



Washington State Association
of County and Regional
Planning Directors

2025-27

Strategic Plan



Background and Purpose

The Washington State Association of Regional Planning Directors (WSACRPD) is an affiliate organization of the Washington State Association of Counties consisting of county planning directors and their employees.

Vision

To be recognized as the voice for county planning professionals.

Mission

To advocate for sound planning practices and provide professional development opportunities to assist counties with meeting the needs of residents while protecting valuable resources and ensuring sustainable growth opportunities.

2025 Executive Committee

PRESIDENT

Michelle Mercer

*Planning Manager
Grant County*

EASTERN VICE PRESIDENT

Thomas Carroll

*Planning Official
Yakima County*

WESTERN VICE PRESIDENT

Mindy Brooks

*Community
Development Director
Lewis County*

TREASURER

Erik Johansen

*Land Services Director
Stevens County*

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Mark Personius

*Planning and Development
Services Director
Whatcom County*

WSAC Staff Supporting this Affiliate

Curtis Steinhauer

*Policy Coordinator &
WSACRPD Staff Lead*

Paul Jewell

*Government Relations
Director*

Kelsey Hulse

Contract Lobbyist

PRIORITY AREA 1

Legislative Advocacy

Goals

- ① Legislators rely on WSACRPD for advice to help craft legislation.
- ② Legislators are educated on and aware of unique county planning challenges.
- ③ WSACRPD authors and champions legislation that promotes sound county planning practices.
- ④ WSACRPD is the conduit between the county “community” and state legislators.

Strategies

- ① WSAC provides legislative advocacy training for its members prior to session starting.
- ② WSAC provides weekly legislative updates to WSACRPD members throughout session.
- ③ WSAC Staff works with WSACRPD members to identify, draft, and find sponsors for priority legislative proposals.

ACTION ITEMS

PRIORITY AREA 1

Legislative Advocacy

Action	Timeline	Responsibility	Strategy	Deliverable
Deliver legislative advocacy training for members at CLC	Annually in November	WSAC Staff Lead and Government Relations Director	1	Presentation to WSACRPD membership
Host legislative updates	Weekly while during session	WSAC Staff Lead	2	Weekly virtual meetings for WSACRPD membership
Solicit requests for legislative priorities	Annually in March	Executive Committee, WSAC Staff Lead	3	List of legislative priority options
Compile and distribute policy reports and staff recommendations	Send to WSACRPD membership by May 1 each year	WSAC Staff Lead	3	Staff reports on each priority proposal for members to consider
Select legislative priorities for the following session	Each year at Spring Affiliate Meeting	WSACRPD membership, facilitated by WSAC Staff Lead and Executive Committee	3	Formal adoption of legislative priorities by membership
Solicit participation in legislative workgroups to guide priority development	Each year at Spring Affiliate Meeting	President, WSAC Staff Lead	3	Workgroup member lists
Host monthly workgroup meetings to develop priorities	July, August, and September each year	Workgroup members, WSAC Staff Lead	3, 4	Bill or proviso drafts that accomplish adopted legislative priorities
Request authorization from WSAC membership to establish WSACRPD legislative priorities	Annually at September LSC and Board meeting	WSAC Staff Lead and Government Relations Director	3	Formal authorization from WSAC Board to execute priorities
Identify sponsors for priorities	October-December each year	WSAC Staff Lead	3	Sponsor commitments for each priority
Approve finalized priority slate	CLC each year	WSACRPD membership	3	Finalized slate of legislative priorities
Facilitate progress of priorities through the legislative process	Continuously during session	WSAC Staff Lead, Workgroup members	3, 4	Legislator engagement, testimony, and successful passage of legislative priorities.

PRIORITY AREA 2

County Collaborations, Training, and Building Better Peer to Peer/ Mentorship Opportunities

Goals

- ① County planners and their staff have access to shared peer-to-peer resources and are provided opportunities to collaborate with their peers on, at minimum, a quarterly basis.
- ② County planners are well versed on unique county specific planning challenges and practices.

Strategies

- ① Host an annual Spring Affiliate Meeting and offer dedicated learning and collaboration opportunities at County Leaders Conference.
- ② Facilitate in-person roundtable meetings for east and west side counties each August.
- ③ Host workgroups on specific policy topics following the annual Spring Affiliate Meeting each year.
- ④ Connect WSACRPD members with WSAC Hub, include forums for specific topics , resource links for planning best practices, and use Hub as an pipeline for mentorship opportunities.
- ⑤ Survey WSACRPD members to determine technical training needs on county planning issues (e.g. rural lands, natural resource lands, LAMIRDs, unincorporated UGAs, shorelines, renewable energy projects) and provide trainings as needed.



