



**Community Agriculture**

# Long-Term Agriculture Designation & Zoning Review

**Part of the Community-Driven Review of  
Agriculture project**

**Work Session # 4 – July 5, 2023**

# Today's Work Session: Public Hearing Follow Up

- ▶ Summary of Decision Points for PC
- ▶ Comments/Major Themes
  - ▶ Comp Plan Changes made based on comment
  - ▶ Co-designation of Mineral and Agriculture Lands
  - ▶ Refined Soils List
- ▶ New Map Series
- ▶ Next Steps

# Summary of Decision Points for Planning Commission

- ▶ Planning Commission may choose to make sequential recommendations on specific decision points.
  - ▶ Delay cluster requirement for further consideration with periodic update?
  - ▶ Revision to co-designation policies for mineral and agricultural resource lands?
  - ▶ Recommendation on code changes to increase flexibility and clarify standards for agricultural operators?

# Summary of Decision Points for Planning Commission

- ▶ Agricultural designation criteria decision points:
  - ▶ Use a refined soils list? With what cut off?
  - ▶ Include Farmlands of Statewide Importance or investigate further as part of periodic update?
  - ▶ What percent of a parcel must be prime soils: 75%, 50%, or other?
  - ▶ What should the predominant parcel size be: 20 acres, 15 acres or other?
  - ▶ What should the block size requirement be: 200-320 acres, 100+ acres, 40+ acres?

# Comp Plan Changes

- ▶ Changes detailed in memo
  - ▶ Add policy around residential density of agriculture resource zones
  - ▶ Delete reference to parcel size
  - ▶ Opt-in policy for contiguous parcels added
  - ▶ Add language about limited ability of nearby owners to recover from nuisances
  - ▶ Clarifies that de-designation, specifically around site-specific requests, that it should be deferred until a comprehensive countywide analysis can be completed
- ▶ For consideration
  - ▶ Cluster requirement – Delay to periodic update? Consider recommending at this time?

# Co-Designation: Mineral and Ag

- ▶ Current comp plan allows for co-designation
  - ▶ Change was made in 2020 after extensive Planning Commission, public, stakeholder review
  - ▶ Prior to 2020, mineral and agricultural lands were not co-designated
- ▶ Mines can be reclaimed for agricultural use
- ▶ Depends highly on underlying soil composition, agriculture, and type of mining, as well as reclamation process
- ▶ Stakeholder workgroup reviewed this in detail

# Co-Designation: Mineral and Ag

## ► Options for PC regarding co-designation of Mineral Lands and Agriculture

- Exclude current operating mines from soils used to update Long-Term Agriculture options (based on public comment received from mining operator and USDA NRCS that active mines would be considered “gravel, pits”)
  - These mines were in place prior to an agricultural designation
  - Reclamation was likely not structured for agricultural use afterwards
  - Future mines that fall on both mineral lands and new LTA lands would be expected to reclaim in a way that manages for future agriculture use

## OR / AND

- Revise policy language that currently limits accessory mining uses on co-designated agricultural properties to only limit to non-prime soils when possible.
  - This policy was drafted when mineral lands was primarily on the edges of LTA areas
  - A wide-spread zone change to LTA would increase the overlap
  - Accessory uses are customary to mining and should not be prohibited.

# Soils Analysis – Land Capability Classification System

- ▶ Groups soils into 8 classes based on non-irrigated agricultural capability

- ▶ Class 1 – Few limitations
- ▶ Class 2 – Moderate limitations
- ▶ Class 3 – Severe limitations
- ▶ Class 4 – Very severe limitations
- ▶ Class 5 – Limitations, impractical to remove
- ▶ Class 6 – Severe limitations, generally unsuitable for cultivation
- ▶ Class 7 – Very severe limitations, unsuitable for cultivation
- ▶ Class 8 – Limitations nearly precluding use for commercial crop production

- ▶ Assigns subclasses to describe limitations or hazards

- ▶ Subclass “e” – Erosion hazard
- ▶ Subclass “s” – Soil limitations (stoniness, prone to drought)
- ▶ Subclass “w” – Water in or on soil
- ▶ Subclass “c” – Extreme climate



# Soils Analysis – Land Capability Classification System

- ▶ 2022 Soil Survey identifies 29 new prime farmland soils
- ▶ 9 soil types are Class 2 or 3; 20 soils types are Class 4-8
- ▶ Class 4s soils generally characterized by prairies and lower woodland areas

