. Yet you move ahead?
- The recent PowerPoint presentation to the City Council on the unreleased Draft Sewer Plan appears to document the large-scale, unfunded capital upgrades necessary for the 2,000 households tentatively allocated by the County to the City for 2045. It also simply excludes addressing the 2,000 2045 projected Middle Housing units. Yet you move ahead?

From the informal survey that I am undertaking, I have identified only two individuals, that are not on the Planning Commission or City Council, that would even consider accepting middle housing without

notice and opportunity to comment. Surely you have heard this from your friends and neighbors. Yet you move ahead with proposals to exclude notice and an opportunity to comment?

I am submitting a copy of this to the Mayor and City Council as their end of the year deadline seems unrealistic and their and your constituents want this once in a decade exercise to be done correctly.

Thank you.

Ian Munce, J.D., AICP
1711 Quail Drive

From: Rod Odegaard <rododegaard7@gmail.com> on behalf of Rod Odegaard
<rod.odegaard7@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 1, 2025 3:32 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Comprehensive Plan Review Comments

***** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *****

I hardly oppose language in any comprehensive plan that does not require notification to property owners about proposed construction in their neighborhoods. Otherwise, the City is intentionally practicing deception by trying to sneak in construction types that may not be inappropriate for the neighbor. Not requiring a notice to property owners until construction on property commences is not due process. A government that cannot govern with transparency is not good government. Drafters of such language to not require such notification should be removed from their positions. They are not looking out for the best interest of the town citizens and property owners.

***Rod Odegaard
3814 W 11th ST
Anacortes***

From: Paul W <hpywndrr@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, August 31, 2025 4:07 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Draft Comp Plan comment - Depot Zone, P. Wittrock

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Hello

Discussions have been underway regarding ways to keep the neighborhood area surrounding the Depot, plaza, Maritime Museum, Preston etc in a historic atmosphere as it mostly is today. That's to keep it a place where residents from all over town enjoy visiting for many functions beyond the Farmers Market.

Councilmember for this area (R. Walters) has proposed a version of CBD zoning that would limit building heights and architecture etc. yet preserve the other most other aspects of CBD.

A sub-goal would be to push five-story+ high-rise buildings into the blocks immediately adjacent to Commercial Ave (bounded by O & Q avenues), such that large scale growth would start from the inside-out, as opposed to popping-up at the current fringes of what's now CBD due to cheaper lots.

It should be noted the "*Next Increment*" proposal may prevent inappropriate buildings in most single-family neighborhoods, but Next Increment alone would prolly not retain the character of the Depot area.

Best would be a new zone...

This area could be called "**CBD Depot**" zone, or the like.

sincerely, submitted for the record

Paul Wittrock
808 7th St, Apt 5 (c1890)

From: Susan Fahey <sbbfahey@comcast.net>
Sent: Sunday, August 31, 2025 8:15 AM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: FW: City of Anacortes - Planning for the next 2 decades!

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Hello,

With apologies for tardiness, I wish to endorse the suggestions for the city's comprehensive plan as submitted by Anna Fahey in the outline below.

Thank you.

Susan Fahey
817 H Avenue
Anacortes

Planning for a strong, resilient, vibrant future for the people of Anacortes

Put locals first

- Protect what makes this town a great place to live.
- A strong, livable community is good for locals and will naturally attract visitors and economic opportunity.
- Public investments and infrastructure should be for locals' quality of life first, not just tourists.

Improve our streets and public spaces for people, not just cars. Small investments in safe, inviting, people-friendly design deliver outsized benefits for residents of all ages:

- **Invest in street trees--everywhere!** — shade, cooling, safety, slower traffic, and climate resilience.
- **Prioritize traffic calming** — Slow car traffic through our neighborhoods. Widen sidewalks, narrow car lanes, add corner bump-outs, and invest in crosswalks, protected bike lanes, plantings, and speed bumps.
- **Car-lite and car-free spaces** — Prioritize parks, plazas, greenways, and pedestrian-only or local-access-only blocks and corridors that support foot traffic to local businesses, encourage

kids to walk to school, and foster connection among neighbors. Street safety and walkability is good for mental and physical health and for our environment.

Expand affordable housing choices

- Zone for **more, smaller, less expensive home choices within city limits** to stabilize prices and prevent sprawling development, protecting our forest lands, rural outskirts, and adjacent open spaces and farmland.
- More affordable, close-in housing options allows **the local workforce we rely on**—teachers, caregivers, grocery clerks—to live nearby their jobs.
- More affordable housing choices in established city neighborhoods help **cut long commutes, ease traffic in and out of town, and reduce tailpipe pollution.**

Stop paving everything—wasting public funds and space on asphalt.

- **No more City investments in parking lots that serve visitors, not locals.** Parking lots are wasteful—often overbuilt and seldom filled. Our waterfront and downtown should be places for us to gather, play, and enjoy—not more asphalt.
- **Asphalt increases stormwater runoff, traps heat, and removes trees and green space.** We should commit to more productive, attractive, and needed uses of our city land.
- **Consider on-street parking management** rather than building more parking lots.
- **Eliminate unnecessary local parking minimums** to encourage more homes, trees, and shared community needs.

From: Janet Clark <sjclark1102@comcast.net>
Sent: Sunday, August 31, 2025 12:53 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Comp Plan

**** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. ****

I have been a 55 year resident of Anacortes, teaching at the high school for most of this time. I count myself blessed to have made Anacortes my home. The natural beauty, the community support for what makes a town vibrant and an awareness of Anacortes's roots enliven our town. We are special and we know it. It is time to make a commitment to keep our citizens, young and old, safe in the recognition that they have a place here. Over recent years, I have watched young families priced out, and now, approaching 80 years, my generation worries about the dearth of Senior living options.

The students whom I taught for so many years regard this place as home. They often left for a while, but they came back because this is where they wanted to raise their families. My friends of 55 years have remained here, working in the community and volunteering in many aspects of its life. We know Anacortes's worth and are committed to maintaining those qualities. And we want to be able to stay here.

Some things just aren't for sale. It is our onus as citizens and yours as City stewards to maintain the qualities which make Anacortes shine.

They are not ephemeral traits but they do need protection.

Below is a list of goals for the Comp plan with which I agree.

Janet Clark

Put locals first

- Protect what makes this town a great place to live.
- A strong, livable community is good for locals and will naturally attract visitors and economic opportunity.
- Public investments and infrastructure should be for locals' quality of life first, not just tourists.

Improve our streets and public spaces for people, not just cars. Small investments in safe, inviting, people-friendly design deliver outsized benefits for residents of all ages:

- **Invest in street trees--everywhere!** — shade, cooling, safety, slower traffic, and climate resilience.

- **Prioritize traffic calming** — Slow car traffic through our neighborhoods. Widen sidewalks, narrow car lanes, add corner bump-outs, and invest in crosswalks, protected bike lanes, plantings, and speed bumps.
- **Car-lite and car-free spaces** — Prioritize parks, plazas, greenways, and pedestrian-only or local-access-only blocks and corridors that support foot traffic to local businesses, encourage kids to walk to school, and foster connection among neighbors. Street safety and walkability is good for mental and physical health and for our environment.

Expand affordable housing choices

- Zone for **more, smaller, less expensive home choices within city limits** to stabilize prices and prevent sprawling development, protecting our forest lands, rural outskirts, and adjacent open spaces and farmland.
- More affordable, close-in housing options allows **the local workforce we rely on**—teachers, caregivers, grocery clerks—to live nearby their jobs.
- More affordable housing choices in established city neighborhoods help **cut long commutes, ease traffic in and out of town, and reduce tailpipe pollution.**

Stop paving everything—wasting public funds and space on asphalt.

- **No more City investments in parking lots that serve visitors, not locals.** Parking lots are wasteful—often overbuilt and seldom filled. Our waterfront and downtown should be places for us to gather, play, and enjoy—not more asphalt.
- **Asphalt increases stormwater runoff, traps heat, and removes trees and green space.** We should commit to more productive, attractive, and needed uses of our city land.
- **Consider on-street parking management** rather than building more parking lots.
- **Eliminate unnecessary local parking minimums** to encourage more homes, trees, and shared community needs within our city neighborhoods.

From: Kathryn Alexandra <kalexandra@comcast.net>
Sent: Sunday, August 31, 2025 5:30 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Planning for a strong future for the people of Anacortes

**** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. ****

Planning for a strong, resilient, vibrant future for the people of Anacortes

Put locals first

- Protect what makes this town a great place to live.
- A strong, livable community is good for locals and will naturally attract visitors and economic opportunity.
- Public investments and infrastructure should be for locals' quality of life first, not just tourists.

Improve our streets and public spaces for people, not just cars. Small investments in safe, inviting, people-friendly design deliver outsized benefits for residents of all ages:

- **Invest in street trees--everywhere!** — shade, cooling, safety, slower traffic, and climate resilience.
- **Prioritize traffic calming** — Slow car traffic through our neighborhoods. Widen sidewalks, narrow car lanes, add corner bump-outs, and invest in crosswalks, protected bike lanes, plantings, and speed bumps.
- **Car-lite and car-free spaces** — Prioritize parks, plazas, greenways, and pedestrian-only or local-access-only blocks and corridors that support foot traffic to local businesses, encourage kids to walk to school, and foster connection among neighbors. Street safety and walkability is good for mental and physical health and for our environment.

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waterfront and downtown should be places for us to gather, play, and enjoy—not more asphalt.

- **Asphalt increases stormwater runoff, traps heat, and removes trees and green space.** We should commit to more productive, attractive, and needed uses of our city land.
- **Consider on-street parking management** rather than building more parking lots.
- **Eliminate unnecessary local parking minimums** to encourage more homes, trees, and shared community needs within our city neighborhoods.

Kathryn Alexandra
Sent from my iPhone

From: Chuck Clark <crosswater@frontier.com>
Sent: Friday, August 29, 2025 6:31 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Re: Zone change from LM to MS along Guemes Channel

Thank you Libby for your quick response. Based on your description and map of the property in question the zone change is entirely reasonable. It was my understanding that it would possibly include the Loveric's marina with some extension near the ferry terminal.

Sorry to get to this response late today, but I withdraw my complaint. I hope this helps and look forward to continue enjoying beautiful Anacortes!

Wishing you and your family a very happy Labor Day weekend.

Respectfully,
Chuck Clark

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 29, 2025, at 6:40 AM, Comp Plan <CompPlan@anacorteswa.gov> wrote:

Hi Chuck,

Thank you for sharing your comments on the 2025 Anacortes Comprehensive Plan Update. We've added your comments to the official record, and they'll be shared with the Planning Commission and City Council for their consideration during the update process. We appreciate your input.

I wanted to make sure that you knew that the proposal to change the zoning near Guemes Channel from LM to MS involves only 1 parcel of land, which is owned by the Port of Anacortes (their request can be viewed [here](#)). You can find more information about it, and the other requests, on the [Comprehensive Plan update project webpage](#) – click on the “Draft Future Land Use Map – Proposed Changes (Updated)” link. Here is a screenshot showing the subject property location:

<image001.png>

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Warm regards,

Libby Grage
Planning Manager

For more information about the 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update visit the project webpage:
www.planacortes.org

City of Anacortes Planning, Community & Economic Development Department
P.O. Box 547 | 904 6th Street | Anacortes, WA 98221
360.299.1986 (work) | 360-661-3505 (work cell)
libbyb@anacorteswa.gov | www.anacorteswa.gov

My incoming and outgoing email messages are subject to public disclosure requirements per RCW 42.56.

From: Chuck Clark <crosswater@frontier.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 28, 2025 3:21 PM
To: Comp Plan <compplan@anacorteswa.org>
Subject: Zone change from LM to MS along Guemes Channel

***** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *****

As a property owner in Anacortes, I would like to voice my opinion on the part of your draft Comprehensive Plan that seeks to change the zoning along Guemes Channel from LM (light manufacturing) to MS (Manufacturing and shipping).

When my wife and I moved to the Redmond/Woodinville area in 1972 from Southern California, we heard about Anacortes through some friends and decided to visit. Immediately we fell in love with the area and both felt at the time this would become the equivalent status of a Newport Beach California.

Additionally, it had and continues to have great zoning for the current mixture of manufacturing, including ship building, oil refinery, and boat building industries. Additionally, with Washington Park, current marinas, and the Washington State Ferry terminals, it truly is the "Gateway to the San Juans" and one of a kind city.

With the proposed zoning changes of LM to MS the current balance of manufacturing, residential, water activities, marine life, noise levels, and Guemes Channel marine traffic will be significantly altered: not for the better. Risk for our Guemes Channel marine life which includes killer whales, will be significantly increased with additional manufacturing along the

channel. It is my opinion that whatever tax gains would be made due to the added manufacturing areas and its associated employment (including money spent in Anacortes) will be more than offset by reduced property taxes.

With these concerns in mind please consider removing this subject zone change in your future planning and keep Anacortes the beautiful destination city it is!!

Sincerely,
Chuck Clark

From: pced
Sent: Friday, August 29, 2025 5:27 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Fw: Public Comment for Anacortes Comprehensive Plan

From: Courtney Orrock <ceorrock@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 29, 2025 3:52:17 PM
To: pced <pced@anacorteswa.gov>
Subject: Public Comment for Anacortes Comprehensive Plan

***** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *****

To the City of Anacortes PCED Department,

Below please find comments related to the draft of the Anacortes Comprehensive Plan.

Overall, I understand that this is a plan, and that it is meant to show that the City has thought through how to deal with population growth. But I think expecting a city that has natural limitations (for example, the ACFL and being on an island) to accept a 28% growth in population is not feasible. I understand the allocation methodology, however for Anacortes to be taking more of the growth allocation (16.9%) than Burlington (16.3%) and Sedro Woolley (15.2%) is something I don't agree with.

1) When the plan is finalized, it would be helpful to have a couple hard copies printed and available for checkout at the Anacortes Library. Also, for plans going forward that have a public comment/review period, it would be helpful to have a couple hard copies printed and available for checkout at the library. I printed my own copy of the draft as reviewing ~500 pages, and making notations, is difficult to do on a screen. However, printing may not be an option for people and people may not have access to a computer to review online.

2) Vol 1, pg 13 - under value statements, I think it would make sense to include a component of public safety and financial feasibility when referencing "Embrace and promote green energy and technology opportunities..." As an example, the proposed Guemes Island Ferry Electrification project that is trying to use a green energy technology, but there are significant safety concerns to the community as well as not even being financially feasible,

3) ED2.1 - when is the economic strategic plan going to be completed?

4) ED4.7 - I am surprised to not see the refineries listed in a more direct way in the Economic development section of the plan, as well as including them in the conversation for future uses for the refineries themselves. There is a small blurb regarding the refineries in Vol 2, pg 42, but I would think that

an industry that has one of the highest average annual wages in Skagit County (~\$185K) and an employment multiplier of 2.0 (each of the 200+ refinery workers that live on Fidalgo Island support another job on the Island) would have a more prominent part in our City's Economic Development Plan.

Thank you,

Courtney Orrock
Anacortes, WA

From: Trish Eden <trisheden@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, August 29, 2025 4:36 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Comprehensive Plan

***** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *****

Dear members of the Anacortes City Council,

As you plan for the next 20 years, I hope you'll commit to keeping Anacortes a great place to live while the community grows and adapts to a changing climate.

The best things we can do to plan for a low-carbon community and to build up our climate resilience over the next decades are 1) to make it easier for Anacortes residents of all ages to walk more and drive less; and 2) to make sure our community can affordably house local workers. The good news is that these climate solutions are also solutions that protect and improve our quality of life and economic security for people of a range of incomes who call Anacortes home.

Let's do everything we can as a community, investing public dollars and using our shared community spaces, to make this a safe, healthy, inviting city to walk. Some ideas: slow traffic, expand sidewalks, add more trees along our streets, and invest in safe crosswalks, lane narrowing bump outs, and bike paths. These small changes will mean more of us get outside, stay healthy, and find community among our neighbors (also important to combat the country's obesity, mental health, and isolation epidemics).

Let's make the southern end of Commercial Ave less like a hi-way and more like a friendly neighborhood. Let's add walk to school corridors through town so kids can be safe!

I'd also like to see more spaces that are for pedestrians only, where people connect, support local businesses, and build community. Let's close a portion of Commercial Ave. in Old Town and/or a corridor between Commercial and the Depot. Attractive "town squares" will be great for locals and will attract tourists too!

Allowing more infill housing choices will stabilize prices, prevent sprawl, and reduce pollution from long commutes and added traffic.

Finally, let's prioritize public amenities, open spaces, centrally located housing choices and small, local businesses over parking lots! I hate to see how the Port has expanded the blacktop near Cap Sante. This seems to be parking capacity that caters to out of town guests and peak festival days, not land use for the people of the city to use the rest of the year. Same goes for the planned concert and conference venues. Let's make sure those don't amount to yet more vast paved over wastelands blighting our charming downtown and waterfront. At every decision point, let's choose community good and our air, water, and environment over pavement!

I care about this town. I trust you to set in motion a policy and planning framework to ensure Anacortes remains vibrant, welcoming, and livable for generations to come.

With respect and thanks for all your work on this process,

Trish Eden

Chris Eden

Sent from my iPhone

From: Gus Moore <gusmoore@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 29, 2025 11:11 AM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Anacortes Comprehensive Plan

***** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *****

To the Anacortes City Council,

As the City sets goals and policy direction in land use and public investments for the next two decades, I hope we'll commit to preserving what's special about this community and prioritizing our environment.

Two critical solutions for a healthy place (and people) and a healthy climate are:

1. **Investments and infrastructure to make it easier for residents of all ages to walk, roll, and bus more and drive less.** We've prioritized cars for too long and we're paying the price in traffic and pollution. A great city is a city where it's safe, convenient, accessible, and pleasant to walk or bike.
2. **Ensure our community can affordably house people of all incomes.** Right now many people with jobs here in town, especially lower wage workers, cannot afford to live here. This means they drive in from elsewhere--adding to a higher cost of living, longer commutes, and lost time and community connections. We all pay the price in traffic and pollution.

Actions a city can take to cut pollution and build climate resilience also have the benefit of improving the local quality of life and we can make sure to protect the unique local character of Anacortes in the bargain. A win-win-win.

In the Comp Plan, I hope you'll commit to pedestrian-friendly actions. I'd love to see more traffic-calming infrastructure throughout residential and commercial areas, including more safe crossings, more greenways and pedestrian-only blocks, bike corridors, lane narrowing, and more trees. (Trees also help by providing shade and cooling as we deal with heat waves).

At the same time, the City has taken great steps forward, but we still need more infill housing choices, from ADUs to apartments close to downtown. This is critical to control local home prices and rent, prevent sprawling development into our natural areas and encroaching on ACFL, and reduce pollution from added commuters and driving.

My family has deep roots in Anacortes. I'm raising my kids here and plan to grow old here. I hope that as we look to the next horizon we take bold actions to keep this town strong through added population growth, an unpredictable global economy, and through changes to our climate. Planning for the next 20 years is no time for half measures!

Apologies for missing yesterday's deadline. I was just alerted to this opportunity to share my feedback.

With respect and thanks,

Gustav Moore

1320 8th St. Anacortes

From: AT&T Yahoo <erikb1@frontier.com>
Sent: Friday, August 29, 2025 10:12 AM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Comp Plan request/ Comments

**** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. ****

To Whom It May Concern,

We would like to see RV Park and Storage as an allowed use in the Stevenson Rd area.

Currently Anacortes has full RV parks and could use additional.

Thanks, Erik Bowman

From: Tom lundsgaard <designdecor@msn.com>
Sent: Monday, August 25, 2025 7:27 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Change of zoning

**** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. ****

I very much object to this change. Mary Jane Lundsgaard 2706 Oakes Ave.

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: Nick Fahey <tidepointcyp@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 29, 2025 9:37 AM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: My thoughts on the Comp Plan

***** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *****

Dear Councilmembers,

I've lived in Anacortes for over forty years. I'm a retired commercial fisherman. I made my living here and raised my family here, and I've witnessed a lot of changes in town over the decades. Through it all, one thing has stayed constant: Anacortes is a special place. We need to be thoughtful now to keep it that way. In other words—let's "Keep Anacortes Anacortes."

Here's what that means to me as I think about a plan for the next 20 years.

Public dollars and planning should be aimed at improving life for the people who call this place home. When Anacortes is a wonderful place to be, we'll all benefit, and the good life and charm of the place will attract tourists and visitors and new businesses.

We are overrun by traffic nowadays. In my time here, the feel of the city has changed drastically. We used to send our kids out to play or bike around with no worries. Now, it's people driving fast and cars backed up at every stop light. You don't see many kids outside. We've built a city that works for drivers but at the cost of quiet residential areas and a pleasant downtown. We should build the city over the next two decades as a place for people to live, not just to drive.

I agree with others who say we should line every street with trees. Trees are a long-term public investment that bring shade and a pleasant experience for people walking around. As I age and watch my grandkids on their screens, I wish we could slow the cars down and invest in safe sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike lanes so kids can walk to school and older folks can get around safely. I'm with Rick Steves: We need plazas like Europe has, places for people to gather that become the heart and soul of the town. We could plan for nice things like this. It's good for public health, community connections, and good for local business.

A main thing we need to keep Anacortes Anacortes is to make sure regular, blue collar workers like me can afford to live here. I appreciate the city's work on housing. We'll become an elite, walled-off community only for rich if we don't figure out how to get more working-class homes for people with local jobs.

And I can't stand to see the City and the Port falling all over themselves to pave over every open city block or all that space down by Cap Sante Marina--just so campers and pukers (pleasure boats) can park while they breeze through town. What about making those places into something that locals use and benefit from. Same with the concert venue and arts center and conference center. Give those a public aspect, a courtyard or garden or mixed use and try to refrain from taking up every inch with blacktop that sits

empty. I'm serious; we've got to stop paving over every inch of our buildable land. My daughter works on public policy for how cities can grow well and grow sustainably, and I agree with her that a smart 20 year plan will prioritize every single thing besides pavement--but mostly the people here and the character of the place.

I care about this town. I want my grandkids to grow up in an Anacortes that still feels like Anacortes—a town that still works for the people who live here, old timers and newcomers too. Let's make decisions with that future in mind.

Respectfully,

Nick Fahey

From: Strich, David <david.strich@wsdot.wa.gov>
Sent: Thursday, August 28, 2025 1:47 PM
To: Comp Plan; Libby Grage
Cc: grantj@scog.net; Sarah Ruether; Chang, Teri; Kopca, Cole; Gonzalez, Jacob B.; Long, Lexine (COM); Shambaugh, John E.; Resnick, Justin
Subject: WSDOT Comments on draft Anacortes 2025 Comprehensive Plan
Attachments: 2025-08-28 WSDOT Comments on draft Anacortes Transportation Element.pdf

***** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *****

Hi Libby and the Anacortes Comp Plan team,

WSDOT values the City of Anacortes as a partner and appreciates our collaboration to develop and maintain a safe and efficient multimodal transportation network. Thank you for the opportunity to review the draft Anacortes 2025 Comprehensive Plan. Please accept this email for the record.

All in all, it is my opinion that the transportation element is very well done. To support this good work, our team tried to find places where more explanation or details would strengthen the plan. Various subject matter experts across five WSDOT divisions looked at this plan. You will find notes about consistency and suggestions to consider. For your convenience, the comments are attached as a pdf. Please let me know if you would prefer these comments in another format.

For awareness and the record, I cc'd Skagit Council of Governments staff, WSDOT Land Use team, and Department of Commerce staff to this email.

Again, we very much appreciate collaborating with the City of Anacortes and we look forward to reviewing future iterations of Comprehensive Plan goals, policies, and elements as they are available.

All the best,
David

David Strich, PhD
Senior Multimodal Planner
Northwest Region/Mount Baker Area (MBA) Planning
(360) 757-5996
Él/彼/He/Him

[Website: Planning guidance | WSDOT \(wa.gov\)](#)



Hi Libby and the Anacortes Comp Plan team,

WSDOT values the City of Anacortes as a partner and appreciates our collaboration to develop and maintain a safe and efficient multimodal transportation network. Thank you for the opportunity to review the draft Anacortes 2025 Comprehensive Plan. Please accept this email for the record.

The transportation element is very well done. To support this good work, our team tried to find places where more explanation or details would strengthen the plan. Various subject matter experts across different WSDOT divisions looked at this plan. You will find notes about consistency and suggestions to consider. If you would prefer these comments in another format than this pdf, please let me know.

We very much appreciate collaborating with the City of Anacortes and we look forward to reviewing future iterations of Comprehensive Plan goals, policies, and elements as they are available.

This is a very well-crafted plan and considerable effort has been made to accurately and clearly update the planning for the entire multimodal network. In fact, this draft has already considered and incorporated feedback from previous WSDOT comments. This comment is split into two sections- general and specific comments.

In General:

Consider revising for consistency the terminology to distinguish Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and Washington State Ferries (WSF). Though WSF is a division of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), it may make the plan clearer by making a distinction between the two and not using the agencies/acronyms interchangeably. Consider including a glossary at the beginning of the Transportation Element to define the acronyms or introducing the agencies and the acronyms early in the document. Consider when it may be appropriate to use “State” or “State of Washington,” in relation to these terms, or when a specific agency ought to be mentioned.

As an example, on Page II-197 consider revising “WSDOT Ferry Terminal” with “WSF Anacortes Terminal”. This would be more consistent with Figure T-3 Street Classifications map that identifies the facility as “Washington State Ferry Terminal” and a description of the facility on Page II-234. Page II-251 describes this as the “WSDOT San Juan Island ferry”

Specific Items for consideration

Page II-222 consider:

- editing “principals” with “principles”

- recent legislation has changed the Complete Streets threshold to \$1,000,000 (no longer \$500,000)

- Figure T-10 seems to be misnumbered, should be T-11. This Safe Systems Approach is the WSDOT version and includes “Safer Land Use” which is not as explicitly included as an element in other graphics and literature (though it is implied) about the Safe Systems approach.

Figure T-11. WSDOT encourages the City to use this logo because of the specific inclusion of the Safer Land Use element but it should be labeled as the WSDOT ~~Principals~~ Principles and Elements of the Safe System Approach, because other graphics, like USDOT, only include the other five.

Page II-224 has a holing place in the narrative for **Figure XX**, should probably be edited to “Figure T-12”.

Page II-240 County Roadway LOS forecast refers to Figure 23. This may be mislabeled or the figure may be missing.

Page II-251 “... thousands of visitors [s]top to spend money....” – the “s” is missing.

Policy T-1.7 (Page I-82)

A: Clarifying question: Does this mean passenger-only ferry service at the existing WSF terminal, or is this visioning a different facility operating closer to downtown?

B: RE: use of “replacement”: WSF has no plans to replace the terminal, such as we did at Mukilteo. The terminal **building** is on the list for replacement, but the terminal is not moving.

Possible revision could be: “Continued maintenance and replacement of the ferry terminal building.”

C: Consider “Restoration of” instead of “Restore”.

Intersection LOS Results section (page II-213)

In the third paragraph, the plan states “WSDOT may require an Intersection Control Evaluation (ICE) to determine if a traffic signal or a roundabout is a preferred intersection control solution.”

We recommend changing the language to be more general and not specifying the control types, for example: “WSDOT may require an Intersection Control Evaluation (ICE) to determine the preferred intersection control type.”

Table T-10.a. Active Transportation Network Improvement Needs (pp II-248-249)

It is good to see a robust list of projects to support active transportation users. Regarding projects WS-1 through WS-9 there are recommended project improvements and estimated costs with design considerations that may achieve Level of Traffic Stress 1 or 2.

WSDOT recognizes that FHWA and AASHTO often encourage context-specific implementation. For example, Project WS-1, which proposes conventional bicycle lanes, would appear to meet WSDOT Bicycle LTS 2, but FHWA and AASHTO note the preference for a buffer. Bicyclists leaving the ferry terminal will likely be passed by vehicles; due to the uphill grade, the speed differential between cyclists and motorists would be high. A buffer would reduce stress under this context.

Of course, physically separated facilities for walking, biking, and rolling have the lowest stress of all, though they may not always be feasible. We would encourage the City to explore context-specific exploration of each project to learn about cost estimates from updating conventional bike lane to buffered or buffered to separated. It could be that the costs are marginal or that possible future funding opportunities could cover the difference. If this information has been studied, then the City could be more poised to garner support for these facilities. Please let us know if you want to connect with WSDOT subject matter experts about this idea.

Vol 1: Introduction Goals and Policies

Freight Transport Policy T-3.8 (Page I-91)

- Currently frames the policy to meet the needs for local distribution, including truck routes.
- Suggest consideration of needs and accommodation of pass-through truck freight traveling to/from the Port of Anacortes. SR 20 Spur, Commercial Ave to Ferry Terminal is designated as a FGTS Class T-3 route carrying 1.4M annual tons of freight and Truck AADT (average daily truck traffic) of 460. (WSDOT – 2023 Freight Data Freight and Goods Transportation System)

- Suggest noting that the port of Anacortes provides a vital supply chain link of food, fuel and critical supplies to the San Juan Islands through the Washington State Ferry System.

Marine Transport Policy (Page I-92)

- Currently frames policy on the support of moorage, boat trailer parking, marinas and commercial and industrial development.
- Supporting the movement of marine freight is not listed and suggest it be considered.

Vol 2: Background Information

Strengths (Page II-77)

- Currently states “The Port is a key economic asset, supporting shipping, fishing, and recreational boating. It has deepwater docks, which are a less common resource in Washington, and serves as a hub for marine activities, contributing significantly to local spending.”
- Suggest including the movement of freight. And noting: Pier 2 is primarily used for dry bulk cargo shipments, and Curtis Wharf docks commercial ships and provides vessel moorage for U.S. Navy ships and other tenants staging project cargo. (2022 Washington State Freight System Plan).

Public Comment: Supported Housing & Personal Accountability

Submitted by: Suzanne Rohner

Date: August , 2025

Topic: Comprehensive Plan Update – Housing Element

As Anacortes updates its Comprehensive Plan under the Growth Management Act (GMA), I urge the City to include policies that reflect the proven success of accountability-based supported housing models—particularly those aligned with the philosophy of the Anacortes Family Center.

Supported and fully supported housing must go beyond shelter. It should serve as a platform for transformation, empowering residents to set goals, engage in services, and transition toward long-term stability. The GMA allows cities to include such programmatic expectations in their planning documents, provided they are consistent with fair housing laws and do not create exclusionary barriers.

Recommended Policy Language:

1. Goal-Based Residency Framework

Encourage supported housing programs to implement individualized case management plans with weekly goals related to employment, education, parenting, or health. Progress should be tracked and reviewed regularly to reinforce personal responsibility.

2. Participation in Empowerment Services

Supported housing should include structured services such as financial literacy, job readiness, parenting classes, and mental health support. Participation in these services should be a core component of residency.

3. Time-Bound Transitional Housing Models

Transitional housing should be designed with clear timelines and exit strategies. Programs may include 60–90 day stays with defined benchmarks for securing employment, childcare, or permanent housing.

4. Community Engagement and Peer Accountability

Residents should be encouraged to contribute to their living environment through shared responsibilities, peer mentorship, or community service. These elements foster pride, ownership, and mutual accountability.

5. Outcome-Based Evaluation

The City should require annual reporting from supported housing providers that includes resident outcomes such as employment rates, successful transitions to permanent housing, and participation in services. These metrics should inform future funding and land use decisions.

These recommendations do not conflict with the GMA’s mandate to accommodate housing for all economic segments. Rather, they enhance the effectiveness of supported housing by ensuring

it is both compassionate and outcome-driven. These recommendations also address the concern that supported housing not evolve into a taxpayer funded entitlement.

Thank you for considering these additions to the Comprehensive Plan. They reflect the values of our community and the lived success of local organizations like the Anacortes Family Center.

Thank you for your consideration,

Suzanne Rohner

From: Eddy Ury <eddyu@re-sources.org>
Sent: Thursday, August 28, 2025 10:14 AM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: 2025 Comp Plan & Future Land Use Map
Attachments: RE Sources Comp Plan letter to Anacortes - August 27 2025.pdf

***** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *****

Thank you again for considering our comments, here attached.

--

Eddy Ury
Climate & Energy Policy Manager
RE Sources
(360) 733 8307 x 215

August 27, 2025

To: Anacortes Planning Commission
Cc: City Council
Mayor Matt Miller
Planning Services

Re: **2025 Comprehensive Plan Draft & Future Land Use Map**

Honorable Planning Commissioners,

On behalf of RE Sources and our supporters on Fidalgo Island, I will again commend the Planning Commission, Planning staff, consultants and participants of Anacortes for leading an exemplary public process from last year to now. The 2025 Comprehensive Plan update Draft resultantly displays forward-thinking policies that reflect thoughtful deliberations of complex challenges in planning for the decades ahead. At this stage I will comment only on the Future Land Use map.

The updated zoning map would expand the Light Manufacturing (LM) district boundary, which currently stretches around Highway 20 and Fidalgo Bay Road, across an important critical area. Long protected for fish & wildlife habitat conservation, the aquatic lands between March's Point Road and Fidalgo Bay Road fall within city limits, but have not previously been demarcated in the City's adopted zoning map wherein the district boundary ends at the shoreline. The parcels are owned by Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR), which in 2000 established the Fidalgo Bay Aquatic Reserve (FBAR).

For numerous reasons, it would be wholly inappropriate to adopt an LM designation for tidelands and bedlands. The uses allowed for LM are intuitively unlawful and infeasible to site there. If the City nonetheless deems it necessary and justified to encompass Fidalgo Bay within any land use designation, then perhaps Public Use (P) would be most appropriate. The City should consult directly with the responsible officials at DNR and the FBAR Citizen Stewardship Committee, local residents appointed to oversee implementation of the Aquatic Reserve Management Plan.

Additionally in the draft map, the boundary line for the northward adjacent Commercial Marine (CM) area is also shown to expand overwater beyond the adopted map's border. This notable change is not identified in the list of docketed requests and staff recommendations. In any case, we hope to see the final map in recognized alignment with

the requests of the owners of the parcels within the extended CM zone, namely the Samish Indian Nation.

Setting aside the question of zoning boundaries, to faithfully fulfill the goals and policies of its Comprehensive Plan, the City must update the Anacortes Municipal Code (AMC). Particularly, the impacts of industrial uses may extend beyond the zoning boundary. Permitted uses may conflict with City's Critical Areas Regulations and/or its planning goals for neighboring areas, or otherwise could be noncompliant with state regulations. The City can avoid contestation over future development proposals by adopting statutes with specific terms and transparent conditions.

We look forward to reviewing the forthcoming draft amendments to Development Regulations for the 2025 Update. Thank you for your diligent service and thoughtful consideration of public input to shape our shared future.

Sincerely,

Eddy Ury

Climate & Energy Policy Manager
RE Sources

From: Ian Munce <ianmunce@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 28, 2025 10:45 AM
To: Matt Miller; City Council; CityClerk; Comp Plan
Cc: Bill Turner; Libby Grage
Subject: Comments For City Council Stormwater Planning September 2, 2025 Agenda Item
Attachments: 0710058.pdf; Re- Draft Storm Water plan.pdf; Fwd- Munce Comments-January 2025 Draft Stormwater Management Master Plan (SWMP).pdf

***** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *****

Dear City Council

The City's 'Land Capacity Analysis 2024' at page 15 states as follows: "Based on Commerce Guidance and regional trends, [the consultant] LCG assumed that 5% of homeowners might choose to develop an ADU over the planning horizon ... this would result in an ADU [land] capacity of 357 units". Taken together with other infill this would equate to approximately 2,000 units, the number tentatively assigned by Skagit County for our 20 year planning horizon. Scenario #1.

In the absence of any publicly available City sponsored consultant study as to the land capacity of 'locating cottages, duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes on what were single family lots', using the same methodology applied to ADUs would add another 2,000 or so units. Scenario #2.

Simply put, the 2024 Draft Stormwater Plan in Table 1.6 only assesses and plans for Scenario #1 and not Scenario #2. So, if the City continues moving down the Scenario #2 path, the Draft Stormwater Plan is simply not 'fit for purpose' and not just for stormwater Planning but for environmental review.

Speaking from personal knowledge, the thousands of lots that were developed over the past 30 years were mainly in single family subdivisions with covenants and with Homeowners Associations managing their own stormwater systems. The Draft Stormwater Plan does not assess these systems capacity to handle more units than they were designed for. This needs to be done or our existing urban runoff problems will be dramatically exacerbated, an unacceptable environmental outcome. I attach a Report from the Washington State Department of Ecology that summarizes the environmental impacts from uncontrolled urban runoff.

Mr Turner and I submitted the comments set forth below in February this year but received no acknowledgement or response. Having clean water discharging into the Salish Sea is vitally important to our stewardship responsibilities set forth in our Comprehensive Plan, e.g. Attached State Ecology Report. We subsequently forwarded our comments to the Planning Commission, see below.

Given that it appears that the next step in moving forward with the Stormwater plan will now be with you, the following comments are submitted for your consideration. Please keep in mind that for State Resource Agencies the Stormwater Plan is probably our most significant local document and that integrating the Stormwater Plan into the Comprehensive Plan and SEPA analysis will be a major undertaking, one that has not yet begun.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Ian Munce
1711 Quail Drive

From: Ian Munce ianmunce@gmail.com
Subject: Fwd: Munce Comments-January 2025 Draft Stormwater Management Master Plan (SWMP)
Date: Feb 13, 2025 at 3:06:00 PM
To: Ian Munce ianmunce@gmail.com
Bcc: bill.h.turner@gmail.com, andrewlemborg@gmail.com,
Eschorr68@gmail.com

From: Ian Munce <ianmunce@gmail.com>
Date: February 13, 2025 at 3:01:27 PM PST
To: aarone@anacorteswa.gov
Subject: Munce Comments-January 2025 Draft Stormwater Management Master Plan (SWMP)

Dear Mr. Esterholt,

I would first like to complement City staff and the consultant team for an excellent draft Stormwater Management Master Plan (SWMP). The baseline stormwater system data and hydraulic modeling should guide sound capital budgeting and development review for years to come. I look forward to understanding how I can participate in the public participation and adoption process, including review under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). I recommend that you have a Draft SWMP webpage where State agency comments, stakeholder comments, and comments from Anacortes residents and businesses can be posted and reviewed by all concerned; the Planning Department has just such a page for their 2025 Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulation Periodic Review. My preliminary comments and questions are as follows:

Soils

A review of Draft SWMP Figure 1.6 identifies and documents that nearly all of the soils outside the Anacortes Community Forest Lands are Group C and D. Group C consists of "soils that have a slow infiltration rate when thoroughly wet" and Group D consists of "soils that have a very slow infiltration rate and high runoff potential when thoroughly wet. These consist mainly of clays that have a high shrink-swell potential, soils that have a claypan or clay layer at or near the surface, and soils that are shallow over nearly impervious material. These soils have a very slow rate of water transmission". Figure 1.6 maps Group C soils together with Group D as a combined Group C/D where "... the first letter applies to the drained soil condition and the second to the undrained soil condition of the soil so categorized".

Comment 1: Every new development needs to fully fund the cost of converting an undrained soil condition to a drained soil condition. This tenet needs to be incorporated into all development

review procedures to avoid externalizing these costs by environmental degradation and/or transferring them to ratepayers, taxpayers, and neighbors. It has been the controlling principle over the past 40 years as the City has established home owners associations and their privately owned and maintained stormwater systems.

Capital Budget

Question 1: With the current stormwater connection fee and monthly stormwater charges how many years will it take to achieve full buildout of the stormwater system to meet the 25 year storm design standard for existing development? e.g. 40-80 years?

Question 2: In order to meet federal and State permit requirements and climate change imperatives does this schedule need to be accelerated and how can such acceleration be funded? For instance, should the monthly stormwater charge be significantly increased and should connection fees be adjusted by drainage basin?

Question 3: Given that the 2007 SWMP assigns 54% of capital costs to private development, what is the equivalent percentage for the 2025 SWMP and how will these funds be collected?

Critical Areas

The current SWMP (2007) addresses the interface between stormwater (quantity and quality). It includes as Figure [7-5 a](#) map of designated wetlands, a map that was adopted along with the SWMP and is currently in effect.

Comment 2: Given that the City GIS system includes a current version of a designated wetlands map and protecting and restoring wetlands is of central importance to Comprehensive Plan policies, it simply malpractice to propose to exclude such a map and not to factor critical area policies into the updated SWMP. This is particularly egregious as: the SWMP Update Scope of Work actually calls for “#500. Physical and Biological Basin Assessment. Field stream assessments catalogued streams **and associated wetlands** ...”. In addition to wetlands and wetland buffers, the SWMP needs to address other critical area protections as to geologically hazardous areas, aquifer recharge areas, and habits of local importance in order to meet State Phase II Permit Requirements.

Comment 3: The SWMP needs to acknowledge and place operational emphasis on Anacortes Municipal Code 19.70.040 as it mandates not just protection of streams and wetlands but their restoration., e.g. ongoing destruction of wetlands and their buffers was outlawed in the 2023 Critical Area Ordinance.

Comment 4: The Draft SWMP on page 54 is incorrect when it states that "The City Comprehensive Plan identifies protection and enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat and improvement of functional integrity of watercourses as important **goals**". Emphasis added. Rather, these are controlling **policies** and the SWMP needs to acknowledge and address them as such.

