

Skagit County  
Planning & Development Services



# Annual Report 2018





## Board of Skagit County Commissioners



## Skagit County Planning & Development Service

April, 2019

Skagit County Administrative Building

1800 Continental Place

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Figure 1-Front cover photo- View from Chuckanut Bay towards Bow (Drone Photography by Scott Pratschner: 2018).



## Message from Director

This 2018 Annual Report contains information about the permitting and planning activities our department conducted during the past year. Our intent is to share information about what we've accomplished, and how we've implemented the goals outlined in the 2017-2022 Skagit County Strategic Plan.

This Annual Report addresses the following strategic concepts: **Environmental Sustainability:** Goal 5 Protect natural resources; Goal 6: Reduce or eliminate water pollution and Goal 7: Promote Sustainable activities, **Growth and Economic Development:** Goal 8: Maintain Rural Character: Goal 9: Manage growth to preserve the quality of life; Goal 10: Plan for urban infrastructure; Goal 11 Support economic development; **Quality Services:** Goal 12: Provide efficient effective, responsive public services; **Public Engagement and Transparency:** Goal 21: Make County government more accessible and customer friendly, Goal 22: Improve External Communication.

We believe that each permit we issue represents an investment in our community. Over time, each permit allows the county to grow and develop in a manner consistent with the County's long term vision.

I would like to extend my thanks to the volunteer committees such as the Skagit County Planning Commission, Agricultural Advisory Board, Forest Advisory Committee and others for their ongoing work to ensure the best of Skagit County will be available for future generations to benefit from and to enjoy in the decades ahead. Also a big thank-you to the staff who have worked hard at all levels to compile this information. We will continue to improve this report and the quality of our services with your suggestions and feedback.

We are proud to serve Skagit County. The status quo is never acceptable here so let us know how we can better serve you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Hal H. Hart". The signature is stylized with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Hal H. Hart

Planning and Development Services Director





2018

# Planning & Development Services

year in review



## About Us

Our department provides land use planning and permitting, code enforcement, and fire investigation and prevention functions. PDS is responsible for the development and implementation of strategies, policies, and codes to guide future growth and development in unincorporated Skagit County.

## Skagit County's Shared Vision

To preserve a high quality of life, strive for government efficiency, support economic opportunities, increase housing choices, ensure that transportation facilities and services are available to serve development at time of occupancy and use (concurrency), provide for an efficient land-use pattern, preserve rural, resource and ecologically fragile areas for future generations, respect property rights and maintain opportunities for citizen participation and involvement throughout Skagit County's planning processes.

## Divisions within the Department

**Current Planning** is responsible for reviewing and processing land-use development permit applications such as subdivisions, special use permits, variance requests, etc. in accordance with the currently adopted land use ordinance (Title 14).

**Natural Resources** is responsible for reviewing and processing all applications that deal with water availability, critical areas, and forestry practices.

**Permit Processing** is responsible for intake of all Planning and Development Services applications. Functions include assisting the public with zoning, land use and permitting questions.

**Building** is responsible for reviewing all building construction in unincorporated Skagit County for consistency with Building Code requirements for health, life safety and fire protection. Functions include plan review, on-site inspections and code compliance.

**Fire Marshal** is responsible for reviewing life safety on all buildings permitted, as well as fire investigations in unincorporated Skagit County.

**Long Range** is responsible for the comprehensive plan, land use and development code amendments.

For more information: <https://www.skagitcounty.net/Departments/PlanningAndPermit/main.htm>

