Zoning, Housing, and Habitat:

Ground-breaking Geospatial Tools for Planning Washington's Future

Washington State Department of Commerce

MAKERS
architecture • planning • urban design

Western Washington University
MAKE WAVES.

HDR

Washington Department of FISH & WILDLIFE

v1.5

Panel

Washington State Zoning Atlas

- Tara Newman, tara.newman@commerce.wa.gov
- Tammi Laninga, tara.newman@commerce.wa.gov
- Ian Crozier, iantcrozier@gmail.com
- Rachel Miller, rachelm@makersarch.com

Cascadia Housing Study: Chang Xu, chang.xu@hdrinc.com

Washington's Riparian and Wildlife Tools: Ken Muir, ken.muir@dfw.wa.gov

Washington State Zoning Atlas

American Planning Association Washington Chapter

Tara Newman, Tammi Laninga, Ian Crozier

10/08/2025

Washington State Department of Commerce

v1.5

What is the WAZA?

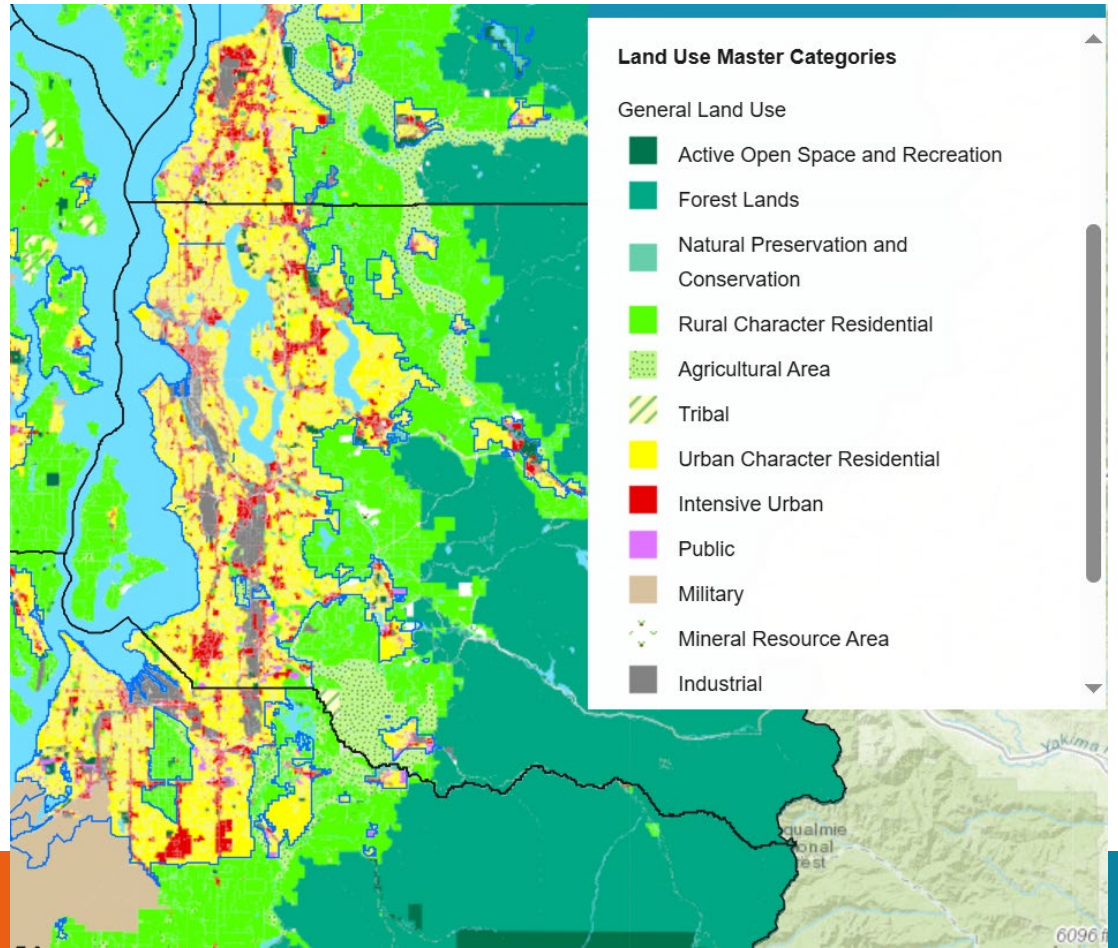
Tara Newman, Senior Planner – National Estuary Program,
Department of Commerce

What is a State Zoning Atlas?

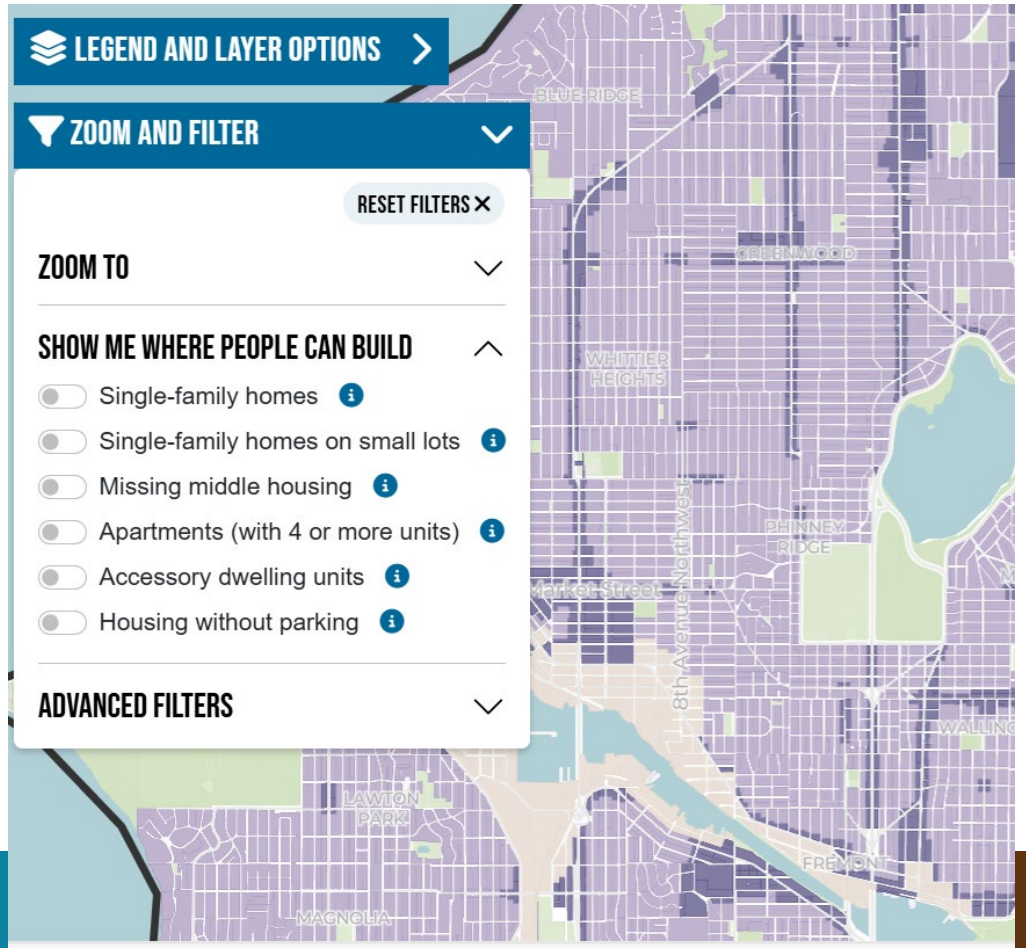
- Every city and county has its own zoning
  - Very difficult to map zones across jurisdictions
  - Even similar zones regulate uses and development differently
- Very difficult to assess zoning statewide or answer basic land use and policy questions at the state level.
  - For example,
    - Where do new housing policies apply?
    - Where are all the natural resource lands in the state?
    - Where can industrial or green energy uses be sited?
- Zoning Atlas translates each local jurisdiction's zoning into standardized categories and documents allowed uses and development standards.