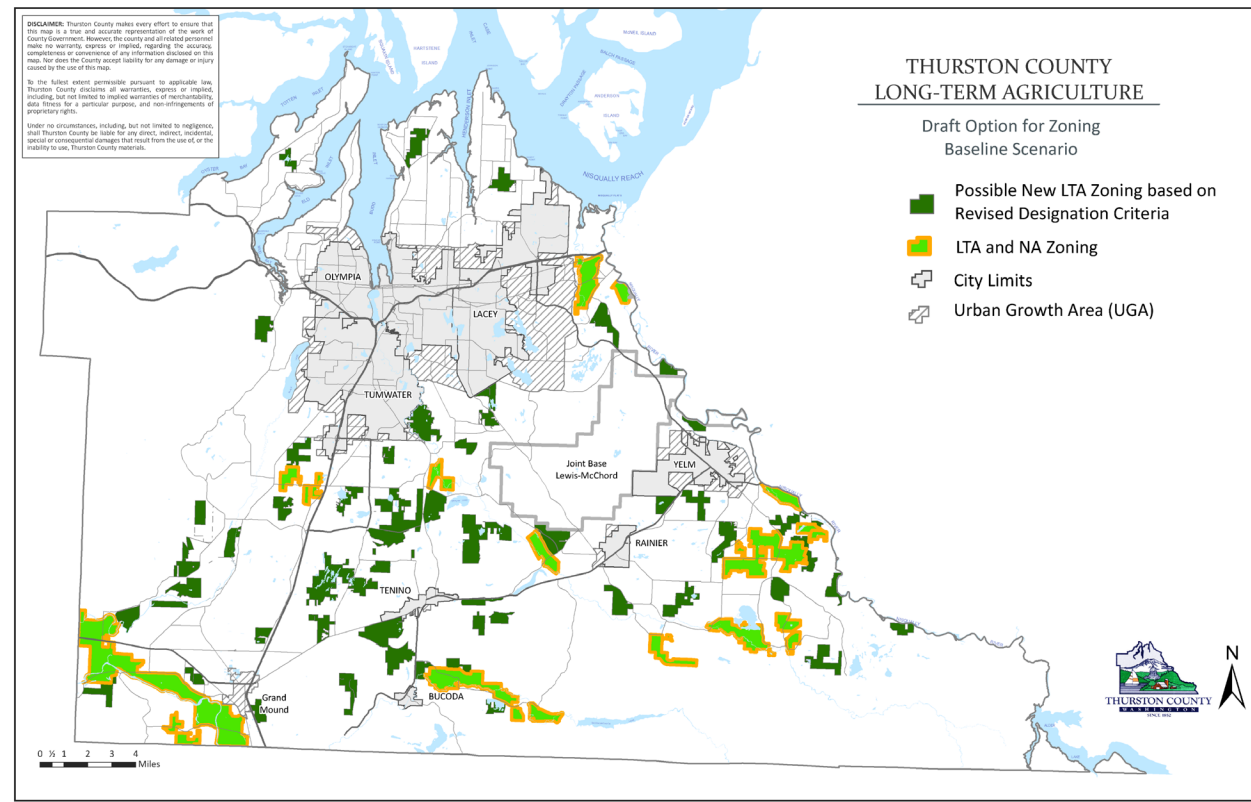
Prime Farmland Soil Categories	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Classes 5-8
Prime (subclasses "e", "w")	-	1	6	-	-
Prime if Drained* (subclass "w")	-	-	1	3	4
Prime if Irrigated (subclass "s", "w")	-	-	1	10	-
Prime if Protected from Flooding (subclass "w")	-	-	-	4	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>7</b>

\* - four soil types are identified as being both Prime if Drained and Prime if Irrigated/Protected from flooding

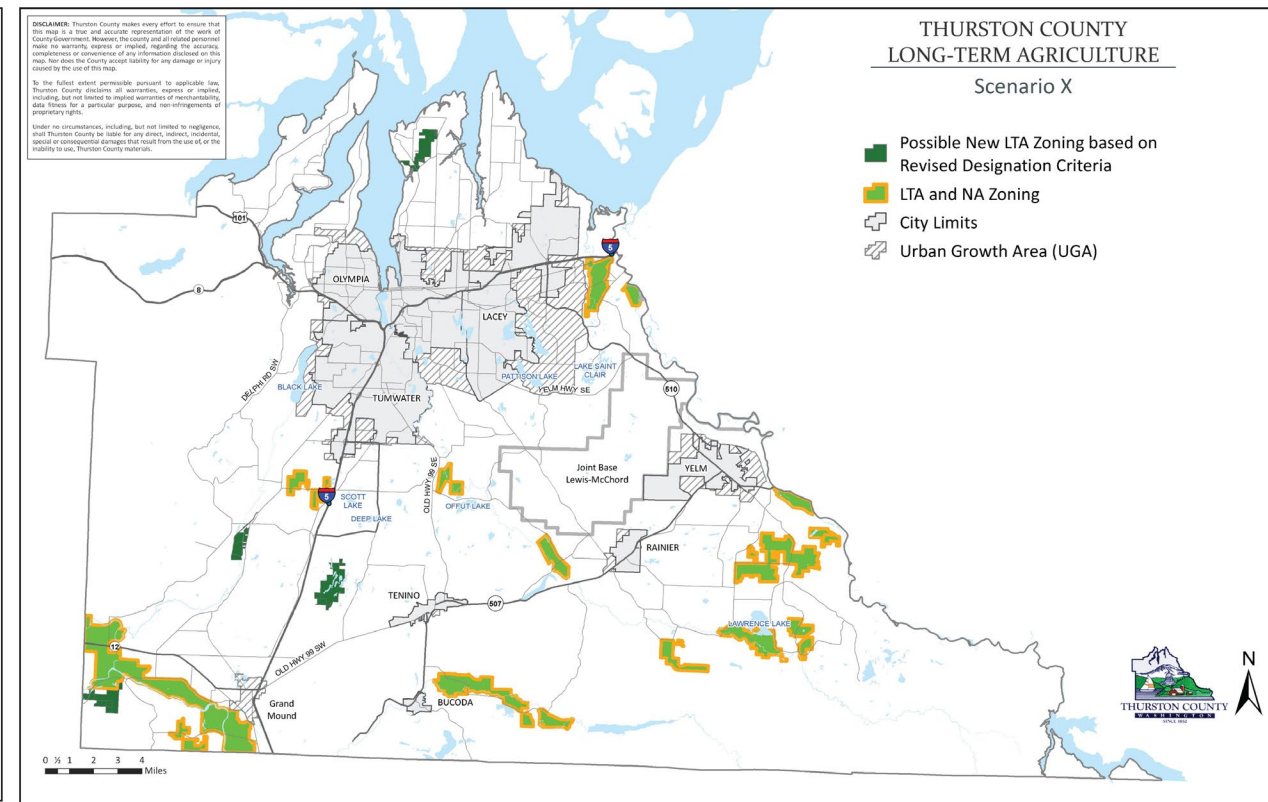
# New Map Series Based on Public Comment