Water Quality

Comment 5: The Draft SWMP needs to establish a program whereby the septic systems within its drainage basins are routinely monitored and maintained to ensure compliance with all current standards. Scientific work associated with the Fidalgo Bay Aquatic Reserve documents that there is a very real current problem that needs to be addressed as a priority.

Fidalgo North Stormwater Action Plan

This Plan addresses one of the five distinct drainage basins identified in the SWMP. As adopted by the City Council in 2023 as part of the City's Phase II Permit Requirements, this Fidalgo North SAP, this Plan highlights the 296 acres in the City's R1 zone at the southern end of the drainage basin as largely undeveloped, dominated by protected natural areas, and controlled by Comprehensive Plan policies that limit housing density to two units per acre and mandate careful environmental and permit review of even minor development projects.

Question 4: Please explain and document why the Fidalgo North SAP was amended in 2024 to omit explicit reference to these characteristics and improperly recharacterize the R1 zone as 'largely developed'?

Question 5: Please explain what public process was followed to effectuate this recharacterization in the Fidalgo North document on file?

Comment 6: Please use the 2023 version of the Fidalgo North SAP and correct the acreage numbers as I formally requested as a part of the '2025 Periodic Review'.

Comment 7: Please address my request as part of the '2025 Periodic Review' that the entire R1 zone be designated as a "Habitat of Local Importance" under both the City Municipal Code and the Washington State Administrative Code. The Best Available Science in the current '2025 Periodic Review' record identifies that most, if not all, of the R1 zone acreage consists of overlapping critical areas, i.e. streams and stream buffers, wetlands and wetland buffers, geologically hazardous areas, aquifer recharge areas for individual domestic wells, and fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas. Attachment A.

Thank you.

Ian Munce

1711 Quail Drive

<[11042024_Reconnaissance Report.pdf](#)>

From: Ian Munce ianmunce@gmail.com
Subject: Re: Draft Storm Water plan
Date: Feb 12, 2025 at 5:40:02 PM
To: William Turner bill.h.turner@gmail.com

Thanks

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 12, 2025, at 4:59 PM, William Turner <bill.h.turner@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Mr. Esterholt

My comments are as follows:

Overall

This SWMP is one of the most carefully and thoughtfully prepared and presented document that I have had the pleasure of reading. The topic is extremely complex both in the controlling receiving water mandates, the engineering itself, the overlap with natural lands protection and restoration, and the importance of the interface with climate change exigencies. Yet, the SWMP is very well structured, informative, and readable. Thank you.

Comprehensive Plan (CP) Interface

The proposal to incorporate the SWMP into the City's 2025 Comprehensive Plan (CP) Periodic Update is sound and most likely essential. Not only will the SWMP technical analysis inform the ongoing CP update, but the SWMP's structure and work-program need to be reworked somewhat to evaluate how the CP policies are and will be implemented, e.g. the CP is all about growth paying for itself without subsidies from taxpayers and ratepayers and

protecting and restoring our natural areas (both lands and waters). These CP policies are controlling and directive and the following sentence on SWMP page 54 needs to be expanded accordingly: from "The City's Comprehensive Plan identifies protection and enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat and improvement of functional integrity of watercourses as important goals" to "... important goals and controlling policies".

1. Introduction and Planning Criteria

On page 6, please correct "to approximately" to "by approximately". On page 7, the 'Existing Data Review Summary' should list City GIS data for Wetlands, data that needs to be mapped and analyzed as to stormwater management implications. This is an undocumented part of the consultants Scope of Work: "Project Scope of Work #500 - Field stream assessments catalogued streams **and associated wetlands** and identified future potential restoration projects". January, 29 City Council Agenda Package p.23 of 386. As to Figure 1.5, this figure shows "Existing Zoning" and not "Existing Land Use".

H Avenue Rotary Dog Park users funded the attached consultant report for those wetlands associated with the Ace of Hearts Creek. I submit that it is essential that this Best Available Science work be included in the final SWMP for all the SWMP's streams.

Section 1.11 includes the following: "The Phase II Permit also requires compliance with established total maximum daily loads (TMDLs), as described in Section S7 of the permit. As of 2024, Anacortes has not established any TMDLs". This permit requirement needs to be explained in some detail along with how and when the City will come into compliance both in setting and enforcing TMDLs.

On page 13, "Mapping the tree canopy cover on Permittee owned or operated properties" is proposed for 2026 and "Adopt or implement canopy goals and policies to support stormwater management and water quality improvements in receiving waters" is proposed for 2028. To meet the 2025 CP Periodic Update requirements (and prevent further tree canopy destruction) this work needs to be done now and fully taken into account in both the SWMP and CP. This work program acceleration is consistent with the following declaration: "Through discussions with City staff, Osborn learned that the City wants to focus its NPDES compliance efforts on Tree Canopy Goals and Policies ...". In this regard the SWMP highlights that "Special attention should be directed towards ... maintaining existing mature tree canopies" and that the City "... must also develop a system for identifying tree canopies for stormwater management purposes, which should be developed annually or as needed".

Sincerely,

Bill Turner

Sent from my iPad

For more information

Washington Department of Ecology

Water Quality Program

www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/stormwater/index.html

Colleen Keltz
Communications Manager
360-407-6408

Watershed planning

To find out what watershed you live in and how to get involved:

www.ecy.wa.gov/watershed/index.html

Helpful websites

- Puget Sound Partnership
www.psp.wa.gov/our_work/stormwater.htm
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
cfpub1.epa.gov/npdes/home.cfm?program_id=6
- Seattle Public Utilities SEA Streets Project
www.seattle.gov/util/About_SPU/Drainage_&_Sewer_System/Natural_Drainage_Systems/Street_Edge_Alternatives/index.asp

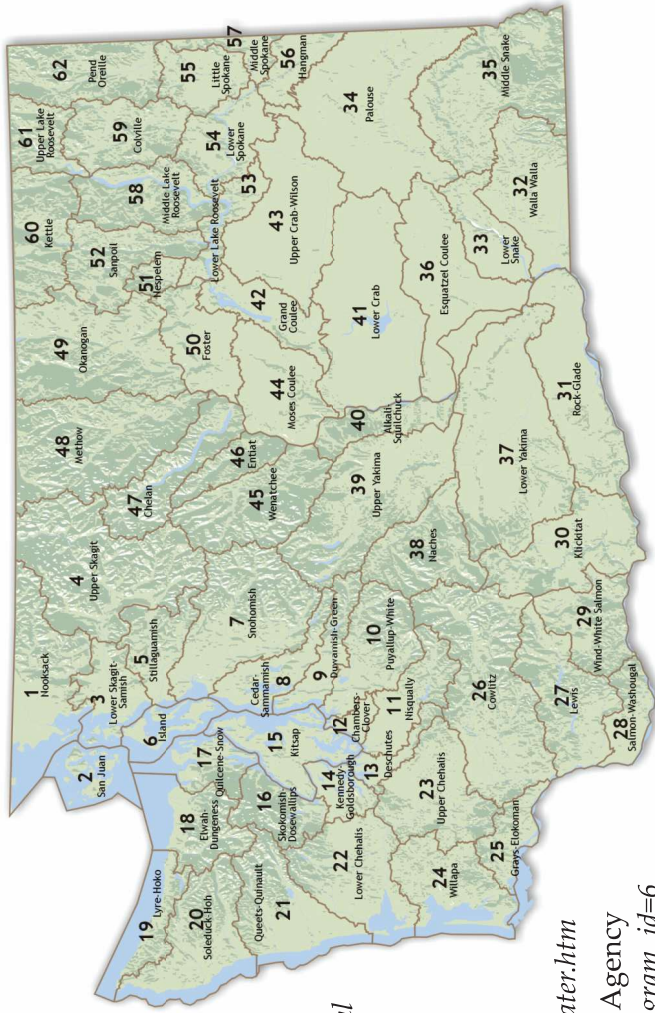
Other resources

- For local information, contact your city or county.
- Search the Internet for more information on stormwater, runoff, rain gardens, low impact development, etc.

<https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/publications/SummaryPages/0710058.html>

To request ADA accommodation including materials in a format for the visually impaired, call Water Quality Program at 360-407-6600. Persons with impaired hearing may call Washington Relay Service at 711. Persons with a speech disability may call TTY at 877-833-6341.

Water Resource Inventory Areas are administrative and planning boundaries for water basins, commonly known as watersheds.



Stormwater runoff is damaging salmon habitat. It's the Number 1 water pollution problem in the urban areas of our state, and it causes and contributes to flooding.



Photo: Toni Weyman Broscher



Protecting Washington's waters from stormwater pollution

Did you know Washington has a stormwater runoff problem? Stormwater runoff is damaging salmon habitat. It's the Number 1 water pollution problem in the urban areas of our state, and it causes and contributes to flooding.

Chances are pretty good you've seen stormwater runoff. It's the water from rain or snow that runs off yards, roofs and roadways. As gravity pulls it downhill into low spots, ditches and storm drains, the water picks up soil, chemicals and other pollutants and carries them into our lakes, rivers and marine waters.

Our waters and salmon as well as other fish and wildlife species aren't the only things at risk. Stormwater problems also affect the health and safety of people.

As we develop land to accommodate Washington's growing population, our state's stormwater problem grows, too. The good news is we can do something about it—all of us.

In Washington, the state Department of Ecology, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and local governments all work together to regulate stormwater.

The key to solving the problem isn't really in the rules and permits. It's in people—how we live on the land and the everyday choices each of us makes.

From rain to runoff — what comes down must go somewhere...

If you want to understand stormwater, watch what happens the next time it rains. Pay attention to how shapes and surfaces determine what happens to the water.

Watch how rainwater flows downhill and collects in low places. See how quickly it starts running down a downspout or into a gutter. Feel how pavement stays hard but soil gets soft. Pay attention to what the water sweeps along in the gutter and where there's an oily sheen on a puddle. Notice what happens to streams and rivers. Notice how runoff seems to be everywhere in the city and is harder to find in the forest.



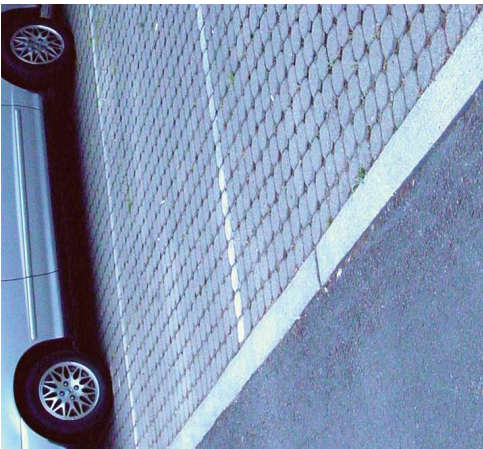
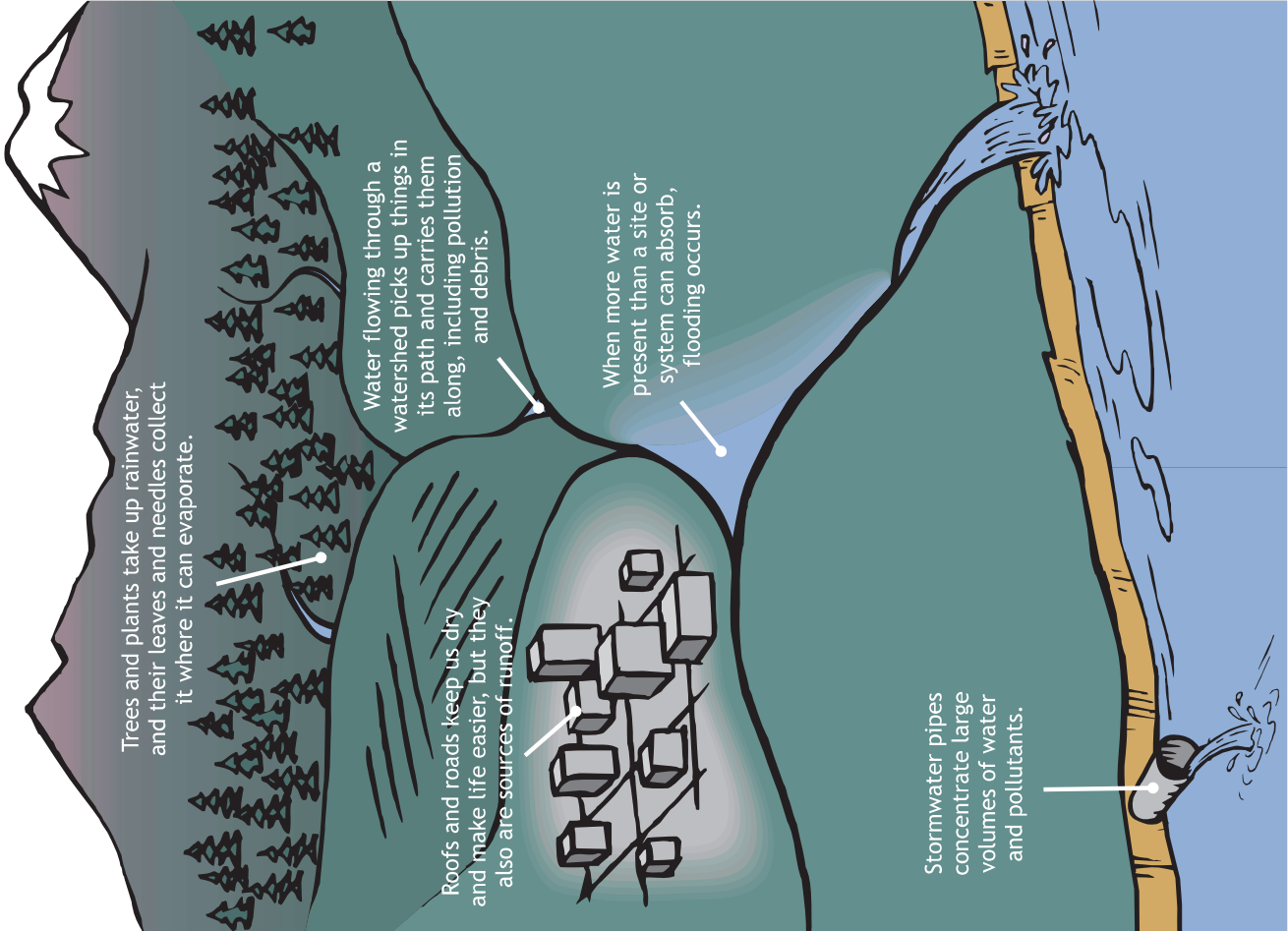
In Washington's forests, the needles of evergreen trees hold a lot of rain—as much as 40 percent of a low intensity rainfall.

A watershed is all the land that drains to the same body of water. A watershed's natural drainage system includes a network of streams and rivers. In a large watershed, many different sources and land uses can contribute to stormwater runoff.

The landscape connection is the key to stormwater runoff

On undeveloped sites, water from rain or snow follows natural patterns of drainage and circulation. Much of the water seeps down into the soil and into underground water supplies. In forests and grasslands, trees and other plants will take up some of this water. Water will also collect on their leaves and needles and evaporate.

Wetlands absorb and hold runoff. In a natural or near-natural setting, the water that does run off directly into streams or other waters is usually filtered and slowed by the web of plants it runs through, a sort of natural purifying system.



Permeable pavement like this provides a hard, drivable surface, but it also lets some stormwater soak back into the ground.

Choices for the future

Stormwater pollution often goes hand in hand with growth. Since 1982, Washington's population has grown by two million people, adding the equivalent of 10 new cities the size of Spokane or Tacoma. Millions more people are expected to be added in the next few decades. As the state's population grows, we can choose to limit polluted runoff and the harm it does, or risk losing some of what makes Washington a special place to live.

While new regulations and technologies can help, we can't expect them to completely make up for the impacts of converting forests and grasslands into shopping malls or subdivisions. Choices we make about how we use the land, including how much development to allow, where it occurs, and how much vegetated land is retained, are crucial for successfully managing stormwater and for keeping Washington's watersheds healthy.

Washington Waters — Ours to Protect

People really can make a difference when it comes to reducing stormwater runoff and the problems and costs that go with it. Because we all contribute to the problem, we all can be a part of the solution. It starts with paying attention to stormwater — at home, at work and in our communities.

We can reduce the amount of runoff.

- Reduce the amount of paved or hard surface areas. Consider permeable paving for that new patio or driveway.
- Look for ways to keep runoff out of the stormwater system so it can soak into the ground. Plant rain gardens. Use rain barrels. Wash your car on the lawn or at commercial car wash that recycles water. (This helps prevent runoff pollution, too!)

We can create cleaner runoff.

- Reduce fertilizers, turf builders and pesticides on your lawn and garden. Use small amounts of slow-release fertilizer and environment-friendly products for problem areas.
- Reduce pollution from roads, driveways and parking lots. Wear and tear on roads, tires and brakes leaves a lot of pollutants behind. Fix vehicle fluid leaks immediately, and consider alternatives to driving solo.
- Reduce bacterial pollution from animal waste. Scoop pet waste and put it in your garbage. Cover and control animal manure on small farms.
- Maintain your septic system. This will keep it from failing and causing pollution.

We can work together.

- Get involved with community stormwater projects such as marking storm drains, maintaining neighborhood green spaces, and establishing pesticide-aware neighborhoods.
- Participate in your local watershed management group and in land use, stormwater and development planning with your city or county. Support smart development practices that maximize the natural vegetation.



Rethinking stormwater runoff

Dealing with stormwater has traditionally focused on getting it out of the way quickly. In Washington, many communities have rules for managing stormwater as part of regulating development and preventing erosion and flooding.

However, many communities are not as used to dealing with stormwater runoff as a major source of pollution or destroyer of habitat. With increasing stormwater runoff problems and new state and federal requirements, Washington is rethinking how it handles stormwater.

Washington has successfully tackled other pollution problems. By combining regulations with co-operation, creativity and good long-term planning, we can reduce the problems with stormwater runoff.

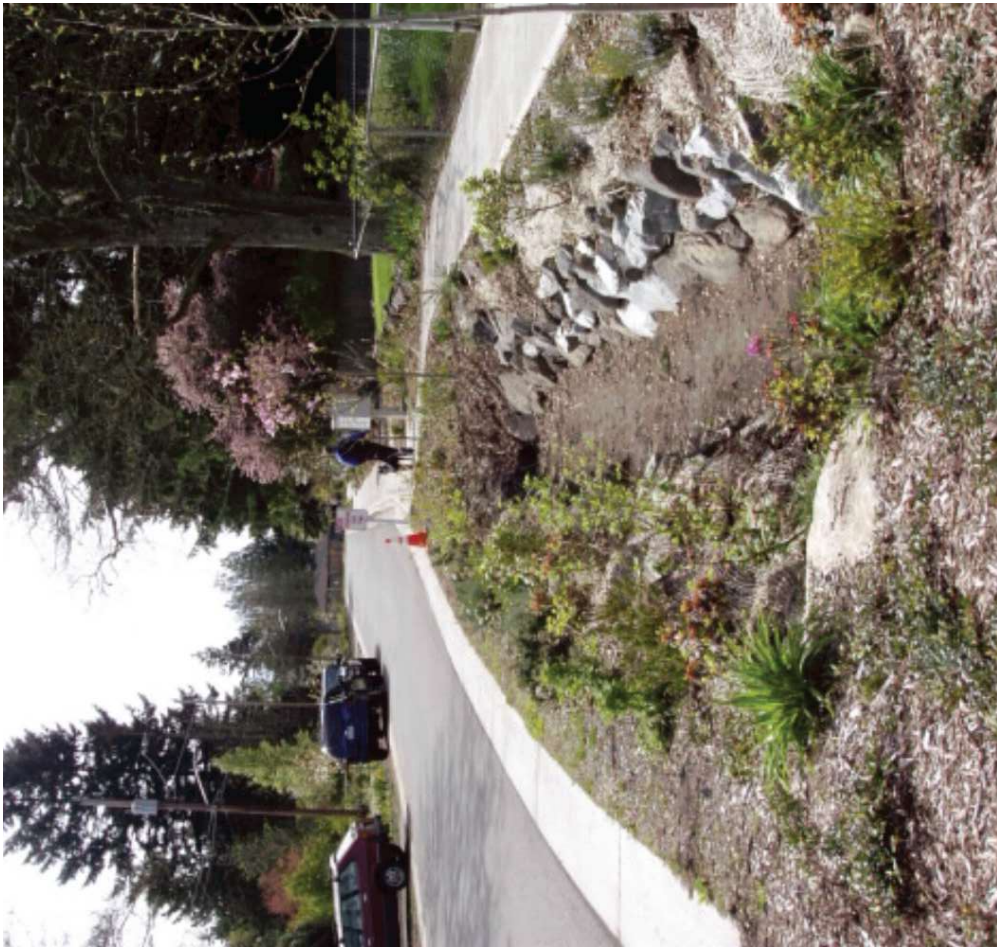


Our transportation choices are part of the runoff picture. Many pollutants in runoff from roads, driveways and parking lots come from cars and trucks. Some sources are:

- Antifreeze
- Brake fluid
- Brake lining
- Exhaust particles
- Oil
- Pavement particles
- Tire particles
- Transmission fluid

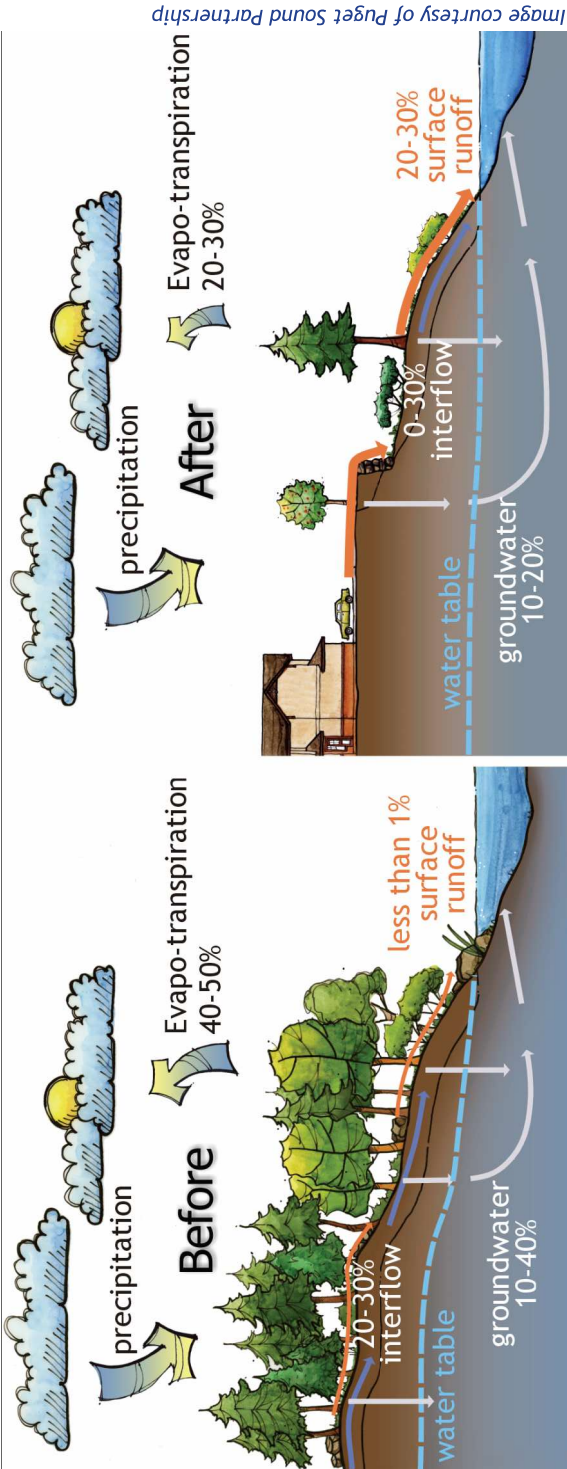
A new approach — reduce runoff at its source

- Stormwater runoff accumulates, and so do the problems it creates as it flows downhill. It makes sense to try to stop the problems before they start or get too big to manage.
- Innovative developers, engineers and designers are already looking at ways to reduce runoff at its source and better mimic nature’s systems by:
- Retaining more natural vegetative cover.
 - Reducing hardened surfaces and soil compaction.



Seattle’s SEA (Street Edge Alternatives) Streets pilot project reduced the amount of stormwater runoff leaving a street by 98 percent for a small rain event. This successful project has inspired similar projects, and the City expects that future projects will cost less than traditional street improvements.

Photo: Seattle Public Utilities



Before development almost all rainfall is taken up by plants, evaporates or infiltrates through the ground. After conventional development, surface runoff increases significantly while evaporation and infiltration into the ground decrease.

Developing land typically has meant removing trees or other vegetation, reshaping the land, compacting soil, and creating hard surfaces. These changes alter the natural water patterns, or hydrology, of a site. Much of the water that plants and soil previously would have absorbed now runs off into local waters, either directly or through a system of gutters, ditches, swales, or pipes. These systems collect runoff and concentrate the flow, quickly conveying it into streams or other waters.

Covering as little as 10 percent of a watershed with impervious surfaces can degrade streams, harming salmon, trout and other aquatic life.

The way we use and develop the land changes not only where stormwater goes and how fast it gets there, but also what it meets along the way—parking lots, roads, roofs, farms, ranches, ball fields and more. Whatever stormwater runoff picks up from these places, it carries into Washington’s waters.



Water flowing through a watershed picks up things in its path and carries them along, including pollution and debris.

How much stormwater do we make?

POTENTIAL RUNOFF	1,200-square ft. roof	1-acre of pavement
1 inch of rain or snow melt	748 gallons	27,150 gallons
Average annual precipitation		
Seattle (37 in. /yr)	27,700 gallons	1 million gallons
Spokane (17 in. /yr)	12,700 gallons	0.5 million gallons
Olympia (51 in. /yr)	38,100 gallons	1.4 million gallons

Roofs, roads and paved parking lots keep us dry and make life easier, but they are also common sources of runoff. Imagine all the roofs and roads in your area and across the state, and imagine how much runoff they generate.

Precipitation data source: NOAA - Average annual precipitation, 1971-2000. Figures have been rounded.

Washington’s growing problem with stormwater runoff

Altered flows — too much, too soon and too little, too late

Stormwater often gets to where it’s going faster after an area is developed. Runoff quickly flows into streams and other surface waters instead of seeping into the ground to recharge groundwater and slowly feeding those streams year round.

The results include much higher stream flows and flooding when it rains (especially during heavy rains), and much lower stream flows in the dry season. These extreme high and low flows are bad for salmon, trout and other fish as well as people and communities.

The high-energy, faster, heavier flows erode stream channels and scour streambeds, churning up silt and damaging spawning areas. The energy from high flows also flushes away tiny aquatic life that serve as part of trout and salmon’s diets and part of a healthy stream.

Extreme low flows are also a problem for fish. Some urban streams that used to run year round sometimes dry up in the summer. Others have too little flow to allow salmon to swim up them to spawn. Hardened surfaces contribute to this problem by interrupting the natural water-absorbing process. Rainfall hits these hard surfaces and escapes directly into rivers rather than soaking into the ground to recharge underground water supplies that feed small streams in the summer months.



With high amounts of hardened or paved surfaces, urban areas generate more and faster runoff, increasing the risk of flooding.

Did you know...?

- *Economic costs related to stormwater in the Puget Sound region are expected to exceed \$1 billion over the next decade.**
- *Even the drier east side of the state has to deal with stormwater, especially in urban areas. If laid end-to-end, Spokane’s storm sewers would stretch all the way to Seattle and back.*

There are other flow-related impacts, too. Flooding from extreme high flows can damage private property, public roads and utilities. And when stormwater runs off instead of seeping into groundwater, some wells may go dry.



Stormwater runoff can affect both the quality and quantity of drinking water supplies. Cities and counties require more stormwater protection in areas near public supply wells to protect them from pollution.

* Damages and Costs of Stormwater Runoff in the Puget Sound Region, 2006; Derek B. Booth, Bernadette Visitation and Anne C. Steinemann



Photo: Jill Williams

Contaminated stormwater runoff can create hazards to human health and affect recreation, tourism, fishing, and businesses.

Beaches have been closed for swimming and shellfish harvesting.

Salmon suffer not only from chemical pollutants, but also from soil washed in from construction sites and other bare ground.

Mud can cover spawning areas, suffocating salmon eggs. It also can clog gills, making it harder or impossible for salmon, trout, and other fish to breathe.



Polluted waters

Most stormwater runoff carries pollution and more pollution comes from highly urbanized areas. More importantly, most of it is not treated, or “cleaned up” before it enters Washington’s waters.

Stormwater runoff is the Number 1 urban water pollution problem in the state.

As runoff flows over roofs, pavement and developed land, it picks up soil particles, oil and grease (mostly from cars and trucks), and many different toxic chemicals, including those from fertilizers, weed-killers, and pesticides. It also picks up bacteria from pet and livestock waste and failing septic systems.

About one-third of the state’s waters are too polluted to meet state water quality standards. Frequently, the cause of this pollution is stormwater. This water is not fit for drinking or swimming.

Shared connections

Polluted stormwater runoff is an issue across the state. It’s easy to see how it connects to issues about Puget Sound, the Spokane River, the Columbia River, and salmon recovery. Stormwater runoff connects to other issues, too:

- *Many of the same things that pollute runoff and surface waters can also pollute aquifers, which are sources of drinking water.*
 - *The danger from landslides and unstable slopes increases in areas with stormwater problems.*
 - *As we prepare for climate change, we must consider how changes in rain and snowfall could affect flooding and water supplies.*
- The good news is that solutions for stormwater can help us deal with many of these connected issues.*

Salmon and trout need cool water to survive, but stream temperatures can rise when cool groundwater isn’t available to feed a stream year round. Also, stormwater runoff entering a stream is often warmer than the stream itself.

From: Julie Kinder <juliek564@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 28, 2025 4:50 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Comments on Comp Plan - Transportation element, V1
Attachments: Comp Plan Comments_Julie Kinder_V1Transp.docx

***** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *****

Please consider the attached comments as you work to finalize the Comp Plan.
Thank you,
Julie Kinder
Anacortes, WA

// Submitted by Julie Kinder, Anacortes, WA

Section references refer to the file *V1-Transp.pdf*

- Goals and Policies
 - Factual correction – there is currently no ferry traffic to Sidney, BC. There is a more accurate statement in a later paragraph (noted below in these comments), but the wording in the introduction to this section should be amended. The Anacortes–Sidney, B.C. ferry service was last in operation in March 2020, and there isn’t funding identified so far that ensures its return. This fact should be recognized up front in Goals and Policies. There shouldn’t be a statement that implies the ferry service is, and has been, operating.
- Policy T-1.7
 - Correct statement in this section accurately reflects the goal of restoring Anacortes-Sidney, BC service.
- Policy T-1.9 Part D
 - Factual correction – Island Hospital has been renamed Island Health.
 - There is already an alternate route between Skyline and Island Health, which is generally via Commercial Ave or Ave M, 32nd Street, Ave A, Havekost, Marine Drive, and Anaco Beach Road. There is already a Fire Dept (Station 2) on the Skyline side of the island. Reconsider the necessity of Part D.
 - The West 2nd route parallel to Oakes isn’t a continuous street and would require considerable improvements including wetland mitigations, paving and widening of alleys, and figuring out a way around or through the Kiwanis ball field parking lot, before it could be used by emergency vehicles. The West 2nd route is also a recognized and well-used pedestrian and bicycle route shown on the Anacortes Ped/Bike map, that allows active transportation users to avoid Oakes. If West 2nd is developed as an alternative for vehicle traffic, then the route must be made appropriate for safe, multi-modal use so active transportation users don’t lose this corridor. Bottom line - Recommend either removing the reference to West 2nd or acknowledging some of the related challenges.
- Policy T-2.2
 - To the list of A-G roadway users, suggest adding the “rolling” category, as has been done in other parts of the document. If “pedestrians” includes “rollers” then please make this clear somewhere. (If it’s already noted, I missed it.)
- Policy T-2.12

// Submitted by Julie Kinder, Anacortes, WA

- Edit requested: “Encourage identification and pedestrian/**bicyclist** scale signing...”
- Policy T-2.15
 - Edit requested: “Encourage pedestrian/**bicyclist** movement to and from gathering spaces, public facilities, and parks, particularly in downtown Anacortes, the Skyline area, and appropriate locations on the Fidalgo Bay waterfront. **Provide bicycle parking racks near accessways in these areas.**”
- Policy T-2.16
 - Edit requested: “Improve ADA-compliant pedestrian crossing opportunities **with bicyclist-accessible slap buttons** across highly traveled street corridors throughout Anacortes. **Designs for ADA and pedestrian crossings must avoid or mitigate the fact that “bulb-outs,” which protect pedestrians, also constrain and/or eliminate shoulders and bike lanes, and can create curbed pinch points that endanger bicyclists.**”
- Policy T-2.18
 - Edit requested: “Incorporate ADA, pedestrian, and bicycle accommodations into all new construction (complete streets) as appropriate. **Designs for ADA and pedestrian crossings must avoid or mitigate the fact that “bulb-outs,” which protect pedestrians, also constrain and/or eliminate shoulders and bike lanes, and can create curbed pinch points that endanger bicyclists.**”
- Policy T-2.19
 - As in T-2.16/18, I’m not requesting that this be mentioned *everywhere*, but it has to be mentioned *somewhere*. When planning bump outs, curb extensions, pedestrian refuge islands, please also consider the safety of bicyclists. Designs that promote pedestrian safety must avoid or mitigate curbed pinch points that endanger bicyclists by forcing them into traffic lanes. We already have a few of these in Anacortes, and they are a hazard for cyclists.
- Policy T-2.20
 - Factual correction – the City of Anacortes was already awarded the Silver level in January, 2025, an upgrade from our prior Bronze rating. Continued progress will be expected in order to sustain that level in 2028 when we re-apply for certification. Wording could be changed to: **Strive to maintain the League of American Bicyclists certification of Anacortes as a Silver-level**

// Submitted by Julie Kinder, Anacortes, WA

Bicycle Friendly Community. Work towards becoming a Gold-level Bicycle Friendly Community.

- Policy T-2.21
 - After the bullet about engaging in route planning and soliciting advice from other city employees and bike commute advocates, add this bullet:
Continue to update the Anacortes Pedestrian and Bike route map and distribute it at no charge on the City of Anacortes website (downloadable pdf file), the downtown visitor center (hard copy), and at the annual Open Streets event (hard copy).
- Human Health and Safety
 - I fully support the statements in this section (Policies T-4.7 through 11)
 - Especially support Policy T-4.9/10 regarding connecting the WSDOT ferry terminal with downtown and the Tommy Thompson trail.
 - Policy T-4.12 Suggested edit: “Encourage private charging station installations ***and bicycle parking areas*** as part of parking requirements for larger projects.”

Respectfully submitted by

Julie Kinder

Juliek564@gmail.com

Anacortes, Washington

From: Catherine Houck <catherinehouck8@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 28, 2025 12:51 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: comp plan public comments
Attachments: City of Anacortes comprehensive plan 2025 comments.docx

***** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *****

August 28, 2025

Dear City of Anacortes Planning Commission and City Council Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft 2025-2045 Anacortes Comprehensive Plan. More importantly, thank you for your fortitude and diligence in serving the citizens of Anacortes throughout this planning process.

I am writing to you today with a few comments about the draft 2025 Future Land Use Map. Some of the land use designations along Fidalgo Island's marine shoreline are not compatible with the goals and policies set forth in the Environment Goals and Policies Section of the updated City of Anacortes Comprehensive Plan draft 2025. Specifically, Goal EC-2. Shoreline Resources. Preserve, protect, enhance, and restore shoreline natural resources. The proposed zoning designations along much of Guemes Channel and Fidalgo Bay are not compatible with preserving, protecting, enhancing, and restoring shoreline and marine natural resources. I highlight these marine shoreline zoning use issues below.

- **South Fidalgo Bay, south of the Tommy Thompson Trestle: "LM=Light Manufacturing"**

Why is the Washington State Department of Natural Resources Fidalgo Bay Aquatic Reserve zoned "Light Manufacturing"? Here's a link that shows the WA State DNR Aquatic Reserve Program <https://dnr.wa.gov/aquatic-reserves>.

At the very least, Fidalgo Bay's tidelands and adjacent upland shoreline should be designated "P" for "Public Use." Ideally, there should be a land use zone called "C" for "Conservation."

The Draft 2025 Open-Space-Map correctly identifies the Fidalgo Bay Aquatic Reserve at the south end of Fidalgo Bay, south of the Tommy Thompson Trestle. All of Fidalgo Bay, and most importantly the Aquatic Reserve also should be designated a "Biodiversity Area" on the 2025 Open-Space-Map in addition to a "wetland area". Fidalgo Bay supports a myriad of marine organisms.

Forage fish, most notably surf smelt, spawn and rear in Fidalgo Bay. In fact, Fidalgo Bay supports one of the most prolific or the most prolific surf smelt spawning areas in the entire state. Herring, another species of forage fish, use the eelgrass beds in Fidalgo Bay to spawn and rear. Forage

fish are the basis of the marine food web that supports salmon and ultimately orcas. In short, Fidalgo Bay is critical as marine habitat in our region and state.

Names are important. Good cartography is important. Please be consistent in land and water biological importance, land designations and zoning across the City of Anacortes 2025-2045 Comprehensive Plan.

- **Ship Harbor from WA State Ferry Terminal to east “CM=Commercial Marine”:**

“CM” zoning should only be for the existing footprint of the WA State Ferry Terminal. The rest of Guemes Channel, from the edge of the ferry terminal loading lanes to the east should be designated “O” for open space. Ideally, it would be great to have a designation of “C” for conservation for this biologically important area, that would also include public access/open space.

- **Guemes Channel “LM=Light Manufacturing”:**

Why is this entire stretch along Guemes Channel designated as “LM”? A Commercial Marine designation should only be where existing industrial areas currently exist. Much of this area, and all of the shoreline and tidelands should be designated “O” or Residential.

- **West side of Fidalgo Bay, east of Q Avenue “MMU” and “I” south of 28th Street:**

Mixed Marine Use “MMU” and Industrial “I” should not extend into Fidalgo Bay, the shoreline or tidelands. From the shoreline into Fidalgo Bay should be designated as Open Space (or “C” for Conservation if such a category were added).

- **West side of Fidalgo Bay, south of 37th St “CM=Commercial Marine”:**

Why is this area designated Commercial Marine? It should be designated residential on the uplands only. The shoreline, tidelands, and Fidalgo Bay should be designated at Open Space (or “C” for Conservation if such a category were added). By 2045, Fidalgo Bay Resort likely will be inundated.

- **March’s Point, “HM=Heavy Manufacturing”:**

In the next 20 years, the United States may join the rest of the world in transiting away from fossil fuels. March’s Point will undergo a major transformation from heavy manufacturing to clean up from this heavily industrialized site. Can you create a land use designation as heavy industrial transiting to cleaner uses of industrial wastelands?

Thank you for considering these comments as you improve the draft 2025-2045 Anacortes Comprehensive Plan and mapping. Thank you for reading these comments.

Sincerely,

Catherine Houck

2318 20th ST.

Anacortes, WA 98221

From: Anna Fahey <anna.fahey@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 28, 2025 7:47 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Re: Anacortes Comprehensive Plan

**** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. ****

Hello,

I grew up in Anacortes. I'm a long-time resident. I work here, I help care for aging parents here, and I'm raising kids here.

I care deeply about this community. As we look to the next 20 years, I urge you to shape a comprehensive plan that serves everyone who calls Anacortes home so that we can thrive in a changing world, so that we can shoulder growth without losing our character, and so that we can protect what is most cherished about our community. With every land use decision and every public investment, the City and Port should prioritize the lives, safety, and quality of life for the residents they serve. To do so,

1) **Prioritize the people who live here over tourists.** Protecting what makes this town a great place to live will naturally make it an attractive place to visit.

2) **Design our public spaces and our streets for people not just cars.** A great place to live is a safe, inviting, accessible, and convenient place to get around by foot, bike, or wheelchair—not just by car. We often design our roads and build street infrastructure to usher cars through more efficiently. But the opposite objectives make for far more lively, safe, pleasant, and vibrant neighborhoods and shopping areas. People-friendly streets require minimal investment and deliver outsized benefits.

a. **Prioritize street trees.** Tree-lined streets are inviting for pedestrians. Trees provide shade which makes walking more pleasant and safe. Trees provide a cooling effect and protect us against dangerous temperatures and heat islands—an important climate mitigation and resilience measure. Trees along residential streets help slow traffic, making pedestrians safer and reducing tail pipe emissions. Plant as many trees as possible to plan for the next 20 years and beyond.

b. **Prioritize traffic-calming and walkable street infrastructure.** More sidewalks, more places. Widen sidewalks and narrow street lanes. Add accessible, traffic-calming infrastructure: corner bump outs, crosswalks, intersection islands, four-way stops, protected bike lanes, trees and plantings, and speed bumps.

c. **Prioritize pedestrian and car-lite streets and spaces.** Reserve more centrally-located public roadways and spaces as car-free. Parks, plazas, pedestrianized blocks, and inviting street live. These people-friendly areas boost foot traffic and support small, local businesses. Greenways and local-access-only areas of residential neighborhoods make for safe corridors for children to walk to and school, for families to play outside, and for neighbors to get together. We should do everything we can to get residents of all ages outdoors, exercising, and interacting with each other—good for all our mental, physical, and environmental well-being. This should be a top goal for shaping our community over the next two decades.