Building from Previous Work

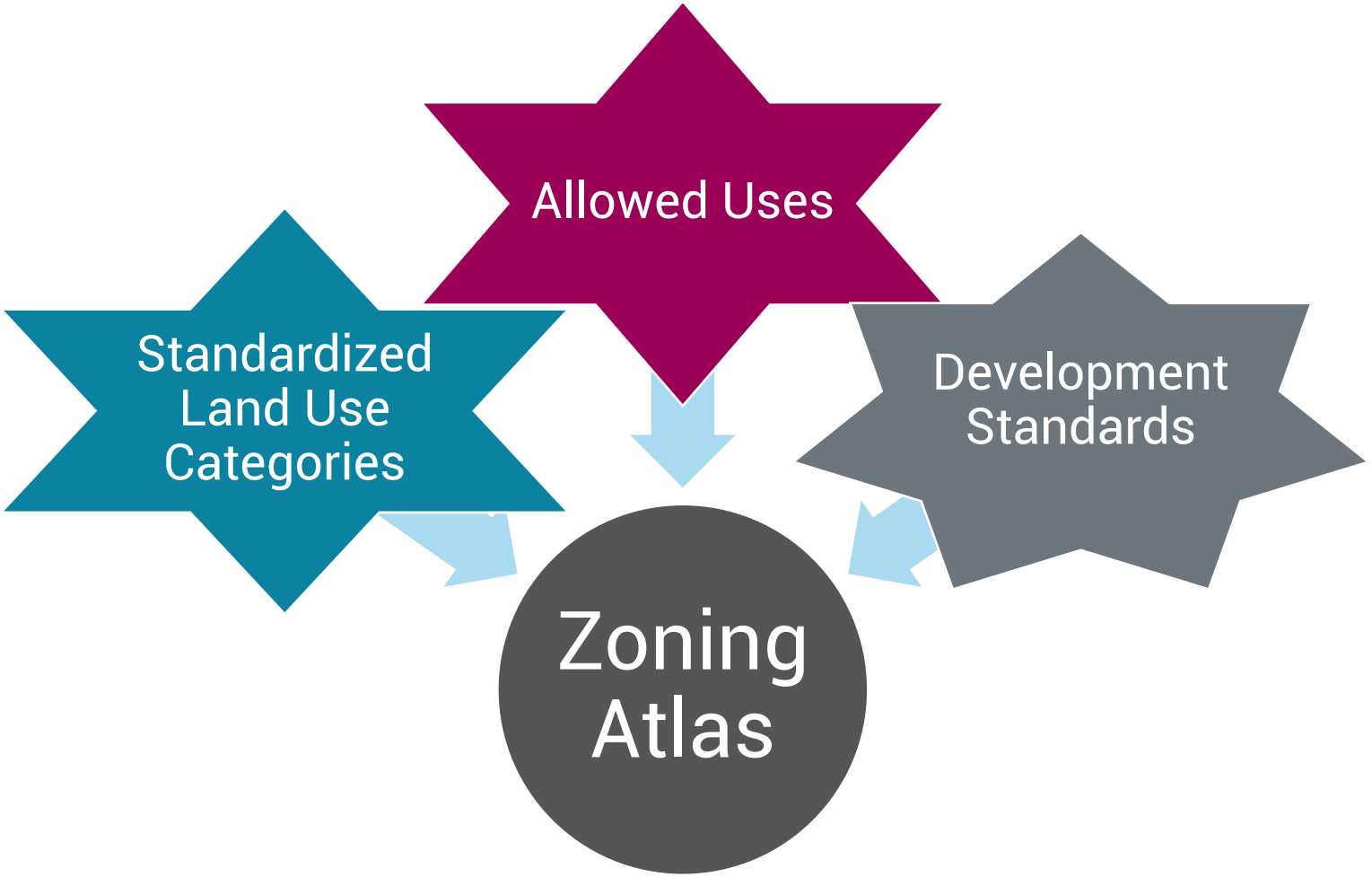
Puget Sound Mapping Project



National Zoning Atlas



What's Included in Washington's Zoning Atlas

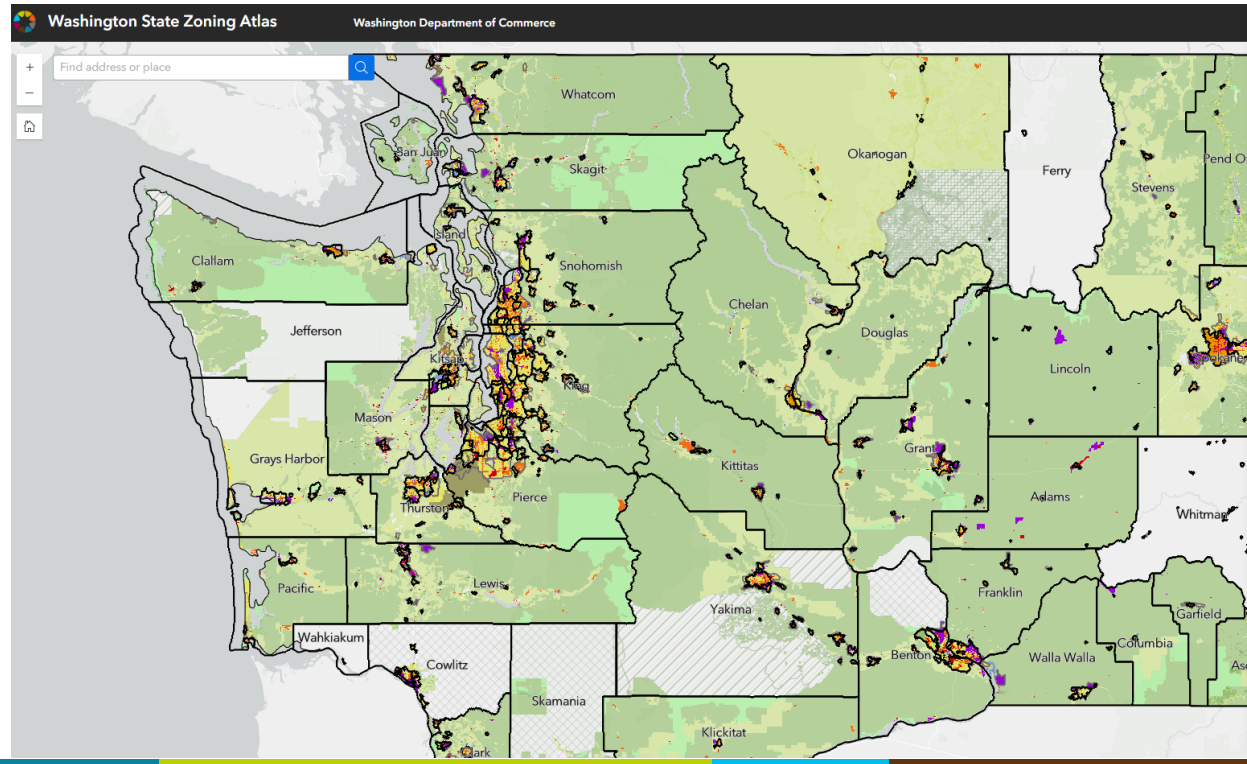


Exploring the Tool

- Commerce's Zoning Atlas website:

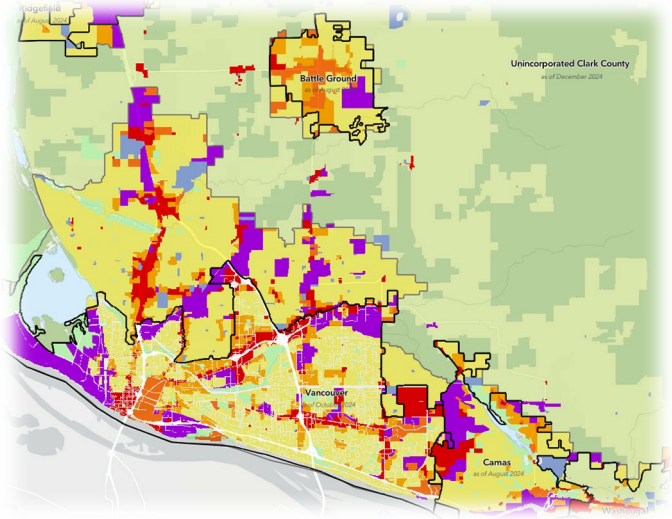
https://www.commerce.wa.gov/growth-management/data-research/waza/ -

  - Interactive Map
  - Downloadable Database
  - User Guide



Using the Zoning Atlas at the Local Level

- Compare zoning in similar jurisdictions
- Cross-jurisdictional or watershed planning
- More accessible zoning information for small jurisdictions
- Identifying development opportunities



Limitations

- Zoning remains local
- Some data may already be out of date
  - Atlas reflects data collected from April 2024 to June 2025
- Some data may be inaccurate or incomplete
- Zoning maps may not be accurate at the parcel level

Always check the jurisdiction's official code and maps!

Keeping it Updated

- We're working on a process for keeping Zoning Atlas updated
  - Rolling updates as jurisdictions update their codes and maps
  - Periodic database overhauls

- Send us your zoning updates!

WAZA Development

Dr. Tamara (Tammi) Laninga, Associate Professor, Director, Urban Planning & Sustainable Development Program, Western Washington University

The Development Team

MAKERS
architecture • planning • urban design

Eastern Washington University
EWU Urban & Regional Planning

Washington State Department of Commerce

bhc CONSULTANTS

uepp DEPARTMENT OF URBAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING & POLICY

Western Washington University
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NRSIG

URBAN DESIGN & PLANNING
COLLEGE OF BUILT ENVIRONMENTS

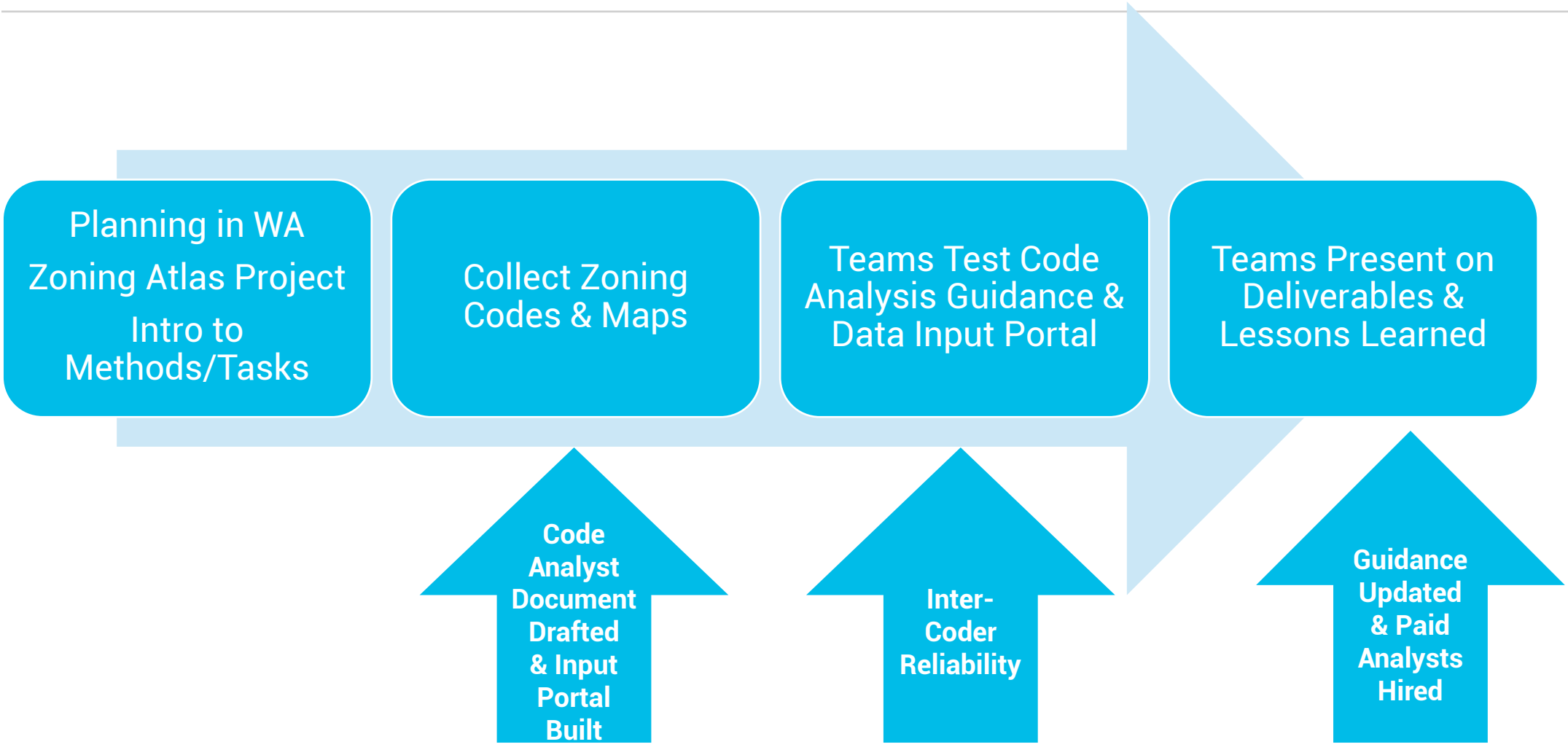
SCHOOL OF URBAN STUDIES
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON | TACOMA

Team Task & Timelines

Tasks	Project Team	Months
Populate Advisory Group	MAKERS, Commerce	1-2
Initial Database Set-up	MAKERS, BHC, NRSIG	2-4
Refine Zoning Classifications for Data Standardization	MAKERS, BHC, NRSIG, Advisory Group	3-5
Develop Student Analyst Guidance Document	MAKERS, BHC, NRSIG, **Student Liaison** (UW Graduate Student), **Universities**	3-5
Deliver Training Curriculum	**WWU Faculty** & BHC	4-6
Collect Data	**Student Liaison, Urban planning students**, MAKERS, BHC	6-15
Clean Data	MAKERS, NRSIG	12-16
Publish Atlas	NRSIG, Commerce	17-18

Training Seminar Recruitment

Training Seminar Topics & Tasks



Fun Facts …

320	• WA City & County Jurisdictions
29	• Students in the Course (6 EWU, 12 UW-S, 5 UW-T, 6 WWU)
1	• Graduate Student Liaison
11	• Paid Student Analysts (Summer 2024)
1-10	• Hours per jurisdiction
650	• Hours WWU students worked
97	• Percent of Zoning text data entered

Student Analyst Reflections

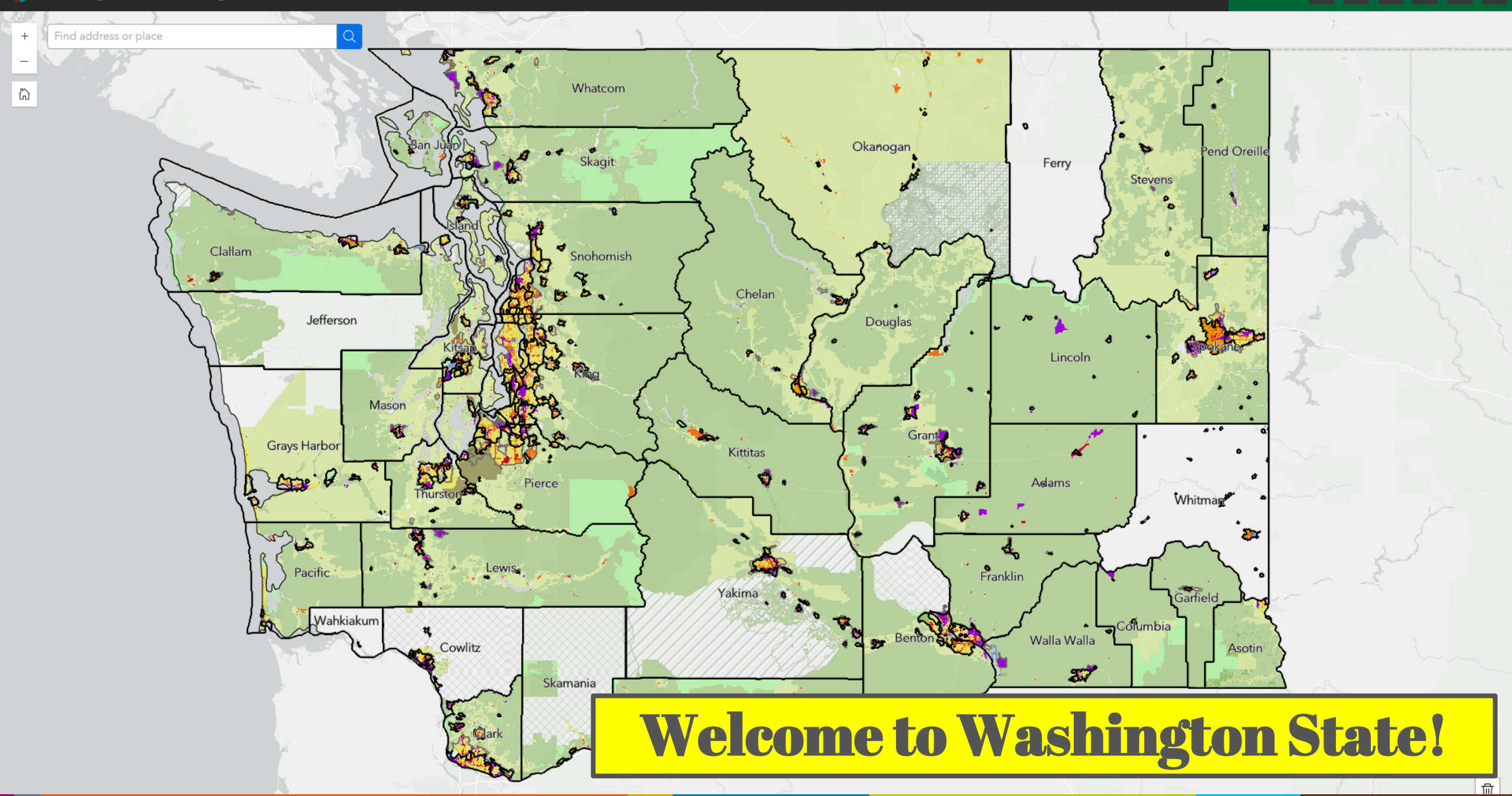
Confidence-Booster: *I now feel VERY confident reading code and am able to sift through lots of information quickly.*

