

ANNUAL REPORT

2018

WHATCOM COUNTY AUDITOR'S OFFICE



Table of Contents	Page
Message from the Auditor	3
<u>Election Division</u>	
What's New	4
Elections in 2018	4
Voter Registration	5
Ballot Return in 2018	6
Historical View of Voter Turnout	7
Cost Per Ballot & Hours Spent Analysis	8
<u>Recording Division</u>	
Document Recording	10
Document Submission	11
Recording System Enhancements	12
Historic Records Projects	13
Marriage Licensing	14
Recording Revenue	15
<u>Licensing Division</u>	
Title and Tab Transactions	16
Transaction History	17
Subagent Oversight	18
Mobile Home Processing	18
Licensing Revenue	19
<u>Administration</u>	
Administrative Overview	20
State and National Involvement	21

2018 BY THE NUMBERS

12,550

New registered voters,
Page 5

77.13%

General Election voter turnout hit a record high,
Page 6

8,780

Plat Maps indexed and verified for new plat reservation module in Recording, Page 12

126,410

Historical records indexed and added to on-line records search ,
Page13

\$25

Recording fee increase, Page 15

1,180

Increase in vehicle/vessel licensing transactions county-wide, Page 17

Contact Information

Whatcom County Auditor
311 Grand Avenue, Suite 103
Bellingham, WA 98225

(360) 778-5100
auditor@co.whatcom.wa.us
www.whatcomcounty.us/auditor

Office Hours (*excluding holidays*)
Monday—Friday
8:30 am—4:30 pm

Message from the Auditor

The Auditor's Office Mission Statement states that the office is "*committed to excellence in public service, easy access to information, and efficient operations in its key services of elections, recording and licensing.*" I am happy to report in this year's Annual Report that we have remained true to our mission and made great strides in accomplishing what we set out to do.

The Election Division rallied to provide for greater than normal quantities of registrations and a record election turnout for an off-year general election, all the while implementing a new ballot processing system. We gained ballot processing efficiency and this will only get better as we utilize the new system and implement other changes in the next coming years.

The Recording Division provides essential core services to keep the records of land transactions available to the citizens. As more outside agencies submit recordings electronically, the efficiencies gained are seen daily. The enhancements added to our system, particularly the new plat reservation module, will provide a comprehensive list of all plat and condominium names. Great strides were made in the historic records projects and made more documents available online to the residents of Whatcom County.

The Licensing Division provides for vehicle and vessel title and tab renewals through staff in our office and in the six subagents throughout the County, totaling over \$29 million in state and local fees. See the charts for where these distributions go. Mobile home transactions are some of the most complicated and time consuming processes in Licensing. This past year the staff worked on a number of initiatives to help improve the process for the customers and the office.

We are here to serve you and are committed to improve every day!

Sincerely,



Debbie Adelstein
Whatcom County Auditor



Administering Elections

- ◆ File candidates for local elected offices
- ◆ File and process all local ballot measures
- ◆ Design and print a local voters' pamphlet for each election
- ◆ Layout, proof, and print ballots and various election materials
- ◆ Ensure that all eligible voters are mailed a ballot 20 days prior to an election
- ◆ Hire, train, and supervise Opening Board workers, ballot collection teams, and ballot drop box closers
- ◆ Ensure ballot secrecy and security is maintained
- ◆ Receive, process, and count returned ballots
- ◆ Certify and publish election results
- ◆ Conduct Observer Training

Election Division

What's New

In 2017, we selected a new vote count system (Clear Ballot) and a new ballot sorting solution (ES&S Mail Ballot Verifier). Both of these systems were implemented in 2018, Clear Ballot during the February election and the Ballot Verifier during the April election. This new technology resulted in a reduction to manual processes and paperwork affording us a significant decrease in staff hours to complete an election.

In 2018, we received approval for a larger, all-inclusive election processing room. Planning commenced over the summer months with anticipated occupancy in time for the 2019 Primary Election. All phases of election processing will be relocated to the current law library space in the basement of the courthouse. The law library in turn will move to a renovated space in the basement.

In addition to implementation of new technology at the local level, we have been simultaneously involved in a new statewide voter registration system. Our participation includes representation on the Executive Steering Committee that provides oversight and direction for the overall project and the Power User Group which tests the new system. Our "go live" date is scheduled for the end of April 2019.

2018 was a banner year for both voter registration and voter turnout (see details on the following pages). In addition, there were three very close races that required one hand count following the Primary Election, and two hand counts following the General.

Election staffing was restructured, reclassifying one of the election positions to an Election Supervisor, and splitting one of the election Clerk III positions to provide 50% of the time spent in elections and 50% in recording.

2018 Elections

February 13 Special Election: Bellingham School District 501 Proposition 2018-1 (General Obligation Bonds—\$155,000,000) & Mt Baker School District 507 Proposition 2018-2 (Facilities and Technology Levy).

April 24 Special Election: Blaine School District 503 (Technology and Capital Projects Levy).

August 7 Primary: 9 state offices, 2 local offices, and 5 Precinct Committee Officer races.

November 6 General: 4 state measures, 1 advisory measure, 17 races, and 4 local ballot measures.

Prepaid postage

On May 15, 2018 Governor Jay Inslee and Secretary of State Kim Wyman jointly announced they had secured funding for statewide ballot return postage for the 2018 Primary and General Elections.

King County had already adopted an ordinance to pay for ballot return postage for its residents. That county decision prompted Wyman to call upon Inslee's office to determine if funding could be secured for the remaining 38 Washington counties to offer the same service.

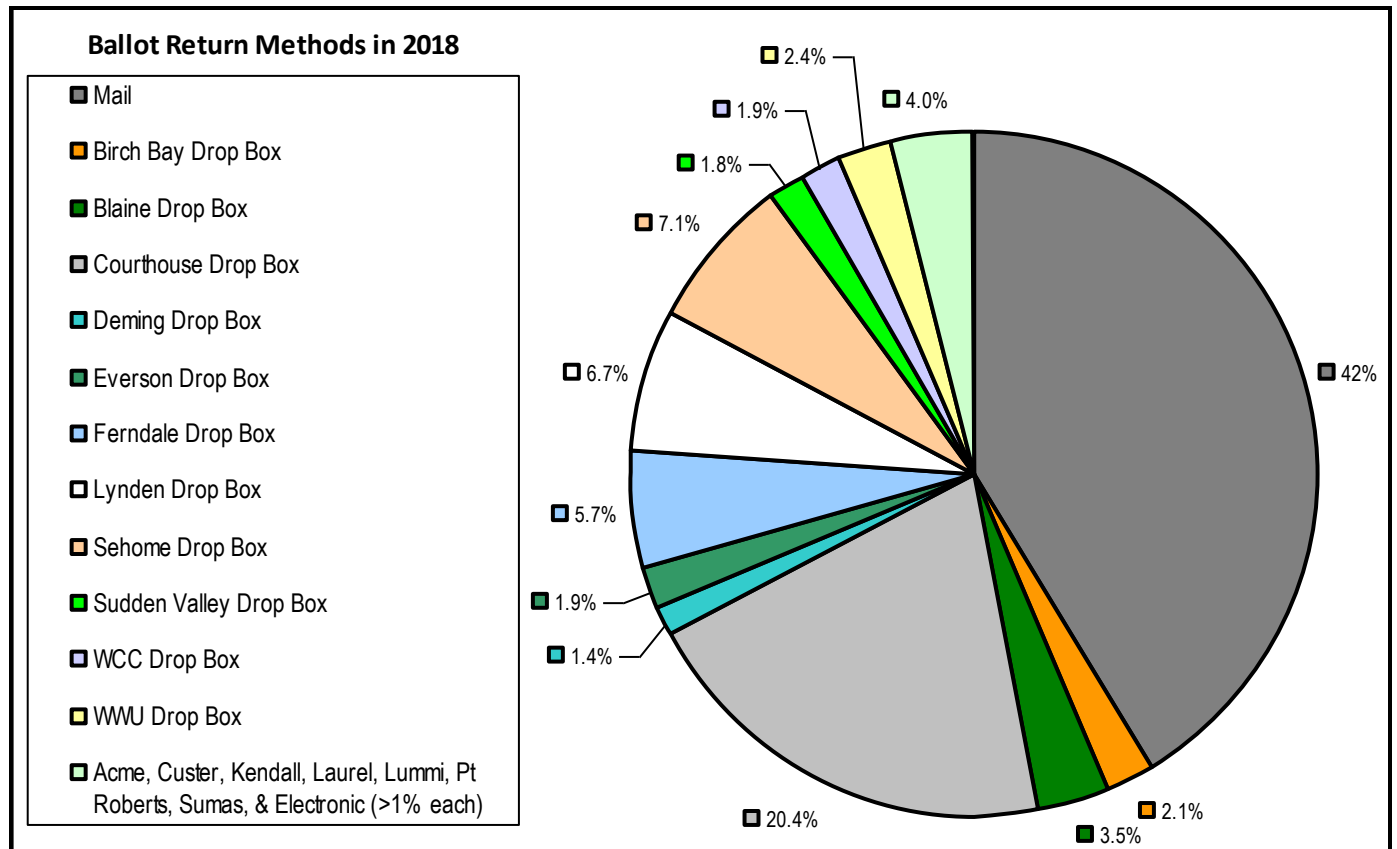
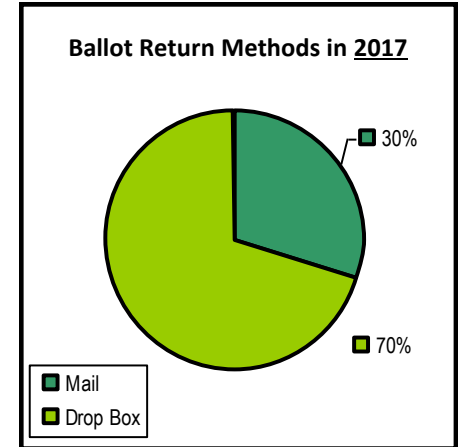
Inslee's office achieved statewide parity for the 2018 elections by combining \$600,000 of the governor's funds with a matching contribution from Wyman's office. That money came from 2018 fiscal year salary savings from position vacancies and existing funds intended to reimburse counties for previous election costs.

