



**Steering Committee (Winslow Subarea Plan and Comprehensive Plan Update)
Regular Business Meeting
Monday, February 23, 2026**

Council Chambers
280 Madison Ave N
Bainbridge Island, WA

and

Remote Meeting on Zoom
<https://bainbridgewa.zoom.us/j/85074579238>
or Telephone: US: +1 253 215 8782
Webinar ID: [850 7457 9238](https://bainbridgewa.zoom.us/j/85074579238)

Agenda

1. Call to Order

2. Approval of Notes

A. Steering Committee Notes 20260108

3. Regular Business

ACTION per City Council July 22, 2025: Directed that the Steering Committee be authorized to have an ongoing agenda item that is simply an open conversation between the representatives from the two bodies sitting on that body to discuss the status of the Comprehensive Plan and explore opportunities for cooperation between the bodies.

A. Discuss the Department of Commerce Technical Assistance for City Housing Accountability Act (HAA) selection

B. Consideration of Proposed Updates to Comprehensive Plan Guiding Principles

4. Public Comments

Members of the public are encouraged to submit written public comment to the Steering Committee at any time by emailing pcd@bainbridgewa.gov. Members of the public are welcome to provide public comment in-person at a Steering Committee meeting as well. Speakers will have up to three minutes to provide comments. Orderly behavior and civility in remarks is expected with no clapping or booing, and no yielding of one person's time to another person. Remote public comment is allowed with advance notice to the Planning & Community Development Department by noon on the date of the meeting at pcd@bainbridgewa.gov, provided that all remote commenters shall be required to display their true name and to keep their camera turned on to show their true uncovered face while delivering their comments. Public comment is not accepted during the balance of the Steering Committee meeting.

5. Adjournment

The City of Bainbridge Island's meetings are wheelchair accessible. The City also provides auxiliary aids and services for effective communication such as assistive listening devices, closed captioning, and print materials in digital format. For other reasonable accommodations and/or modification to programs, services, or activities, please contact the ADA Coordinator, Anshu Wahi at awahi@bainbridgewa.gov or 206-947-0803 as soon as possible, preferably at least 2 business days prior to the meeting.

Meeting of the Steering Committee Overseeing the
Winslow Subarea Plan Update and the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Review

January 8, 2026

City Council Conference Room

<https://bainbridgewa.zoom.us/j/85074579238>

This meeting will be recorded

Notes

Meeting called to order at 3:35 PM

Review of previous meeting notes

ACTION per City Council July 22, 2025: *Directed that the Steering Committee be authorized to have an ongoing agenda item that is simply an open conversation between the representatives from the two bodies sitting on that body to discuss the status of the Comprehensive Plan and explore opportunities for cooperation between the bodies.*

ACTION per Steering Committee Nov. 13: *Continued discussion of an Affordable Housing Strategy, namely “The Steering Committee will discuss structure, process, direction and resources for a Housing Implementation Strategy to plan for and subsidize the lowest AMI income brackets.”*

Public Comment – no public comments received

Adjourned: 5:00 PM

Notes:

Present were Councilmembers Leslie Schneider and Kirsten Hytopoulos, Planning Commissioner Sarah Blossom, PCD Director Patty Charnas, Planning Manager Darron Buchanan and Senior Planner Jennifer Sutton.

Steering Committee Meetings (Date & Time) -

Councilmember Schneider introduced changing the meeting day, proposing Mondays at 3:30 PM instead of Thursdays. Possibly the 4th Monday of every month moving forward.

Last month's notes were reviewed.

Meeting Process & Communication -

- Council member Hytopoulos would like to add substantive items to the agenda in addition to the discussions and include process status and accountability.
- Council member Schneider added that it's particularly important given a June deadline and would like to highlight areas of progress as well as areas where we are stuck, and how to move forward. Identify processes that will work.
- Director Charnas related a need to communicate to the City Council what the Steering Committee is working on, has contributed, and accomplished.
- Planning Commission Chair Blossom related that there's not much to be done with the Comprehensive Plan, that the focus is on elements in the Winslow Subarea Plan
- Discussion around the need for a process/progress timeline, identifying hot issues, including what the consultants are working on, and who is handling the different tasks with deadlines. When can it be presented to the public and ahead of the City Council? Council does not want the Comp Plan at the last minute.
- Need to develop clear guidance/strategy and timeline on what is required for 1220 and the Growth Management Board.

