



Signature Report

Ordinance

Proposed No. 2026-0235.1

Sponsors Dunn

1 AN ORDINANCE related to comprehensive planning and
2 development regulations; amending Ordinance 13147,
3 Section 12, and K.C.C. 20.08.170, Ordinance 17486,
4 Section 3, and K.C.C. 20.10.015, Ordinance 13147, Section
5 20, as amended, and K.C.C. 20.18.040, Ordinance 14047,
6 Section 4, as amended, and K.C.C. 20.18.055, and
7 Ordinance 12196, Section 9, as amended, and K.C.C.
8 20.20.020, and adding a section to K.C.C. chapter 20.08.

9 BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

10 SECTION 1. Findings:

11 A. The Washington state Growth Management Act ("the GMA") requires
12 counties to take action to review, and if needed, revise their comprehensive plans and
13 development regulations to ensure compliance with the requirements of the GMA by
14 December 31, 2024. King County completed its statutorily required comprehensive plan
15 update in December 2024 via Ordinance 19881.

16 B. The King County Countywide Planning Policies establish procedures and
17 criteria for amendments to the Urban Growth Area boundary and provide a countywide
18 framework for growth management planning by King County and the cities within King
19 County.

20 C. From time to time, minor technical amendments to the Urban Growth Area
21 boundary may be needed to correct mapping errors or discrepancies, resolve situations
22 where buildings or parcels are split by the boundary, align the boundary with either edge
23 of a right-of-way or similar linear feature it currently touches, encompass existing urban-
24 serving infrastructure within the boundary, or address similar technical issues.

25 D. Technical amendments to the Urban Growth Area boundary are distinct from
26 substantive amendments made to accommodate housing or employment growth,
27 implement the Four-to-One Program, or redesignate land based on growth needs or other
28 policy considerations.

29 E. The amendments adopted by this ordinance establish Comprehensive Plan and
30 development regulation procedures for considering technical amendments to the Urban
31 Growth Area boundary consistent with the Countywide Planning Policies and the GMA.

32 F. The amendments adopted by this ordinance distinguish technical land use map
33 amendments from site-specific land use map amendments and allow technical land use
34 map amendments to be considered during an annual, midpoint, or ten-year update to the
35 King County Comprehensive Plan when initiated by the executive or council.

36 G. The Urban Growth Area boundary near the city of Black Diamond currently
37 bisects portions of an unopened, undesignated King County right-of-way. The land use
38 map amendment in Attachment B to this ordinance adjusts the boundary to coincide with
39 the southern and western boundaries of the right-of-way, so that the unopened right-of-
40 way is within the Urban Growth Area.

41 H. The Black Diamond land use map amendment is limited to portions of the
42 existing right-of-way and is not made for the purpose of increasing housing or
43 employment growth.

44 I. On July 23, 2026, John Adler, Mayor of Black Diamond, provided a letter of
45 support for the technical map amendment to the chair of the King County local services
46 and land use committee. The letter states that the amendment will not result in additional
47 residential units and that the mayor will pursue annexation of the portions of unopened
48 right-of-way into the city of Black Diamond if the amendment is approved.

49 SECTION 2.

50 A. Attachment A to this ordinance is adopted as amendments to the 2024 King
51 County Comprehensive Plan, as adopted in Ordinance 19881 and amended by Ordinance
52 20024.

53 B. The land use map amendment in Attachment B to this ordinance is hereby
54 adopted as the official land use control for those portions of unincorporated King County
55 defined in the attachment.

56 SECTION 3. Ordinance 13147, Section 12, and K.C.C. 20.08.170 are hereby
57 amended as follows:

58 "Site-specific (~~((comprehensive plan))~~) land use map amendment" means an
59 amendment to the comprehensive plan land use map (~~((which))~~) that includes one property
60 or a small group of specific properties. "Site-specific land use map amendment" does not
61 include amendments meeting the definition of "technical land use map amendment."

62 NEW SECTION. SECTION 4. There is hereby added to K.C.C. chapter 20.08 a
63 new section to read as follows:

64 "Technical land use map amendment" means an amendment to the comprehensive
65 plan land use map that includes one or more properties, rights-of-way, or other mapped
66 features, and is made in order to correct mapping errors or discrepancies, resolve
67 situations where buildings or parcels are split by the Urban Growth Area boundary, align
68 the Urban Growth Area boundary with either edge of a right-of-way or similar linear
69 feature it currently touches, encompass within the Urban Growth Area boundary urban-
70 serving infrastructure existing before January 1, 2027, or address similar technical issues.
71 Technical land use map amendments are not made for the purpose of increasing housing
72 or employment growth.

73 SECTION 5. Ordinance 17486, Section 3, and K.C.C. 20.10.015 are hereby
74 amended as follows:

75 A. After the Growth Management Planning Council approves or amends the
76 Countywide Planning Policies, the executive, as its chair, shall timely transmit to the
77 King County council an ordinance adopting the Countywide Planning Policies or
78 amendments thereto.