Election Division

Ballot Return in 2018

There was a total of 373,665 ballots mailed for the four elections conducted in 2018. Of that number, 204,800 ballots were returned equating to a 55% average voter turnout over the course of the year.

Did pre-paid postage increase return by mail? An analysis of ballot return by mail was conducted for the years 2017 and 2018. The chart to the right indicates 30% of ballots were returned by mail in 2017. As revealed in the graph below, ballots returned by mail increased to 42% in 2018 *with* prepaid postage. Lack of sufficient data leaves us unable to determine the full effect of prepaid postage on voter turnout.



10 Year High & Low Turnout

Non-Presidential General Elections:

⇒ **2018—77.13%**

⇒ 2017—45.88%

Primary Elections (August)

⇒ 2008—46.65%

⇒ 2013—21.71%

Special Elections (February/April)

⇒ April 2015—57.97%

⇒ **February 2018—32.58%**

Whatcom County's voter turnout is higher than the average for Washington State.

	Whatcom County	Washington State
2018	77.13%	71.83%
2017	45.88%	37.10%
2016	82.70%	78.76%
2015	47.24%	38.45%
2014	59.81%	54.16%
2013	54.89%	45.27%
2012	83.46%	81.25%
2011	59.02%	52.95%
2010	74.62%	71.24%
2009	53.62%	50.89%
2008	87.93%	84.61%
Average	65.00%	59.71%

Election Division

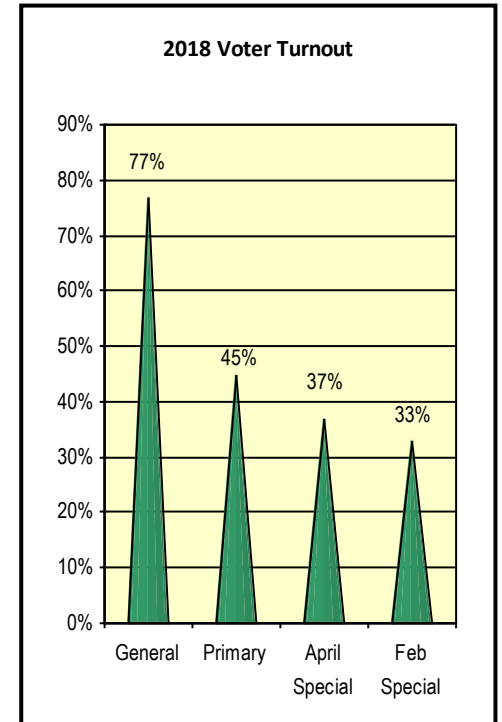
A Historical View of Voter Turnout

2018 saw a record-breaking turnout for a non-presidential General Election. Whatcom County had a 77.13% turnout, or 110,504 ballots returned.

Secretary of State Kim Wyman certified that 3,133,462 ballots were returned and counted in the 2018 General Election, the highest voter turnout ever recorded in a Washington State midterm election!

The chart on the bottom left illustrates Whatcom County's turnout is consistently higher than the turnout for Washington State as a whole.

The chart below shows the 28-year history of general election turnout in Whatcom County.



General Election Turnout in Whatcom County (*Presidential Election years in gray)										
1990-1999	1990	1991	1992*	1993	1994	1995	1996*	1997	1998	1999
Ballots Returned	39,660	39,660	64,463	44,911	45,192	45,511	65,565	50,593	57,090	53,038
Turnout %	64%	64%	81%	56%	53%	51%	69%	59%	63%	58%
2000-2010	2000*	2001	2002	2003	2004*	2005	2006	2007	2008*	2009
Ballots Returned	74,671	44,163	55,066	45,786	91,497	63,716	69,782	55,059	101,399	61,288
Turnout %	76%	45%	60%	48%	86%	62%	68%	53%	87%	53%
2010-2018	2010	2011	2012*	2013	2014	2015	2016*	2017	2018	
Ballots Returned	86,993	69,147	104,727	69,709	76,123	61,136	114,920	63,626	110,504	
Turnout %	74%	59%	83%	54%	59%	47%	82%	45%	77%	

General Election Cost Per Ballot & Hours Worked					
	Election Cost	Registered Voters	Number of Ballots Cast	Cost per Reg. Voter	Cost per Ballot Cast
2018	\$407,002	143,265	110,504	\$2.84	\$3.68
2017	\$503,000	138,688	63,626	\$3.63	\$7.91
2016	\$505,413	138,962	114,920	\$3.64	\$4.40
2015	\$424,543	129,345	61,136	\$3.28	\$6.94
2014	\$399,789	127,280	76,123	\$3.14	\$5.25
2013	\$421,691	127,002	69,709	\$3.32	\$6.05
2012	\$468,529	125,485	104,727	\$3.73	\$4.47
2011	\$398,255	117,162	69,147	\$3.40	\$5.76
2010	\$353,525	116,581	86,993	\$3.03	\$4.06
2009	\$402,339	114,292	61,288	\$3.52	\$6.56
2008	\$385,831	115,314	101,399	\$3.35	\$3.81
2007	\$385,831	102,458	55,059	\$3.77	\$7.01

Election Costs

Election costs are calculated based on all expenses related to that specific election. Major costs include salaries, printing, postage, vendor services to mail the ballots, and allocated costs such as election hardware and software maintenance, facilities costs and administrative overhead.

Election Division

Cost Per Ballot and Cost Per Registered Voter

As the charts show, costs per ballot cast and per registered voter were at an 11-year low in 2018. Costs dropped due primarily to re-engineering workflow coupled with greatly enhanced efficiencies from new technology implemented in 2018 resulting in reduced staff hours. In 2018, there were also reduced system maintenance costs because the new election systems included the first year maintenance in the purchase price.

