

LEWIS COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Frank Corbin, Chair

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

To: Lewis County Board of County Commissioners
From: Lewis County Planning Commission
Date: September 29, 2026
Subject: **Transmittal to the BOCC – Amendment to Lewis County Code - Family Burial Grounds**

Dear Commissioners:

The purpose of this report is to transmit to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) draft amendments to the Lewis County Code. The draft amendments are found in the August 3, 2026 Planning Commission Staff Report, Attachment A, available online at <https://lewiscountywa.gov/departments/community-development/comprehensive-plan-and-development-regulation-amendments/family-burial-grounds/>.

Overview

The proposed amendments establish regulations for family burial grounds in Lewis County in response to Substitute House Bill 2239. The Planning Commission finds that the proposed amendments provide appropriate local regulations for a use authorized by state law while maintaining protections for surrounding properties public health and safety, and environmental resources.

Summary of Recommended Amendments

LCC 17.10 – Definitions: Updates cemetery-related definitions and adds definitions for animal crematoriums, crematoriums, columbaria, mausoleums, and family burial grounds.

LCC 17.42.020 – Rural Area Zoning Summary: Adds family burial grounds to the applicable land use table as permitted land use. Maser site plan review required.

LCC 17.38.830 – Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas: Prohibits new family burial grounds within Category I CARAs.

Shoreline Master Program, Section 5.03 – Allowed Shoreline Uses: Prohibits family burial grounds within shoreline jurisdiction.

LCC 17.142.110 – Family Burial Grounds: Establishes eligibility, permitting, size and setback standards, prohibits on-site cremation, and establishes recording, development restriction, and abandonment provisions.

LCC 16.02.040, 16.05.030, 16.05.330, 16.10.460 & 16.12.460 – Subdivisions: Clarifies that family burial grounds are subject to subdivision requirements and establishes requirements for plat identification, easements, disclosures, access/maintenance agreements, and protection from future land disturbance for family burial grounds associated with land divisions.

Findings of Fact

The Planning Commission finds that the proposed amendments satisfy the criteria of LCC 17.12.110(2). Specifically, the amendments are consistent with the Lewis County Comprehensive Plan and are in the public interest.

The amendments are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan because they establish a regulatory framework for a limited use of privately owned property without changing the County's established land use designations or overall growth management framework. The amendments provide for the implementation of state law while maintaining appropriate consideration of surrounding land uses, public health and safety, and environmental resources.

The amendments are in the public interest because they provide clear and predictable local regulations for family burial grounds while incorporating the applicable requirements and protections established by SHB 2239. The amendments provide clarity for property owners, neighboring property owners, and County staff in the administration of family burial grounds.

Recommendation

Based on the above findings, the Lewis County Planning Commission recommends that the Board of County Commissioners pass an ordinance that adopts the proposed amendments, as shown in August 3, 2026 Planning Commission Staff Report, Attachment A.

Being duly authorized to transmit the recommendations on behalf of the Lewis County Planning Commission, I hereby respectfully submit the documents to the Lewis County Board of County Commissioners.

Submitted by  Date 9/30/26
Frank Corbin, Chair
Lewis County Planning Commission