79 B. The King County council shall refer the proposed ordinance transmitted by the
80 executive under subsection A. of this section to the ~~((committee on transportation,~~
81 ~~economy and environment))~~ local services and land use committee or its successor for
82 review and consideration. If the King County council recommends substantive revisions
83 to the Countywide Planning Policies or amendments approved by the Growth
84 Management Planning Council, the King County council may refer the proposed
85 revisions to the Growth Management Planning Council for its consideration and
86 response.

87 C. Within ten days after the ordinance transmitted by the executive under
88 subsection A. of this section, as amended by the council, is effective, the clerk of the
89 King County council shall send the notice of enactment and the Countywide Planning
90 Policies and amendments to each city and town in King County for ratification as
91 provided for in the Countywide Planning Policies. Each city and town must take action
92 to ratify or reject the proposed Countywide Planning Policies or amendments as approved
93 by the King County council within ninety days after the date the ordinance approving the
94 Countywide Planning Policies or amendments was enacted. Failure of a city or town to
95 take action and notify the clerk of the King County council within ninety days shall be
96 deemed to be approval by that city or town. The notice shall include the date by which
97 each city or town must respond with its response to ratify or reject the proposed
98 Countywide Planning Policies or amendments and where the response should be directed.

99 D. Countywide Planning Policies or amendments are ratified if approved by the
100 county, cities and towns representing at least seventy percent of the county's population
101 and thirty percent of the jurisdictions. For ratification purposes, King County is the
102 jurisdiction representing the population in the unincorporated areas of the county.

103 E. Within ten days after the date for response established by the clerk of the King
104 County council under subsection C. of this section, the clerk of the King County council
105 shall notify the executive, as chair of the Growth Management Planning Council, of the
106 decision to ratify or not to ratify the Countywide Planning Policies or amendments.

107 SECTION 6. Ordinance 13147, Section 20, as amended, and K.C.C. 20.18.040
108 are hereby amended as follows:

109 A.1. Site-specific land use map amendments may be considered during the
110 annual, midpoint, or ten-year update, depending on the degree of change proposed.

111 ~~((B.))~~ 2. Site-specific land use map amendments that do not require substantive
112 change to Comprehensive Plan or subarea plan language and that do not alter the Urban
113 Growth Area boundary, except to correct mapping errors, may be initiated by either the
114 county or a property owner for consideration in the annual update.

115 ~~((C.))~~ 3. The following categories of site-specific land use map amendments may
116 be initiated by either the county or a property owner for consideration in the ten-year
117 update or midpoint update:

118 ~~((1.))~~ a. Amendments that could be considered in the annual update;

119 ~~((2.))~~ b. Amendments that require substantive change to comprehensive plan
120 policy language; and

121 ~~((3.))~~ c. Amendments to the Urban Growth Area boundary.

122 B. Technical land use map amendments may be considered during the annual,
123 midpoint, or ten-year update, and may be initiated by the executive or council.

124 SECTION 7. Ordinance 14047, Section 4, as amended, and K.C.C. 20.18.055 are
125 hereby amended as follows:

126 A. All site-specific land use map amendments~~((, whether))~~ initiated by ~~((property~~
127 ~~owner application, by council motion, or by))~~ the executive ~~((proposal,))~~ shall be
128 reviewed based upon the requirements of Comprehensive Plan policy ~~((I-207))~~ I-108, and
129 must meet the following additional review standards:

1. Consistency with the policies, objectives and goals of the Comprehensive Plan, including any applicable subarea plans, the countywide planning policies and the state Growth Management Act;

2. Compatibility with adjacent and nearby existing and permitted land uses; and

3. Compatibility with the surrounding development pattern.

B. Site-specific land use map amendments for which recommendations have been issued by the hearing examiner by January 15 shall be submitted to the executive and the council by the hearing examiner by January 15. The department will provide for a cumulative analysis of these recommendations and such analysis will be included in the annual March transmittal.

C. Technical land use map amendments shall not be inconsistent with the policies, objectives, and goals of the Comprehensive Plan, including any applicable subarea plans; the countywide planning policies; and the state Growth Management Act.

D. All ~~((such))~~ land use map amendments will be considered concurrently by the council committee charged with the review of the Comprehensive Plan. Following this review, ~~((site-specific))~~ land use map amendments ~~((which))~~ that are recommended by this committee will be incorporated as an attachment to the adopting ordinance transmitted by the executive for consideration by the full council. Final action by the council on these amendments will occur concurrently with the annual update to the Comprehensive Plan.

SECTION 8. Ordinance 12196, Section 9, as amended, and K.C.C. 20.20.020 are hereby amended as follows:

152 A. Land use decisions are classified into four types, based on who makes the
153 decision, whether public notice is required, whether a public hearing is required before a
154 decision is made, and whether administrative appeals are provided. The types of land use
155 decisions are listed in subsection D. of this section.

