



**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE
WHATCOM COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 26, 2026**

Public Hearing and Work Session

1 **Call to Order**

2 The meeting was called to order by Whatcom County Planning Commission Chair
3 Dunne at 6:00 p.m.

4 **Roll Call**

5 **Present:** Matthew Berry, Rud Browne, Daniel Dunne, Jim Hansen, Dominic Mocerri,
6 Scott Van Dalen

7 Nicholas Greif arrived at 6:05 p.m.

8 **Absent:** Suneeta Eisenberg

9 **Staff Present:** Mark Personius, Maddie Schacht and Aileen Kogut-Aguon

10 **Department Update**

11 Mark Personius, Director of Planning and Development Services (PDS), gave an update
12 on what is expected to be presented to the Commission for March and April:

- 13 - March 12th and March 26th – Open Space Applications
- 14 - April 9th – Housing Code Amendments to be concurrent with the Comp Plan
- 15 - April 23rd – UGA Zoning Map Amendments for the rest of the cities

16 Mr. Personius continued his update, stating that staff will be presenting the proposed
17 docket to Council at their March 10th meeting with more than a dozen applications to
18 be added to it such as, the Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) update and the Lynden and
19 Ferndale School Districts request to add impact fees.

20 Commissioner Mocerri asked a clarifying question on when the docket will be sent to the
21 Commission.

22 Mr. Personius stated when Council finalizes and approves the docket, it will be
23 forwarded to the Commission.

24 Commissioner Hansen spoke on the school district impact fees noting that he
25 personally contacted the superintendent of every school district in the county, making
26 sure they knew this was available to them.

27 **Open Session Public Comment**

28 There was no public comment.

29 **Commissioner Comments**

30 Commissioner Berry introduced himself to the Commission, representing District Five.

31 Commissioner Mocerri stated that in the past, the docket was sent to the Commission
32 prior to sending it to Council and would like to see that occur again in the future. It is
33 best practice to see the docket before it goes to Council as it allows the Commission to
34 add things to it if needed.

35 Commissioner Greif gave an update on his attendance status as his wife recovers from
36 a leg injury. He anticipates attending meetings in person moving forward.



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1 Commission Chair Dunne stated there is one seat available for the Commission for
2 either District One or District Five, and encouraged anyone who is interested to apply.

3 **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

4 **Timestamp: 6:19p**

5 **Motion 1. Commissioner Van Dalen moved** to approve the meeting minutes
6 *from February 12, 2025*

7 **Commissioner Mocerri seconded.**

8 **Roll Call Vote: Ayes- Berry, Browne, Dunne, Greif, Hansen, Mocerri, Van**
9 **Dalen**

10 **(Ayes- 7; Nays- 0; Abstain- 0). The motion carried.**

11 **Timestamp: 6:23p**

12 **Zoning Map Amendments to the City of Blaine UGA Proposal**

13 **Timestamp: 6:23p**

14 Maddie Schacht, PDS Senior Planner, presented the proposed zoning map amendments
15 for the City of Blaine’s urban growth area (UGA). The zoning map amendments for all
16 the other UGAs will be presented to the Commission in one packet separate from
17 Blaine at a later date.

18 There are three re-zones requested by the City of Blaine:

- 19 - Rezone of pending de-annexed area
- 20 - Rezone of “Dakota Creek” UGA
- 21 - Rezone of a portion of Blaine’s east UGA

22 Ms. Schacht presented each proposed rezone area with the recommendations from
23 PDS once the areas are approved for de-annexation and returned to the county.

24 Commissioner Mocerri asked a clarification question about the maps and why it
25 changed.

26 Commissioner Hansen asked a clarifying question about Council’s preliminary approval
27 of the city’s UGA proposal.

28 Ms. Schacht stated that Council has approved the UGA itself, the zoning maps come
29 next and will be approved concurrent to the Comprehensive Plan.

30 Ms. Schacht finished her presentation with staff recommendations of rezoning the
31 pending de-annexed area, approximately 573-acres to R-10A when returned to County
32 land base, and rezoning “Dakota Creek” UGA from UR-4 to R-10A if County Council
33 approves the removal of the UGA designation. PDS does not recommend approval of
34 rezoning a portion of Blaine’s East UGA, which is approximately 263-acres from UR-4
35 to Light Impact Industrial (LII) zoning.

36 **a) Public Hearing**

37 **Timestamp: 6:38p**

38 Otto Pointer provided public comment.



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b) Work Session

Timestamp: 6:42p

Commissioner Mocerri asked why the city is wanting to rezone the area to LII.

Alex Wenger, the City of Blaine's Community Services Director, stated that this is an opportunity to protect the industrial land supply and promote jobs in Whatcom County. The city wants to coordinate and collaborate with the County as part of the process to align the growth plans. Blaine is planning to use the area for job growth and manufacturing uses in the future.

Commissioner Mocerri asked if there are realistic timelines of when the property would be brought into the city.

Mr. Wenger stated at this time the answer is unclear as they would need to work with their City Council to identify an annexation plan and move forward.

