Island County 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update
Survey Monkey Results

An online survey was offered through Survey Monkey.com. This survey was open to the public from February 4, 2015 through March 31, 2015. During this time 728 people took the survey. Questions were developed by Island County Planning Staff with input from the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners with the intention of gathering values and priorities regarding the Comprehensive Plan Update.

The survey was advertised through emails, press releases and flyers. The Comprehensive Plan Update website was updated with all new information and flyers were created and posted at all of the libraries in Island County, the Ferry and terminals, and Island County offices. Additionally, through a partnership with the County Treasurer’s Office, a flyer was included in the property tax statements that went out to every land owner in Island County. This insert provided property owners with some basic information about the Comprehensive Plan Update and invited them to visit our website and take the online survey. We believe that a large number of people received this notice and acted on it as there was a large spike in the number of people who took the survey in the days immediately following the mailing.

Key Takeaways:

- A fairly balanced number of responses were received from respondents living in each of the County’s geographic areas (South Whidbey, Central Whidbey, North Whidbey, and Camano Island)
- Online survey respondents were primarily homeowners and between the ages of 55 and 74
- In the North Whidbey Planning Area the top reason for coming to Island County was employment, in the other three planning areas Rural Character/Lifestyle is the primarily reason people came to Island County
- Respondents in all of the planning areas had the same top three priorities: Protecting the Environment, Clean, Safe Drinking Water, and Protecting and enhancing Open Space & Rural Scenery
- When asked what respondents would like to see changed in Island County, the top priorities included Economic Development, Environmental and Land Use concerns.
- Environmental protection, rural character, and water quality were ranked as the three highest priorities for the Comprehensive Plan Update.
Survey Questions and Summary of Results:

Q1. Which area do you live in or nearest to?

![Bar chart showing distribution of areas people live in. Camano Island: 17%, Coupeville: 16%, Freeland: 17%, Langley: 18%, Oak Harbor: 18%, Other (please specify): 18%.]

*Note: Those who selected “other” were primarily in Clinton and Greenbank.*

Q2. Do you own or rent the place where you live?

![Bar chart showing distribution of ownership status. Own: 91%, Rent: 7%, Other (please specify): 1%.]
Q3. Which of these best describes your relationship with Island County?

![Bar chart showing relationship types]

- Full-time Resident: 88%
- Seasonal Resident: 5%
- Frequent Visitor: 4%
- Other (please specify): 3%

Q4. What is your age?

![Bar chart showing age distribution]

- 19 or younger: 0%
- 20 to 24: 0%
- 25 to 34: 5%
- 35 to 44: 7%
- 45 to 54: 15%
- 55 to 64: 33%
- 65 to 74: 33%
- 75 or older: 7%
Q5. How long have you lived in Island County?

- Less than 1 year: 3%
- 1-5 years: 18%
- 6-9 years: 17%
- 11-20 years: 27%
- 21-30 years: 15%
- 31 years or more: 16%
- Other (please specify): 4%

Q6. What was the primary reason that brought you to Island County?

- Rural Character: 48%
- Employment: 15%
- Other (please specify): 13%
- Close to family/friends: 9%
- Born/grew up here: 8%
- Affordable home prices: 4%
- Recreational opportunities: 3%

Note: Those who responded with “other” indicated; the Navy; family owned a vacation home, natural beauty or retirement most frequently.
Q7. What three words or short phrases describe what you value most about Island County?

-This question was open ended. The answers are illustrated below in a word cloud, the larger the word or phrase is, the more times it appeared in responses.

Q8. Briefly describe 1-3 things you would like to see changed in Island County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th># of Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County Governance/Taxes</td>
<td>352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Development</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Use</td>
<td>128</td>
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<tr>
<td>Protect environment</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navy/Jet Noise</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking and Biking Facilities</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Beach Access</td>
<td>69</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parks and Rec</td>
<td>65</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Transportation</td>
<td>64</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development Regulations</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Practices</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On/Off Island Transport</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Less Population Growth/Development 39
Affordable Housing 38
Clean Water 37
Agriculture 35
Preserve Open Space 34
Other* 31
Utilities 31
Code Enforcement 27
Sustainable development 25
Recycling 22
Road Maintenance 22
Rural 12
Historic Preservation 7
Climate Change 3
More Development 1
UGAs 1
Total 1,707

*Primarily includes comments about deer and hunting

Q9. Briefly describe 1-3 things you would like to see maintained in Island County.

The top ten responses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th># of Occurrences</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>146</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>142</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transit (bus service)</td>
<td>115</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beach Access</td>
<td>98</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open Space</td>
<td>85</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agriculture (farms)</td>
<td>81</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roads</td>
<td>73</td>
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<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>58</td>
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<td>Environment</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q10. Should local governmental actively pursue strategies to encourage people to move to Island County?

Q11. In your opinion, please indicate the priority level of the following Comprehensive plan topics to the 2016 Island County Comprehensive Plan Update.
Q12. Given finite resources, please identify three Comprehensive Plan topics that you think the County should prioritize during the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update.