

From: [Roger Mitchell](#)
To: [PDS comments](#)
Subject: Comprehensive Plan - proposed amendment 5
Date: Thursday, July 30, 2015 10:36:42 PM

PDS:

Please confirm receipt of the attached Comprehensive Plan Policy or Development Regulation Amendment Suggestion

Thanks



Comprehensive Plan Policy or Development Regulation Amendment Suggestion

Planning & Development Services · 1800 Continental Place · Mount Vernon WA 98273
voice 360-416-1320 · www.skagitcounty.net/planning

Per RCW 36.70A.470(2), this form is intended for use by any interested person, including applicants, citizens, hearing examiners, and staff of other agencies, to suggest amendments to Skagit County’s Comprehensive Plan policies or its development regulations, which are contained in Skagit County Code Title 14. Please do not combine multiple unrelated Comprehensive Plan policy or development regulation amendments on a single form. This form is for policy or development regulation amendments; use the Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment Request form for changes to the land use/zoning map.

Submitted By

Name	<u>Roger Mitchell</u>	Organization	<u></u>
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Proposal Description

Please answer all of the questions below that are applicable to your suggestion.

1. Describe your proposed amendment.

Establish a permanent, standing, Rural Advisory Board – analogous to the Agriculture Advisory Board and the Forest Advisory Board – that reports to, and serves at the pleasure of, the Board of County Commissioners. Each County Commissioner would appoint three rural citizens, not residing in any incorporated city or town or Indian Land, to serve on the Rural Advisory Board.

2. Describe the reasons your proposed amendment is needed or important.

Forty/ one percent of Skagit citizens have no official, *unique*, elected representation. They have no collective voice. They are disenfranchised. As one wag has said, “If you’re not at the table – you’re on the menu.” Everyone else has an elected official to represent them. Rural citizens do not have a unique, elected representative. Rural citizens have the three County Commissioners – but so does every other citizen.

Anacortes citizens, at **13.5%** of the County, have a representative. Rural citizens, at **41%** of the County, do not.

Burlington citizens, at **7.2%** of the County, have a representative. Rural citizens, at **41%** of the County, do not.

Concrete citizens, at **0.6%** of the County, have a representative. Rural citizens, at **41%** of the County, do not.

Hamilton citizens, at **0.3%** of the County, have a representative. Rural citizens, at **41%** of the County, do not.

LaConner citizens, at **0.8%** of the County, have a representative. Rural citizens, at **41%** of the County, do not.

Lyman citizens, at **0.4%** of the County, have a representative. Rural citizens, at **41%** of the County, do not.

Mount Vernon citizens, at **27.2%** of the County, have a representative. Rural citizens, at **41%** of the County, do not.

The Samish Tribe members, at **1.2%** of the County, have a representative. Rural citizens, at **41%** of the County, do not.

Sedro/Woolley citizens, at **9.0%** of the County, have a representative. Rural citizens, at **41%** of the County, do not.

The Swinomish Tribe members, at **0.8%** of the County, have a representative. Rural citizens, at **41%** of the County, do not.

Who speaks, uniquely and collectively, for rural citizens ? No one.

Skagit County cannot afford to *not* have regular, formal, input on rural issues *from* rural citizens. Rural citizens have unique needs but they also have unique contributions to make to our county. A Rural Advisory Board will facilitate the dialogue that is necessary to allow every citizen and the county to prosper.

3. *If you are suggesting revision to a particular section of the Comprehensive Plan, please identify which section(s):*

This suggestion does not pertain to any specific section of the Comprehensive Plan.

4. *If you are suggesting revision to the Comprehensive Plan, would the revision create inconsistencies with existing sections of the Comprehensive Plan? If so, please list those sections:*

This suggestion does not create inconsistencies with existing sections of the Comprehensive Plan.

5. *If you are suggesting revision to the Comprehensive Plan, would the revision require corresponding amendments to the County's development regulations?*

I don't believe this suggestion would necessarily require revision of development regulations. This suggestion is more of a highest priority policy than specific development regulations.

6. *If you are suggesting revision to a particular section of Skagit County Code Title 14, please identify which section(s).*

No Skagit County Code Title 14 revisions are necessary to implement this suggestion.

7. *If you are suggesting this development regulation amendment as a result of a particular project or permit application, please identify which project or application:*

This suggestion is not as a result of any particular project or permit application.

8. *If you are suggesting specific language as part of your amendment, please attach that specific language. Specific language is not required.*

Skagit County will establish a permanent, standing, Rural Advisory Board that reports to the Board of County Commissioners. The Rural Advisory Board will be composed of nine members, three appointed by each County Commissioner. Each Rural Advisory Board appointee must permanently reside in unincorporated Skagit County and not within any city or town or Indian Land.

9. *Describe why existing Comprehensive Plan policies should not continue to be in effect or why they no longer apply.*

Not applicable to this suggestion.

10. *Describe how the amendment complies with the Comprehensive Plan's community vision statements, goals, objectives, and policy directives.*

The Comprehensive Plan community vision statements, goals, objectives, and policy directives cite preserving the high quality of life in Skagit County. Rural quality of life cannot be preserved if rural residents have no *unique* voice in their County government that speaks solely and collectively for them.

11. *Describe the anticipated impacts to be caused by the change, including geographic area affected and issues presented.*

The anticipated impacts of this suggestion could be, and should be, huge. With 41% of our county's citizens disenfranchised from representation and input unique to their specific needs, there cannot be a fair and equitable government. Establishing a Rural Advisory Board is a simply, cost/ effective, well/ established mechanism to make our county whole with equality for each citizen no matter where in our county they live.

12. Describe how adopted functional plans and Capital Facilities Plans support the change.

Currently adopted functional plans do not, per se, support this suggested amendment, however all such functional plans will benefit from it.

13. Describe any public review of the request that has already occurred.

No public review of this suggested amendment to the Comprehensive Plan has already occurred.

Notices

Fees. No fees are required for a policy or code change suggestion, per SCC 14.08.020(6).

Docketing. SCC Chapter 14.08 governs the process for docketing of Comprehensive Plan amendments; suggestions for changes to the development regulations are docketed following the same process. Docketing of a suggestion is procedural only and does not constitute a decision by the Board of County Commissioners as to whether the amendment will ultimately be approved. Amendments are usually concluded by the end of the year following the request. State law generally prohibits the County from amending its Comprehensive Plan more than once per year.

Submission deadline. Suggestions must be received by the last business day of July for docketing. Suggestions received after that date will not be considered until the following year's docket.

How to Submit. Submit your suggestion via email (preferred) to pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us or to Planning & Development Services at the address above.