Jennifer provided a quick overview of the work the consultants are doing now with the information from the Planning Commission, as well as how that affects regulations/resolutions.

Focus for the Comprehensive Plan is on doing what is required/necessary, no time to develop a middle-housing code. Capacity analysis is critical and will be tiered.

Discussion on new City Council Liaison appointments to various committees/groups. Discussion also included what the City Council members would like to work on at the February 3rd meeting.



**Steering Committee (Winslow Subarea Plan and Comprehensive Plan Update)
Regular Business Meeting Agenda Bill
Monday, February 23, 2026**

Agenda Item: Discuss the Department of Commerce Technical Assistance for City Housing Accountability Act (HAA) selection

Department: Planning & Community Development

Agenda Section: Regular Business

Estimated Time: Minutes

Recommendation:

Discussion only.

Narrative:

The City Council Study Session on February 17, 2026, had 2 agenda items related to the City's selection under Washington's new Housing Accountability Act (HAA):

- Receive Presentation on Washington Department of Commerce Housing Accountability Act
- Discuss Provision of the Department of Commerce Technical Assistance Directly to the City Council

The first item was discussion only. Related to the second item, Dept. of Commerce staff indicated that they will coordinate with City staff. City Council then passed a motion to discuss this topic further at the next steering committee meeting and at a future study session.

Fiscal Impact:

Community Engagement and Outreach:

Attachments:

None



**Steering Committee (Winslow Subarea Plan and Comprehensive Plan Update)
Regular Business Meeting Agenda Bill
Monday, February 23, 2026**

Agenda Item: Consideration of Proposed Updates to Comprehensive Plan Guiding Principles

Department: Planning & Community Development

Agenda Section: Regular Business

Estimated Time: 60 Minutes

Recommendation:

The Steering Committee has been requested by the Planning Commission to consider and recommend updates to the Comprehensive Plan Guiding Principles back to the Planning Commission.

Narrative:

The Guiding Principles and Policies portion of the *Introduction* was added during the 2016 Comprehensive Plan update. The City's Race Equity Advisory Committee (REAC) has worked on a proposal to update the Guiding Principles; the proposal was forwarded to the City Council in November 2025.

The Planning Commission considered this proposal as part of its January 8, 2026 review of the *Introduction* chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Commission unanimously approved the following motion:

I move that the Planning Commission refer the REAC suggested Guiding Principles to the Steering Committee, and for

that body to return then to the Planning Commission with recommended updates to the Guiding Principles in the *Introduction* chapter.

Note that Resolution No. 2023-03 identifies the following as one of the purposes of the Steering Committee:

- Apply an equity lens consistent with the Government Alliance for Race Equity’s racial equity assessment as well as a climate lens to all project work, activities, and outcomes .

Fiscal Impact:

Community Engagement and Outreach:

Attachments:

1. REAC Email to City Council forwarding Guiding Principles Proposal
2. Current Guiding Principles

Jennifer Sutton

From: Anshu Wah
Sent: Wednesday, November 12, 2025 3:17 PM
To: Jennifer Sutton
Subject: FW: Guiding Principles for City Council Discussion
Attachments: Draft Guiding Principles_Nov2025.docx

From: Caitlin Lombardi <caitlin.lombardi@cobicommittee.email>
Sent: Monday, November 10, 2025 8:48 AM
To: City Council Distribution Group <CityCouncilDistributionGroup@bainbridgewa.gov>
Cc: City Manager <CityManager@bainbridgewa.gov>; REAC Distribution List <REAC@bainbridgewa.gov>; Anshu Wah
<awahi@bainbridgewa.gov>
Subject: Guiding Principles for City Council Discussion

Dear City Council,

On behalf of REAC, I am pleased to share the attached proposal for updated Guiding Principles for the Bainbridge Island City Council. We hope that these will give you a significant foundation for your own discussion, public outreach, and finalization of Guiding Principles that steer the City's decision-making from a set of shared values and commitments.