- ▶ Uses refined soils list, land capability classification 3 and above
- ▶ Adds back in parcels <20 acres that are adjacent to new LTA and used for agriculture
- ▶ Otherwise, criteria match the first set of maps
  - ▶ Baseline - - - Map X
  - ▶ Scenario 1 - - - Map Y
  - ▶ Scenario 2 - - - Map Z

# Side by Side: Baseline vs Scenario X



► 22,000 acres



► 2,450 acres

- Soil threshold: >50%
- Block Size: 200-320 acres
- Parcel size: 20 acres





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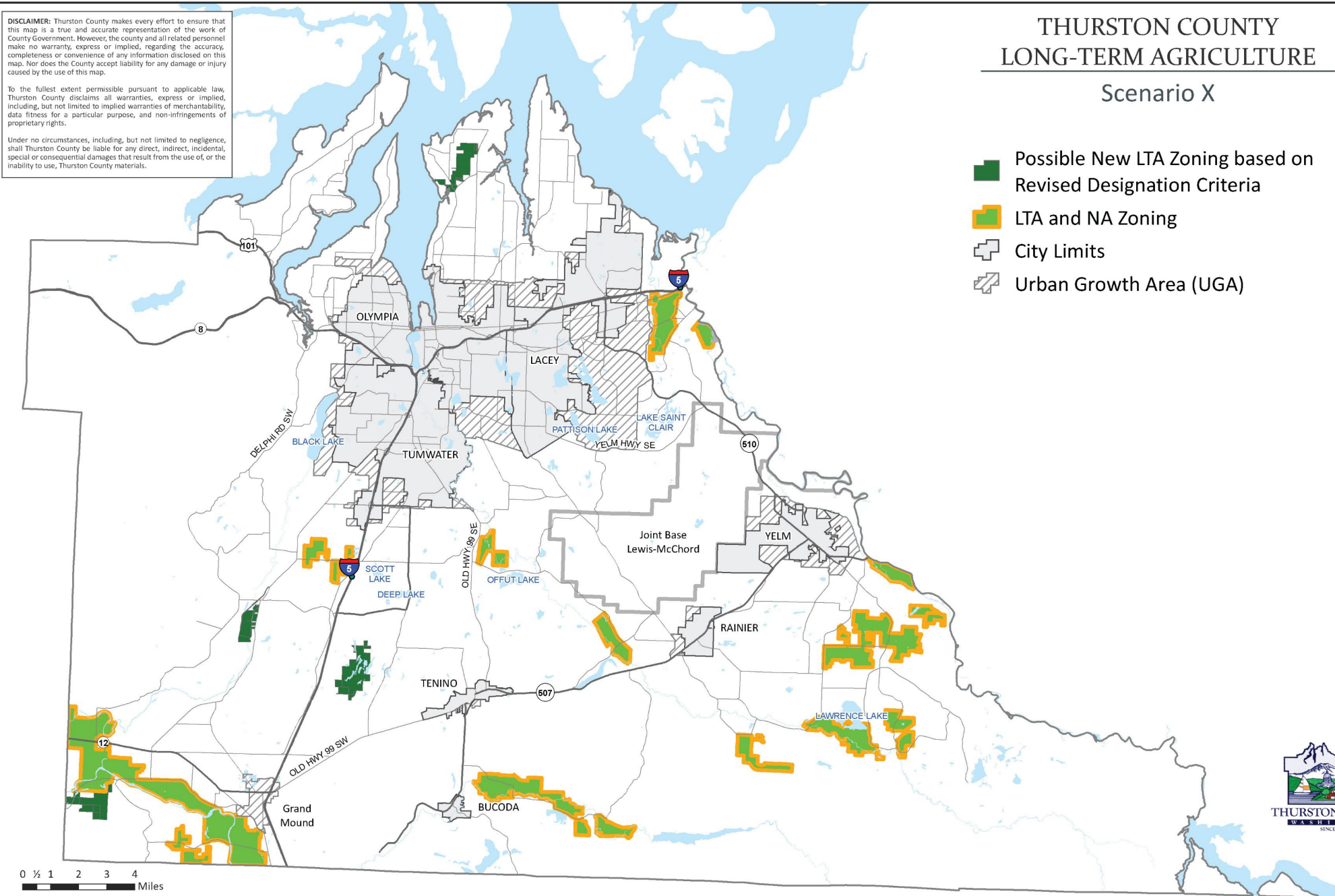
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# THURSTON COUNTY LONG-TERM AGRICULTURE

