



PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA

City Hall – Council Chambers
865 SE Barrington Drive, Oak Harbor, WA 98277

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2025

6:00PM

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL:

Position	Member	Attendance		
Position 1	Jeffrey Ward	<input type="checkbox"/> In person	<input type="checkbox"/> Online	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Position 2	Kevin Wilson	<input type="checkbox"/> In person	<input type="checkbox"/> Online	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Position 3	<i>Vacant</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> In person	<input type="checkbox"/> Online	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Position 4	<i>Vacant</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> In person	<input type="checkbox"/> Online	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Position 5	Joshua Engelbrecht, <i>Chair</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> In person	<input type="checkbox"/> Online	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Position 6	Ryan Bradley	<input type="checkbox"/> In person	<input type="checkbox"/> Online	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Position 7	Eddie Fry, <i>Vice Chair</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> In person	<input type="checkbox"/> Online	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Ex Officio	Council Member Jim Woessner	<input type="checkbox"/> In person	<input type="checkbox"/> Online	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- a) September 9, 2025 Regular Business Meeting

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

During this time, citizens may comment on subjects of interest not on the agenda or agenda items. To ensure comments are recorded properly, state your name clearly. Individual comments will be limited to three (3) minutes to ensure maximum participation during the 15-minute timeframe allotted for this item. Public Comment may also be submitted online at <https://www.oakharbor.gov/publiccomment> at least two (2) business days in advance of an advisory board meeting.

4. DISCUSSION/ACTION/PRESENTATION/REPORT ITEMS

- a) 2025 Major Update to the Comprehensive Plan

5. MEMBER COMMENTS

6. **NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING DATE:** November 12, 2025 (Please note that this meeting occurs on Wednesday due to the Veterans Day holiday)

7. ADJOURNMENT

Meetings will be recorded and published to www.youtube.com/c/CityofOakHarbor. The City of Oak Harbor is committed to providing meeting access to the widest possible audience, regardless of technology or ability. If accommodations are required, please call (360) 279-4500 at least two business days prior to the meeting.

**CITY OF OAK HARBOR
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
SEPTEMBER 9, 2025 – 6:00 P.M.**

This meeting was hosted from the City of Oak Harbor – City Hall Council Chambers at 865 SE Barrington Drive, Oak Harbor, WA., and was recorded. The video counter number is in parentheses () for each agenda item.

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL: (:00) Chairman Engelbrecht called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Position	Member	Attendance		
Position 1	<i>Vacant</i>	In person	Online	Absent
Position 2	Kevin Wilson	In person	Online	✓ Absent
Position 3	<i>Vacant</i>	In person	Online	Absent
Position 4	<i>Vacant</i>	In person	Online	Absent
Position 5	Joshua Engelbrecht, <i>Chair</i>	✓ In person	Online	Absent
Position 6	Ryan Bradley	✓ In person	Online	Absent
Position 7	Eddie Fry, <i>Vice Chair</i>	✓ In person	Online	Absent
Ex Officio	Councilmember Jim Woessner	In person	Online	✓ Absent

CITY STAFF PRESENT: Principal Planner Cac Kamak and Senior Administrative Assistant Sarah Heller.

OTHERS PRESENT: Videographer Tim Shelley, Jr.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: (0:30)

- a. **Augusts 12, 2025 Regular Business Meeting:** Commissioner Fry **MOVED** to approve the August 12, 2025 meeting minutes, **SECONDED** by Commissioner Bradley. With all in favor, **MOTION PASSED.**

3. PUBLIC COMMENT: (1:30) There were no public comments received.

4. DISCUSSION/ACTION/PRESENTATION/REPORT ITEMS:

a. **2025 Major Update to the Comprehensive Plan (2:15)**

Principal Planner Cac Kamak presented the Planning Commission with updates on the status of the work on the Comprehensive Plan including potential changes to the housing allocation, policy review, and the updating of the Urban Design, Transportation, Utilities, Environment, and Capital Facilities elements. Additional elements are planned to be discussed at future commission meetings. He also discussed the scheduling of a potential joint meeting with City Council.

Commissioners Engelbrecht, Bradley, and Fry shared their respective questions and comments.

5. MEMBER COMMENTS: (1:39:30) Vice Chair Fry made a statement encouraging members of the public to consider applying for a position on the Planning Commission. City Administrator Combs

noted that there is currently a Planning Commissioner appointment scheduled for an upcoming City Council meeting. Mr. Kamak also pointed out that there is a comment form on the City's Comprehensive Plan webpage for the public to submit additional questions or comments regarding the Comprehensive Plan update.

6. **NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING DATE:** The Planning Commission's next meeting is scheduled for October 14, 2025.
7. **ADJOURNMENT:** (1:42:10) Commissioner Fry moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Bradley. With all in favor, motion passed.

Minutes taken by Senior Administrative Assistant Sarah Heller.

DRAFT

City of Oak Harbor Planning Commission Staff Report

Date: October 14, 2025
Subject: 2025 Major Update to the
Comprehensive Plan

FROM: Cac Kamak, AICP, Principal Planner, Development Services Department

BACKGROUND

The City is advancing the review of the various Elements and imbedded goals and policies in the Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Commission discussed Urban Design, Transportation, Utilities, Environment, and Capital Facilities at its September 9, 2025 meeting and contributed comments and feedback. The same elements were discussed with the City Council at their September 23, 2025, meeting. Comments from these reviews will be incorporated into the Draft Comprehensive Plan.

Discussion continues on the Urban Growth Area (UGA) and the Countywide Planning Policies (CPP) with the County and State at the time of writing this report. Staff will provide an update at the meeting.

DRAFT POLICIES REVIEW

Attached for this month's review are the preliminary draft policies for Parks, Recreation and Open Space, Economic Development, Government Services, and Climate Resiliency.

Climate Resiliency will be a new element in Oak Harbor's Comprehensive Plan. In addition to the draft policies, Oak Harbor Vulnerability and Risk Assessment, Climate Hazard and Policy Gap Memo, and other climate related documents have been attached for your reference. The OakPAC meeting on September 24, 2025 focused on climate related discussions. The summary of the meeting is also attached to this memo.

Drafts will also be posted on the City's website to invite public input. These are working drafts intended as a starting point for discussion and are expected to be refined with feedback from boards, commissions, the Council, and the community.

The tentative schedule for the draft elements are provided below.

September 9th Meeting – Topics:

Urban Design
Transportation
Utilities
Environment
Capital Facilities

October 14th Meeting – Topics:

Parks and Recreation
Economic Development

Government Services
Climate Resiliency

November 12th Meeting – Topics:

Land Use
Housing
Urban Growth Area

Enclosed in this packet is the draft for Urban Design, Transportation, Utilities, Environment, and Capital Facilities. Staff will facilitate a discussion on the changes at the meeting

RECOMMENDED ACTION

No action recommended at this time

ATTACHMENTS

1. Preliminary Draft Policy Review Documents –
2. Preliminary Draft Climate Resiliency policies
3. Oak Harbor Vulnerability and Risk Assessment
4. Climate Hazard and Policy Gap Memo
5. Climate FAQs
6. OakPAC meeting summary

Goal, Policy, Page Number, Theme/Sub Heading	Existing Policy (2016)	Proposed Policy Revision	Reasoning/Notes
PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE			
Open Space, a., 82, Open Space	Protect open space lands that provide forage, migration, and habitat for wildlife by identifying and designating them in plans, considering them during development review, and including protective measures in the City’s development regulations.		
Open Space, b., 82, Trails	Partner with NAS Whidbey Island to formulate a Plan acceptable to both parties for the continuation of the Waterfront Trail to Maylor Point.	Partner with NAS Whidbey Island to formulate a Plan acceptable to both parties for the continuation of the Waterfront Trail to Maylor Point.	Revised based on discussion with the Navy.
Open Space, c., 82, Trails	Develop the waterfront trail into a promenade and improve the connection between the marina and downtown.		
Open Space, d., 82, Trails	Design and build trails around the 7th Avenue Wetlands Area.	Design and build trails around the 7th Avenue Wetlands Area and implement boardwalk signage.	Added specificity about future projects.
Open Space, e., 82, Trails	Provide safe and convenient trails for walking and bicycling between parks, neighborhoods and major activity centers throughout the City, and to other recreation sites on North Whidbey.		
Open Space, f., 82, Trails	Prepare a bicycle and pedestrian trails plan that establishes design standards and provides connections between City parks, residential areas and major activity centers.		

Goal, Policy, Page Number, Theme/Sub Heading	Existing Policy (2016)	Proposed Policy Revision	Reasoning/Notes
Open Space, g., 82, Trails	Coordinate between the City’s and County’s plans by integrating trail plans and connections from county, state and nationwide plans, and other regional agencies (ex. Bicentennial Trail, Pacific Northwest Trail, and other County-wide trails plans into the City Trail Plans).		
Open Space, h., 82, Open Space	Identify and preserve open space lands that permit public access to the waterfront and other natural areas.		
Parks, a., 83, Parks Trails	Create a map of the City parks and trail system and publish to the City website.	Create a Continue mapping of the City parks and trail systems and publish to the City website.	Revised to better communicate the action. Mapping has already started and will continue.
Parks, b., 83, Design	Post a City Parks directory map at Windjammer Park that graphically incorporates key City landmarks.	Post a Promote City Parks directory map at Windjammer Park that graphically incorporates key City landmarks using physical and digital communications.	Revised to better communicate the action. The City is working on updates with communications department.
Parks, c., 83, Design	Construct a concert/performance arts pavilion at Windjammer Park.	Construct a concert/performance arts pavilion at Windjammer Park.	
Parks, d., 83, Development	Encourage private development of an RV park.	Encourage private development of an RV park.	Moving to the economic development section.
Parks, e., 83, Outdoor Activities	Provide shoreline access, campgrounds and trail linkages for kayakers and others using human powered watercrafts.		
Parks, f., 83, Outdoor Activities	Provide more facilities for large group gatherings in parks.		
Open Space, i., 83, Open Space	Promote the conservation of open spaces that are in both public and private ownership.		

Goal, Policy, Page Number, Theme/Sub Heading	Existing Policy (2016)	Proposed Policy Revision	Reasoning/Notes
Open Space, j., 83, Viewsheds	Identify and protect important “view corridors” that provide visual access to scenic vistas.		
Open Space, k., 83, Open Space	Protect open spaces that provide important ecological functions and values.	Protect open spaces that provide important ecological functions and values through inventory and mapping.	The policy has been revised to add specificity and this policy also helps with overall community resilience.
Open Space, l., 83, Open Space	Work with Island County staff to identify opportunities for cooperation in preserving open space areas within the City’s UGA, as well as within the City / County Joint Planning Area.		
Open Space, m., 83, Open Space	Promote a coordinated regional effort toward the preservation of open space.		
Open Space, n., 83, Open Space	Identify properties that may be suitable to create an open space link between Waterloo Marsh and Swantown Lake.	Identify properties that may be suitable to create an open space link or trail connections between Waterloo Marsh and Swantown Lake.	Add specificity about specific projects.
Open Space, o., 83, Environment	Recognize hydrologic and other features that create physical or visual linkages between properties and natural features.		
Open Space, p., 83, Open Space	Establish an “open space trust fund” for the protection, preservation, and potential acquisition of open spaces through which individuals, organizations, governments, trusts, foundations, businesses, and other entities may contribute.		
Open Space, q., 83, Development Open Space	Review and revise as necessary the City’s development regulations to ensure that adequate provisions are made to preserve open space as land is developed.		