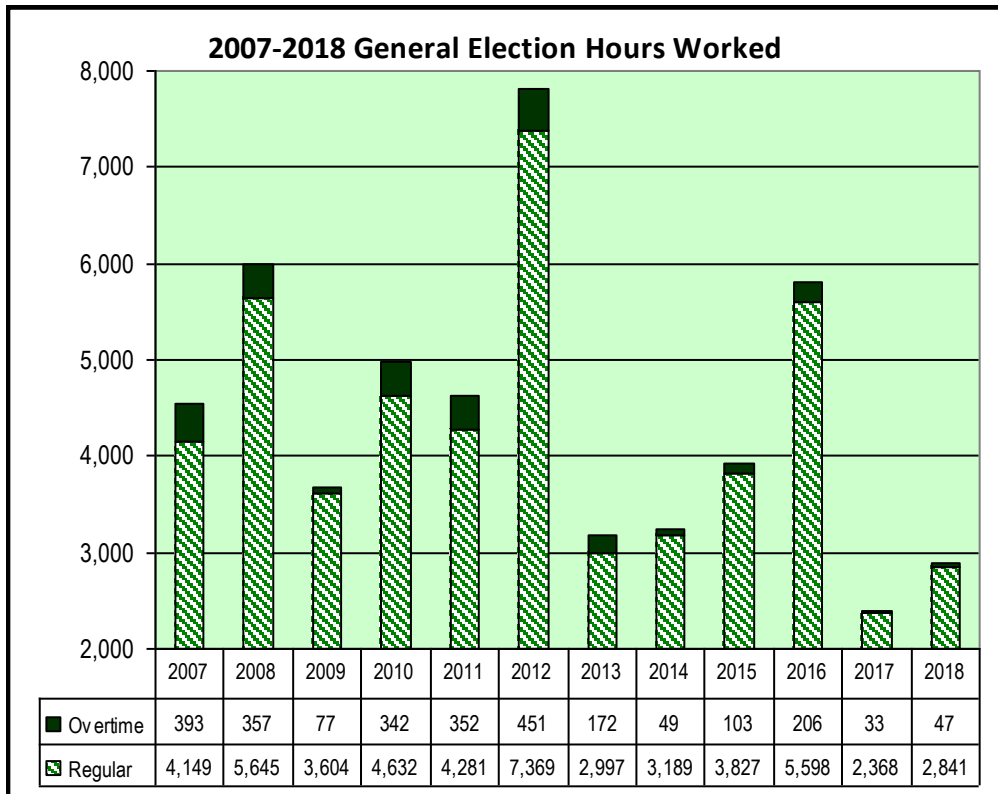
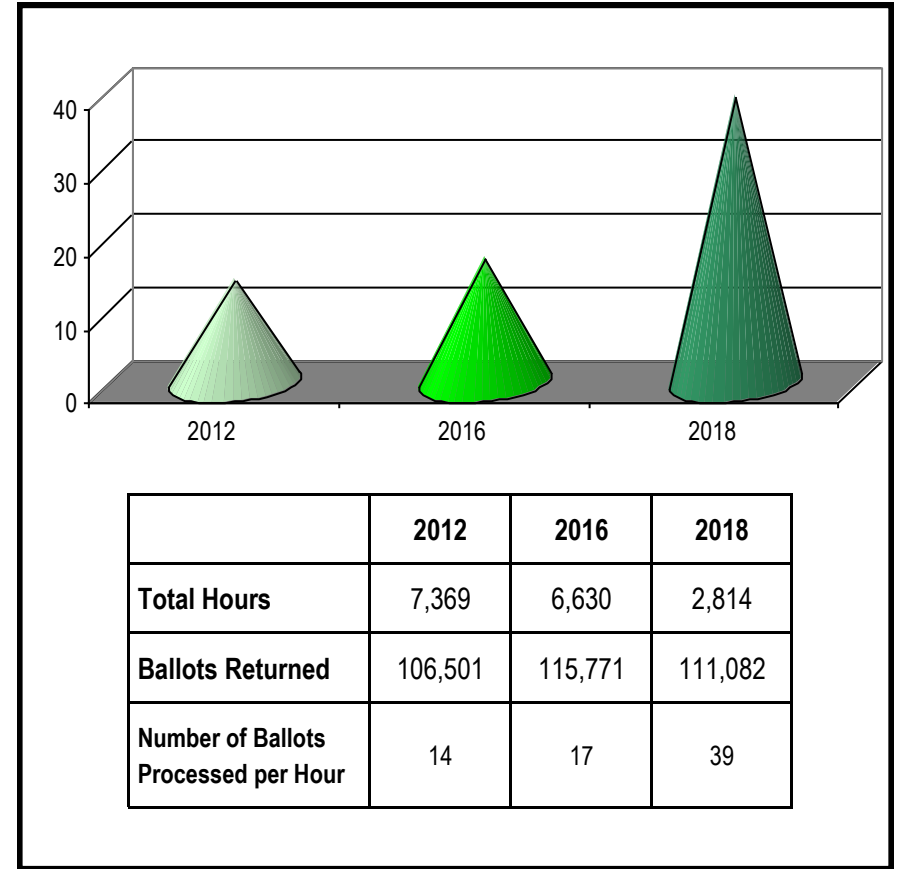
August Primary Election Cost Per Ballot & Hours Worked					
	Election Cost	Registered Voters	Number of Ballots Cast	Cost per Reg. Voter	Cost per Ballot Cast
2018*	\$349,565	139,813	62,717	\$2.50	\$5.57
2017	\$323,155	105,045	32,681	\$3.08	\$9.89
2016*	\$303,463	132,362*	49,088	\$2.29	\$6.18
2015	\$279,259	102,161	25,861	\$2.73	\$10.80
2014*	\$320,465	126,961*	42,736	\$2.52	\$7.50
2013	\$184,976	65,994	14,325	\$2.80	\$12.91
2012*	\$317,225	118,654*	47,234	\$2.67	\$6.72
2011*	\$284,726	118,678*	44,270	\$2.40	\$6.43
2010*	\$294,259	114,312*	50,015	\$2.57	\$5.88
2009*	\$281,513	116,410*	31,980	\$2.42	\$8.80
2008*	\$343,062	107,538*	50,167	\$3.19	\$6.84

*indicates county-wide election

Election Division

Ballot Processing Efficiency

The chart to the right compares the 2018 General Election to two other elections of comparable ballot return size—2012 and 2016. The chart illustrates how many ballots per staff hour were processed for each of the three years. Total hours represents all staff hours (full time and part time) needed to administer the entire election from the first step of setting up the election in the system through certification and post-election hours needed for document archiving and billing activities. The number of ballots processed per hour divides total hours into ballots returned. As you can see from the chart, the combination of new technology and improved efficiencies in our procedures reduced the number of hours required to administer the election by more than half.



The chart to the left shows total hours worked during the General Election over the last 12 years. While the number of hours fluctuates due to voter turnout, which impacts the number of ballots that are processed, you can see a steady decline in overtime used for all elections.

Core Services

- ◆ Record paper and electronically submitted documents
- ◆ Index recorded documents for ease of public access
- ◆ Make recorded documents publicly available through in-person customer service center and online access
- ◆ Help customers search recorded documents
- ◆ Provide certified copies of recorded documents
- ◆ Register and reserve plat and condominium names
- ◆ Register process servers
- ◆ Preserve and protect historically significant permanent archival documents

