ISSUE 01 / INAUGURAL MONDAY EDITION / OCTOBER 12, 2026

A NOTE FROM CHRISTOPHER

A little closer to home

Life on Whidbey and across Washington

Keeping up with Olympia can feel like another job - especially when you are already helping people, running an organization, or getting through the week.

I am putting this report together to make that a little easier. We will follow the changes that affect housing, care, family stability and the organizations doing the work. We will also follow the money: a new law can open a door, while funding, staffing and local decisions determine what happens next.

Where we are now

The 2026 regular session ended March 12. We are now between sessions: agencies are implementing laws while the next budget and legislative proposals take shape. The 2027 session begins a new legislative biennium and is the longer budget-writing session. [2]

Expected dates: January 11-April 25, 2027, if all 105 regular-session days are used. This window is derived from existing session rules; the official 2027 cutoff calendar is still to be verified. [3]

HOW AN IDEA REACHES YOUR COMMUNITY

1	2	3	4	5
An idea	**A closer look**	**Agreement**	**Governor**	**Delivery**
A bill is introduced.	Committees hear and revise it.	Both chambers agree on text.	Signature, veto or other action.	Rules, funding and services.

Explore the official lawmaking guide

A proposal, a law and a working program are different stages.

Choose the area closest to your life or work. Numbered sources are clickable and lead to bill records, agency guidance and agendas. Local implications are analysis unless a local record supports them; unknown effects remain identified as unknown.

Christopher John Wiegenstein, M.S.

An independent reporting project.

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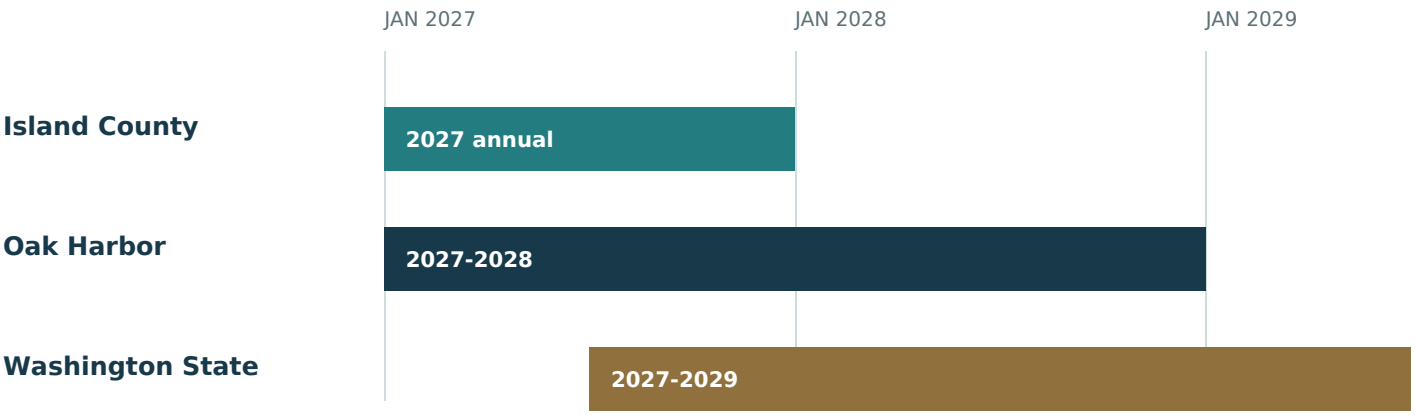
BEFORE WE LOOK AHEAD

Three budgets. One community.

The dates overlap. The decisions and responsibilities remain distinct.

In 2025, lawmakers adopted the state's 2025-2027 budgets. The 2026 session adjusted them through supplemental budgets. Now local governments are preparing their next plans while Olympia builds toward the 2027-2029 state budget. [5] [6]

WHERE THE BUDGET CLOCKS LINE UP



County: Jan.-Dec. 2027 | City: Jan. 2027-Dec. 2028 | State: July 2027-June 2029

These are budget periods, not confirmation that future budgets are adopted. [7] [8] [9] [6]

Why that matters here

The city and county begin 2027 before the Legislature completes the next state budget. Later state decisions may affect grants, service contracts, infrastructure or local responsibilities. That is a connection to trace, not a demonstrated Whidbey revenue forecast.

A SHORT LOOK BACK / ENACTED 2025-2026 LAWS

A law is a beginning, not the whole story

2026: ESHB 2266 (housing/shelter siting) and E2SHB 2418 (permit review), signed March 27, effective June 11. 2025: E2SHB 1213 (Paid Leave protections), signed May 17, effective Jan. 1, 2026. Site approvals and local implementation need separate review. [10] [11] [12]

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YOUR NAVIGATION GUIDE

Find the part that matters to you

The same fourteen sections remain the backbone. Background below is not all new this week.