Goal, Policy, Page Number, Theme/Sub Heading	Existing Policy (2016)	Proposed Policy Revision	Reasoning/Notes
Open Space, r., 83, Development	Explore options to convert the property located on the southeast corner of SR 20 and Fakkema Road into an oak grove.	Explore options to convert Continue improving the property located on the southeast corner of SR 20 and Fakkema Road into an oak grove.	Revised to better reflect the action. The City is in the process of updating this and has completed two phases of the project.
Recreation, a., 84, Open Space	Look for opportunities to use the former landfill site, where appropriate, as supplemental recreational facilities.		
Recreation, b., 84, Economy Development	Develop a regional ball park complex to serve local needs and attract tournament level sports competition.		
Recreation, c., 84, Development	Assist in developing programs to utilize existing facilities within the City to provide recreational opportunities for all ages.		
Recreation, d., 84, Maintenance	Work with the School District to establish long term use of existing facilities where feasible to meet established level of service standards for recreational facilities identified as needed in the level of service analysis.		
Recreation, e., 84, Outdoor Activities Education	Work with North Whidbey Parks and Recreation District to establish recreational programs for youth in the community.	Work with North Whidbey Parks and Recreation District to establish recreational programs for youth in the community.	Revised to reflect status of this process.
Recreation, f., 84, Funding	Coordinate with Island County to establish funding for recreational programs and facilities.		
Recreation, g., 84, Activity Community	Build a community center that serves as an indoor multiple purpose facility for active and passive recreational needs that serve the residents all year round.	Complete an analysis or feasibility study to build community center that serves as an indoor multiple purpose facility for active and passive recreational needs that serve the residents all year round.	Revised to better reflect the action.
Parks, h., 84, Open Space	Prepare a concessionaire policy and related ordinance for the City's shoreline and community parks.		

Goal, Policy, Page Number, Theme/Sub Heading	Existing Policy (2016)	Proposed Policy Revision	Reasoning/Notes
Parks, i., 84, Economy	Support and encourage opportunities for community events, sports and recreation rentals, local vendors, local performances, and other local programs.		
Parks, j., 84, Development	Develop guidelines to promote private properties and existing developments to provide pocket parks along the City's arterial streets.		
Parks, k., 84, Maintenance	Upgrade existing structures and facilities to make them safe and extend their life and usefulness.		
General, a., 85, Maintenance Funding	Explore revenue options to maintain adopted level of service for parks, recreation facilities, trails and open space.		
General, b., 85, Growth	Plan for the acquisition of sufficient land for a community park that will help to meet level of service standards, replace /relocate existing facilities and accommodate future growth of the City over the next twenty years.		
General, c., 85, Maintenance Volunteers	Develop new volunteer programs to improve City parks, recreation and trails systems, and other areas in need of beautification.		
General, d., 85, Lighting Community	Prepare a lighting policy and associated ordinance for the City's community and neighborhood parks.		
Recreation, i., 85, Maintenance Development Funding	Investigate long term funding options for the Marina that are sustainable and can serve the facility well into the future.		

Goal, Policy, Page Number, Theme/Sub Heading	Existing Policy (2016)	Proposed Policy Revision	Reasoning/Notes
Recreation, j., 85, Maintenance	Upgrade all existing facilities and utilities in the Marina to meet or exceed current safety standards.		
Parks, g., 83-84, Outdoor Activities	Provide upland facilities at Flintstone Park that will support the possibility of relocating the Marina or developing future boating facilities.	Provide upland facilities at Flintstone Park that will support the possibility of relocating the Marina or developing future boating facilities.	Revised because conditions relating to this policy have changed.
Recreation, h., 84-85, Development	Update the Marina Improvement Plan to include projects that develops the facility into a community-wide recreational facility and asset.		
Development	New Policy	Rehabilitate part of current infrastructure into revenue generating facilities.	
Arts and Recreation	New Goal	Promote the expansion of Arts and Culture in Oak Harbor's parks, recreation, open space and other public spaces.	This is proposed to provide consistency with the 2025 OH Arts Plan.
Arts and Recreation	New Policy	Follow best practices set out in the Arts Plan for Arts Commission's project selection criteria, artist commissioning, and other processes.	This is proposed to provide consistency with the 2025 OH Arts Plan.
Arts and Recreation	New Policy	Direct people to Historical Downtown and the waterfront from Route 20, using art treatment as wayfinding.	This is proposed to provide consistency with the 2025 OH Arts Plan.
Arts and Recreation	New Policy	Make better connections between Historical Downtown and the waterfront, with actions such as art treatment on Dock Street, at the City parking lot on Dock Street, the Transit Center and to Flintstone Park.	This is proposed to provide consistency with the 2025 OH Arts Plan.

Goal, Policy, Page Number, Theme/Sub Heading	Existing Policy (2016)	Proposed Policy Revision	Reasoning/Notes
Economic Development			
1, 135, Coordination Economy	Encourage coordination between Oak Harbor and Island County governments with local, state, and federal entities as well as the public to promote economically diverse opportunities for Oak Harbor.		
1, 1.a, 135, Community Stakeholders	To ensure community consensus, representation should be sought from all Oak Harbor Stake-Holders in planning for economic diversification. "Stake-holders" include, but are not limited to, the School District, Skagit Valley Community College, NAS Whidbey, Greater Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce, Island County Economic Development Council, Downtown Development Council, Partnership Oak Harbor, and the public at large.		
1, 1.b, 135, Economy	The City and County should monitor the implementation of the North Whidbey Economic Diversification Action Plan and regularly meet to refine economic development programs.		
1, 1.c, 135, Economy Planning	To achieve economic development Goals, the City and County should coordinate, where applicable, zoning, development standards, permit review processes, and land use within the urban growth area.		

Goal, Policy, Page Number, Theme/Sub Heading	Existing Policy (2016)	Proposed Policy Revision	Reasoning/Notes
1, 1.d, 135, Economic Development	Ensure that economic development addresses all levels of the demography, including, the youth and retired.		
1, 1.e, 135, Employment Economy	The City, working with other governmental agencies and the public sector, shall seek to provide employment opportunities for older adults, particularly those with low-to moderate incomes.		
1, 1.f, 135, Funding	The City should pursue Rural Economic Development Fund grants through Island County to assist in funding the construction of public facilities that support economic development projects identified in the Capital Improvements Plan.		
1, 1.g, 135, Infrastructure Economic Development	The City should work with the Economic Development Council in promoting the Opportunity Zone and explore leveraging private investments in this area with improvements to public infrastructure.		
	New Goal	Ensure the land use and development regulations provide opportunities for diverse economic growth.	
	New Policy	Maintain strong relationships with key economic groups and industries to understand change in economic conditions.	
	New Policy	Periodically review economic data and supplement with City data for accurate employment capacity.	

Goal, Policy, Page Number, Theme/Sub Heading	Existing Policy (2016)	Proposed Policy Revision	Reasoning/Notes
	New Policy	Review development regulations to reduce barriers to key industries that provide job opportunities for residents.	
2, 136, Waterfront Redevelopment	Implement the Waterfront Redevelopment, Branding and Marketing Program to increase visitor spending and enhance the quality of life and economic vitality of Oak Harbor.	Implement the a Waterfront Redevelopment, Branding and Marketing Program to increase visitor spending and enhance the quality of life and economic vitality of Oak Harbor, incorporate the Marina as a partner for a cohesive district identity.	Revised to bring partners together.
2, 2.a, 136, Waterfront Redevelopment Funding	The City shall pursue a variety of funding strategies as outlined in the Waterfront Redevelopment, Branding and Marketing Program in order to bring about its implementation.	The City shall pursue a variety of funding to implement a downtown marina redevelopment plan. The City shall pursue a variety of funding strategies as outlined in the Waterfront Redevelopment, Branding and Marketing Program in order to bring about its implementation.	Revised to expand to broader opportunities.
2, 2.b, 136, Waterfront Redevelopment	The City will assist the Old Town businesses and Main Street Association to help implement the capital and noncapital projects identified in the Waterfront Redevelopment, Branding and Marketing Program.	The City will assist the Old Town businesses and Main Street Association to help implement the capital and noncapital projects identified in the Waterfront Redevelopment, Branding and Marketing Program.	Removed because conditions relating to this policy have changed.
2, 2.c, 136, Funding	The City should seek, support and assist in grant applications to help fund construction of planned circulation improvements in the downtown area.	The City should seek, support and assist in grant applications to help fund construction of planned circulation improvements in the downtown area.	Removed because conditions relating to this policy have changed.
3, 137, Economy	Increase Oak Harbor's market share of retail sales to reduce the economic leakage off-island.		

Goal, Policy, Page Number, Theme/Sub Heading	Existing Policy (2016)	Proposed Policy Revision	Reasoning/Notes
3, 3.a, 137, Land Use Community	Adequate land should be zoned, where compatible with existing uses, to meet the retail needs of the local community.		
3, 3.b, 137, Development	The City should support consolidation of segmental strip development into organized groupings by assisting with planning and upgrading of site improvements.		
4, 137, Economy	Continue working with the Navy to enhance economic opportunities.		
4, 4.a, 137, Navy Economy	The City supports the continuing operation of NAS Whidbey as a military installation. Should the present character of operations and mission change in the future such that the Navy can support joint use, then the opportunity for joint use of Ault Field should be explored.		
4, 4.b, 137, Military Economy	Consider surplus military lands for economic diversification potential.		
4, 4.c, 137, Navy	The City should work together with the Navy to encourage Naval procurement of local products and services.		
5, 138, Navy Economy	Implement long-range economic diversification projects to provide job opportunities and reduce economic reliance on Naval Air Station Whidbey Island.		

Goal, Policy, Page Number, Theme/Sub Heading	Existing Policy (2016)	Proposed Policy Revision	Reasoning/Notes
5, 5.a, 138, Employment	The City, in cooperation with Island County and other stakeholders, should work to increase the number of jobs in primary industries and the retention of existing employment.		
5, 5.b, 138, Military Diversification	Diversification assistance should be directed towards helping businesses and employees most likely impacted by military realignments.	Diversification assistance should be directed towards helping businesses and employees most likely impacted by military realignments.	Removed because conditions relating to this policy have changed.
5, 5.c, 138, Employment	The City should work to establish the North Whidbey Enterprise Area to facilitate the creation of primary jobs in targeted business sectors including transportation, manufacturing, and utility (see North Whidbey Economic Diversification Action Plan and map).	The City should work to establish Continue to promote the North Whidbey Enterprise Area to facilitate the creation of primary jobs in targeted business sectors including transportation, manufacturing, and utility (see North Whidbey Economic Diversification Action Plan and map).	Revised the language to better reflect the City's current actions for the North Whidbey Enterprise Area.
5, 5.d, 138, Land Use	The City should consider annexations in the Enterprise Area in coordination with extension of utilities and other infrastructure.		
5, 5.e, 138, Financial	The City should pursue the financing and construction needed to upgrade Goldie Road and Oak Harbor Road corridors and extension of Cemetery Road, in conformance with the Transportation Element.		
5, 5.f, 138, Zoning	Adopt performance zoning and design standards for the Enterprise Area to allow flexibility in site design and use, while requiring a high standard of aesthetics, circulation, and overall compatibility with the small-town character of Oak Harbor and unincorporated Island County.		

Goal, Policy, Page Number, Theme/Sub Heading	Existing Policy (2016)	Proposed Policy Revision	Reasoning/Notes
5, 5.g, 138, Environment	Encourage non-polluting industries to locate within the city and/or urban growth area.	Encourage Explore the implementation of standards for non-polluting industries to locate within the city and/or urban growth area.	Revised to reflect the action.
5, 5.h, 138, Financial Economy	The City should pursue funding and construction of the North Whidbey Enterprise Area sewer as a means of encouraging economic growth and job creation within this area.		
6, 139, Tourism	Ensure tourism with an emphasis on strengthening Oak Harbor as a tourist destination.	Ensure tourism with an emphasis on strengthening Oak Harbor as a tourist destination, including seafood and marine tourism.	Revised to add specificity to some vital OH industries.
6, 6.a, 139, Tourism	The City, Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce and other tourism agencies should participate in regional tourism planning.		
6, 6.b, 139, Tourism	Allocate hotel/motel tax funds and leverage additional support for tourism.		
6, 6.c, 139, Tourism	The City should encourage the Tourism Promotion and Visitor Information Center programs of the Chamber of Commerce.		
6, 6.d, 139, Tourism	Encourage the Economic Development Council to promote and assist existing and new tourist oriented businesses.		
6, 6.e, 139, Tourism	A hotel/special events center should be encouraged to locate in the downtown waterfront area, as determined in the Downtown Redevelopment, Branding and Marketing Program.		

Goal, Policy, Page Number, Theme/Sub Heading	Existing Policy (2016)	Proposed Policy Revision	Reasoning/Notes
6, 6.f, 139, Tourism	The City should explore and encourage the development and expansion of ecotourism and military related tourism, such as reunions and a military museum.		