156 1. Type 1 decisions are made by the manager of the department of local
157 services, permitting division ("the division"). Type 1 decisions are administrative
158 decisions. An administrative appeal is not provided.

159 2. Type 2 decisions require public notice and are made by the manager. Type 2
160 decisions are discretionary decisions that are subject to administrative appeal to the
161 hearing examiner.

162 3. Type 3 decisions require public notice and are quasi-judicial decisions made
163 by the hearing examiner following an open record hearing. An administrative appeal is
164 not provided.

165 4. Type 4 decisions require public notice and are site-specific quasi-judicial
166 decisions made by the council based on the record established by the hearing examiner,
167 after a recommendation by the division.

168 B. Except as provided in K.C.C. 20.44.120.A.7., or unless otherwise agreed to by
169 the applicant, all Type 2, 3, and 4 decisions included in consolidated permit applications
170 that would require more than one type of land use decision process may be processed and
171 decided together, including any administrative appeals, using the highest-numbered land
172 use decision type applicable to the project application.

173 C. Certain development proposals are subject to additional procedural
174 requirements beyond the standard procedures established in this chapter.

175

D. Land use decision types are classified as follows:

TYPE 1		Temporary use permit for a homeless encampment or temporary microshelter village under K.C.C. chapter 21A.45, except as required by K.C.C. 21A.45.100 Building permit, commercial site development permit, or clearing and grading permit that is not subject to SEPA, that is categorically exempt from SEPA as provided in K.C.C. 20.20.040, or for which the division has issued a determination of nonsignificance or mitigated determination of nonsignificance Boundary line adjustment Right-of-way permit Variance from K.C.C. chapter 9.04 Shoreline exemption Decisions to require studies or to approve, condition or deny a development proposal based on K.C.C. chapter 21A.24, except for decisions to approve, condition, or deny alteration exceptions Decisions to approve, condition, or deny nonresidential elevation and dry floodproofing variances for agricultural buildings that do not equal
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		or exceed a maximum assessed value of sixty-five thousand dollars under K.C.C. chapter 21A.24 Approval of a conversion-option harvest plan Binding site plan for a condominium that is based on a building permit, an as-built site plan for developed sites, a commercial site development permit for the entire site Approvals for agricultural activities and agricultural support services authorized under K.C.C. 21A.42.300 In the urban area: microsubdivision, microsubdivision revision, microsubdivision alteration, or microsubdivision vacation Final short plat Final plat Critical area determination
TYPE 2^{1,2}		Except those classified as microsubdivisions in the urban area, short subdivision short subdivision revision, short subdivision alteration, or short subdivision vacation Zoning variance Conditional use permit

		Temporary use permit under K.C.C. chapter 21A.32 Temporary use permit for a homeless encampment or temporary microshelter village under K.C.C. 21A.45.100 Shoreline substantial development permit³ Building permit, commercial site development permit, or clearing and grading permit for which the division has issued a determination of significance Reuse of public schools Reasonable use exceptions under K.C.C. 21A.24.070.B Decisions to approve, condition, or deny alteration exceptions or variances to floodplain development regulations under K.C.C. chapter 21A.24 Extractive operations under K.C.C. 21A.22.050 Binding site plan Waivers from the moratorium provisions of K.C.C. 16.82.140 based upon a finding of special circumstances Sea level rise risk area variance adopted in K.C.C. chapter 21A.23
TYPE		Preliminary subdivision

3 ¹		Plat alterations Preliminary subdivision revisions Plat vacations; special use
TYPE 4 ^{1,4}		Site-specific zone reclassifications <u>under K.C.C.</u> <u>20.22.150</u> Site-specific shoreline environment redesignation Site-specific amendment or deletion of P suffix conditions Site-specific deletion of special district overlay

¹ See K.C.C. 20.44.120.C. for provisions governing procedural and substantive SEPA

appeals and appeals of Type 2, 3, and 4 decisions.

² When an application for a Type 2 decision is combined with other permits requiring Type 3 or 4 land use decisions under this chapter, the examiner, not the manager, makes the decision.

³ A shoreline permit, including a shoreline variance or conditional use, is appealable to the state Shorelines Hearings Board and not to the hearing examiner.

⁴ Approvals that are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan may be considered by the council at any time. Zone reclassifications that are not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan require a site-specific land use map amendment and the council's hearing and consideration shall be scheduled with the amendment to the Comprehensive Plan under K.C.C. 20.18.040 and 20.18.060.

E. The definitions in K.C.C. 21A.45.020 apply to this section.

189 **SECTION 9. Severability.** If any provision of this ordinance or its application to
190 any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the ordinance or the
191 application of the provision to persons or circumstances is not affected.

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

ATTEST:

APPROVED this ____ day of _____, _____.

Attachments: A. King County 2026 Update to the 2024 Comprehensive Plan, B. Land Use Map
Amendment