Commissioner Browne presented the exhibit map he sent to the Commission and explained what each layer represents. He stated the source of the data for the map is from the Washington State Department of Ecology and the latest version of the National Wetlands Inventory Data.

Mr. Wenger asked a clarifying question as to why Commissioner Browne is not using Whatcom County's wetland GIS data, noting that the presented map is not a regulatory map.

Commissioner Browne stated that the Whatcom County GIS wetland data layer is 40 years out of date and is inaccurate as the aerial footage was from 1987 and only covered Category 1 wetlands that were greater than three acres if they were in forested area.

Commissioner Mocerri asked about alternative zoning opportunities other than LII for the proposed area that would be a compromise to preserve the land from getting developed and not allow LII until some of the concerns about when annexation might occur.

Mr. Wenger stated that there may be other zoning, but that would have to be explored further. The proposed LII zoning would be the most consistent with the land uses that are anticipated and able to regulate once it is annexed into the city.

Commissioner Berry asked about proposed development to the Klein property and Blaine Industrial Park.

Mr. Wenger stated that the city has approved the application twice. It is the largest industrial site in the city at 45-acres.

Mr. Personius stated the UR-4 zone allowed density is one unit per 10 acres without sewer or water provided, which is the current case for the property until the city annexes it which the city does not want to do. If the UGA designation is removed, the area will then default to R-10A, one unit per 10 acres, same as the adjacent rural parcels.



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1 **Motion 2. Commissioner Van Dalen moved** to accept the proposed rezoning of
2 pending de-annexed area, approximately 573-acres as R-10A as proposed by
3 staff.

4 **Commissioner Hansen seconded.**

5 Commissioner Browne expressed his opposition to the de-annexation of the City of
6 Blaine.

7 Commissioner Van Dalen stated that the decision for the de-annexation was voted on
8 by the people of Blaine.

9 Commissioner Hansen clarified that the proposal being presented is to rezone the
10 pending de-annexed area and not on whether or not it should be de-annexed as it is
11 not up to the Commission to decide that.

12 Ms. Schacht noted that the de-annexation was approved by the voters and is now at
13 the Boundary Review Board. Whatcom County does not have authority to deny the de-
14 annexation under this particular RCW.

15 **Roll Call Vote: Ayes- Dunne, Hansen, Mocerri, Van Dalen, Berry**

16 **Nays-Browne**

17 **(Ayes- 5; Nays- 1; 1 no-vote). The motion carried.**

18 Timestamp: 7:15p

19 **Motion 3. Commissioner Hansen moved** to accept the proposed rezone
20 changes to the Dakota Creek property as proposed by staff from UR-4 to R10-A.

21 **Commissioner Van Dalen seconded.**

22 Commissioner Mocerri asked what would happen if the area stayed as UR-4.

23 Mr. Personius stated UR zoning is only for the UGA. The area is coming out of the UGA
24 so the zoning would have to change to rural zoning.

25 Commission Chair Dunne stated that the area is pretty developed and looks like an
26 urban neighborhood for homes and not farms or anything other than housing.

27 Commissioner Mocerri asked about rezoning it to RR zoning.

28 Mr. Personius stated that the RR zoning is for LAMIRDs.

29 Ms. Schacht stated that in Policy 2-MM in the Comp Plan, it talks about zoning different
30 areas. LAMIRDs zoning is 2 dwelling units per acre, a zone that is denser than the
31 property being presented.

32 The Commission expressed their desire for this area to be as dense as possible, if it is
33 to be de-designated as a UGA, or stay within the UGA at its current UR-4 zone density.

34 **Roll Call Vote:**

35 **Nays- Browne, Dunne, Greif, Hansen, Mocerri, Van Dalen, Berry**

36 **(Ayes- 0; Nays- 7; Abstain- 0). The motion failed.**

37 Timestamp: 7:38p



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1 **Motion 4. Commissioner Mocerri moved** to recommend County Council
2 consider keeping the Dakota Creek in the UGA, or if they do not, adopt the
3 highest potential density available in the rural designation.

4 **Commissioner Van Dalen seconded.**

5 Commissioner Browne expressed opposition to keeping the area in the UGA.

6 **Roll Call Vote: Ayes- Hansen, Mocerri, Van Dalen, Berry, Browne, Dunne**

7 **Abstain- Greif (Ayes-; Nays-; Abstain-). The motion carried.**

8 Timestamp: 7:50p

9 **Motion 5. Commissioner Berry moved** to support PDS's recommendation and
10 maintain current zoning in the East Blaine UGA as UR4 pending a high-level study
11 of the critical areas and public outreach.

12 **Commissioner Greif seconded.**

13 **Roll Call Vote: Ayes- Greif, Van Dalen, Berry, Browne, Dunne**

14 **Nays- Hansen**

15 **Abstain- Mocerri (Ayes- 5; Nays- 1; Abstain- 1). The motion carried.**

16 Timestamp: 8:02p

17 **Adjournment**

18 Timestamp: 8:02p

19 The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

20 Minutes prepared by Aileen Kogut-Aguon.

21 WHATCOM COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION ATTEST:

22 _____
23 Daniel Dunne, Chair

Aileen Kogut-Aguon, Coordinator