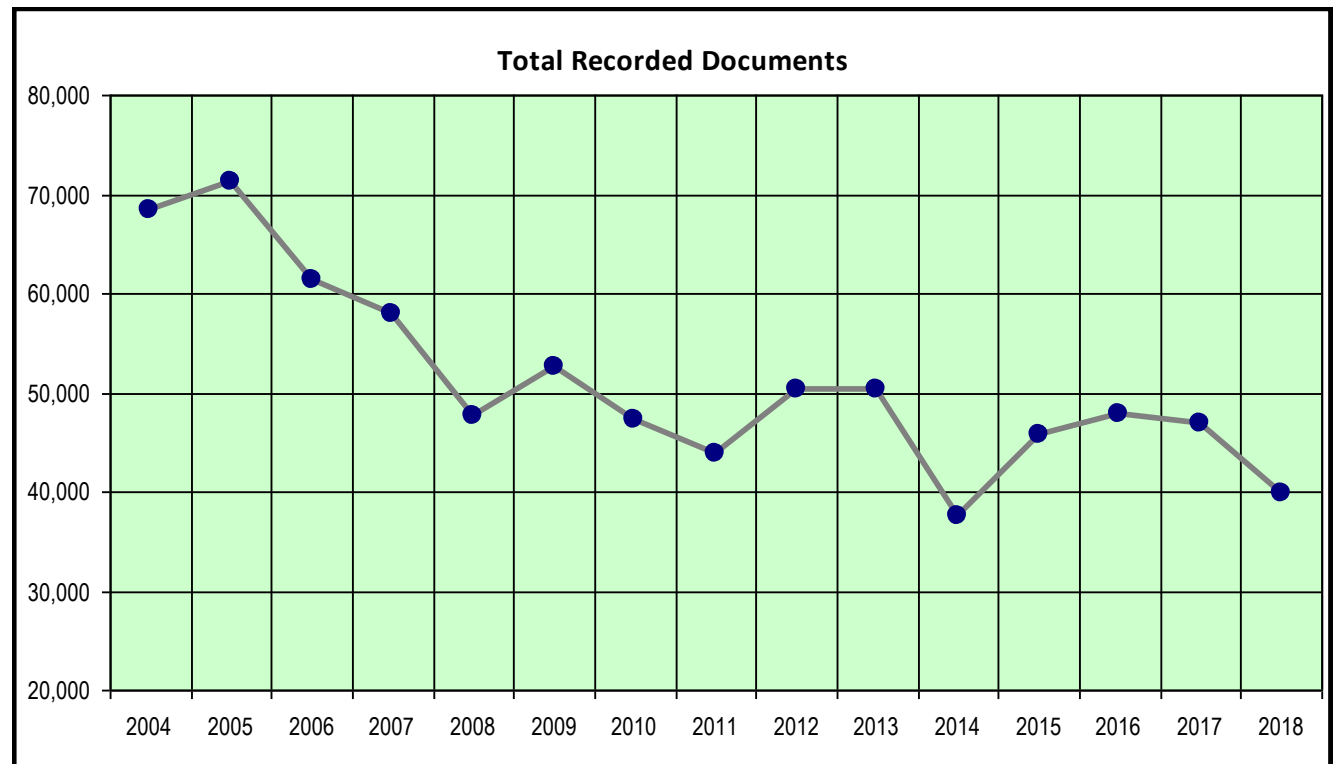
Recording Division

Document Recording

In 2018, a total of 39,748 documents were recorded, a 13% decrease or 7,200 documents over 2017. Document recordings are volatile; volume relates directly to interest rate fluctuations (lower rates result in refinancing of existing loans) and the real estate sales market.

Four document types represent over 66% of all recorded documents in 2018:

1. Deed (21.4%)
2. Deed of Trust (20.6%)
3. Appointment of Trustee (10.8%)
4. Reconveyance (14.1%)



Four e-Recording Submitters:



Two Local Title Companies:



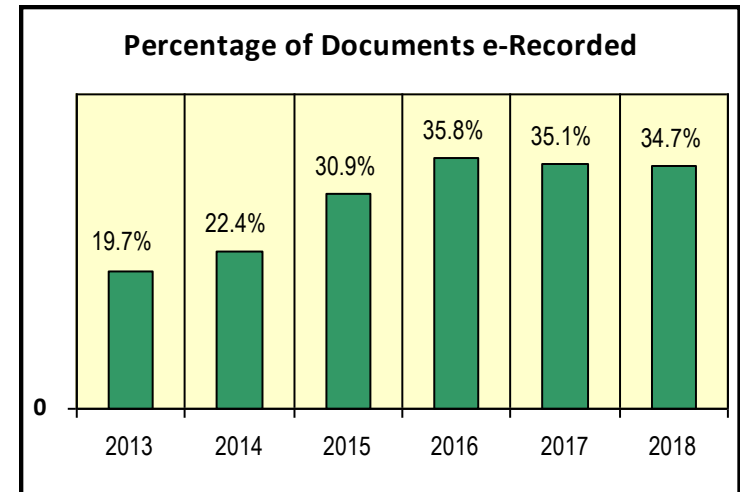
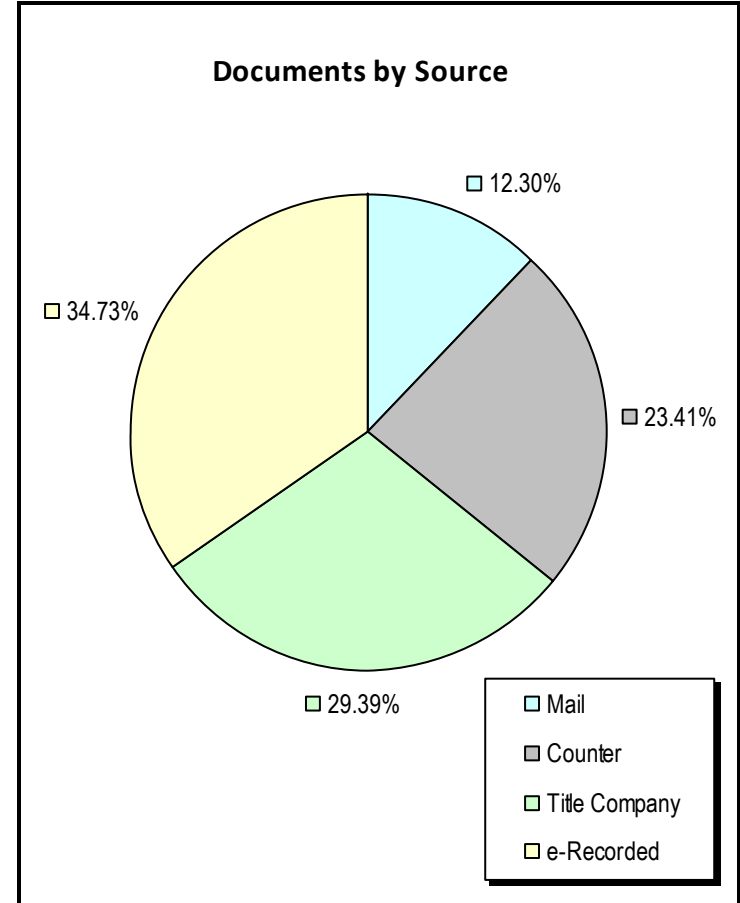
Recording Division

Document Submission

Documents may be submitted to be recorded in a number of ways: over the counter, through the mail, by title company courier, or through an e-Recording submitter. The chart to the right spotlights the various submission methods.

Title companies represent the largest proportion of recording customers. In addition to the 29.39% of all documents brought in by title company couriers, they also contract with one of the e-Recording submitters to have a portion of their recordings submitted electronically.

The chart at the bottom right shows the growth of e-Recording transactions since its inception in 2013.



Did you know?

The Recording Division is the custodian of Whatcom County's recorded documents dating back to 1854 in multiple formats:

- ◆ Bound Books
- ◆ Original Linen Maps
- ◆ Mylar Maps
- ◆ Microfilm and Microfiche
- ◆ Online Images

All recorded documents are permanent and archival. Original documents not available at the Whatcom County Auditor's Office are stored at the Northwest Regional Archives facility in Bellingham or in the county records center. Copies of the electronic records are stored at the Digital Archives in Cheney.

Recording Division

Recording System Enhancements

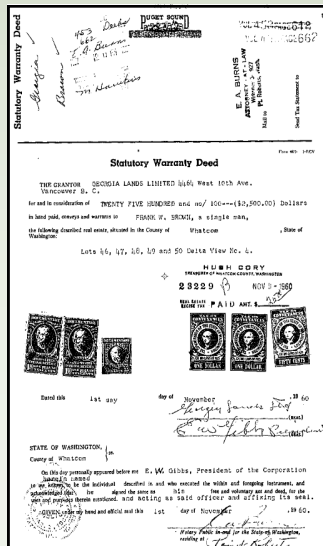
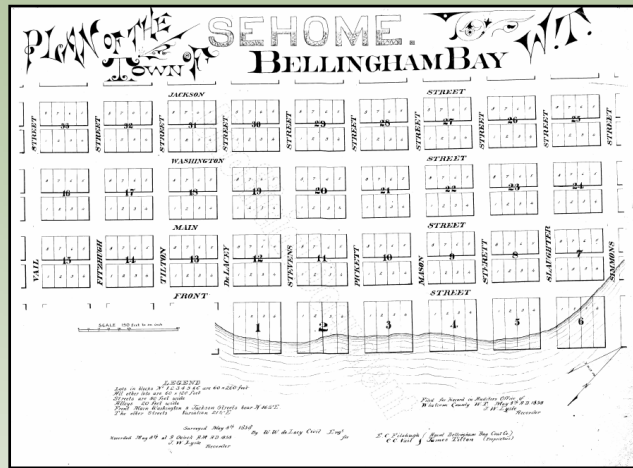
The Plat Reservation module and map database cleanup were completed in 2018. These projects involved several steps:

- Maps that were not in the current recording system from 1857 – 1981 were researched, located, scanned and imported into the on-line records repository.
- Plat and Condominium names in the existing grantor/grantee index were updated for consistency when searching.
- 8,780 maps were indexed and verified. Document types included: plats, short plats, binding site plans, amended plats, amended short plats and condominiums.