3) **Prioritize adequate, affordable housing choices.** To affordably house our neighbors today and prepare for new residents over the next 20 years, we need to legalize smaller, less expensive home choices within existing city neighborhoods. Allowing a range of housing types is a critical strategy for stabilizing prices (McMansions are expensive; a shortage drives up prices overall). A range of housing types within our established city neighborhoods, also helps prevent more sprawling development that encroaches on our forest lands, rural outskirts, open spaces, and farmland. Affordable options in town mean that the workers we rely on, from teachers to grocery checkers to home health aides, can live near their local jobs. This protects our town's working class roots and ensures people of all incomes can live here. It also cuts long commutes, traffic congestion, and air pollution.

4) **Finally, stop paving over everything—wasting public dollars and spaces on empty asphalt!** Anacortes should consider on-street parking management rather than yet more massive paved parking lots that primarily serve out of town visitors, not locals. Asphalt is ugly--detracting from the charm of our city. Most parking lots are wasteful—overbuilt and seldom full. Asphalt collects stormwater and consolidates toxic pollution in our local waterways. Asphalt traps heat. And wasteful parking replaces trees and green spaces. Parking lots spread businesses, amenities, and housing out, making it more difficult and unpleasant to walk--and forcing more driving. I recommend eliminating all local commercial and residential parking minimums. Short of that, our local public dollars and Port funds should not go toward any more visitor (and RV) parking lots. *A forward thinking city—and port, looking out two decades, will stop prioritizing parking lots for visitors over other community amenities.*

I'm excited about what our city can be and how we can cautiously and thoughtfully grow and evolve over 20 years. For an attractive, vibrant, unique, and resilient community over the coming two decades, the City of Anacortes should commit to people who live here! And there are wonderful, uncomplicated ways to do it! We'll all be better off.

--

Anna Fahey



August 27, 2025

TO: City of Anacortes Planning, Community and Economic Development Department, Planning Commission and City Council CompPlan@anacortes.org

FROM: Evergreen Islands, P.O. Box 223, Anacortes WA 98221

SUBJECT: Comments on Draft 2025-2045 Anacortes Comprehensive Plan

Dear Anacortes Planning Department, Planning Commission and City Council,

These comments are submitted by Evergreen Islands, a local nonprofit which continues to protect and defend the unique ecosystems of the saltwater islands in Skagit County. Since 1977 Evergreen Islands members have worked to ensure that the built and natural environment remains healthy for future generations.

Introduction

Evergreen Islands has actively participated in the City's robust public involvement process for this update to the Comprehensive Plan. Evergreen Islands members attended the 3 Open Houses, attended many of the 20 or so meetings before the Planning Commission and City Council, participated on the Climate Team, submitted written comments, and reviewed supporting documents and presentations. Individuals completed the online surveys such as the Transportation, Economic Development and Climate surveys.

The opportunity to participate is appreciated. Regrettably, however, the City has failed to provide responses to comments or otherwise analyze and track how public feedback was seriously considered in any changes made in the Updated Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan must reflect community knowledge, values and recommendations in giving voice to the goals of the Growth Management Act. There may have been written responses to comments in Planning Commission or City Council meeting packets, but these have not been readily available to the public through the Planning Department's Comprehensive Plan website. Groups and individuals can be discouraged in local government if they do not receive acknowledgment of the time and effort they put into public participation.

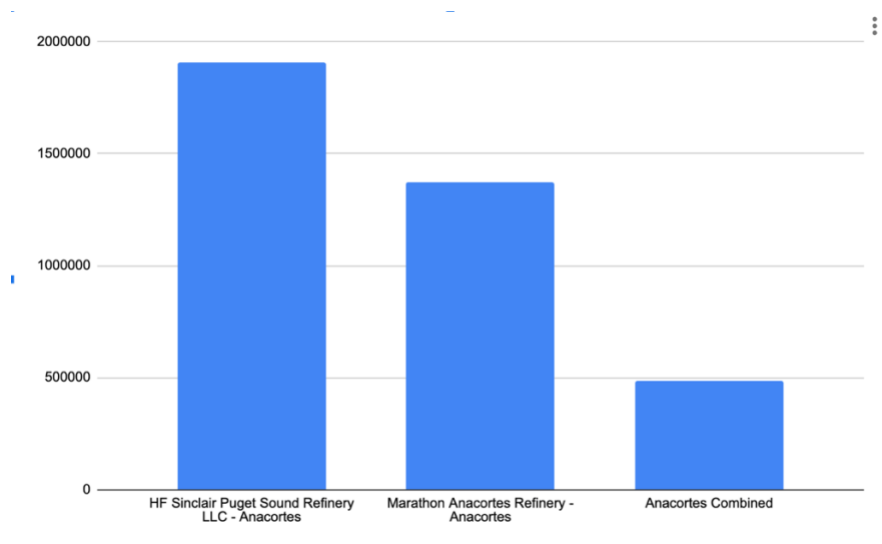
This Draft reflects promising Goals and Policies, including those carried forward from the 2016 Comprehensive Plan. Evergreen Islands remains concerned that aspirational Goals

and Policies are meaningless unless they are implemented, monitored and enforced. Budget and staffing need to be aligned with the intentions represented in this document.

March Point Industrial Area

The March Point Urban Growth Area needs better protections in zoning, code and regulations. The March Point heavy impact industrial zone falls within the City of Anacortes's Urban Growth Area. Development at March Point is subject to the Anacortes Municipal Code, and is shaped by the Anacortes Comprehensive Plan policies, although Skagit County manages the permitting and environmental review process for projects. This creates a black hole at times where the two jurisdictions can fail to take responsibility and provide leadership. Confusion and messy processes stall projects and fail to protect public health and the environment.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions. In Comprehensive Plan Update process, Skagit County includes the Greenhouse Gas calculations from the two refineries at March Point in the county's overall greenhouse gas calculations, but the City of Anacortes makes little to no mention of the overwhelming role the refineries play in spewing greenhouse gas and how this compares to ALL GHG emissions within City boundaries. The City should acknowledge the substantial greenhouse gas emissions generated by the refineries outside the City boundary, yet within the City's urban growth area. The graph below compares the annual greenhouse gas emissions measured in metric ton equivalents (MT CO₂e):



This Draft does include slightly modified language but falls short of making meaningful change. Here is the change noted in the Draft:

Policy ED-4.7. [Coordinate with Skagit County to](#) ~~A~~ anticipate and plan for potential future desired uses at the March Point refineries as product types, manufacturing processes, economic competitiveness, and transportation methods change.

An Uncertain Future Calls for a Sub Area Plan. The lack of foresight and informed planning for March Point likely will result in increased risks to the community from land uses there caused by new product manufacturing, transshipment of products, or expanded production, all of which would lead to increases in vessel traffic, new chemical risks, and increases in vessel size. All of these pose very serious public safety and environmental threats. Facing this uncertainty, Evergreen Islands urges the City of Anacortes to take leadership in drafting a Sub Area Plan for March Point, working in coordination with Skagit County, local tribes and nations, industry and interest group representatives. The City of Tacoma has an example of such a process in the Tacoma [Tidal Flats Subarea Plan](#).

Recommended Policies for March Point. We recommend the addition of the policies in [blue](#) below:

Policy LU-9.7. New or additional industrial and manufacturing development should comply with the following criteria:

- A. Sewer, water, and communications services should be available or planned for the industrial site area.
- B. New sites designated for industrial use should have convenient access to existing or planned highways or major arterials.
- C. Consistent with the Environment and Conservation Element of the Comprehensive Plan.
- [D. Consistent with the Fidalgo Bay-wide Plan](#)
- [E. Consistent with the Climate Element of the Comprehensive Plan and the Climate Action Plan.](#)
- [F. Site facilities responsibly with conditions to protect wildlife habitats and watershed health.](#)
- [G. Facilities shall utilize best available technology and procedures to protect public health & safety from industrial hazards, and to limit and mitigate potential impacts to/on:](#)
 - [Vessel Traffic](#)
 - [Fisheries, shoreline habitat, critical areas](#)
 - [Toxic Air Pollution](#)
 - [Lifecycle Greenhouse Gas Emissions](#)
 - [Water Consumption & Contamination](#)
 - [Land Disturbance](#)
 - [Public Safety, Risk & Hazard \(fires, spills, etc.\)](#)

- [Nuisances, Noise, Traffic](#)

Other organizations have commented on the need to plan for the future of March Point. Evergreen Islands joins Skagit Land Trust, RE-Sources and others who have submitted comments regarding March Point during this planning process.

Stormwater Management, Sewer capacity and Increased Housing Density

This Draft relies on urban infill and higher density housing to meet the needs of projected population increases yet Evergreen Islands is concerned that the existing and planned stormwater and sewer systems are insufficient to handle this level of density. Is this realistic? Are we prepared for this future development? The City of Anacortes needs to conduct an analysis of the stormwater and sewer system capacity and ensure that it can maintain water quality while providing for future housing needs.

Urban Tree Canopy

The City is taking positive action to protect and encourage urban trees for the values they provide and to meet an objective in the stormwater management plan. Evergreen Islands commends city council members who have convened an Urban Tree Volunteer Panel to conduct programmatic research which can inform an urban tree policy to protect and enhance our urban trees.

Parks and Recreation Section

Ship Harbor Advisory Committee. This Draft recommends deleting the Ship Harbor Advisory Committee (GOAL PR-4). Why is an advisory committee being deleted at the time when the Parks and Recreation Department is proposing a trail replacement and extension at Ship Harbor?

Anacortes Community Forest Lands ACFL. Evergreen Islands strongly opposes the deletion of the policy to maintain pristine/natural character of ACFL. Under Policy PR-8.3, the City is proposing to delete the entire policy of managing the ACFL as a pristine, natural area with low impact recreation. This is the existing being proposed for deletion in the Draft Comprehensive Plan - **Policy PR-8.3: The Anacortes Community Forestlands should be managed to maintain their pristine and/or fragile environmental and to preserve watersheds, wildlife habitats, wetlands, and aesthetic values, while providing for appropriate low-impact recreational uses with priority for residents.**

We have heard the reason for this deletion is that the Parks and Recreation Department is updating the ACFL Plan, which will be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan. It is wholly appropriate that the Comprehensive Plan contain policy statements for the ACFL

such as PR-8.3 or a similarly worded policy statement. Public comments summarized in the Open Houses conducted for the Comprehensive Plan include themes regarding the importance of the ACFL and how it is managed. In addition, if the ACFL Plan is incorporated into the 2025-2045 Comprehensive Plan, the City should include in the public record all the public comments submitted during the ACFL Plan Update process. These comments demonstrate the values community members hold for the ACFL as a forest where natural processes prevail while providing public access and recreation that helps protect habitats, wildlife and ecological processes.

Environment and Conservation Section

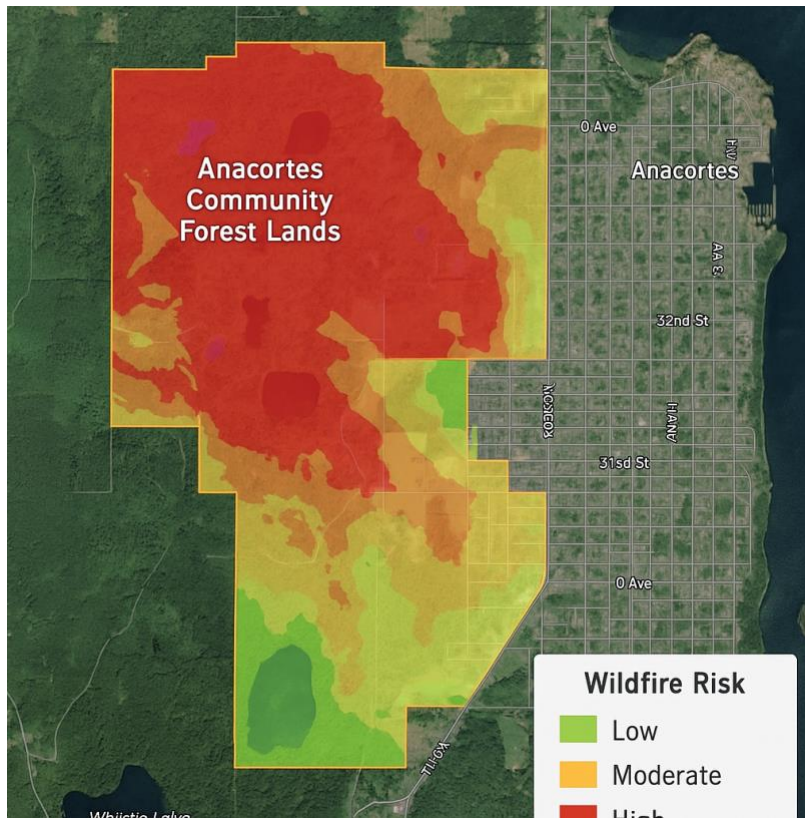
The Draft includes a NEW, proposed policy EC-1.6 “Consider impacts on public access when developing climate adaptation plans and implementing strategies”. Instead, it should read: “consider impacts of public access on climate adaption actions and implementing strategies”.

Updated Land Use Map

Please correct the mapping to reflect the management goals of the Fidalgo Aquatic Reserve. Pages L-5, L-6, **Fidalgo Bay Aquatic Reserve** is mapped as Light Manufacturing. This needs to be changed to Public Use.

Wildfire Awareness, Preparedness, Notification and Evacuation

One of the climate risks noted in the Climate Assessment is Wildfire. The overall risk of wildfire is MODERATE. Wildfire risk and wildfire smoke are themes noted in the comments collected during Comprehensive Plan Open Houses. We know climate change predictions: increasing temperatures, prolonged dry periods and strong, erratic wind can increase the probability and impact of wildfire in Western Washington.



Anacortes needs a plan to reduce wildfire risk, prepare for wildfires, plan evacuation routes and notification systems. With a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), Anacortes could be better prepared to raise community awareness, reduce risks and coordinate response in the event of a wildfire. The Washington Department of Natural Resources offers grants for completing CWPPs. Wildfire and wildfire smoke can have devastating impacts on humans and the environment. Western Washington is no longer immune to wildfire. The Updated Skagit County Comprehensive Plan gives more attention on wildfire risk and stronger policy statements than Anacortes. We recommend that you consider policies from the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan Update. For example: implementing the Firewise public education program, prioritizing certain areas of the county for additional fire prevention planning and reviewing evacuation routes. Other surrounding cities and counties are working toward raising awareness and creating plans. Anacortes can start with a focus on the wildland urban interface surrounding the ACFL.

Shoreline Master Program Update

Evergreen Islands recognizes that the Shoreline Master Program update has been delayed while the City focuses on the Comprehensive Plan. We look forward to once again participating in the Updated SMP as well as focusing on the water quality in an updated Stormwater Management Plan, recognizing how important both plans are for the next 20 years and beyond.

Thank you to the Planning, Community and Economic Development Department, the Planning Commission and City Council for all your efforts to make this planning process accessible and representative of this community. We also appreciate how engaged other City Department heads and staff have been in this process.

/s/ Marlene Finley

Board President

Evergreen Islands

From: Chuck Clark <crosswater@frontier.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 28, 2025 3:21 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Zone change from LM to MS along Guemes Channel

**** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. ****

As a property owner in Anacortes, I would like to voice my opinion on the part of your draft Comprehensive Plan that seeks to change the zoning along Guemes Channel from LM (light manufacturing) to MS (Manufacturing and shipping).

When my wife and I moved to the Redmond/Woodinville area in 1972 from Southern California, we heard about Anacortes through some friends and decided to visit. Immediately we fell in love with the area and both felt at the time this would become the equivalent status of a Newport Beach California. Additionally, it had and continues to have great zoning for the current mixture of manufacturing, including ship building, oil refinery, and boat building industries. Additionally, with Washington Park, current marinas, and the Washington State Ferry terminals, it truly is the "Gateway to the San Juans" and one of a kind city.

With the proposed zoning changes of LM to MS the current balance of manufacturing, residential, water activities, marine life, noise levels, and Guemes Channel marine traffic will be significantly altered: not for the better. Risk for our Guemes Channel marine life which includes killer whales, will be significantly increased with additional manufacturing along the channel. It is my opinion that whatever tax gains would be made due to the added manufacturing areas and its associated employment (including money spent in Anacortes) will be more than offset by reduced property taxes.

With these concerns in mind please consider removing this subject zone change in your future planning and keep Anacortes the beautiful destination city it is!!

Sincerely,
Chuck Clark

From: James Benedetto <saipanjim@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 28, 2025 12:10 PM
To: Comp Plan; Comp Plan
Subject: Comments on the City of Anacortes DRAFT 2025-2045 Comprehensive Plan

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August 28, 2025

City of Anacortes PCED
P.O. Box 547
Anacortes, WA 98221

Re: Comments on the City of Anacortes DRAFT 2025-2045 Comprehensive Plan

Dear Commissioners,

As an Anacortes resident and property owner, I am adamantly opposed to certain portions of the City of Anacortes DRAFT 2025-2045 Comprehensive Plan. In my opinion, the laudable goal of incentivizing the development of more affordable housing in our community should not be at the expense of existing property owners' property values, our use and enjoyment of our property, or the peaceful character of our neighborhoods. We should not permit any development that does not fully mitigate the adverse impacts such development will have on the infrastructure. Nor should we be asked to even consider property levies to directly subsidize development of low-income housing, as the draft policy H-3.6 provides.

1. Providing for more affordable housing in growing areas should not degrade existing property owners' property values, or negatively affect our use and enjoyment of our property.

I am opposed to the proposed amendment of Policy H-2.1, "Zoning should allow the next increment of housing in all neighborhoods and should disallow sudden, radical change in all neighborhoods." Presumptively allowing the "next increment of housing in all neighborhoods" as a matter of policy ignores the impacts that such changes will bring about, and may in fact cause "sudden, radical change" in some or all neighborhoods. The existing language of Policy H-2.1, "Encourage housing types and design that reinforce and enhance the character and scale of established neighborhood development patterns" should be retained.

Allowing triplexes and other multiplexes in my neighborhood, for example, will undoubtedly adversely affect my property value. A two-story multiplex may deprive me of my view of the water and Mt. Baker. It will also degrade the peaceful character of my neighborhood, and ruin my use and enjoyment of my property. In my experience, it only takes a small number of multifamily units going into a neighborhood before parking, traffic, noise and other ill effects (e.g., graffiti, vandalism, and discarded trash) become unbearable, driving existing residents to greener pastures. I've seen it happen in Seattle and elsewhere.

For example, if an adjoining property was acquired by a developer who wanted to tear down what is presently a single-family detached residence to build a fourplex (which would be allowed under the proposed definition of RLD 2), that would definitely change the character of the neighborhood in a negative way. Assuming each unit was occupied by a family of four, there might be as many as 16 vehicles jockeying for street parking, and a lot of increased traffic, not to mention the noise incidental to an increase in local population density. My current neighbors on three sides have small children, who are often seen riding bicycles, go karts or scooters, walking their dogs, etc. Will my neighbors have to worry about their children's safety if there are suddenly 16 new vehicles zipping through our neighborhood? Will they prohibit or severely restrict their children from riding bikes in the neighborhood with all the increased traffic?

2. Fully neutralizing adverse impacts development will have on neighborhood infrastructure should be the top priority.

As noted above, permitting multiplexes in a neighborhood of single family detached homes will strain the parking infrastructure. But what about the impacts on traffic patterns, the electrical grid, water supply and sewer? It is well known that a higher concentration of people in multifamily housing can worsen traffic congestion, particularly in areas where streets were not designed for high density. Local water and wastewater systems, particularly in small communities, may not have the capacity to handle increased demands on multifamily development. Failures can lead to public health and environmental risks, e.g., water main breaks and sewer backups. If improvements are required to handle the increased demand, who will bear the cost of the necessary upgrades? Will we need additional police officers to handle the increased need for traffic enforcement and additional emergency responders to handle fires, medical evacuations, etc.? It seems certain that our property taxes will go up astronomically.

Will adding multifamily developments lead to our neighborhood schools becoming overcrowded? Too many new students can increase class sizes and adversely affect the quality of education.

Until and unless such potential adverse impacts to infrastructure can be realistically assessed and effectively mitigated, I am opposed to allowing triplexes and other multiplexes in our neighborhood, as the proposed draft definition of RLD 2 would permit.

3. Residents should be given adequate notice and an opportunity to comment on all new development proposals, and particularly if any variance is sought from zoning or other requirements.

I am in favor of mandatory notice of any proposals for development of "middle housing" in our neighborhood, and a mandatory opportunity to comment before approval for such projects is granted. Zoning requirements should be strictly enforced, and as noted above, impacts on the environment and other infrastructure should be assessed and effectively mitigated or prevented. In fact, voter approval should be required for any such development.

4. The definition of Residential Low Density 2 (RLD 2) should NOT be amended as proposed.

Under the current definition of RLD 2, single-family detached residences are permitted, while ADUs, duplexes and cottages may be permitted under certain circumstances. Triplexes and other multiplexes are not permitted. However, under the proposed amendment to the definition of RLD 2, single-family detached residences, ADUs, cottages and duplexes are permitted, and triplexes and other multiplexes may be permitted under certain circumstances. In my experience, a developer can obtain a variance or establish the "certain circumstances" permitting the non-conforming use pretty much for the asking; the proposed definition, then, opens a back-door for large numbers of triplexes and other multiplexes without regard for how that will degrade the quality of our neighborhoods for existing property owners.

I chose to buy property in Anacortes because it is a peaceful, quiet, walkable community, what the Comprehensive Plan might mean when it refers to the "unique character of the community." Please do not turn Anacortes into another crowded, frenetic collection of residents who only see each other at big box stores.

5. No taxpayer subsidy for construction and preservation of affordable housing.

Draft policy H-3.6 would require that we "[c]onsider a housing levy to provide funding for construction and preservation of affordable housing." I am opposed. That is not required under Washington's Growth Management Act, and it is not the role of city government to fund affordable housing. Those of use who live in this community should not be required to subsidize housing for others, irrespective of their income, and it adds insult to injury to expect us to subsidize the very development that will degrade our use and enjoyment of our property, destroy the character of our neighborhoods, and ultimately drive us away from Anacortes.

Sincerely,

James Benedetto
Property owner and resident

From: Darry Thompson <darrytl1991@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 27, 2025 8:30 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Comp Plan

**** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. ****

Dear whom it may concern,

Whatever former Planning Director Ian Munce wants for middle housing, do the opposite.

Respectfully,
"Darry Tibbles"
Anacortes

From: janet2busy@gmail.com
Sent: Wednesday, August 27, 2025 12:45 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Comments on Anacortes 2025-2045 Draft Comprehensive Plan

***** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *****

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Anacortes 20-year plan!

I chose Anacortes after a multi-year, nationwide search for my “forever” community. Please preserve these unique aspects of Anacortes – you can’t find them in most places and they are priceless.

Preserve What Makes Anacortes/Fidalgo a Special Oasis.

Clean air (for the most part)

Clean, good-tasting and sufficient drinking water. The City made a good decision to secure Skagit River Water rights and update the water plant in Mt. Vernon.

Quiet (for the most part)

Low traffic (and mostly predictable per ferry schedule, etc.)

Small-town feel and friendliness

Rural feel with farm/farmstand and roadside produce/flower stands

Working town with fishing and placards announcing “fresh fish or crab” at Dock XX

Sustainability Awareness and Activities

Beautiful Library that supports a wide range of interests and activities

Art for All

Forests and Lakes and Trails in our backyard!!!

Waterfront Beaches, Marina, Islands, and Trails in our backyard!!!

Hospital and Medical care 1.5 miles from my house

Ferry access to the Guemes and SJ islands (and hopefully BC again in the future)

Causeway access to mainland with shopping, Amtrak, etc. for convenience without the traffic/eyesores

BellAir Airport Shuttle and Skagit Transit

Low Crime

Future Focus.

Anacortes is blessed with a beautiful natural environment that provides priceless value to the community and a quality of life that will only become more unique with time. It deserves protection.

1. Forests – More fire controls and focus on prevention. Burn permits for private citizens are not monitored and people have big bonfires (not small, contained campfires) within City limits. Fire Dept can only respond once the bonfire is lit – so not for prevention. This setup is a recipe for disaster.

Coordinate with County on red-flag days, fireworks, etc. Whidbey banned personal fireworks & burning yet Fidalgo did not ... Why not? The City fireworks over the water are amazing and should suffice.

2. Lakes – Rules to preserve water quality and eliminate invasive algae and other contaminants from entering water. Controls on pesticides, runoff, boat washing, etc. have been implemented in other lake areas across US with great success and little inconvenience.
3. Noise – Preserve the quiet. Growlers do NOT need to fly low over Fidalgo or near refinery. They have an entire ocean over which to practice maneuvers. Deafening noise is unnecessary and would be illegal for industry. It is unhealthy for hearing and air quality. Also a trigger for autism/PTSD.
4. Zoning – Do not change low-density zoning area requirements that additions (ADU, etc) include notification and comment from neighbors. Areas on wells/septic could be compromised with more development so it should go through planning process.

5. Public Transportation – Skagit bus is limited to the “flat” areas of Fidalgo as far as I can tell. Would be good to have on-call transit for ADA. Bellaire/Airport shuttle is great – would be nice if there were more long-term parking available at the Anacortes stops.
6. Air/Refinery – How does Anacortes benefit from this industry? How will it change if the refinery looks beyond fossil fuels to other energy production (renewables or green hydrogen or?). Will it be an asset or a negative to life in the area? Having worked in the oil and gas industry it is nice that refineries bring jobs, etc. but the City should be involved in making sure environmental controls are in place and citizens are not breathing air toxics. So far, my observation is that the wind mostly blows emissions away from Anacortes, but on calm/hot days the hydrocarbon smell is evident.
7. Increase Funding for Forest and Lake Preservation, Conservation, Sustainability Activities, Acquisition of Land for Parks/Watershed/Buffer, Public Transit around the island (and for those with limited mobility) as well as Bike Paths.
8. Extend sewer infrastructure to areas currently on septic.
9. Support Fire and Police Department work toward prevention/education to keep fire and crime risk low.
10. Resist the urge to bring in big box stores, casinos, “tourist events” and to build on every inch of available land/real estate. The town I left lost its charm and quality of life when it was overrun with tourism, buildings, second homes, traffic and noise.

I’ve been impressed with the City website, Planning maps online, and the responsiveness of everyone I called to ask questions about the town and infrastructure. Hope that never changes – it is wonderful!

Here’s to the next 20+ years ...

Janet Peargin

4304 Whistle Lake Rd., Anacortes

From: Mark Nihart <marknihart@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 27, 2025 12:47 PM
To: Comp Plan; mbnihart@comcast.net
Subject: CompPlan 2025 Comments ACFL Section -3

**** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. ****

2026 Forest Plan Comments - 3

Mark B. Nihart
1616 28th Street
Anacortes, WA

(An acknowledge that this email was received and the comment was registered is requested)

To: City of Anacortes Planning, Community and Economic Development Department,
2025 Comprehensive Plan Consultants

Subject: Anacortes 2025 Comprehensive Plan

All Parties:

Forest Plan Comments 3

(received as of 3/4/2025)

Comments on the 2026 ACFL Plan part 2

Bob Jepperson

Comments on "Management Areas: Introduction"

The central mission statement of the section called "Management Areas: Introduction" states:

"Areas will be managed to conserve and enhance their unique environment and wildlife habitat

while maintaining recreational opportunities for local residents."

1. I am not the first person to point out that "recreational opportunities" is an insufficient term.

In order "to conserve and enhance their unique environment and wildlife habitat," the term recreational opportunities should read "low-impact recreational opportunities."

2. Managers cannot reach the stated goal as long as an imbalance of attention and money are

directed only toward efforts that support access for humans to the ACFL. Trails and

structures that “conserve and enhance” access for humans to the ACFL receive far more attention and money than do projects that “conserve and enhance” wildlife habitat. If the imbalance comes from a lack of ideas for projects, ask the public for suggestions.

Comments on “Management Areas”

“Goal: Identify areas of environmental, educational, historic, cultural and/or biological significance, encourage their preservation, and regulate development which could cause significant deterioration of these qualities. ”

Why was the word “significant” inserted into the above statement? Using the words “significant

deterioration” simply opens the door to actions causing deterioration of the environment. Again, this section of the plan fails to use the term “low-impact recreation.” All forms of recreation

in the ACFL must be low impact, otherwise, management will have failed the mandate “to conserve and enhance wildlife habitat.”

Comments on “Management Areas: Little Cranberry Lake area”

Coliform bacteria – Little Cranberry Lake was closed to all human usage during part of 2022 due to

elevated levels of coliform bacteria at the north end of LCL. Although species-specific tests were

not conducted, the logical source was Canada Goose feces. Approximately 97% of LCL shorelines

are populated with native species of plants. Only the park-like north end of the lake supports lawn

grass. Canada Geese graze extensively on lawn grass. As a result of their spending much of their

day along 3% of the lake’s shoreline, most of their feces fell onto 3% of the land that borders the

lake. Rain washed fecal bacteria into the water, and that area of the lake failed the health2 department’s tests for coliform bacteria. The small, grassy section of the shoreline should be

planted with native species that conform to Department of Ecology standards for earthen dams.

Cyanobacteria - To maintain water quality in LCL, management faces an even more difficult

challenge with outbreaks of blue-green algae or cyanobacteria. On many occasions, I have

photographed their bright green colonies in the water along Trail 102. When blooms are reported,

Skagit Health performs tests to determine levels of toxicity in the water. Outbreaks were reported in

Little Cranberry Lake in 2014, 2015, 2022, 2023 and 2024. Are chemicals and nutrients entering

LCL to stimulate the growth of cyanobacteria? The two main tributaries to the lake enter at the SE and SW corners of the lake. Water entering the SE corner comes from the Big Beaver Pond. Water entering from the SW corner comes from what has historically been forested watershed, but in recent years developers excavated and constructed houses on the LCL-side of the ridge. The runoff from that area now includes any chemicals used on lawns, landscaping, roofs and roads in the development. Sophisticated tests that go beyond simple tests for pH or dissolved oxygen, such as those that can be done by Skagit Health or by the lab at the Anacortes Water Treatment Plant, should be regularly performed to ensure that such chemicals and nutrients are not flowing into LCL via the unnamed creek that flows under the footbridge on Trial 105.

Treated wood – When projects are built next to bodies of water, construction materials should not contaminate the water. Treated wood should not be used. Over time, the chemicals used to slow the rotting of wood have evolved from the use of creosote to pentachlorophenol to chromated copper arsenate (CCA), and to other chemicals. Currently at Little Cranberry Lake, the structure at the spillway includes treated wood. Perhaps that can be replaced someday, and in the future, better choices of materials should be made.

Microplastics – When plastic structures are exposed to sunlight and oxygen, the breakdown of the surface produces a chalky or dusty substance that consists of millions of tiny particles called microplastics. The particles do not disappear, they disperse into the air, the water, and the soil where their microscopic size allows them to be ingested by microorganisms which in turn are ingested by larger living things, humans included. Projects near bodies of water should not include virgin or recycled plastic.

Lead toxicity – Little Cranberry Lake is a civic treasure worthy of a healthy future that should include a reduction in the lake's lead toxicity. I can supply resource materials as well as the names of a few outstanding people in Washington State who are pioneering the effort to make fishing

tackle safer for wildlife. The growing concern for waterfowl (and Bald Eagles) that suffer ill health or death after ingesting lead from fishing tackle is a subject that managers of natural areas should be studying and incorporating into their management plans. Already in Washington State, thirteen lakes have been closed to the use of lead fishing tackle. Other areas of America have programs with volunteers who bring alternative fishing supplies to lakes and offer to exchange lead-free tackle for less toxic tackle. Advancing this cause can be a matter of pride for communities who care about the health of their wild neighbors.

Trail closures – APRD had their own reasons for closing Trail 132 on the south shore of LCL, but because managers chose to close the trail, the wild residents who need the resources of the adjacent habitat are benefiting greatly from the closure. The trail formerly brought people too close to the channel between the trail and Pine Island. The channel represents one of the critical areas³ that needs protection for the benefit of waterfowl, river otter, beaver (who maintain their lodge at the west end of the channel), and two species of turtle that bask above water on the small islands and bog logs that enrich the habitat of the channel.

APRD also proposes closing a portion of Trail 101 on the west shore of LCL. The APRD has their reasons for the partial closure, but whatever their reasons, closure of part of Trail 101 will reduce disturbance of the foraging activities of osprey, Trumpeter Swans, Pied-billed Grebes, Kingfishers, Common and Hooded Mergansers, Canada Geese, Bald Eagles, Double-crested Cormorants, Buffleheads, Mallards, Wood Ducks, and River Otters.

One line in “Management Areas: Little Cranberry Lake area” reads, “Parks staff work with the Forest Advisory Board on a plan to move Trail #106 to higher ground. ” The current wording implies that all of Trail 106 should be moved to higher ground. I have been an advocate of this project for many years, but moving the entire trail is not necessary. Moving part of Trail 106 would significantly improve the adjacent wildlife habitat. One section of the trail adversely impacts the waterway in the

following ways:

1. Dog or horse manure deposited on Trail 106 introduce biological contaminants into this arm of the Big Beaver Pond.
 2. Siltation occurs when rain washes trail materials into the waterway.
 3. Where Trail 106 crowds the edge of the waterway, native plants have no room to grow along the shoreline. Allowing ground cover plants to grow along the water's edge will protect and enhance the habitat for many species.
 4. Currently, a portion of Trail 106 brings people, dogs and horses too close to the waterway where the wild residents hunt, feed, or lay eggs.
- Impact of recreation – Trails approved for mt bikes and horseback riding do not come near LCL, except at the north end of the lake where the trail crosses the earthen dam. Mt bikes and horseback riding have little negative effect on the residents of the lake. Currently, when walkers approach waterfowl along shoreline trails such as Trails 101 (on the west shore) and Trail 102 (on the east shoreline), the wild residents must leave their foraging areas. If they are shoreline feeders, either on terrestrial plants or plants rooted in shallow water, they often swim all the way to the opposite shore to find shallow water, but with trails close to both shores of the lake, feeding can be interrupted. Closing part of trail 101 will help reduce the impact. By far, the greatest negative impact on LCL residents is caused by watercraft. I have done tests myself by rowing a small inflatable boat on the lake. I rowed a boat of a dull, dark green color; used black oars; and I dressed in my usual forest green or camo attire. I rowed the boat slowly and carefully. I was as inconspicuous as possible. Even when I was still a long distance away, waterfowl turned and swam away, or they took flight, and their response was caused by a single watercraft on the lake. More boats create more disturbance to feeding areas and nesting sites. The lake is relatively narrow and not long, especially for kayakers. Hand-powered watercraft of all types have the potential to degrade LCL as wildlife habitat, far more than walkers on nearby trails, but watercraft need not be banned from LCL. Banning watercraft would represent one extreme; no management at all represents the other. The basic goal of the draft 2026 Management Plan has already been clearly stated: "Areas will be

managed to conserve and enhance their unique environment and wildlife habitat while maintaining recreational opportunities for local residents. ”

A management plan is needed for watercraft on Little Cranberry Lake, one that continues to allow

watercraft on the lake but minimizes negative impact. Fewer boats on the lake would reduce

negative impacts on LCL as a “unique environment and wildlife habitat.” An effective plan would

include strategies for reducing the number of boats, canoes, kayaks, and standup paddleboards on the lake.

Furthermore, critical areas must be identified and marked. Some jurisdictions manage bodies of

water by marking critical areas with anchored signs. Critical areas include the two islands, the

channel south of the southern island (Pine Island), and the area approaching the inlet at the NE

area of the lake (just east of the viewing platform).

Currently, watercraft can move through any section of the lake at any time. With no management

guidelines, the basic goal of the ACFL management plan cannot be achieved

~Bob Jepperson

Enforcement:

The residents/voters recently increased their tax burden to increase the number of police officers

by six. The Anacortes Police Department (APD) is responsible for protecting people and property in

Anacortes including the ACFL. The APD needs to develop a plan to say how they are going to do this

with different staffing levels then do it. They can choose to make every officer a part time Park

Ranger or just a select few. The APD has the staff to provide 7 by 24 by 365 enforcement in the

ACFL. If they feel they need specific Park Rangers to do the job above and aboard their current

staffing they should go the City Council and provide justification for Park Ranger only positions.

The Forest Plan needs to focus on what is in its charter. Park Department responsibilities and Park

Department budget. Additionally, the Parks Department has access to other funding sources such

as the Park Foundation and the Conservation Easement Fund, apparently over 2 million dollars.

The Parks Department should use its budget and access to other monies to provide key enforcement infrastructure to be used by the APD such as a gate before the Whistle Lake Parking

Lot, secure gates at all other parking lots, 24x7 electronic surveillance system at Little Cranberry

Lake PL, Heart Lake PL, Whistle Lake PL and graveled area on the lake, Sugar Loaf PL, Mt. Eire PL

and other key areas in the ACFL. These systems are not that expensive.

The APD should identify in their yet to be developed ACFL enforcement plan what infrastructure and

equipment then work with the Parks Department to acquire what is needed.⁵

It would be useful for the public to have the APD attend FAB meetings to report out on enforcement

issues and needs.

~Mark Nihart

Dear Anacortes Community Forest Land Management Team,

As daily forest trail hikers, we would like to express a few thoughts regarding the management and care of the Anacortes Community Forest Land.

The natural order of the forest and her inhabitants is a beautiful story. It is as bold and courageous a story as it

is a gentle and nurturing story. It is our belief that motorized vehicles and development would not serve to

protect this treasure that Anacortes can be so proud of.

The programs designed by the Friends of the Anacortes Forest for adults and children are important and give

an educational overview of the beauty and strength of the forest. The forest offers the opportunity to

experience her sounds and to see an abundance of foliage. The forest lands give people the opportunity to

learn and to interact with nature and others without a device. The forest lands offer a calm restful place for

healing. The forest lands are a valuable gift for our youth as they seek solutions for their daily problems in a

place where electronic devices are turned off.

We would like to see the forest lands remain undisturbed. In its natural state, it is more entertaining and

educational than anything people could possibly do to improve it. The forest lands offer prefect recess

playtime.

Respectfully,

F. Dennis and Christy E. Giddings

1514 Latitude Circle

Anacortes, WA 98221

History

History should be in the appendix along with the FAB comments and Parks Comments on the new plan and

links to the public comments. The history should include history before the Europeans arrived ideally

provided by the Samish Nation. Also, early European history of the ACFL area before it was logged which

Museum Director Brent Lunsford could provide.

And, some clarification as to how the ACFL came to be protected. The unelected Forest Advisory board (FAB)

is an advisory board. It advises Parks. Parks made the request that the ACFL be protected from logging and

other abuses supported by advice from the FAB. The City Council made the decision to protect the ACFL.

~Mark Nihart6

Page 3, Par. 7. It mentions that public comments were received from 40 citizens mostly opposed the ADA

access. Actually most of the citizens were opposed to the idea of a kayak launch in this location. There is no

confidence among the public of the usefulness or need for this as none has been demonstrated. The location

of such a kayak launch was believed to make it hard to use, likely to NOT be used and the desire to increase

boating in this particular lake in ACFL, given that it is a haven for wildlife, especially at the south west end of

the lake, seems contrary to the original mission of the forest lands plan (to conserve and enhance wildlife

habitat - page 4). Other more usable and accessible and less sensitive areas were suggested such as

Campbell lake or Pass lake or even Heart. These have more non resident traffic, more pollution already with

their proximity to roads and noise. And better parking.

I like the layout of goals, policies on page 7.

Page 8 - projected use of Little Cranberry should focus on local residents. Then take down the new sign

advertising its location. Signs advertising the locations of trailheads encourage use from non residents. I

support no extended parking

Please put up some signs stipulating no feeding of the wildlife. I support closing part of trail 101

Page 10 paragraph 1 - it is not clear what "continue to explore motorized options means" Increasing

motorized options of any kind will clearly have increased impact and further degradation. In the Whistle Lake section I think you have to introduce a policy on motorized boats, even if electric. I have

seen a dramatic increase in all kinds of boats being brought to Whistle Lake. How is this going to be managed going forward.

What about E-bikes in all areas, there should be a plan for speed and power restrictions clearly posted.

I support no expanded parking.

Page 11 - Ray Auld Drive. It would be nice to introduce some NO CAR hours as is done at WA Park. Many

people enjoy biking and walking up this trail regularly and some of the car traffic goes FAST.

Page 12 - Totally in support of the conservation area. It would be wonderful to keep the SW corner of Little

Cranberry Lake a conservation area as well.

Hear, hear on forest management policies on page 13. It will become more and more critical to our emotional and physical health.

Flora management - there should be signage stipulating that harvesting is illegal, especially mushrooms.

Most people do not know this.

Page 15 7). I am not sure what the purpose of this statement is, it seems to be a somewhat vague comment rather than anything useful.