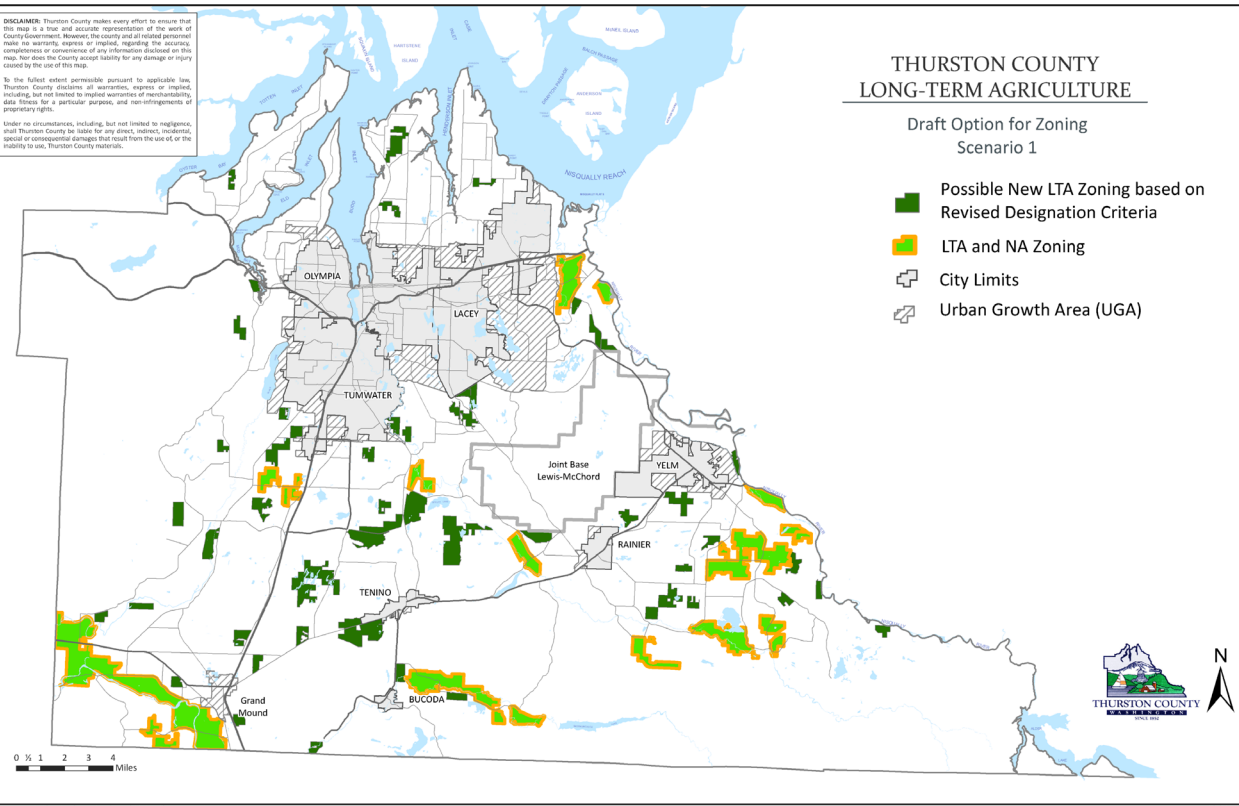
## Scenario X

-  Possible New LTA Zoning based on Revised Designation Criteria
-  LTA and NA Zoning
-  City Limits
-  Urban Growth Area (UGA)