This draft is the result of significant research--into our own City's processes and priorities, other cities' guiding principles and practices, and overall best practices--and countless discussions to identify if/what gaps existed in our current guiding principles and how we could shape language to ensure all needs and interests are reflected in this crucial, influential document. We submit it to you with the hope that you will continue to gather insights and perspectives from across our community, and bring these to completion very soon as they relate to the Comprehensive Plan.

Each principle begins with a bolded statement followed by text that provides context and specificity. While we acknowledge some of these are quite lengthy, we feel context is very important so that each principle is interpreted correctly for many years to come and by many different Councilmembers, present and future.

Please reach out with any questions, we are standing by to support this across the finish line!

Thank you,
Caitlin Lombardi
Co-Chair - REAC

DRAFT Guiding Principles – November 2025

Prepared by the City of Bainbridge Island Race Equity Advisory Committee

As stewards of Bainbridge Island, past, present and future, the members of this Council agree to:

- **Uphold and balance the three pillars of a sustainable community** – environment, economy, and social equity – in our decision-making.
- **Seek comprehensive community input.** Recognizing our decisions impact different people in different ways, we must invite and hear as many perspectives as possible, even when it is difficult.
- **Steward the immense resources of Bainbridge Island**, including the natural environment, public spaces, local economy, and people who live, work, and visit our community, for current and future generations.
- **Preserve and enrich a strong sense of community** on Bainbridge Island; where people care about and help one another, have their basic needs met, and are drawn to gather in their neighborhoods, at local events, and in a downtown core that is inviting, accessible, and serves a variety of needs and interests for residents and visitors alike.
- **Honor the island’s natural and aesthetic attributes**, including scenic winding roads and neighborhood pathways, extensive forested areas, meadows, farms, marine views, waterfront parks, historic buildings, and a timeless, pedestrian-friendly downtown with local businesses and a small town scale.
- **Proactively pursue health and safety measures** reflecting our population’s size and diversity, island geography, and limited infrastructure and exits.
- **Make Bainbridge Island accessible and welcoming to all people**, regardless of economic, racial, physical, or social attributes. We recognize that past laws, policies, and culture intentionally and unintentionally excluded certain groups from life and prosperity on Bainbridge Island, such as the Treaty of Point Elliot that relegated the original stewards of Bainbridge Island to reservations, racial housing covenants that created “whites only” neighborhoods (Rockaway Beach and Lytle Beach, for example), and the internment of Japanese Americans during WWII, as well as the increasingly high cost of housing today that excludes many middle- and low-income earners from living on Bainbridge. We seek to create policies and culture that invite diversity and actively remedy the lasting results of exclusion.
- **Act on climate change while recognizing that our natural resources are abundant *and* finite.** We acknowledge that these resources have been diminished since colonial settlers displaced Indigenous Coast Salish People of the Water and brought extractive practices. We are committed to sustainably manage land, water, air, wildlife, and natural resources while ensuring

environmental costs and benefits are shared equitably among all people on Bainbridge and our neighbors.

- **Honor our island's rich, complex, and multicultural history** and uplift historically silenced stories with vital present-day lessons, like our treasured Japanese Exclusion Memorial's reminder: "Nidoto Nai Yoni" — "Let it Not Happen Again."
- **Conduct ourselves, individually and as a body, with integrity, honor, and respect** for the City of Bainbridge Island, our colleagues on the Council, and all constituents.

Outside of the *designated centers* the predominant land use pattern is lower density with lower building heights which minimizes the footprint of the built environment and maximizes the protection of tree canopy, *aquifers*, surface waters and *fish and wildlife habitat*. The Island's broad conservation landscape of canopied woodlots, parks and saltwater shorelines is dotted with working *farms*, historic structures and a housing stock that has become more compact, energy-efficient and well-integrated into the landscape.

Agriculture is a thriving part of the Island's economy. All City-owned agricultural land is under cultivation and produces seasonal foods for local consumption. The number of *farms* on private acreage has increased and is supplementing the local food supply. Capital facilities planning has kept up with changes in the natural and built environments, meeting the needs of a population that expects a high *level of service*. All residents have reliable electric power, telecommunication services to meet their needs, potable water, solid waste and recycling services, and storm water facilities that prevent flooding and erosion while eliminating pollutants before the water enters Puget Sound.

The good will, imagination and pragmatism of our citizens foster an environment in which we engage with, listen to, and learn from one another. Bainbridge Island functions as a caring community that provides human services where needed to maintain the well-being of all its members, where every person feels connected to the community and where each individual has opportunities.