Page 15 - Trail systems - regarding maintenance, it is anticipated that climate change will continue to bring

ever increasing intensity to the periods of rainfall, likely Nov through February. Time and costs for

maintenance will increase as public use continues to widen out sections of muddy, water logged trail. I am

noticing a big difference already in some sections in the last couple of years. Some public education via

signage might be helpful.

Page 16 7) how are you going to stop social trails from the new housing developments. I have noticed several.

11) Why are the hours 6-10? This seems arbitrary and more logical would seem to be daylight hours.

Page 18 4) what about ebikes? These can go as fast as motorcycles sometimes and are quiet! We need posted

speed limits or trail restrictions for these.

Page 18 - Fishing - if the goal is to keep Whistle Lake more primitive some thought should be given about what

boats to allow. People are becoming more and more creative about what type of boat they are willing to haul.

into Whistle lake

Page 19 - I approve of no camping

What about drones? So far they have not been a problem but shouldn't we be proactive on this? I have

experienced camping up at yellow aster butte and having a drone fly repeatedly over and around the entire

vicinity including my camp site.

Collaboration with schools and Samish Nation clearly a win for everybody including the forest

Page 20 line 4, seems too vague, what sort of physical infrastructure are we talking

Page 20 - policies - I would like to see a line such as "ensure clear and transparent communication with the

public about any potential changes in policy or usage designations (except for things like seasonal closures

etc), such as public meetings, notification in Anacortes American or whatever. This is detailed regarding trails

on page 29 and 30, but maybe needs to be here too.

Page 31 - L. Cranberry - should have a section about E mountain bikes - speed limit. Also on Page 36 for

Whistle lake. Are ebikes non motorized. They are quiet and non polluting but they go faster and will increase

usage

Page 57 I. spelling error, "uses

Page 58 - This lake seems too small to need a dock. use the money elsewhere.

I love all the science going on and the clear acknowledgement of the anthropogenic climate change effects.

Overall this is a much improved document. I just wish there were more things looking ahead, such as

increased trail damage due to heavy rainfall, and increased usage, more plans to regulate ebikes, motorized

boats, and drones. And more emphasis on protecting more critical areas and in these areas prioritizing

ecology over recreation, especially given that with increased growth in population, and stressors from climate

change the ecology will become more and more stressed.

Thank you for all the work you do to protect our beloved forests.

cheers

Sarah Roberts

Forest Advisory Board

Board membership requires some kind of education and or experience in a field related to forest

management, environmental sciences, wetland, or wildlife management. Education would be at least a 9-to-

12-month comprehensive certificate from college or university. A two or four-year degree is preferred with a graduated degree being ideal.

Also, the board should include members from the Salish people and members from organizations that can provide expertise and potential support for the ACFL. I would suggest: The Samish Nation – Coast Salish⁸ people cultural and environmental knowledge, Friends of the Forest – Forest Education, Skagit Land Trust (SLT)– ACFL trust knowledge managed by the SLT, Transition Fidalgo - ACFL forest and wetland science knowledge, and the local Audubon Society for waterfowl and bird expertise. The organizations or Nation would offer up members to serve on the FAB approved by Council.

For individuals terms should be 3 years with a two-term maximum. After a 3-year absence a person could be appointed again. Organizations could determine their own terms for those individuals (and alternates) representing them.

~Mark Nihart

We feel that it's important to have someone with forestry experience/ background on the Forestry Advisory Board.

Thank you,
Wendy and Hugh Kendrick.

I would like to submit a general comment on the plan, which is "Less is more."

Mother Nature does a marvelous job all on her own. My request would be that we do only the most essential things and let Mother take care of the rest.

Everytime I walk in the ACFL, which is frequently, I say a silent thank you to those wise souls who set this forest aside for our enjoyment and solitude. To me, it's an island of harmony & peace in a world gone mad.

Thanks for all you do!

~John

We look ahead at more development, increased population and more and more people living in Anacortes using the Anacortes forest lands. We must do all we can to make sure we preserve animal habitat and certain parts of the forests and lakes free from water craft and over use by bikers and hikers like me. We love living on Fidalgo Island and encourage density downtown. But lets keep our forest lands too. They make life worth

living for us and the animals, trees, bugs and so much more, like clean air and water to name a few essentials.

Best,

Michael Bade

ACFL, as you know, is packed with downed tree branches. I am concerned the forest floor is ripe for wildfire.

Have you considered gathering community support and energy to help clear the forest?

The City would need

to provide removal once material was brought to pathways.

~Marian Courtice9

Thank you for this opportunity to provide additional comments on another draft. I believe a number of changes are needed on this draft and I hope these will be considered. I hope the current draft is not accepted because of the problems I will highlight in these comments.

Thank you, Martha Hall, Anacortes, WA.

#1. I oppose the fishing and boating that is proposed for all of our lakes in the ACFL. As this Draft notes, fishing and boating- and paddleboards I guess - are also provided on other lakes in our area.

Boats and fishing – and paddleboards- are incompatible with the far more popular recreational uses of wildlife watching, photography and study because boats and fishing displace the wildlife.

Boats and fishing – and paddleboards - are also incompatible with protecting shoreline areas of lakes for birds and other wildlife to use for nesting/denning and resting and foraging because boats and fishing displace birds and other wildlife and prevent them from using these critical habitats along lake shorelines. This is why shorelines are protected in the Anacortes CAO. Protection must also include protections from human disturbance caused by boats and fishing.

When human uses and/or natural resource values are incompatible, the Park Department has the responsibility to address incompatible uses by provide separate areas for these. This can be achieved on lakes by designated specific lakes or specific parts of lakes for specific uses and/or values that are not compatible.

The current Draft fails to do this, and instead, prioritizes fishing and boats over other kinds of recreational uses and over protecting shorelines so birds and other wildlife can use these critical habitats.

These are the reasons why the current draft's proposed use of boats and fishing on all lakes in the ACFL is unacceptable:

A. This proposal does not provide a fair allocation for recreational uses of our lakes and instead, it prioritizes two that are not compatible with other uses; boats and fishing.

Allowing boats and fishing and paddleboards of some kind on every lake is prioritizing these two uses over far more popular uses such as wildlife watching

photography and study. Statistics for fishing in WA State show that only about 12% of Washingtonians are interested in any kind of fishing, marine or freshwater.¹⁰ General observations show that far fewer people are interested in bringing a boat of any kind of one of our lakes. So why does the Anacortes Park Department favor the two less popular uses over the other uses?

B. This proposal lacks any analysis or acknowledgement that boats and fishing are incompatible with other kinds of recreational enjoyment of birds and other wildlife, which needs to be corrected. Anyone who has spent anytime watching wildlife knows that as soon as a person in a boat or a person who is fishing from shore or from a boat approaches an area, the birds, fish and other wildlife flee. They are displaced. Nests may be left unprotected and vulnerable. Foraging birds sitting on shoreline trees like kingfishers and merlins flee.

As an avid wildlife watcher, I see this regularly on our lakes in the ACFL. I've been watching the swans on Little Cranberry when a person in a rowboat entered the lake and proceeded to row down to the other end where the swans were foraging. This person kept rowing towards them until they flew away. Little Cranberry Lake is so small that everyone in a kayak or rowboat will go to the far end of the lake and scare away all birds and other wildlife in that area as well as those near the parking area. I see the same thing happen at Heart Lake which also has good nesting and foraging areas. People in kayaks are sometimes worse than people who are fishing in that they are out to explore the lake and they leave few areas undisturbed before they leave. And they seem to lack any knowledge of how they are disturbing wildlife as they paddle around our lakes.

C. Anyone who spends time at local lakes also knows that people who fish from shore trample and destroy shoreline vegetation, they leave fishline caught in bushes that can be lethal for birds and other wildlife, they displace wildlife from these "critical habitats" when they are fishing, and they prevent birds and other wildlife from using these areas for nesting and denning.

These problems are very visible along the shoreline of Little Cranberry and Heart Lakes; the trampled shoreline, the fishline caught in bushes, the displacement of wildlife. User-made trails along the edges of these lakes continue to be a problem. More of these trails need to be closed. This includes more around the far end of Little Cranberry and a better closure of the one trail that was closed but is still being used by various people. This also includes the user-made trail along the edge of Heart Lake from the parking area going north. This user-made trail was hardened with fill and improvements by the Park Department staff a few years ago. This was praised by members of the Forest Board who seem to lack a basic understanding of user-made trails, their impacts, and the impact and fill that was illegally put in the lake to improve this trail. This trail needs to be removed. Other trails are available nearby, and a bit higher on the hill. I've submitted photos of this illegal trail building and fill to the Park Department in the past. (My ACFL¹¹ map does not seem to show this trail accurately in relationship to the others going N from the parking area.)

D. Our CAO addresses the need to keep trails and other uses away from shorelines, but it fails to cover disturbances caused by boats and fishing and paddleboards.

The Park Department has the responsibility to reduce these by managing some lakes or parts of lakes for wildlife-related kinds of recreation and for wildlife uses such as nesting and foraging by prohibiting boats and fishing from shore or from boats.

E. Since fishing is less established at Little Cranberry than at Heart Lake, and Little Cranberry Lake offers high value wildlife habitats, not allowing fishing and any boats on Little Cranberry makes sense. This change would displace the very few people who fish and/or use boats on Little Cranberry.

Little Cranberry is very small. Most of the high quality wildlife areas are at the far end from the parking. Thus, boaters on Little Cranberry end up at the far end of this lake and spend a lot of time in the critical habitats. Parts of Heart Lake could be closed to fishing and boats and paddleboards through the use of roped off areas using floats as is done in some lakes for swimming areas. This could be a seasonal closure.

E. The emphasis on fishing and boats must be addressed when considering that these displace other recreational uses and wildlife uses yet they are offered on every lake. This is a quote from this draft;

There are seven major lakes on Fidalgo Island. Each has a particular recreational and fisheries value. Heart Lake is a well-known trout-fishing lake. Campbell Lake and Lake Erie both have boat launch facilities and are managed for spiny-ray and trout. Pass Lake is a fly-fishing only lake adjacent to Highway 20. Trafton Lake (Crater Lake) is surrounded by private property. Little Cranberry Lake is accessible by automobile and is actively used for fishing. Whistle Lake is the only lake not impacted by automobile access. Whistle Lake will be reserved for a more “primitive” recreational experience.

F. This is also disturbing because the fishing is proposed in conjunction with the WA Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) which stocks some lowland lakes. I hope the Park Department and residents of Anacortes know that this state agency, WDFW, has never fully studied and disclosed the impacts of its stocking of lowland lakes which is one of its responsibilities. People who advocate for responsible fish and wildlife management have asked WDFW to do this for years without success. Thus, Anacortes and our lakes become victims of another program that may be harmful to our lakes and our ACFL.¹²

Undisclosed impacts most likely include many caused by stocking lakes with non-native fish and with an abundance of these fish. These includes impacts on native amphibians who are eaten by these fish when in their immature or adult stages.

Other undisclosed impacts include those caused by people who fish for these non-native fish from the shoreline or from boats. These I have already covered.

#2. I oppose the priority in this Draft to provide year-around flyfishing at Heart Lake, Little Cranberry and Whistle. What user group has the political influence to do this when the negative impacts are obvious; displacement of wildlife, its incompatibility with other recreational uses that are far more popular, and the trampling of shorelines and fishline left in trees and bushes. As we’ve seen, flyfishing is not that popular.

Prioritizing this use and extending this to year-around will increase the negative impacts on other kinds of recreation and on wildlife's ability to use these areas. Why does a recreational activity that isn't very popular and that disturbs other uses and values prioritized in this Draft? I really question whether this reflects the uses and values that interest most people in Anacortes since this use displaces the others? Why does a small minority have this kind of influence over the management of all three lakes, Whistle, Heart and Little Cranberry?

#3. I oppose the renewing of ACFL and Park and Recreation membership after one term is over. Many people in Anacortes use and am interested in our ACFL for many reasons. People have served numerous terms and been on the ACFL Board for many, many long years. They had more than enough time to share their private views and visions in one 5 year term.

Our elected officials do not usually serve this long unless the people choose to re-elect them. We the public have little say in these appointments. Some over the years have shown a lack of adequate knowledge of the CAO, wildlife and their habitats, the impacts of recreation, and other important areas. People who are re-appointed limit participation from others who may have other knowledge and views to add.

Membership should include one member of the Parks and Recreation Commission, and four citizen members. b.) Terms of the Board members should be 5 years, with the initial terms staggered to provide for reappointment of one member each year.

#4. I oppose the Draft's reference to considering in the future uses of the capped dump at A Avenue including as a location for another dog park. A dog park and a bike skills course were considered in the past and both were very unpopular with most residents of Anacortes. Why? Because these could both greatly increase the impact of these two user-groups; dogs and competitive bike riding.¹³

Either use, a bike skills park or a dog park would increase use at this trailhead where parking is limited, access to the street is limited and dangerous on the curve in front of this trailhead, and these uses will both require extra monitoring which the city cannot afford.

We already have a problem with too many off-leash dogs in the ACFL and people not cleaning up after their dogs. We do not need to attract more dogs to the ACFL when there are no additional ways to address these problems.

Bike skill courses encourage a different level of bike riding that is fast and dangerous on most trails in the ACFL that are narrow, curvy and have little sight-distance. The Park Department previously set a max speed limit in the ACFL at 15 mph or something outrageous. What is the speed limit on the paved road around WA Park? Anacortes Parks cannot police bike speeds so why is the limit so high? Some bike riders, like car drivers, see a speed limit as an expectation. This is dangerous. I was hit while walking a trail in the ACFL by a very competitive, older teenager on a bike who was coming down a hill on a curve very fast. He was in his fancy bike competition uniform and thought the speed limit was 15 or something. Fortunately my dog was to my side and not hit and I was only hit on one shoulder

and did not fall. My dog and I were very lucky. Many people walk and run with phones and music stuck in their ears. They would never hear a bike as I did.

#5. Why does the old dump have to have a human use on top of it????

Currently it is used by some birds and other wildlife. Add more dirt and plant more species that would provide more food for wildlife and this sunny area would receive a lot of use by birds and wildlife.

This could become a place to watch birds and wildlife; build an wildlife observation place here near the road, with interesting signage along the fence.

#6. I support these goals in the Draft to prevent damage from fires, with a few additions to these which I will add after this list in the Draft:

Fire Protection Goals:

To protect City Forest Lands from damage or destruction by fire.

Policies:

- 1.) maintain the two-track forest roads available for emergency and maintenance access.
- 2.) Maintain existing fire plan in conjunction with the Anacortes Fire Department and Department of Natural Resources.
- 3.) Work with the Anacortes Fire Department and the Friends of the Forest on educating adjacent property owners on defensible space.
- 4.) Prohibit fireworks, fires and barbeques/any kind of grill, stove and any burner based cooking or heating system in the Community Forest¹⁴ Lands. Any open flame used for cooking or lighting is prohibited in the ACFL.
- 5.) Levy stiff fines, in addition to suppression costs, for violations.
- 6.) Smoking and vaping is prohibited within the Community Forest Lands per City ordinance 3050.

I would add these additional comments related to fire danger.

- A. Add and educate the public about the cause of fires in the ACFL: the cause is usually humans doing careless thing that are prohibited such as smoking.
- B. Encourage ACFL users to report dangerous activities that may start a fire when these are seen is needed, but who would these be reported to?
- C. Introduce the need to close the ACFL when fire danger becomes very high
- D. Encourage a program in the summer/early fall especially of volunteers having tables at main trailheads to provide information and caution people about the danger of smoking, and other activities.

#7. Protections for Mt Erie are not adequate in this draft. As we've seen in the past, and currently, the number of climbers may far exceed capacity. Have the impacts of past climbing activities been documented, such as the loss of moss and other vegetation from the cliffs and the loss of the nesting pair or peregrine falcons?

Friends of mine who once joined the classes on Mt Erie had many stories about how the moss and vegetation was destroyed by their activities. This bothered them but they were led to believe that this is fine which they didn't agree with. This Draft has the fox taking care of the chicken coop which doesn't usually work very well.

2 Continue to explore options for a reservation system for all

commercial climbing groups.

3 Work with the Mt. Erie Climbing Committee to establish a climber capacity for the mountain.

Policies: 1. Climbing and scrambling shall be restricted to the Mt. Erie summit and South and West Face Management Area.

2. Establish Maintain a Mt. Erie Committee consisting of five members including: three members representing climbers and/or scramblers, one naturalist and one at large Anacortes citizen.

A. Suggestion: A requirement is needed for an unbiased team to monitor current conditions in the area where climbing occurs and changes over time as well as the amount of use, numbers and etc.¹⁵

B. Suggestion: A desired future condition is needed for the natural ecosystems that are used. Monitoring would be for whether this condition is being maintained and/or recovered after past abuse.

#8. I support and believe mandatory requirements for any picnic site in the ACFL must have these facilities; garbage can, recycling container and restrooms. If these are not provided, there is a good chance that users will need these and maybe to the wrong thing, like the many examples of people going to the bathroom around the parking lot at Little Cranberry Lake when an adequate restroom is not available.

I also support the ban on camping anywhere.

#9. I do not understand the support or need for one walk-in picnic site and who will monitor and maintain the garbage, recycling and sanitary facilities at this site.

Who is going to maintain this area and provide the necessary facilities?

Goal: To allow picnicking at designated walk-in areas. Policies:

1.) Provide garbage, recycling and sanitary facilities where appropriate.

Fires and barbeques are prohibited.

2.) Prohibit camping throughout the ACFL.

3.) Develop at least one walk in picnic site for local use.

#10. I support this wildlife goal but the policy also needs to include this: No activity will be permitted that significantly alters the varied and abundant wildlife.

As written, the policy only addresses “a mixture of habitats”. Habitats that are disturbed by humans are not viable wildlife habitats for most species. Only species like mallards and Canadian geese are likely to use disturbed habitats.

Protecting the habitats AND preventing disturbance of these habitats is the responsibility of the Park Department. Both are necessary. This is why fishing and boating and paddleboards should be limited to specific areas. These activities do not preserve and enhance the diversity of wildlife in the ACFL. People wonder why they mostly see mallards and Canadian geese. The reason is obvious; these are species that can tolerate humans and our activities better than most species.

Maintaining a diversity of wildlife, including the species that are not as tolerant of humans, requires management that limits the impacts and disturbances of humans and keeps these out of critical habitats like the far end of Little Cranberry Lake and

the back sides of Heart Lake. Without boats, fishing, and paddleboards, and shoreline trails, these areas would be used by more kinds of wildlife. This would then increase the quality of wildlife watching and photography, which would be a huge plus for the ACFL for many more people than the amount of the loss that results from restrictions on fishing, boating and paddleboards.¹⁶

Wildlife Management Goal: To preserve and enhance the present diversity of wildlife on City of Anacortes Forest Lands.

Policies: 1.) No activity shall be permitted which will significantly alter the mixture of habitats that provide a varied and abundant wildlife population.

#11. I support the creation of wildlife observation sites IF this was done based on a lot of research on where this has been done successfully. Too often, these sites are used for something else and become a problem, not an asset. I do not support boardwalks for the reasons we saw at Ship Harbor Nature Preserve; people on these boardwalks scare all wildlife away. These boardwalks reduced wildlife use of this wetland. I hope this system of boardwalks is removed now that they are rotting. Blinds are more likely to be effective if constructed and used correctly.

From the draft, #5.) Develop suitable wildlife observation sites in conjunction with recreational development. After a detailed study, observation boardwalks could be built for research, field work and observation by local educational institutions.

Creation of observation areas that are away from the shoreline, signed as places to view wildlife, and usable with scopes and binoculars are far less likely to scare away all of the wildlife. Volunteers with scopes and binoculars could be at these sites to provide education on how to best see wildlife. Many people in Anacortes have this knowledge and if this seemed worthwhile, they and I might volunteer to help with this. Watching the interesting behaviors could be emphasized which might increase interest in wildlife rather than just identifying species.

The little dock-like structure at Little Cranberry Lake is an example of a structure that does not work; people who walk out on this dock scare far more wildlife away than they see. The observation site must be free of noises created when walking on docks, and they must be built into the landscape so the people are not obvious to the wildlife.

#12. I support this policy on picking flowers and berries, and etc. and removing plants. I do see violations of this but not all that frequently. More people need to understand this rule and be encouraged to report violations.

Policies: 1.) Removing trees, shrubs, bushes, flowers or other vegetation from the ACFL is prohibited. Berries or other edibles may be picked from the trail for enjoyment while in the ACFL. Harvesting for home consumption or retail is prohibited. Mushroom harvesting is prohibited.

#13. I oppose more motorized options for this ridge as is stated in this Draft:¹⁷ The Whistle Lake/Fidalgo Ridge trails will only continue to grow in popularity. Trails in this area should be maintained for current user groups, with exploration of motorized options. Parks and Police staff

should focus on dogs on leash enforcement and education, as well as the same for motorized trail use. Water quality will remain an important factor when considering any future uses of the lake.

The reasons to oppose this are obvious; the destruction caused by motorized uses, the lack of monitoring and policing of this use, the noise which negatively impacts all other user-groups and wildlife. Illegal motorized use is a constant problem as stated in this draft for the Whistle Lake area:

There is also on-going motorbike use of trails closed to them, as well as unsanctioned use during the November 1 – March 31 winter closure.

#14. The series of beaver ponds and the streams connecting these - near Little Cranberry Lake – need more protection. The trail along the edge of the end of Big Beaver Pond to where the water flows into Cranberry Lake needs to be moved to higher ground and away from this stream/pond complex that provides high quality wildlife habitat and a corridor. Another section of the trail along the edge of the shoreline of Little Cranberry Lake, at the far end from the parking area needs to be closed. It is too close to the water. It prevents this area from being usable for most species for nesting.

This trail could be relocated after crossing the bridge so it runs up the hill rather than along the stream/pond complex. Both sides of this complex are degraded and impacted by trails. Where the trail leaves Big Beaver, this section could be re-routed up the hill too instead of running along so close to this stream/pond complex. Human disturbance of this area is constant with the trails along both sides. This is why wildlife seldom uses this very good habitat – they constantly have to leave because of human use on one side or the other. Trails on both sides could easily be re-routed. One side floods regularly. Instead of adding illegal fill to this area, as has been done in other areas, re-route this trail. This is the right answer. This follows requirements in the Anacortes CAO. Why is doing the right thing taking so long? It took many years to close on short section of trail on the other side of this bridge, along one short part of the shoreline along Little Cranberry Lake. More of this trail also needs to be closed which would be easy to do. It is a user-made trail, the kind of trail that is caused by fishing. Another very good trail is just above this shoreline trail.

#15. Last and most important: I support these “Goals” as stated in 2016 Comp Plan.

As I’ve said in these comments, many of the items in this Draft fail to do what these goals require: protect the natural habitats and wildlife. This includes the items that allow fishing, boating and paddleboards on every lake,¹⁸ observation areas that may just scare wildlife away, and etc. I wish the Park Department and ACFL Board members would read these goals and figure out what they say and mean and then implement them. These are from the 2016 Comp Plan:

The Forest Plan is governed by the following statements in the City of Anacortes 2016 Comprehensive Plan pertaining to the Anacortes Community Forest Lands:

Goal: Identify areas of environmental, educational, historic, cultural

and/or biological significance, encourage their preservation, and regulate development which could cause significant deterioration of these qualities.

Policy: The Anacortes Community Forest Lands (ACFL) are critical areas having the designation as a Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Area.

Goal: Provide opportunities for residents to have access to undeveloped natural areas. **Policy:** Whistle Lake, Heart Lake and Little Cranberry Lake watersheds should be managed to maintain their pristine and/or fragile environment and to preserve watersheds, wildlife habitats, wetlands, aesthetic values, and recreational uses with priority for residents.

Goal: The City's parks and forest lands (ACFL) should be managed with the principal goals of maintaining and enhancing habitat, conservation, and recreational values.

This is just one more example from the section about Little Cranberry Lake. This section states the importance of the natural areas:

The lake basin provides a variety of habitats for plants and animals, and wildlife is relatively plentiful. The rocky meadows on both sides of the lake are prime spring wildflower sites.

Why doesn't more of this Draft do what these goals require for this lake and the rocky meadows on both sides of this lake. The meadows on both sides had many unique plant species. These are rapidly declining as people walk on these plants, lay down in these areas, picnic in these areas, and etc. They have not been protected in any way that I can see. Now we are losing them.

Thank you for another opportunity to comment on the Draft for the ACFL Plan. I hope more changes are made that will protect the natural habitats and the ability of wildlife to use these which means reducing human disturbance and impacts.

Martha Hall, Anacortes, WA19

Appendix Item – copied from this Draft

#1. Fishing Goals in this Draft that I oppose:

#1. Provide the opportunity for local residents access to fishing in Little Cranberry, Heart and Whistle Lakes.

#2) Continue to support the efforts of the Fidalgo Fly Fishing club to make Heart Lake open year round for fishing, as Little Cranberry and Whistle are.

Policies:

1.) Develop or improve limited access points for fishing City-owned lakes.

2.) Prohibit use of any combustion engines on Whistle Lake, Little Cranberry Lake and Heart Lake.

3.) At the present time, Whistle Lake will not be enhanced for sport fishing.

4.) Develop a long-range sport-fishing plan in conjunction with the State

Game Department. Continue to work with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife on short and long term goals for recreational fishing on Heart, Whistle and Little Cranberry lakes.

5.) Monitor fish population in conjunction with water-quality monitoring program.

There are seven major lakes on Fidalgo Island. Each has a particular recreational and fisheries value. Heart Lake is a well-known trout-fishing lake. Campbell Lake and Lake Erie both have boat launch facilities and are managed for spiny-ray and trout. Pass Lake is a fly-fishing only lake adjacent to Highway 20. Trafton Lake (Crater Lake) is surrounded by private property. Little Cranberry Lake is accessible by automobile and is actively used for fishing. Whistle Lake is the only lake not impacted by automobile access. Whistle Lake will be reserved for a more "primitive" recreational experience.

~Martha Hall

Regarding the notion that the ACFL is intended to be used only by residents of Anacortes, or preferably only those who live next to the ACFL. I do not remember the funding of Conservation Easements being so restricted; and the whole idea strikes me as ludicrous as if we aren't supposed to stop at city parks and public spaces in the towns and cities we visit or that are nearby. However, in looking online for some of the history of the Forest Management Board, found city resolution 663 (from 1981) with the only requirement for members of the board being that all were residents of Fidalgo Island with at least 4 of the 5 being residents of the city of Anacortes to be appointed by the mayor. They could include timber cruisers for a logging company for all the document specified. At the same time found the 1981 first Forest Management Plan which assumed that users would be from Anacortes, and most often that they'd be limited to people in the immediate neighborhood of the ACFL. It is now 2025, not 1981.

Anacortes is no longer a rundown working-class town with many of the shop fronts vacant where such a limited perspective might be acceptable.

We have been through the Covid epidemic. The town's business district has expanded, and the population has both changed and increased. People are being told to get out and move for their health. We are also told that being out in "nature" or "green spaces" is beneficial to our health. In short, use of the ACFL has increase greatly.

It is time to quit this nonsense of viewing the units of the ACFL are neighborhood parks or even expecting to be able to restrict their use to residence of Skagit County.

As for parking areas being abhorrent, I can assure you that city residents of the area near the Guemes Island Ferry Dock were delighted when parking for ferry users was expanded by clearing what had been a

warehouse for a moving company and converting the land into a comparably large parking lot for ferry users. Maybe I should start parking in the neighborhoods; they have some interesting access points.

Resident of Anacortes,

~R Hammerly

I have read over the Anacortes Community Forest Lands November 2026 draft and the proposed changes generally look fine to me.

There is one item I do have a concern over that I did not specifically see addressed. That being

the proposed kayak launching dock for Little Cranberry Lake. To make it easier for more and

more people to put there kayaks into the lake would undoubtedly diminish the natural nature²¹

of the area and pose additional dangers to the birds and other wild life that depend on the lake for their well being.

I would like any considerations of placing a kayak launching dock into Little Cranberry Lake be

discontinued. Thank you for the opportunity to express my thoughts.

~Tom C Johnson of Anacortes.

Here are a few focused comments on the ACFL draft plan, which overall is clear and detailed; thanks for

that. The callouts in the introduction section regarding expanded use of science, and pursuit of ranger/public

safety/law enforcement, are particularly welcome.

There also is an opportunity to explicitly link the two themes: public safety resourcing will increasingly be

important for fire safety and ACFL integrity/sustainability into the future. The linkage of the two themes may

be helpful in framing public safety resourcing as “an investment, and not a cost” in building public

support. (Per Brian Wetcher’s suggestion at the last FAB meeting, I provided more detailed comment on this

topic to Councilman Ryan Walters, and can forward that if useful.) Prior to moving to Anacortes three years

ago, I lived in Northern California for 27 years, where the linkage between evolving science and public safety

priorities and funding have become pervasive and profound.

There are no references to e-bikes or electric bicycles that I can find in search mode.

There is a page 18

reference to “electric motorcycles,” which seems a reasonable way to describe the vehicles. That said, as a

recently studied and otherwise looming topic, this should be mentioned in the introduction, introducing

“electric motorcycles” as the preferred term of art. It may already be contemplated – if lower-power e-bikes are introduced at some point, I suggest a document commitment to some workable plan (could include volunteer/visitor photo documentation) for monitoring of e-bike impacts, including off-season and use beyond designated trails (which also could capture similar gas motorcycle impacts). Page 3 text about prior comments being opposed to “ADA” seems misleading. Most earlier comments that I saw related to generic concerns about further development of an already fragile area – certainly not anti-kayak per se, or ADA. The apparent absence of public commentary supporting the initiative makes it appear to be a pet project for a single constituent. Even if not so, that appearance can undermine public trust in the decision-making process.

Thanks, and please let me know if any clarifications would be helpful.

Todd Board

1. Add a Table of Contents at the front of the Plan that lists all sections and sub-sections with numbers and headings.
2. Add chapter and/or section numbers to unnumbered portions of the plan for ease of reference.
3. Ensure that numbering of sections and sub-sections is logical and that sections are in numerical order. Include references to all Appendices in appropriate places in the main document.
 - There is a mix of organizational numbering/lettering used throughout the document, including: no numbers, cardinal numbers, Roman numbers, sub-letters (both capitalized and not), sub-numbers, boldface type, not boldface type, etc. Make these consistent and coherent.²²
 - There is an Appendix 1, 3, and 4 but no Appendix 2.
4. The following comment is applicable to various sections of the Draft that discuss trail use in Cranberry Lake, Whistle Lake, and Heart Lake areas.

The draft plan is generally based on the premise that allowable trail users won’t change. One exception is the section starting with this paragraph:

6.) Provision for Trail Plan Amendment

Unforeseeable circumstances may create in the future the need for trail plan amendments other than those already provided for in the trail plan limitations. If such a situation arises, amendment to the plan must follow the procedures below.

...

However, there are "foreseeable" circumstances which should be addressed specifically in the Cranberry Lake, Whistle Lake, and Heart Lake sections of the plan. The draft recognizes that trail use by all users is increasing over time. Historically trail maintenance and/or improvements haven't kept pace with trail use. City funding is limited. Volunteer efforts don't fill the gap. Because this gap will continue to increase, the Forest Plan should foresee the need to take action where trails are overused or, alternatively, plan for increased funding and/or volunteer efforts to upgrade trails so they can take increasing traffic. Specific areas of concern and recommendations should be highlighted for trails in each of the three areas of the ACFL, and the potential need for changes should be specifically addressed.

5. Comments on the Little Cranberry Lake discussion under Management Areas.

- If Recommendations #3 and #4 (regarding Trails #101/106) require City or State permits, this should be noted.
- If Recommendation #6 (regarding expanding ADA access) is required by a State or Federal mandate, provide the reference. If not mandated, identify the basis for the recommendation.
- Identify specific planning that is underway to expand ADA access, and the permitting/public comment process that would be required prior to implementation.
- Identify why Little Cranberry Lake has been singled out for ADA improvements, while other areas have not. Or instead of stating that ADA improvements will be made, consider using verbiage similar to that used for Heart Lake in the Cranberry Lake recommendation, i.e. "Develop ADA access and trails where possible at Heart Lake."

6. Comments on the South Cranberry Lake discussion under Management Areas.

- The list of "Recommendations" should include the "required" "Trail Improvements" noted immediately above (in "Projected Use").
- Include the trail numbers that are targeted for improvement, as was done in the Little Cranberry Lake discussion. If trail numbers are not yet available, note this.
- Identify specific planning/permitting that will be required to improve the trails.

7. Each user section under "Implementation of the Trail Plan" states that it is unlawful to cause erosion or damage to vegetation or the trails. As things are, every trail user during this winter season is causing erosion and vegetation damage/trail widening to some sections of soggy trails. The Forest Plan recognizes this could

be a problem, and provides a framework for resolving it in the paragraph about Seasonal Trail Closures. This section should provide the mechanism for concerned trail users to notify the City about locations that are really being torn up, so they can be evaluated for temporary closure.²³

5.) Seasonal Trail Closures

Motorcycles are prohibited on all ACFL trails from November 1st to March 31st. Staff shall have the authority to extend the seasonal closure if warranted with Forest Advisory Board approval. Due to trail conditions during the wet season or if unexpected situations arise throughout the year, seasonal closures may be invoked for other user groups to minimize trail damage. A trail or series of trails may be closed until the problems or conditions leading to the damage are corrected. These seasonal closures will be imposed under the discretion of the Parks and Recreation Director and be discussed at the next regularly scheduled Forest Advisory Board meeting to explain the reasons for the closure and take public input. Seasonal closures will be posted at trailheads and/or popular parking areas.

8. Under Management of Recreational Activities/Trail System/Trail Maintenance

- I have been told by a City employee that any new trail or re-route of an existing trail (even to reduce trail impact on habitat, or move a trail up-slope to a less boggy location and avoid trail widening) requires a permit from the City of Anacortes, and that a State permit may also be required (depending on the trail's location). If this is accurate, a simple overview of permitting requirements should be included in the Forest Plan (for example in this section). This would be consistent with other mentions of permitting requirements that are already in the plan.
- Similarly, I was told that every trail bridge repair or replacement also requires one or more permits.
- In summary, in the Draft Plan, I see references to approval by the Forest Advisory Board and the Parks and Recreation Director; in addition, any Permit requirements that impact trails should be identified in the Plan when discussing Trail Maintenance.

9. Heart Lake / III. Recreation Area

Sub-section I) says "Prohibited uses (from list provided by the State):"

This wording looks incorrect. Maybe "uses" is a misspelling of "uses"?

Thank you.

Julie Kinder

I'm an Anacortes resident and my family use Cranberry Lake and Anacortes parks regularly. Please see below for my comments on the Draft 1 plan.

Thank you,

Eric Lantz²⁴

Comments on Draft#1 ACFL Plan Update 2026

<https://www.anacorteswa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/30282/Forest-Plan-Draft?bidId=>

Comment#1: Kudos for repeatedly reinforcing the protection of undeveloped natural areas in the ACFL

The plan clearly and repeatedly stresses out city's intention to preserve the community forest lands in as

natural a state as possible. Here are a couple of great examples:

Management Areas Introduction:

The recommendations for management of these lands will be presented with the fewest possible restrictions

on user groups and yet consistent with protection of the forest against damage, the observance of essential

sanitary/safety measures and the prevention of actions by individuals or groups which unduly conflict with

the enjoyment of the area by all citizens

Comment#2: The "prevention of actions by individuals or groups which unduly conflict with the enjoyment of

the area by all citizens" should apply to motorcycle use. As a dirt bike rider, it was typical for me to cover 30-

50 miles or more on a single ride. These areas- especially Cranberry Lake- are far too small and noisy

motorcycles are far too close to wildlife and other citizens to continue to allow motorcycle use. Some might

ask, "what's changed" and my opinion is "nothing- these areas never were suitable for motorcycle use".

Management Areas section:

Goal: Provide opportunities for residents to have access to undeveloped natural areas.

Policy: Whistle Lake, Heart Lake and Little Cranberry Lake watersheds should be managed to maintain their

pristine and/or fragile environment and to preserve watersheds, wildlife habitats, wetlands, aesthetic values,

and recreational uses with priority for residents.

Comment#3: Please take a stand (along with the City Council) on the priorities expressed in this policy! Let's

make it explicit in this plan that "maintain their pristine and/or fragile environment and to preserve

watersheds, wildlife habitats, wetlands, aesthetic values" is a higher priority than expanding the types and

scope of recreational uses of these areas. Because once the areas are degraded and the wildlife gone it's

difficult, if it's even possible, to repair them.

Comment#4: This goal doesn't particularly match this policy.

Management Areas section:

Goal: The City's parks and forest lands (ACFL) should be managed with the principal goals of maintaining and

enhancing habitat, conservation, and recreational values.

Policy: The City of Anacortes will continue to support the Conservation Easement Program

I applaud the goal here- but the Conservation Easement Program is a very small part of addressing this

goal. Again, let's prioritize the parts of this goal because the policy for each part can be conflicting and

priority is how we resolve that.

Comment#5: Where is the usage data to support the assertions in the plan?

There are several assertions in the plan about usage/popularity but where is the data which drives these

assertions? The data should be in the plan (appendix) or the plan should be clear these are anecdotal

opinions of the park staff and thus of lesser reliability than systematic measures. For example,

Little Cranberry Lake Area:

Fishing, from shore and small non-motorized boats, are also very popular²⁵

How much fishing occurs at Cranberry lake? And, compared to the number of hikers and bicyclers is this

really "very popular"?

Comment#6: Kudos for the intended use of Cranberry lake!

Projected Use: The lake basin should be reserved primarily for local resident use.

Expanded parking should

not be developed. Neighborhood and social trail access should be closely monitored.

Current low impact

uses include hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, and fishing.

Comment#7: Is this code for "kayak chute and dock"?

Earlier ACFL planning included the intention to put a kayak launching chute and a dock into Cranberry

lake. There was opposition to that idea and with this revision of the plan the idea has disappeared altogether-

or has it? Is that idea included in the 6th Recommendation for Cranberry lake?

Management Areas- Little Cranberry Lake section

6.) Expand ADA access.

As a kayaker and someone who expressed opposition to this idea in previous plans, not only is this a bad idea

for the wildlife of the lake but couching this as ADA accessibility would be especially troubling. There is a LOT

of dead wood in Cranberry lake. Grounding a kayak on a log or branch often results in the kayak rolling over

and dumping the kayaker into the water. A kayaker with limited mobility dumped into water surrounded by

branches and marine growth is likely to result in a very poor outcome for all involved. We should either clear

the lake of dead wood (and wildlife) or NOT promote waterborne ADA access to the lake. Clearly land-borne

ADA access is our responsibility as a community but let's not invite disaster on the water.

Comment#8: Why so inflammatory in the Introduction?

This statement in the Plan's Introduction seems designed, unconsciously or not, to simplify and marginalize

the feedback on earlier drafts. There was no "core group" coordinating responses. The concerns were not

with meeting ADA requirements responsibly- there are a host of issues. And the parks department replied

with we'll take it under advisement sort of responses for an alarming number of seriously concerns. Let's not

focus on inflaming each other- let's focus on creating a high-quality plan for the entire community.

"These comments were delivered by a core group of approximately forty citizens that were mostly focused on

opposition to Forest Plan's mandate to improve Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access to the lake,

along with a secondary focus on eliminating motorized recreation from the ACFL.

~Eric Lantz

I am handicapped. I would like to see ADA accessible wildlife platforms and ADA trails preferably paved and

flat or minimal incline at Heart Lake in what is now the gravel parking lot. It would be great if two platforms

were available one near the forested area and could extend along the lake's shoreline some and another

place extending out into the lake.

Little Cranberry Lake ADA viewpoint needs to have the trail improved and more ADA trails where possible

behind the viewpoint. Also, if possible ADA trails on the other side of the lake where possible but no viewing

platforms just a bench. Albeit these trails will be short but will provide better access to the lake.26

Little Cranberry Lake should not have any more infrastructure as it will take away from the natural setting for

ADA people. No kayak launch is needed or any other structures. The lake should be kept natural and for

wildlife so no boats, kayaks, paddle boards, etc. allowed as they scare wildlife away from ADA viewing areas.

ADA access should consider those who use a cane, wheelchair, electric wheelchair or mobility device and

those who can still walk but suffer from injuries like stroke in which walking can be challenging especially on

uneven surfaces.

~Korby Nihart

First, a note of appreciation for the efforts of Parks staff and the Forest Advisory Board in bringing

the document to its present state.

I am a city resident and regular user of ACFL trails. As well, I am a longtime volunteer crew leader

and ambassador with Washington Trails Association (WTA). I have been involved in a number of

discussions with city staff regarding trail improvement opportunities and was a crew member with a

demonstration project on trail 113 that took place in March of 2022.

That being said, my comments reflect only my personal views. Specifically, I want to address a

statement in the document to the effect that trail maintenance should focus on improving the

condition of current trails.

There are numerous examples of need for improvement within the ACFL's 50+ miles of trails. While

the document calls out several cases for action (101, 106 and 311), many more trails present

problems with environmental sustainability and /or user safety. For example, excessive gradients

such as a portion of 215 on the north side of Sugarloaf lead to significant erosion and unsafe

footing. Exposed bedrock on 101 north of the 131 junction presents fall and injury risks on a heavily

used trail. A great many more such cases are known to parks staff and trail users alike.