2018

# Current Planning

year in review

pre-development/  
pre-app meetings

**83**

held to guide the applicant  
through the application  
process  
97 in 2017

lot certifications  
recorded

**267**

certifying whether a lot is  
eligible for conveyance or  
development  
216 recorded in 2017

variances received

**23**

granting relief from setback  
standards  
19 received in 2017

special use permits  
received

**11**

for uses that are not outright  
permitted  
19 received in 2017

boundary line adjustments  
received

**66**

for lot line adjustments  
53 received in 2017

land divisions  
received

**13**

creating 104 potential lots  
19 received in 2017

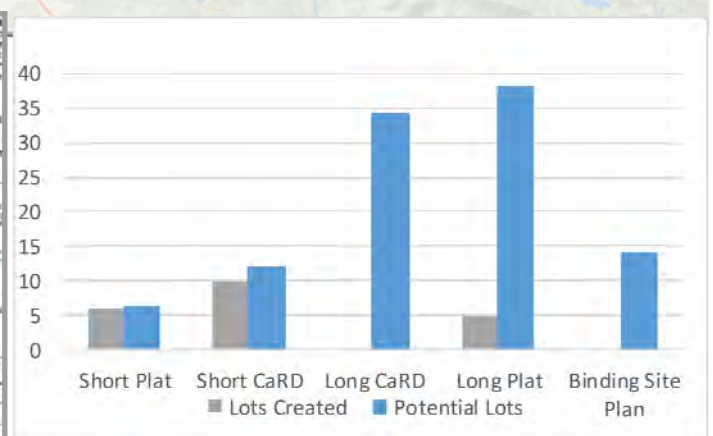


Skagit County Planning and Development Services invites the public to submit written comments on proposed plans, policies, code amendments, appeals, permit applications, and other types of proposals. To ensure that comments are addressed in the decision or recommendation, Skagit County Planning and Development Services should receive them before the end of the published comment period.

You can view these projects at <https://www.skagitcounty.net/Departments/PlanningAndPermit/legalnotices.htm>



## year in review

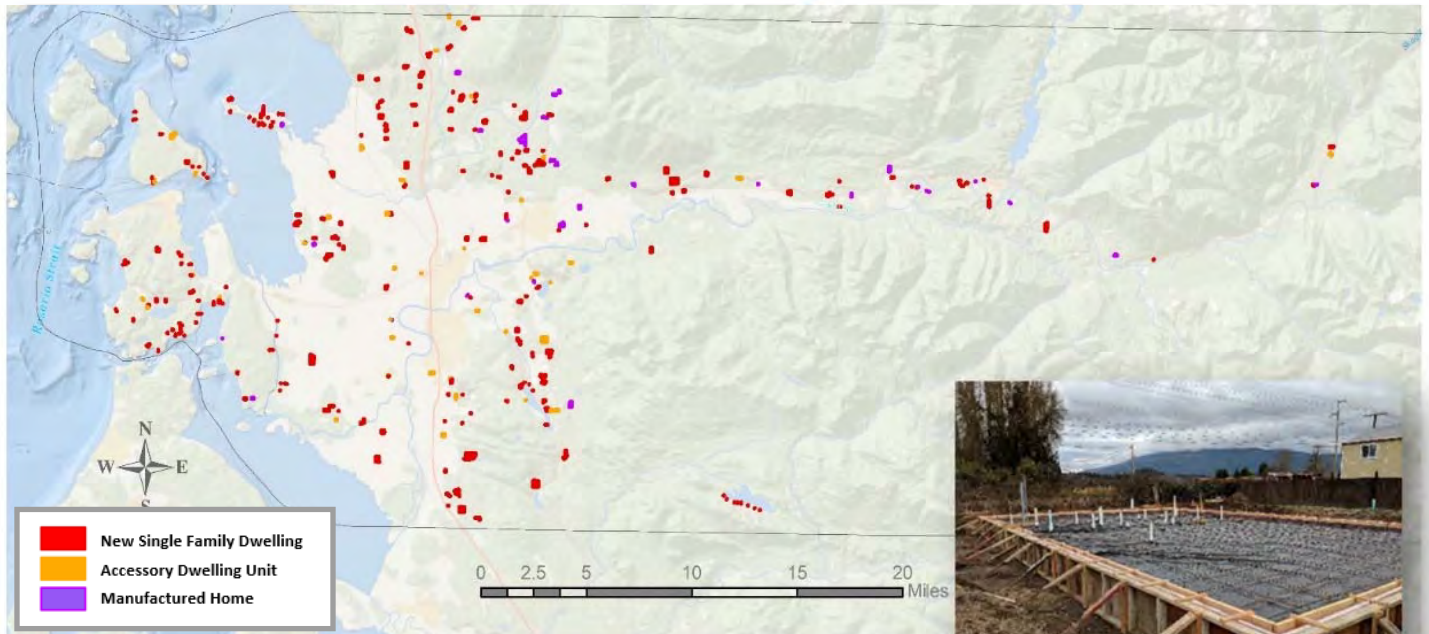


The graph and map above show the number of lots created from subdivisions that were finalized in 2018 (Lots Created) versus the number of potential lots that will be created once the subdivisions are finalized (Potential Lots).

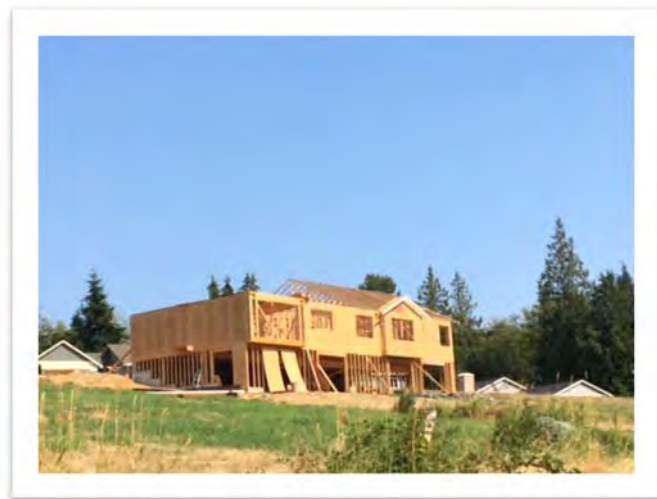
2018

# Residential Building Permits

year in review



The above map shows location of permits applied for or finalized in 2018. Map courtesy of Skagit County GIS Department.



In 2018, a total of 226 new housing unit applications were received by the department with a total project valuation of \$54,317,753.32. In addition, 201 building permit applications were received for property improvements; including garages, agricultural buildings, decks, additions, foundation improvements, interior remodels, and other structures such as retaining walls, solar panels and pools. These improvements have a total project valuation of \$60,602,423.11.

The graph to the right shows the number of residential building permit applications received by the department for 2018. Building permit application review time is dependent upon the volume of applications received.