WA-01 Budget and revenue	2027-2029 budget preparation; 2026 supplements remain part of the current baseline. [5] [6]
WA-02 Health care and Medicaid	DSHS identifies October eligibility changes and court-order protections; local impact count unverified. [15]
WA-03 Behavioral health and crisis response	HB 2429 enacted; youth behavioral health planning sits alongside unfinished crisis-financing ideas. [13]
WA-04 Housing and homelessness	ESHB 2266 and SB 6026 enacted. Covered jurisdictions and sites still require review. [10] [14]
WA-05 Local government	HB 2418: integrated permit process, including a responsible official, due June 30, 2027 for covered governments. [11]
WA-06 Public safety, corrections and reentry	Watch state policy alongside county jail practices, contracts and reentry capacity. No new local change established.
WA-07 Youth, juvenile justice and developmental disabilities	October child care billing/copayment changes; higher eligibility-percentage expansion canceled. DD plan also active. [16] [28]
WA-08 Human services and food assistance	Federal SNAP changes vary by eligibility review and exemptions; use current household guidance. [15]
WA-09 Kratom and 7-OH	State predecessors remain unfinished. Federal concentrated-product notice is proposed, not an effective new order. [33]
WA-10 Labor and workforce	Paid Leave job-protection threshold reaches 15 employees in 2027; employee conditions and premium rules differ. [12]
WA-11 Transportation and ferries	ESSB 6005 enacted with partial veto. Budget authority does not guarantee a sailing or service increase. [17]
WA-12 Technology, AI and privacy	My Health My Data is an existing baseline with scope and exemptions. No new 2027 AI obligation established. [18]
WA-13 Veterans and military families	SB 5420 enacted in 2026; access to state benefits remains program-specific. [19]
WA-14 Energy and resilience	E2SHB 1903 energy framework has a partial veto; ESHB 1201 covers disaster pet planning. Local benefit unverified. [20] [21]

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OCTOBER 5-11 / WEEK IN REVIEW

What this could mean at home

Recent developments and newly verified local windows; earlier implementation is on page 3.

WA-04 Housing and homelessness / this week's spotlight

ESHB 2266 and SB 6026 changed shelter siting and residential zoning in 2026. For local providers, the next question is practical: does the law cover the jurisdiction, use and property? A state-law change alone does not approve a Whidbey site. [10] [14]

The Housing Task Force meets Oct. 14 at 9 a.m.; recommendations are due Nov. 15. Provider coordination is a connection to follow. A new department, local funding and contract changes are not yet established. [22]

WA-01 / WA-05 | Central Whidbey

Oct. 9: Port posts industrial-development levy projects

Draft costs total $1,504,572: Greenbank Farm $1,329,572; Wharf $175,000. Hearing Oct. 13; no levy vote that day. Final tax rate and household effects unverified. [44] [45] [46]

WA-01 / WA-05 / WA-11 | North / countywide

Newly verified: county's Oct. 13 decision window

$2m in rural economic-development funds for the Mulberry Village road agreement and 2027 road program scheduled. Water-franchise hearings cover named systems. Proposals remain pending; expenditure is not established. [47]

WA-01 / WA-05 / WA-14

Oct. 7: Public Works Board funding update

Report of Oct. 2 awards: about $15.4m preconstruction and $5.1m emergency funds remain until exhausted. Flood-resilience funds committed; listed counties omit Island. [23]

WA-01 / WA-05

Oct. 8: 99 Opportunity Zone nominations

Treasury certification comes next; Jan. 1, 2027 is the target. Island absent from verified dashboard county filter; no demonstrated Whidbey investment or revenue effect. [24] [25]

WA-02 / WA-07

Oct. 8: HCA gender-related care funding

Notice lists Oct. 13 effective date and state-only continuation of affected care. Draft amendments unavailable; local billing effects and inconsistent identifiers unresolved. [26]

WA-07

Oct. 7: DD Council plan conditionally accepted

2027-2031 priorities include housing, workforce and rural access. Conditions unexplained; no Whidbey allocation established. Quarterly meeting follows Oct. 15-16. [27] [28]

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OCTOBER 12-16 / AMERICA/LOS_ANGELES

The week ahead

Times are Pacific. Open the linked agenda for changes and participation details.

TUE 13

Local hearings and decisions

10 a.m.: Island County - Mulberry Village agreement, 2027 road program; water-franchise hearings no sooner than 10. 1 p.m.: Port of Coupeville via Zoom; IDD testimony during meeting, 5-minute limit. Written comments before hearing; no levy vote. [47] [44]

TUE 13

HCA implementation date

Effective date listed in the Oct. 8 notice. Watch for amendment drafts and billing guidance. [26]

WED 14

Housing, services and transportation

9 a.m.: Housing Task Force (register). 10 a.m.-noon: House ELHS disability services. 10-11:45 a.m.: JTC mobility/EV studies. 1:30-3:30 p.m.: Ways & Means schools, fire, behavioral health capacity and computing surcharge. [22] [29] [31] [32] [30]

WED 14

7-OH and mitragynine pseudoindoxyl

Proposed federal notice scheduled for publication; this does not make a scheduling order effective. [33]

THU 15 / FRI 16

Developmental Disabilities Council

Hybrid meeting: Thursday 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; Friday 9 a.m.-noon. Consult packet for business. [34]

A little further ahead

Oct. 9 posting: EV rebate administrator procurement. Conference Oct. 20, 11 a.m.-noon; proposals Nov. 20, 4 p.m. Consumer opening date not given. [35]

Oct. 27, 1 p.m.: Port preliminary-budget hearing; Nov. 10 anticipated budget/levy adoption (time unverified). Nov. 15: Housing Task Force recommendations due. [44] [45] [22]

Dec. 7: expected House prefiling under existing rule. Jan. 11-April 25: derived 2027 session window, not a verified cutoff calendar. [4] [3]

What we’ll follow together

One short spotlight, verified changes, the next week’s calendar and corrections. The appendix preserves unfinished 2025-2026 proposals as predecessors; actual 2027 bills need new official evidence.