My request to the City Council is for the creation of a funding source to provide for long-term,

ongoing maintenance of existing trails. There is widespread agreement on the extraordinary

environmental and recreational value associated with the ACFL. City leadership would be prudent

to proactively preserve that value by committing needed financial resources to trail maintenance.

Sincerely,

Richard Mellon

The AFCL is truly a gem, providing amazing opportunities to walk in wild places right within the city

limits. I feel grateful that my husband and I can walk into the forest from our home on 26th Street

and find peace.

Given the following clear statement in the draft: "Areas will be managed to conserve and enhance

their unique environment and wildlife habitat while maintaining recreational opportunities for²⁷

local residents" recreational opportunities should be more clearly understood and defined with an emphasis on those which do not adversely impact the great beauty of our forests and lakes.

Also, keeping the impact of human activity in the forest in balance so that the wildlife that live there

or pass through are as undisturbed and protected as possible should be a priority.

What is truly unique is the wildness and undeveloped nature of the forest lands with the abundance

of wildlife. Walking in the forest, riding horses, or bikes on the proper trails do not disturb the peace

and quiet or the animal residents and provide great benefit for all who can spend time in the forests.

Motorcycles do. They introduce a noxious noise level and pollution. Hence I am in complete

support of phasing out and eliminating this form of recreation in the near future..... not just 5 years

from now. Folks can find other places for this kind of recreation.

Though the bikes can really tear up the trails where drainage is not good. Perhaps folks should

apply for and pay for a permit to ride bikes on the trails to offset the extra upkeep needed on the trails.

Care should be taken for those who paddle board and kayak on Cranberry lake with good signage

to limit walking on the island in the middle of the lake or paddling in areas that provide shelter for

the wildlife there.

Heart Lake provides the perfect setting for greater community use for recreation purposes

...

swimming, kayaking, fishing etc.

To prevent walking off the trails or extending the width of the trails, care for the trails should support

drainage where water accumulates and some gravel added so that people will remain on the trail.

I support the outlawing of the use of leaded weights etc for fishing on any of our AFCLakes plus a

strong educational program for our young fisherman to teach them about their responsibility to

leave no waste behind. Far too often we have found fishing line , hooks, and lures along the shores

of Little Cranberry Lake. Dangerous for humans and dangerous for the wildlife.

Thank you,
Moriah Armstrong

To the Forest Advisory Board:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the Draft of the November, 2026 ACFL

Comprehensive Plan. It is my hope this document will help protect and preserve the sensitive

habitats and wildlife in the ACFL for generations to come. For the 60+ pages, I have tried to provide

feedback sequentially. But first, some general comments:

- A Table of Contents would have been helpful in looking at the Plan as a whole, perhaps to reduce duplication, to see opportunities for combining sections, etc. Page numbering would also have been helpful, though I understand these are likely to change as the draft is modified.

- The numbering throughout the Plan is inconsistent and makes the document harder to read

and cross-reference. One convention recommends use of the following:

IV. Roman numeral

A. Capitalized letter

1. Arabic number

a. Lower case letter

1.) Arabic number with parentheses

Multiple different styles are used, e.g. the “Forest Monitoring Program” uses a different convention.

No matter, whatever is used, consistency would greatly improve readability..

- I do not see Appendix 2, only 1, 3, 4

- The ACFL Forest Health Monitoring Plan might best be headed as Appendix 4 or 5 (depending on where #2 is)

Proceeding now, with my further comments.

INTRODUCTION

First Paragraph is good as written.

Input about the remainder of the Introduction

- It is not the “fifty miles of trail” that led to the CEP, it was to stop logging, etc.

- Has “Friends of the ACFL” become Friends of the Forest”? Terms used inconsistently.

- In addition to the CEP, the most significant policy shifts events in the forty years.....

- At the end of that paragraph, can a sentence be added. “For more history, see Appendix 1.?”

- In Paragraph 4, with climate change also impacting the ACFL, not just Covid and an increase in the number of users, inclusion of this is strongly recommended.

- Much of the 5th paragraph seems irrelevant, aside from the last sentence. Is it not enough

to say this update for 2026 was started in 2023?

- The description of the process for updating the plan (Paragraph 5-9) seems amiss in several ways. The reference to a “core group” is more appropriately stated as “approx. 56 written comments.....
- Additionally, it seems misleading to say written comments were “focused on opposition to the Forest Plan’s mandate to improve ADA access to the lake.” ADA access seems to have become an issue as a means of accessing funds. Rather, public comments were about preservation and protection of the flora and fauna of the ACFL. Topics included beaver ponds, Critical Area Ordinance, Heart, Cranberry and Whistle Lake, drones, motorized vehicles, user fees, horses, etc. etc. Given that these comments can no longer be found on the website for the ACFL, perhaps they should have been included in an Appendix.
- And finally, it is unfortunate that when the APRD was tasked with updating the plan, there was no acknowledgement that public comments were to be considered.
- “formally”, not “formerly” in the very last sentence.²⁹

Management Areas: Introduction

Middle of First Paragraph: “the fewest possible restrictions”. In the interest of the forest, can it just

be said “with restrictions on user groups, consistent with protection of the forest against damage....”

Delete heading “Management Areas” after the maps, or at a minimum, add “(continued)” .

2nd Paragraph: Delete the sentence “Management decision processes must caution against looking

to the past rather than the future.” Mistakes as well as successes have occurred in the past and

there is always something to learn from that. It does not preclude looking forward.

3rd Paragraph: Appreciate acknowledgement of the multiple layers of protection.

Management Area

1st Policy: Add “The Critical Area Ordinance and the Shoreline Master Program also govern portions

of the ACFL. Requirements of these governing entities will be followed.”

2nd Policy: Change “and recreational uses with priority for residents” to “while allowing appropriate

access to residents.”

Little Cranberry Lake Area

Restrictions: before the words “(see Acquisition Section)” add “necessitating maintenance of

water quality.”

Current Conditions: delete “very” in sentence “Fishing from shore and small non-motorized boats

are also very popular.

Projected Use: the term “low impact” is used here for what I believe is the first time in the Plan. It appears elsewhere and I wonder about a definition of the term. “Low intensity” is also used. (First seen under Policies of Forest Management.) Synonymous?

Recommendations: Closing of trail #101 is applauded due to its proximity to the shoreline. Add:
 “Because this is the most pristine of the ACFL lakes, maximize protection of the habitat and flora while minimizing damage.

South Cranberry Lake Area
 Current Use: This area including excluding the old City Dump, is used extensively.....

Whistle Lake/Fidalgo Ridge Area
 3rd paragraph, the last 2 sentences beginning “The lake basin is an extraordinary echo chamber.” are worthy of inclusion, not deletion.

Current use: 3rd sentence. Add “involve off-leash dogs and littering.”

Projected Use: With all the problems cited for the current use, why expand to motorized use?
 “Trails in this area should be maintained for current user groups, with exploration of motorized options. Parks and Police staff should focus on dogs on leash enforcement and education of forest30 land regulations, e.g. dogs-on-leash, no camping. As well as the same for motorized trail use. Water quality will remain an important factor when considering any future uses of the lake.

Heart Lake Area
 Boundaries: add to 80-acre North Heart Lake Unit

Recommendations: under #4, Is the 2010 Heart Lake Master Plan the same as the Heart Lake Management Plan? If so, make the names consistent and add “See Appendix 4” (or whatever number it will be.) Has it been updated since 2010??

Mt. Erie Summit South/West Faces
 Current Use: Hundreds Thousands of people (per the South Heart Lake Road/Ray Auld Drive Area).

Projected Use: the term “scrambling” occurs here and in #1 and #6. It is not a term with which I am familiar, but it sounds dangerous and perhaps gives a mixed message about staying on trails. If in fact it is an allowed use, the word should be added under Trail Uses > Climbing/Scrambling

Forest Lands Stewardship
 Forest Management
 Policies:

As a key part of Forest Management it seems protection from wildfires should be addressed. At a minimum, add #4 "Refer also to Fire Protection under Management Procedures". #5 might be to pursue an inventory of tree species in the forest and their threats.

Flora Management

Goal: To maintain, enhance and rehabilitate the native vegetation on City of Anacortes properties

Anacortes Community Forest Lands. This is not a city-wide plan!

Wildlife Management

Policies: #6 belongs under "Flora Management."

Water Resources Management

Something is amiss in the writing of this section. "Policies" (at the bottom of one page) start (at the

top of the next page) with an unnumbered paragraph "New trail construction....". There is nothing in

this paragraph nor in Policies #1-3 that mentions a relationship to water. Why not say in the Goals

something to the effect that "all trails, both old and new, have the potential to impact water resources in the Forest Lands. See next section "Trail System" for policies governing the trails".

Here only #4 and #5 have a reference to water resources.

Trail System

Add Policies from the Water Resources Management section:31

- New trail construction requires review and approval by the Parks and Recreation Director including a public review via the Forest Advisory Board.

- Improve existing trails to minimize erosion. Where necessary, obliterate trails which are causing undue damage.

- All Critical Area Ordinance regulations, along with a comprehensive list of other local, State

and Federal guidelines, will be met when designing and building a new trail or moving any portion of an existing trail.

It might be good to mention where proceeds from the sale of maps is directed.

Also, add a deleted sentence from the paragraph at the bottom. "Trail maps shall be updated and

improved as new trails are identified." (or is it better to say "annually"? or "every two years at a

minimum." I am not sure what is reasonable here.

Trail Uses

For specific trail uses see current Comprehensive Trail Plan in Appendix _____

Climbing (and add Scrambling, if in fact it is allowed)

A break in format with #1-3 in both Goals and Policies. #1 sounds like a Goal, #2 and #3 fit better as

Policies.

Motor Vehicles

Again, a break in format with #1-3 as both Goals and Policies. The Goal could be better stated as

“For the protection of the forest habitat and wildlife, only certain motorized vehicles are allowed in

the ACFL.” This then makes the #1-3 as Policies.

In relation to the noise of motorcycles and minimizing their disruption of the forest: is there a way

to use decibel readings for setting an acceptable maximum level?

Bicycling

Where is a section on this, especially in view of the debate on e-bikes. Are they motor vehicles or

bicycles? This is a major omission in the Plan.

Fishing

Again, a break in format. #2 Goal is a Policy.

As I understand it, Little Cranberry Lake has had no fish introduced to it. What is there is self-

sustaining. If that is correct, I hope that practice can be continued and written into this Plan.

Education

Format awkward and wordy.

Goal: The ACFL shall continue to be made available for community forest education that encourages stewardship of our natural resources, a conservation ethic, and deeper understanding

of our unique forest ecology. Teaching young people about the recreational and natural values of

the forest lands will continue to develop generations instilled with a sense of stewardship that will

only enhance the long-term health of the ACFL and its recreational opportunities.³²

Policies

- Continue to develop the working relationship between the Samish Indian Nation and the City of Anacortes. The City should continue to reach out to the Samish for a variety of cultural, historic and educational processes, e.g. by scheduling monthly hikes in the ACFL with the City and Samish staff.

- Encourage and evaluate joint cooperative arrangements with the local community, the Anacortes School District, local colleges and universities and local non-profit organizations to use the ACFL for education and ongoing research projects by students and faculty.

- Provide physical infrastructure as appropriate to support environmental education efforts.

Management Procedures

In 1a, b, and c change the word x4 from “should” to “shall” to be consistent with the rest of the

document.

Enforcement

These 2 sections (up to Fire Protection) can certainly be combined to reduce duplication.

Policies

The FIRST #1 as written.

2. City staff will continue to seek funding for a fully commissioned Park Ranger, a Police department employee with access to the data bases maintained by law enforcement staff. This

access is needed to take enforcement action on the low level issues.

3. In the meanwhile, the Police Department will continue attempts to have a presence in the forest

lands during months of peak use.

4. The City will emphasize off leash dog patrol whenever possible.

5. City staff will continue community education to help people understand the cost of vandalism

and illegal dumping in the Forest Lands and the damage this can do to the environment.

6. Defensively plan facilities to minimize vandalism. Build and design rugged facilities to harmonize with surroundings.

7. Maintain facilities. Rundown areas promote vandalism and destructive behavior.

Fire Protection

I know this is a big issue for some in the community. I defer to them!

Appendix I: History

In second sentence, delete "once again".

John M. Morrison Natural Park

Twice it is mentioned that "for all time [these lands] be named John M. Morrison Natural Park." And

yet the parcels donated in 1928 are identified as Cranberry Lake. How was the naming not honored? And how did the name "Cranberry Lake" come about?33

History on Logging on City Properties

In the 6th paragraph, there are 3 typos. In 1989, and an

In the last sentence of that paragraph "...nor do did they want an revenue facilities built on these

lands, but they do did expect the City.....

Conservation Easement Program

There is a typo in the second line, maybe "which" for "while" or "placing" vs "places".

Would also

recommend this be two sentences, the second starting with "The Friends of the ACFL....."

Appendix 3: Comprehensive Trail Plan (where is Appendix 2?) And again, the

inconsistencies with

numbering throughout these Appendices is really frustrating)

A. Trail Plan Limitations

1.) Environmental Limitations: on the second line, add "the trail plan may be amended up to

and including closure..."

In A>1>b. Environmental impact documentation and a proposed amendment must be made available Is the person documenting the environmental impact responsible for writing the amendment? It's unclear but in the next step there is a call for review of the proposed amendment. The step of authorship is missed. The same thing happens in 2.)

b.)

In A. >1.) >d. and 2.) > d. Add User-group representative and the public.

B. The Cranberry Area: In 1.) is #101 closed permanently?

D.) The Heart Lake Area:

1.) Rationale for Trail Designations. At the end of the second sentence add "See Appendix 4. "

In the next paragraph, "The State required that all the land deeded to the City be nonmotorized.

Therefore, all trails in the former State Park are closed to motorcycles and E-bikes.

2.) c.) Mountain Bikes

Mountain bikes without motors are allowed on most Heart Lake area trails. (as per the statement above.)

III. Implementation of the Trail Plan

In the first sentence "Trail users found or proven to be violating the ACFL trail users rules and

regulations can be cited and/or fined by the Anacortes Police.

B.) 3.) Work Crews In the last sentence "by" versus "but" employees of the Parks.....

Appendix 4: Heart Lake Management Plan

In the last sentence of the introduction, it says "This management plan is intended to become an

amendment to the existing ACFL Management Plan drafted in 1991..." It looks like that formally

happened, correct? Following that sentence is a list of Committee members. From what date and

for what reference?34

II. Resource Recreation Plan

A. Motorcycles and e-bikes are prohibited. (same in III A.)

III Recreation Area: there is no mention of these 8 acres encompassing any water, i.e. lake! Yet in

Permitted Uses it talks at the beginning about wind surfing, swimming, sailing, floating dock, kayaks

and canoes, and at the end about fishing and swimming. Perhaps the description needs adjustment or these issues might best be moved to Lake Surface.

G. Beach Use: "sand or grassy area" and "If grass is used...." Please use native vegetation! Grass is

high maintenance and invites problems.

I. Prohibited "uses" vs. "sues"

IV Lake Surface

Delete mini-hydroplane racing, unless the reference is to PAST uses. In that case, there likely needs

to be a statement that it is now prohibited in the ACFL. (at least that's my understanding) I am opting not to review the ACFL Forest Health Monitoring Plan, aside from urging it to be

described as another Appendix. That science is being engaged here is to be applauded. Hopefully this is helpful. It is offered in the spirit of collaboration and with a firm belief that the

ACFL is a gem worth preserving. Thank you for all the work you have done to-date.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Lorence-Flanagan

I want to take a moment to share how grateful I am to be able to take my motorcycle on some of the trails in ACFL. I'm fast approaching 67 years old and I've been riding motorcycles for 56 years. Make

no mistake, some of the motorcycle trails in our forest lands are very difficult and riding them help me maintain my balance, reflexes, and riding skills. I will continue to abide by all the trail rules and

appreciate what I consider to be a true treasure in our community. The ACFL.

Thank you,

Tim Schmidt

I walk in the Forest Lands as much as I can and hope to be able to get on the water this summer. I

have been a virtual attendee at a number of the recent Advisory Board meetings and have followed

the written record and comments.³⁵

In reading the introduction to the 2026 plan, I was struck by this statement:

"These comments were delivered by a core group of approximately forty citizens that were mostly

focused on opposition to Forest Plan's mandate to improve Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

access to the lake..."

Is it the Advisory Board's position that ADA access was the issue being discussed? I don't recall

anybody who opposed the Little Cranberry Lake kayak launch saying anything about ADA access. I

don't recall anybody who advocated for the launch saying anything about a mandate or anything

else about ADA access. So why make it the issue in the introduction? Is it to suggest, perhaps,

that the intention of the "core group" is to discriminate against the disabled?

The board can test this by asking the "core group" (and anyone else) two questions: 1.)

Would you

support a kayak launch at LCL that is not ADA-compliant, so that the general public can kayak on

the lake but those requiring ADA access can not? 2.) Would you support a kayak launch at Heart

Lake, and if so should that launch meet ADA requirements?

I suspect that if you ask those questions the answer to the first will be "no" and the second will be

"yes". You will learn that ADA has nothing to do with the opposition to the LCL launch, and that

those who support a Heart Lake launch site will want it to be accessible to everybody.

As for the "core group" of 40 members in opposition, can the advisory board also estimate from the public's comments the "core group" that is in favor of the LCL kayak launch? Is it greater than zero?

Can that estimate also be published as a separate "core group" so that we know there are two "core groups," for and against, and their relative numbers? If we are going to highlight a "core group" of 40 against, let's make sure to note the "core group" (zero?) in favor.

Moving on from the language in the introduction, I don't recall anyone giving reasons why Little

Cranberry Lake is the best choice for a kayak launch, particularly in comparison to Heart Lake.

Heart Lake is larger, has better road access to the location, more parking, and easier access to the shoreline and into the water, and it appears to have less fragile shoreline and wetlands. The three lakes in the ACFL are a string of gems, each different in character. LCL is the smallest and at this point the one that is most in need of protection and preservation, for the non-humans who live and visit there and for the future humans who will want to have the same good fortune that we have today in being able to share it.

Can someone make the case for LCL vs. Heart Lake and put it in the record at the next meeting? Is there something about the ADA mandate that requires the launch to be at LCL? I'm not an expert and am open to persuasion.

I've read through a number of the other comments. Taking away access to nature from a group of people, in this case motorcyclists, is not something to be done casually or callously.

Motorcycles do seem a strange fit for the character of the land, which is as close to wilderness as one could hope to find so close to civilization.³⁶

Is there a not-too-far location that can be used or developed to provide a space for a motorcycle park? My understanding is that at some point a non-motorized bike park was suggested for the edge of the ACFL, but instead it was built along avenue R. Is that now seen as a win-win? A motorcycle park would be more difficult - larger, more expensive, harder to find because it needs

to have significant natural features, and louder for whomever lives nearby. But it would be worth at least a small effort, for the preservation of the forest and the recreation of motorcyclists. Thanks for taking our comments and for being stewards of the forest.
~Ray Lewis

Hello, just saw today is the last day for comments on the forest lands “management”. My overall take is don’t overdevelop. It is gorgeous as it is. I saw awhile ago there was a plan to hire a person to sort of “ police” the lands, maybe through the parks department. I don’t believe that is necessary. It is self regulated, the many who love this area will see to that. We want nothing harmful or derogatory happening to these lands.
Thank you, Mary Maloney

Climate Change:

The Forest Plan should have a section dedicated to Climate Change. Parks should have a plan on how it plans to mitigate the effects of Climate Change, such as wildfire damage, invasive species and trail washouts for starters. A budget should be a part of the Climate Change Plan. Also, the Forest Plan should address appropriate goals and issues identified in the ANACORTES 2025 Comprehensive Plan & Climate Element. Obvious goals and issues of the that require addressing are:

Requirement 1: Address natural hazards created or aggravated by climate change, including sea level rise, landslides, flooding, drought, heat, smoke, wildfire, and other effects of changes to

temperature and precipitation patterns • Requirement 2: Identify, protect, and enhance natural

areas to foster climate resilience, as well as areas of vital habitat for safe species migration •

Requirement 3: Identify, protect, and enhance community resilience to climate impacts, including

social, economic, and built environment factors, which support adaptation to climate impacts

consistent with environmental justice.

Anacortes Community Forest Lands • Important local resource – provides many ecosystem service

benefits • Also provides a local sink for GHG emissions • In 2024 forest is in stable condition, but³⁷

ongoing monitoring is key • Some areas around ACFL are considered WUI – potential increased wildfire risk.
~Mark Nihart

Fire Protection:

The "...existing fire plan..." should be included in the appendix. The Forest Plan should cite specific areas of the plan in which Parks has ownership and what Parks' goals and objectives are in meeting that part of the existing fire plan over the next five years. The goals and objectives should have a detailed action plan, schedule and a projected budget. Existing Goals and objectives of the existing fire plan shared by the AFD and Parks should have a detailed action plan, schedule and a projected budget. The forest plan should have plans to shut down the forest lands during high fire season and or times when the AFD deems necessary to protect people and property from a wildfire. This plan should be a cooperation of Parks, AFD and APD. The plan should include fire evacuation routes for people in the forest lands and houses and vehicles surrounding the forest lands.
~Mark Nihart

I feel so lucky to live close to the ACFL. I walk in them almost every day. I frequently walk/hike trail #10, one of the most popular in the trail system. I feel strongly that a little maintenance is more than appropriate for that trail since both bikes and walkers use it. This is, of course also true for other well used trails. A small crew could help direct the water coming off the slopes and possibly fill in some areas. I would go a long way to make the trails safer and more manageable. And there are many trails where the roots to the trees become more pronounced with each year that passes. I worry about the trees and about trip and fall accidents. We have a very precious resource in this amazing trail system, and I want to see our community protect and maintain it for the future. It is worth the money.
Thank you,
Darlene Mindrum38

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on the draft 2026 Forest Plan update.
The ACFL
is a community gem.

Living on Rockridge Parkway I spend most of my time in the Little Cranberry Lake area as do many in my neighborhood. So it is with great concern that I see a proposal in the draft plan to close Trail #101 along the lake from Trail #105 to Trail #131. Trail #101 is a popular place for taking in views of the lake, for neighborhood children to fish from, and to relax on a sunny day. I know that sections of the trail are in poor condition and difficult to navigate, but the same can be said for almost any trail in that area. If the large section of the 101 was to be closed as proposed, the alternative would be to access the remainder of the 101 via Trail #131, which is a steep trail with poor footing, certainly no better to navigate than the current 101 (I'd argue worse). In short, with the closure of Trail #132 a couple of years ago and now the proposal to close a large section of the 101, residents of Rock Ridge would be losing popular and valuable access to the lake which will diminish the quality of the forest experience significantly. I would like to see the 101 remain open with consideration given to targeted reconstruction of the most challenging sections of the existing trail. I plan to attend the Forest Advisory Board meeting on March 6th to learn more about the key drivers for closure of a section of Trail # 101. Thank you,
Michael Drollinger

Process:

There should be a section labeled "Process." All discussion regarding the process used to develop the document including references to City, State and Federal regulations and laws, best available science, etc. should be in that section. The Process section should be general in the main document; however, an appendix with process details, documents and links should be included. The appendix should include for starters: links to ALL public comments verbal and written including comments that were captured in the minutes, the criteria used by Director Lunsford and Assistant Director Vaux to categorize the comments and

explanations for those comments that did not make it into the draft document, the comment matrix developed by Director Lunsford and Assistant Director Vaux, the written comments made by FAB members at the conclusion of the public comment period, an explanation why the FAB choose not to review as a board each comment and advise Parks as to it whether the comment should be included or not be included in the draft plan, the criteria for evaluating the comments to the draft plan, the schedule and process for developing the final plan, the statistics for how many comments were accepted, rejected or partially accepted, etc.
~Mark Nihart39

Hello,
The History and Appendixes at the end of the plan add useful perspective.
On page 13 we have
"Policies:
1.) The underlying policy must be one of minimum disturbance with respect to the forest, wildlife, and low-intensity recreational opportunities. "
Trail 132 was closed to minimize disturbance to wildlife and there is a desire to move trails in the SW corner of Little Cranberry Lake farther up from the lake and inlet for the same reason. However, we have your persistent desire to improve boating access to Little Cranberry Lake which leaves nowhere on the lake that is safe for wildlife! Can understand your eagerness to accept the offer of funds for "improvement", but this is more "maximum disturbance" rather than "minimum disturbance" to the wildlife. As for building something that is Handi-capped Accessible, the options I found on the internet required someone to assist the handicapped person and the use of specific boats that fit the particular dock mechanism. Canoes and kayaks differ in the method one uses for getting into them from a dock and the amount of upper body strength required. Can't comment on paddle boards as haven't tried it with one. Would suggest that Heart Lake is a better fit for this sort of activity. If you must do something to protect the shoreline; I'd suggest a hardened, gently sloping portion of the shoreline wide enough for both the boat and people.

As for getting your own police officer, I understand that Ruth Johns was the ACFL manager before 1990 for a time. She was eventually trained for and required to pack a gun. A possibility until the city can afford a dedicated officer for city parks.

Rules for what is allowed in the ACFL are scattered about. For example: I knew that Friends of the Forest cut off sign-up at 25 and that use of the climbing walls is heavy enough (at least in spring when climbing classes come to Erie to practice) that they needed to schedule ahead of time. But did not know there was a party size limit of 25 for hiking. (Do wonder about the qualifications for members of the Forest Advisory Board after a dust up with one who saw our large group of about 16 assembling at 9 am and counted all the cars on the lot, coming up with thirty which he assumed were all ours, although a group of youngsters was arriving via car for a Friends of the Forest outing. No school busses, so assume it was home schoolers.) From the way interesting lichen and mushrooms disappear before I can come back and get a better photo of them, I don't think the idea that taking stuff from the forest is well known to be a no-no. Possibly a slogan such as the National Parks use would address some of this: "Take only pictures, leave only footprints". A single sheet of rules would be helpful.

Lastly, it is no longer realistic to expect only neighborhood or Anacortes people to use the forest land, I'd suggest you substitute "public" for "neighbors" and "city residents" as users. The ACFL are especially handy in the off season when fewer natural areas are accessible. Also shows that if logged-off areas are acquired for public use (as Skagit Land Trust's acquisition of Big Rock), forests can be allowed to grow back

Onward, R Hammerly40

A couple of things---recently minutes from a meeting about the forest lands plan described attendees as "a group largely from one club," (my words, not exact quote). I attended that meeting, and you know me well enough to realize I would never join a club that would accept my membership (thank you, Mr. Marx). It was inaccurate at best. There are some independent thinkers in this town. (Maybe I need to tell Darby that, not you.)

It seems that the goal of the parks these days is to make our parklands popular to tourists and guests. We're losing the preservation part. Though I respect ADA requirements, I object to the plan of the kayak launch at Little Cran. It's also quite disturbing that someone can give a hundred grand for a project, and then the city follows through (Cap Sante lookout is a perfect example, though that was five hundred grand). I hope we're not for sale to the highest bidder; it seems that way at times. I thought the southern trail was blocked to preserve wildlife. What would increased kayak use on that "Little" lake cause? We seem to have conflicting goals for that lake. I propose Heart Lake as a place for said launch--more parking, easier accessibility, less interference and traffic on a neighborhood. I know this seems to be a done deal, but we still pretend to be a democracy, so I feel the need to get my concerns to you. Your pal,
Patti
And let's avoid those merry-go-rounds at all cost!
~Patti Pattee

I hope that going forward to keep first and foremost in our minds what a precious jewel we have here. A beautiful habitat for our wild neighbors that is our responsibility to safeguard and protect. It was mentioned that there is a "very vocal minority" opposed to putting in a dock and kayak launch on Little Cranberry Lake. I don't believe it's the minority at all--every comment I saw was against this--not stabilizing the earthen dam, but encouraging more boat use is the issue. The people who wrote and spoke up did so because they care deeply about the place and the wildlife that live there. We're not against making a place ADA helpful, just not on this tiny lake. Put it on Heart Lake where it's flat and easily accessible--navigating carrying a kayak down to the water is much more challenging than getting in the kayak once down there. Heart Lake, or for that matter Campbell Lake are easily accessible and are already somewhat developed. Leave Little Cranberry Lake as undisturbed and quiet as possible. It was mentioned there was no

pushback on closing Trail 132--there wouldn't be because we care about the lake more than giving up that small area of access.
Peggy Woods

Mark B. Nihart

Resident, Registered Voter and Taxpayer

From: Mark Nihart <marknihart@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 27, 2025 11:54 AM
To: Comp Plan; mbnihart@comcast.net
Subject: CompPlan 2025 Comments ACFL Section -2

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2026 Forest Plan Comments - 2

Mark B. Nihart
1616 28th Street
Anacortes, WA

(An acknowledge that this email was received and the comment was registered is requested)

To: City of Anacortes Planning, Community and Economic Development Department,
2025 Comprehensive Plan Consultants

Subject: Anacortes 2025 Comprehensive Plan

All Parties

Forest Plan Comments
(received as of 2/25/2025)

The plan states....

The recommendations for management of these lands will be presented with the fewest possible

restrictions on user groups and yet consistent with protection of the forest against damage. And yet

.....Motorcycles continually do damage to trails as Robbie Hutton and I noted to you through out

the year. They ride when they wish ,out of season? no problem, restricted trail?, no problem, over

meadows and fragile mossy areas?, no problem ..

And yet motorcycles are allowed. Management decision processes must caution against looking to the past rather than the future.

Motorcycles must be handles in such a way that they will have little or no

adverse impact. It is unlawful to cause the following impacts:

- Severe erosion
- Damage to vegetation bordering the trail
- Damage to vegetation in meadows or mossy outcrops
- Damage to trails such that trail use by other users is hindered

So, I ask that you look to the future and limit their usage. Keep our community forest as wild as possible.

Sincerely,
Rosann wuebbels
Anacortes, WA

Here is another comment:

The statement that "...a core group of people of approximately 40 citizens...is false. There was no core group of people. I submitted several comments, and I did not work with a "core group of people" in any way. I did not know most of the others who commented. The statement of "core group" implies that a "single mind" rather than 40 independent minds made the comments. A more accurate wording would be ".....40 independent citizens and a couple of organizations, representing the greater community, submitted 56 comments.....2
~Mark Nihart

Another comment.

Motorcycles:

This plan should specifically state motorcycles will be phased out in 5 years. Class Two and Three

E-bikes can replace motorcycles operating under the same trail use and season as gas powered

motorcycles. They are quiet thus do not disturb wildlife, people and horses and do not pollute.

The next 5 years should have more restrictions on motorcycles as Class Two and Class Three e-

bikes are already available. Motorcycle riders need to have a valid driver's license and current tabs

on their motorcycles. This will make enforcement easier.

Decibel levels for motorcycles need to be less than 85 decibels at full throttle. A decibel level of 103

decibels is ridiculous. The motorcycles producing this level of decibels are NOT dual sport rather

they are motocross style motorcycles many with modified exhaust systems. This decibel level will

disturb, maybe harm wildlife for 100s of yards and people for over a mile.

The ACFL is not a training ground for 14-year-old boys to develop their motocross skills.
Potential hearing damage
Exposure to noise above 85 dB can cause hearing damage. The recommended exposure time to 119 dB is only 11 seconds.
Motorcycle noise regulations
Noise limits for motorcycles vary by state and country. For example, in Ohio, the maximum noise limit for motorcycles is 82 dB at 35 mph or less, and 86 dB at more than 35 mph.
~Mark Nihart
My only comment so far, is to ensure that in the final plan the most current "approved" maps are referenced and show the trail network with approved users. I'm most familiar with Little Cranberry area, and the "draft" maps on pp 32-35 of 64 are from 2009 and need to be replaced with updated maps. The 2009 maps (for example) still show Trail 132, which was closed in recent years (and you and I both helped).
Thanks,
Julie Kinder3

This language describing the Mount Erie conservation Area: "Projected Use: This area should be limited to low intensity use: hiking, nature observation, mountain biking and horseback riding of designated trails." should be applied to the South Little Cranberry, the Whistle Lake/Fidalgo Ridge area and the South section of Heart Lake. In other words, any areas where trails are pretty much the only options for activity. This is consistent with a recommendation I made last time, suggesting using the term "low-intensity use" where appropriate and listing what that includes. Avoid opening up recommendations for more types of recreational opportunities.
I note that expanding ADA access at Little Cranberry Lake is still in the plan. It should all be concentrated on Heart Lake where ease of automobile access makes it way more likely to be used.
I'll submit these comments myself.
Thanks!
~Sarah Pedersen

Just wanted to continue to share my concerns about Little Cranberry and surrounding lakes/ponds.

I am concerned that we are not aggressively protecting this precious area within Anacortes city limits. If this 'gem' is compromised slowly over time, it will be reduced to what is a basic park with little wildlife. What a shame that would be!
Thanks for your time...
~Marty Meador, 2702 Oakes Avenue

M Comments on the November 2026 draft
ANACORTES COMMUNITY FOREST LANDS PLAN

By William E, Kennedy, Jr. – Anacortes Resident

General: Thank you all for understanding the significance of this plan for our community. I have carefully read this draft and have provided my comments, questions, and suggestions below.

General: During my review, I asked myself “what is a forest management plan? To me, a forest

management plan would logically focus on management activities that safeguard the ecological functions and integrity of the forest. These activities maintain biodiversity and preserve resources (water, soil, and fragile ecosystems). Beyond environmental resource management, the plan should address legal requirements, land use (including recreational and educational activities), and costs while engaging stakeholders. This plan⁴ is mostly successful in meeting my expectations. Many of my comments and questions seek clarification of specific recommendations and the values used in setting the goals and recommendations.

General: This plan references other plans, including the City of Anacortes 2016 Comprehensive

Plan pertaining to the Anacortes Community Forest Lands and the 2010 Heart Lake Master Plan. The relationship between these (and potentially other) City plans should be described. Are all plans subordinate to the City comprehensive plan? Although the Comprehensive Trail Use Plan, 2010 Heart Lake Master Plan, and the ACFL Forest Health

Monitoring Plan are provided as appendices to this plan, it is not clear if all these plans are open to comment and revision, or if they are controlled by other groups. What is being done to ensure that the goals and recommendations of this plan are consistent with the goals and recommendations of the other plans?

General: The relevancy and reason for inclusion of the Appendices is not clear. There should be a

clear callout for each appendix in the text, with a short paragraph introducing what the appendix contains and how it is related to this plan.

Page 3 To provide context, the first sentence should refer to Appendix 1 providing a brief summary of the history of the forest lands. On that topic, why is there no Appendix 2?

Page 3 The purpose of the plan, its scope, and the subordinate goals should be clearly defined

and stated in the introduction. Again, the relationship with the other relevant City plans

should be briefly described. Is this plan intended to provide recommendations on how to implement the City's plan? Are they totally independent?

Page 3 The goals of this plan should be consistent with legal requirements, protect and preserve

a health forest, and reflect the values and priorities of the citizens of Anacortes. If the purpose is to assist with "management decisions," then the intent and limitations of those decisions, regarding the City's plan, should be defined in the body of this plan. The last sentence of the last paragraph of the (now deleted) page 2 indicates that "our goal is to update this plan regularly to review what is and is not working to maintain the ACFL as a healthy forest, wildlife habitat and local recreational venue." Is that still a goal of the plan? Is it intended to be a living document? Perhaps updating the plan in the future is a statement of commitment to a process in the introduction, and not a goal. From my read, here are draft purpose, scope, and goals statements for consideration:

- Purpose: To provide the vision and principles for management of about 3,000 acres of forest

lands within the Anacortes City limits, designated as the Anacortes Forest Lands. Again, how is the purpose of this plan different than other relevant plans? Is it to provide recommendations on how to implement the city plan? Please clearly state the relationship between these plans.

- Scope: This Plan is intended to provide the basis for policy decisions by the City of Anacortes regarding the Forest Lands based on legal requirements, environmental forest management principles, and public access opportunities, prioritized in that order.

- Goals: Maintain, protect, and preserve a healthy forest and wildlife habitat, while providing

for controlled public recreational and educational opportunities.⁵

Page 3 The end of the fifth paragraph states,

"the goal was to develop a plan that works to conserve and enhance the unique environment and habitats within the ACFL while maintaining recreational opportunities for local residents." This goal is perhaps replaced by the statement of purpose. If kept, it needs to be consistent with the overall purpose of the plan, as provided in my comment above.

Page 4 Who are the "Transition Fidalgo citizen scientists" and what are their environmental and

forest management scientific qualifications to comment on this plan, especially for climate change and managing wildfire risk levels? Are they responsible for the text at the end of Appendix 4? Does that information pertain only to Heart Lake, the focus of Appendix 4? It appears that they have collected data, but what does the data indicate, and how is it relevant to this plan? Are their data and findings peer-reviewed? Are any of the data substantially different from regional data on the impacts of the recent drought and the stress on fir, cedars, and other vegetation? Are the data collected over a long enough time to adequately reflect trends – it cites data since only 2019? Are the comments from this group to be considered preferentially to the comments from Anacortes residents? This makes a review of their impartial qualifications, their data collection and analysis methods, and their conclusions most important. Perhaps a stand-alone appendix should be devoted to introducing this group, its role, its findings,

and how this might influence forest management decisions.

Page 4 A comment on data. As a semi-retired scientist, I've frequently been faced with a conundrum: if you collect data, the good news is that you have data. But the bad news is also that you have data. Now you must know what it means. To help ensure that data are useful, data must be collected using a well-defined procedures, using documented data collection protocols, and using defined statistical data quality objectives. If data can't be replicated or reproduced, they are worthless. Also, data collected in the short term may not be representative of long-term trends.

Page 6 Why is the title "Management Areas: Introduction" repeated from Page 4 as a header to

page 6. If redundant, please delete Page 4 (cross through the text). I will assume that Page 4 is intended to be deleted in favor of the text on Page 6 and only comment on Page 6. This might explain the redundancy of statements including those about legal requirements.

Page 6 The first sentence of the first revised paragraph references the seven management areas.

Page 5 shows a map of those areas. For clarity, the map should be labeled as Figure 1, and the first sentence of Page six should reference Figure 1 with a description of what it contains and why it is included. It should be the same for all other figures (maps) across the main document and appendices.

Page 6 The first paragraph is confusing. It states that the management areas are defined by

topographical features and deed limitation to "simplify management decisions," without defining the scope of those decisions. How is this statement consistent with the purpose of the plan? It then states that "all areas will be managed to conserve and enhance their unique environment and wildlife habitat while maintaining recreational opportunities," without recognizing that conserving the environment and providing recreational opportunities will often oppose each other. Recreational activities should be managed in a manner that minimizes the potential impacts to the habitat. Also, what is meant by the "management decision processes must caution against looking to the past rather than the future." The past decision process would likely reflect the values of the residents of Anacortes. Does this mean a shift of management practices in response to other influences like climate change, or changing management practices for either conservation or recreation, and if so, what are the values and basis for how new decisions would be made? What environmental data would support shifting management practices? Logically, you would consider both past and future conditions that may affect the decisions, but the process of decision making should remain intact.

Page 6 The second paragraph is equally confusing. I am not sure how the "legal" requirements

listed ensure that "the public that the ACFL is protected for generations." They only do so within the scope and authority of those legal requirements to the extent that you intend to obey the law. I thought the purpose and scope of this plan were to serve as the basis for decisions by the City to provide that overall protection. Is this the full list? I saw the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) referenced in the description of Little Cranberry Lake but not mentioned elsewhere in the plan. Perhaps the legal requirements, and the

city's compliance actions, should be summarized in an additional appendix, or references if they are documented elsewhere. Further, it is not clear how "these regulations and the recreational activities described in this plan balance recreation and conservation," when, without conservation, the forest will be lost, likely for the sake of recreation. It is also not clear how "the various requirements of these protections greatly assist city staff in continuing to find the balance between recreation and conservation," because noncompliance likely means some form of legal action against the City, not an opportunity to balance conservation and recreational use.

Page 6 I've noticed Anacortes American reporting numerous seasonal vehicle prowls at trailheads associated with ACFL lands. I believe that this situation should be noted and highlighted as a public safety issue. Perhaps a joint position with local law enforcement is needed.

Page 7 As previously stated, it would be worthwhile to define the relationship between this plan

and the City of Anacortes 2016 Comprehensive Plan. Is the purpose of this plan simply to provide implementation recommendations, by management area? Or is it to provide input to revisions of the City's plan?

Page 7 The second goal under management areas should indicate "controlled" access to undeveloped natural areas since, by definition, part of what makes an area natural is having limited (or no) human access. This might also require an update to the City's 2016 plan.

Page 7 The second policy is confusing. The policy of maintaining "the fragile environments and to

preserve watersheds, wildlife habitats, wetlands, aesthetic values" is directly opposed to allowing "recreational uses with priority for residents, " without restraint. Can't do both.

The policy should maintain fragile environments, allowing for controlled and limited recreational use, if possible. This might also require an update to the City's 2016 plan.⁷

Page 8 For Little Cranberry Lake, it is not clear if road improvements are planned since there is no

recommendation for this. If not, then it is not clear that a "permanent" restroom is needed since expanded parking, and expanded use of the area, is not a goal.