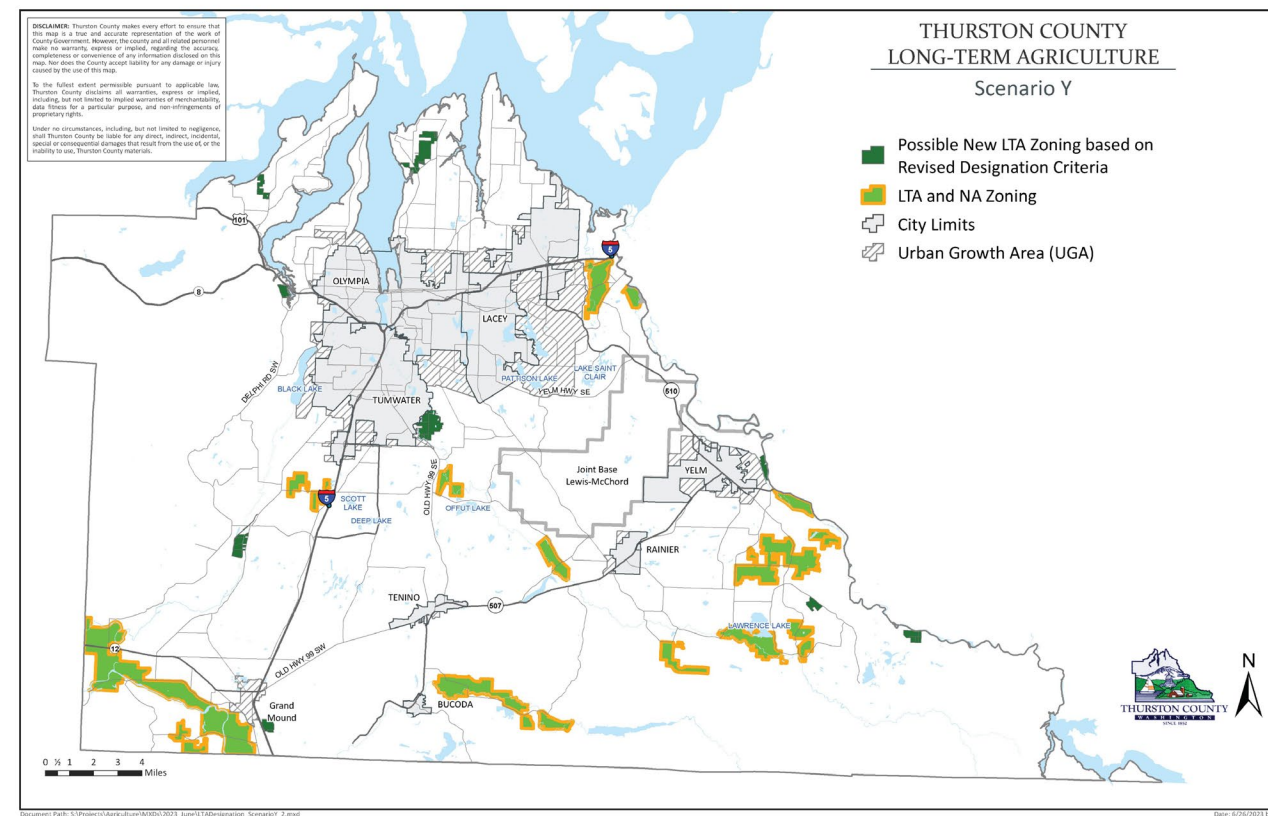


# Side by Side: Scenario 1 vs Scenario Y



► 12,000 acres





- Soil threshold: >75%
- Block Size: 100+ acres
- Parcel size: 20 acres



► 2,300 acres