By statute, the Auditor may not record a plat with the same or similar name as one already recorded. The Plat Reservation module allows for reservation of a plat or condominium name during plat/condominium development along with providing a comprehensive list of all plat and condominium names. This ensures consistency when indexing a name as new documents referencing the plat or condominium name are recorded.



The Recording Division has records dating back to 1854. Those records not yet accessible online are available on microfilm in the Auditor's Office. Once the historical records project is complete, ALL documents will be available online.



Recording Division

Historic Records Projects

Indexing of Historical Documents: In 2016, 1.2 million images from 1959 through 1988 were added to the recorded document repository. Pre-indexed by the imaging services vendor with the Auditor File Number, these records require full indexing in order to be searchable by the public. Full-time staff devoted available hours to the indexing project in addition to part-time temporary employees. In 2018, 126,410 records were indexed and 88,400 were verified. This is a multi-year project and will continue into the future.

Military Separation Records

20 volumes of veteran service records (6,533 documents) from 1943-1963 were digitized from books at the Northwest Regional Archives. The documents were imported into the recording system, indexed, and verified.

Miscellaneous Records Series

The following records series were digitized from books at the Northwest Regional Archives in 2018 :

- Historic Mining – 17,745 documents
- Miscellaneous documents including birth, death, agreements, leases - 2,231 documents
- Power of Attorney – 12,820 documents

Security Archiving

1,307,973 documents were archived back to 1945 on the Silent Cube—a write-once-read-many (WORM) back-up device for long term archival storage.

Miscellaneous Records Cleanup

1,423 historic documents were located with bad annotation layers. These documents were able to be restored using a utility that Helion created. In addition, 668 missing historical records from 1858-1981 were added to the system during indexing research.

Core Services

- ◆ Issue marriage applications
- ◆ Record and index marriage licenses
- ◆ Provide certified copies of marriage records
- ◆ Preserve and provide access to marriage records in Whatcom County dating back to 1854

MARRIAGE RETURN.

1. Date of License *Oct 19 '93*
 2. Full Name of Groom *Chas. M. Grand*
 3. Age Last Birthday *28*
 4. Color (s) *White*
 5. No. of Groom's Marriages *None previously*
 6. Residence *New Whitehouse*
 7. Birthplace (s) *PA. Wisconsin - sexual*
 8. Occupation *Auto-pushing*
 9. Father's Name *John C. Grand*
 10. Mother's Maiden Name *Wesley Higgins*
 11. Full Name of Bride *Edith M. Grand*
 Maiden Name if a Widow
 12. Age Last Birthday *27*
 13. Color (s) *White*
 14. No. of Bride's Marriages *None previously*
 15. Residence *New Whitehouse*
 16. Birthplace (s) *Method - Minn*
 17. Occupation
 18. Father's Name *James Grandwood*
 19. Mother's Maiden Name *Wesley Ridge*
 20. Date of Marriage *Oct 19 '93*
 21. Place of Marriage *New Whitehouse*
 22. By whom Married, and Official Station *Chas. C. Cook*
 23. Names of Witnesses and their Residences
 No. 1 *John C. Grand*
 No. 2 *Emma C. Cook*

NOTE.—(1) Right under "Married" by wife may be known, as White, or Col., or Negro, Indian, Chinese, or Red White and Indian, etc.



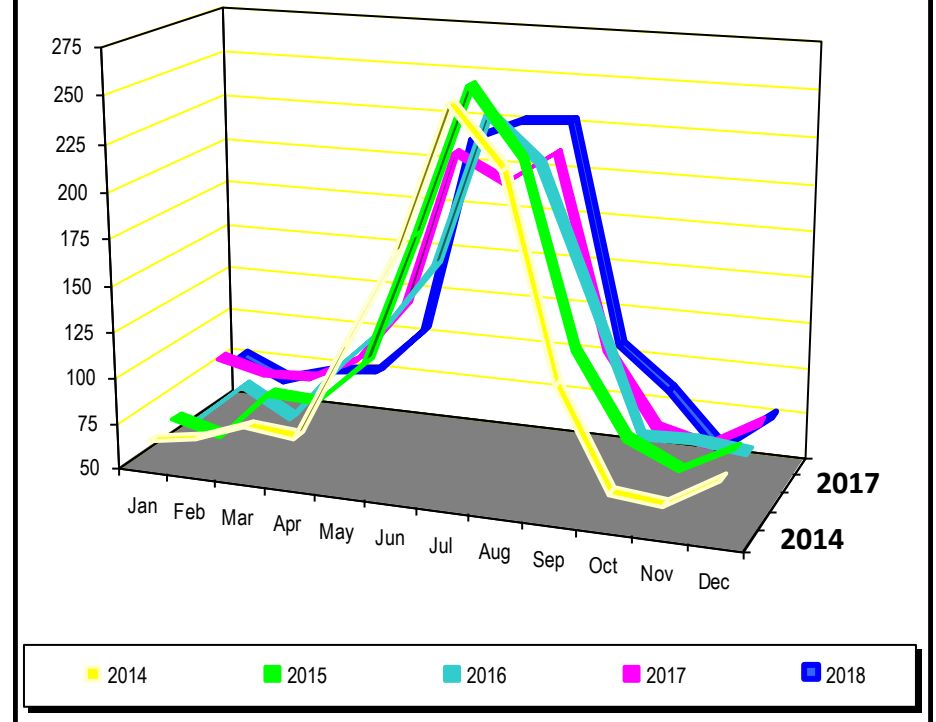
Recording Division

Marriage Licensing

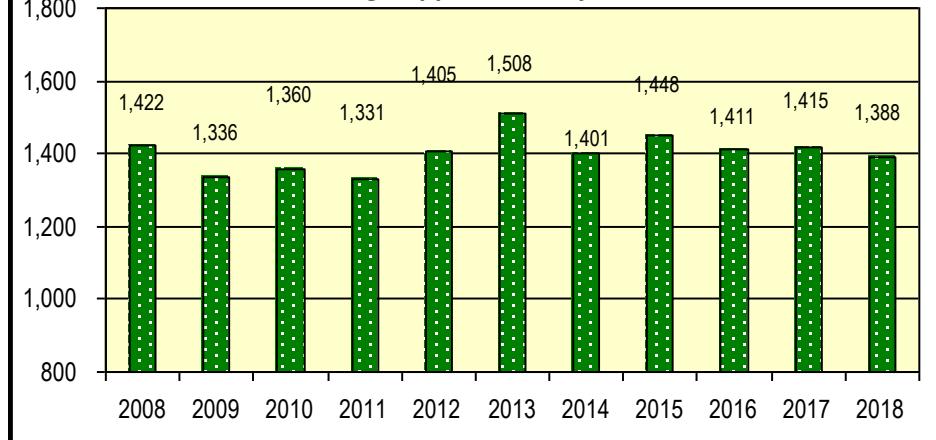
The Recording staff issued 1,388 marriage licenses in 2018, only 27 fewer than 2017's total. See chart below for a look at the past 10 years.

The marriage application form is available on the Auditor's web site enabling couples to fill out the application before coming to the office. If they have not filled it out ahead of time, couples fill out their application at kiosks available in the office. This automated process reduces processing time for both the couple and the staff.