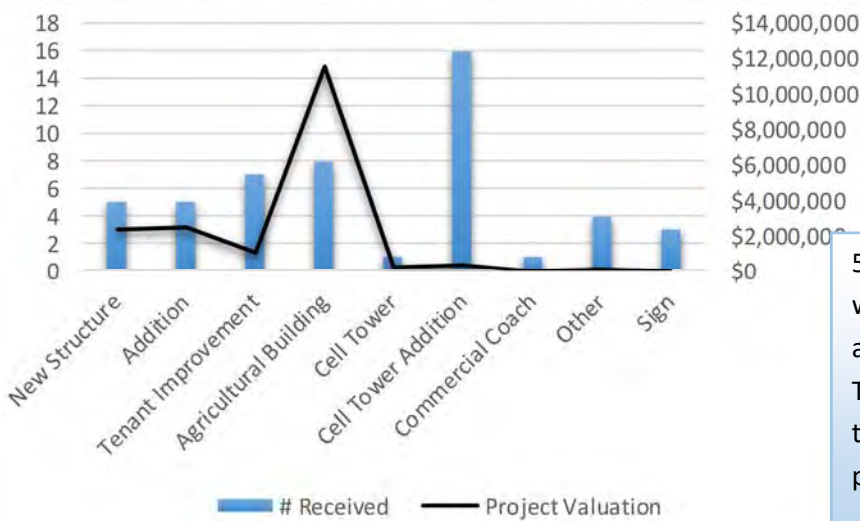


**Helpful Hint:** Building permit applications received in the winter typically have a faster review turnaround.

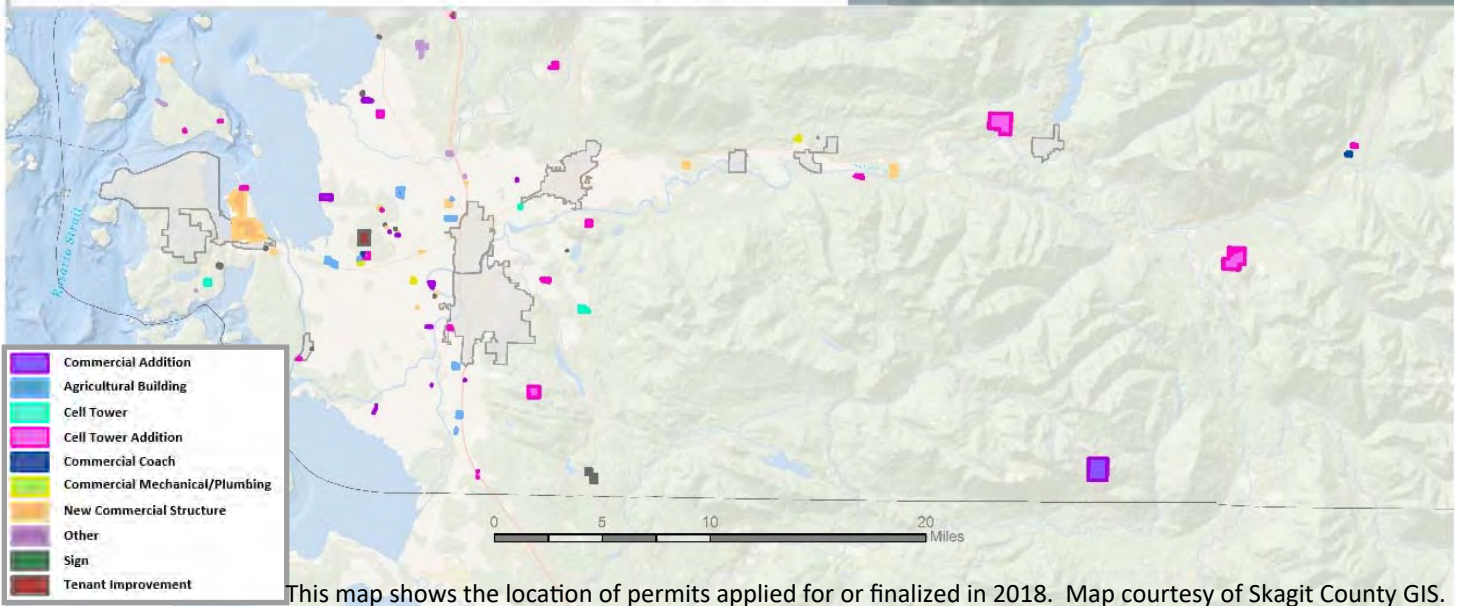




# 2018 Commercial Building Permits year in review



50 Commercial Building Permit Applications were received by the department in 2018 with a total project valuation of \$18,290,383.60. The graph to the left shows the distribution of the types of permits, as well as the total project valuations associated with that type.



This map shows the location of permits applied for or finalized in 2018. Map courtesy of Skagit County GIS.