Government Services

1, 175, Law Enforcement	Maintain and enhance law enforcement services to protect the public health, safety and welfare of Oak Harbor residents.		
1, 1.a, 175, Safety	Ensure that existing public safety and emergency service levels are not diminished as a result of urban growth.		
1, 1.b, 175, Safety	Continue to maintain its law enforcement response time standard of two minutes or less for emergency calls, and five to seven minutes for non-emergency calls.		
1, 1.c, 175, Police	Seek to maintain adequate Police Department staffing.		
1, 1.d, 176, Development Design	Require that new development and redevelopment designs incorporate crime prevention and public safety measures, as practicable, to mitigate the need for law enforcement expenditures.		
1, 1.e, 176, Safety	Continue to offer neighborhood-based crime prevention programs to help educate local residents and employers about actions they can take to reduce the threat of crime.		

Goal, Policy, Page Number, Theme/Sub Heading	Existing Policy (2016)	Proposed Policy Revision	Reasoning/Notes
1, 1.f, 176, Safety	Work cooperatively with the Island County Sheriff's office and other law enforcement agencies to address regional crime prevention issues and cases.		
1, 1.g, 176, Safety	Engage in law enforcement programs which protect the City's large percentage of children for their own inexperience and the criminal conduct of others.		
	New Policy	Review existing police station locations and plan to mitigate potential impacts from climate exacerbated hazards.	Police stations and fire stations were identified as a potentially vulnerable asset for the community when reviewing potential climate impacts.
2, 177, Protection	Maintain and enhance fire protection services to safeguard life, property and firefighting personnel.		
2, 2.a, 177, Protection	Ensure that existing fire protection levels are not diminished as a result of urban growth (See also Urban Growth Area Element).		
2, 2.b, 177, Fire Services Protection	Maintain a fire protection response time standard of five minutes or less for fire-related incidents, and four minutes or less for medical-related incidents.	Maintain a fire protection response time standard of five minutes or less for fire-related incidents or less than 90% of the time to all high acuity EMS and Fire incidents , and four minutes or less for medical-related incidents.	Revised to ensure high quality levels of service.
2, 2.c, 177, Fire Services Protection	Maintain minimum fire flow standards in conjunction with building and fire codes to protect life and property.		
2, 2.d, 177, Fire Services Protection	Maintain adequate fire protection staffing in order to meet its LOS standards.	Maintain adequate fire protection of 1.1 firefighters per 1,000 people to meet its LOS standards.	Revised to ensure high quality levels of service. This is the national average for communities over 25,000 people
2, 2.d, 177, Utilities	Maintain or improve the City's Survey and Rating Bureau rating.	No recommended change.	
Fire Services Protection	New policy	Ensure the ability to muster and effective fire responded force as determined by NFPA	Revised to ensure high quality levels of service.

Goal, Policy, Page Number, Theme/Sub Heading	Existing Policy (2016)	Proposed Policy Revision	Reasoning/Notes
Fire Services Protection	New policy	Ensure consistency with the National Fire Protection Association 1710 and identified personnel for residential, strip mall, or 3-story emergencies.	Revised to ensure high quality levels of service and consistency with federal standards.
2, 2.f, 177, Planning Protection	Adopt and implement zoning, subdivision codes and other regulations that address the relationship between development design and protection of property against fire hazards.	Adopt and implement zoning, subdivision codes and other regulations that address the relationship between development design and protection of property against fire hazards.	No recommended change.
2, 2.g, 177-178, Inspections	Maintain routine inspection programs to enforce building and fire codes.		
2, 2.h, 178, Fire Services	Work cooperatively with adjacent fire protection agencies to coordinate fire delivery service within the Urban Growth Area.		
2, 2.i, 178, Prevention	Continue to educate residents and business owners on fire safety and prevention.		
2, 2.j, 178, Fire Services	Require proposed annexations provide, when requested by the Fire Department, a Fire Response Time Analysis to ensure that the City's response time can be maintained.		
2, 2.k, 178, Fire Services	Consider establishing a fire service impact fee in order to ensure that capital facilities can be provided to maintain the adopted level of service as the community grows, and should also consider a variety of financing mechanisms in combination with noncapital alternatives.		

Goal, Policy, Page Number, Theme/Sub Heading	Existing Policy (2016)	Proposed Policy Revision	Reasoning/Notes
Fire Services	New Policy	Review existing fire station locations and plan to mitigate potential impacts from climate exacerbated hazards.	Police stations and fire stations were identified as a potentially vulnerable asset for the community when reviewing potential climate impacts.
3, 179, Emergencies Natural Disasters	Prepare for natural disasters and other emergencies which may require extraordinary response measures.		
3, 3.b, 179, Emergency Management	Ensure that Enhanced 911 and all other emergency communications plans are consistent with planned future growth.		
3, 3.a, 179, Emergency Management	Cooperate with other responsible agencies to update and maintain a current Emergency Management Plan.		
3, 3.c, 179, Emergency Management	Avoid building critical public facilities, such as hospitals, schools and electric transmission lines, in areas likely to experience severe seismic effects, flooding, hazardous material releases or intense fire.		
3, 3.d, 179, Emergency Management	Maintain current information on land use, transportation, utility and communications systems to assist in emergency planning.		
4, 181, Education	Encourage and promote public and private institutions dedicated to the pursuit of education.		
4, 4.a, 181, Education	Coordinate with Oak Harbor School District, Skagit Valley College and other educational institutions in preparing long-range plans, development regulations and capital projects.		

Goal, Policy, Page Number, Theme/Sub Heading	Existing Policy (2016)	Proposed Policy Revision	Reasoning/Notes
4, 4.b, 181, Education	Coordinate with the Oak Harbor School District, Skagit Valley College and other public entities for joint use, including maintenance, of facilities for public use.		
4, 4.c, 181, School Districts	Continue to include the Oak Harbor School District in the City's development review process and advise the administration of all municipal activities that may affect the District.		
4, 4.d, 181, Education	Coordinate its economic diversification plans with Skagit Valley College and other educational institutions and support reasonable plans for campus expansion (See also, Economic Development and Land Use elements).		
4, 4.e, 181, School Districts	Work cooperatively with the Oak Harbor School District, Skagit Valley College and Oak Harbor Public Library to share information and resources.		
4, 4.f, 181, Public Library	The Library Board is responsible for advising City Council on all matters related to the Oak Harbor Public Library.		
4, 4.g, 181, Public Library	The City and Sno-Isle Regional Library should continue to implement library expansion and improvements to advance customer service, information technology and operational efficiency.		

Goal, Policy, Page Number, Theme/Sub Heading	Existing Policy (2016)	Proposed Policy Revision	Reasoning/Notes
5, 188, Senior Citizens	Continue to provide our senior residents with recreational, social, educational, and health maintenance services specifically designed to meet their current and emerging needs.	Continue to provide our senior residents with recreational, social, educational, and health maintenance services specifically designed to meet their current and emerging needs. Continue to provide senior residents with recreational, social, educational, and health maintenance services specifically designed to meet their current and emerging needs. The City should also identify barriers to accessing these services, define evolving needs, and update planning strategies accordingly.	Revised to add specificity to policy.
5, 5.a, 188, Senior Citizens	The City should identify barriers to service access and define emerging needs of this group while updating planning strategies as needed.	The City should identify barriers to service access and define emerging needs of this group while updating planning strategies as needed.	Combined with the goal.
5, 5.b, 188, Senior Citizens	The City should expand the senior center as use increases and unmet needs are identified.		
5, 5.c, 188, Senior Citizens	Establish an interlocal Agreement with Island County to assure that the Senior Center remains capable of providing its services and adequate staffing is maintained.		
6, 189, Public Involvement	Encourage early and continuous public involvement in the planning process and ensure coordination between the City and other jurisdictions to advance community Goals.		

Goal, Policy, Page Number, Theme/Sub Heading	Existing Policy (2016)	Proposed Policy Revision	Reasoning/Notes
6, 6.a, 189, Design	Design a process that involves early citizen input and review for city plans, policies and regulations.		
6, 6.b, 189, Information	Strive to provide timely information to the citizens on public meeting and discussions using traditional methods of notification along with web and social media postings.		
6, 6.c, 189, Public Involvement	For large scale and complex projects, create and disseminate a public involvement plan designed to encourage early and continuous public involvement.		
6, 6.d, 189, Public Involvement	Seek to maintain diverse public involvement, and expeditiously appoint new advisory board and commission members as vacancies occur.		
6, 6.e, 189, Diversity	Strive to create diversity in advisory groups and commissions to provide a broad spectrum of experience, knowledge and insights regarding city matters		
6, 6.f, 189, Information	Provide timely and effective public notification of land use actions.		
6, 6.g, 189, Coordination	Coordinate with other public agencies to promote city goals and further adopted statewide and countywide goals and policies.		
7, 190, Permitting	Process land use and development permits in a fair and timely manner, with City decisions based upon clear and objective standards to ensure predictability.		

Goal, Policy, Page Number, Theme/Sub Heading	Existing Policy (2016)	Proposed Policy Revision	Reasoning/Notes
7, 7.a, 190, Permitting	Combine review and notification procedures for multiple permits, whenever possible, to eliminate unnecessary delay in review of development applications.		
7, 7.b, 190, Permitting	Consider streamlining procedures under the State Environmental Policy Act and Shoreline Management Act, as such programs may be developed by the State of Washington.		
7, 7.c, 190, Permitting	Process development applications within the legal time frames established by state law.		
7, 7.d, 190, Permitting	Consider establishing a fee structure for development permits which is graduated to reflect demands on staff time.		
8, 191, Property Rights	Private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation having been made. The property rights of landowners shall be protected from arbitrary and discriminatory actions. (Also see the United States Constitution, 5th Amendment)		
8, 8.a, 191, Property Rights	Preserve the rights of property owners, operating under current land use regulations, unless a public health, safety or welfare purpose is served by more restrictive regulation.		

Goal, Policy, Page Number, Theme/Sub Heading	Existing Policy (2016)	Proposed Policy Revision	Reasoning/Notes
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Policy Revision Summaries

Important Links for Reference

[2016 Comprehensive Plan](#)

[Oak Harbor adopted plans web page](#)

[Oak Harbor Title 19 Zoning](#)

[Windjammer Park Plan](#)

[Waterfront Redevelopment Plan](#)

[2019 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan](#)

[2024 Active Transportation Plan](#)

[2025 Safety Action Plan](#)

[2025 OH Arts Plan Draft](#)

Climate and Resilience Recommendations

The minimum requirements for the climate element in HB 1181 and RCW 36.70A.020 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.

Following HB 1181's minimum requirements each jurisdiction must include at least one climate resilience goal and supportive policy for each climate-exacerbated hazard that is relevant to your jurisdiction¹.

¹ Commerce, Intermediate Planning Guidance, 2023

Based on the climate analysis completed for Oak Harbor, the priority hazards exacerbated by climate change were identified as:

Hazards identified by the Risk and Vulnerability Assessment	Hazards Identified by the Community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sea-level rise; • Extreme precipitation; and • Flooding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildfire/smoke • Extreme heat as it relates to transportation • Drought as it relates to transportation

Policies in the Climate Resilience Element are meant to address assets that are especially vulnerable to climate-exacerbated hazards, including, but not limited to:

- Medical clinics, hospitals, fire and police departments;
- Roadway infrastructure;
- Stormwater systems;
- Wastewater treatment plants; and
- Shorelines

Integrated Policies

In the current comprehensive plan (2016), approximately 29 policies were identified that are promoting, or may be modified to promote, the requirements of HB 1181 to address climate exacerbated hazards, promote natural areas, and enhance community resilience. Most of the existing policies mitigate against flooding, extreme precipitation, and extreme heat and protect bridges, ecosystems, parks, tree canopy (tree inventory), transportation network (streets, trails, and transit). The following policies identified and enhanced in the first draft of revisions were:

Land Use	1.b	Parks,	4.k	1.c
1.h	1.c	Recreation and	4.l	1.d
2.n	1.d	Open Space	6.b	2.i
5.a	1.e	k.	Utilities	3.c
5.j	3.d		5.d	3.h
5.k	5.b	Transportation	Environment	5.a
Urban Design	7.b	2.f	1.a	5.f
1.a		4.i	1.b	

New policies for climate and resilience in other elements

Land Use

Foster higher-intensity land uses in mixed-use urban villages with transit corridors.

Establish form-based codes where appropriate to better integrate higher-density development.

Establish land use patterns that increase the resilience of the built environment, ecosystems, and communities to climate change.

Transportation

Address active transportation and other multimodal types of transportation options in concurrency programs – both in assessment and mitigation.

Urban Design

Choose native drought- and pest-resistant trees, shrubs, and grasses in restoration efforts to support climate resilience.

New Policies in the Climate and Resilience Element

The policies in the new element are meant to address climate-exacerbated unique to Oak Harbor including sea-level rise, extreme precipitation, and wildfire and smoke. Existing policies in the Environment Element address flooding and have been revised to reflect their integration with the new climate and resiliency element.

Overall Resilience

Goal: Expand planning efforts that support community resilience from multiple climate exacerbated hazards.

1. Ensure that City departments incorporate considerations for climate-related vulnerabilities, mitigation, and adaptation strategies in future planning documents.
2. Include a climate-resiliency component in long-range transportation planning documents or planning for transportation projects.
3. Include a climate-resiliency component in long-range water/sewer planning documents or planning water/sewer projects.
4. Consider completing coastal hazards assessments for City infrastructure projects to mitigate long-term damage to public services.
5. Consider the use of climate-resilient materials in future infrastructure projects, especially for roads and their vulnerability to drought and extreme heat.

Equity and Resilience

Goal: Promote equal access to community features and work to reverse environmental justice impacts on the community.

1. Ensure equal access to community amenities, like parks and open space, for Broad View, Fair Winds, Silverspot Valley, Swantown and Ault Forest communities.

This policy comes from using the [environmental health disparities](#) tool from the Washington Department of Health and analyzing social and environmental vulnerability.

Sea-Level Rise

Goal: Protect and restore coastal ecosystems to increase the resilience of species, habitats, and communities to climate change.

1. Consider developing an ordinance requiring review of sea-level rise effects in designing projects.
2. Collaborate with other regional and State stakeholders in on-going and future periodic SLR vulnerability studies.
3. In areas with significant vulnerability to climate hazards, facilitate and support long-term community visioning including consideration of managed retreat.
4. Consider future climate conditions during siting and design of capital facilities, including changes to temperature, rainfall, and sea level, to help ensure they function as intended over their planned life cycle.

Extreme Precipitation

Goal: Ensure the protection and restoration of streams, riparian zones, estuaries, wetlands, and floodplains to achieve healthy watersheds that are resilient to climate change.

1. Support enhanced data collection for hazard events of all magnitudes to provide a fuller understanding of the community's hazard characteristics — including those affected by climate change.
2. Incorporate sea-level rise information, along with tsunami hazard mapping, into critical area delineation for siting critical infrastructure, land-use planning, and emergency management.
3. Encourage the use of modular buildings that can be moved, renovated, and deconstructed as community or tenant needs and climate impacts change.
4. Restore floodplains and connectivity to improve the resilience of streams and rivers and reduce flood risk.
5. Review required buffers and setbacks for steep slopes and shorelines vulnerable to erosion exacerbated by climate change, and establish new minimums, if necessary, so that improvements are not required to protect structures during their expected life.

Water Resources*

Goal: Protect and preserve water quality and quantity from drought, extreme heat, and other hazards exacerbated by climate change.

1. Manage water resources sustainably in the face of climate change.
2. Utilize water conservation methods and technologies to foster climate resilience.
3. Explore opportunities for new water-storage systems to provide back-up water supplies during droughts and support climate resilience.
4. Seek funding for green infrastructure projects that help capture, filter, store, and reuse stormwater runoff.

**A specific goal relating to water resources has been proposed to address the city's high vulnerability of water/sewer infrastructure from multiple climate hazards and impacts.*

Wildfire/Smoke

Goal: Improve the community's knowledge of and resilience to wildfires and smoke.

1. Ensure that all urban forestry management plans include considerations for the impacts of climate change.
2. Improve communication to residents around wildfire and smoke adaptation strategies through the City website and in-person opportunities, specifically targeting vulnerable populations.
3. Complete a review of air filtration systems in public buildings and begin improving air filtration systems for high smoke days.
4. Seek funding for storage of personal respirators for free distribution during extreme smoke events.
5. Monitor chronic health diseases or other health indicators to assess the community's vulnerability to wildfires.
6. Explore ways to foster indoor community events and exercise in the future as impacts climate-exacerbated hazards increase.

MEMORANDUM

Revised: August 26, 2025

To: Cac Kamak, Principal Planner
City of Oak Harbor, Washington

From: Heidi Rous
Climate Director, Kimley-Horn

RE: SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL CLIMATE IMPACTS/RISKS/VULNERABILITEIS & POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES, CLIMATE ELEMENT AND RESILIENCY SUB-ELEMENT 2025 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE, CITY OF OAK HARBOR

Purpose

As a follow-up to the current policy gaps and opportunities memorandum submitted earlier, this memorandum summarizes potential impacts, risks, and vulnerabilities to key assets in the City of Oak Harbor (City). Due to a changing climate, the memorandum identifies potential opportunities for the City to take actions to improve the resiliency of those assets. This memorandum informs a new Climate Element and Resiliency Sub-Element, consistent with House Bill 1181 (“HB 1181”) and Washington state’s Growth Management Act (GMA) policies, that is part of the Comprehensive Plan update ([RCW 36.70A.070\(9\)](#)). Under HB 1181 and the GMA for the City, a resiliency sub element must, among other things, equitably enhance resiliency to, and avoid or substantially reduce the adverse impacts of, climate change in human communities and ecological systems through goals, policies, and programs consistent with the best available science and scientifically credible climate projections and impact scenarios ([RCW 36.70A.070\(9\)\(e\)\(i\)](#)).

Scope

Critical infrastructure located within the City are assessed for vulnerability and risk to prioritize climate hazards (see “Analysis” section below). Assets identified are the same as those mentioned in the previous memorandum, *Summary of Climate Hazards and Policy Gaps & Opportunities, Climate Element and Resiliency Sub-Element 2025 Comp Plan Update City of Oak Harbor (“Assets Memorandum”)*. According to the 2023 Department of Energy (DOE) Guidance, assets are defined as community groups, places, natural resources, infrastructure, and services that the community finds valuable and wants to protect against climate-exacerbated hazardous events. This analysis characterizes the exposure of each asset to a climate hazard (“sensitivity”) along with how frequent the hazard will occur (“probability”), how adaptive the asset is to disturbances (“adaptive capacity”), and how significant functional and physical costs would be (“magnitude”). This memorandum strives to describe the findings and provide a basis for developing goals and policies that make up the Climate Element and Resiliency Sub-Element.

Methodology

Following the guidance document from the Washington State Department of Commerce’s Intermediate Planning Guidance document, the Climate Element Workbook was utilized to assess climate impacts, risk, and vulnerabilities, and develop recommended actions. For this assessment, each asset-hazard pair from the Assets Memorandum was assessed in terms of infrastructure sensitivity or exposure and adaptive capacity. Both sensitivity and adaptive

capacity characterized vulnerability outcomes on a low, medium, and high rating (see definitions in “Analysis” section below). As determined by analysis, outreach, and review of the City’s existing plans (such as Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, Capital Improvement Plan, Comprehensive Plan, and those further mentioned in the “Analysis” section below), the primary climate hazards most relevant to the City are:

- Extreme precipitation,
- Flooding,
- Sea level rise

Based on these specific climate hazards, a total of 54 asset-hazard pairs were analyzed for sensitivity and adaptive capacity using a qualitative rating system (Low, Medium, and High). Ratings were determined based on indicators such as age, asset condition, physical design, social assets, economic costs, etc. Based on the sensitivity and adaptive ratings, an appropriate vulnerability risk rating (Low, Medium, High) was determined. For example, a low sensitivity and a low adaptive capacity would suggest a medium vulnerability for an asset-hazard pair.

Similarly, the same 54 asset-hazard pairs were analyzed for its probability or frequency of hazard occurrence and the magnitude of potential losses/consequences using a low, medium, and high rating. The ratings were determined based on indicators such as location, social assets, revenue, operations, and safety, etc. Using both the probability and magnitude rating, a composite risk rating was calculated. Based on the composite risk rating, a decision of “Take Action” or “Accept Risk” was identified for each asset-hazard pair. For example, a high probability with a medium magnitude for an asset would indicate a high composite risk rating; thus, a “Take Action” decision was indicated.

Analysis

Vulnerability Characterization

Existing reports, documents, and the City Website were used to gather relevant data pertaining to each hazard. Existing reports and documents include, but are not limited to:

- 2008 City of Oak Harbor Comprehensive Sewer Plan
- 2016 City of Oak Harbor Water System Plan Update
- 2016 Oak Harbor Transportation Plan
- 2016 City of Oak Harbor Windjammer Park Integration Plan
- 2019 City of Oak Harbor Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan
- City of Oak Harbor Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan and Implementing Procedures 2019-2024
- Island County Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan 2020 Update Volume 1: Planning-Area-Wide Elements
- Island County 2020 Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Volume 2: Planning Partner Annexes
- City of Oak Harbor Capital Improvements Plan 2023-2028
- 2036 Oak Harbor Comprehensive Plan, A Vision for the Future
- City of Oak Harbor Shoreline Master program

Through utilization of data found in the above documents, the sensitivity and adaptive capacity for each asset-hazard pair were determined based on a low, medium, and high rating according to the appropriate indicators. In accordance with DOE guidance, indicators are identified to qualitatively rank the sensitivity and adaptive capacity

of each asset. **Table 1: Sensitivity and Adaptive Capacity Definitions** describes examples of key indicators that exhibit low, medium, and high sensitivity and adaptive capacity.

Table 1: Sensitivity and Adaptive Capacity Definitions			
Example Key Indicators of “Sensitivity”		Example Key Indicators of “Adaptive Capacity”	
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor repairs and accommodations required. • Slight inconveniences and temporary loss of services. • Minor disruption to business continuity and minimal loss of revenue and wages. • Little to no increase in costs and demands to respond to emergency events. 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptive solutions are innovative but costly. • Adaptive solutions may require coordination with multiple agencies to implement, leading to disruptions in service and longer implementation times. • Solutions require change in lifestyle or changes in political decisions. • Ability to avoid damage is limited.
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary loss of food production, transportation, and distribution. • Temporary loss of functionality and operations closure of emergency response services. • Moderate repairs and replacements required. • Moderate increase in costs and demands to respond to emergency events. 	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts can be reduced or mitigated to a certain extent; however, adaptive solutions are only feasible for limited assets. • Some assets may face difficulties in adapting in terms of cost and implementation. • Coordination with third party agencies may be necessary for adaptivity measures. • Solutions require some change in systematic operations but are somewhat executable.
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant impact requiring reconstruction of parts or an entirety of an asset. • Extensive rehabilitation of assets resulting in long-term or permanent loss of functionality or operations closure. • Significant impact to vulnerable populations due to flooding and extreme precipitation-related deaths and illnesses, population displacement, or migration. 	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assets can adapt with little to no difficulty. • Direct influence on the implementation of strategies or solutions for the asset is apparent. • Adaptive solutions are highly feasible for most, if not all assets with affordable costs. • Solutions are implemented immediately and face little to no resistance.

Table 1: Sensitivity and Adaptive Capacity Definitions			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permanent loss of species not able to adapt to weather events exacerbated by climate change. 		

Based on the definitions above and relevant indicators, each asset-hazard pair was evaluated and given an appropriate sensitivity and adaptive capacity rating. Using the sensitivity and adaptive capacity ratings, an appropriate vulnerability rating was determined. Each asset-hazard pair describes climate indicators to determine sensitivity, adaptive capacity, and vulnerability ratings (Refer to **Appendix A: City of Oak Harbor Climate Element Workbook** for more details).

Risk Characterization

Similar to the Vulnerability Characterization described above, the same resources were used to determine the probability and magnitude ratings for each asset-hazard pair. The definitions for a low, medium, and high probability and magnitude rating are shown in **Table 2: Probability and Magnitude Definitions**.