Marriage Applications by Month and Year

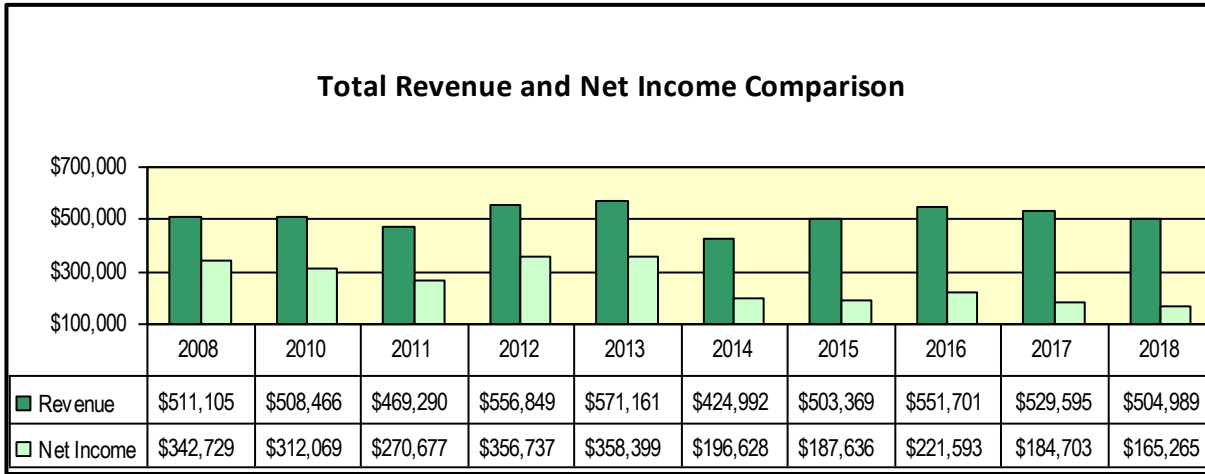


Marriage Applications by Year



Recording Division

Recording Revenue



Recording fees are charged for each document and page. Monies collected go to the county general fund and a number of special purpose funds. In 2018, new legislation resulted in an overall recording fee increase of \$25. This increase will help fund statewide programs to end homelessness and provide affordable housing. While there are some exemptions to the recording fee, most documents are charged the new base rate of \$99 for a one page document and \$1 for each additional page. The chart at right shows the fee distribution.

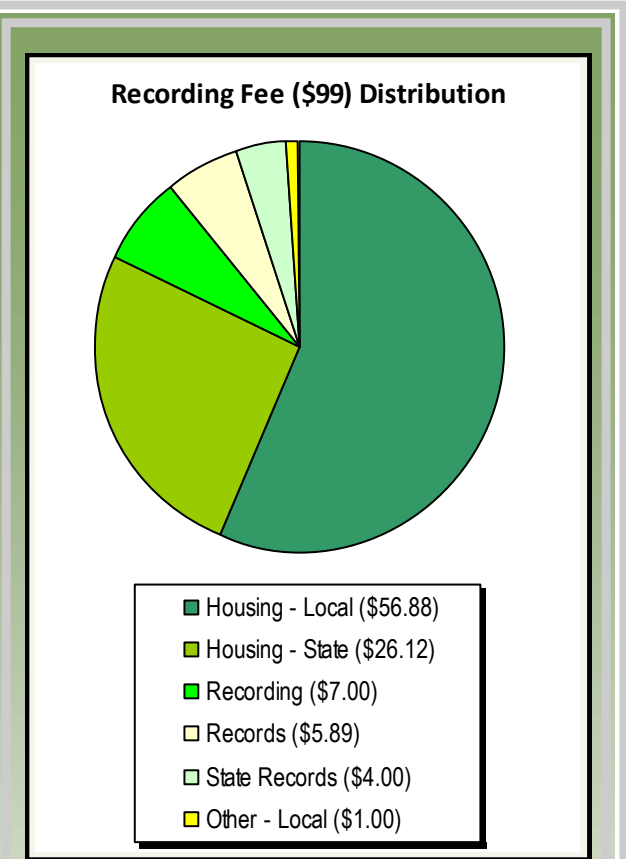
Of the fees collected for affordable and homeless housing, a portion remains locally for county use, and a portion is distributed to the state for statewide programs. The total collected is shown below:

Affordable Housing

County	\$227,413
State	+ \$151,609
Total	\$379,022

Homeless Housing

County	\$1,362,289
State	+ \$ 648,018
Total	\$2,010,307



Of the total general fund revenue collected, revenue for recording documents was \$401,168 in 2018. Recording also collects fees for copies, certified copies, conducting research for customers, administrative fees for collection of the Affordable and Homeless Housing fees, marriage application fees, and a few miscellaneous fees. The total contribution to the county general fund for these fees was \$103,821 in 2018.

Core Services

- ◆ Title and license vehicles and vessels in partnership with the Washington State Department of Licensing
- ◆ Train, oversee, and audit six local vehicle and vessel licensing subagents
- ◆ Collect tax on behalf of the Department of Revenue for private party sales and out of state sales
- ◆ Issue disabled parking placards

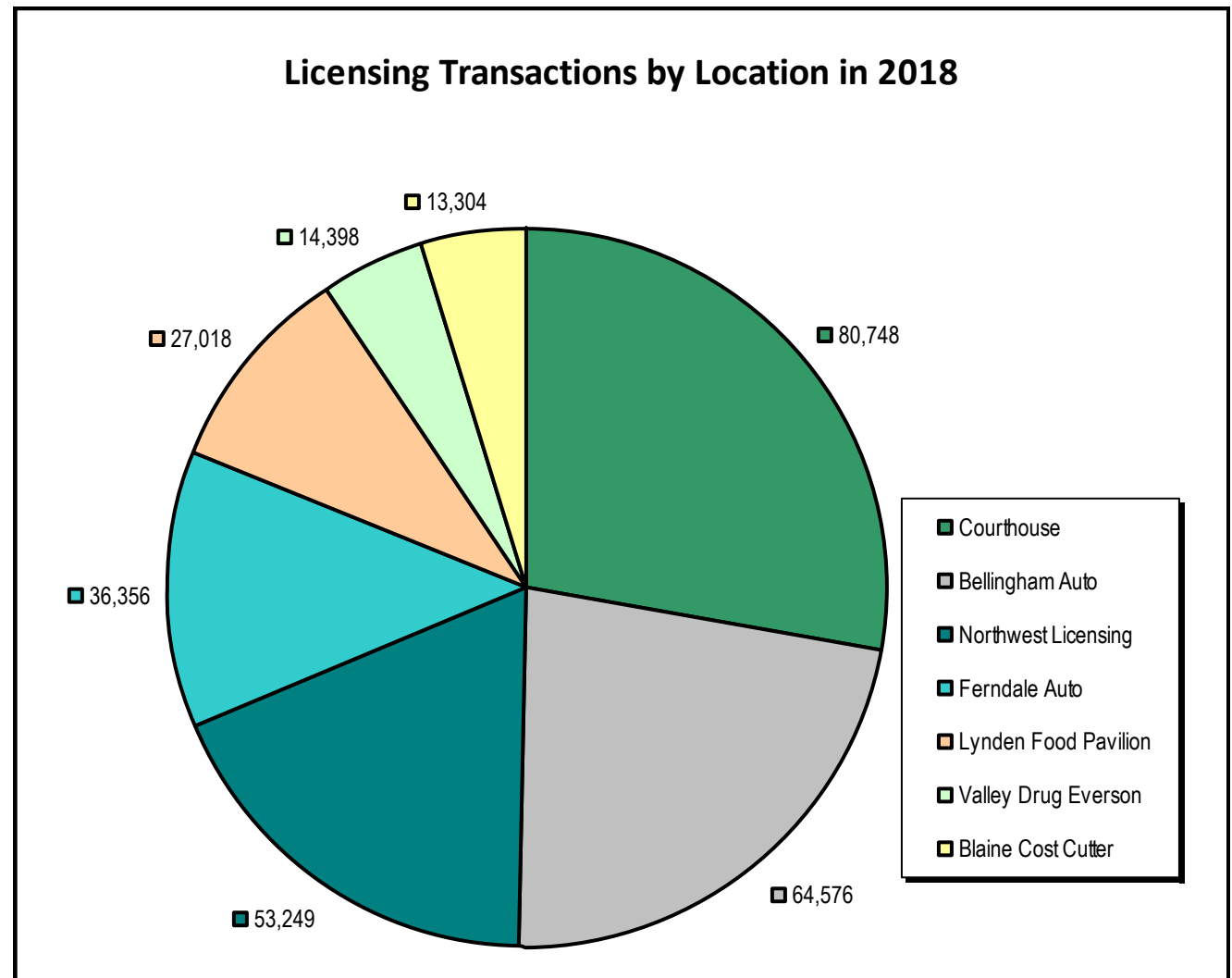
Did You Know?

Licensing fees for transferring ownership of your vehicle or renewing your registration is the same whether you visit the County Courthouse or one of the local licensing offices. The \$5 service fee for renewing annual registration and the \$12 title transfer fee support a local licensing office or construction and purchase of state ferries depending on where the transaction is processed. The fee change became effective January 1, 2015.

Licensing Division

Title and Tab Transactions

In 2018, Licensing staff processed 80,748 vehicle and/or vessel title and tab renewal transactions. The county, together with six subagents, processed approximately 289,649 transactions, 1,180 more than in 2017. This is an average of 5,555 transactions in the county per week!