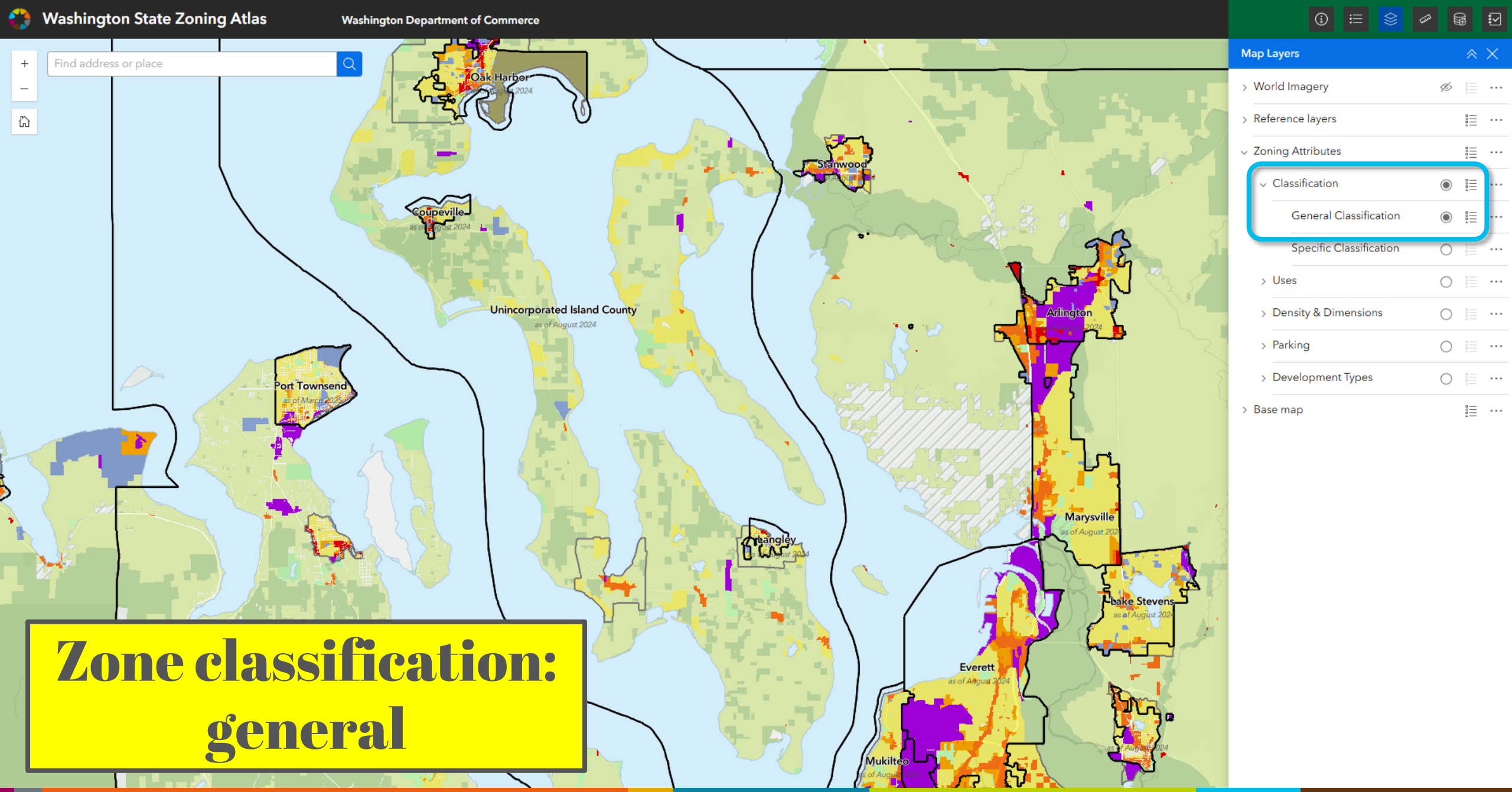
Deeper Understanding: *[I] deepened my understanding of how zoning policies shape urban and rural development. I observed significant differences in how municipalities regulate housing density, commercial uses, and mixed-use developments.*

Need for Clear Codes: *Something that surprised me … was how ambiguous some of the codes were … Zoning codes should be user friendly and accessible to everyone to ensure effective uses.*

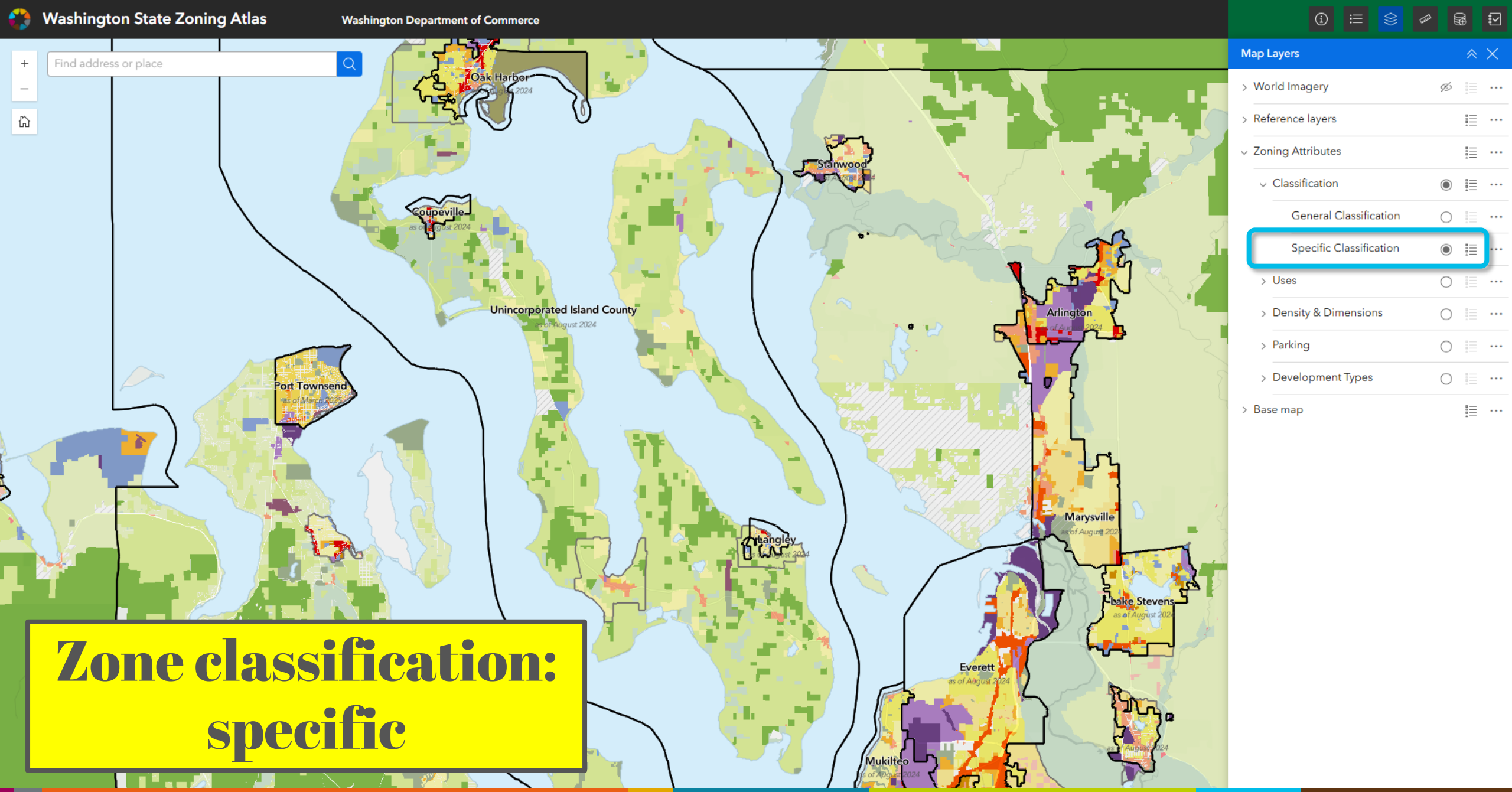
How to use the WAZA

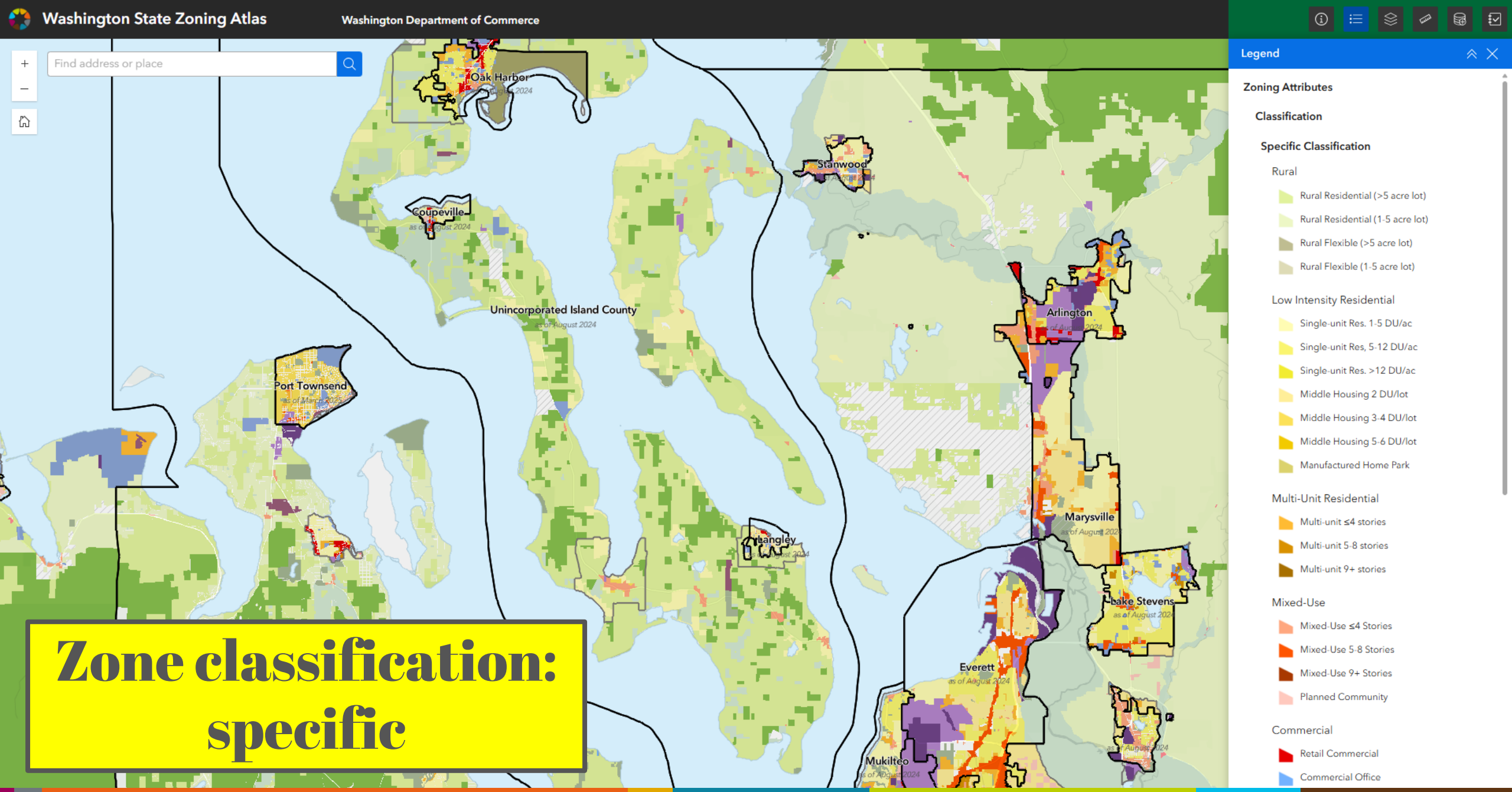
Ian Crozier, while Associate 2 – Planner,
MAKERS architecture and urban design


Find address or place
Whatcom
San Juan
Skagit
Okanogan
Ferry
Pend Oreille
Stevens
Island
Clallam
Snohomish
Chelan
Douglas
Lincoln
Spokane
Jefferson
Kitsap
King
Mason
Grays Harbor
Kittitas
Grant
Adams
Whitman
Pierce
Thurston
Pacific
Lewis
Franklin
Yakima
Garfield
Wahkiakum
Cowlitz
Benton
Walla Walla
Columbia
Asotin
Skamania
Clark
Welcome to Washington State!