2018

# Natural Resources

year in review

1,241



water availability questions  
researched

364



number of site inspections

34



number of shoreline permits  
received

152



number of water  
applications received



number of forest  
practice permits



number of gravel mine  
applications in process



number of variances  
submitted



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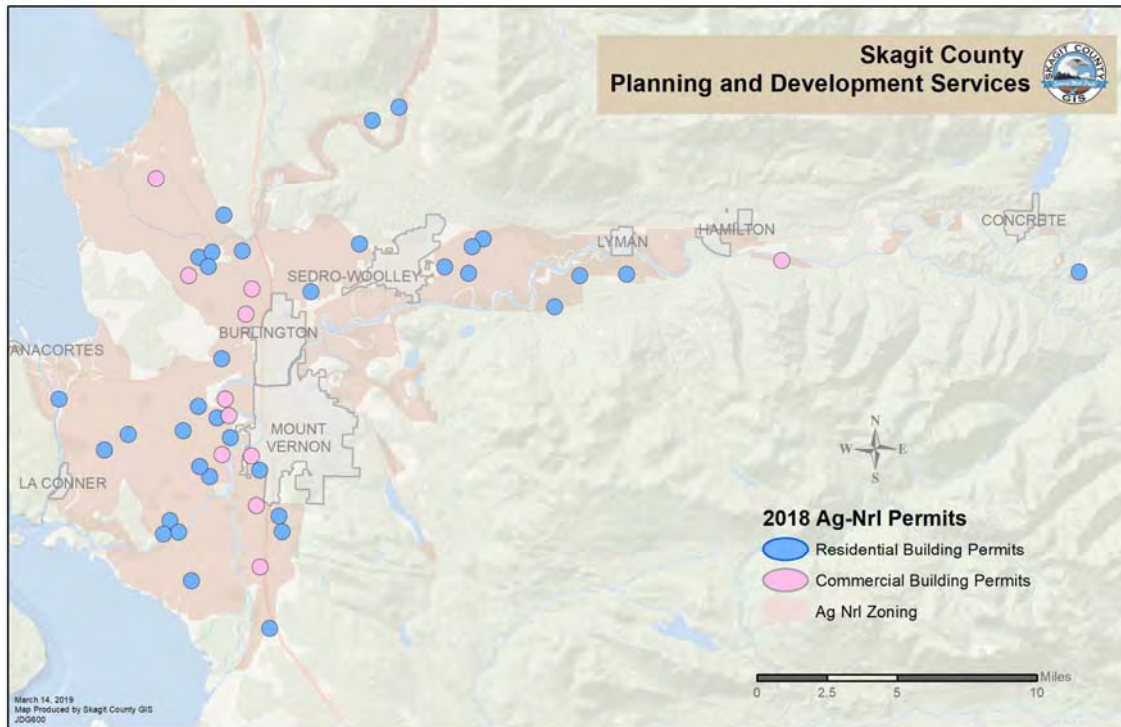
[planning@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:planning@co.skagit.wa.us)





# 2018 Agricultural Development

## year in review



Summary of Building Permit Applications Received in 2018 in the Ag-NRL Zoning Designation

Application Type	Received (#)	Project Valuation (\$)	Project Area (Sq ft)	New/Replace Impervious Surface* (Sq ft)	New/Replace Impervious Surface* (Acres)
<b>Commercial Building Permit</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>\$10,259,625.52</b>	<b>131,808</b>	<b>337,815</b>	<b>7.76</b>
Agricultural Building	4	\$9,169,649.35	121,002	335,226	7.70
Cell Tower Addition	3	\$66,000.00	-	0.00	0.00
Other	2	\$910,861.00	1,700	0.00	0.00
Tenant Improvement	2	\$113,115.17	9,106	2,589	0.06
<b>Residential Building Permit</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>\$4,454,382.82</b>	<b>80,562</b>	<b>124,049</b>	<b>2.85</b>
Accessory Dwelling Unit	4	\$161,577.00	3,636	5,605	0.13
Agricultural Building	10	\$610,559.00	29,894	58,259	1.34
Deck	1	\$1,979.20	160	160	0.00
Garage	4	\$164,617.52	4,084	2,554	0.06
New Single Family Dwelling	11	\$3,416,276.34	40,502	57,471	1.32
Other	1	\$35,000.00	-	0.00	0.00
Remodel	4	\$64,373.76	2,286	0.00	0.00
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>\$14,714,008.34</b>	<b>212,370</b>	<b>461,864</b>	<b>10.60</b>



2018

# Long Range Planning

year in review



*Picture of the Planning Commission.*

*Photo courtesy of Skagit Valley Herald 2018*

## **Comprehensive Plan/Land Use Map/Development Amendments**

The Long Range team engaged in a year-long process to complete the annual docketing and adoption of twenty-two Comprehensive Plan, Land Use map, and development code amendments. The project website may be viewed at

[www.skagitcounty.net/2018CPA](http://www.skagitcounty.net/2018CPA). The resulting

impact of the adopted changes includes the acknowledgement and ability to apply performance standards to campground development in the Rural

Intermediate zone; the recognition of private property ownership in and near the Mt. Baker – Snoqualmie National Forest; better collaboration between the Port of Skagit, the Drainage Districts, and the County on development permits; and a number of code corrections resulting in regulations that are easier to read and administer.