Table 2: Probability and Magnitude Definitions ¹			
Probability		Magnitude	
Low	Very limited historic events recorded. Frequency of hazardous events to occur is periodic with likelihood of future events to occur episodically. For example, the likelihood of hazardous event(s) to occur once in 20 years.	Low	Minimal destruction to applicable assets with adequate functionality. In addition, minimal injuries and functionality to daily livelihood. Applicable assets may be easily repaired with available resources within a short duration of time without complications.
Medium	Limited, but some available historic events recorded. Frequency of hazardous events to occur is somewhat periodic. For example, likelihood of hazardous event(s) to occur once in 5 to 20 years.	Medium	Moderate destruction to applicable assets with decreased functionality. Injuries and functionality to daily livelihood are moderately heightened. Applicable assets may have increased difficulty for repair and functionality due to increased restoration times and complications. Health concerns are also a higher likelihood with strong suggestions for evacuation plans.
High	Recent, multiple historic events recorded. Hazardous events occur frequently. For example, likelihood of hazardous event(s) to occur within 5 years.	High	Extreme destruction to applicable assets with little to no functionality. Injuries and functionality to daily livelihood are extremely heightened. Applicable assets will have significant challenges for repair and elongated periods of construction before functionality can be resumed. Health concerns are at an extreme likelihood with strong coercion for evacuation plans.

1. Definitions for low, medium, and high probability and magnitude were derived from the U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit, <https://toolkit.climate.gov/steps-to-resilience/assess-vulnerability-risk>. Accessed July 2024.

Based on the definitions above and relevant indicators, each asset-hazard pair were evaluated and given an appropriate rating. Each asset-hazard pair describes climate indicators to determine probability, magnitude, and climate risk (Refer to **Appendix A** for more details). It is also important to note that the recommended decisions of “Take Action” or “Accept Risk” should be not understood as a “final” decision for the City. These decisions are strictly based on the structure of the climate workbook analysis.

Summary of Analysis

Based on the vulnerability and risk analysis, **Table 3: Asset Vulnerability and Climate Hazard Risks** showcase which asset/critical infrastructure are exposed to a priority climate hazard throughout the City. An asset-hazard pair which received a composite risk rating of medium or high are denoted with color scales associated with low (yellow), medium (orange), and high (red) ratings. Composite risk is comprised of an asset’s level of vulnerability to a climate hazard and the probability and magnitude of impact to the asset from a climate hazard. A summary of asset vulnerability and climate hazard risks to critical infrastructure within the City is further provided below.

Table 3: Asset Vulnerability and Climate Hazard Risks

	Priority Climate Hazards			
	Assets	Extreme Precipitation	Flooding	Sea Level Rise
Community Assets	Grocery stores			
	Downtown Oak Harbor			
	Religious institutions			
	Educational institutions			
	Commercial retail			
	Naval air station Whidbey Island			
	Critical water areas			
	Urban tree inventory			
	Police station			
	Fire station			
	Dispatch center			
	Medical clinic/hospital			
	Bridges			
	Streets/Arterials			
	Transit stations			
	Wastewater treatment plants			
	Sewer infrastructure			
	Stormwater infrastructure			
	Solid waste collection			
	Water supply			
Marine shoreline				
Residential neighborhoods				

2. City identified vulnerabilities: police stations and sea-level rise (medium), bridges and sea-level rise (medium), streets and flooding and extreme precipitation (medium), wastewater treatment plant and sea-level rise (high), sewer infrastructure and sea-level rise (high), stormwater infrastructure and sea-level rise (high), water supply and extreme precipitation and flooding (high).

Low composite risk ratings	Medium composite risk ratings
City Identified Vulnerability	High composite risk ratings
Boxes that are grey had lack of data and/or non-variable data from the CMRW tool. The City of Oak Harbor may determine the assets' vulnerability to hazards, identified by diagonal lines.	

Some assets are not located within the City but are located within the County and provide services to City residents through interlocal agreements and contracts. Although certain assets may not be exposed to a particular climate hazard, they may be affected by secondary climate hazards such as coastal flooding and landslides from exposed soil following wildfire and precipitation events, flooding from overtopping of levees, and landslides or soil erosion from severe coastal storms. The section below focuses on asset-hazard pairs with a Medium to High vulnerability rating and Medium to High composite risk rating. Additional details can be found in **Appendix A** and **Memo 1: Summary of Climate Hazards and Policy Gaps & Opportunities**.

Vulnerability

- **Sensitivity:** Assets most vulnerable to priority climate hazards are the Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, medical clinics/hospitals, roadway infrastructure, stormwater systems, wastewater treatment plants, and marine shorelines. Assets are most likely to be impacted by hazards from increased flooding, extreme precipitation storm events, and sea level rise. Examples of climate impacts to assets are further described below:
 - The Naval Air Station Whidbey Island (NASWI or station) is located in northern Oak Harbor near the coastal shoreline. NASWI is the single largest employer on Whidbey Island; therefore, NASWI could face temporary or permanent closure which could impact the income streams of many communities.
 - The City's shoreline is comprised of exposed bluffs/cliff faces, roads, homes and yards, low-lying wetlands, open space, recreational structures, sand, boat, piers, and docks. Unstable bluffs and homes are more vulnerable to landslides from extreme precipitation storm events and sea level rise.
 - Wastewater infrastructure located near low-lying coastal areas are more vulnerable to temporary and permanent flooding from extreme precipitation storm events and sea level rise inundation. Pipes with combined sewage and stormwater flows can overflow during extreme precipitation events and back up, causing acute flooding and eventually overflowing into public waterways^{1 2}. The City does not have a combined sewage and stormwater system³. However, older sewered areas in the neighborhoods of Old Town and Mid Town may experience overflow and flooding due to increased infiltration and inflow.
 - The City receives 99.7% of potable water from Anacortes estimating at 1-billion gallons per year (3,070 acre-feet)⁴. Supplemental water sources come from underground wells located throughout the City and may be more susceptible to saltwater intrusion from future sea level rise.
 - Whidbey Health Medical (Whidbey health) center's main campus is located in a natural hazard risk zone for severe storms. Whidbey health may be the primary medical center providing services to Oak Harbor residences despite its location in Coupeville.
- **Adaptive Capacity:** Exposed assets can adjust to hazards by retrofitting older buildings and infrastructure and implementing design features that consider increased climate hazards. Other methods such as land use controls and design standards may be enforced to site assets in non-hazardous areas that can withstand climate hazard events. Adaptive capacity measures are intended to increase climate resiliency and are further provided in "Recommended Actions" section below.

Composite Risk Characterization

- **Probability:** The frequency of priority climate hazards is anticipated to increase and become more unpredictable among all assets.
 - **Frequency of Extreme Precipitation:** Total precipitation from 25-year extreme storm events (25-27 inches) are expected to increase by an average of 11% by the end of the century⁵. Annual precipitation

¹ Drexel University. "Climate change and sea level rise pose an acute challenge for cities with combined sewer systems". Accessed at [Climate change and sea level rise pose an acute challenge for cities with combined sewer systems \(phys.org\)](https://climatechangeandsealevelrise.org/) on August 2024.

² [Microsoft Word - EP_SLR_BackgroundInfo_Combined_2018_general.docx \(nisenet.org\)](#)

³ City of Oak Harbor Comprehensive Sewer Plan, 2008.

⁴ Gray & Osborne, Inc. *City of Oak Harbor Water System Plan*, 2014.

⁵ University of Washington. Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington. Accessed at [Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington | Climate Impacts Group \(uw.edu\)](https://climateimpacts.org/) on August 2024.

from a 2-year storm (12-15 inches) are expected to increase by 16%. Historically, there have been several severe storms recorded in the past two decades occurring in the winter months⁶.

- **Frequency of Flooding:** Flood depth for Oak Harbor is anticipated to range from 5-10 feet with the marina having an anticipated flood depth of greater than 10 feet⁷. Assets located in areas with deep flood depths and slow velocity, and vice versa, are more susceptible to flood damage⁸. Principal flooding sources for Oak Harbor are typically caused by storms and rapid accumulation of runoff surface water, or through storm surges coming off the coast during high tides.
- **Frequency of Sea Level Rise:** There is a 50% likelihood that relative sea level rise will exceed 0.8 feet by mid-century under a high emissions scenario (RCP 8.5)⁹.
- **Magnitude:** Moderate destruction with decreased functionality will result in potential losses and consequences to certain assets. Some assets are anticipated to experience significant destruction resulting in permanent losses. Some examples are included below:
 - Critical water areas in Oak Harbor are primary labeled as having moderate contamination susceptibility with a few areas identified as having high susceptibility. Areas with high aquifer susceptibility are mainly found in Northeast oak Harbor and South/West Oak Harbor. Remaining aquifers have low susceptibility and are scattered throughout Oak Harbor with majority located in south Oak Harbor.
 - Wastewater treatment plants (WWTP) are considered critical facilities according to the City’s Emergency Operations Plan. Upgrades and maintenance costs can range from \$800,000 to over \$2 million depending on parts and labor^{10 11}. Increased severe storm events could increase infrastructure damage and halt operations; thus, costing the WWTP millions of dollars for replacement parts and general reconstruction.
 - Extreme precipitation can cause secondary hazards like coastal erosion, liquefaction, and landslides that can cause stormwater overflows and loss of functions¹², particularly along shorelines. Flood damage for shoreline assets in impact zones include boat dock and pier, park play structures, roads, and dry dock storage yard. Flooding and major storms from extreme precipitation events can result in loss of functionality and destruction of shoreline structures and buildings depending on intensity of wave velocity with lengthy repair periods.
 - Residents located adjacent to unstable slopes along Southwest Scenic Heights Street in Scenic heights neighborhood and Mountain circle in Crescent harbor neighborhood are more susceptible to landslide and significant structural damage. Historically, severe storms in 2006 and 2015 were recorded to have dollar losses totaling approximately \$95,995 and \$13,000¹³, respectively; as such, similar losses could potentially total similar monetary values or significantly higher.

⁶ City of Oak Harbor Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2020

⁷.Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Miller, I., Petersen, S., Fougerat, M., Pucci, D., Clark, L., 2016. *Sea Level Rise and Coastal Flood Risk Assessment: Island County, Washington*. Funded by the NOAA Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund and the Salmon Recovery Funding Board.

¹⁰ City of Oak Harbor Stormwater Management Plan, 2024.

¹¹ [Microsoft Word - EP_SLR BackgroundInfo Combined 2018_general.docx \(nisenet.org\)](#)

¹² Ibid.

¹³ County Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2020.

- More frequent flooding events due to aging stormwater infrastructure and erosion or landslides from waterlogged soil can lead to destruction of urban trees, specifically Garry Oaks which are important to the community. Citizen groups maintain Garry Oak groves and are protected under the City's Critical Areas Ordinance.

Recommended Actions

This section is preliminary for discussion purposes only. Recommended actions are based on cumulative factors in the climate hazard analysis and are subject to change based on further discussions with the City and community members.

- Municipal code and other regulatory documents may consider updating development standards for buildings and infrastructure located in sea-level rise inundation zones as identified in the Sea Level Rise and Coastal Flood Risk Assessment¹⁴, particularly along coastal shorelines.
- Major streets/arterials, transit stations, and other transportation infrastructure should consider updating primary evacuation routes for increased severe storms and secondary evacuation routes in the event primary evacuation routes are inaccessible in emergencies.
- As the NASWI provides employment and housing opportunities for a large fraction of people in Oak Harbor, evacuation plans should be updated accordingly to consider climate hazards. In addition, NASWI should consider strengthening emergency action plans (EAPs) in the event of increased climate hazards to minimize significant economic losses and disruptions of employee livelihood.
- As the City relies heavily on their water supply from the City of Anacortes, the City should update emergency water plans and consider alternative water supply connections.
- Saltwater intrusion from SLR can encroach into shallow groundwater levels, increasing flooding extent and contaminating potable water sources.¹⁵ SLR and increased rainfall can exacerbate coastal flooding.¹⁶ Since the City contains shoreline areas, additional refined studies on SLR should be conducted to better understand the City's vulnerability to SLR-related hazards and their impacts to residents and critical infrastructure.
- Consider updating the 2008 Comprehensive Sewer Plan to assess flood impacts from increased extreme precipitation events and future relative sea level rise, in addition to spot checks after major storm events which are extreme precipitation events with greater than 24-hour, 10-year recurrence rainfall intervals¹⁷.
- Bridges are important for City resident evacuations and access to critical facilities. There is a lack of records regarding whether bridge design return period accounts for future sea level rise. Consider reconstruction of bridges to increase resiliency to extreme precipitation and increased flood damage.