Community cultural planning sets direction for integrating the arts, humanities and history with urban design, economic development, education and other initiatives that nurture the quality of life on Bainbridge Island.

Artistic creativity and humanistic inquiry advance other community goals such as economic vitality, quality education, and community planning and design. Investments in the arts and humanities are investments in the growth of the community, enriching the lives of its residents and making Bainbridge Island a better place to live.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

NOTE: The City's Race Equity Advisory Committee has submitted a proposal to update the **Guiding Principles**

While the *Vision* describes a preferred future outcome for Bainbridge Island, the *Guiding Principles* and associated Guiding Policies provide the *policy* direction needed to navigate toward that desired future.

Guiding Principle #1

Preserve the special character of the Island, which includes downtown Winslow's small town atmosphere and function, historic buildings, extensive forested areas, meadows, *farms*, marine views and access, and scenic and winding roads supporting all forms of transportation.

Guiding Policy 1.1

Develop an island-wide conservation strategy to identify and apply effective methods to preserve the natural and scenic qualities that make the Island a special place, including better protection for the shoreline, trees, soils, native plants, and *farms*.

Guiding Policy 1.2

Accommodate new growth in *designated centers* that meet the Island’s identified needs for housing, goods, services and jobs while respecting conservation and environmental protection priorities.

Guiding Policy 1.3

The built environment represents an important element of the Island’s special character. Improve the quality of new development through a review process that implements the community *vision* and supports long-term goals for the preservation of the Island’s special character.

Guiding Principle #2

Manage the water resources of the Island to protect, restore and maintain their ecological and hydrological functions and to ensure clean and sufficient groundwater for future generations.

Guiding Policy 2.1

Manage the water resources of Bainbridge Island for the present and the future, recognizing that the Island’s finite *groundwater* resources [*aquifers*] are the sole source of our residents’ water supply and are critical perennial sources for our surface waters and the ecosystems they support.

Guiding Policy 2.2

As part of long-range land use planning, consider the impacts of future development to the quality and quantity of water that will be available to future Islanders and to the natural environment. Maintain sustainable *groundwater* withdrawal, protect aquifer recharge areas, guard against seawater intrusion and prevent adverse impacts to water quality from surface pollution.

Guiding Policy 2.3

Preserve and protect the ecological functions and values of the Island’s *aquatic resources*.

Guiding Policy 2.4

Anticipate and prepare for the consequences of *climate change* on our *aquatic resources*. These changes include sea level rise, altered precipitation patterns, as well as any other changes in climate and community response to climate in order to ensure ample quality, quantity and seasonal integrity of surface water and *groundwater* for the Island’s people and ecosystems.

Guiding Policy 2.5

Create a Bainbridge Island surface and *groundwater* management plan for the purpose of maintaining the long-term health of our fresh water *aquifers* and surface waters.

Guiding Policy 2.6

Recognize the importance of our water resources to present and future generations of Bainbridge Islanders, and apply the *precautionary principle*.

Guiding Policy 2.7

Recognize the water resource needs of *farms*, home gardens and domestic landscapes and support planning and conservation practices that ensure the sustainable use of our Island's finite *groundwater* resources.

Guiding Principle #3

Foster diversity with a holistic approach to meeting the needs of the Island and the human needs of its residents consistent with the stewardship of our finite environmental resources.

Guiding Policy 3.1

Ensure a variety of housing choices to meet the needs of present and future residents in all economic segments and promote plans, projects and proposals to create *affordable housing*.

Guiding Policy 3.2

Make budget decisions that adequately consider the well-being of all Island residents with the goal of providing opportunities to be contributing members of the community.

Guiding Policy 3.3

Support, protect and enhance the value of the arts and humanities as essential to education, quality of life, economic vitality, the broadening of mind and spirit, and as treasure in trust for our descendants.

Guiding Principle #4

Consider the costs and benefits to Island residents and property owners in making *land use* decisions.

Guiding Policy 4.1

Respect private property rights protected by the State and U.S. Constitutions.

Guiding Policy 4.2

Recognize that private property rights are not absolute but must be balanced with necessary and reasonable regulation to protect the public health, safety and welfare.