# THURSTON COUNTY LONG-TERM AGRICULTURE

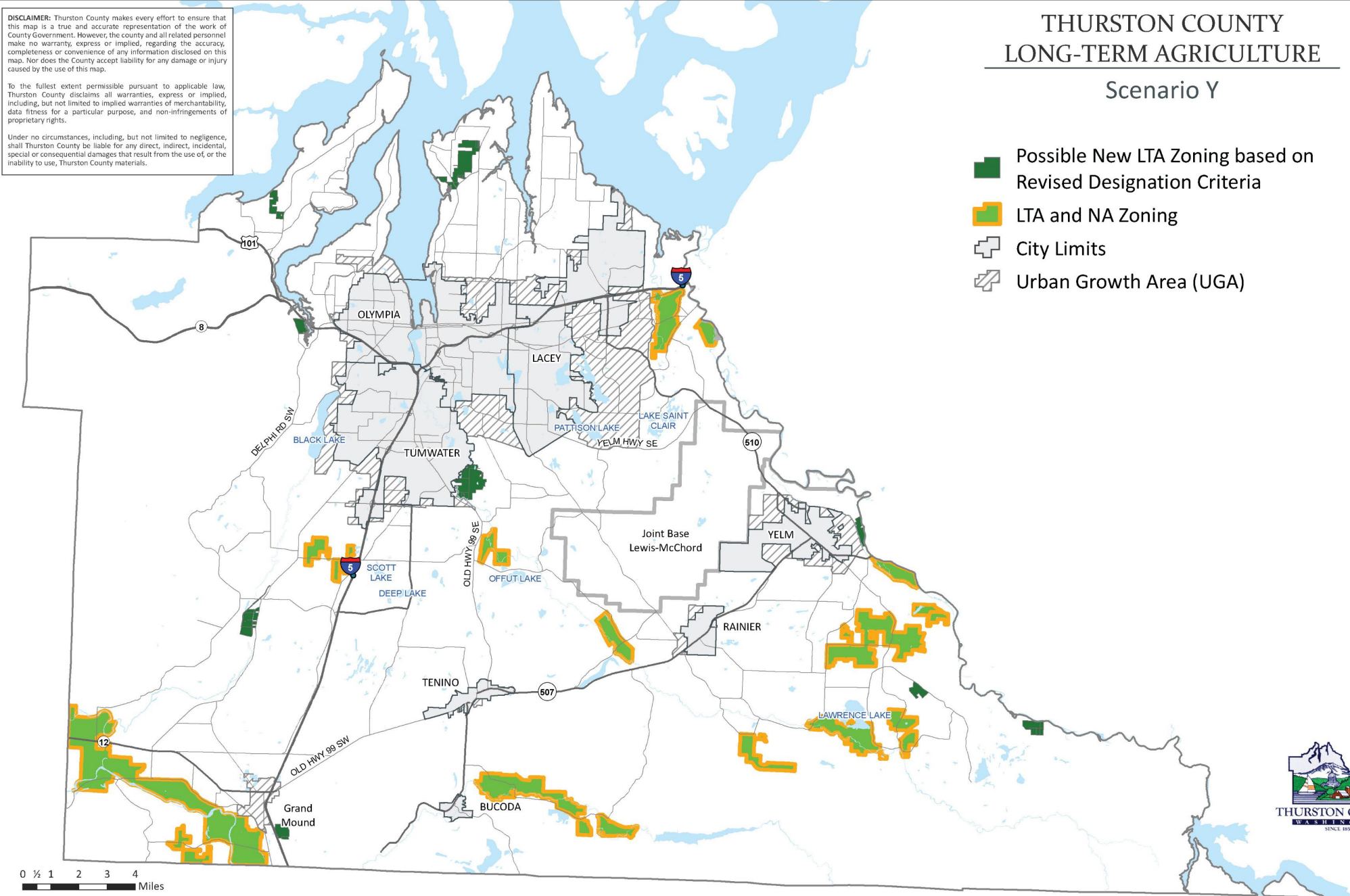
## Scenario Y

-  Possible New LTA Zoning based on Revised Designation Criteria
-  LTA and NA Zoning
-  City Limits