Page 8 Goal 6 cites expand ADA access. Is this an overall "goal" of the plan, or only limited to

Little Cranberry Lake? If it is an overall goal, it should be stated in the introduction and stated as a goal for each management unit. If not, delete this goal since it would be selected enforcement.

Page 8 For South Cranberry Lake, are there any additional provisions needed if remediation of the

old dump is required. These might pertain to minimizing the spread of recovered materials to air, water, and soil and minimizing (or recovering from) vehicle access during remediation. Such statements might highlight the need to protect the area from long-term disturbance, especially during recovery from remediation.

Page 9 For Whistle Lake/Fidalgo Ridge Area, because of the seasonal surge of usage, should the

plan consider a possible permitting system, either for access or parking, or both to help control crowd size? It would be unfortunate if a tragedy occurred because of overuse and lack of ability to respond. This would be similar to consideration of a permit system for Mt. Erie Summit South/West Faces.

Page 10 Because of the diversity of use of the Heart Lake Area, there seems to be additional

documents, agreements, and plans at play, for example, the 2010 Heart Lake Master Plan.

How does this plan interact with the separate Hart Lake Plan (or is it the same plan?) and other plans or agreements?

Page 11 Mention of a homeless encampment at Heart Lake may require additional emphasis on local law enforcement.

Page 11 Apart from continued maintenance, there are no recommendations for the South Heart

Lake Road/Ray Auld Drive Area. With increased traffic, are there no additional easement or access (or parking) safety requirements?

Page 11 The Mt. Erie Summit South/West Faces section includes consideration of a permit system

to ease congestion on the climbing faces. Consideration should be given to other high-use areas including Heart Lake.

Page 13 In the Forest Lands Stewardship section both the flora and wildlife sections indicate that

The City should be open to proposals by groups wishing to study these lands in order to provide baseline data on wildlife populations and species diversity. These proposals will be reviewed by the Parks & Recreation Director. The Director will then make a recommendation to the Forest Advisory Board. Does the Parks & Recreation Director possess the knowledge about habitat management to be able to determine if such proposals for study might harm areas needing preservation or will the Director consult with the expertise found in local non-profit organizations?

Page 17 In the section on trail uses, the details for Motor Vehicles do not mention e-bikes, only

motorcycles with internal combustion engines. Is there a second effort on the use of e-bikes, and if so, should that information appear as recommendations in this plan?

Page 20 What type of infrastructure would be appropriate to support educational activities?

Page 21 Would the dedicated Park Ranger have law enforcement jurisdiction within the community or only on forest lands?

I love the quietude of the Anacortes Forest Lands.

I see no reason for any changes from the existing beauty. I hope no further development will occur.

~Marian Courtice

To whom it may concern,

This is my comment to the ACFL plan. Leave Little Cranberry Lake alone! We don't need a boat ramp or dock or an interpretive center at the last wild lake in the forest lands! More people means more erosion of the banks, more risk of fires in the summer and degradation of the lake itself! There are other lakes that already have development so put your docks and interpretive center elsewhere.
The next thing will be to pave the road! Hands Off!!!
~Dan Courtice

Mark B. Nihart

Resident, Registered Voter and Taxpayer

From: Mark Nihart <marknihart@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 27, 2025 11:20 AM
To: Comp Plan; mbnihart@comcast.net
Subject: CompPlan 2025 Comments ACFL Section - 1

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2026 Forest Plan Comments - 1

Mark B. Nihart
1616 28th Street
Anacortes, WA

(An acknowledge that this email was received and the comment was registered is requested)

To: City of Anacortes Planning, Community and Economic Development Department,
2025 Comprehensive Plan Consultants

Subject: Anacortes 2025 Comprehensive Plan

All Parties:

The 2025 CompPlan has a section for the Anacortes Community Forest Lands (ACFL). These comments should be considered for the writing of that section.

The comments listed below are from the public comment period for the first draft of the 2026 Forest Plan update. The comments did not receive a public review, nor did the commenters get an personal acknowledgement for the comment much less any explanation of why the comment would be Accepted, Considered for more review or Rejected, no response from the Forest Advisory Board (FAB) or the Parks and Recreation Department. The second draft done by Parks and Recreation did not include much of the recommendations from concerned, knowledgeable and engaged people familiar with and users of the ACFL also residents, taxpayers, rate payers and registered voters who made the public comments.

Forest Plan Comments

(Received prior to 2/20/2025)

Hi I hope this is the right email to share feedback on the plan. Really appreciate the focus on

balancing conservation with use. My only feedback as a heavy user (running and hiking) and supporter would be motorcycle use. Each area is a relatively small area and whenever motorcycles come through you cannot get away from the noise population and quite honestly ruins the experience for those around. I have been in areas where they allow more motorcycle usage with rutting of trails but I'm assuming you are not proposing allowing that much use. I will say all that I have come across have been very courteous. Thanks for all you do!
~Corinne

Below is my comment on part of the draft Forest Plan that talks about ADA access and people who commented on the old plan:
It is a completely false statement that the people who commented were "...in opposition to the Forest Plan's mandate to improve Americans with Disabilities (ACT) access to the lake." The lake being Little Cranberry Lake, which already has ADA access.
The line should be deleted completely and replaced.
The general consensus of the comments written and oral did approve of more ADA access in the ACFL but they did not approve of having an ADA kayak launch device at Little Cranberry Lake for at least a couple reasons: the lake is too small for kayaks, increasing watercraft activity jeopardizes wildlife using the lake, the lake's fragile shoreline should be free of any more infrastructure and kept primitive and other more suitable lakes are readily available and better for kayaking.
People spoke in favor of having more ADA access at places like Heart Lake that has no ADA facilities.
~Mark Nihart

I've gotten a few comments from the Forest Stewards, that the intro section could be a little more specific about the monitoring program. Perhaps the edits below could be included.
"The public has also asked for more science to be included in the plan. The City has been working with the Transition Fidalgo professional and citizen scientists to develop and implement an ACFL monitoring program. This program was initiated in 2019 and their work is featured in this plan. This includes a more focused discussion on adapting forest management to Climate Change and what

may be the results of same, including (delete) thoughts about the changing wildfire risk levels.”

Thanks.

~Eric2

Hi,

I live on 12th near Cranberry Lake in the ACFL, and I was told that comments about the 2026 plan

could be directed here. I mainly just have one comment or suggestion.

I love the ACFL and really appreciate that we have it and have kept it like it is for so long, but I worry

about it getting chipped away over the years by “management” that becomes “development”. To

that end, I think it might be worth double checking the plans to make sure that the overall goals or

protection and preservation can consistently overcome the temptation to development. This topic

speaks the confusion described in the document about the boat launch development plans on

Little Cranberry, which have thankfully been avoided thus far.

Let me include an example I see in the document.

Here, it says the goals are to protect habitat and prevent damage, and provide access to undeveloped areas.

Here again, in the Forest Management section, we see similar goals:3

So, if the goal is MINIMUM disturbance so that people have access to UNDEVELOPED areas, and

ALL forest management activities will be conducted towards these goals, then it is really important

for these principles are embedded in the rest of the document. Otherwise, the goals of the various

sections are in conflict with one another.

And when I say conflict, I mean that almost all of the recreation values could be achieved by just

having a forest and protecting it, but perceived human “access” problems lead to “management”,

which seems inevitably to lead to “development”. Because such development is a one-way street, it

is really important to make sure the recreation goals align with the preservation goals, but I don’t

see clarity on that in the plan document.

Here’s the example I see right now: Fishing.4

Policy number one. It’s right there. DEVELOP stuff! This is the problem. Real fishermen don’t need

developed access to wild fishing areas. In fact this harms the wild fisherman, because the more

“access” to wild fishing areas we have “developed”, the less “actually wish” fishing areas remain.

So this goal is in conflict with some of the other top-line goals earlier in the document.

And this is exactly how the boat launch thing seemed to happen on Little Cranberry.

Here’s how I

would summarize that drama described in the plan:

- Problem: there are too many people creating erosion
- Solution: develop a facility to serve the people
- Cost: it damages the wildlife and fails to meet the more important goals
- Unanticipated outcome: The new facility invites MORE people, worsening the erosion problems that justified the change in the first place
- Expected response: more development!
- Problem with this outcome: The people who came to use the boat development are not there for undeveloped area access, and now nobody can enjoy a pristine lake, because
- Cranberry no longer would be undeveloped.

And all of this to try to make ADA rules fit into the concept of wild, undeveloped areas? It seems

absurd. I think that’s what happens when the document is produced that is, from the outset, in

conflict with itself like this.

I hope you can see how the fishing “Goal” embeds this same self-disagreement with the rest of the

document and plants the seed for this same drama over and over in the future, with the main loser

being the ACFL preservation efforts.

Thank you for considering this perspective.

Cheers,

Robert Nelson

3709 W 12th.

The Plan states that the Forest Lands should be managed in perpetuity to ensure the maximum

benefit to sensitive habitats and wildlife and the citizens of Anacortes. While I agree with this

statement, the plan fails to adequately address items that harm wildlife and does not adequately

address the use by non-citizens of Anacortes.

The plan doesn’t address the damage to wildlife and citizens from allowing motorcycles up to 120

decibels. Sounds at or above 120 decibels (dB) can cause immediate hearing damage and is

harmful to wildlife and humans. Further, The Hearing Health Foundation states sounds above 705

decibels can damage hearing over time. Based on the damage to hearing, setting a limit of 120 decibels is not safe for humans or wildlife. Not only is this noise level harmful to hearing, it causes disturbance and prevents quiet enjoyment of the forest lands. Further, motorcycles tear up trails damaging the actual trails.

The Plan also makes reference to wanting to hire a forest ranger; however, does not address how this is to be paid for. The Plan indicates it will need to be addressed by the City of Anacortes. A proper plan should have a proposal to pay for any additional services the Plan is recommending. Since the forest lands are used by many people who do not live in Anacortes, plans should not rely solely on the citizens of Anacortes to pay for items in the plan. You should be considering things like charging for parking, increasing or instituting or increasing user fees for things like camping in Washington Park, and fees for rock climbing on Mt. Erie. Many using these facilities are not Anacortes residents and; therefore, are not paying tax dollars to support those activities. The plan did not address how many non-residents require assistance of police or paramedics and whether they pay for those services when they need them. The lack of fiscal awareness of the cost of the Plan is alarming.

~Carolyn

The Introduction to the draft 2026 ACFL Plan includes one distortion:

“The vast majority of the oral and written comments were focused on Little Cranberry Lake. These comments were delivered by a core group of approximately forty citizens that were mostly focused on opposition to Forest Plan’s mandate to improve Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access to the lake...”

The Anacortes Parks and Recreation Department (APRD) has proposed construction of a “floating kayak chute” on Little Cranberry Lake (LCL). In 2019, the same parks administration proposed building a bicycle skills park inside the forest lands. The public voiced objections to that proposal, and for many of the same reasons, the public is voicing its opposition to the construction of a launch facility on LCL.

First, the public does not wish to see the Anacortes Community Forest Lands “parkified.” The ACFL is uniquely attractive to Anacortes residents and to out-of-area visitors because it remains natural. Very few communities possess a natural area, especially one that includes trails for access. All communities have parks, and a few own a natural area that serves as protection for watersheds that supply drinking water, but large, municipally owned natural areas with trails are rare. First-time visitors to the ACFL comment on its uniqueness. “We don’t have anything like this back home” is the most common remark I hear from visitors. The ACFL has no picnic tables, no picnic shelters, no disc golf courses, no soccer fields, no tennis courts, no basketball hoops, etc. Parks are developments designed to provide some forms of recreation for people, and many of those types of recreation require physical facilities. Natural areas with trails also provide recreation, but the recreation must be low impact, otherwise the health of habitats within the natural area degrades due to noise, proximity of humans to wildlife, erosion of soil, degradation of water quality, etc. Secondly, the proposals to build a bicycle skills park or a floating kayak chute inside the ACFL both share another objectional feature: location. When the APRD proposed construction of a bicycle skills park inside the ACFL, people immediately reacted: “The park would be out of sight to the public and inaccessible to fire, police, or medical personnel. There’s no rest room, lights, nor supervision of any kind.” The proposed location was inappropriate. People suggested, “Why not build it next to the skateboard park which already has all those services available?” Ultimately the bike park was built in a location that made sense. The same arguments hold true for a “floating kayak chute” or dock of any kind on Little Cranberry Lake. Perhaps it takes the fresh eyes of a first-time visitor to see what Little Cranberry Lake is – truly one of the Pacific Northwest’s finest gems. Surrounded by the city of Anacortes yet protected and hidden from the city by evergreen forest on all sides, the narrow lake provides a home for every

imaginable form of aquatic and terrestrial wild species. We cannot view LCL as an aqua-colored, fiberglass basin filled with crystal clear, chlorinated water; it is alive with life, from the murky, plankton-rich water to a self-sustaining fishery that includes bluegill, crappie, large-mouth bass, and yellow perch that provide “free, without cost to the city” recreation for the many teens and pre-teens who fish from the shores of the lake; to waterfowl that feed on the lake’s production of food (osprey, eagle, pied-billed grebe, two species of merganser, Canada Geese, Trumpeter Swans, cormorants, etc.); to the two species of owl that nest annually in the trees near the lake. Little

Cranberry Lake is alive, and about 97% of the lake’s shorelines remain natural with native vegetation. Building recreation structures along the lakeshore clashes with the appeal of Little

Cranberry Lake’s undeveloped shorelines.

To say that citizens “were mostly focused on opposition to Forest Plan’s mandate to improve

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access to the lake” is a distortion of citizen objections. Any

“improvements” to the north end of LCL must not detract from the gem that LCL is.

As with the proposal to create a bike park inside the forest lands, building a launch structure at

Little Cranberry Lake would ignore and degrade the natural qualities of the lake’s environment. The

APRD found a better location for the bike park. They can do the same with the proposed kayak

launch. Little Cranberry Lake is not the right location. There are other locations where such a

structure could be built, locations that would not be met with such widespread public opposition.

~Bob Jepperson

Mark B. Nihart

Resident, Registered Voter and Taxpayer

From: Mark Nihart <marknihart@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 27, 2025 4:07 PM
To: Comp Plan; mbnihart@comcast.net
Subject: CompPlan 2025 Comments ACFL Section -4

**** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. ****

2026 Forest Plan Comments - 4

Mark B. Nihart
1616 28th Street
Anacortes, WA

(An acknowledge that this email was received and the comment was registered is requested)

To: City of Anacortes Planning, Community and Economic Development Department,
2025 Comprehensive Plan Consultants

Subject: Anacortes 2025 Comprehensive Plan

All Parties:

Like 2026 Forest Plan Comments 1,2 and 3 the comments listed below are from the public comment period for the first draft of the 2026 Forest Plan update. The comments did not receive a public review, nor did the commenters get an personal acknowledgement for the comment much less any explanation of why the comment would be Accepted, Considered for more review or Rejected, no response from the Forest Advisory Board (FAB) or the Parks and Recreation Department. The second draft done by Parks and Recreation did not include much of the recommendations from concerned, knowledgeable and engaged people familiar with and users of the ACFL – residents, taxpayers, rate payers and registered voters who made the public comments.

This set of comments includes the comments made by the Forest Advisory Board, which were not discussed just presented to the public - no public comment - and were generally ignored in the second Forest Plan Draft.

NOTE: The 2026 Forest Plan is NOT due to Council until 2026 so lots of time to engage the public in the creation of the 2026 Forest Plan.

By Email

March 4, 2020

Bob Vaux, Assistant Director

Parks & Recreation

904 6th Street

Anacortes, WA 98221

bobv@anacorteswa.gov

Re: Anacortes Community Forest Plan 2026 Forest Plan update

Evergreen Islands comments

Dear Mr. Vaux:

I am writing this letter on behalf of Evergreen Islands to provide comments on the November

2026 draft of the Anacortes Community Forest Lands ("ACFL") Plan. Consistent with its mission

to protect the islands and environs of Skagit County, Evergreen Islands advocates for a wild and

free ACFL with targeted and reasonable, low impact recreational infrastructure. The comments

below are intended to reflect Evergreen Islands' vision to preserve this natural gem for their

wild inhabitants and for generations to come.

The following comments set forth Evergreen Islands': (1) goals for the ACFL planning process;

and (2) recommendations.

A. Goals.

Evergreen Islands' goals are to ensure:

1. the use of best available science for planning and managing ACFL with a priority on preserving natural habitat to the greatest extent possible while allowing appropriate recreational use. This includes addressing projected climate change impacts on the forest, including changing hydrologic regimes and species composition.

2. that the plan reflects the community values to protect forest habitats and manage the forest for both sustainability and climate resilience.

3. that the plan addresses current and future recreation demand with management practices that protect the forest, wildlife, and ecosystem functions.

B. Recommendations.- 2 -

Evergreen Islands urges the City to adopt the general and specific recommendations below.

Before delving into these recommendations, we want to thank you for adding language to an

appendix to address the issue of climate change on the ACFL and a description of the ongoing citizen science data collection program.

1. General.

- We reiterate our earlier recommendations that this update process involve:
 - identification of Strengths, Weaknesses and Opportunities in the 2021 ACFL Plan;
 - completion of a rapid assessment of changed conditions and trends that will be used to inform the plan update; and
 - ask the Forest Advisory Board what changes, if any, they have observed in the ACFL since 2016.
- We also urge Discussion and implementation of the recommendations provided by the members of the public who have invested their time and energy to review the draft Plan. We were disappointed to see that the new introduction to the draft Plan, instead of thoughtfully evaluating the comments, dismissed them out of hand as “opposition to Forest

Plan’s mandate to improve Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access to the lake....”

We

are frustrated further that this misleading complaint cannot be vetted by the public who read the draft Plan because the initial round of public comments has been omitted from the

project website. We strongly encourage revision of this section of the Plan to accurately reflect comments the City received, which focused largely on protection of the unique environment and wildlife of the ACFL as a whole and specifically on avoidance of new, impactful development on Little Cranberry Lake. We have proposed language about the latter under our specific recommendations below.

- We propose that the document be formatted with page numbers and a table of contents, as well as an executive summary of the document that identifies the need for change, a summary of resource and recreation management changes, and budget considerations.
- And finally, we ask that development of new structures in the ACFL be strictly limited.

2. Specific recommendations.

The following bullets identify proposed language that we support:- 3 -

- page 8 (Little Cranberry Lake Management Area) – we support the proposal to add language stating that, “Expanded parking should not be developed.”
- page 8 (Little Cranberry Lake Management Area) – we support the proposal to remove the language to “Consider paving access road from Georgia Avenue to the lake.

The following bullets identify specific recommendations by page number.

- page 8 (Little Cranberry Lake Management Area) – we recommend adding language to the list of recommendations such as the following, “preserve and protect the natural habitats of Little Cranberry Lake by retaining its current, largely undeveloped character.”
- page 7 (Little Cranberry Lake Management Area) – we recommend retaining the following sentence proposed for deletion “Its dedication as Cranberry Park in 1964 and the need to maintain water quality argue for very sensitive and careful management.”
- page 15 (Water Resources Management) – we support the proposal to establish a

public review process for new trail construction, and recommend retaining the following sentences, "Locate trails away from the lakeshores and marsh edges where necessary in order to minimize impacts on water quality."

- page 18 (Fishing) – we recommend retaining the following sentence, "At the present time, Whistle Lake will not be enhanced for sport fishing."

Please do not hesitate to contact me at kyle@loringadvising.com or 360-622-8060 if you have

questions about these comments.

Sincerely,

Kyle A. Loring

Forest Plan Board Review

JoAnn gave an overview of the process and timeline, thanking the public for their written comments.

Bob presented a power point review of the public comments received and the major topics covered. There was discussion about the new electric motorcycles that are coming out and the need to address them in the plan. Bob addressed the topic of ADA access at Little Cranberry. It is in the plan as the state and RCO require ADA access. A number of years ago the group, Barrier Busters, did an audit of the forest lands and determined that Little Cranberry was the best location for ADA access. Bob also clarified that the DOE dam safety office required the removal of vegetation and planting of grass on the LC dam. They have asked staff to remove more vegetation but so far have not required it. As to trail maintenance, that is Jamie's main focus. He works tirelessly on narrowing trails.

JoAnn then asked the Board members to share their feedback on the public comments.

Brian asked the Board to refer to the letter submitted by Evergreen Islands as he had a hand in writing that. The letter has goals and recommendations listed.

Tabb stated that on page 17, there should be some review and rewriting of the policies and goals regarding motor vehicles. He would like to see it written similar to the other goals, stating that the main goal is to protect the ACFL. Nate had nothing new to add but discussed how the comments should be evaluated and weighted.

Bob spoke about the previous Parks and Recreation comprehensive plan and the survey that was done for that project. There were 418 households that responded with overall favorable ratings. Staff have found that when there are no calls or requests, people are happy with the parks and ACFL. Staff generally only hear from the public about problems or issues, with pickleball being a perfect example.

There was discussion about Mt Erie and the suggestion that climbing groups should be required to get permits. However, this opens the City to liability. JoAnn shared that she also reviewed and categorized the comments and was pleased to see that it matched up with what staff had presented. She would

like to see an expanded section about fire safety and response.

Kit was not in attendance but had submitted written comments. He would like to see ebikes addressed in the plan. He also submitted a draft executive summary and glossary of terms.

Discussion was had about defining “best available science”. Bob stated that Staff relies on other regulatory agencies and their expertise during the extensive permitting process.

Nate would like to see a section on regulation and the processes of writing the plan.

The Board voted unanimously to approve Staff writing the final draft. This will be brought back to the Board for adoption and then presented to Council.

Public comments will be taken by Council at that time.

Mark B. Nihart

Resident, Registered Voter and Taxpayer

From: pced
Sent: Wednesday, August 27, 2025 8:45 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Fw: Public Comment for the Planning Commission Meeting on 8/27/2025

From: Ian Houben <i.houben@skagithabitat.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 27, 2025 1:21:05 PM
To: libbyb@anorcoteswa.gov <libbyb@anorcoteswa.gov>; pced <pced@cityofanacortes.org>
Subject: Public Comment for the Planning Commission Meeting on 8/27/2025

***** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *****

Dear Planning Commission,

The primary cause for homelessness is no longer a mystery. We **know** that it is a housing supply issue. The math is clear on that. Accepting that truth provides an incredible opportunity for municipalities like Anacortes to address the issue head on. Yet, it doesn't always mean the decisions will be easy ones.

I know that you will hear many voices against change, and it's good to listen to what those voices have to say. But I support the Anacortes Planning Commission's efforts to increase housing density, and I encourage Commissioners to continue to find creative ways to build the city so that it can continue to grow in healthy and vibrant ways.

It is a fallacy to assume that not adding density will allow a community to keep the same character. No place can avoid change. A community is in constant flux and flow just like the beautiful waters that encircle Fidalgo Island. The Planning Commission and the residents of Anacortes have an opportunity to guide that change in a way that is inclusive of all kinds of households and avoidant of the mistakes of larger jurisdictions. Or Anacortes' policy makers and residents can attempt to resist the inevitable currents of change and live with the realization, only too late, that those who were left out of their plans will be left without options.

Homelessness is largely avoidable, but it requires bold and courageous decision-making from a handful of people in a given place at a given time. Expanding Anacortes' housing supply to thoughtfully include low- and middle-income housing solutions will allow young people to stay here and thrive, workers in retail and service to integrate into the community where they labor, seniors to age in place, and families affected by divorce, disability, or death to have some semblance of stability on a single income.

Thank you for thoughtfully finding ways to increase density in Anacortes, and please don't stop being bold and courageous in your plans and policies for this community with a goal of growing as dynamic as the waters that touch its shores rather than the stagnant pools that resist change.

With gratitude,

Ian Houben

Director of Philanthropy

Skagit Habitat for Humanity

Cell: (360) 202-5901

Office: (360) 428-9402 ext. 116

<https://skagithabitat.com/>



From: Phyllis Hanen <phanen@windermere.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 27, 2025 11:04 AM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: the necessity for Conditional Use processes

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Dear Members,

I have been fortunate to have been made aware that the City of Anacortes is interested in/or has already decided to eliminate conditional use type processes, allowing for notices to be delivered to residents about future developments in or near their neighborhoods. Doing so allows the citizens to have a voice about the direction they would like to see their city move toward.

Since the City is required to update its Comprehensive Plan & Development Regulations every 10 years, this discussion & decision needs to be made by the end of this year. I vote and insist residents be notified of any proposed development via the conditional use type processes that have been in place and continue with community engagement. Not to mention council, let's be more transparent about your intentions!

Respectfully,

Phyllis Hanen
Windermere Real Estate
206-940-2512

From: pced
Sent: Wednesday, August 27, 2025 8:46 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Fw: Public Comment Submission

From: CityClerk <cityclerk@anacorteswa.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, August 27, 2025 4:59:59 PM
To: pced <pced@anacorteswa.gov>
Subject: FW: Public Comment Submission

Hello Team PCED,

Please see below public comment submission that came into the City Clerk inbox for the Planning Commission. It was submitted using a link provided for on the August 13, 2025 meeting.

Best regards,

Greg Francioch, CMC | Legal Assistant | Assistant to the City Clerk
City of Anacortes, P.O. Box 547, Anacortes, WA 98221 | 360-299-1960

[Visit the City of Anacortes public records document center today!](#)

*NOTE: Public documents and records are available to the public as provided under the Washington State Public Records Act (RCW 42.56).
This e-mail may be considered subject to the Public Records Act and may be disclosed to a third-party requestor.*

From: No Reply <noreply@civicplus.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 27, 2025 4:38 PM
To: CityClerk <cityclerk@anacorteswa.gov>
Subject: Public Comment Submission

******* This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *******

Submitted by: Ginger Decker
Email Address: Msgingersnap@live.com

Commented on event: <https://anacorteswa.portal.civicclerk.com/event/1303/overview>

If you are having trouble viewing the URL above, cut and paste the string into your browser window.

User comment: Dear Planning Commission Members, You are wonderful people to serve our city and probably in a difficult position drafting a twenty year plan for our town while adhering to Washington's

2023 requirements that well might erode the character of this town. I have a few ideas that might help you stay within the law while protecting our neighborhoods' and town's livability. I was happy when the GMA came about to protect our rural, agricultural, and wildlands from urban sprawl. Today, while I like some middle housing solutions, a blanket mandate to force these into neighborhoods will have an undesirable outcome. Much of the state legislation drafted these past four years has been "solutionism", the idea that social problems can be solved by fixes such as middle housing regardless of nuance or long term impact. The legislature has had to walk back on several of these bad ideas and might well do so on urban planning. There is a reason we have R1 zoning and I'm guessing you all know better than I that shifting that to R3 undermines the fundamental qualities of what a neighborhood is. I don't know how much wiggle room or creativity you can use to preserve our Anacortes character, but implore you to incorporate as much affordable single family residences as possible into existing neighborhoods and concentrate higher density to marine and central business areas. Limit the high end homes and enable moderately priced housing that provides owner occupation. Remember that gardens, play areas, low turnover, and safe streets are essential for community health. Here is my wish list for our plan and some possibly crazy ideas that may work: Bargain with the state with arguments such as: The highway already burdens our roads and adding more density competes with the usefulness of highway 20. As an island with more fragile marine considerations, limited buildable land, and the Samish tribe that shares our island, can exemptions be asked for? I participate in culvert testing that demonstrates the need for testing for the environmental impact of growth. Data can be provided to be very useful. Salmon is best example. Transportation and infrastructure: Require 1.5 - 2 off street parking per bedroom Continue building out safe bicycling corridors Add more safe crossing spots for pedestrians across highway 20, especially where housing development may occur Encourage use of transit and continue to work with Skagit on ways to leave the island without transferring buses Housing: Do not relax requirements to encourage middle housing Require 1.5-2 off street parking per bedroom Require owner occupancy for ADUs and cottages Encourage owner occupied townhouses in established neighborhoods Encourage condos downtown and marine area (seniors not yet ready for assisted living will buy these) Establish a storage requirement for small units While the state can override, establish height restrictions and expectations will follow Require set backs and green space Allow taller buildings and density in the commercial and marine districts Most rentals are not managed to protect surrounding neighbors. Provide a feedback mechanism for neighbors that requires an appropriate response from property management Notify residents via snail mail of proposed middle housing projects in their neighborhood and opportunity to comment Limit number of middle housing units per neighborhood per year over 20 year period Require appropriate infrastructure costs be paid by developers. Require landscaping on middle housing projects Don't give up on Sharpe's corner. It is close to Skagit park and ride and suitable for commuters both south and east. Governance: Provide better enforcement. The recent illegal development of ADUs within the cottage development at 1203-1211 14th St was never addressed by our city. In the past year, the owner has converted the garages into additional housing (ADUs) without permits, doubling the density while eliminating off street parking. Recognize need to staff planning department for unintended consequences of middle housing mistakes such as exceeding height restrictions, inadequate parking, construction impacts (noise, damage) I believe Anacortes can lead by example by balancing housing reform with environmental ethics and cultural sensitivity. And remember, while a good plan will help us grow better, planning for too much growth will incentivize growth. Again, thank you for your service in shaping our city's future! Ginger Decker 1402 Dakota Av Anacortes WA 98221

From: Wesley Anderson <wjand@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 27, 2025 1:07 PM
To: Comp Plan

**** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. ****

I support the 2025 comprehensive plan as published. Good work bringing much needed high density to our town to promote vibrancy and financial sustainability.

-WJA

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From: David Webster <davidcarol@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, August 26, 2025 2:11 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Zoning change along Guemes Channel

**** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. ****

To whom it may concern,

I am NOT in favor of a zoning change from Light Manufacturing to Manufacturing and Shipping along the Guemes Channel.

David Webster
3931 Rock Ridge Pkwy

From: Christine Post <christinepost72@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 26, 2025 1:36 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Comments

**** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. ****

Thank you for the opportunity to provide the following comments:

Goal LU-6 and all policies implementing this goal

Disagree strongly that ADUs be allowed on all lots that allow for single family homes. The increased likelihood of an increase in transient populations, noise, light pollution, crime, and traffic and stress on aging or undersized infrastructure for which any development fees assessable on the ADUs are unlikely to cover, among other increased density impacts, are not compatible with neighborhoods originally zoned and established to avoid these exact consequences, that currently consist of single family homes, and that are remote from services.

Policy PR-4.5

It is past time for a City of Anacortes app. There is no ONE, easily accessible mode or method for finding out what is happening or going to happen in Anacortes concerning utilities repairs and projects, transportation repairs and projects, parks repairs and projects, franchised utilities repairs and projects, city sponsored or permitted events, and the like.

Policy T-1.2

The coordination of effective maintenance and preservation programs should include the review of any program element with franchised utilities and city utilities. It is a common experience in this city to see new, repaired, or replaced pavements trenched within a short amount of time for another project or project(s).

Utilities

Is a policy appropriate here that would include a revision to the solid waste franchise/contract and fee schedule that could provide for litter pickup?

Goal U-2

My experiences with other cities suggest there should be a specific policy addressing the need to renegotiate franchises – as opportunity allows – that would provide the city with the tools it needs to implement many of the other policies listed here. Many cities can provide examples of such franchise agreements.

I would be happy to clarify any of my comments as requested. Sincerely,
Christine Post

From: Mark Nihart <marknihart@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 26, 2025 5:08 PM
To: Comp Plan; mbnihart@comcast.net
Subject: CompPlan 2025 Comment AI Comment

**** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. ****

Mark B. Nihart
1616 28th Street
Anacortes, WA

(An acknowledge that this email was received and the comment was registered is requested)

To: City of Anacortes Planning, Community and Economic Development Department,
2025 Comprehensive Plan Consultants

Subject: Anacortes 2025 Comprehensive Plan

All Parties:

Anacortes will need a strategy for how it intends to use and deploy Artificial Intelligence in the CompPlan. It has the ability to upend current city management, some for the good, other for the problematic. Its deployment may change up union negotiations as AI “efficiencies” reduce the need for union employees (also for salaried staff).

Below is what ChatGPT thinks AI will do for mid-sized cities like Anacortes.

How will AI change how city staff manage city assets such as water, sewer, law enforcement, fire departments, waste management, planning, and professional services?

ChatGPT said:

Excellent question — AI is already starting to shift **city asset management** from being **reactive and manual** toward being **predictive, optimized, and data-driven**. In the next decade, this will transform how city staff across departments operate. Here’s a breakdown by sector:

- **Predictive Maintenance:** AI can analyze sensor data (pressure, flow, vibration) to predict pipe breaks, pump failures, and leaks before they happen.
- **Smart Water Management:** AI-enabled meters help detect household or industrial overuse, optimize water distribution, and reduce waste.
- **Sewer Overflow Prevention:** AI forecasts stormwater surges and directs flows into available capacity, reducing pollution events.

Impact: Fewer emergency repairs, lower replacement costs, better water conservation.



Law Enforcement

- **Resource Allocation:** AI helps deploy officers based on predictive crime analytics (e.g., higher patrols in areas/times with expected incidents).
- **Automated Records Processing:** Natural language AI reduces time on paperwork by summarizing police reports.
- **Body Camera Analysis:** AI can flag incidents for review (use-of-force, citizen complaints) automatically.

Impact: More officer time in the field, less admin overhead, better accountability.



Fire Departments

- **Wildfire & Structural Fire Prediction:** AI uses weather + vegetation + historical data to predict hotspots.
- **Routing Optimization:** AI-assisted dispatch provides the fastest route considering live traffic and construction.
- **Equipment Health Monitoring:** Sensors + AI predict failures in engines, hoses, and protective gear.

Impact: Faster response, safer staff, better disaster readiness.



Waste Management

- **Smart Routing:** AI calculates efficient pickup routes daily, saving fuel and staff hours.
- **Load Optimization:** Sensors detect fill levels of bins/dumpsters and trigger pickups only when needed.
- **Recycling Quality Control:** AI vision systems sort waste more effectively than humans.

Impact: Cost savings, reduced emissions, higher recycling rates.



Planning & Development

- **AI-Assisted Zoning & Permitting:** Natural language models process applications, flagging inconsistencies or missing information.
- **Urban Growth Modeling:** AI simulates traffic, housing demand, and environmental impact for proposed developments.
- **Community Engagement:** AI chatbots answer citizen questions about projects, permits, or zoning.

Impact: Faster permit cycles, more data-driven land use decisions, improved public transparency.



Professional & Administrative Services

- **Finance & Budgeting:** AI forecasts revenues, models long-term costs of infrastructure, and flags fraud or anomalies.
- **Procurement:** AI screens vendors, evaluates bids, and ensures compliance.
- **Citizen Services:** Virtual assistants triage service requests (e.g., potholes, noise complaints, permit questions).

Impact: Reduced staff burden, more accurate budgeting, better resident satisfaction.



Risks & Considerations

- **Data Privacy & Security:** Especially in law enforcement and utilities.
 - **Equity & Bias:** AI predictions must be transparent and regularly audited to avoid discriminatory outcomes.
 - **Workforce Transition:** Staff will need retraining; AI augments but doesn't fully replace human decision-making.
-

✓ Summary:

AI will let cities manage assets **proactively, at lower cost, and with more resilience**. Staff will shift from **reacting to problems** toward **strategically planning and preventing failures**.

Would you like me to build a **visual roadmap (5–10 year timeline)** showing when these AI impacts are likely to roll out in mid-sized cities like Anacortes, Mount Vernon, or Bellingham?

You said:

Yes

Great — here's a **visual roadmap (5–10 year timeline)** showing how AI adoption is likely to transform **city asset management** in a mid-sized city (like Anacortes, Mount Vernon, or Bellingham).



AI Adoption Roadmap for City Asset Management (2025–2035)

2025–2027 (Early Adoption)

◆ Water & Sewer

- Pilot leak detection using AI sensors
- Predictive maintenance on pumps & valves
- Early digital twins for wastewater systems

◆ Law Enforcement

- AI transcription for police reports
- Body camera AI-assisted evidence tagging
- Chatbots for non-emergency service requests

◆ Fire Departments

- Dispatch routing optimization with AI maps
- Pilot wildfire risk prediction (satellite + weather data)

◆ Waste Management

- Smart routing trials for garbage/recycling trucks
- Bin-level sensors in dense areas

◆ Planning & Services

- AI-assisted permit processing (basic zoning compliance checks)
 - Chatbots answering planning & building FAQs
-

2028–2030 (Scaling Phase)

◆ Water & Sewer

- Full digital twin of water & sewer networks

- AI-driven stormwater surge management
- Automated maintenance scheduling

◆ **Law Enforcement**

- Predictive patrol models (audited for bias & fairness)
- AI anomaly detection in crime data
- Real-time analytics from city-wide sensors

◆ **Fire Departments**

- AI fire-risk forecasting for all neighborhoods
- Equipment predictive maintenance for fire engines
- AI-assisted post-incident reporting

◆ **Waste Management**

- City-wide AI-optimized collection routes
- AI vision systems in recycling facilities
- Dynamic staffing models for waste crews

◆ **Planning & Services**

- Urban growth modeling (AI simulations for traffic, housing, utilities)
- Automated compliance checks in development applications
- AI-powered citizen engagement dashboards

2031–2035 (Mature Integration)

◆ **Water & Sewer**

- Fully autonomous utility management with real-time AI monitoring
- Seamless demand forecasting tied to climate change models

◆ **Law Enforcement**

- Integrated city-wide AI “digital command center” for emergency response
- AI assistants embedded in daily officer workflows

◆ **Fire Departments**

- AI-enabled drone fleets for wildfire and structural fire monitoring
- Real-time fire behavior prediction during incidents

◆ **Waste Management**

- Autonomous collection vehicles (AI-driven trucks)
- Full circular waste tracking with AI (from collection → recycling → resale)

◆ **Planning & Services**

- AI-driven master planning updates in real time (housing, transport, energy)
- Predictive financial models driving budgets and capital projects
- Fully integrated AI assistants for citizens to interact with all city services

✦ **By 2035**, a city like Anacortes could run most infrastructure **with predictive AI systems**, while staff focus on oversight, equity, and community engagement.

Do you want me to also create a **projected cost savings & efficiency gains chart** (e.g., staff hours saved, O&M costs reduced) for each phase?

Mark B. Nihart

Resident, Registered Voter and Taxpayer

From: Mark Nihart <marknihart@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 26, 2025 4:08 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Anacortes CompPlan 2025 Comment-3

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Mark B. Nihart
1616 28th Street
Anacortes, WA

(An acknowledge that this email was received and the comment was registered is requested)

To: City of Anacortes Planning, Community and Economic Development Department,
2025 Comprehensive Plan Consultants

Subject: Anacortes 2025 Comprehensive Plan

All Parties:

Management of quickly advancing technology in many areas should be addressed in the 2025 CompPlan.

Some areas for consideration:

Battery Storage/Energy Storage is growing with large battery installations proposed such as Guemes Ferry Dock and Port of Anacortes and more likely at the Port of Anacortes and maybe March Point in the future. Instead of natural gas, gasoline and diesel backup generators, battery backup storage with solar recharging are likely soon. The hospital, police and fire stations are prime candidates for a change over to battery backup as are home power backup.

Arguably E-bikes and E-scooters capable of speeds of over 20 miles an hour are already a problem. New electric motorcycles are even more powerful. They will only become more powerful and more sophisticated. No license required nor insurance and many if not most are ridden by young people to grade school kids.

Drones are common and getting more common. Policies to the extent the city can enact policies to regulate them need to be considered. Launching them from public property should be banned particularly in the ACFL, Washington Park and ball fields.

Boats in all the marinas could move to electric engines thus batteries. The fire department will need to have the equipment and training to fight a marina fire that would include gas, diesel, electric powered boats and fiberglass constructed boats fires.

Privacy could be a major concern as the use of camera surveillance of public and private property increases; it has many possible good uses to reduce enforcement costs. Current technology already is very capable: new technology looks to be much more capable. It is one thing to have a camera with signs saying cameras in use at Heart Lake parking lot, it is another to have sophisticated cameras at stop lights, public spaces, and inside public buildings. Private use of cameras will grow and will cross over into public spaces. Drones are another area in which privacy is compromised.

Local Power Generation may become more of reality as technology advances. So, what processes are used to determine what kinds are allowed – solar, wind, tidal? How big is too big for a solar rooftop installation, could East Anacortes have solar farms, as wind turbines become smaller (in Europe some are) where will they be allowed to be sited (March Point). Tidal generation is yet to be fully developed. Guemes Channel could be a prime spot for tidal.

And....?

The CompPlan needs to be flexible enough to take advantage of technology advances but protect the residents from unintended consequences of their use and installations. The sooner the city gets in front of technology the better it will be prepared to take advantage of it. The sooner it is being actively discussed in public forms with published processes and methodologies for how the city will evaluate the technologies AND processes and procedures for active direct public comment and participation with processes and methodologies to respectfully and timely process all public comments and concerns the less likely lawsuits at adoption stage or worse installation stage will happen – hopefully.