Guiding Principle #5

The use of land on the Island should be based on the principle that the Island's environmental resources are finite and must be maintained at a sustainable level.

Guiding Policy 5.1

Regulate all development on the Island consistent with the long-term health and carrying capacity of its natural systems.

Guiding Policy 5.2

Recognize that the sustainable use of the Island's finite land base is served by *green building* practices.

Guiding Policy 5.3

Preserve and enhance the Island's natural systems, natural beauty and environmental quality.

Guiding Policy 5.4

Protect and enhance wildlife, fish resources and natural ecosystems on Bainbridge Island.

Guiding Policy 5.5

Recognize and protect the Usual and Accustomed fishing areas of neighboring Tribes.

Guiding Principle #6

Nurture Bainbridge Island as a *sustainable community* by meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Guiding Policy 6.1

Promote environmental *sustainability* by supplementing the State's mandated 20-year plan horizon with a horizon of one hundred years in order to recognize the longer-term life cycles of natural systems. Tailor *green building* practices and public *infrastructure* investments to be in line with this longer-term perspective.

Guiding Policy 6.2

Promote an equitable social environment on the Island by addressing basic human needs including *affordable housing*, personal health and safety, mobility and increased access to human services, civic and cultural amenities.

Guiding Policy 6.3

Promote economic *sustainability* and work to provide economic opportunities for all community residents.

Guiding Policy 6.4

Promote food production as part of the *land use* planning process.

Fig. IN-6 Sustainable Community



Guiding Principle #7

Reduce *greenhouse gas* emissions and increase the Island's *climate resilience*.

Guiding Policy 7.1

Mitigation: Participate with state, regional and local partners to reduce *greenhouse gas* emissions consistent with the 1990 benchmark and future year targets set forth in state law, educate the public about *climate change* and incentivize Island activities including *land use* patterns and building practices that reduce *greenhouse gas* emissions.

Guiding Policy 7.2

Adaptation: Minimize or ameliorate the impacts of *climate change* on our community and our Island's ecosystems through climate-informed policies, programs and *development regulations*.

Guiding Policy 7.3

Evaluate the climate vulnerabilities and implications of City actions and identify policies that alleviate those vulnerabilities. Consider the effects of shifting conditions (sea level rise, changing rainfall patterns, increasing temperatures and more extreme weather events) and the effects they cause (altered vegetation, changing water demands, economic shifts).

Guiding Principle #8

Support the Island's *Guiding Principles* and Policies through the City's organizational and operating budget decisions.

Guiding Policy 8.1

Promote good governance and an Island culture of citizenship, stewardship and civic engagement.

Guiding Policy 8.2

Update each City Department’s work program annually, allocate sufficient time and resources and provide needed policy direction to achieve consistency with and implement the *Comprehensive Plan* in a manner that is transparent and consistent with the community *Vision*.

Guiding Policy 8.3

Grow a diversified and vibrant local economy.

Guiding Policy 8.4

Nurture a healthy and attractive community including a focus on the quality of the built environment through progressive *development regulations* and reviews.

Guiding Policy 8.5

Build reliable *infrastructure* and connected mobility that encourages physical activity such as biking and walking while also respecting the Island’s scenic qualities.

Guiding Policy 8.6

Grow a green, well-planned, environmentally sustainable community.

Guiding Policy 8.7

Plan for a safe city where citizens, City Officials, and Law Enforcement work together in an environment of accountability and trust.

Guiding Policy 8.8

When implementing policies, consider longer-term, indirect or unintended consequences of decisions.

WHAT A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IS AND IS NOT

There is an important distinction between a *comprehensive plan* and a *development regulation*. The former is a policy statement that provides direction. The latter is a control on how land may be used, which is one of the ways in which a *policy* statement is implemented.

The *GMA* definition of a *comprehensive plan* is:

"Comprehensive land use plan," "*comprehensive plan*," or "plan" means a generalized coordinated land use policy statement...

RCW 36.70A.030(4)

Thus, the Bainbridge Island *Comprehensive Plan* is a “policy statement” that provides important direction to a variety of City actions including but not limited to, the adoption of its capital budget and its *development regulations*. However, the Plan is not a “land use control” which means that it is not designed or intended to be applied directly to development permits.

The *GMA* definition of *development regulations* is: