Island County held a series of community meetings, one in each of the planning areas, to provide information to the public and gather feedback about what issues are most important to review during the Comprehensive Plan update. The dates, locations and attendance are summarized below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Meeting Summary</th>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
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<td>March 17, 2015</td>
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<td>March 19, 2015</td>
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<td>March 26, 2015</td>
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<td>March 30, 2015</td>
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The meeting attendees were given a questionnaire to complete. It asked them to rate a series of value statements and prioritize topics to be addressed during the update process. Additionally, attendees were encouraged to provide additional written comments they felt were important to consider during the update process. The results of the questionnaire are presented below, followed by a copy of the questionnaire. The value statement results are presented as total number of responses, while the priorities are presented as percentages.

Attendees were then divided into small groups for discussion about issues important to Island County. Staff captured the discussion points and categorized them, which are also presented below. Because of the great turnout in Freeland, the small meeting room did not lend itself to breaking into small groups, but staff members were available for discussions with attendees about important issues, and these points are included within the small group discussion categories.

Some key takeaways from the community meetings include:

- Preserving the rural character of the island, including agricultural lands is a priority
- Environmental protection is important to the community 11397
• Cleaning up the community development code, including allowed uses, needs to occur during the Comprehensive Plan update

• Protecting the community’s water sources to ensure future supply is a priority

• Economic development is important, but there is no clear consensus on what this looks like or means

• Tourism, affordable housing, and historic preservation were identified as low priorities by meeting participants

Community Meeting Questionnaire Results – Value Statements (124 Responses)

1. The existing character of Island County’s rural areas should be protected, even if this means greater restrictions on new development and the use of land for purposes other than agriculture or residences.
2. Improving public access to beaches and shorelines should be a priority, even if this means higher taxes for parks in the County or redirecting funds from other purposes.

![Value Question 2](image1)

3. The ability of property owners to use or develop their property however they want should be prioritized above protecting Island County’s rural character and landscapes.

![Value Question 3](image2)
4. The County should prioritize environmental protection, even if it means increasing the size of protective buffers, where development is restricted.

Value Question 4

5. New development should be allowed only when it can be shown that drinking water is available to serve the development, even if this means limiting new subdivisions or increasing the minimum size of new lots.

Value Question 5
6. New development should be concentrated in areas which are already developed, even if this means limiting the amount of development which can occur in rural areas.

![Value Question 6](image)

7. Economic development should be encouraged, but new commercial uses should primarily be located within built-up areas, cities, and towns.

![Value Question 7](image)
8. Tourism should be encouraged in Island County, even if it places a strain on infrastructure and resources.

9. The preservation of historic structures and landscapes should be expanded outside of Ebey’s Reserve, even if it means regulating the use of land or modifications to historic structures.
10. The remaining large tracts of land should be protected even if it means increasing the minimum size of new parcels.

Value Question 10

11. The Conservation Futures Fund (a tax levied when property is bought or sold to pay for open space conservation) should be increased so that more land can be purchased or protected every year.

Value Question 11
Community Meeting Questionnaire Results – Priorities (110 Responses)

The County has a set amount of time for the comprehensive plan update effort. If you were given total control, how would allocate time (by percentage) to each of the following categories, please explain any specific areas you would focus on. You may create your own categories, but you may not exceed 100%. (Note that transportation is not included as an option because it is already in progress).

Staff Time Priority for Comprehensive Plan Update
Community Meeting Questionnaire Results – Categorized Comments

The following comments were provided on the surveys by meeting attendees. They have been grouped together into categories that generally relate to topics required to be addressed during the Comprehensive Plan update.

**Transportation**

- Access to earthen trail along Kettle Trail for equestrians

**Economic Development**

- Sell the pheasant farm and use small cabins to promote tourism similar to Costanoan on CA Coast
- Support Agro-tourism in rural areas
- Tourism is major source of income/revenue but must balance with environmental impact
- Where do commercial rural activities fit into economic development?
• Agro Tourism brings business and encourages open space and rural character
• Tourism is the best economic development but must be done with environmental protection
• It is important to allow agriculture to continue and not put more barriers or costs
• Supports Property Rights, but also keeping economic development mostly in UGAs
• Tourism should be left to private sector
• Tourism should be sustainable and appropriate for specific areas. Some areas can’t handle large value tourism
• Increase tourism/ like San Juan’s & Anacortes
• Biking in particular - make this a bicyclist destination – it’s perfect if we had good bike lanes! Think of all the Canadian and Seattleites we would have visiting on bike
• Ag and local food - encourage self-sufficiency/working forests, hobby farms
• We should encourage bikes & eco-tourism - state parks; widen roads on Camano for bicycles-promote the area

**Development Regulations**

• Entire code needs reviewed and revised for basic functionality and internal consistency
• Current regulations permit a bonus increase density if a PRD is located in a wetland - this shouldn't be permitted
• You need coherent and easily implemented code to implement planning
• Code needs to be must easier to understand
• Without environment, there is nothing (climate) keep original forest tree ord. more credits for water protection
• Need to simplify land use code
• Simplifying codes is the #1 request to the EDC by contractors
• Community input in codes
• Simplify to discourage loopholes & enforce penalties
• Simplifying codes is the most important. Use plain language-put online
• Repeal APZ zoning
• Simplify code
• The code is complex because the issues are complex. Safeguards must not be lost or watered down if simplified

**Historic Preservation**

• Current historic preservation efforts insufficient
• Historic preservation is important economically, community strength and quality of life
• Historic preservation and protecting open space and rural scenery go together
• The preservation is focused on white culture of the 1800s not historic preservation - it is elitist and unnecessary. Add grandfather flexibility for people
who have bought land and homes and are now facing multiple regulations and bureaucracy created after the homes were bought

Rural Character

- Protection of farmland and encouragement of farming uses and productivity
- Do not handcuff agricultural, it is part of the appeal. Respect private property!
- Collaborative, community conservation on preserving the rural environment
- People move to, or visit, Island County for its life-style and Rural environmental attributes
- This is a beautiful island & full of wildlife, clean air and good water. Keep it as it is. This is why we are here
- Live here for the rural character and open space;
- Support Ag & timber use of land so landowners can afford to keep their land and not clear and sell to developers

Housing

- If Sunnyview is an example, affordable housing is best left alone
- Leave Affordable Housing to the Cities
- Build affordable housing in urban cores

Land Use Planning

- Open space needs protected for wildlife corridors
- Agriculture needs defined carefully and critical areas must trump agricultural uses
- As cities grow, the demand for food increases and areas suitable for agriculture diminish. More people around the world are taking a look at urban farming
- Wildlife corridors and habitat need to be as large as possible
- Environmental protection including water, soil, shorelines and shellfish
- Agriculture is critical for the economy, food production, and environmental and landscape values. Environmental protection needs to be balanced with agriculture and property rights.
- Decades of property damage have occurred from surface water partly due to development
- Put specific efforts in to sustainable land use and clarify your intentions; the preservation of our environmental resources and assets is the most important concern;
- Land use is the primary purpose of GMA
- Open space
- Restrict high density housing
- Establish air quality and noise controls
- Environment-only as it directly impacts water availability, slide zones, etc.
- Don't allow clear cutting
• No box stores/strip malls
• Larger plots-less houses, there has to be water
• Without environmental protections Camano will become a much less safe and please place to live

**Beach Access**

• Access to parks/beaches/rec facilities needs more enforcement and less planning
• Beach Access and Sustainable practices
• Maintenance of access roads and paths to beach access
• Beaches are one of the primary reasons people move here