Mark B. Nihart

Resident, Registered Voter and Taxpayer

From: Mark Nihart <marknihart@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 26, 2025 2:02 PM
To: Comp Plan; mbnihart@comcast.net
Subject: Anacortes CompPlan 2025-2

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Mark B. Nihart
1616 28th Street
Anacortes, WA

(An acknowledge that this email was received and the comment was registered is requested)

To: City of Anacortes Planning, Community and Economic Development Department,
2025 Comprehensive Plan Consultants

Subject: Anacortes 2025 Comprehensive Plan

All Parties:

The Anacortes Parks and Recreation Department managed parks such as the ballfields, pickleball courts, Washington Parks, Causland Park, Storvik Park, etc. should be managed using management styles for use as primary people driven parks and people driven recreational activities with consideration for nature where nature areas exist such as Washington Park.

The ACFL should be managed separately for Nature First with limited, low-impact, non-motorized human recreation second using best Forest, Wildlife, Wetland practices and management styles by professionals with background in Forest, Wildlife, and Wetland management. This needs to be clearly articulated in the 2025 CompPan.

And, the CompPlan requires a detailed implementation plan, projected budget and schedule to accomplish the change from how the two distinct areas are managed.

Mark B. Nihart

Resident, Registered Voter and Taxpayer

From: Charlie Nelson <cpn5280@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 26, 2025 6:27 AM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: No to Proposed Rezoning along Guemes Channel

**** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. ****

I am writing to express my disappointment and a resounding “no” to the proposals to change the zoning along the Guemes Channel from LM (Light Manufacturing) to MS (Manufacturing and Shipping).

As a resident born and raised in Anacortes this attempt to re-zone this area is unnecessary and will have a wide ranging detrimental impact.

Please listen to constituents and do not proceed with this proposal.

Regards,
Charlie Nelson

Charlie Nelson
2403 Washington Ct
Anacortes, Wa 98221
Cell Phone 1-303-570-3042
Personal Email: cpn5280@yahoo.com

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From: pced
Sent: Tuesday, August 26, 2025 7:20 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Fw: Public Comment for the Planning Commission Meeting on August 27th, 2025

From: Mariah Haney <mariah.haney@compass.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 26, 2025 2:18:56 PM
To: pced <pced@cityofanacortes.org>
Subject: Public Comment for the Planning Commission Meeting on August 27th, 2025

***** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *****

Ladies and gentlemen,

I write to you today in favor of increased density and regulations which allow for additional middle housing in Anacortes. This argument is not about forcing change, but about granting freedom and flexibility to property owners—empowering them to make decisions that best suit their unique situations.

Imagine a homeowner with extra space that could be transformed into a rental unit, ADU/DADU, providing additional income or a home for a loved one in need. Increased density regulations allow for such possibilities, fostering a community where people can tailor their living environments to their personal and financial needs.

It's crucial to understand that just because regulations permit increased density, it does not compel any homeowner to act upon it. The choice remains fully in the hands of the property owner. This flexibility is a core principle of homeownership—the freedom to use and enhance your property as you see fit, within local regulations.

Moreover, increased density can be instrumental in providing affordable, critical middle housing, which is essential for the vibrancy and functionality of our communities. Our neighborhoods thrive when they include individuals from all socioeconomic backgrounds, contributing to a dynamic workforce and diverse community life.

By simply providing the option, not the obligation, to increase density, we support individual choice while addressing the housing needs of a broader population. Let's embrace this opportunity to reinforce the longstanding right of homeowners to control and decide the future of their private properties, while also supporting a more adaptable and inclusive housing landscape for all.

Thank you!



Mariah Haney

BROKER, ABR, MRP
ANACORTES, WA

📍 809 7th St.

📞 360.720.3332

🌐 mariahhaney.com



Please be advised that, for security reasons, we refrain from conducting business via WhatsApp due to the prevalence of high-risk scams.

From: Diane Fisher <dbfishgan@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 26, 2025 7:38 AM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: lack of assisted living and adult day care for middle income seniors

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Diane Fisher <dbfishgan@gmail.com>

to CompPlan



There is a need for new and improved existing assisted living accommodations, especially for middle income seniors.

Our senior citizens are and will continue to grow. Since the loss of the Gentry House, there is no access to Adult Day Care programs unless you travel to Burlington. Alzheimers and other disabling senior issues are not addressed. Ideally, a continuing care with assisted living to memory care facility would be worth investing in our growing senior population.

Diane Fisher
dbfishgan@gmail.com

From: Todd & Melyssa Stephens <toddandmelyssa@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 25, 2025 9:37 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: ADU Square Footage

***** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *****

Libby and Planning Commission,

I'm writing in regard to the proposed changes to the ADU regulations, specifically the 1,000 square foot maximum size limitation. I understand the rationale behind this restriction—to ensure new construction remains compatible with the surrounding neighborhood—but I would like to propose an exemption for existing structures being converted into a primary residence with ADUs, provided that no exterior expansion occurs.

This exemption would allow homeowners to repurpose existing space into affordable housing without increasing the building footprint or adding new structures to the community. Such flexibility would support the city's housing goals while preserving neighborhood character.

My home is a clear example of where this exemption could be beneficial. The existing structure is 3,591 square feet and could be efficiently divided into three units: a primary residence of 1,383 sq ft, ADU-1 at 1,155 sq ft, and ADU-2 at 1,053 sq ft. Under the current draft, this configuration would not be permitted due to the square footage cap, despite the fact that no new construction would be involved.

I respectfully urge consideration of language that allows for exceptions to the 1,000 sq ft limit when converting existing structures. This change would enable homeowners like myself to contribute to the city's affordable housing supply in a responsible and community-friendly way.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Todd Stephens
Anacortes Homeowner

From: Mark Nihart <marknihart@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 25, 2025 1:01 PM
To: Comp Plan; mbnihart@comcast.net
Subject: Anacortes CompPlan Comments - 1

***** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *****

Mark B. Nihart
1616 28th Street
Anacortes, WA

(An acknowledge that this email was received and the comment was registered is requested)

To: City of Anacortes Planning, Community and Economic Development Department, 2025 Comprehensive Plan Consultants

Subject: Anacortes 2025 Comprehensive Plan

All Parties:

To ensure Anacortes residents, registered voters and taxpayers – the true owners of Anacortes and its future - are providing guidance to ALL city plans, policies, procedures, regulations, ordinances and city sponsored boards, committees, special committees, Council and commissions, such as the Planning Commission and the Forest Advisory Board the 2025 Anacortes Comprehensive Plan requires a section in Goals that details how this will be accomplished.

Specifically:

- A standard meeting set of meeting rules that meet the State meeting requirements but go beyond those requirements to ensure all voices are heard, respected, responded to in writing within 30 days and sufficient time in meetings to allow people to speak and at least a 60-day timeframe to provide comments
- All comments made at meetings verbal or submitted written comments will be responded to in writing within 30 days they were received, and a written response in 60 days by a named responsible city employee, Council member, board, committee, or commission member.
- The city will have a published and documented process for collecting comments to be used by city sponsored boards, committees, special committees, and commissions. More than one process is suggested as smaller committees, project committees, and smaller boards such as the Museum Board have smaller interested audiences.
- All city sponsored boards, committees, special committees, and commissions will have a standard, detailed procedure for how comments will be acknowledged and a minimum level of a respectful

explanation for the comment: no insulting one word or simple sentence explanations. Comments that are “considered” or rejected will have detailed explanations with references as to why they are just being considered and were rejected.

- All city sponsored boards, committees, special committees, and commissions will have a standard, detailed processes, procedures and methods used for analysis of public comments published before comments are accepted. The detailed processes, procedures and methods can be challenged by public comment in the first round of comments as to their appropriateness.
- Artificial Intelligence applications such as ChatGPT are allowed as a human managed tool to categorize and analyze submitted comments and can assist in providing responses to the comments BUT only from the documents and references used in documents, minutes, studies that comments were referred to: no internet wide resources used. A named human must review the categorization, analysis and responses made by using AI and take responsibility for their accuracy. How AI was used or will be used will be disclosed fully. The original AI response together with questions asked will be publicly available and easily accessible together with the human editing of the AI responses or any presentation made from AI.
- Surveys will be limited to gather information for public input. Especially general surveys to the entire Anacortes population because of the difficulty of creating surveys that provide reliable and valid information and the difficulty of determining what appropriate statistics to apply even if a qualified and tested survey instrument can get reliable and valid information. A professional researcher should be employed if surveys are to be used. Qualitative research methods (and or mixed method research methods) of the target population and then the study population will be used instead of purely qualitative methods. An example would be PickleBall, the entire population of Anacortes is not concerned with Pickle Ball but the Target Population – pickleball players and those who live near pickle balls outside courts are, the Study Population would be a subset of the Target Population chosen to study pickleball siting options (outside courts sited in East Anacortes near the refineries as an exception) and noise and parking mitigation if sited in or near residential areas. Other examples would be users of the Anacortes Community Forest Lands, Library, Museum, Washington Park.

Mark B. Nihart

Resident, Registered Voter and Taxpayer

From: Sam Hill <sdhill@gwtc.net>
Sent: Monday, August 25, 2025 8:22 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: zoning change along Guemes Channel

***** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *****

I own a home on Guemes Channel that will be affected by the proposed zoning change from LM to MS. This is an absolute NO from my perspective. Are you wanting a Dakota Creek West?????

DO NOT CHANGE THE ZONING . If it happens, I hope you are prepared to explain to the county assessor why property values dropped 30-40% on all the property adjacent to Guemes Channel.

Samuel Hill
2804 Oakes Avenue

From: John E. Hilburn <airboz@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, August 25, 2025 12:24 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Treatment of "Middle Housing" in 2025 Comprehensive Plan

***** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *****

As an eight-year citizen in westend Anacortes I contribute the following comments to the "public comments" solicited for the 27Aug hearing:

- Notification of citizens should be a MINIMUM requirement for government to inject multifamily housing into our single family neighborhoods.
- Permitting of middle housing in historically single family neighborhoods, even after the Council has discarded local sentiment against rezoning to allow such housing, violates the purpose of the Council's functional purpose to "represent" the people of the city. Although the Council may deem such alterations of neighborhood character & ambiance to be in the best interest of the city, it assumes the superiority of Council judgement over the desires of citizens, who must live with the results.
- After working a lifetime to achieve the ability to purchase a home in the small town ambiance of an "Anacortes" and enduring the ever escalating property & other local taxes, it is distressing to find my representatives in the City Council voting to pass measures with some consistency which make it ever more difficult to remain in the town of my original purpose.
- Communication of actions to be considered by Council is left most often to the initiative of the individual citizen, typically missed by most American citizens, much to their own detriment and convenience to their governmental representatives. To be truly effective in its function the Council should do all in its power to ensure ciutizens are made of aware of their opportunities to address the issues affecting them - it is called "duty", a term very familiar to former service members, who live in some abundance in this city.

I respectfully submit that the provisions outlined in the Comp Plan for 2025 incorporate consideration of the above concerns.

Repectfully,

John E. Hilburn, Cdr, USN(ret)
48N

From: Dennis Clark <dennisbclark@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 25, 2025 6:58 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Comments on Comprehensive Plan Update

**** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. ****

My suggestions for the City of Anacortes 2025-2045 Comprehensive Plan update:

- 1) The Housing Section should further prioritize the need for affordable housing by removing barriers at the city level to MORE housing. These barriers include unnecessarily low-density zoning, lengthy permitting processes, costly requirements for parking and design, and conditional-use permitting. If supported by a stronger, updated Comp Plan, the City could re-examine zoning and rationalize the entire permitting process to remove lower-value steps, reduce the time required for developers (and city staff), and provide greater certainty to developers. There appears to be a lot of land in Anacortes — vacant lots and large lots with small homes -- that can be developed with little or no environmental or community impact. The regulatory process should be simplified/shortened/automated for development of most properties. Municipal government needs to shift the balance from those who say "no" to *any* change in their neighborhood to those who will build more housing. The City cannot solve the problem of high housing costs but by improving the regulatory process, it can help those who *are* able to do so.
- 2) The Housing Section draft clause H-1.12 should be retained only if it applies to durations greater than, say, three years. Property owners should have the right to offer short-term rentals for some reasonable period of time when not occupying their home. (I recognize that Comp Plans typically don't have that level of specificity but that's my recommendation nonetheless.)
- 3) The Transportation Section rightly prioritizes maintaining our current transportation network (Goal T-1). Further, while the transportation system includes more than just streets, streets are the core of our transportation network. The City has learned the hard way, following the Great Financial Crisis, that falling behind on street maintenance is detrimental to having an efficient and safe transportation system. The City *must* maintain the street system going forward and should prioritize maintenance over expansion or new, nice-to-have features that will be used by fewer people than the street network.
- 4) Across all sections, I recommend that the City Council avoid the temptation to add more "good ideas" to the Comp Plan as part of this update. Our little city is great in part because it does not attempt to be all things to all people. The City of Anacortes can continue to being good at providing municipal services only if it remains *focused*. The current Comp Plan does not need much updating to continue to serve the City well. Less is more.

Thank you for your consideration and keep up the good work!

Sincerely,
Dennis Clark
Anacortes citizen since 2011

From: Betsy Braun <betsy.braun1010@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 25, 2025 4:00 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Thank you - here are my comments on the draft Comp Plan
Attachments: 2025 0825 Comments from Elizabeth Braun.pdf

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Please see the attached .PDF -

Thank you -
Betsy

--

Elizabeth "**Betsy**" Braun, Architect, MHA
3618 Oakes Avenue
Anacortes, WA 98221

206-679-5696, Betsy.Braun1010@gmail.com

Live your life with arms wide open

Today is where your book begins

The rest is still unwritten - Natasha Bedingfield

Comments on Anacortes Comprehensive Plan Draft

Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to review the proposed future actions of the City government in enhancing and protecting our beautiful City. The plan is clearly a significant amount of thoughtful and visionary work. I was delighted to read it and get a sense of what our future might bring.

I enclose my comments after this first reading. You have given me much to think about.

Volume 1 –

page 1-9 adds income bracket to the focus for the land use and housing elements. Income bracket may not be an accurate metric, as many of the City's residents are retired people, with low incomes but high net worths. Consider how to address total wealth.

Page 1-9: consider replacing "by bicycle" with "and other motorized and non-motorized vehicles." Page 1-13 uses multi-modal, which means interconnected systems, which is something different. Suggest using the same language as in the Transportation section for consistency.

Page 1-13 and LU-7C: recommend preserving the historic, pedestrian-friendly scale of old town and the CBD. This may conflict with the need to increase housing, especially affordable housing. The pedestrian realm (the first 3 stories and streetscape) should be preserved and improved, but the scale may need to increase in height to accommodate future growth and prevent sprawl.

LU-1B, LU-4.1 and PR-7.4: Proposes a heavy Manufacturing zone in the Whitmarsh Junction area between S. Marsh Point Road and Hwy 20. There is a significant heron rookery in the woodlots in this area that should be preserved. Consider changing the land use to P and establish it as a park area to protect this heron rookery. It should be designated as a Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation area – Habitat of Local Importance. Work with the ACFL and Skagit land trust to acquire the property or a conservation easement.

LU-1B, LU-5.1, LU-6.4 and CE-7: The commercial zone proposed along Commercial Avenue is bordered along much of its length by RHD residential zones. Consider allowing street-level neighborhood retail and other businesses (coffee shops, convenience stores, sandwich shops, etc.) as part of mixed-use development in the RHD zone to create Pedestrian retail amenities in this zone and to enliven the streetscape. Allow outdoor gathering places (seating and displays) that are associated with adjoining retail. Walking along Commercial Avenue outside of the CBD is not pleasant – it is at automotive scale and speed, with many parking lots creating a dead zone between street and buildings. Adding neighborhood retail to the RHD zone offers the opportunity to extend the pedestrian scale,

speed and amenities of the CBD further south. Adding a modified MUB-O overlay to the RHD zone may accomplish this goal.

LU-1B, LU-6.1, ED-1.7, H-1.2, H-1.5: The RLD-2 zone between Anacopper Road and A-street north of the ACFL (The Northern Pacific Addition to Anacortes) has a restrictive covenant #509693 from when it was originally platted that restricts development to a single-family residence, not to exceed one and a half stories in height, with a private garage for not more than two cars, among other restrictive requirements. This covenant has not been recorded in the county records for all parcels in the development. It also has not been followed. There are numerous houses in this Addition that have accessory dwelling units, that are more stories than permitted and that do not meet the other land use criteria in the covenant.

The affected area includes a significant part of the land proposed for RLD-2 zoning. The city should work with the property owners to revise this covenant and allow the development criteria to revert to the underlying zoning, except for the height restrictions. Residents will not want their neighbors to build up in ways that block their existing views (Although some already have built more stories than allowed in the covenants.)

This would allow greater density and help to meet the region's housing needs with the proposed duplexes, cottages, ADU's and DADU's, etc.

Page 1-32. Policy LU-2.1B is vague where it proposes building massing standards that are compatible with Anacortes's business districts and residential neighborhoods. How is "compatible" to be determined in zones where substantial variations in scale already exist? Please put some objective criteria in to help developers understand up-front what is feasible. H-1.8 and H-2.2 also notes the problems with "Neighborhood Character". Objective criteria will help avoid NIMBY actions disguised within the term "compatible" or other subjective terms.

Page 1-32: LU-2.2D, LU-7E, CR-1.7 and CE-7.2: Public Facilities tend to be single-use, one-story developments with large parking lots. Encourage Public-private partnerships with low-income housing developers on public facility projects to leverage the land and site development costs to build affordable units as part of the development, either above and/or adjacent to the Public Facilities.

Page 1-34. Policy LU-4.2 suggests green building rating systems. Instead of requiring a separate scoring system or systems, with the cost, delay, and inconsistencies they entail, add specific green building goals to the city requirements to provide certainty to developers and speed the permitting process.

Page 1-34: Policy LU-4.5 Suggest going beyond proposing adoption of local WUI code into starting with voluntary recommendations for how to build mitigation strategies, which could be piloted now, and codified later.

Page 1-35, Policy LU-5.1. I support development of the Guemes Channel Trail and its completion. However, the language as proposed could imply that any single-family home built on property adjacent to the cliff must provide public access across their property from the top of the cliff to the water. This is not reasonable and has liability implications for the homeowners. It needs to be split into two sections – public access at the base of the cliff to extend the trail across existing tidal lands which may be privately owned, and public access connecting the trail to points of public access (street stubs or ROW's) in neighborhoods at the top of the cliff.

Policy LU-6.2: There are a considerable number of dogs in the City. Few properties are landscaped in ways that accommodate the dog's need to pee and poo. The amount of biowaste produced can also have a significant adverse effect on the storm sewer system. Consider how to recommend to homeowners how to landscape in ways that accommodate dog's needs, and that will appropriately channel the waste.

Page 1-41, Policy LU-8.3, ED-1.4 and T-3.18: Develop plans in coordination with the Port of Anacortes to substantially increase marina capacity to meet the region's demand for boat moorage and maintenance services. There are huge waits for slips in the Cap Sante marina and other regional marinas.

Page 1-44 LU-11.3A appears to be missing text. A map showing where adequate public services are deemed to be inadequate would be very helpful.

Page 1-45 Subarea plans: Additional subarea plans are not needed for a small town and only increase the cost and complexity of planning and development. Let the Comprehensive Plan do this work.

Page 1-54, Policy ED-2.7: Provision also needs to be made to charge electric bicycles, scooters, razors and other non-automobile electrified transportation modalities.

Page 1-54, Policy ED-3.7: this seems in conflict with the recent moratoriums on expanding air B&B style accommodations for lodging options. Some more rational approach to adding Air B&B options needs to be developed.

Goal EC-7 and page 371: Trees eventually sicken and die. The retention process needs to include removing aged and dangerous trees, especially those that pose hazards to adjacent structures. Onerous retention regulations only encourage property owners to damage, poison or kill their trees. A rational approach to tree canopy retention also needs

to take into consideration the needs stated elsewhere in the plan to accommodate growth. If Off-site planting is the proposed mitigation option, locations where trees can be planted to meet the mitigation requirements should also be identified. A robust site plan and permission to plant additional trees may see volunteers willingly planting lots of replacement trees each year.

Page 82, Policy T-1.8 suggests bus service during the annual Ferry Maintenance Shutdown. There is no road to Guemes Island. Please clarify how a bus service works – is this a boat? This is confusing.

Page 83 Policy T-1.9D. West 2nd avenue goes through a sleepy residential neighborhood and is not continuous. It is interrupted by several undeveloped blocks, a wetland and the practice fields for the schools once it bends and turns into 13th street. I strongly protest rerouting emergency traffic through this neighborhood and disagree with this draft policy. Consider instead creating a continuous third/middle lane on SR20 that can be used for emergency vehicles connecting the east and west ends of town and improving Marine Drive and Havekost road as a southern alternate emergency route.

Page 87 Policy t-2.21, T-2.32 and CE-7.4 Suggest adding: Work with major employers who have shift workers who work evening and night shift and the local bus services to determine if there is sufficient demand to create carpool/vanpools or bus routes to support after-hours commuting. (ex: shift change bus options at the Hospital or “Bars closed” bus to Mt. Vernon/Burlington area for restaurant workers on Commercial Ave, etc.)

Page 93, Policy T-3.23: “Consider waiving or reducing parking requirements for housing appropriate for lower income households if there is nearby transit service available.”

Page 94, Policy T-4.5, T-4.11 and CE-8 and 8.2: My household has two electric powered vehicles and a gas-powered vehicle. We almost never charge our e-cars away from our house, because the charging process can take 5-8 hours. Adding charging stations should be done in conjunction with careful analysis of real demand and charging durations, and incremental additions should be made until that demand is satisfied. Policies requiring charging stations in areas or near services where they will not be used and cannot be secured are a waste of money. Let demand drive their placement. Anacortes already has a good supply of public charging stations – evaluate how well they are used and how financially feasible they are before adding more.

Page 95. Policy T-4.16 mentions a 2016 ADA transition plan. Policy T-4.17 refers to a 2024 ADA Transition Plan. Should 4.16 refer to the 2024 plan?

Page 99, Table CF-1 under Water. The 35 PSI minimum implies that water pressure provided via domestic mains may be much higher. Most appliances (hot water heaters,

dishwashers, etc.) cannot be served with higher water pressures without damaging them. Consider existing systems when adjusting existing water pressures upwards with capital improvements and notify customers prior to the upgrades so they can install appropriate pressure reduction equipment.

Page 102, Policy CF-7.7 suggest adding “wildfire resistance” to the resilient criteria.

Page 114 Policy CE-6.5. I believe that Washington State RCW 19.27A.210 has building efficiency targets that are going to require buildings to meet energy efficiency standards within the next decade, with larger buildings (over 50,000 SF) upgraded first. It is highly likely that within the lifetime of this Comp Plan that the state will extend this standard to all commercial buildings of any size. Also, the target to be met is going to continue to shift to more stringent targets, and smaller buildings. Meeting these standards will affect the Capital Plan. Consider anticipating this requirement and adding a goal of meeting or exceeding the state requirements as part of this Comp plan.

Page 116 Policy CE-8.5 – This is pretty vague. California required Commercial Harbor Craft to use renewable diesel since January 1, 2023. What is the timeline for the Port of Anacortes to transition to R99 Diesel or equivalent? Should the city use the Comp plan to accelerate this transition, and set specific timeframes, as California has done? It appears that if California requires it, the industry must be mature enough to meet our demand also. Traditional diesel fuel is ecologically terrible, carcinogenic, polluting. It is listed as one of the two reasons Anacortes will not meet the 2050 target of zero emissions. (Page 22 of GHG emissions inventory report.) I recommend moving forward with banning it, as Europe is doing. The plan should set specific timeframes for compliance, and they should be aggressive.

Page 119, CE-12, 12.4 and 13.3. It may be worthwhile to try to educate folks about the dangers of tossing lit cigarettes and cigars out of cars, or as they are walking or hiking. Many visitors are unaware of how susceptible our forests are to a carelessly thrown cigarette butt. Putting some resources into forest fire prevention messages is a worthwhile addition to the Comp Plan.

Volume II

Page 152 – The Altair-Americus memorial is mis-spelled. Also, Grandview Cemetery is mis-spelled.

Page 153 The report incorrectly spells Oakes Avenue for the Roadside Park.

Page 158 describes a future community recreation center. The Senior Center and numerous schools and other facilities within the City already include the proposed

facilities. Before we stretch our resources to try and add more, let's try to use what we already have more intensively. Most of these facilities sit empty most of the time, especially after school hours. Expanding the existing partnerships or focusing the City on gaps that are not otherwise provided, funding for instructors/counselors or scholarships to facilities that require payment could accomplish this goal with zero capital construction investment.

Page 173 – mixed use of the Washington Park Loop Road – I would strongly encourage the loop road to be widened enough to create a dedicated pedestrian sidewalk -either paved or gravel area on one side. The existing conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians occur because there is no shoulder for most of the trail, forcing pedestrians and the multitude of dogs into the thorny underbrush as cars crawl past. Widening the road and striping it to produce a clear pedestrian zone would make everyone much happier.

Page 174 & 179 – re: SHIP - the Ship Harbor boardwalk is rotting away, as are the fences directing the foot traffic. I would be willing to volunteer in work parties to replace rotting boards and help upgrade the trail. Can this be made a priority? Someone is going to put a foot through the boards and hurt themselves, soon!

Page 175, general. The Citizens of Anacortes are the best folks to find and eliminate non-native invasives in our parks. Signs at park entrances asking people to look for these varmints and yank them or report them would empower us and leverage our peoplepower. I just saw a batch of Tansy Ragwort and did not think I could pull it on park property. I also did not know who to report it to.

Page 185 re: funding mechanisms. I support property tax levies as a way to make capital improvements to the parks. I support City General Fund and other ongoing taxes for maintenance. I am not supportive of bonds and taking on long-term debt. I am also not in favor of development impact fees, as they make it more difficult to provide the housing we need. I favor options that pay as we go. I am supportive of fees for users, especially for uses like camping in Washington Park, use of the playing fields for formal league play and for events like concerts, etc. I am also supportive of leveraging state and community sources of funds, and, of course, volunteers!

Page 200 – the descriptions of the roadways are all posting speeds in excess of what is actually posted within the city limits. While this document may be describing design standards, it should be adjusted to state what the actual speeds generally are on the roads in the City, and that these slower speeds are to enhance pedestrian and wildlife safety.

Page 208 – I just want to make a shout-out to the City Street Repair and maintenance crews for the outstanding and friendly work they do! We appreciate you!

Page 223 – A search of the City’s website did not turn up the 2025 Comprehensive Safety Action Plan. Is it mis-named in this document? Where can it be found?

Page 234 – until Ferry Traffic to Canada is restored, is it possible to use the Customs parking for additional parking at the Ferry Terminal?

Page 321 – Fire Station #3 is very close to Skagit County Fire Protection District #13. Is there possibility in coordinating responses between the two systems to increase the capacity projected in the Comp plan? Can the comp plan please address how the two systems coordinate their responses?

Page 324 – mentions that the Police department does not have sufficient support staff for the anticipated number of additional cases generated with growth. How much of the current clerical work is done remotely, and how much more can be done remotely? Remote work should be considered as a strategy to reduce capital costs. It also provides resilience and redundancy if something were to happen to the station.

General comment: There are numerous “Spellcheck typos” where an incorrect version of a word is in the text. The word does not make sense within its context. Please do careful proofreading of the document to catch these. Also, consistency in naming between the various comp plan elements would be helpful. Parks and other facilities are referred to with many different names, in different places within the documents.

Examples – page 333 – Deport instead of Depot

Page 345 – illustrates the electrical system. We have a great opportunity to site a significant number of new solar panels in Anacortes without using up more land or rooftops by allowing solar purveyors to place solar panels above existing streets, or in adjacent rights-of-way. By placing the generation near its point of use, we reduce the burden of upsizing the distribution grid.

The street network typically has power distribution on poles. This power network can be easily tapped into. The poles can also host a variety of battery storage options, like how transformers are supported. The engineering of street light poles, signs and structures is robust and well-known. A decentralized, distributed generation and storage system such as this could be rapidly deployed with little to no land use impacts, and if sited well, have a low impact on people’s views. It would require a PPP with investors, the City/state for the ROW access and PSE.

Page 352 and page 116 – this appears redundant to the emissions information provided elsewhere in the report. Is it necessary to show it twice? How do the two sections differ?

Page 360 shows how we will be getting more rain in the winter and much less in the summer. What sequestration strategies can we take to store the rainwater for dryer summers? California is looking at some interesting strategies to pump water into aquifers to speed up recharging them seasonally. Should we consider similar strategies?

Racially Disparate Impacts Analysis DRAFT:

This document uses the term Race to identify needs in our community to be more equitable. However, the term Race is limiting and overlooks other factors that may have greater impact on the overall well-being of our town's citizenry. Terms now in common use include Caste and Class. Caste notes that irrespective of income or racial background, social stratification can occur that marginalizes certain peoples. Class defines social and economic hierarchies that we have brought with us largely from Europe, where stratifications also marginalize those of lower "classes." As we become a world where more of us are of mixed racial descent (ask anyone who has had their DNA traced), we need to broaden our policies and practices to help overcome caste and class impacts. Please consider broadening the analysis to evaluate our City with these terms. Policies that create housing within neighborhoods for people of all income ranges and housing needs, including low-income housing for large or multigenerational families, with the necessary parking to support them, will help break down some of these barriers. Allowing construction of religious and social facilities within easy walking distance of multicultural neighborhoods will provide the cultural hubs people of differing backgrounds need. (temples, mosques, shrines, etc.) Finding ways to support small specialty groceries near or within the neighborhoods will provide food compliant with belief-based dietary guidelines. Considering altering hours of operations of public facilities to provide access to people whose beliefs prohibit driving or work-like activities on various days of the week will help support their access.

Land Capacity analysis -Page 24, figure 19: I support increasing the maximum building heights to 40 feet to increase the developable capacity. I also support allowing for higher lot coverage and smaller setbacks if coupled with better stormwater management for multifamily units to encourage denser land use and reduce the cost of the multifamily units. I also support not requiring 3 off street parking spaces for ADU's and DADU's in neighborhoods where on-street parking is available.

Climate Vulnerability and Risk Assessment Report

Page 12 – 2.3.3.1 is misspelling Skyline as Skyview.

From: Ed West <ctn33319@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, August 24, 2025 8:44 AM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Comp Plan Comments

**** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. ****

I wish to support the goals stated about the Guemes Channel trail. Completing this trail has been delayed for years even though many of the landowners have indicated a willingness to allow the trail, no effort has been made to secure the right of way from those landowners. It is important to secure the right of way where we can and work with the remaining landowners to secure their participation as well.

Policy PR-2.1. Place a high priority on completing the multi-use trail along Guemes Channel from the Depot Arts Center to Washington Park with links to other natural areas including the ACFL and Ship Harbor Interpretive Preserve.

Policy PR-2.2. Pursue public-private and other agency partnerships in developing conveniently-spaced public access points to the Guemes Channel trail that include parking and other facilities that are designed to be compatible with their surroundings.

Bicycle lanes from D Street to Washington Park, along 12th St and Oaks Ave. There are several areas along this route where the bike lane is too narrow. I ride a tricycle and there are areas where I can't keep my left wheel inside the lane, with my right wheel on the pavement. This is a major route for cyclists and should be improved for safety, and to encourage travel by bicycle.

John E "Ed" West
5301 Sterling Drive
608-792-9387 cell
ctn33319@gmail.com

From: Ian Munce <ianmunce@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, August 24, 2025 2:28 PM
To: Comp Plan
Cc: Bill Turner; Ryan Walters
Subject: 8-27-25 Planning Commission Public Hearing
Attachments: 8-24-25 Attachment A.docx; 8-24-25 Attachment B.docx; 8-24-25 Attachment C.docx

***** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *****

Dear, Libby

I write to submit three separate sets of comments (Attachments A, B, and C) to this email as one hearing exhibit for ease of future reference.

Attachment A

This attachment contains the email chain in which you explain to Mr. Turner the difference between: (1) 'comments that can be submitted at any time' and then (as far as I can determine from the record to date) simply ignored and (2) Amendments that require a \$3,000 fee to be considered.

Attachment B

This attachment contains an email chain between me and the Washington State Department of Commerce in which Commerce, without any equivocation, states that charging citizens a fee for policy proposals to be considered is simply wrong, but that I will have to appeal to the Growth Management Hearings Board to secure a direction to the City to reopen the entire Comprehensive Plan process.

Attachment C

This attachment contains an email chain between me and Council-member Walters in which he acknowledges that the \$3,000 fee is inappropriate for citizen requests but that at some point the City Council, or its secretive Planning Committee (no agenda, no minutes), as a body decided not to waive the fee for the ten year Comprehensive Plan update. He did kindly agree to submit one of my 11 Comprehensive Plan Amendment proposals, provided of course he agreed that it deserved further consideration.

August 27 Planning Commission

I submit that I have every reason to be aggrieved. I did not submit Comprehensive Plan Amendments to the City Council because I did not want to incur \$33,000 in fees. More importantly to the mandatory public participation process, untold citizens were chilled out of the process from the outset by an outrageous fee designed with exactly this purpose in mind.

I did request that the Planning Department/Planning Commission work to remedy this egregious error of judgement by starting your own process to invite citizen driven Amendment proposals but you all decided not to do that. It has become clear now that you are just going to consider every submission as a comment and will have some sort of staff response at some point. I submitted 11 specific Comprehensive Plan Amendments proposals to the Planning Commission with extensive supporting

documentation and reasoning but apparently you all decided to not to consider them at all or just to treat them as comments.

Please feel free to correct me if I have mischaracterized this in any way.

Sincerely

Ian Munce
1711 Quail Drive

From: William Turner <bill.h.turner@gmail.com>
Date: June 27, 2024 at 10:08:09 PM PDT
To: Ian <ianmunce@gmail.com>
Subject: Fee for comp plan amendments

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Libby Grage <libbyb@cityofanacortes.org>
Date: June 27, 2024 at 2:42:11 PM PDT
To: William Turner <bill.h.turner@gmail.com>
Cc: turner sally <sallycturner@gmail.com>, John Coleman <johnc@cityofanacortes.org>
Subject: RE: Fee for comp plan amendments

Hi Bill,

Thank you for your email. To clarify, comments on the 2025 Comprehensive Plan update may be submitted to the city by anyone, at any time, at no cost.

Per [AMC 19.16.040](#), a petition for an amendment to the comprehensive plan policies, the comprehensive plan land use map, or the development regulations must be filed with the PCED department on forms provided by the department, along with all fees required by the adopted fee schedule. The fee schedule adopted by City Council via [Resolution 3140](#) shows that the comprehensive plan "amendment petition submittal" fee is \$960, with an additional fee of \$1,870 paid within 14 days of the docketing Ordinance adoption, if docketed. I do not find anything in the code or fee schedule providing a different fee for amendment petitions submitted for docketing during a periodic update. As outlined in the [Public Participation Plan](#) adopted by City Council in Resolution 3156, the 2024 annual docket submittal deadline was extended to June 30 to allow more time for submittal of petitions. Those petitions received by June 30 will be considered for docketing as part of the 2025 periodic update. Petitions received for the 2025 annual docket will likely be deferred to 2026.

The petition submittal fee is intended to defray the costs of city staff time to process comprehensive plan amendment requests, including making a docket recommendation to city council based on the criteria outlined in [AMC 19.16.050\(B\)](#). These criteria include a consideration of whether the petition, in light of all proposed amendments being considered for inclusion the year's docket, can be reasonably reviewed within the staffing and operational budget allocated to the department by City Council. As the periodic update includes many mandatory updates due to new state legislation, it is important to have an understanding of the number and scope of amendment petitions submitted by the public early in the update process to ensure sufficient resources are allocated to complete the mandatory update on time.

Sincerely,

Libby Grage | City of Anacortes
Planning, Community & Economic Development Department
Planning Manager
P.O. Box 547 | 904 6th Street | Anacortes, WA 98221
360.299.1986 (work) | 360-661-3505 (work cell)
libbyb@cityofanacortes.org | www.cityofanacortes.org

My incoming and outgoing email messages are subject to public disclosure requirements per RCW 42.56.

-----Original Message-----

From: William Turner <bill.h.turner@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, June 25, 2024 2:08 PM

To: John Coleman <johnc@cityofanacortes.org>; Libby Grage <LibbyB@cityofanacortes.org>

Cc: turner sally <sallycturner@gmail.com>

Subject: Fee for comp plan amendments

***** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *****

As I said by phone yesterday, it is my belief the online fee structure is intended for requested specific changes to comp plan “between” the required 2016 and 2025 state required review. You will get very few comments or requests for changes with these fees. Your consultant, Makers, will agree.

I suggest you modify the requirements for comp plan changes, alert the public to this change and extend deadline after doing so. The State mandates public participation. This is not “pay to play.” This is a democracy. It is difficult to get participation sometimes, but this will be extremely negative to any outcome.

Sincerely, Bill Turner

Sent from my iPad

From: Ian Munce <ianmunce@gmail.com>
Date: July 1, 2025 at 3:02:04 PM PDT
To: Valerie Smith <valerie.smith@commerce.wa.gov>
Cc: Darcy Swetnam <darcys@anacorteswa.gov>
Subject: Re: Formal Protest at citizens being excluded from Submitting Recommendations for Comprehensive Plan Amendments-July 1, 2024 Citizen Comments

Dear Ms. Smith

Thank you for this timely response. It is very much appreciated. I just wanted to be sure of your position.

It just seems ridiculous to me that I should have to go to the GMHB on this but I guess I will have to schedule for this. It is just that if I prevail the only remedy will be for the City to start all over again.

It would be my earnest hope that any comments that your Department submits on the City's 2025 Periodic Update will somehow acknowledge that meaningful citizen input was not/may not have been included in the final version.

Thank you again.

Ian Munce, J.D., AICP

On Jul 1, 2025, at 2:46 PM, Smith, Valerie (COM) <valerie.smith@commerce.wa.gov> wrote:

Dear Mr. Munce,

Thank you for your message.

To clarify: general participation in a periodic update process should not require a fee. However, site-specific amendments or docketed proposals may be subject to the city's adopted procedures and associated fees. Jurisdictions may integrate their annual amendment process into the periodic update to ensure consistency and cumulative review.

Commerce's role under the Growth Management Act is advisory. While we encourage jurisdictions to ensure broad public access and transparency, we do not have enforcement authority. Concerns about public participation, proposal consideration, or local process implementation are more appropriately directed to the Growth Management Hearings Board.

Commerce is not withdrawing or modifying any prior guidance.

Thank you,
Valerie

Valerie Smith, AICP | DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR

Pronouns: [she/her/hers](#) | [Why I share my pronouns](#)

Growth Management Services | Washington State Department of Commerce
Olympia, WA

(desk) 360-725-3062 (cell) 360-259-0487

From: Ian Munce <ianmunce@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, June 30, 2025 3:34 PM

To: Smith, Valerie (COM) <valerie.smith@commerce.wa.gov>

Cc: Long, Lexine (COM) <lexine.long@commerce.wa.gov>; Holman, Carol (COM) <carol.holman@commerce.wa.gov>

Subject: Formal Protest at citizens being excluded from Submitting Recommendations for Comprehensive Plan Amendments-July 1, 2024 Citizen Comments

External Email

Dear Ms. Smith

This is just to let your Department know that despite your advise regarding the inappropriateness of charging a fee to participate in the 2025 CP/DR the City has made no adjustment(s). The Planning Commission is scheduled to release a draft CP next month without making any significant effort that I can locate to address citizen proposals. It is hard to tell because the Planning Commission minutes are trending about five months behind, but there appears to be no significant discussion regarding multiple citizen proposals.

I for one will be forced to appeal to the GMHB on the City's refusal to meaningfully engage the public contrary to the plain language of the statute and relevant case law. The only proposals that seem to have been considered by the Planning Commission are those forwarded by the City Council and recommended by City staff and consultants. I question whether this approach fulfills the terms of their GMA update grant from your Department.

I thought that I should advise that my case will begin with the fact that without explanation the City has declined to follow your advise regarding fees. So, if you wish to withdraw this advise I would like to know sooner rather than later.

Thank you.

Ian Munce, AICP

On Jun 26, 2024, at 9:20 AM, Smith, Valerie (COM) <valerie.smith@commerce.wa.gov> wrote:

That is not my understanding of the city's process.

If you are proposing a site specific map amendment, you would need to go through the process for the annual amendment, and pay the fee.

Otherwise, participation, recommendations, requests, and/or public comments will be reviewed consistent with the Public Participation Plan, with no fee required.

Thank you,
Valerie

Valerie Smith, AICP | DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR
Growth Management Services | Washington State Department of Commerce
Olympia, WA

Phone: 360-259-0487
<image001.gif>

www.commerce.wa.gov | [Facebook](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Subscribe](#)

Email communications with state employees are public records and may be subject to disclosure, pursuant to Ch. 42.56 RCW

From: Ian Munce <ianmunce@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 26, 2024 9:17 AM
To: Smith, Valerie (COM) <valerie.smith@commerce.wa.gov>
Subject: Re: Formal Protest at citizens being excluded from Submitting Recommendations for Comprehensive Plan Amendments-July 1, 2024 Citizen Comments

External Email

Valerie

Thanks for the prompt response.

However, my reading of the City documents is that they are attempting to apply the annual amendment process to the ten year update and impose \$3,000 fees for citizens to 'pay to play'. I think this is outrageous and something that I would like to submit a formal complaint to Commerce on if you will advise me of the proper procedure.