## **Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) and Transportation Improvement Program Updates (TIP)**

Notable amendments this year included the adoption by reference of Anacortes' CFP to enable the County to collect Transportation Impact Fees in the city's unincorporated Urban Growth Area (UGA); and amendments to the TIP to incorporate the projected costs of the proposed Guemes Island Ferry. The commenting public was supportive of Public Works' proposal to consider improvements to the safety of the Josh Wilson and Farm to Market Road intersection. The project website may be viewed at [www.skagitcounty.net/cfp](http://www.skagitcounty.net/cfp).

## **Long Range Work Program**

The Board of County Commissioners set the Long Range Work Program by Resolution, R20180037, in the first quarter of the year. The Team completed the plat extension updates to Chapter 14.18 SCC, and worked closely with the Planning Commission, staff, and community stakeholders to develop code drafts for updates to the following Title 14 chapters: Flood Damage Prevention, Land Disturbance, Permit Procedures, Zoning, Stormwater Management, and Land Divisions. A list of current projects and proposed dates of completion may be viewed at the project website: <https://skagitcounty.net/Departments/PlanningAndPermit/communplan.htm>.

2018

# Long Range Planning

*year in review*



## Guemes Ferry Replacement

The Team and our planning consultant BERK prepared and issued an environmental review under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) for the replacement Guemes Ferry proposed by Public Works. We worked closely with the Public Works consultant Glosten to analyze population projections and recommended growth strategies for Guemes Island, and assist in determining which permits would be required to potentially modify the ferry terminal to accommodate the new ferry. Our Team will continue to manage and monitor the BERK

contract and attend public meetings to provide planning and SEPA support to the ferry replacement project. The project website may be viewed at [www.skagitcounty.net/ferryenviro](http://www.skagitcounty.net/ferryenviro) and [www.skagitcounty.net/ferry](http://www.skagitcounty.net/ferry).

## Western Washington University Sustainable Communities Partnership

In collaboration with Urban Planning Professors Doctors Laninga and Zafaratos and Geology Professor Dr. Mitchell, managed student-led groups to complete the following projects: an Edison Community Plan, draft code amendments to implement setback reform, and a prescriptive design for a potable rainwater catchment system. The department hired three interns for the Long Range Team that focused on Stormwater White Paper, Housing Strategies memo, and provided daily support in the form of research, staff report writing, and attendance at Planning Commission and Board meetings.

## Water System Review

The Long Range Team is responsible for water system reviews, in order to determine the system's consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, zoning, population projections, and development regulations. We collaborated with the Washington State Department of Health, the Department of Ecology, engineering consultants, and the Department's Senior Water Resource Planner to complete reviews and approvals for the Blanchard Knob Water System, the City of Anacortes, the Colony Mountain Community Club Water System, and the Taggart Quarry Water System. We look forward to continued collaboration with our multi-disciplinary team in 2019.



GIS Map of Western Skagit County and Location of Water System Reviews

2018

# Fire Marshal

year in review

664



commercial inspections  
completed

210



burn permits issued for  
safe burning

171



request for FM responses  
regarding fires

402



number of applications  
reviewed for fire code safety

466



inspections for building permits  
(residential, commercial, fill & grade)

55



fire investigations



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[planning@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:planning@co.skagit.wa.us)





2018

# Planning & Development Services

*year in review*

6,653

customers helped at the  
Permit Center



506

total number of application  
appointments offered



52,104

 estimated phone calls to  
PDS reception line

106

public records  
requests processed



4,110

number of  
building inspections

385

number of stormwater  
inspections



2,583

number of  
applications received



360-416-1320



[planning@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:planning@co.skagit.wa.us)





## **Skagit County Planning & Development Service**

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