-  Urban Growth Area (UGA)

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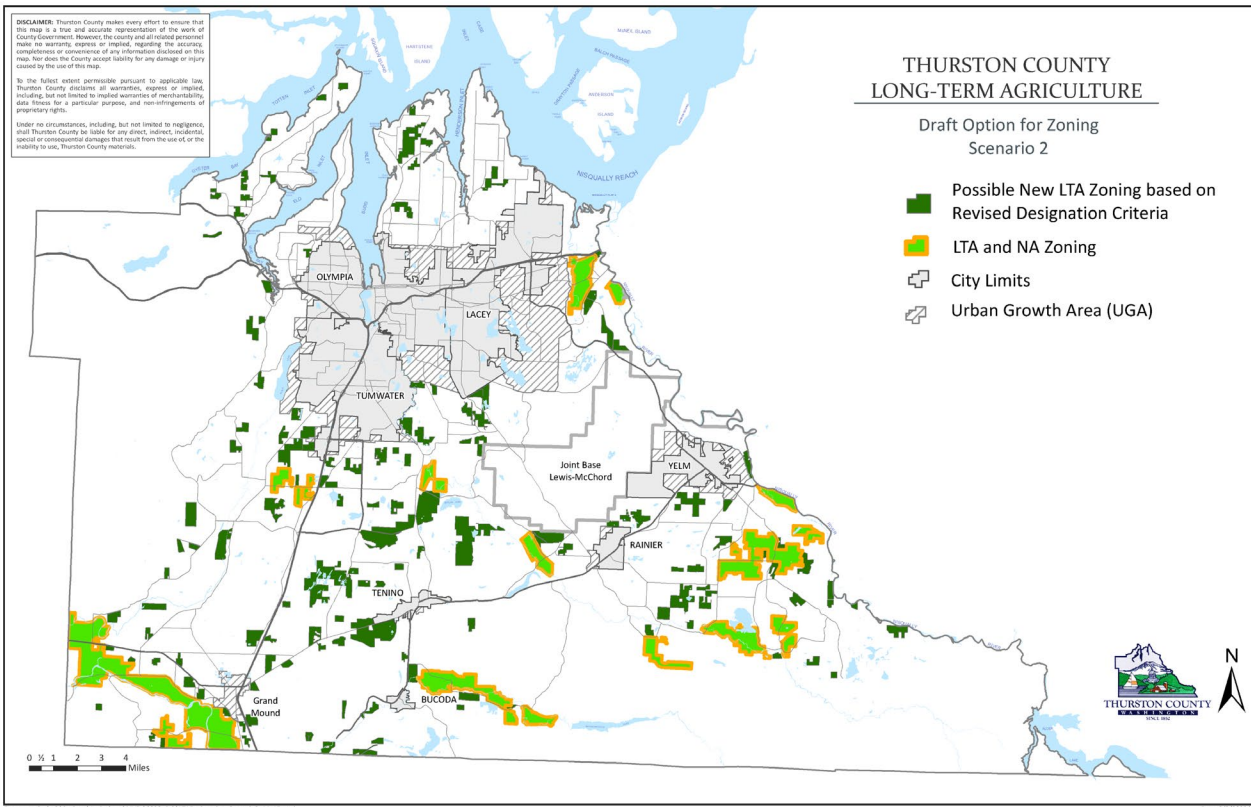
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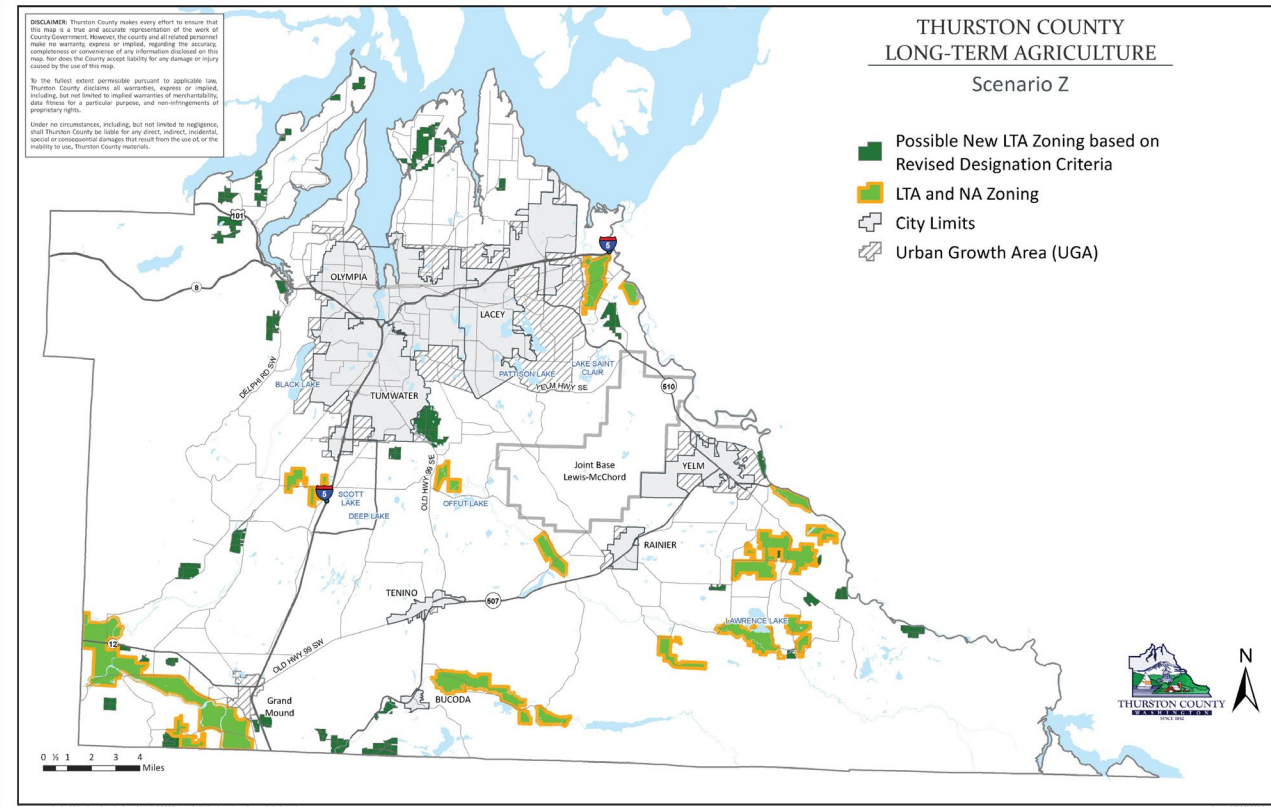