2018 Quick Facts:

- ◆ 63,146 renewals in 2018 were processed via the internet. An internet renewal allows customers the convenience of paying the fee online in addition to having the option of picking up the tabs at a desired location or having the tabs mailed. If the customer does not select a desired location, the system will default to the subagent closest to the customer.
- ◆ 4,535 Quick Titles were issued countywide with 152 of those issued at the courthouse location.
- ◆ The courthouse location processed 7,667 vehicle title transactions, 64,071 were processed countywide.
- ◆ Of the 289,649 total transactions processed countywide, 80,748 were processed by the courthouse location (28%).

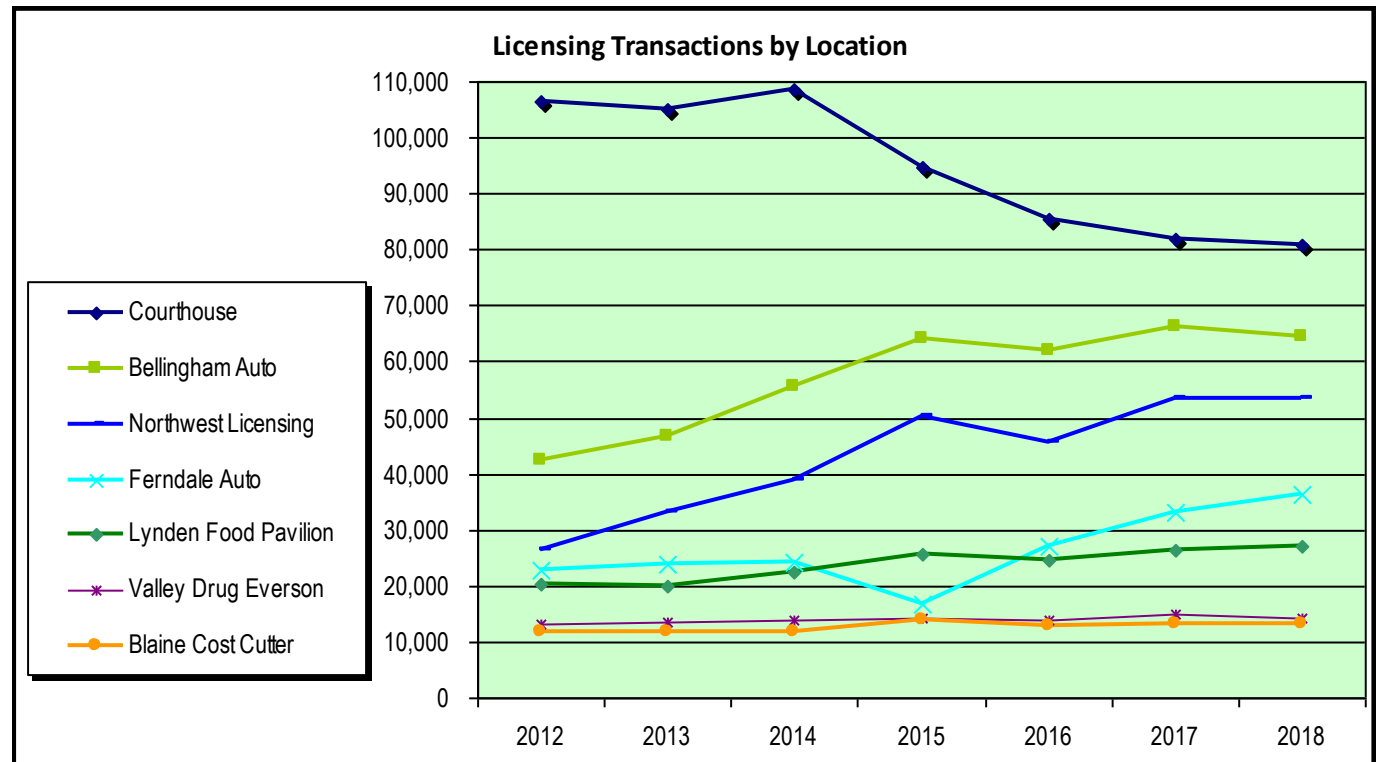
Licensing Division

Transaction History

Transactions at the courthouse have decreased steadily since 2014. 2018 saw a reduction of 984 transactions over 2017. However, total transactions countywide increased by 1,180. Changes in procedures and fees account for the reduction in the courthouse transactions including:

- “Normalizing” the fees collected by the county and the subagents
- Dispersing internet transactions between the county and the subagents, setting the default agent to the one closest to the customer
- Allowing subagents to process quick titles

The chart below shows a comparison of licensing transactions by location over the last seven years.



Subagents in Whatcom County:

- ◆ Bellingham Auto Licensing
804 Lakeway Drive, Bellingham
- ◆ Valley Drug Licensing
208 E. Main Street, Everson
- ◆ Auto Licensing of Ferndale
1740 La Bounty Drive, Suite 4, Ferndale
- ◆ Lynden Food Pavilion Licensing
8130 Guide Meridian, Lynden
- ◆ Blaine Cost Cutter Licensing
1733 H Street, Suit 100, Blaine
- ◆ Northwest Licensing
2502 Cedarwood Avenue, Bellingham

A subagent is a private business that enters into contract with a County Auditor and is appointed by the Department of Licensing Director to perform vehicle and vessel title and licensing services.

As part of the oversight of the six subagents, the Licensing Staff:

- Held two subagent meetings
- Administered four certification tests
- Verified that four clerks completed 1800 hours to become Certified Licensing Operators

Licensing Division

Mobile Home Processing

Lean Event and Mobile Home Committee

Whatcom County participated in a Department of Licensing (DOL) sponsored lean event for mobile homes to help identify process improvements. Out of this lean event, our staff developed a flow chart, a How-Do-I guide, and data analysis spreadsheet. Our staff is continuing to participate in work groups to improve mobile home processes at all levels.

Publications

Licensing staff created a flow chart outlining different mobile home and park model scenarios. This chart enables licensing clerks to quickly determine what documents are required in complicated transactions and provide consistent information to customers. Department of Licensing adopted this chart and distributed it to all licensing offices statewide.

Our staff also produced a How-Do-I-Guide answering the most frequently asked questions about buying or selling a mobile home, taxes, getting a moving permit, and title eliminations. We wanted to make this information available at other county, state, and local offices so customers have the information they need to complete their transaction in a single trip to a licensing office, instead of multiple trips. Department of Licensing published this handout to all licensing offices statewide.

Information Tracking for Statistical Analysis

Eight counties documented their mobile home transactions for six weeks tracking completed and rejected transactions. The counties documented the reason(s) they could not complete a mobile home transaction so we can identify common trouble areas. Our office coordinated data collection and organized all transactions into spreadsheet so the data can be analyzed and applied.

Licensing Transactions-Auditor's Office

- ◆ 5,171 Discover Passes sold
- ◆ 868 Personalized license plates renewed
- ◆ 81 WWU license plates issued
- ◆ 89 Seattle Seahawks license plates issued
- ◆ 286 Electric vehicles registered
- ◆ \$106,312 State Park donations
- ◆ \$5,497 Organ and Tissue donations