¹⁴ Miller, I., Petersen, S., Fougerat, M., Pucci, D., Clark, L., 2016. *Sea Level Rise and Coastal Flood Risk Assessment: Island County, Washington*. Funded by the NOAA Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund and the Salmon Recovery Funding Board.

¹⁵ Advancing Earth and Space Sciences, *Groundwater Rise and Associated Flooding in Coastal Settlements Due to Sea-Level Rise: A Review of Processes and Methods*. 2022. Available at [Groundwater Rise and Associated Flooding in Coastal Settlements Due To Sea-Level Rise: A Review of Processes and Methods - Bosserelle - 2022 - Earth's Future - Wiley Online Library](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhydrol.2022.128554). Accessed August 2024.

¹⁶ Yu et. al. (2022). *Impacts of sea-level rise on groundwater inundation and river floods under changing climate*. 2022. Journal of Hydrology, Available at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhydrol.2022.128554>. Accessed August 2024.

¹⁷ City of Oak Harbor Stormwater Management Program SWMP Plan, 2024.

- Consider additional back-up power sources for medical clinics against future extreme precipitation and storm events to mitigate loss of functionality and services during power outages. Affordable transportation of senior individuals, who are more vulnerable during storm events, should also be considered.
- The City’s shoreline includes many different uses and infrastructure that are susceptible to erosion from extreme precipitation and flooding from future sea level rise inundation. Consider redundancies for shoreline assets such as roads, natural gas & electricity, public buildings, and over-water structures n in case of lost functionality.

Kimley-Horn looks forward to collaborating with the City to identify potential opportunities to identify priority climate hazard impacts and increase resiliency among all sectors within the community.

Sincerely,

Heidi Rous

Climate Director, Kimley-Horn

On Behalf of:

City of Oak Harbor, Washington State

MEMORANDUM

November 5, 2024

To: Cac Kamak, Principal Planner
City of Oak Harbor, Washington

From: Heidi Rous
Climate Director, Kimley-Horn

RE: SUMMARY OF CLIMATE HAZARDS AND POLICY GAPS & OPPORTUNITIES, CLIMATE ELEMENT AND RESILIENCY SUB-ELEMENT 2025 COMP PLAN UPDATE, CITY OF OAK HARBOR

Purpose

This memorandum summarizes potential climate impacts to City of Oak Harbor’s (City) assets, policy gaps or opportunities in existing plans, and potential policy opportunities to address climate impacts. The memorandum further informs the new Climate Element and Resiliency Sub-Element, consistent with House Bill 1181 (“HB 1181”) and Washington State’s Growth Management Act (GMA). A memorandum summarizing climate vulnerability and risks of identified assets will be provided separately. Under HB 1181 and the GMA ([RCW 36.70A.070\(9\)](#)) for the City, a resiliency sub element must, among other things, equitably enhance resiliency to, and avoid or substantially reduce the adverse impacts of, climate change in human communities and ecological systems through goals, policies, and programs consistent with the best available science and scientifically credible climate projections and impact scenarios [RCW 36.70A.070\(9\)\(e\)\(i\)](#).

Scope

Critical infrastructure located within the City are identified and assessed for exposure to climate hazard scenarios (see “Analysis” section below). Assets identified are located within Oak Harbor and are either owned and operated by the City, quasi-public agencies, or private entities. Assets include administrative buildings, historical sites, transportation infrastructure and facilities, residential neighborhoods, and urban tree inventories that are owned and managed by the City. Other critical facilities operating under an interlocal agreement with Island County were assessed including educational and religious institutions, water, sewer, waste, and energy facilities. Identifying local assets owned or managed by non-City entities provides an opportunity to coordinate with responsible agencies and protect critical facilities and communities against climate hazards. Other assets may include community groups, places, and services which will be identified through community stakeholder interviews winter 2024-2025. Other assets identified by stakeholders will be updated in the workbook and incorporated into Climate Element goals and policies.

Methodology

Under the Washington State Department of Commerce’s Intermediate Planning Guidance document, Section 3: Resilience Sub-element provides step-by-step guidance for developing a new climate and resiliency element, as shown below:

1. Explore Climate Impacts

2. Audit Plan and Policies
3. Assess Vulnerability and Risk
4. Pursue Pathways
 - a. Select and/or adapt existing goals and policies
 - b. Develop new goals and policies
 - c. Update and adopt hazard mitigation plan
5. Integrate Goals and Policies

Following the guidance document, the Climate Element Workbook was utilized (See **Appendix A: Oak Harbor Climate Element Workbook**). The intermediary tasks within Steps 1-5 are included below and are further detailed in the Analysis section.

1. Identifying and organizing City and community assets under specific sectors;
2. Identifying potential climate hazards per sector;
3. Pairing assets and hazards;
4. Describing potential climate impacts, asset exposure, non-climate stressors, and climate impact consequences of each asset-hazard pair;
5. Identifying priority climate hazards affecting the City; and
6. Reviewing existing plans for climate gaps and opportunities.

The Climate & Resilience Element is required to have one (1) goal and supportive policy for each climate-exacerbated hazard which is relevant to the City, as required by FEMA and HB 1181. Recommendations include new measures that enhance beneficial opportunities among the eleven sectors which are not typically included in a FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plan.

Analysis

Identify Community Assets

Over 100 City assets were identified, including administrative and civic buildings, senior centers, parks, recreation facilities, historical sites, transportation infrastructure and facilities, air stations, solid waste management facilities, water distribution infrastructure, shorelines, and other critical facilities co-managed with special districts i.e., fire stations, police stations, telecommunication facilities, etc. The assets were pulled from existing reports, documents, and the City website. Existing reports and documents include:

- 2008 City of Oak Harbor Comprehensive Sewer Plan
- 2013 City of Oak Harbor Water System Plan Update
- 2016 City of Oak Harbor Transportation Plan
- 2016 Windjammer Park Integration Plan
- 2019 City of Oak Harbor Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan

- 2019 City of Oak Harbor Comprehensive Management Plan and Implementing Procedures 2019 - 2024
- 2020 Island County Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Volume 1: Planning-Area-Wide Elements
- 2020 Island County Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Volume 2: Planning Partner Annexes
- 2021 City of Oak Harbor Shoreline Master Program
- 2021 Island Transit Annual Report and Transit Development Plan 2022 – 2027
- 2021 Oak Harbor Housing Action Plan
- 2023 – 2028 City of Oak Harbor Capital Improvements Plan
- 2024 City of Oak Harbor Stormwater Management Program Plan
- 2036 Oak Harbor Comprehensive Plan

Exploration of Hazards and Changes in the Climate

Hazards, climate indicators, and climate impacts specific to the City were identified for each sector utilizing the Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington (“CMRW”) webtool. The CMRW tool provided County-level data within the State of Washington. As the City is within Island County, this selection was made for analysis and describes a “broad stroke” overview of climate hazard impacts to the City. Impacts to specific assets and infrastructure required additional resources as further described in the second memorandum. The CMRW tool provided a long list of climate indicators within various sectors such as agriculture, buildings and energy, cultural resources and practices, economic development, ecosystems, emergency management, human health, transportation, waste management, water resources, and zoning and development. Within these sectors, hazards such as drought, extreme heat, extreme precipitation, flooding, reduced snowpack, sea level rise, and wildfire were analyzed under the higher greenhouse gas scenario (RCP 8.5) with its respective climate indicator. The RCP 8.5 scenario was utilized as compared to the lower greenhouse gas scenario (RCP 4.5) as the scenarios do not differ significantly prior to 2050. Selected climate hazards and indicators can be found in **Appendix A**.

Pairing Assets and Hazards

Approximately 54 asset-hazard pairs were identified by selecting the appropriate sector in the CMRW tool, which automatically populated select hazard data that would impact the sector. For example, the buildings and energy sector yielded hazard data for extreme heat and wildfire, but resulted in no variable results for drought, extreme precipitation, flooding, reduced snowpack, and sea level rise. Assets were grouped with each respective hazard data; for example, Educational Institutions (identified to be within the buildings and energy sector) would be listed as “Educational Institutions – Extreme Precipitation” and “Educational Institutions – Flooding”. The asset-hazard pairs were then assessed for climate impacts focusing on how the respective hazard impacted the asset, how each asset is exposed to the hazard, nonclimate stressors that may exacerbate climate impacts, and past/future consequences of previous factors that are specific to the County asset. This exercise builds off the previous two exercises of identifying County assets and potential climate hazards.

Exposure, Impacts, Stressors, Consequences

Climate impacts to the appropriate City assets were assessed based on disruptions to the specific sector under the RCP 8.5 climate scenario.

The following summarizes key take-aways:

- Flooding, extreme precipitation, and sea level rise were the most recurring hazards when paired with assets.
- The City of Oak Harbor is anticipated to experience an increased frequency of extreme precipitation events in terms of increased total precipitation and magnitude of 2-year and 25-year recurrence events.
- The City of Oak Harbor is immediately along the coastline and may face a 5% chance of sea level change by more than 0.5 feet by 2030¹. By 2100, there is a strong likelihood (50% probability of sea level rise greater than 2 feet, and extreme projections far exceed that (i.e. a 1% chance of sea level rise of about 5 feet by 2100, and a 0.1% change of sea level rise of approximately 8 feet by 2100)².
- The risks of drought, extreme heat, reduced snowpack, and wildfire are relatively low.
- In low-lying coastal areas, there is an increased probability of flooding events than riverine flooding. Low-lying areas near the coast (i.e. less than 16 feet in elevation) are subject to flooding from sea level rise inundation.
- Critical facilities such as water and wastewater treatment plants, landfills, and stormwater infrastructure, etc. located on flood plains/landslide prone hazard areas are more likely to experience a significance loss of operations and physical damage to the structures.
- Residential communities located in flood zones and unstable bluff zones are more likely to experience secondary hazards from extreme precipitation; thus, potentially resulting in significant damages and loss of function.
- Rising sea levels will likely lead to permanent inundation of low-lying areas, increased tidal reach and coastal flooding, and increased exposure to storm surge events. In addition, increased coastal erosion and shifts in or loss of coastal wetland habitat are anticipated.

This list is non-exhaustive and may expand based on the best available science and community input. Future community engagement events may identify other assets such as community groups, places, and services that will be analyzed for additional climate hazard impacts in an updated workbook and memorandum. A community engagement plan and community engagement summary report will be provided as a separate appendix with the updated memorandum.

Identify Priority Climate Hazards

Priority climate hazards were identified based on the most common recurrences among asset-hazard pairs. Priority hazards were also identified based on the City's existing plans and anecdotal information. Some of the existing plans include the 2019-2024 Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan and Implementing Procedures, Island County Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan Volumes 1 & 2, and the shoreline master program. The climate hazards most relevant to the City include:

- Extreme precipitation
- Flooding
- Sea Level Rise

Policy Audit – Climate Gaps and Opportunities

¹ Miller, I., Petersen, S., Fougerat, M., Pucci, D., Clark, L., 2016. *Sea Level Rise and Coastal Flood Risk Assessment: Island County, Washington*. Funded by the NOAA Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund and the Salmon Recovery Funding Board.

² Ibid.

As referenced in the Climate Element Workbook (Appendix A), a policy audit was performed across the pertinent City of Oak Harbor and related Island County documents. From the City of Oak Harbor, the audit included the City's 2016 Comprehensive Plan, Shoreline Master Program (SMP), Active Transportation Program, Waterfront Redevelopment, Branding & Marketing Program, and the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan. From Island County, staff reviewed the 2020 Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan in which the City of Oak Harbor is annexed into.

The Climate Gaps and Opportunities Analysis (Appendix A) identified 69 policies from the 2016 Comprehensive Plan that may be used or revised to provide further policy direction in addressing climate related issues.