**Governance & Policy**

• County officials don’t know their own laws
• All of the topics included in the priorities are important for quality of life in the islands
• Goal should be to produce a County with a flourishing environment and thriving economy
• Change Freeland’s mission to that of a senior/retreat community, Do NOT support Economic Development
• The relationship of the Navy and the rural agriculture character
• They all go together. Look at the study on healthy communities’ practices and less on regulating, controlling and boxing us in. General thoughts to most of these questions is that it depends on how the regulations reflect these things, the proverbial "devil is in the details." I believe we already have too many regulations. In general I would like to see more creativity and innovation vs. regulations.
• Conservation Futures Fund- not for economic development! Topics need to be addressed until the questions are answered.
• Not a priority to attract low income residents, robustness in the face of climate change
• CFF only for open space, not for development. Protecting and enhancing open space goes hand in hand with environment
• CFF only for conservation purposes
• Local Food - need to increase production
• Hiring a climatologist would be wise and at the very least responsible. Extremely concerned with climate change and planning for it. Food security very important
• Food for resiliency and GMO free
• No more taxes, there is concerns about raiding the CFF to pay for other things.
• Protect citizen from Noise & Pollution
• Environmental protection including the noise and pollution caused by the Navy jets
• Top issue is stop unregulated developer growth
• Conservation future fund should be eliminated; affordable housing, economic development historic preservation and agriculture should be left to private sector
• Concerned about the Navy
• Films and other source of information that show existing development
• Forbid loaded logging trucks to cross deception pass
• Encourage Conservation Easements
• Reward volunteer watches to ensure people don't leave dog poop
• Close OLF and restrict touch and goes
• Transportation - should be funded by the users not the general taxpayer; Bicycle and hiking should be financed by users not general road transportation; Existing ownership should not be subject to new use restrictions- or at least a 20 year phase in for new restrictions on existing owners
• All time should be spent on issues concerning residents! If the residents are well taken care of, tourism will come
• Let the market decide on housing, tourism & historic preservation
• Please consider a way to limit the constant destruction of trees in our county
• Please delete from plans activities that will clearly destroy people's properties - for example, the flooding of the present farm field along Inverse Rd.

Community Meeting Small Group Discussions – Categorized Comments

The following comments were provided during the small group discussions by meeting attendees. They have been grouped together into categories that generally relate to topics required to be addressed during the Comprehensive Plan update.

Transportation

• Small/local route shuttles
• Island Transit Service
• Maintain concurrency requirements
• Cars vs. Transit – information campaign about economic/environmental costs of driving
• Transportation can negatively impact Reserve
• Unintended consequences – Keystone Ferry traffic
• Better network of bike trails/path
• Banta Rd traffic/access to Hwy 20 – needs traffic light but WSDOT says no
- Develop more traffic circles that are larger – WSDOT circles too narrow
- Plan needed for new bridge to I-5
- Transportation – Oak Harbor road congestion & congestion on ferries – how to get people off island
- Multi-modal path (bikes, ped, horses) from end to end of Whidbey
- Maintain transportation concurrency standards
- Improve public transit and create incentives for use as well as alternative modes
- Expand pedestrian/bicycle paths
- Bridge Whidbey to Camano or Fir Island
- Need Port/Boat Dock/Boat Access on Camano
  - Transportation Option & Disaster Planning
- Need Bicycle Lanes/Paths
- Expand transportation options

**Economic Development**

- Economic Diversity
- Marine Highway & Commercial Port Facility
- Encourage small businesses with sustainability focus and implemented
- Low impact tourism – bicycle tours, etc.
- Better bike map
- Better funding for bike trails
- Need plan for when/if base closes
- Diverse business growth outside of Navy
- Businesses not dependent on federal money
- Economic diversification
  - Policies to grow living wage jobs
  - Jobs that protect rural character & charm
- Bike Routes/Tourism
- Utilities – how to get high speed internet service to South Camano
- Improved Communications for Camano
  - Cell Service and Ham Radio
- Cost of Extending Utilities to Camano (Water, Communications, Etc.)
- Freeland Water and Sewer District plans
- Promote local food production
- Local food production and distribution

**Development Regulations**

- Low Impact Development Standards
- Alternative Building Materials
- Alternative/more sustainable methods and materials for building construction (incentives)
- Innovative stormwater management – bioswales (incentives)
- Update Ordinances – do it “in house”
- Surface water damage issues – Banta Rd. issues with developments draining into & flooding field
- New development water run-off – need more and broader impact studies
- Swan Lake development infringement
- Concern about making distinction between existing and new development regulations
- Streamline permit process
  - Satisfied with staff assistance at permit counter
- Historic homes – improvements are costly to bring up to code
- Evaluate permit process for efficiency
- Create incentives and regulations for LID and non-conventional building materials
  - Greywater use
  - Composting toilets
  - Green roofs
- Clearing in Advance of Development
- No Clearcutting & Retain Buffer Zones
- Low Impact Development
- Keep Forest Zoning for older homes but allow for permitting without having to update everything to new codes
- Need to evaluate APZ and make changes as necessary
  - More hard surfaces = more noise
  - Require jets to keep the gear up like Lopez Island
  - Flying too low over houses
- APZ zoning
  - Limit or remove as it is hard to build
  - Do not remove APZ
- Repealing APZ Zoning
- Development regulations/land uses in Freeland
- Agriculture regulations – be careful to not over regulate
  - Ebey’s – don’t regulate type of building
- Support Agriculture and Working Forests
  - Best Management Practices
- Development standards to accommodate single level homes with ramps
- Alternative solutions for wastewater – composting toilets
- Improve sanitary sewer/septic regulations

Historic Preservation

- Enforcement
- Disconnect between natural and cultural
- Expand knowledge of the reserve
- Effort to update Historic Preservation Element
- Expand beyond Ebey’s Reserve
- Part of economic development
Better signage
- Transportation signage near bus barn
- Consider values of Reserve in high level planning
- Design Review Ordinance
  - Inconsistently applied – color is key to new development
  - Not strong enough – but overly strong in unimportant places
- Strong commitment from County as advocate for Historic Preservation
- Historic Preservation is economic development – “Place based economy”

**Rural Character**

- Character Districts – “small pockets to protect character”
  - Maxwellton, Langley, North Camano
- Sustainable Development
  - Tourism might not be appropriate all places
- Plan for preservation and success – value to the County
- Rural character – avoid impacts from tourism
- Cluster developments to protect large open spaces
- Retain rural character by concentrating growth, but not to urban densities
- Decrease minimum lot size below 5 acres for R zone – want to subdivide into smaller lots
- Protect large tracts of forest land
- Concerns with Overdevelopment
- Camano is Beautiful – Keep it that way
- Keep Camano’s Limited Resources in Mind
  - Should stay rural – that’s why we live here
- Rural Character
  - Screening with vegetation
  - Tourism centers where lodging/access can accommodate
  - Design standards
- 1990s Camano wanted to keep rural character and road
- Value Rural Character
- Stanwood is designated UGA for Camano
- Scenic Corridor from bridge to Terry’s Corner – enforce regulations and limit commercial development

**Water Supply**

- Concerns with drainfield contamination of groundwater – what is maximum population that can be sustained to avoid this?
- Impact of new wells on existing groundwater considerations
- General aquifer concerns – impacts of new development
- Consideration for a sustainable water supply
- Water availability – where are future residents going to get water?
- Greywater use – recharge aquifers & not discharge to shoreline
• Water supply issues
  o Preserving existing water rights
  o Secure alternative water supply source
• Water Resources & Availability
  o Development consistent with contamination/seawater intrusion
• Stanwood/Public/PUD Water – do we want to bring services to Camano?
• Navy is pumping water from water reservoir – used to buy from Skagit
• Cottage Industries and Water Availability
• Water – Major Issue Facing Island County
• Water and Sewer Utilities for Camano
  o Desalination an option?
• Need Reserve Water Supply for Camano – ASR?
• Tourism the answer to water limitations? (lower usage)
• New development needs to demonstrate water capacity via drainage-basin planning

Housing

• Increase affordable/entry level homes
• Increase diversity of housing types (townhouses, etc.)
• Decrease building fees for historic preservation and affordable housing
• Keep the islands beautiful
• Increase housing density to accommodate population growth
  o Multi-story
  o Less sprawl
  o Less impact on infrastructure
  o Less driving
• Oldest population county in the state
  o Dementia daycare facility needed
  o More senior facilities needed – Camano Island facility is nice

Land Use Planning

• Geologic hazard areas
• Critical Areas – avoid development in slide areas & educate the public
• Identify vulnerable shoreline sites (does this exist in the SMP?)
• Protection of Penn Cove and other locations from acidification
  o No idle zones and other policies
• Soft Shore Treatments over Bulkheads
• Land uses along shoreline and saltwater intrusion
• Effect of Climate Change on Island County
• Planning Scenarios – establish base case then evaluate worst (sea level rise) to best case
• Hire Climatologist to provide information on potential impacts
• Climate change impacts
• Sea level rise
• Increased storms and rain
• Shoreline erosion
• Saltwater intrusion
• Population refugees moving to island

• Land Use and Transportation Connection
• Plan for environmental and population impacts
• Rural land uses – appropriate uses/home businesses
• Biodiversity Planning
• Home occupations OK, but follow zoning regulations
• Subdivision of Land – availability of septic and water
• Diking Districts and watershed issues
• Avoid urban sprawl – keep development within UGAs
• UGA coordination between Oak Harbor and County
• Freeland UGA too large – needs to be more realistic
• Concentrate development within cities – establish infill land use policies
• Population Growth
  o Encourage growth in north end of Whidbey where infrastructure exists – keeps SW rural
  o South and west areas of Oak Harbor UGA for growth concentration
• Flood Issues – Particularly with Septic Systems
• Septic/Sewer systems – promote sewer to serve community areas, limits of septic = limits growth & use of land

Beach Access

• Regulate public beaches to better protect private beach rights (better signs)
• Public beach access – there is plenty, no need to spend more tax money for park acquisition
• Increase public beach access to shorelines
• Shorelines - rights of passage clarification of rules and regulations
• Improved Beach Access
  o ROW ends are public access points – adjacent property owners use as own – needs enforcement and parking opportunities
• Signage for Public Parks and Access

Governance & Policy

• Emergency Preparedness
  o Earthquakes & Power supply
• Measuring County Values – Oak Harbor population center can sway decisions
• Vision: Living Building Challenge
• Relationship between taxes/assessment and regulation
• Energy efficiency emphasis for residential & commercial development – solar/wind
• More sustainable development
• Conservation Future Funds – Preserve and Expand
• Conservation futures program
  o Eliminate program
  o Continue program (x 3)
• Improve communication with Navy about quality of life issues
• How do NAS plans factor into County effort?
• No Commissioner to Represent North Whidbey
  o Four Planning Areas = Four Commissioners
• Improve blue building/center for County offices
• Funding Equity between Whidbey and Camano
• What is identity of Camano?
  o Retirement focus or attract young families?
• Recycling Program
• Need to begin curbside recycling program
• Alternative Energy sources
• Genetically Modified Organisms – how to keep out of the county
• Expand Senior Services on Camano
• No winter percolation test required for septic systems – need to require
• Annual review of septic systems – no one follows up on this, maybe “falling through the cracks”?
## Island County 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update
### Public Meeting Questionnaire

1. **Values** – Please rate how strongly you support the following statements:
   (One indicating that you strongly support the statement and five indicating that you do **not** support the statement)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Support</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Do Not Support</th>
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<th>Topic</th>
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<th>Explanation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protecting and enhancing Open Space &amp; Rural Scenery</td>
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<td>Land Use (determining what should be allowed where)</td>
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<td>Environmental Protection</td>
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<td>Affordable housing</td>
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<td>Historic Preservation</td>
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<td>Agriculture &amp; Local Food</td>
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<td>Simplifying and clarifying Island County’s codes and regulations</td>
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<td>Total 100%</td>
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