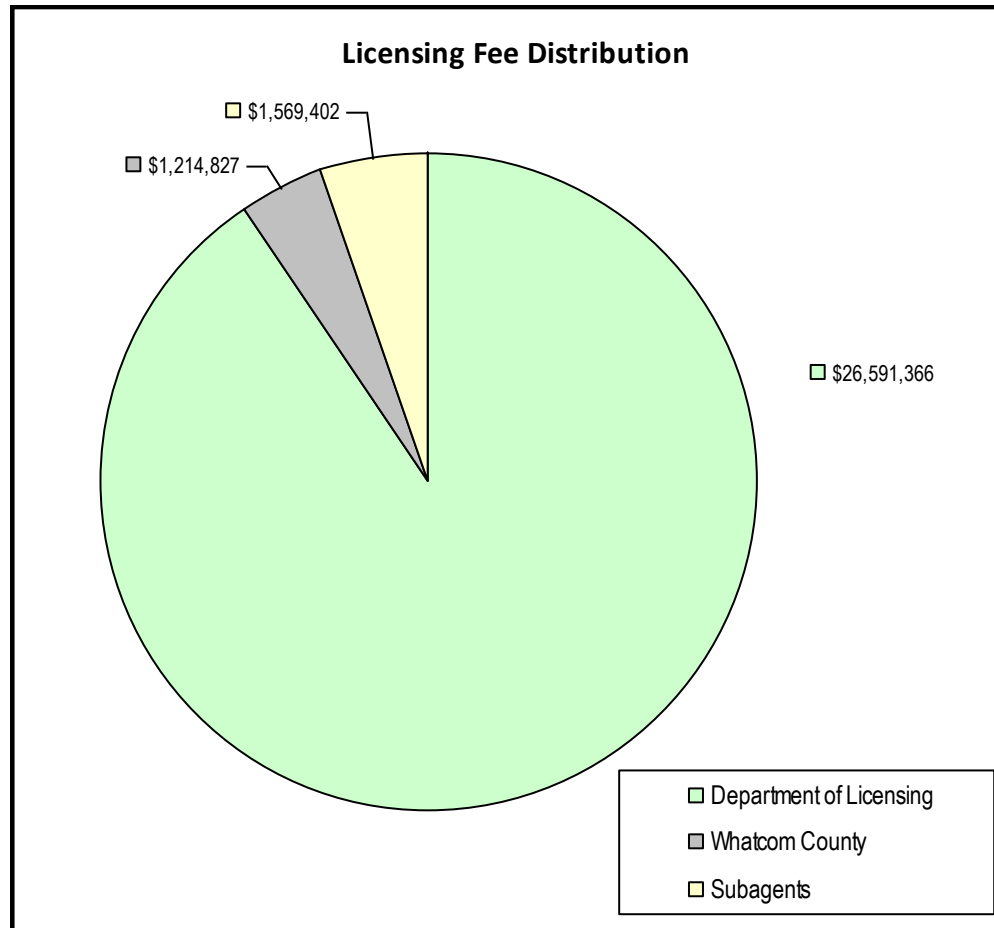
Licensing Transactions—All Locations

- ◆ 10,615 Discover Passes sold
- ◆ 2,106 Personalized license plates renewed
- ◆ 148 WWU license plates issued
- ◆ 329 Seattle Seahawks license plates issued
- ◆ 688 Electric vehicles registered
- ◆ \$196,340 State Park donations
- ◆ \$10,957 Organ and Tissue donations

Licensing Division

Licensing Revenue

Whatcom County licensing transactions totaled over \$29 million in state and local vehicle/vessel licensing fees in 2018. Of the total fees collected, 91% were allocated to the Department of Licensing to support the state's transportation system. The remaining funds were divided between the Whatcom County General Fund and the county's licensing subagents as shown in the chart below.



Core Services

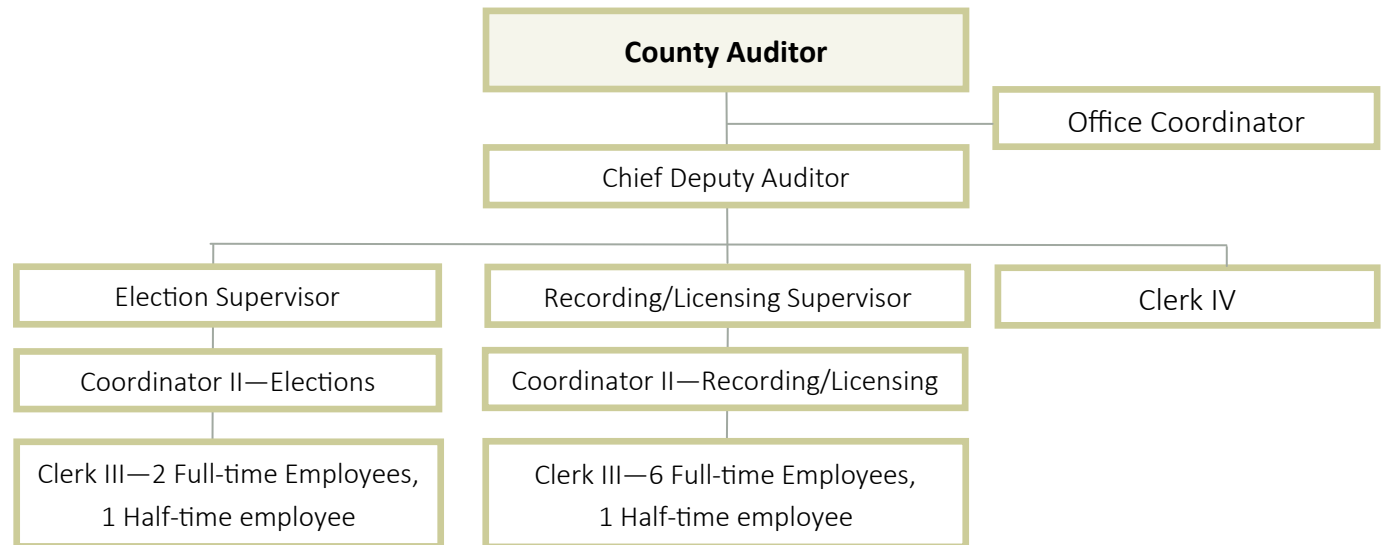
- ◆ Administration
- ◆ Oversight of Three Divisions
- ◆ Budget
- ◆ Payroll
- ◆ Purchasing/Accounts Payable
- ◆ Initiatives, Referenda, District Creation
- ◆ Requests for Proposals
- ◆ Contract Management
- ◆ Legal Notices and Press Releases

Administrative Overview

Auditor's Office Administration, namely the Auditor, Chief Deputy, Office Coordinator, and Clerk IV, provide support for office-wide operations.

Administration Highlights in 2018

- ◆ Processed 7 resolutions for ballot measures
- ◆ Calculated and mailed out 72 Election and Registration cost bills to cities and districts
- ◆ Managed 50 contracts
- ◆ Developed and issued 1 Request for Proposal
- ◆ Updated the Candidate Filing Guide and the Initiative/Referenda Handbook
- ◆ Processed 57 Oaths of Office and created Certificates of Election/Appointment
- ◆ Published 1 Elections Newsletter
- ◆ Held one Citizen's Advisory Committee meeting
- ◆ Held one Accessibility Committee meeting



Highlights:

- ◆ Legislative Committee
- ◆ Recording Committee
- ◆ WACO Board
- ◆ WACO Strategic Planning Committee
- ◆ Voter Intent Guidelines Committee
- ◆ Executive Steering Committee for a new statewide Voter Registration system
- ◆ Property Records Industry Association (PRIA)
- ◆ International Association of Government Officials

Statewide Involvement

In addition to the oversight of three divisions under the Auditor’s purview, the Auditor and the Chief Deputy participate in the Washington State Association of County Auditors (WSACA) and the Washington Association of County Officials (WACO). These statewide advocacy groups provide opportunities to interact with other counties, statewide officials, and to learn and share best practices.

Washington State Association of County Auditors (WSACA)

Chief Deputy Diana Bradrick serves on the WSACA Legislative Committee. Her participation advocates for legislative priorities affecting the auditors; she solicits input and participation from all members of the association. Auditor Adelstein also serves as a member of the WSACA Recording Committee. Bradrick participates in recording and election policy committees. The committees focus on standardization of practices to achieve and maintain consistency of common goals.



Washington Association of County Officials (WACO)

Auditor Debbie Adelstein is on the Board of WACO as the representative of the Auditors’ Association. WACO is a non-profit, non-partisan organization of assessors, auditors, clerks, coroner, prosecutors, sheriffs, and treasurers from Washington’s 39 counties. They advocate for all elected officials and promote better county government. Auditor Adelstein currently chairs the Strategic Planning Committee of WACO.



Secretary of State’s Office Committees

Auditor Adelstein serves on the Executive Steering Committee for the VoteWA project—the new statewide voter registration database scheduled to go live in April, 2019. In 2018, Chief Deputy Bradrick won the “County Elections Employee of the Year” in Washington State! The Whatcom County Auditor’s Office is extremely proud to have one of its own selected for this prestigious award, Auditor Adelstein said. “We’ve known what a gem we have. Now the rest of the state knows it too!”

National Involvement

Chief Deputy Bradrick has been a long-time member of the International Association of Government Officials (IGO) and the Property Records Industry Association (PRIA). Her participation in these associations keep the office current on emerging technology as well as up-to-date on national trends in the recording area.





Published by the Whatcom County Auditor's Office

February 2019