While Oak Harbor has made substantial effort to adopt climate resilience policies into their regulatory framework, the City will need to continually reconsider policies and update these documents as time progresses and climate related changes occur. For the 2025 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, policies could be updated to address climate-related hazards relevant to the City to improve resiliency and mitigate associated impacts. The Climate Element Workbook required staff to review the aforementioned documents to assess how certain policies currently address or could be updated to address impacts from climate related hazards. For more information on specific existing policies that could be updated to address and mitigate impacts from a changing climate, please refer to the provided Climate Workbook Section 3 Task 2.1 included in Appendix A. When considering adding and developing new policies, the Washington State Department of Commerce has supplied jurisdictions with the Climate Menu of Measures to help guide the development of the Climate Element and Resilience Sub Element. From the above analysis of priority climate hazards identified in the Section 3 Task 1.3 of the Climate Workbook, the City's existing plans, and anecdotal information, issues associated with sea-level rise, extreme precipitation, flooding, availability of water resources and balancing future population growth are likely of particular concern for the City of Oak Harbor. The Climate Menu of Measures has several policies for consideration that will help the City address these climate related hazards. Relevant policies derived from Commerce's Menu of Measures pertaining to Sea-level Rise, Extreme Precipitation, and Flooding that could be utilized by the City in the Periodic Update of the Comprehensive Plan include, but are not limited to, the following:

Sea-Level Rise

- Protect and restore coastal ecosystems to increase the resilience of species, habitats, and communities to climate change.
- Ensure the protection and restoration of streams, riparian zones, estuaries, wetlands, and floodplains to achieve healthy watersheds that are resilient to climate change.
- Consider sea-level rise in coastal and nearshore habitat restoration projects.
- Design and site new and expanded roads to have the least possible adverse effect on the shoreline, account for sea-level rise projections, not result in a net loss of shoreline ecological functions, or adversely impact existing or planned water-oriented uses, public access, and habitat restoration and enhancement projects.
- Ensure that the local transportation system, including infrastructure, routes, and travel modes, can withstand and recover quickly from extreme weather events and other hazards exacerbated by climate change.
- Reduce stormwater impacts from transportation and development through watershed planning, redevelopment and retrofit projects, and low-impact development.
- Develop and implement a strategy to expedite management of debris (e.g., downed tree limbs and buildings blocking roads and streams) after a disaster incident to reduce the risks of subsequent fire, flood, injury, and disease vectors.
- Consider climate change, including sea-level rise, extreme precipitation, increased winter streamflow, and other impacts, in floodplain management planning.

- Develop, implement, and periodically update a plan to mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts to the coastline.
- Establish land use patterns that increase the resilience of the built environment, ecosystems, and communities to climate change.
- Maintain and update a critical areas ordinance that incorporates climate change considerations.
- Establish regulations that require the location of new lots and structures outside of sea-level rise hazard areas.
- Assess the sea level rise vulnerability of wetlands, aquatic vegetation, beaches and dunes, and other valuable natural assets and collaborate with landowners and partners to support adaptation.
- Acquire properties or easements on properties that are vulnerable to climate-exacerbated hazards and are or will become unsuitable for development.
- Address rising sea water by siting and planning for relocation of hazardous industries and essential public services away from the 500-year floodplain.
- Develop regulations for elevating or setting back new and substantially improved structures to reduce the risk of damage caused by sea level rise.
- Require that proposals for shoreline stabilization demonstrate a need and require the use of soft shore stabilization methods to the extent practicable to protect sites from wave-driven erosion or flooding exacerbated by sea level rise.
- In areas with significant vulnerability to climate hazards, facilitate and support long-term community visioning including consideration of managed retreat.
- Consider future climate conditions during siting and design of capital facilities, including changes to temperature, rainfall, and sea level, to help ensure they function as intended over their planned life cycle.
- Establish overlays, special zoning districts, design standards, or other strategies to increase resilience to climate hazards.
- Direct new development into areas where exposure to climate hazards is low.
- Identify and implement strategies to increase the resilience of the shoreline environment to sea-level rise and other climate hazards, while also protecting shoreline ecological functions, allowing water-dependent uses, and providing public access.

Extreme Precipitation/Flooding

- Identify and implement strategies to prepare for and mitigate the effects of saltwater intrusion into aquifers and drainage systems.
- Support enhanced data collection for hazard events of all magnitudes to provide a fuller understanding of the community's hazard characteristics — including those affected by climate change.
- Incorporate sea-level rise information, along with tsunami hazard mapping, into critical area delineation for siting critical infrastructure, land-use planning, and emergency management.
- Plan and build facilities, utilities, and infrastructure projects to avoid or withstand flooding from rising sea levels and associated climate impacts (e.g., changing flood plains).
- Ensure that buildings are designed and built sustainably to reduce environmental impacts and remain resilient to extreme weather and other hazards worsened by climate change.
- Encourage the use of modular buildings that can be moved, renovated, and deconstructed as community or tenant needs and climate impacts change.
- Restore floodplains and connectivity to improve the resilience of streams and rivers and reduce flood risk.
- Support enhanced data collection for hazard events of all magnitudes to provide a fuller understanding of the community's hazard characteristics — including those affected by climate change.
- Factor climate impacts into the planning of operations and coordination of preparedness, response, and recovery activities among first responders and partners, including public health, law enforcement, fire,

school, and emergency medical services (EMS) personnel.

- Restore and maintain critical areas and open space areas to maximize the climate resilience benefits they provide.
- Establish development regulations that incorporate best practices for reducing the risk of wildfire, extreme heat, flooding, and other climate-exacerbated hazards.
- Review required buffers and setbacks for steep slopes and shorelines vulnerable to erosion exacerbated by climate change, and establish new minimums, if necessary, so that improvements are not required to protect structures during their expected life.

Water Resources

- Protect and preserve water quality and quantity from drought, extreme heat, and other hazards exacerbated by climate change.
- Manage water resources sustainably in the face of climate change through smart irrigation, stormwater management, preventative maintenance, water conservation and wastewater reuse, plant selection, and landscape management.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive drought resilience strategy that factors in projected climate impacts and sets action levels for different drought stages.
- Utilize water conservation methods and technologies in development of irrigation infrastructure within parks and recreation areas to foster climate resilience.
- Expand municipal reclaimed water systems and allow onsite non-potable water systems to reduce water demand in private-sector commercial and residential buildings.
- Evaluate the long-term adequacy of water delivery infrastructure to ensure that changes in hydrological patterns (e.g., increases in flooding frequency or reduction of late-summer water availability associated with climate change) can be anticipated and managed effectively.
- Construct and maintain new water-storage systems (e.g., large cisterns, water towers, and reservoirs) to provide back-up water supplies during droughts and support climate resilience.
- Develop and maintain a fund to build green infrastructure projects that help capture, filter, store, and reuse stormwater runoff.
- Identify and implement strategies to prepare for and mitigate the effects of saltwater intrusion into aquifers and drainage systems.
- Increase aquatic habitat resilience to low summer flows by increasing water residence time, storing water on the landscape, conserving water, protecting groundwater, keeping waters cool, and protecting water quality.
- Choose native drought- and pest-resistant trees, shrubs, and grasses in restoration efforts to support climate resilience.

Sincerely,

Erin O'Kelley
Policy Planner, Kimley-Horn

Alice Cao and Denise Truong
Climate Planning Analysts, Kimley-Horn

On Behalf of:
City of Oak Harbor, Washington State

PUBLIC RELEASE MEMORANDUM

September 17, 2025

To: The City of Oak Harbor

From: Kimley-Horn & Associates

Oak Harbor Risk & Vulnerability Assessment Frequently Asked Questions as Part of the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update

What is the Oak Harbor Risk and Vulnerability Assessment?

The Oak Harbor Risk and Vulnerability Assessment, also referred to as the “Vulnerability Assessment” was conducted as part of the City’s Comprehensive Plan periodic update. This assessment identifies and evaluates potential impacts from climate-related hazards on the City’s assets and other resources critical to the community’s resilience. The analysis follows the requirements of Washington State’s Growth Management Act (GMA), specifically [RCW 36.70A.070\(9\)](#), and incorporates the recommended steps provided by the Washington Department of Commerce. For information about the required analysis and steps [visit the Department of Commerce Climate Planning Website](#).

Who completed this analysis?

Kimley-Horn, a consultant for Oak Harbor, completed the climate vulnerability and risk assessment for the new Climate Element as part of City’s Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update.

Why was the Vulnerability Assessment conducted?

The assessment ensures that the City is proactively addressing risks posed by climate-related hazards, such as flooding, wildfire, and sea-level rise. This assessment reviews historical climate data and projected climate data against local assets to help assess which assets may be most vulnerable to the unique hazards impacting the City of Oak Harbor. This helps protect public assets, prioritize investments, and plan for a more resilient community. In addition, this is a requirement passed by State law and is part of a larger effort to manage growth within a climate change framework.

What does the Vulnerability Assessment cover?

The analysis focuses on:

- City-owned assets, such as facilities, infrastructure, and public services.
- Vital community resources to bolster resilience against prevalent climate hazards in The City of Oak Harbor.

Are all jurisdictions in Island County completing similar assessments?

Yes, other jurisdictions are completing their own vulnerability assessments/climate-related analysis as part of their respective comprehensive plan updates. All cities and counties are required to adopt new climate elements with resiliency sub-elements. Residents who live outside of the City of Oak Harbor are encouraged to review [Island County's Vulnerability Assessment and draft Climate Element](#).

Will there be an opportunity for public input on the Vulnerability Assessment?

While The City of Oak Harbor is not accepting public comments on the Vulnerability Assessment specifically, residents can submit public comments online at <https://www.oakharbor.gov/808/Oak-Harbor-Comprehensive-Plan>.

How does the Vulnerability Assessment align with state laws and guidelines?

The assessment adheres to the [Growth Management Act \(GMA\) RCW 36.70A.070\(9\)](#), which mandates counties to identify and plan for potential climate-related risks. The City of Oak Harbor has followed [guidance from the Washington Department of Commerce](#) to ensure a thorough and compliant analysis.

What data was used for this analysis?

The data used by staff is based on those required and recommended from the Department of Commerce's [Intermediate Guidance](#). Staff strives to remain balanced in using data to support the climate vulnerability assessment while being consistent with State laws.

How will the results of the Vulnerability Assessment be used?

The findings from the Vulnerability Assessment guide policy updates, prioritize infrastructure investments, and inform future planning initiatives to improve the City's resilience to climate-related hazards. The policies will be included in a new Climate and Resiliency Element in the City of Oak Harbor Comprehensive Plan. A draft of the Comprehensive Plan will be released February-March 2025. A first draft of climate-related policies was presented to the Planning Commission in October 2024 when the vulnerability assessment was partially complete and under review by the City. There was a 30-day public comment period for climate-related policies and The City of Oak Harbor received over 100 public comments relating to climate and resiliency. Visit the [City of Oak Harbor Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update Website](#) to see climate-related public comments received.

What will be done with the analysis?

Next, the City will take any one or combination of pathways, which include:

1. Selecting or adapting existing goals or policies (Pathway 1);
2. Developing new goals or policies (Pathway 2); and/or
3. Updating a hazard mitigation plan and adopt it, by reference, in the comprehensive plan (Pathway 3).

The data will be used eventually to support actions in pursuit of any of the chosen pathways.

Where can I find more information about the The City of Oak Harbor's Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update?

For additional details about the The City of Oak Harbor's Comprehensive Plan update, please visit the project website at: <https://www.oakharbor.gov/808/Oak-Harbor-Comprehensive-Plan>
You can find links to previous materials completed for the project, public comments submitted to date, and other community engagements events completed to date.

If you have questions about the assessment or need further assistance, please contact The City of Oak Harbor at 360-279-4500 or submit comments using the online form at:

<https://www.oakharbor.gov/808/Oak-Harbor-Comprehensive-Plan>



Oak Harbor

Comprehensive Plan

Setting the Compass for Oak Harbor's Next Chapter

City of Oak Harbor Comprehensive Plan
Advisory Committee (OakPAC)

OakPAC Meeting 2 Report

Last Updated: September 25, 2025

Furthering the Community Engagement Plan

Visit [Oak Harbor's Comprehensive Plan Project Website](#) to read the [Community Engagement Plan](#).

The City of Oak Harbor's upcoming community engagement plan for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and new Climate Element and Resiliency sub-element, spanning from Spring 2024 to Spring 2026, promises a multifaceted platform for civic involvement and collaboration. With a focus on transparency and inclusivity, the project invites residents to engage at various levels.