ACTION ITEMS

PRIORITY AREA 2

County Collaborations, Training, and Building Better Peer to Peer/ Mentorship Opportunities

Action	Timeline	Responsibility	Strategy	Deliverable
Book hotel, plan initial logistics for Spring Affiliate Meeting and County Leaders Conference	Annually June-July	WSAC Operations Staff	1	Contract with hotel, workplan for conference planning
Draft agenda for County Leaders Conference	Annually in August, with follow up meetings as needed	WSAC Staff Lead and Executive Committee	1	Agenda and budget for CLC activities
Confirm content for County Leaders Conference	Annually September-October	WSAC Staff Lead	1	All agenda items confirmed, calendar invites sent to speakers, final agenda distributed to members
Host County Leaders Conference activities	Annually in November	WSAC Staff Lead, Government Relations Director, Executive Committee, WSAC Operations Staff	1	2-hour membership meeting, an affiliate sponsored dinner, and one full day of WSACRPD focused breakout sessions
Draft agenda for Spring Affiliate Meeting	Annually in October, with follow-up meetings in January, February, March, and April	WSAC Staff Lead and Executive Committee	1	Agenda for Spring Affiliate Meeting
Initial contact with Affiliate Meeting presenters, formalize keynote presenter	Annually October-December	WSAC Staff Lead, with support from Executive Committee as needed	1	Commitment from keynote speakers and other presenters
Plan logistics for Spring Affiliate Meeting	Annually in January	WSAC Staff Lead, Executive Committee, WSAC Operations Staff	1	Budget, and meal plan, and opening of registration for Spring Affiliate Meeting
Confirm Content for Spring Affiliate Meeting	Annually January-March	WSAC Staff Lead	1	All agenda items confirmed, calendar invites sent to speakers, final agenda distributed to members

Obtain Sponsors for Spring Affiliate Meeting meals	Annually January-April	WSAC Staff Lead and operations staff, with support from the Executive Committee as needed	1	Sponsorships for all dinner and lunch events
Host Spring Affiliate Meeting	Annually in May	WSAC Staff Lead, Government Relations Director, Executive Committee, WSAC Operations Staff	1	Broad participation from WSACRPD membership at Spring Affiliate Meeting
Plan content and logistics for East/West Roundtables	Annually in June	WSAC Staff Lead, Executive Committee	2	Agenda for East/West Roundtables, invites sent to members
Confirm content for East/West Roundtables	Annually in June	WSAC Staff Lead	2	All presenters confirmed, relevant agency staff and legislators invited, finalized agendas sent to members
Host East/West Roundtables	Annually in August	Executive Committee members, with support from WSAC Staff Lead	2	Participation from relevant geographic members at each roundtable
Host initial workgroup meetings for any non-legislative workgroups	Annually in July	Workgroup members, WSAC Staff Lead	3	Workgroup charter, goals, and meeting schedule
Host additional workgroup meetings	As needed throughout interim	WSAC Staff Lead, workgroup members	3	Progress toward and eventual achievement of workgroup goals
Configure WSAC HUB space for WSACRPD members to share information	Begin work in October 2025, present to Executive Committee in December	WSAC Staff Lead and operations staff, with feedback from Executive Committee	4	WSACRPD HUB space includes forum areas, a link hub, and other resources
Conduct HUB training for WSACRPD members at Spring Affiliate Meeting	May 2026	WSAC Staff Lead and operations staff	4	Members understand how to interact with each other via the HUB
Survey WSACRPD members on training needs	August 2026	WSAC Staff Lead, and operations staff with feedback from Executive Committee	5	Survey sent to members
Schedule and design trainings based off of WSACRPD survey feedback	September-December 2026	WSAC Staff Lead, Government Relations Director, WSACRPD members as needed	5	Training designed and scheduled in conjunction with other in person events

PRIORITY AREA 3

Focusing on Developing and Maintaining Agency Relationships with Commerce, DOT, WDFW, Health, DAHP, WABO, SBCC, DNR, Ecology, Etc.

Goals

- ① State agencies engage counties at the start of and throughout the policy and rule-making process.
- ② State agency representatives are educated on and aware of unique county planning challenges.

- ③ Agency rulemaking results in outcomes that:
 - Are implementable at the county level
 - Reflect the unique concerns of rural communities
 - Recognize the broad issues planners must balance
 - Do not create new unfunded mandates

Strategies

- ① Maintain current contact lists for each agency including services provided and a liaison for each agency program.
- ② WSACRPD will compile and provide an inventory of state programs and information on the constraints counties have implementing these rules (budget, staff, time, training, political will, resources, etc.).
- ③ Explore strategies to encourage statewide adoption of Commerce's 2025 customer service focus/priority for all agencies.
- ④ Invite reps from each agency to attend Spring Affiliate Meeting and County Leader's Conference activities.



ACTION ITEMS

PRIORITY AREA 3

Focusing on Developing and Maintaining Agency Relationships with Commerce, DOT, WDFW, Health, DAHP, WABO, SBCC, DNR, Ecology, Etc.

Action	Timeline	Responsibility	Strategy	Deliverable
Create initial inventory of state programs and contacts	Begin work immediately, target completion by 2026 Affiliate Meeting	WSAC Staff Lead to Compile, Executive Committee and Government Relations Director to review and provide feedback	1, 2	Spreadsheet detailing contacts for each program and descriptions of program relevance
Update inventory	Annually following Legislative session	WSAC Staff Lead to compile, Executive Committee and Government Relations Director to review and provide feedback	1	Spreadsheet detailing contacts for each program and descriptions of program relevance
Identify county implementation challenges by state program and rule	Begin work following 2026 Spring Affiliate Meeting, complete by November 2026	WSAC Staff Lead to compile, Executive Committee, membership, and Government Relations Director to review and provide feedback	2	Report detailing challenges that can be used for advocacy and technical assistance
Meet with Director Joe Nguyen about Commerce's customer service focused service deliver model	September 2026	WSAC Staff Lead to coordinate, Executive Committee and Government Relations Director to attend	3	List of strategies to foster this approach in other state agencies
Invite state agencies staff to WSACRPD member events	May, August, and November each year	WSAC Staff Lead	4	Agency attendance for select portions of CLC, Spring Affiliate Meeting, and east/west roundtables