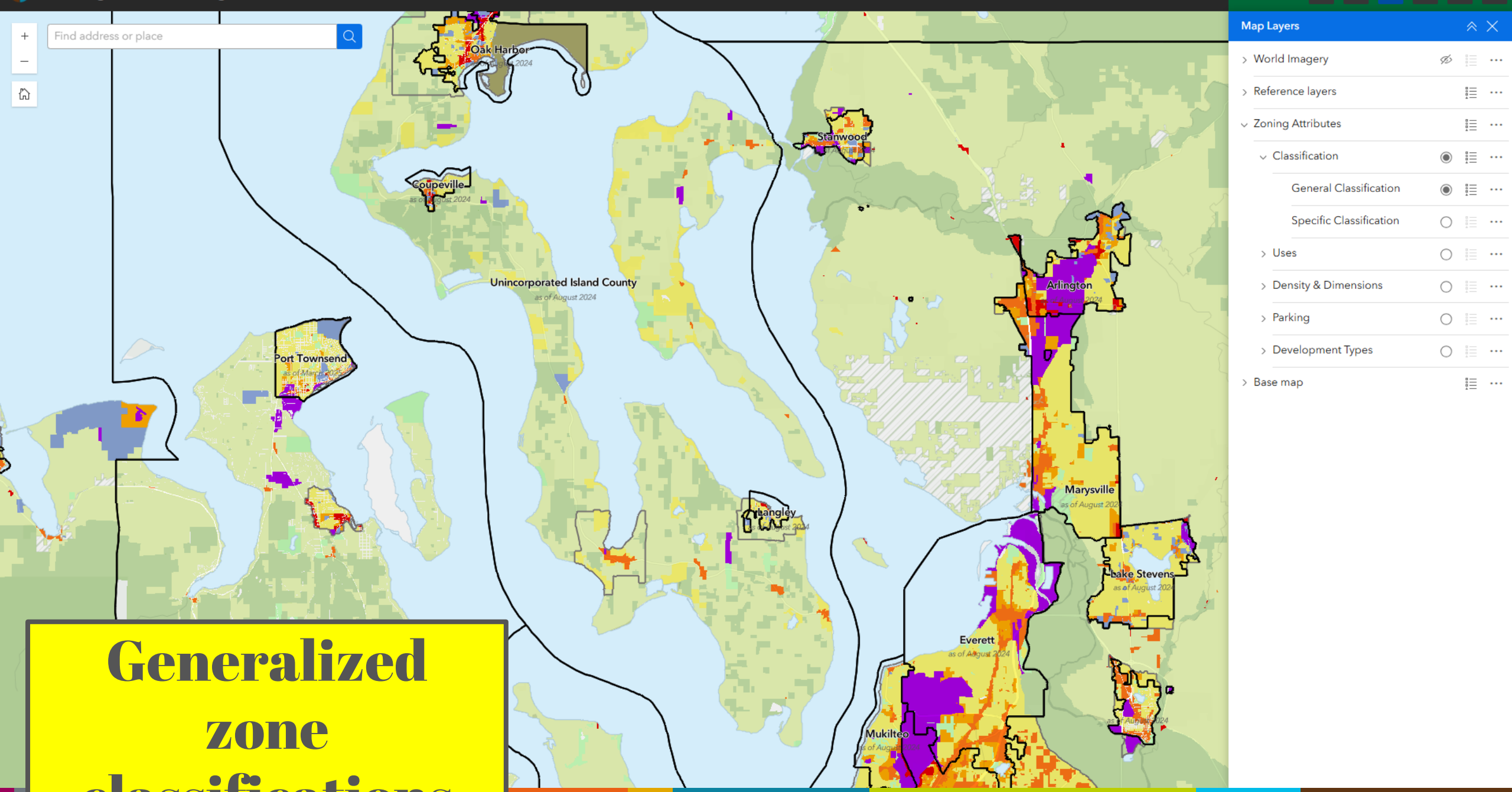


Zone classification: general

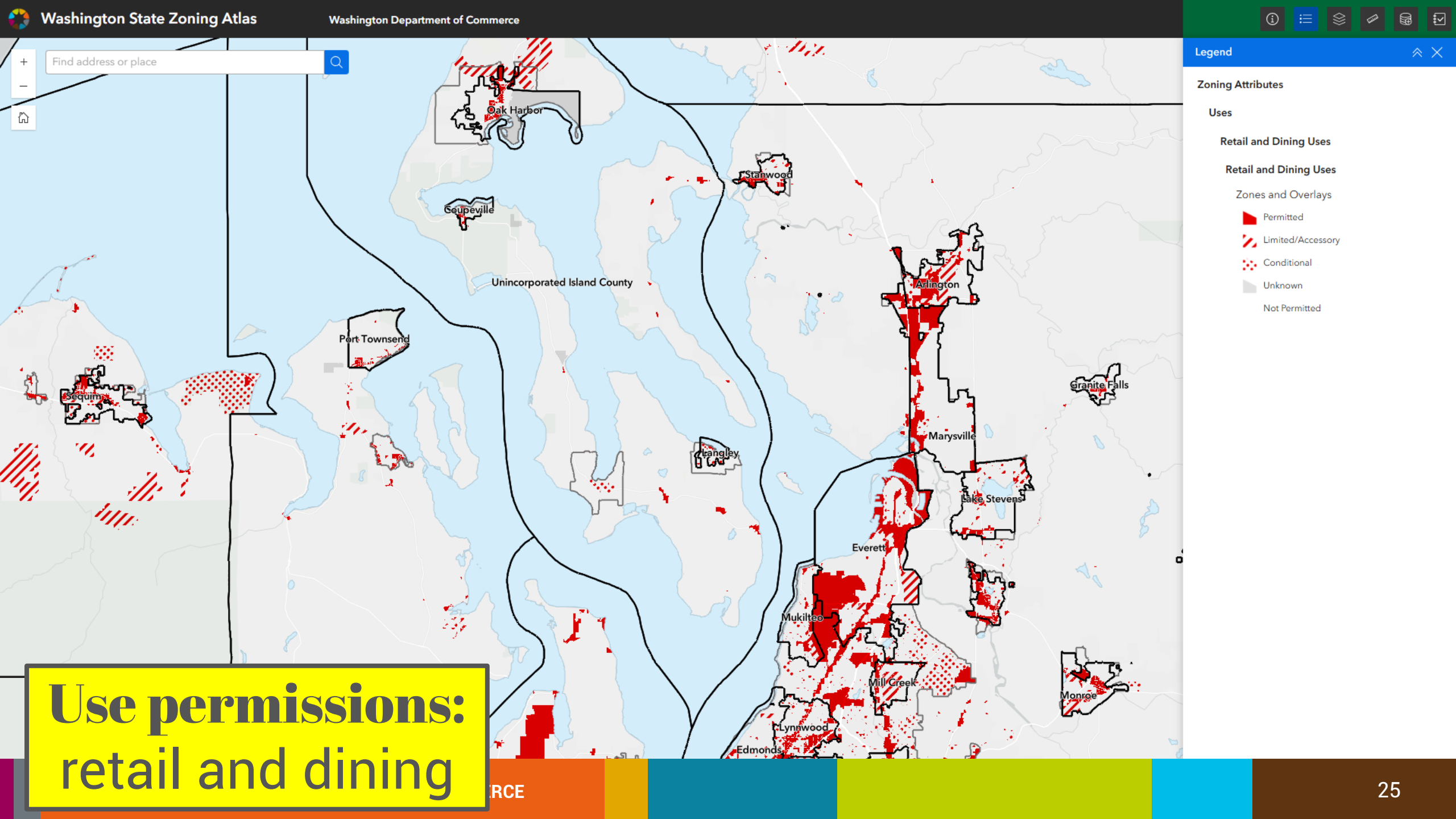

Washington State Zoning Atlas
Washington Department of Commerce
Find address or place
Map Layers
World Imagery
Reference layers
Zoning Attributes
Classification
General Classification
Specific Classification
Uses
Density & Dimensions
Parking
Development Types
Base map
Oak Harbor
Stanwood
Coupeville
Unincorporated Island County
Port Townsend
Arlington
Marysville
Lake Stevens
Everett
Mukilteo
Zone classification: specific