Ian

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 26, 2024, at 8:44 AM, Smith, Valerie (COM) <valerie.smith@commerce.wa.gov> wrote:

Good morning,

The city has a Public Participation Plan for the Comprehensive Plan Update project (attached).

The process you are referring to below is the annual amendment process, which is a little different. However, including the annual Comp Plan Amendments for consideration as part of the ten-year Update is consistent with Commerce's guidance on how to review amendments concurrently so cumulative impacts can be ascertained (RCW 36.70A.040)

Thank you,

Valerie

Valerie Smith, AICP | DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR
Growth Management Services | Washington State Department of Commerce
Olympia, WA

Phone: 360-259-0487

<image001.gif>

www.commerce.wa.gov | [Facebook](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Subscribe](#)

Email communications with state employees are public records and may be subject to disclosure, pursuant to Ch. 42.56 RCW

From: Ian Munce <ianmunce@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, June 26, 2024 8:05 AM

To: Smith, Valerie (COM) <valerie.smith@commerce.wa.gov>

Subject: Fwd: Formal Protest at citizens being excluded from Submitting Recommendations for Comprehensive Plan Amendments-July 1, 2024 Citizen Comments

External Email

Good day, Ms. Smith

I believe that some early guidance from Commerce would be helpful.

Thank you.

Ian Munce, AICP

Begin forwarded message:

From: Ian Munce <ianmunce@gmail.com>

Date: June 26, 2024 at 7:58:16 AM PDT

To: CityClerk <cityclerk@cityofanacortes.org>

Cc: Dave Andersen <dave.andersen@commerce.wa.gov>, Lexine Long
<lexine.long@commerce.wa.gov>

Subject: Formal Protest at citizens being excluded from Submitting Recommendations for Comprehensive Plan Amendments-July 1, 2024 Citizen Comments

Good day,

I write to file a formal protest at the City excluding regular citizens in general, and me in particular, from participating in the regular ten year Comprehensive Plan update due to:

1. The fees required, \$960 initially and \$1870 later, presumably for each discrete language change.
2. The notion that the City Council will pick and choose which proposals will receive full consideration before the Planning Commission.

This approach may have some merit as part of the annual amendment process if a map amendment is proposed. However, I submit that it is illegitimate for the regular, State mandated ten year thorough review of a jurisdiction's Comprehensive Plan. It violates the Growth Management Act's mandate for meaningful 'early and continuous' public participation' and, I suspect, the terms of the State grant. It is also irresponsible as it just creates grounds for appeals to the Growth Management Hearings Board once the Comprehensive Plan is adopted in 2025: will the City be directed to start over?

Please open an additional submittal period for Comprehensive Plan language changes and please do not require any filing fee for such proposals. As there does not appear to be a filing fee, I will be filing proposed Development Regulation changes.

Ian Munce, AICP
1711 Quail Drive
Anacortes

<Resolution 3156-PPP-executed.pdf>

From: Ryan Walters <ryanw@cityofanacortes.org>
Date: June 28, 2024 at 3:13:05 PM PDT
To: Ian Munce <ianmunce@gmail.com>
Cc: Bill Turner <bill.h.turner@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: Formal Protest at citizens being excluded from Submitting Recommendations for Comprehensive Plan Amendments-July 1, 2024 Citizen Comments

Ian, I concur; I do not see a fee listed in our unified fee schedule for development regulation amendments. At our next update of the fee schedule I will advocate for clarity that comp plan policy amendments either have a zero or nominal fee.

Bill, let me know if you want to talk about your comp plan amendment proposal.

Ryan Walters, JD, AICP
Anacortes City Councilmember, Ward 1

mobile 360-610-7770

From: Ian Munce <ianmunce@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 28, 2024 3:04 PM
To: Ryan Walters <ryanw@cityofanacortes.org>
Cc: Bill Turner <bill.h.turner@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: Formal Protest at citizens being excluded from Submitting Recommendations for Comprehensive Plan Amendments-July 1, 2024 Citizen Comments

Good afternoon, Ryan

I have framed my 11 requests as amendments to the development regulations. So, under the City's system I don't believe that I can be assed a fee. Bill Turner, on the other hand, does have comprehensive plan changes that he is attempting to move forward without a fee. I understand, informally, that Commerce may have a problem with a \$3,000 fee to 'pay to play'.

I understand the docketing process for annual comprehensive plan amendments that involve a map change but think it is totally inappropriate for a periodic review. And will so advocate.

Thank you for the curtesy of a response. It really is appreciated. It does move the discussion forward.

Ian

On Jun 28, 2024, at 2:44 PM, Ryan Walters <ryanw@cityofanacortes.org> wrote:

Ian,

I agree it's undesirable to require such an exorbitant fee for members of the public to submit policy amendments. I've raised this objection with other councilmembers and planning staff.

Staff tell me that councilmembers are not subject to the fee. If you want, send me your completed application form and I'll take a look. I certainly don't promise to advocate for it, but could help get it into the hopper.

Docketing is a process laid out in our code, envisioned by GMA, and it's very standard among jurisdictions. I don't advocate any changes to that, and don't think it's a problem.

Ryan Walters, JD, AICP
Anacortes City Councilmember, Ward 1

mobile 360-610-7770

From: Ian Munce <ianmunce@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 26, 2024 4:05 PM
To: City Council <citycouncil@cityofanacortes.org>
Subject: Fwd: Formal Protest at citizens being excluded from Submitting Recommendations for Comprehensive Plan Amendments-July 1, 2024 Citizen Comments

***** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *****

Good day,

I submitted this public comment at 8:00 am this morning with the expectation that it would be in the agenda package, but I was wrong. I include it below because you might want to consider the issues before Monday night. Thank you.

Ian Munce

From: Ian Munce <ianmunce@gmail.com>
Date: June 26, 2024 at 7:58:16 AM PDT
To: CityClerk <cityclerk@cityofanacortes.org>
Cc: Dave Andersen <dave.andersen@commerce.wa.gov>, Lexine Long <lexine.long@commerce.wa.gov>
Subject: Formal Protest at citizens being excluded from Submitting Recommendations for Comprehensive Plan Amendments-July 1, 2024 Citizen Comments

Good day,

I write to file a formal protest at the City excluding regular citizens in general, and me in particular, from participating in the regular ten year Comprehensive Plan update due to:

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2. The notion that the City Council will pick and choose which proposals will receive full consideration before the Planning Commission.

This approach may have some merit as part of the annual amendment process if a map amendment is proposed. However, I submit that it is illegitimate for the regular, State mandated ten year thorough review of a jurisdiction's Comprehensive Plan. It violates the Growth Management Act's mandate for meaningful 'early and continuous' public participation' and, I suspect, the terms of the State grant. It is also irresponsible as it just creates grounds for appeals to the Growth Management Hearings Board once the Comprehensive Plan is adopted in 2025: will the City be

directed to start over?

Please open an additional submittal period for Comprehensive Plan language changes and please do not require any filing fee for such proposals. As there does not appear to be a filing fee, I will be filing proposed Development Regulation changes.

Ian Munce, AICP
1711 Quail Drive
Anacortes

From: debndan Call <debndan91@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, August 24, 2025 4:22 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Questions

**** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. ****

Hello,

The plan isn't a short simple read, so i'm hoping it is good stuff for the people of Anacortes, not just for the politicians and money.

The LEG-2024-05 - add all city-owned ACFL parcels to the Urban Growth Area.

What does that mean? Walters assured me no ACFL was going to be affected, but what's this? That certainly sounds like trashing the forest lands for 'growth' of more houses!

And what sowa the LWWF-2024-12 mean when it says "Change from Residential Medium Density to Public?

What does that mean?

I'm sure there's much more I would have comments on, but you don't make it short and simple, which to me means hiding stuff from the public.

Deb Call

From: Joe Arellano <mindflo1951@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, August 24, 2025 12:07 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Affordable Senior housing

**** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. ****

Dear Comp/plan commission,
As independent seniors we are very much in favor of possible tiny home communities 400 sq feet sized homes for independent seniors. Your rendition of the tiny home community with a community meeting area pictured in your announcement is very attractive to us.

A mailed notice of middle housing options near our home would be appreciated.

Thank you.

Respectively,

Joe and Billie Arellano

From: Gail Stetson <gailastetson@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, August 23, 2025 1:05 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Anacortes growth

***** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *****

For a small town, Anacortes is very dense. I was shocked to hear we have 18,000 ADUs! While this is an efficient use of space, we all moved here for a reason. We wanted a small town where you didn't live check by jowl. I am completely against allowing duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes or tiny homes. I understand that real estate is an important industry, but buying and selling and renting the pre-existing dwellings is a fairly healthy business here as people move here to retire then die, move to assisted living or to be near children. We also have a significant number of Navy folks moving in then out again. I am sure you care about Anacortes. Please preserve this wonderful small town.

Thank you for reading this,

Gail Stetson

Skyline

From: Ky Huggins <ky.huggins@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 22, 2025 3:06 PM
To: Comp Plan
Subject: Comprehensive Plan - 202X

***** This email is from outside the City of Anacortes network. Please use caution when clicking on links, opening attachments, or replying. *****

Good Afternoon-

Some comments on the proposed plan

Page 13:

- Pursue Environmental...
 - Keep bullet points 1, 2 and 5. Delete 3 and 4

Page 35:

- LU 4.7
 - What about incentives to achieve this worthwhile goal. Reduction of property tax as trade off. Proof/reporting required.

Pages 36-38:

- LU-5 and LU-6
 - Good stuff!!

Pages 46-50:

- Housing
 - Thoughtful changes. Well done.

Page 64:

- EC-8
 - Agree. Section was redundant and should be stricken

Page 66:

- EC-13
 - Agree. This is not the role of a small WA city.

Pages 96-103:

- Capital Facilities

- Mostly good, however
 - CF 1.2 appears to have LOTS of room for subjective interpretation. Lots of lawsuits nationally over similar rules

Pages 109-122:

- When I read " a group of city and local agency staff, elected officials, local business leaders, and community members volunteered their time as part of an advisory Climate Team" I was on edge. Point of fact: I am not, nor have I ever been, a "climate change denier". I believe the climate is changing and I believe it has always changed. Harken back to "The Little Ice Age" roughly 1300-1850. No ICE automobiles, diesel trucks. The two questions that remain unresolved (science is never settled) are 1: To what extent does human activity effect changes in climate and 2: What costs should we bear if we believe we can impact the rate of climate change. Not sure a panel of volunteers in our community is prepared or qualified to answer either question although I'm sure there was a consensus on #1 - a lot.

By way of closing, I have never voted for Donald Trump, Hilary Clinton, Joe Biden or Kamala Harris. ;-)

I recognize that this Comprehensive Plan took an amazing amount of planning, discussion and coordination and for that the participants are to be commended.

Best regards,

--

C.E. "Ky" Huggins III



Planning Commission Agenda Bill

Meeting Date: September 10, 2025

Agenda Item: 6.a.

Subject: 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update - Development Regulation Amendments (Discussion)

Staff Contact: Libby Grage, John Coleman

Approved for Submittal to Commission by

Libby Grage
John Coleman

Action Type

Discussion

Summary Statement: Staff will present information about development regulation amendments being considered as part of the 2025 periodic update. Discussion and feedback from the commission is requested.

Background: See attached memo.

Previous Action: See attached memo.

Competing Viewpoints Considered:

Recommended Motion: None - discussion only.

Alternative Actions:

Attachments (listed in order presented):

1. 9/5/25 Staff Memo - Summary of Development Regulation Amendments
2. Attachment A to 9/5/25 Staff Memo



Date: September 5, 2025

To: Planning Commission

From: Planning, Community & Economic Development (PCED) Department

Re: 2025 Comprehensive Plan & Development Regulations Update
Development Regulation Amendments - summary

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to identify and summarize key development regulation amendments that the City is considering as part of the 2025 periodic update process.

Potential amendments based on the requirements of the Growth Management Act (GMA) and the City's local needs, as determined through the docketing process and public participation. This document outlines both mandatory and docketed amendments currently under consideration.

The following is a summary of both the mandatory and docketed amendments under consideration as part of the City's periodic update:

Summary of Proposed Amendments

Mandatory (Required by GMA)

To maintain compliance with recent changes in state law, the City must update its development regulations to address the following topics:

- Zoning for sufficient land capacity for all income housing needs
- Permanent supportive and transitional housing
- Indoor emergency shelters and housing
- Limits on city regulation of the number of unrelated persons that occupy a household or dwelling unit
- Co-living housing
- Residential parking requirement limits
- Creation of additional housing units in existing buildings
- Accessory dwelling units
- Affordable housing on property owned by religious organizations
- Impact fees
- Transportation concurrency

- Critical areas regulations.

2025 Docket ([Resolution 3161](#))

The City Council has also docketed the following items for consideration during the 2025 update:

- Streamlining permit review process
- Revisions to regulations affecting the Marine Supply building block
- Updates to street standards
- Implementation of recommendations from the 2023 Anacortes Housing Action Plan
- Review of permitted uses in the Industrial zone
- Amendments to Marine Mixed Use zone regulations east of Q Ave.
- Driveway cut width standards
- Balcony projection allowances
- Shared roof deck provisions
- Indoor recreation uses in the LM1 zone
- Completion of unfinished 2021 docket items

Draft Amendments and Planning Commission Review

Notably, 2025 Docket Item LEG-2024-20 directs the City to consider regulatory changes that implement strategies from the 2023 Housing Action Plan (HAP), aimed at improving housing affordability, availability and diversity. Over the past year, the Planning Commission has been actively reviewing potential amendments aligned with these goals.

A [DISCUSSION DRAFT](#) of proposed HAP-related amendments (with tracked changes) was released and reviewed by the Planning Commission at meetings over the past year. This draft is currently being updated to reflect all proposed changes, including non-housing-related amendments, and will be available prior to the next Planning Commission meeting.

Key Proposed Changes by Code Division

Organization

AMC Title 19 - Unified Development Code is organized into the following Divisions:

- Division 1. General and Legislative Provisions
- Division 2. Procedures
- Division 3. Permits
- Division 4. Zoning and Land Uses
- Division 5. Community Design
- Division 6. Project Design
- Division 7. Environment
- Division 8. Development Agreements

Each Division is further divided into Chapters. The tables in the following section summarize proposed updates by Division and Chapter, including:

- Chapter numbers and titles
- A summary of proposed changes
- The associated docket item number, statutory citation, HAP-strategy number, or other rationale for each amendment.

Some rows are marked “[PC Review Item – See Attachment A](#)” indicating items scheduled for discussion at upcoming Planning Commission Meetings. Other items within the tables have been previously reviewed and discussed by the Commission at prior meetings.

Attachment A provides additional details about the PC Review Items, including draft amendment text when available.

Division 1 – General and Legislative Provisions

Division 1 contains general provisions for administration of Title 19, definitions, interpretation, adopted international codes and local amendments, and procedures for legislative actions.

Contents & Update Summary

Division/ Chapter	Title	Proposed Updates Summary	Docket item number, HAP strategy #, legislation addressed, or other rationale
Title 19, Division 1 – General and Legislative Provisions			
19.10	General Provisions	None	N/A
19.12	Definitions & Interpretation	Add housing-related terms, definitions, and cross-references	Various
		Revise “Family” definition	HAP 2.5.1 RCW 35A.21.314 (2021)
19.14	International Codes	None	N/A
19.16	Legislative Actions	None	N/A

Division 2 – Procedures

Division 2 contains the land use permit application procedures, including the type of review, decision and appeal process for each permit type. It also includes permit revision and expiration provisions, and concurrency review provisions.

Contents & Update Summary

Division/ Chapter	Title	Proposed Updates Summary	Docket item number, HAP strategy #, legislation addressed, or other rationale
Title 19, Division 2 - Procedures			
19.20		PC Review Item – See Att. A	LEG-2024-17

	Application Procedures	Change certain shoreline substantial development permit applications from Type 3-PC and Type 4 to Type 2 or Type 3-HE decisions	
		PC Review Item – See Att. A Change CUPs from Type 4 to Type 3-HE decision	LEG-2024-17
		PC Review Item – See Att. A Change Type 2 (local/inter-local facilities) essential public facilities to a Type 3-HE decision	LEG-2024-17
		PC Review Item – See Att. A Change land divisions 10+ lots from Type 4 to Type 3-HE decision	Staff
		Vesting provisions updates	2021 Docket
19.22	Concurrency	PC Review Item – See Att. A May not deny proposals based on LOS failure if impacts could be mitigated through active transportation or other strategies	2021 Docket RCW 36.70A.070(6)(b)
19.24	Essential Public Facilities	None needed.	SB 5536 (2023) -adds opioid treatment programs to list of EPFs (RCW 36.70A.200)
19.28	Permit Revision & Expiration	None	N/A

Division 3 – Permits

Division 3 contains purpose, applicability, and review criteria for different permit types, including site plan review, land divisions, boundary line adjustments, conditional uses and variances.

Contents & Update Summary

Division/Chapter	Title	Proposed Updates Summary	Docket item number, HAP strategy #, legislation addressed, or other rationale
Title 19, Division 3 – Permits			
19.30	Site Plan Review	None	N/A
19.32	Land Divisions	None	N/A
19.34	Boundary Line Adjustments	None	N/A
19.36	Conditional Uses	None	N/A
19.38	Variances	None	N/A

Division 4 – Zoning and Land Uses

Division 4 contains descriptions and purpose of each zone, each zone’s allowed uses and form and intensity standards, definitions and standards for residential, commercial, industrial, and public/institutional/open space uses, accessory uses/structures, provisions for accessory dwelling units, temporary uses, and nonconforming situations.

Contents & Update Summary

Division/ Chapter	Title	Proposed Updates Summary	Docket item number, HAP strategy #, legislation addressed, or other rationale
Title 19, Division 4 – Zoning and Land Uses			
19.40	Zones	None	N/A
19.41	Allowed Uses	RESIDENTIAL ZONES	
		R1 - Allow cottages in R1	HAP 2.1.1
		R2A - Allow triplexes & townhouses (up to 4 units) in R2A (only on alley loaded lots, subject to max. unit size)	HAP 2.1.3
		Old Town – Allow triplexes & townhouses (up to 4 units) in Old Town (only on alley loaded lots, subject to max. unit size) Allow rooming houses as (P) instead of (C) in OT	PC suggestion HAP 2.1.9
		R3, R3A – Allow assisted living as (P) permitted instead of (C) conditional in R3, R3A Allow “rooming houses” as (P) instead of (C) in R3 and R3A	HAP 2.1.5 HAP 2.1.9
		R4A – Allow assisted living as (P) permitted instead of (C) conditional in R4A Allow Co-housing living in R4A	HAP 2.1.5 HAP 2.1.9; HB 1998 (2024)
		R4 – Allow nursing homes as (P) instead of (C) in R4 Allow Co-housing living in R4 Prohibit new SFRs on lots > 6,000 sq. ft.	HAP 2.1.5 HAP 2.1.9; HB 1998 (2024) HAP 2.1.7
		All residential zones - Allow permanent supportive housing and transitional housing in all residential zones	ESSHB 1220 (2021)
		MIXED USE & INDUSTRIAL ZONES	

		Add supportive housing types (STEP) as permitted uses in CBD, C, MMU, and CM zones	HAP 2.1.10
		PC Review Item – See Att. A Under new state law, SB 5509 (2025) , Day Care I and II facilities must be an outright permitted use in all zones except industrial zones or light industrial zones (where the city must provide for conditional use approval of on-site childcare center, except in or around high hazard facilities). Adoption deadline is generally July 2027.	SB 5509 (2025) LEG-2024-21
		PC Review Item – See Att. A Allow indoor recreation in LM 1 zone	LEG-2024-29 (Bowman)
		PC Review Item – See Att. A Allow indoor recreation, heavy service, and self-service storage in Industrial zone	LEG-2024-21 (MJB)
19.42	Form and Intensity Standards	Adjust form and intensity standards to improve the physical and economic feasibility of building small homes, multifamily housing, and affordable housing	HAP 2.4
		Min. lot sizes - Reduce minimum lot sizes for duplexes and area needed for each additional attached dwelling in R2, R2A, R3, R3A, R4 and R4A zones. Link reduced duplex lot sizes to caps on unit gross floor area	HAP 2.4.1
		Min. lot size calculations – add RMZs to the areas excluded from minimum lot size calculations	Staff
		Max. lot coverage – Increase from 50% to 60% in R4 and R4A zones	HAP 2.4.2
		Min. density standards – Add minimum density for R4 zone	HAP 2.4.4
		Max. density standards – Remove the use of maximum density standards from remaining residential zones, except R1, and rely on minimum lot size standards and permitted uses	HAP 2.4.4
		Street Setbacks – Reduce minimum street setback for R2A, R3 and R3A from 20’ to 15’	HAP 2.4.5

		Side Setbacks – Reduce minimum interior side setbacks for upper floors in R3, R3A, R4 and R4A, from 7.5’ to 5’	HAP 2.4.5
		Height bonus – Adjust small unit bonus height provisions to increase max. unit size from 600 sf to 650 sf	HAP 2.4.6
		Elevator penthouse – Increase height allowance for elevator penthouse structures	HAP 2.4.7
		PC Review Item – See Att. A Bonus incentives in MMU zone (east of Q); REQUEST: Amend Figure 19.42.070(4) to change the minimum developer-provided public park space area to qualify for bonus incentives from 10,000 to 5,000 sf; do not require dedication to the city.	LEG-2024-22
		PC Review Item – See Att. A MMU maximum north/south oriented building width limitation standards. REQUEST: Amend 19.42.120(C)(5)(c) to eliminate the 150’ maximum width in the north/south orientation for buildings taller than four stories or more than 50’ tall.	LEG-2024-23 (MJB)
19.43	Residential Uses	PC Review Item – See Att. A Horizontal stepback requirement for CBD and MMU zones REQUEST: 19.42.120(C)(7) to remove or clarify the requirement for buildings exceeding the maximum base height that there be a minimum 8’ horizontal stepback along at least 75% of the facade somewhere between the ground floor and top floor.	LEG-2024-25 (MJB)
		Cottages - Allow duplex cottages in all zones where cottages are permitted	HAP 2.1.8
		PC Review Item – See Att. A Rooming house –consider updating definition and use standards	HAP 2.1.9
		PC Review Item – See Att. A Co-living housing – add housing type and use standards	HAP 2.1.9; ESHB 1998 (2024)
		Supportive housing – add new housing category, including emergency housing, emergency shelter, permanent supportive housing and transitional housing (STEP Housing)	HAP 2.1.10; ESSHB 1220 (2021)

		Townhouse open space - adjust required dimensions	HAP 2.5.5
		PC Review Item – See Att. A Adjust single-purpose residential use limitation calculations REQUEST: Amend AMC 19.43.010(G)(3)(C) and AMC 19.43.010(H)(3)(b) and 19.43.020(C)(3)(b) [new code citations are 19.43.070 (townhouses) and 19.43.080 (multifamily)] to exclude associated landscaping and open space areas from the maximum site area coverage (60%) permitted for single-purpose residential or assisted living uses.	LEG-2024-25 (MJB)
19.44	Commercial Uses	PC Review Item – See Att. A Amend MS zone to ensure replacement of Marine Supply building is consistent with the main street downtown core 19.44.120 – Retail sales. Add an MS zone-specific retail use standard permitting up to 6,000/8,000 sq. ft. NFA outright on ground floor abutting Commercial Ave. south of 2 nd St.	LEG-2024-18
19.45	Industrial Uses	None	N/A
19.46	Public, Institutional, and Open Space Uses	None	N/A
19.47	Accessory Uses and Structures	Revise ADU regulations to comply with state law. See PC Draft.	HAP 2.3; HB 1337 (2023)
19.48	Temporary Uses	None	N/A
19.49	Nonconforming Uses and Structures	None	N/A

Division 5 – Community Design

Division 5 contains provisions for street improvement requirements, street design standards, requirements for private driveways and access, subdivision design standards, and provisions for undergrounding utilities.

Contents & Update Summary

Division/Chapter	Title	Proposed Updates Summary	Docket item number, HAP strategy #,
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			legislation addressed, or other rationale
Title 19, Division 5 – Community Design			
19.50	Introduction		
19.51	Public Street Improvements Required	Update street cross sections and add active transportation network map.	LEG-2024-19
19.52	Public Street Design		2021 Docket – C5, C6, C7, C8
19.53	Private Driveways and Access	Driveway cut widths	LEG-2024-26 (MJB):
		Driveway location	2021 Docket
19.54	Subdivision Design and Block Structure	None	
19.59	Underground Utilities	None	

Division 6 – Project Design

Division 6 contains standards for the planning and design of development projects, including site and building design, parking, landscaping, fences, signs and other general standards. The Wireless Communicating Facilities provisions are also located in this division.

Contents & Update Summary

Division/ Chapter	Title	Proposed Updates Summary	Docket item number, HAP strategy #, legislation addressed, or other rationale
AMC Title 19, Division 6 – Project Design			
19.60	Introduction	None	N/A
19.61	Block Frontage Standards	Clarify applicability of standards to townhouses	HAP 2.5.2
		Clarify “undesigned” block frontage requirements	HAP 2.5.3
19.62	Site Planning	Clarify applicability of standards to townhouses	HAP 2.5.2
		Adjust required amount and design of usable open space for multifamily development	HAP 2.5.4

		Service areas and mechanical equipment – clarify applicability and offer more flexibility	HAP 2.5.7
		PC Review Item – See Att. A Adjust provisions for balcony projections allowance and shared roof decks REQUEST: Amend AMC 19.62.030(C) to clarify balcony setbacks requirements for units that have their only solar access (windows) facing an interior side property line	LEG-2024-27 (MJB)
		PC Review Item – See Att. A Shared roof decks REQUEST: Amend AMC 19.62.040(B)(1)(e) to allow multifamily buildings in a horizontal mixed-use development to fulfill 100% of their required internal open space requirement with shared roof decks	LEG-2024-28 (MJB)
19.63	Building Design	Clarify applicability of standards to townhouses	HAP 2.5.2
		Revise articulation standards to improve clarity	HAP 2.5.8
		Building materials – clarify applicability of durable materials on ground floor	HAP 2.5.9
		Blank walls – update standards to reduce construction cost impacts	HAP 2.5.10
		PC Review Item – See Att. A Add residential use parking standards per state law	SB 6015 (2024)
		PC Review Item – See Att. A Guest parking – waive guest parking requirements in certain areas or remove requirements for MF housing	HAP 2.6.3
		Revise off-street parking standards for middle housing and affordable housing Waive parking requirements for affordable housing in the CBD zone	HAP 2.6.1 SB 6015 (2024)
		Add off-street parking requirements for living housing and supportive housing	HAP 2.1.10
		PC Review Item – See Att. A Update dimensional standards for parking space layout to comply with SB 6015 (2024)	SB 6015 (2024)
19.65	Landscaping	Parking lot landscaping – simplify planting area widths	HAP 2.5.6

19.66	Fences, Walls and Hedges	TBD	2021 Docket – C10: fence permits, repair and maintenance
19.67	Signs	TBD	2021 Docket – C11: housekeeping and noncommercial temporary signs
19.68	Wireless Service Facilities	None	N/A
19.69	Standards, Generally	None	N/A

Division 7 – Environment

Division 7 contains standards for critical areas, floodplain management, stormwater management and clearing and grading.

Contents & Update Summary

Division/Chapter	Title	Proposed Updates Summary	Docket item number, HAP strategy #, legislation addressed, or other rationale
AMC Title 19, Division 7 – Environment			
19.70	Critical Areas	None currently.	Review and update is required as part of the 2025 periodic update. This work is in process and will be completed before the end of 2026.
19.71	Shorelines	None	N/A
19.74	Floodplain Management	None	N/A
19.76	Stormwater	None	N/A
19.78	Clearing & Grading	None	N/A

Division 8 – Development Agreements

Division 8 contains provisions for development agreements.

Contents & Update Summary

Division/Chapter	Title	Proposed Updates Summary	Docket item number, HAP strategy #, legislation addressed, or other rationale
Title 19, Division 8 – Development Agreements			

19.80	Development Agreements	None	N/A
19.82	Development Agreement for Port-Owned Property	None	N/A

Next Steps

Over the next several meetings, staff will present information about the amendments listed in the above tables that have not previously been reviewed /discussed by the Planning Commission. A complete draft of the development regulation amendments will be released for public review and comment no later than September 10. A Planning Commission public hearing is tentatively scheduled for October 22, 2025.

Attachment A

Development Regulation Amendments – Key Discussion Items

This document corresponds to the tables in the 9/5/25 Staff memo summarizing development regulation amendments under consideration during the 2025 periodic update.

AMC Title 19, Division 1 – General & Legislative Provisions

None

AMC Title 19, Division 2 – Procedures

Ch. 19.20 Application Procedures

1. LEG-2024-17 – Streamline permit review

Proposal Summary: The City should amend AMC 19.20.030, Types of Review, to expedite minor permit applications. [View full text of proposal here.](#)

Staff Comments: Staff recommend the following changes to AMC Table 19.20.030-1. Shoreline substantial development permits are proposed to move to a Type 2 Administrative decision type, with Shoreline CUP and Shoreline Variances moving to a Type 3-HE decision. (Consider whether there should be a local appeal available for shoreline CUPs or shoreline variance decisions by the HE – they go to Ecology for approval after the City’s final decision, then there is a 21-day Ecology appeal period, with appeals going to the Shoreline Hearings Board).

Proposed amendment text:

Table 19.20.030-1

Review classification and process matrix

Types of Review	Type 1 Administrative Ministerial Actions	Type 2 Administrative Decisions	Type 3-HE Hearing Examiner Decisions	Type 3-PC Planning Commission Decisions	Type 4 City Council Decisions
Types of Applications	• Accessory dwelling units • Assessment of impact fees per AMC Chapter 3.93 • Boundary line adjustments • Building, mechanical, and plumbing permits • Clearing and grading permits	• Administrative conditional use permits, including home occupation permits • Binding site plans, less than 10 lots • Critical area permit – Permitted alteration • Level 1 variances	• Binding site plans, 10 or more lots • Conditional use permits, except administrative CUPs • Critical area variance – Reasonable use exception	• Shoreline conditional use and variance permits • Shoreline substantial development permits (SSDP) for projects valued less	• Binding site plans, 10 or more lots • Conditional use permits, except administrative CUPs • Essential public facilities, Types 1 and 2

Types of Review	Type 1 Administrative Ministerial Actions	Type 2 Administrative Decisions	Type 3-HE Hearing Examiner Decisions	Type 3-PG Planning Commission Decisions	Type 4 City Council Decisions
	• Critical area letter of exemption • Extension of time for approval • Fence permits • Minor permit revisions • Shoreline exemptions • Sign permits • Site plan review, less than 10 dwelling units, less than 12,000 sq. ft. of nonresidential gross floor area, or less than 20,000 sq. ft. of nonresidential site improvements	• Preliminary short subdivisions • SEPA threshold determinations • <u>Shoreline substantial development permits (SSDP)</u> • Site plan review, 10 or more dwelling units, 12,000 sq. ft. or more of nonresidential gross floor area, or 20,000 sq. ft. or more of nonresidential site improvements • Stormwater Management Manual exceptions	• <u>Essential public facilities, Type 2</u> • Level 2 variances • <u>Preliminary long subdivisions</u> • <u>Shoreline conditional use and variance permits</u> • Zone boundary determination	• than \$1,000,000 on-site less than three acres	• Framework development plans • Preliminary long subdivisions • Site-specific rezones authorized by the comprehensive plan • Shoreline substantial development permits (SSDP) for projects valued at \$1,000,000 or more or on-site of three acres or more
Pre-Application Conference	At discretion of Director	At discretion of Director	Yes <u>At discretion of Director</u>	Yes	Yes
Pre-Application Neighborhood Meeting	No	No, except may be required for short subdivisions, binding site plans, and site plan review a <u>At discretion of Director</u>	Yes <u>At discretion of Director</u>	Yes	Yes
Notice of Application	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Comment Period	None	14 days (<u>30 days for shoreline permits</u>)	21 days (<u>30 days for shoreline permits</u>)	21 days (30 for shoreline permits)	21 days (<u>30 for shoreline permits</u>)
Rec. By	None	None	Director	Director	Planning Commission
Pre-Decision Open Record Public Hearing	No	No	Yes, before Hearing Examiner	Yes, before Planning Commission	Yes, before Planning Commission
Closed Record Decision Hearing	No	No	No	No	Yes, before City Council
Decision By	Director	Director	Hearing Examiner	Planning Commission	City Council

Types of Review	Type 1 Administrative Ministerial Actions	Type 2 Administrative Decisions	Type 3-HE Hearing Examiner Decisions	Type 3-PG Planning Commission Decisions	Type 4 City Council Decisions
Notice of Decision	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Local Appeal Available To	Hearing Examiner	Hearing Examiner	City Council	City Council	None
Appeal Hearing Type	Open record	Open record	Closed record	Closed record	N/A

Ch. 19.22 Concurrency

1. 2021 Docket Item C3

Proposal Summary: The proposed amendment is to add language regarding Director establishment of an administrative concurrency facilities review and monitoring program and to add application requirements and review fee language.

Staff Comments: Staff will be providing an updated recommendation soon.

2. RCW 36.70A.070(6)(b)

Proposal Summary: We may need to amend the concurrency provisions may to address new state law requirements within this statute.

Statute excerpt: “...A development proposal may not be denied for causing the level of service on a locally owned or locally or regionally operated transportation facility to decline below the standards adopted in the transportation element of the comprehensive plan where such impacts could be adequately mitigated through active transportation facility improvements, increased or enhanced public transportation service, ride-sharing programs, demand management, or other transportation systems management strategies funded by the development.”

Staff Comments: Staff is reviewing whether we need to amend the code to implement this new requirement regarding transportation concurrency. Staff will provide an updated recommendation soon.

AMC Title 19, Division 3 – Permits

None

AMC Title 19, Division 4 – Zoning and Land Uses

Ch. 19.41 Allowed Uses

1. Co-Living Housing

Proposal Summary: HB 1998 (2024) requires cities to allow co-housing living wherever multifamily with 6+ units are allowed by right currently. The city may not require any standards for co-living housing that are more restrictive than these that are required for other types of multifamily residential uses in the same zone. *Sleeping units in co-living housing may not be treated as more than ½ a dwelling unit for purposes of calculating fees for sewer connections, unless city makes findings based on facts that fees should exceed the ½ threshold.*

Staff Comments: Permit co-living housing as shown below.

Potential amendment text:

Table 19.41.040

Principal uses permitted in residential zones.

Principal Use	R1	R2	R2 A	R3	R3 A	R4	R4 A	OT	Reference & special use limitations
Rooming houses				P	P	P	P	P	AMC 19.43.150
<u>Co-housing living</u>						<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>		<u>AMC 19.43.160</u>

Table 19.41.050

Principal uses permitted in mixed-use and industrial zones.

Principal Use	CBD	C	MMU	CM	CM2	LM	LM1	MS	I	HM	Reference
<u>Co-living housing</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>				<u>P^(x)</u>			<u>AMC 19.43.160</u> <u>^(x) in LM, only west</u> <u>of Commercial,</u> <u>south of 2nd St.</u>

2. LEG-2024-21 and SB 5509 regarding childcare facilities

Proposal Summary: LEG-2024-21 requests that daycares be permitted in the Industrial zone. Under SB 5509, Day Care I and II facilities must be an outright permitted use in all zones except industrial zones or light industrial zones (where the city must provide for conditional use approval of on-site childcare center, except in or around high hazard facilities). Adoption deadline is generally July 2027.

Staff Comments: Recommend allowing in all zones, subject to zone-specific use standards in industrial zones to address compatibility and safety issues. Staff will be providing an updated recommendation soon.

Potential amendment text:

Table 19.41.050

Principal uses permitted in mixed-use and industrial zones.

Principal Use	CBD	C	MMU	CM	CM2	LM	LM1	MS	I	HM	Reference
Day Care , as listed below											AMC 19.44.010(A)
Day care I facilities	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	AMC 19.44.010(B)
Day care II facilities	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	AMC 19.44.010(B)

3. LEG-2024-29 regarding indoor recreation uses in LM1 zone

Proposal Summary: The request is to allow indoor recreation uses in the LM1 zone.

Staff Comments: Consider whether zone-specific use standards or conditions are needed to manage conflicts w/ industrial uses (parking, etc.). Should some recreation uses still be prohibited – such as theaters or pools, etc.

Potential amendment text:

Table 19.41.050

Principal uses permitted in mixed-use and industrial zones.

Principal Use	CBD	C	MMU	CM	CM2	LM	LM1	MS	I	HM	Reference
Recreation, Indoor as listed below and based on net floor area (NFA)											AMC 19.44.090(A)
<10,000 sq. ft. NFA	P	P	P	P			P		P		Reference to special restrictions

4. LEG-2024-21- uses in the Industrial zone

Proposal Summary: The request is to allow indoor recreation, heavy service, and self-service storage in the Industrial zone.

Staff Comments: The merit of these requests depends on how much industrial land should be preserved for purely industrial purposes versus opening up more flexibility. The HAP notes that long-term supply and demand should be reviewed to provide the City more confidence in industrial trends and its zoning direction. Restrictions may be warranted within some distance of the shoreline to preserve working waterfront access, or use the Tommy Thompson Trail as a reference.

- Indoor recreation could potentially be an appropriate option, especially for athletic uses adapting vacant or underutilized industrial buildings. This is a recent trend in the Puget Sound metro, e.g. pickleball courts, indoor volleyball, and gymnastics. Conditions could manage conflicts with industrial use; e.g. parking is likely to have higher demand than the previous use. Consider if restrictions on certain uses like theatres or pools would be appropriate.
- Heavy service could be compatible with the zone's purpose of "...manufacturing and closely related uses in areas with existing industrial uses..." as the minimum 15,000 square feet of outdoor activity might mitigate concerns about opening up the zone too much.
- Self-service storage should likely be avoided since it is more a residential/commercial activity with very low job density.

Staff will provide a recommendation at next PC meeting.

Ch. 19.42 Form and Intensity Standards

1. 2025 Docket Items # LEG-2024-22, LEG-2024-23, LEG-2024-25

Proposal Summary: The requests are to:

Amend Figure 19.42.070(4) to change the minimum developer-provided public park space area to qualify for bonus incentives from 10,000 to 5,000 sf; do not require dedication to the city.

Amend 19.42.120(C)(5)(c) to eliminate the 150' maximum width in the north/south orientation for buildings taller than four stories or more than 50' tall.

Amend 19.42.120(C)(7) to remove or clarify the requirement for buildings exceeding the maximum base height that there be a minimum 8' horizontal setback along at least 75% of the facade somewhere between the ground floor and top floor.

Staff Comments: Staff will provide analysis and a recommendation at next PC meeting.

Ch. 19.43 Residential Uses

1. Rooming Houses

Proposal Summary: Consider updating rooming house definition and standards.

Staff Comments: Staff will provide analysis and a recommendation at next PC meeting.

2. Co-living housing

Proposal Summary: Add Co-living housing – add housing type and use standards

Staff Comments: Recommend proposed amendments shown below.

Potential amendment text:

19.43.160 Co-Living Housing

- a. Definitions.
 - (A) “Co-living housing” means a residential development with sleeping units that are independently rented and lockable and provide living and sleeping space, and residents share kitchen facilities with other sleeping units in the building. This definition does not preclude an option for sleeping units with bathrooms and/or kitchenettes.
 - (B) “Sleeping unit” has the same meaning as defined in the adopted state building code.
- b. Standards.
 - (A) Room dimensions. Sleeping unit room dimensions must comply with the adopted state building code.
 - (B) Design Standards. For the purpose of meeting the project design standards of Division 6 of this title, except for AMC Chapter 19.64, Parking, this use is considered a multifamily use when interpreting applicability provisions.
- c. Zone-Specific Standards. (this section not needed if Olson building site is rezoned to CBD)
 - (A) MS Zone Standards
 - (I) Multifamily dwellings are-permitted west of Commercial Avenue and south of 2nd Street.
 - (II) Residential units must be no larger than 800 square feet each and constructed within a mixed-use development.

3. LEG-2024-25 re: single purpose residential use limitation calculations

Proposal Summary: Amend MMU-specific standards in 19.43.070 (townhouses) and 19.43.080 (multifamily)] to exclude associated landscaping and open space areas from the maximum site area coverage (60%) permitted for single-purpose residential or assisted living uses.

Staff Comments: Staff will provide analysis and a recommendation at next PC meeting.

Ch. 19.44 Commercial uses

1. LEG-2024-18 re: MS zone retail use

Proposal Summary: Amend MS zone to ensure replacement of Marine Supply building is consistent with the main street downtown core 19.44.120 – Retail sales. Add an MS zone-specific retail use standard permitting up to 6,000/8,000 sq. ft. NFA outright on ground floor abutting Commercial Ave. south of 2nd St.

Staff Comments: Staff will provide analysis and a recommendation at next PC meeting.

AMC Title 19, Division 5 – Community Design

Staff will provide more information at next PC meeting.

AMC Title 19, Division 6 – Project Design

Staff will provide more information at next PC meeting.

AMC Title 19, Division 7 – Environment

No updates proposed currently.

AMC Title 19, Division 8 – Development Agreements

No updates proposed currently.