# Side by Side: Scenario 2 vs Scenario Z



► 19,000 acres





- Soil threshold: >75%
- Block Size: 40+ acres
- Parcel size: 15 acres



► 7,200 acres

# THURSTON COUNTY LONG-TERM AGRICULTURE

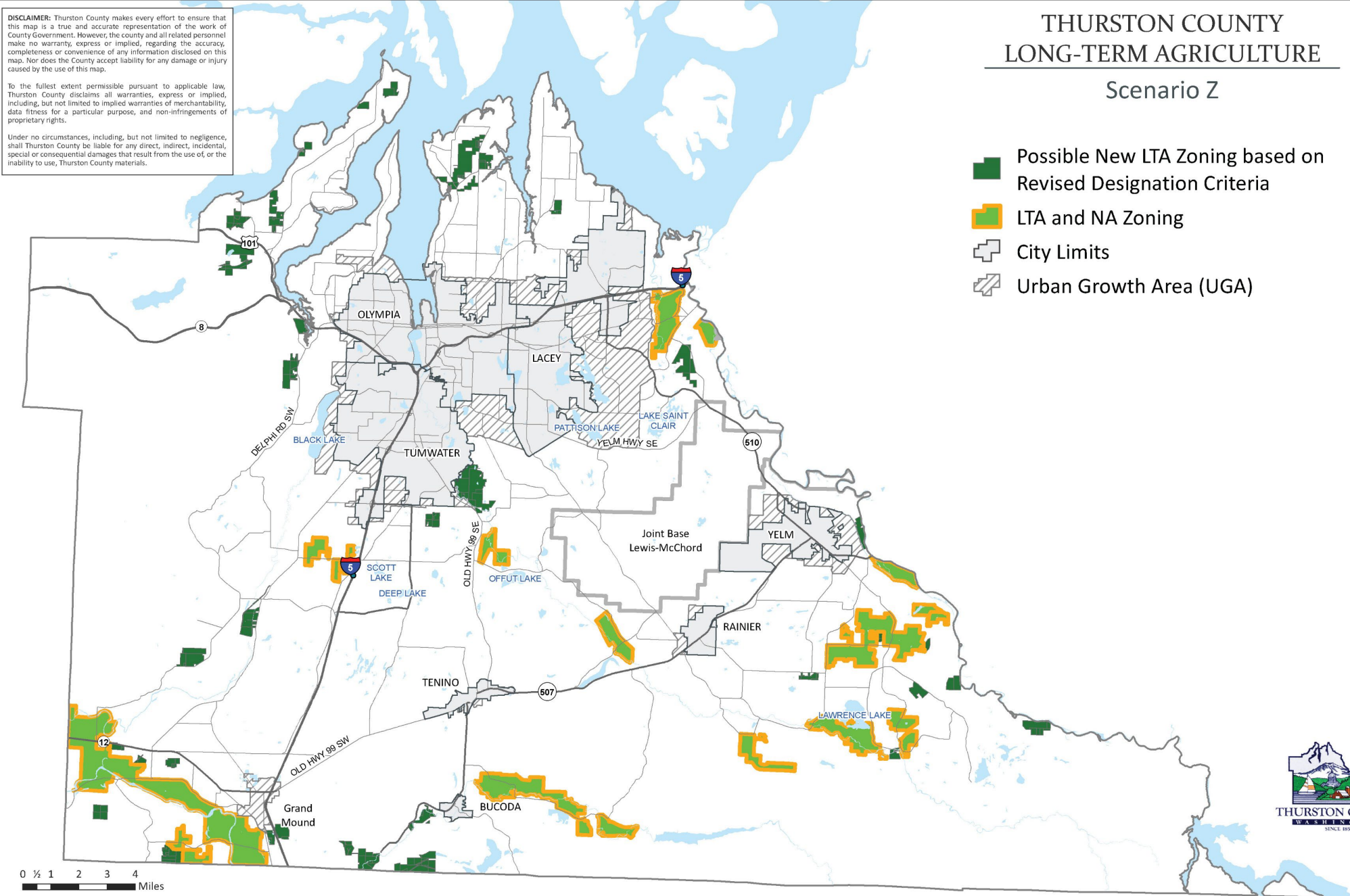
## Scenario Z

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# New Map Series: Forested

	Options From June 21, 2023 Public Hearing			New Options Based on Public Comment		
Type of Forestland	Baseline – Based on Appeal	Scenario 1 (Based on Stakeholder Themes)	Scenario 2 (Based on Stakeholder Themes)	Scenario X (mirrors Baseline with refined soils list)	Scenario Y (mirrors Scenario 1 with refined soils list)	Scenario Z (mirrors Scenario 2 with refined soils list)
Acreage of New LTA	Additional 22,000	Additional 12,000	Additional 19,000	Additional 2,450	Additional 2,300	Additional 7,200
Designated Forestland (88)	7,047	4,263	5,679	1,151	690	2,227
Non-Commercial Forestland (92)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Timberland (95)	36	36	113	0.1	0.1	40
Total Forested	7,083 (31% of new)	4,299 (34% of new)	5,792 (30% of new)	1,151 (47% of new)	691 (30% of new)	2,267 (32% of new)

# New Map Series: Existing Agriculture

	Options From June 21, 2023 Public Hearing			New Options Based on Public Comment		
Type of Forestland	Baseline – Based on Appeal	Scenario 1 (Based on Stakeholder Themes)	Scenario 2 (Based on Stakeholder Themes)	Scenario X (mirrors Baseline with refined soils list)	Scenario Y (mirrors Scenario 1 with refined soils list)	Scenario Z (mirrors Scenario 2 with refined soils list)
Acreage of New LTA	Additional 22,000	Additional 12,000	Additional 19,000	Additional 2,450	Additional 2,300	Additional 7,200
“Existing Farms” that overlap with new LTA (81 & 83)	8,680	2,930	4,682	556	576	1,957
Agriculture (not current use, 81)	<i>1,015</i>	<i>186</i>	<i>279</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
Agriculture (current use, 83)	<i>7,665</i>	<i>2,743</i>	<i>4,403</i>	<i>556</i>	<i>576</i>	<i>1,957</i>
WSDA Crop Data	3,185	2,182	3,773	430	274	1,844
Total Acres (WSDA and existing Agriculture)	11,865 (52% of new)	5,111 (40% of new)	8,455 (44% of new)	986 (40% of new)	850 (37% of new)	3,802 (53% of new)



# Next Steps

# Recap of Decision Points for Planning Commission

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# Project Timeline

## **May–July**

Planning Commission Review and  
Public Hearing, Open House

## **Nov.–Dec.**

Final Action on LTA Designation

## **Aug.–Nov.**

Board of County Commissioner  
Review

# Planning Commission Review Schedule

- ▶ **May 3** – work session
- ▶ **May 17** – work session 2, request public hearing
- ▶ **June 21** – public hearing, work session 3
- ▶ **July 5** – **work session 4, (possible recommendation)**
- ▶ **July 19** – work session 5, recommendation (if needed)

# Next Steps

- ▶ Discussion, questions or comments?
- ▶ Next work session –
  - ▶ Any final follow up; recommendation(s)



# Thank you!

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