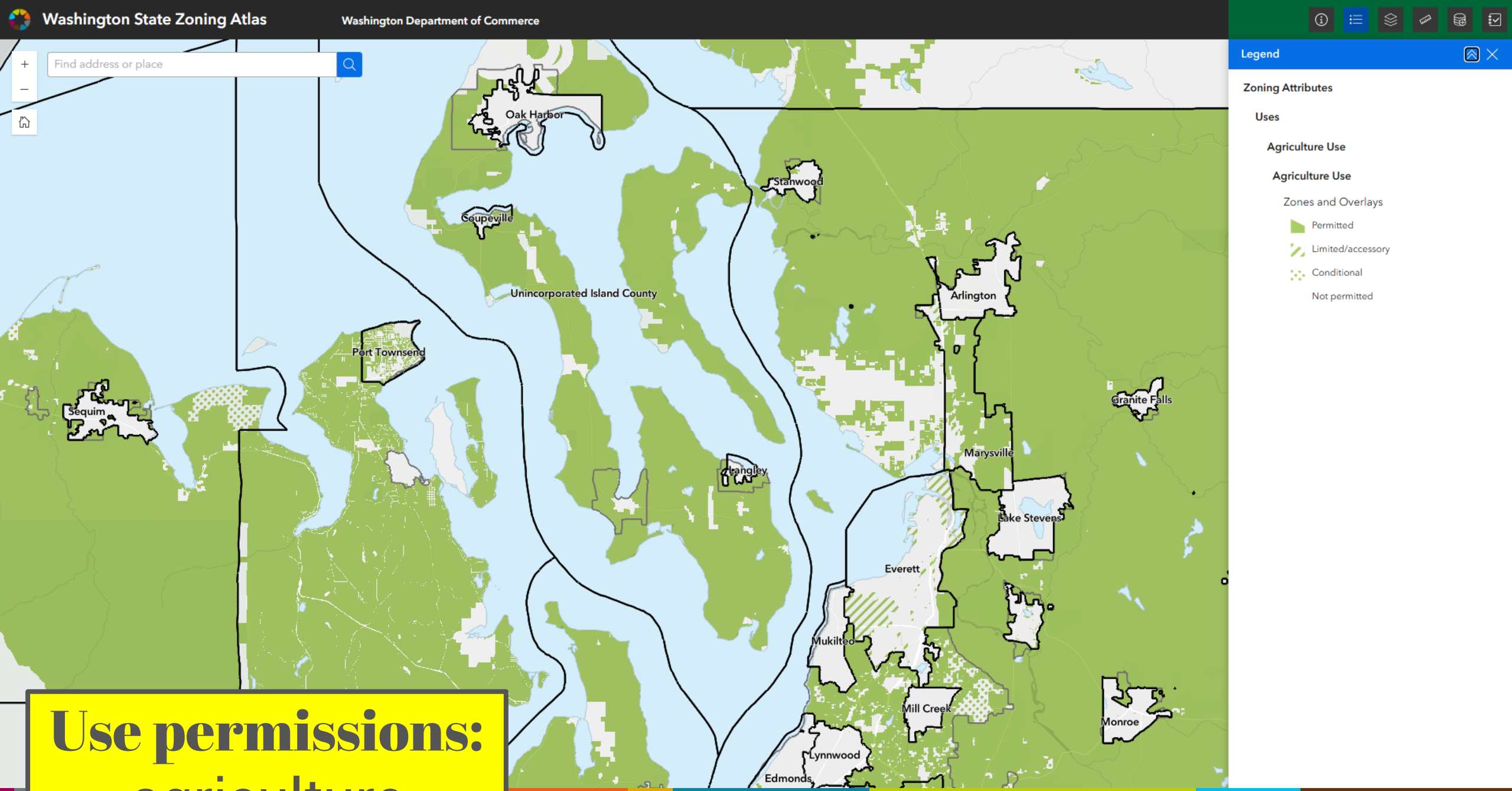


Zone classification: specific

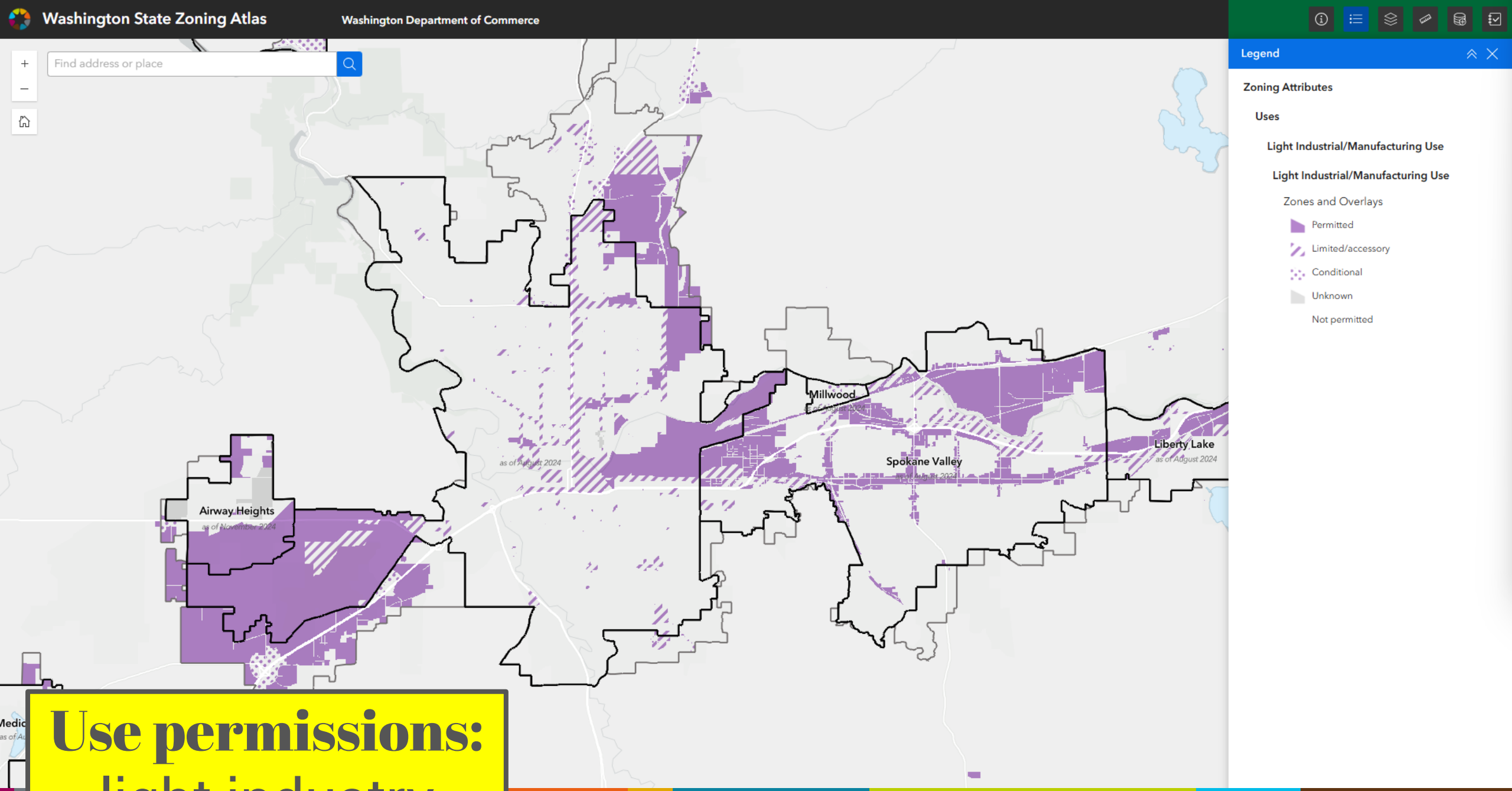


Generalized zone classifications

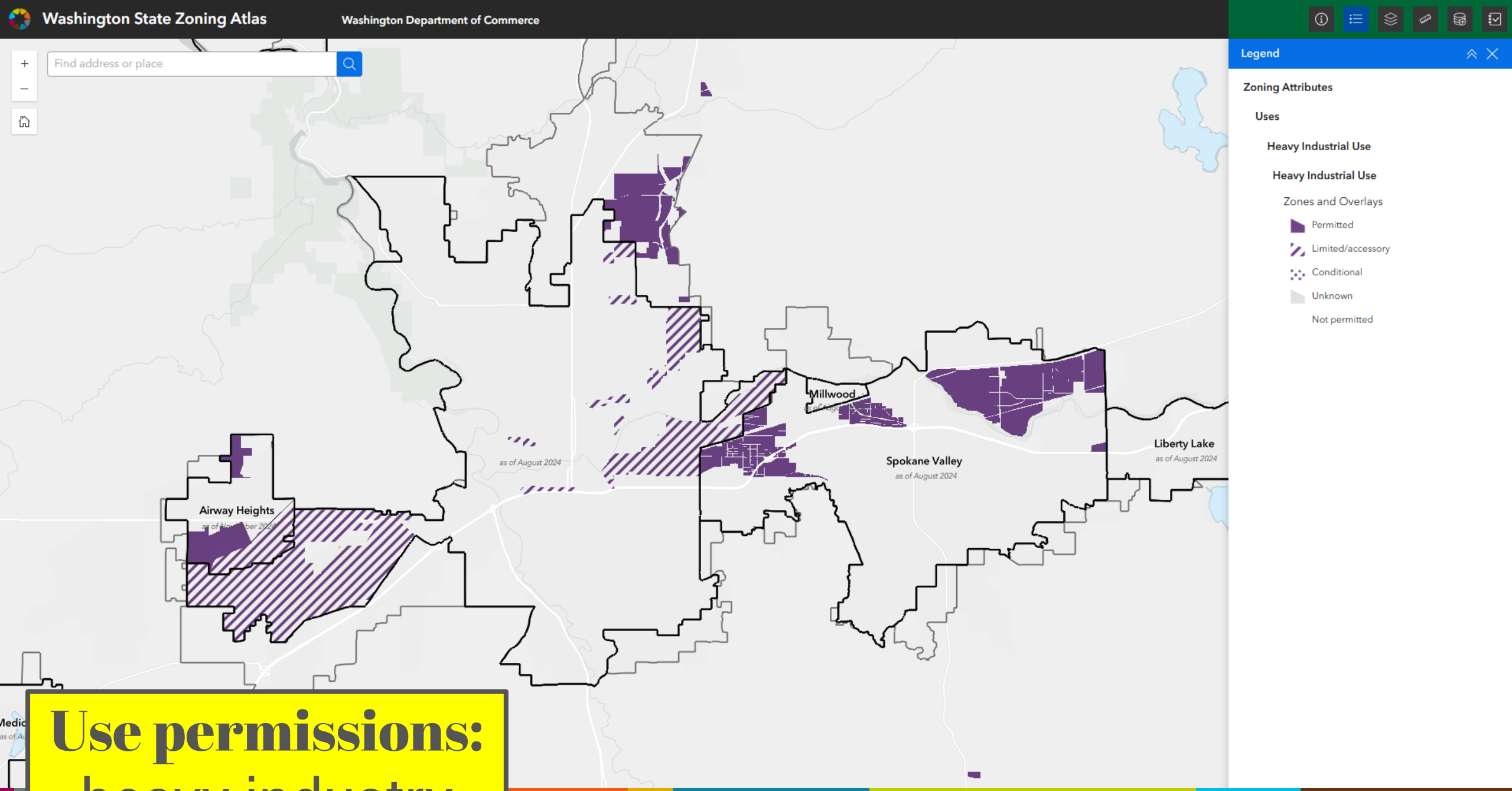

Washington State Zoning Atlas
Washington Department of Commerce
Find address or place
Legend
Zoning Attributes
Uses
Retail and Dining Uses
Retail and Dining Uses
Zones and Overlays
Permitted
Limited/Accessory
Conditional
Unknown
Not Permitted
Oak Harbor
Stanwood
Coupeville
Unincorporated Island County
Port Townsend
Sequim
Arlington
Granite Falls
Marysville
Langley
Lake Stevens
Everett
Mukilteo
Mill Creek
Monroe
Lynnwood
Edmonds
Use permissions:
retail and dining