Specifically, for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and the new Climate Element and Resiliency Sub-Element, the following community engagement goals have been identified for this project. Goals are not listed in order or priority and are given equal importance.

Oak Harbor Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (OakPAC)

The OakPAC will serve as a tool for continuous input throughout the plan drafting process. The first round of plan drafting will occur between August 2025 to February 2026. During this time, OakPAC will convene multiple times and review key policy issues and provide input to assist the project team with direction. The first meeting focused on Housing issues and housing solutions and coordination efforts, the second meeting focused on reviewing the new requirements for climate resiliency and the community-based approach to climate-related solutions, the third meeting will focus on land use changes to accommodate growth.

Community Engagement Goals

Update the vision to ensure principles are still representative of the City of Oak Harbor community and balance with state law.

Collect data on the current conditions of the community that are impacting residents' quality of life.

Understand key priorities from different stakeholder groups.

Identify and reach out to vulnerable populations of climate related hazards.

Prioritize actions that benefit overburdened communities most impacted by climate change.

Collect feedback on the City's approach and recommendations for policy revision or creation.

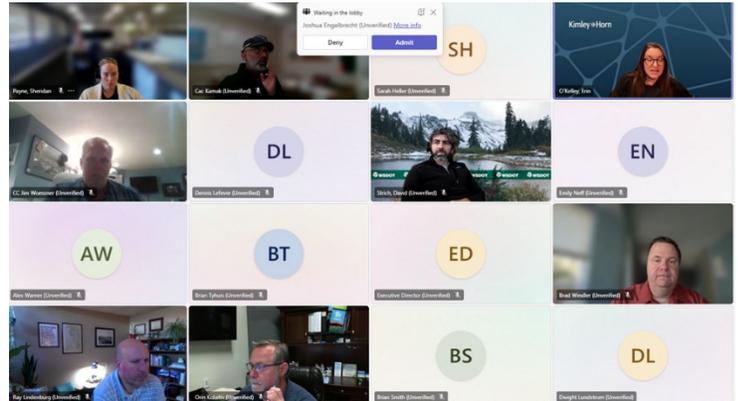
Build informed participants in the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update process.

Build long-lasting relationships with stakeholders, partners, and agencies.

Second OakPAC Meeting Overview

The second OakPAC meeting occurred on September 24th, 2025. The meeting was held virtually on Teams and was hosted by the City. The meeting was recorded and posted on the Oak Harbor's Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update Website for public viewing.

The meeting had approximately 21 total attendees. Most of the attendees were various stakeholders, agencies, and community partners within Oak Harbor and Island County. City employees from public works and the planning department participated in the conversation. Kimley-Horn, the consultant, facilitated the discussion.



The goal of the meeting was to provide updates to the project, information on recently changed state laws that impact the project and collect preliminary concerns and comments from stakeholders around climate and resilience in the City of Oak Harbor.

Meeting #2 Agenda

Project Overview

Provide information on the status of the project. The City is in the plan drafting phase, welcoming the public to provide comments on draft policies until December 5th, 2025.

- Presented the new project timeline and engagement timeline.
- Reiterated what OakPAC is and its role in the project.
- Recapped Meeting #1 and its outcomes.
- Briefly provided an overview of Meeting #2 and its goals.

Climate and Resilience Introduction

The City is adopting a new Element (chapter) of the Comprehensive Plan called Climate and Resilience. This is a new requirement under HB 1181 and is required for all cities and counties. Because this is a new topic, the City has been doing a lot of engagement assessing the community's perceptions and concerns around climate hazards and reviewing gaps in current policies prior to policy drafting.

New Resilience Components

The Consultant identified actions to improve overall climate resiliency:

1. Address natural hazards created or aggravated by climate change

2. Identify, protect, and enhance natural areas to foster climate resilience, as well as areas of vital habitat for safe species migration
3. Identify, protect, and enhance community resilience to climate impacts, including social, economic, and built-environment factors.

Potential policy direction and mitigation strategies were provided by the Consultant to further understanding.

Group Working Session

The group working session focused on discussing the climate vulnerability in Oak Harbor. The results are included in the appendices of the report.

Second OakPAC Meeting Results and Comments

1. In what ways do you think Oak Harbor lifestyles have been or may be impacted by any of the following hazards?

Respondents were asked how they thought climate hazards have or may impact the Oak Harbor lifestyle. There was concern surrounding wildfire smoke impacting children's sports and vulnerable populations as well as how the king tides cause challenges for the island. Sea level rise was emphasized to be a large concern for the community. Respondents were concerned about creating and maintaining maps to show what is vulnerable to sea level rise and flooding and how this related to future developments plans in the City – like the waterfront redevelopment plan. Lastly, an attendee mentioned how climate hazards do impact roadway conditions.

2. Based on your local knowledge, what community assets or infrastructure do you consider to be the most vulnerable to climate hazard impacts?

Assets	Concern
SR – 20	Drought impacts the soil under the concrete, extreme heat impacts the concrete itself.
Housing/Buildings	Vulnerable to extreme weather conditions. Need to work with property owners to add heating/cooling systems.
Water Supply	Water lines offer significant vulnerability.
Emergency Wells	They need to be maintained and resilient as they could be cutoff during a natural occurrence.
Sewage Treatment Plant	Location along the waterfront leaves it susceptible to sea level rise and flooding.
Stormwater	Stormwater is vulnerable to extreme precipitation and flooding along the shoreline. Lack of storage during extreme weather events.

In addition to the table above, stakeholders showed concern about the City's inability to take care of standing water quickly and properly in the event of high tide or significant rainfall. The City is at the mercy of the tide being low enough to drain out to the Bay.

3. What do you think the City should be doing to prepare for long-term infrastructure improvements against climate-exacerbated hazards?

When asked what needed to be done, stakeholders mentioned that the City is moving in a positive direction. Retention ponds and stormwater changes were noted to be useful adaptation strategies. Redundancy in the system was called for – an example is getting a sub sewage plant in a more resilient location. City Council is saying that physical changes to adapt to climate impacts may be needed. The conversation can start around where the City's identify is built – like Downtown or Windjammer Park. Strategy may need to include forcing new development out of the sensitive areas.

The Tulalip Tribe mentioned concerns about how to protect the marine environment from shoreline development. Shoreline armoring and hard surface solutions cause problems because the shoreline is an ecosystem and vital resource for marine life. The Tribes have sovereign rights to all the natural resources in the area.

Respondents posed a good question – asking if we can undertake a long-term study to see how other island/coastal communities have done mitigation. Why not learn from the lessons of others?

4. Based on your knowledge, what community groups or populations come to mind as potentially vulnerable to climate change?

Respondents mentioned that the City has been working well with vulnerable populations, like very low-income to low-income residents, through community groups like Habitat for Humanity. One respondent mentioned that coordination with the Opportunity Council could be improved to provide heating and cooling during a crisis. There also is a need to improve communication with Whidbey and Camano Land Trust and SPIN Café. These organizations have good relationships with their community members and may be able to provide unique perspectives to the City.

5. For climate policy, should the focus be on quick aggressive actions or incremental regulated changes? What additional variables matter?

Respondents emphasized that the City needs to be prepared to take incremental action that places value on the community's future vision. Residents should be educated on the financial implications of future impacts from climate-exacerbated hazards and financial considerations for strategies to mitigate impacts. The City may need to start ongoing education around long-term changes that might needed in order to protect property and infrastructure for future generations.

Respondents discussed the various strategies around adapting the community. Some respondents discussed the benefits of retaining existing properties along the shoreline through hard armoring or seawalls another strategy mentioned was the slow reduction of high-intensity uses along the shoreline and focusing development in low-risk areas. Several respondents

mentioned that some of the potential climate adaptation strategies provided the co-benefit of environmental preservation. For example, focusing development in low-risk areas can protect the valuable shoreline ecosystem and valuable marine life. One respondent mentioned a potential need to develop adaptation pathways that allow the City to identify several climate strategies with varying benefits. The City could identify thresholds of climate impacts that might direction actions depending on the urgency of change required.

6. Based on your local knowledge, what communication strategies should the City be considering to raise awareness about long long-term climate impacts, like sea level rise?

Respondents stated the need to mitigate fear or concern in the community by making sure that we are properly managing the messaging.

It was noted that retreating discussions on topics is a huge problem amongst decision makers. Ultimately, there is a call to construct a larger strategy of communication and engagement regarding climate impacts. Hitting enough partners with big enough voices may contribute to getting leaders involved and spreading the word in their circles.

Notable Community Advocates

The following groups were mentioned in the discussion as successful networks to reach the community and educate on climate resiliency and climate initiatives.

- ▶ **The Parks People**
- ▶ **The Naval Station**
- ▶ **Public Works Department**
- ▶ **Habitat for Humanity**
- ▶ **Opportunity Council**
- ▶ **Whidbey Camano Land Trust**
- ▶ **SPIN Cafe**

Next Steps

The comments provided at this meeting will be considered as the Consultant team moves forward with policy development. From the feedback collected at this meeting, the Consultant team will be exploring potential policy directions for the City to consider. To stay updated on the project, visit the [Oak Harbor homepage](#).

Key opportunities, issues, or strategies, identified:

- Consider the impact from potential high winds during future extreme weather events and develop policies to help protect the community.
- Consider the impact of wildfire and smoke on schools and school activities.

- Review current impacts from extreme weather events to the shoreline and develop short-term and long-term policies.
- Consider the development of adaptation pathways to help the City remain flexible as conditions and data relating to climate change is updated over time.
- Consider developing education material using real-life stories, like public works and the parks department and shoreline impacts, to help residents understand the real impacts from climate-exacerbated hazards they may face.
- Extreme heat and drought have the potential to impact the Cities road conditions, these impacts should be reviewed and planned for by the City of Oak Harbor.
- Review the City's current plans for redevelopment in the downtown core and along windjammer park and understand potential long-term impacts from climate-exacerbated hazards, like sea-level rise and flooding.
- Review current impacts from extreme weather events on the road infrastructure and develop short-term and long-term policies.
- Explore maintaining and implementing maps that show assets that are vulnerable to sea level rise and other hazards.
- Consider the impact of extreme weather on vulnerable populations and develop short-term and long-term policies.
- Consider implementing strategies that target stormwater management in the event of extreme precipitation and flooding.
- Explore opportunities to enhance the City's long-term water supply and develop policy to prepare for disruptions in utility services.
- Consider the implications of the location of the stormwater treatment plant and develop short-term and long-term policies that improve resiliency.
- Explore the use of policy for climate related funding opportunities.
- Consider undertaking a long-term study to see how other islands/coastal communities have handled mitigation.
- Use short-term and long-term policy to target low/moderately-low income groups.
- Explore more partnership opportunities with Anacortes/Skagit Region to increase water supply and to protect current water sources.
- Periodically assess climate-exacerbated hazards against future land-use target growth areas and adjust mitigation or adaptation strategies.
- Consider designating City resources for annual climate-related research to increase overall resiliency.
- Consider focusing development in low-risk areas to protect the valuable shoreline ecosystem.
- Coordinate with utility providers to strategize opportunities to protect against extreme heat or extreme cold.

Appendix

Meeting #2 Attendants

Name	Organization
Todd Gray	Tulalip Tribe
David Strich	WSDOT
Orin Kolaitis	Habitat for Humanity
Jonathon Lange	Island County Planning Department
Jared Braggs	Affiliation Unknown
Joshua Engelbrecht	Oak Harbor Planning Commission
Cheryl Graham	Chamber of Commerce
Emily Neff	Island County Planning Department
Dwight Lundstrom	Oak Harbor Public Schools
Brian Tyhuis	Naval Air Station Whidbey Island
Brian Smith	City of Oak Harbor
Brad Windler	Island Transit
Andres Orozco	Skagit Valley College
Jim Woessner	Oak Harbor City Council
Dennis Lefevre	City of Oak Harbor
Sarah Heller	City of Oak Harbor
Ray Lindenburg	City of Oak Harbor
Cac Kamack	City of Oak Harbor
Alex Warner	City of Oak Harbor
Sheridan Payne	Kimley-Horn
Erin O'Kelley	Kimley-Horn