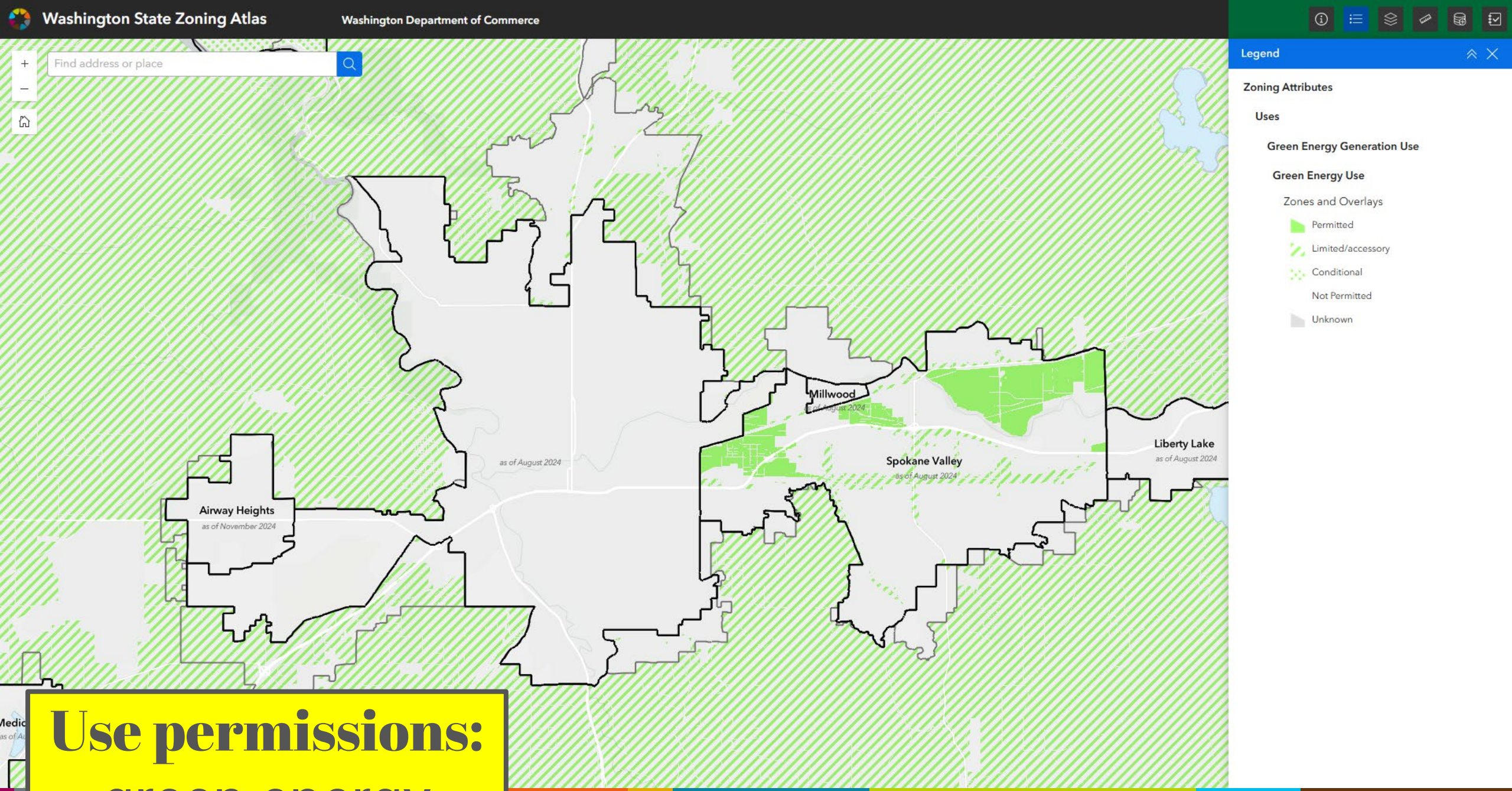
Use permissions: agriculture



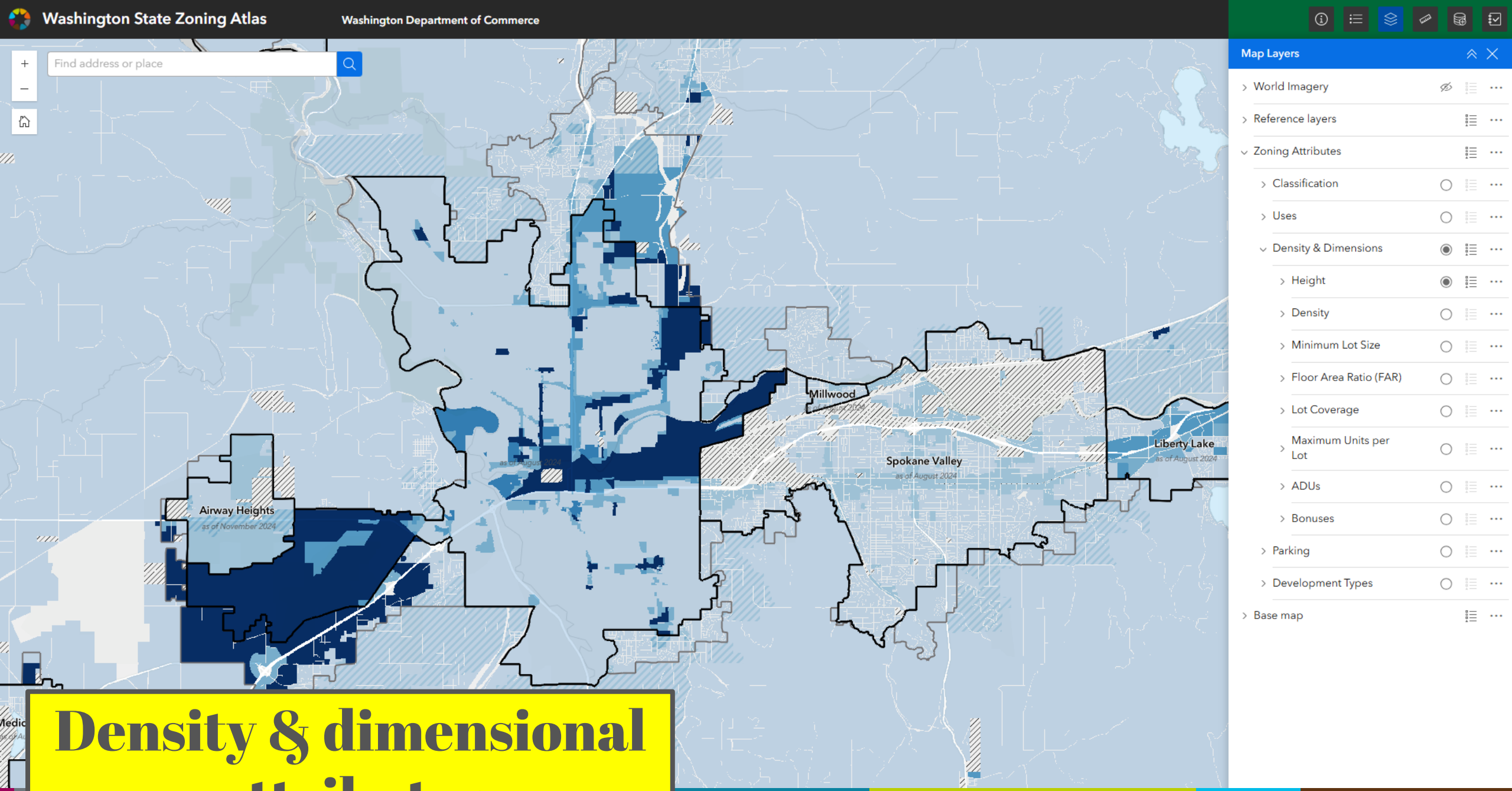
Use permissions:
light industry



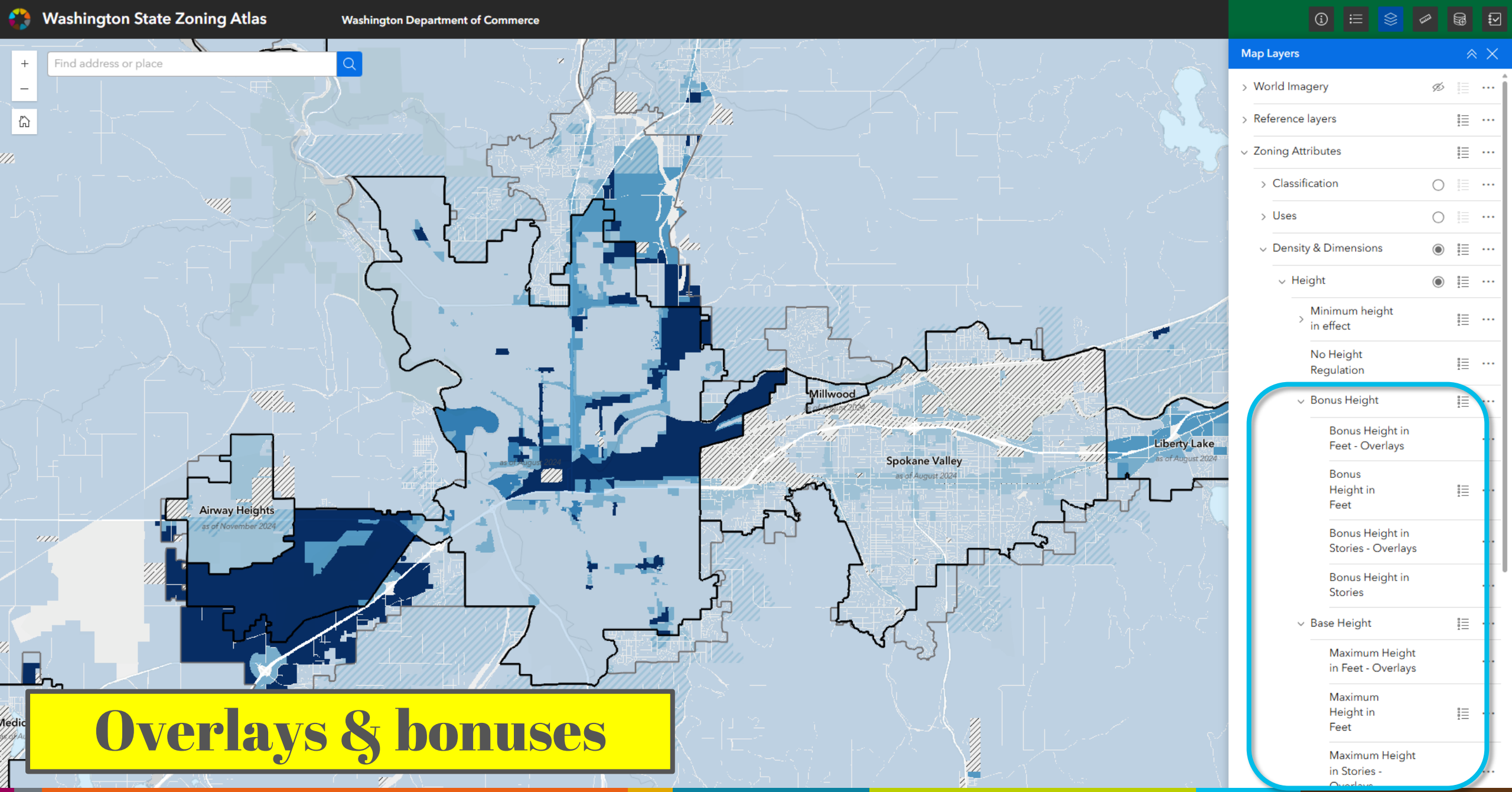
Use permissions: heavy industry



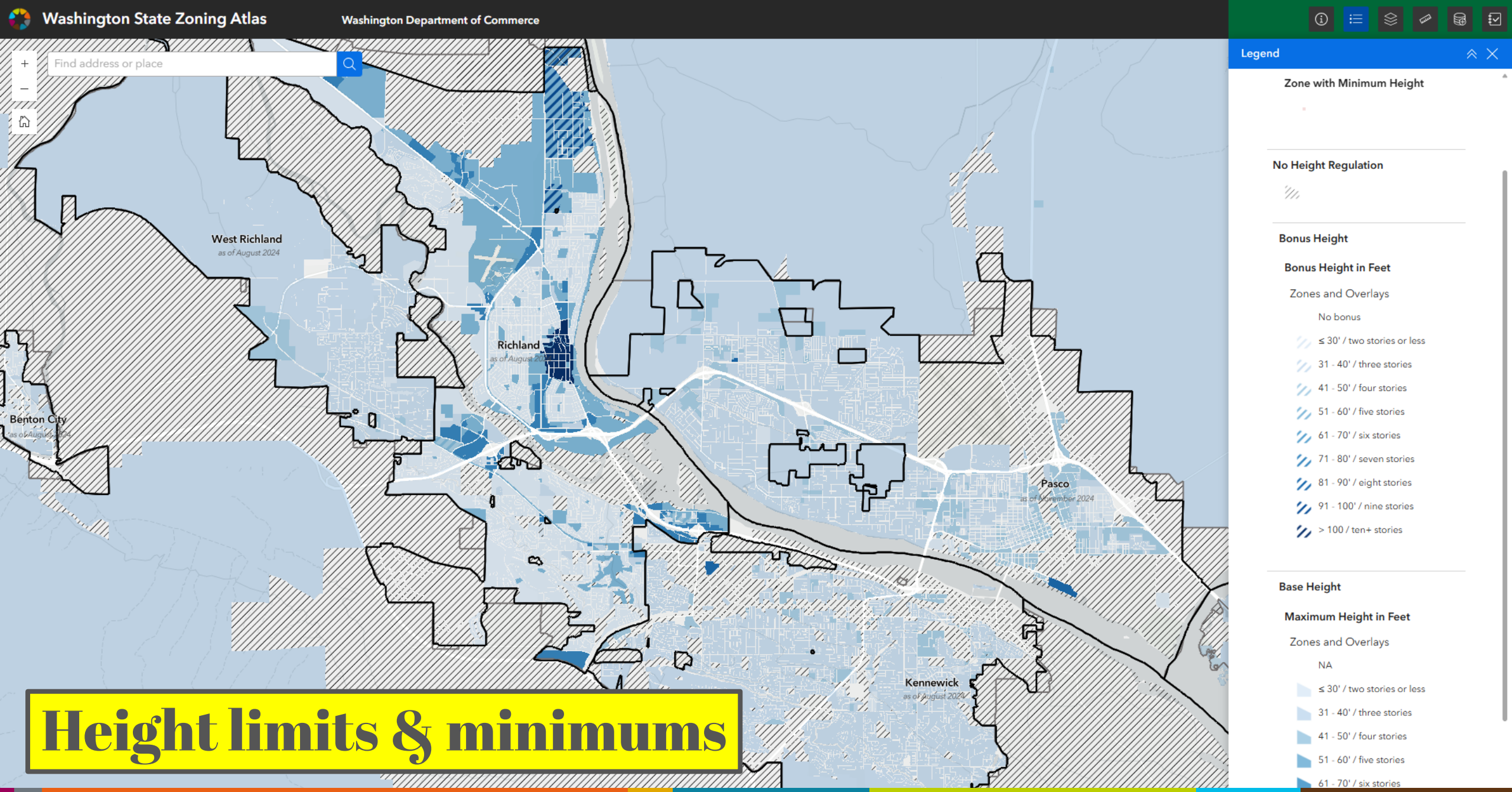
Use permissions:
green energy



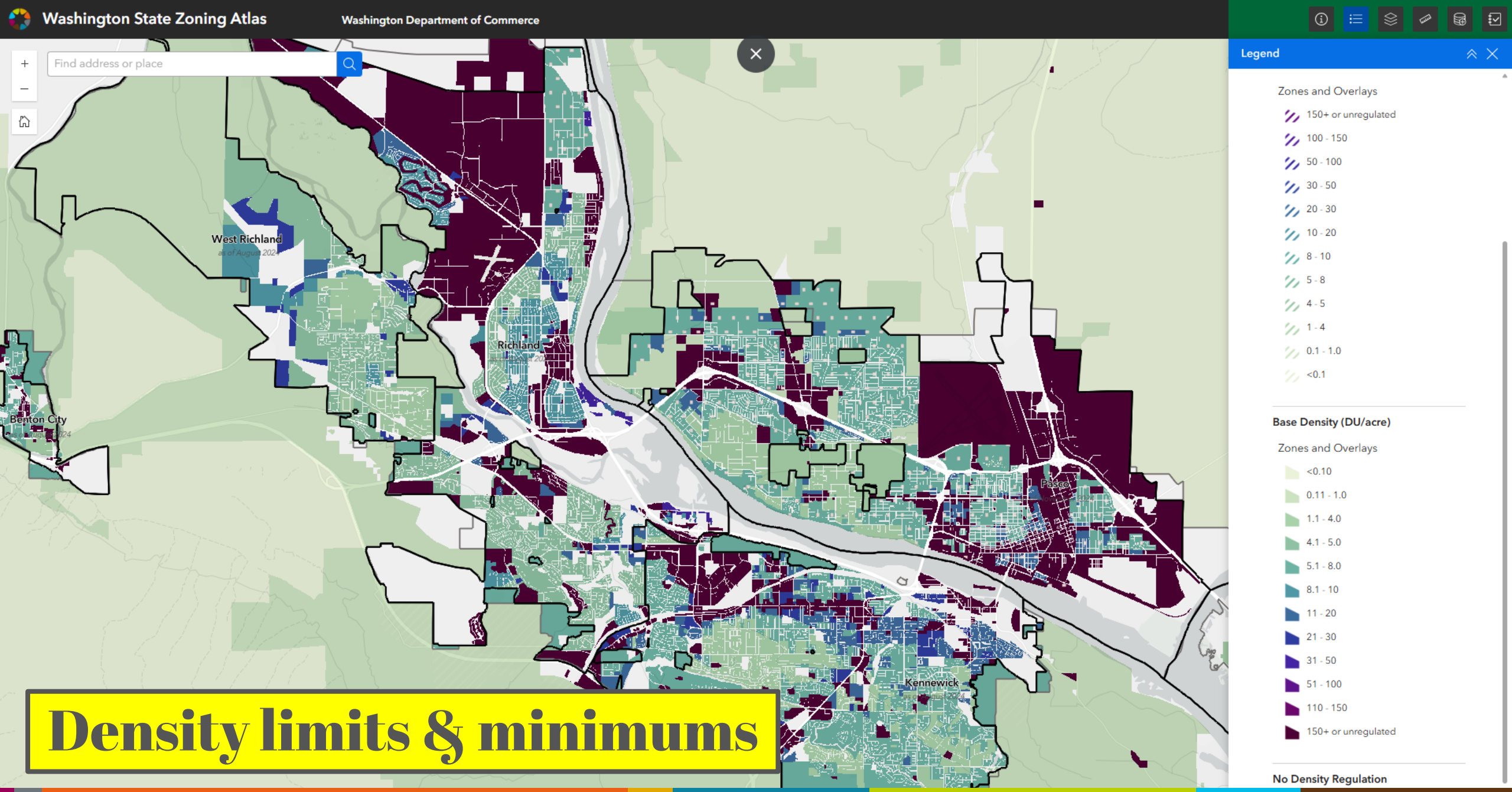
Density & dimensional attributes



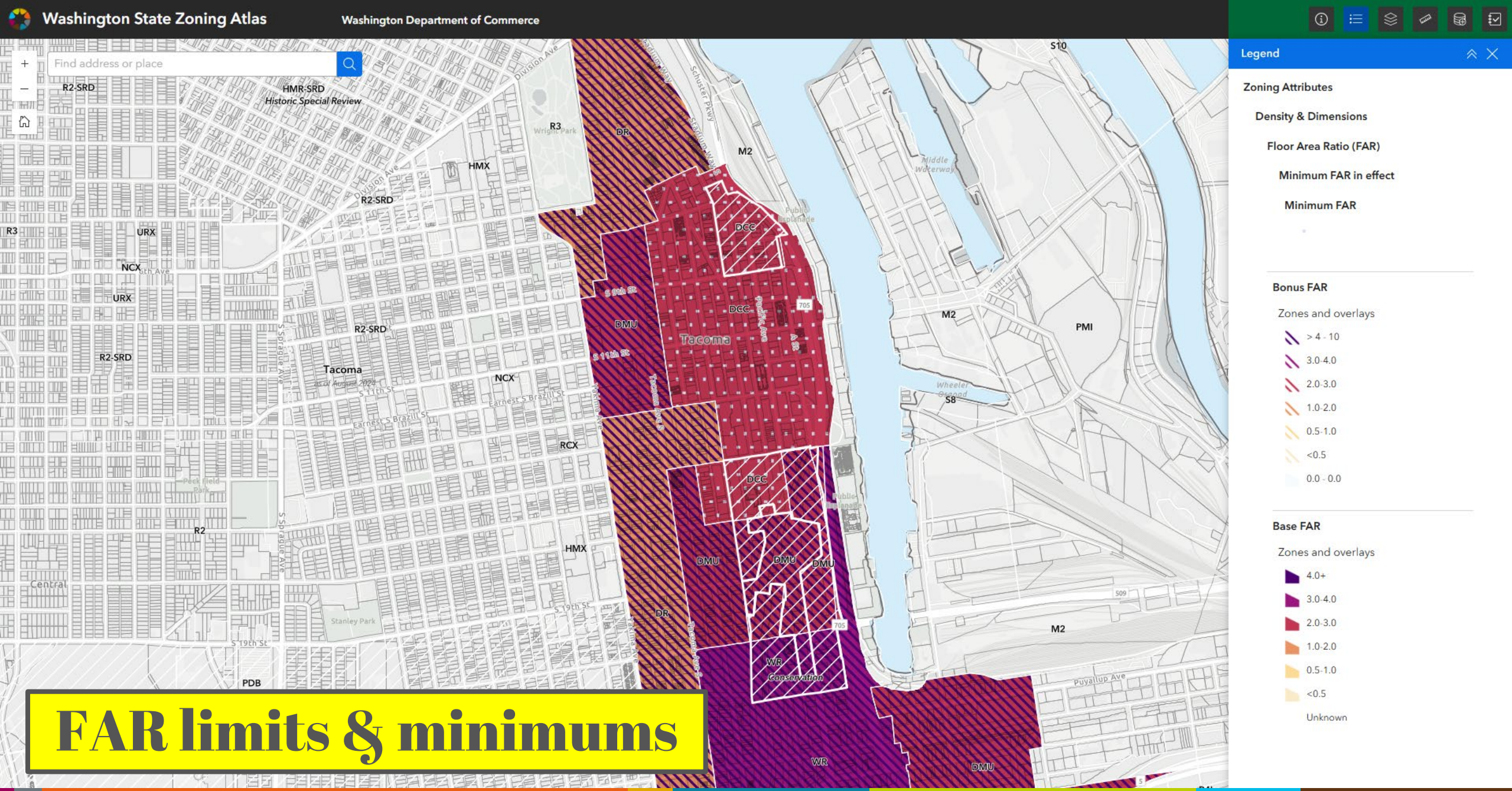
Overlays & bonuses



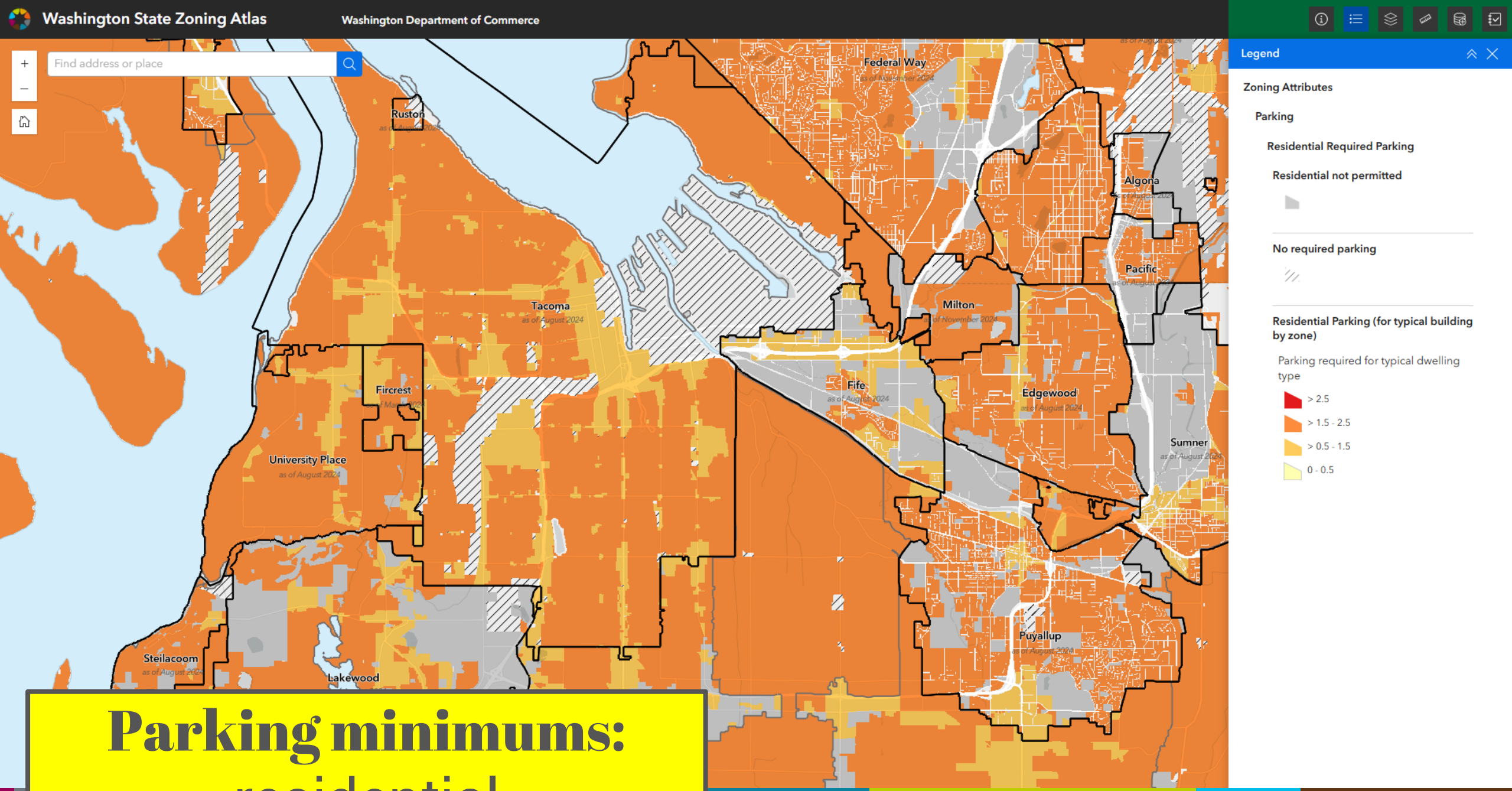
Height limits & minimums



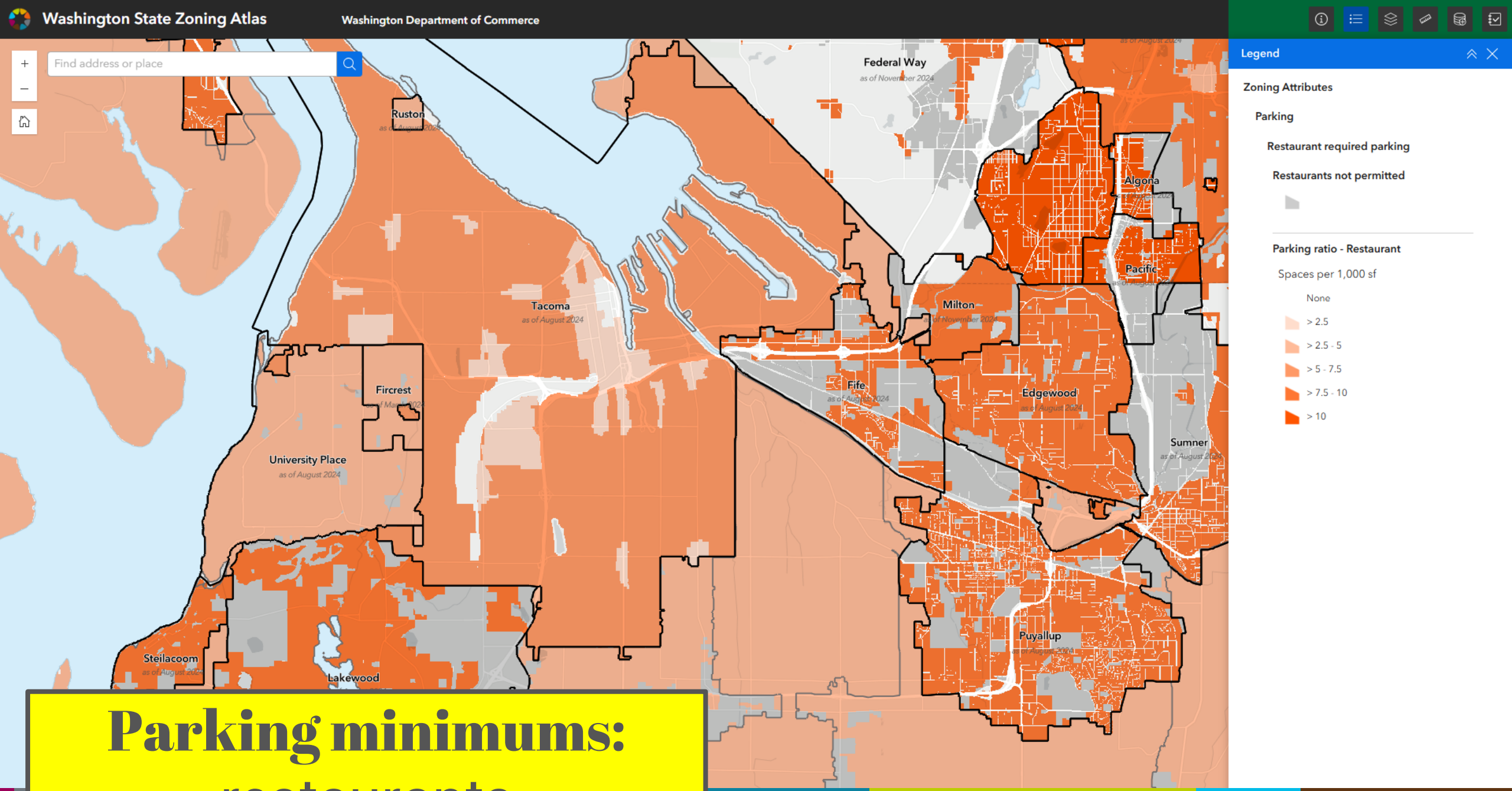
Density limits & minimums



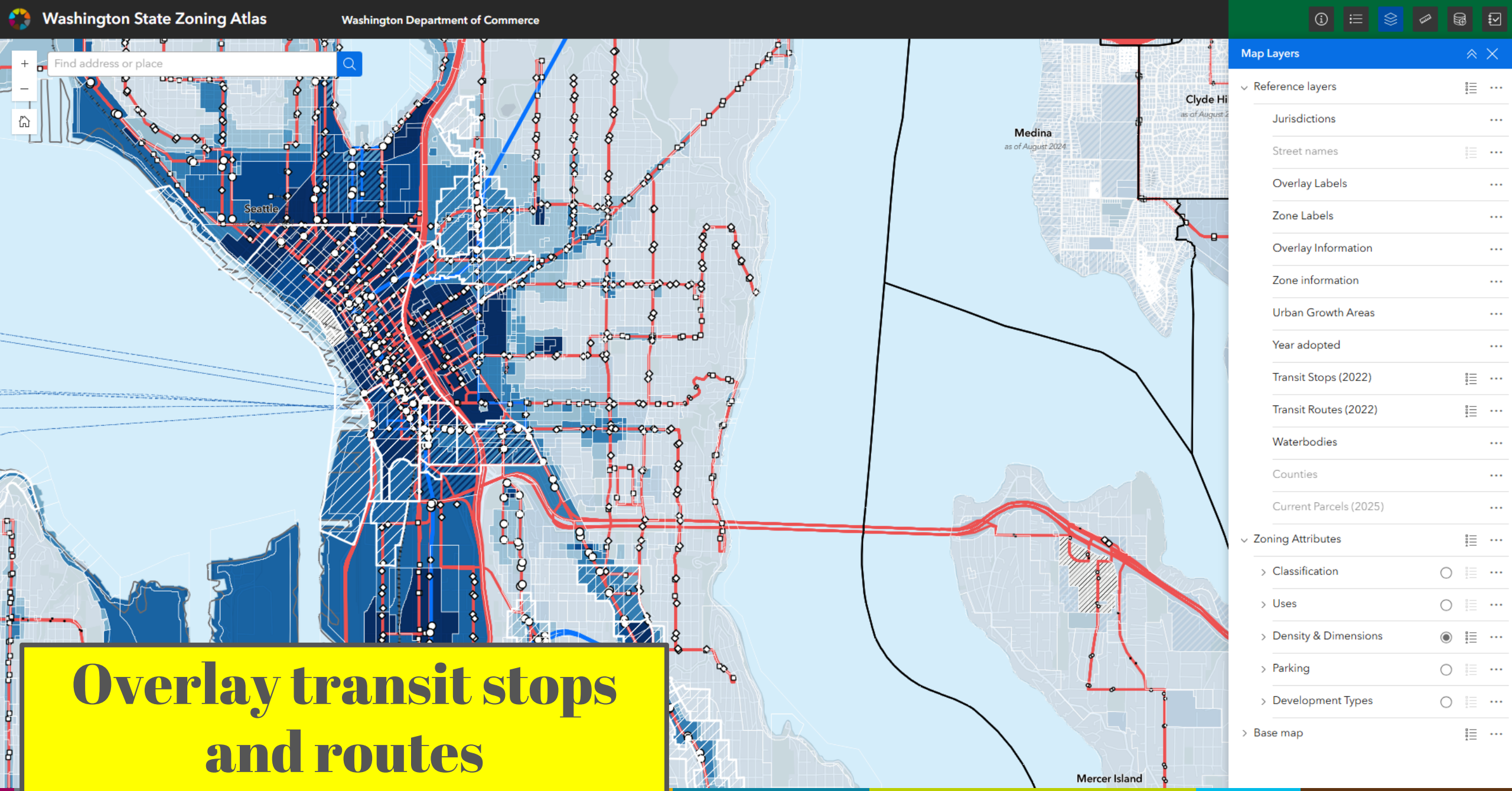
FAR limits & minimums



Parking minimums: residential

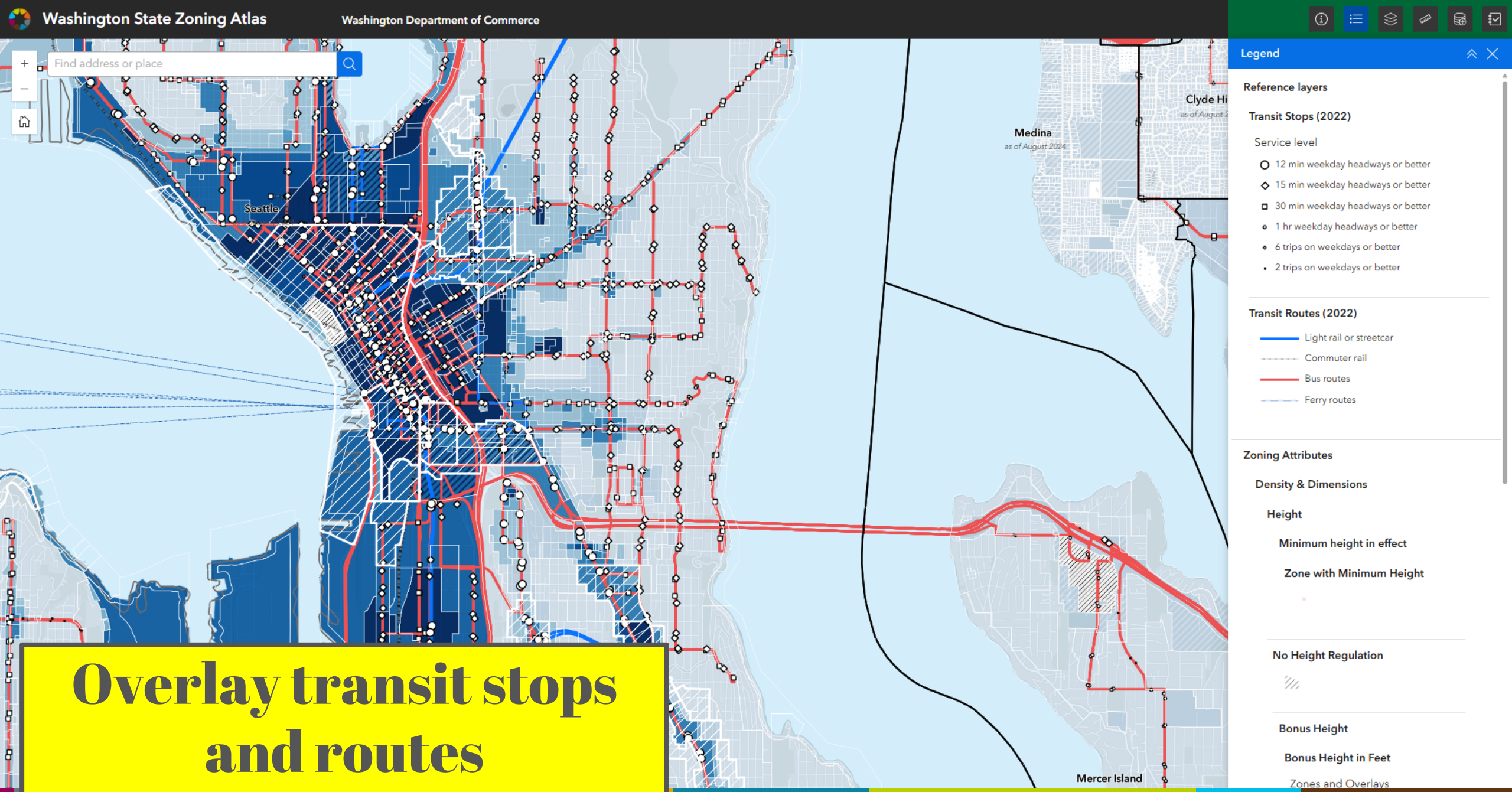


Parking minimums: restaurants



Overlay transit stops and routes

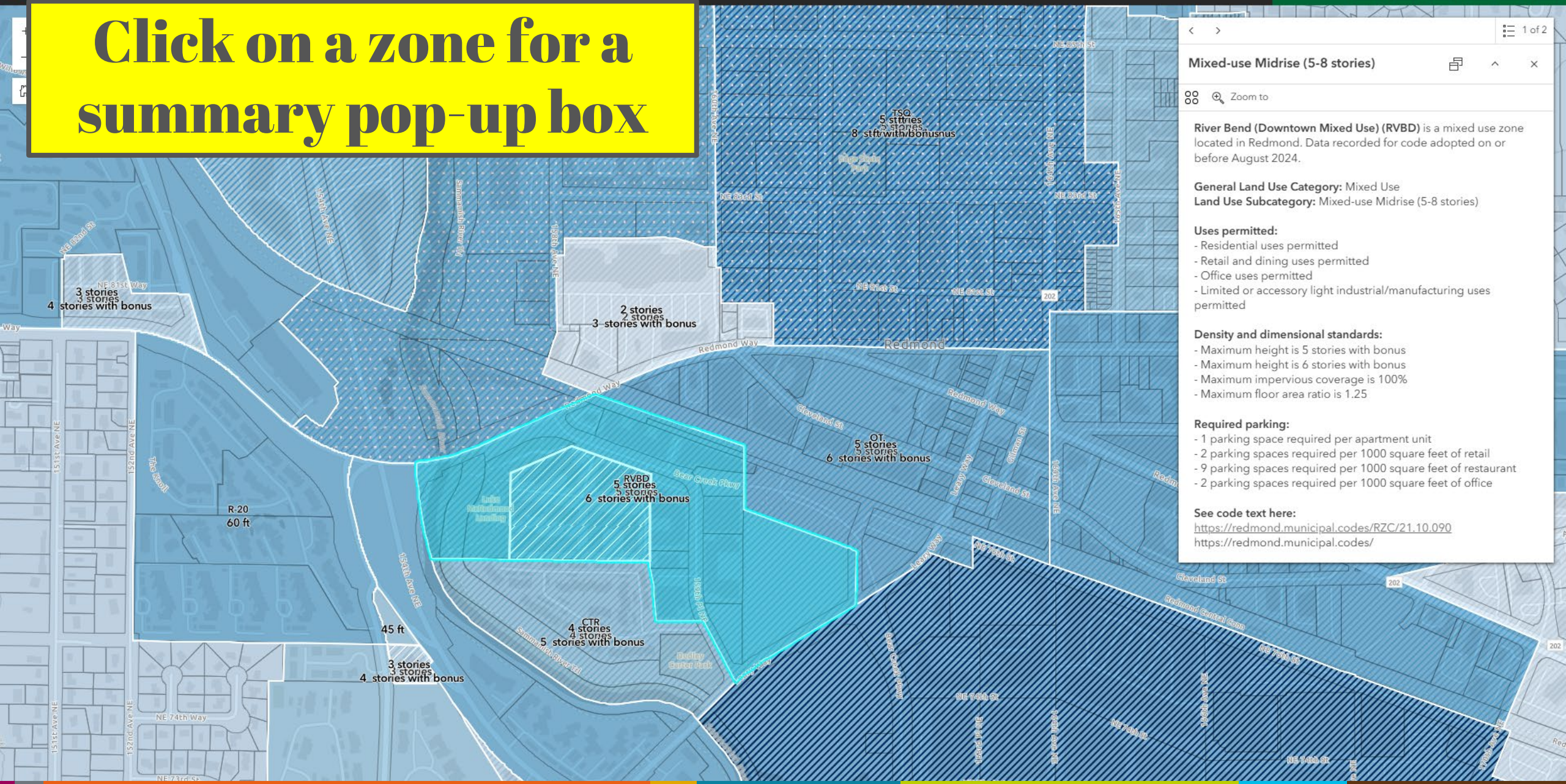
(2022 data from WSDOT)



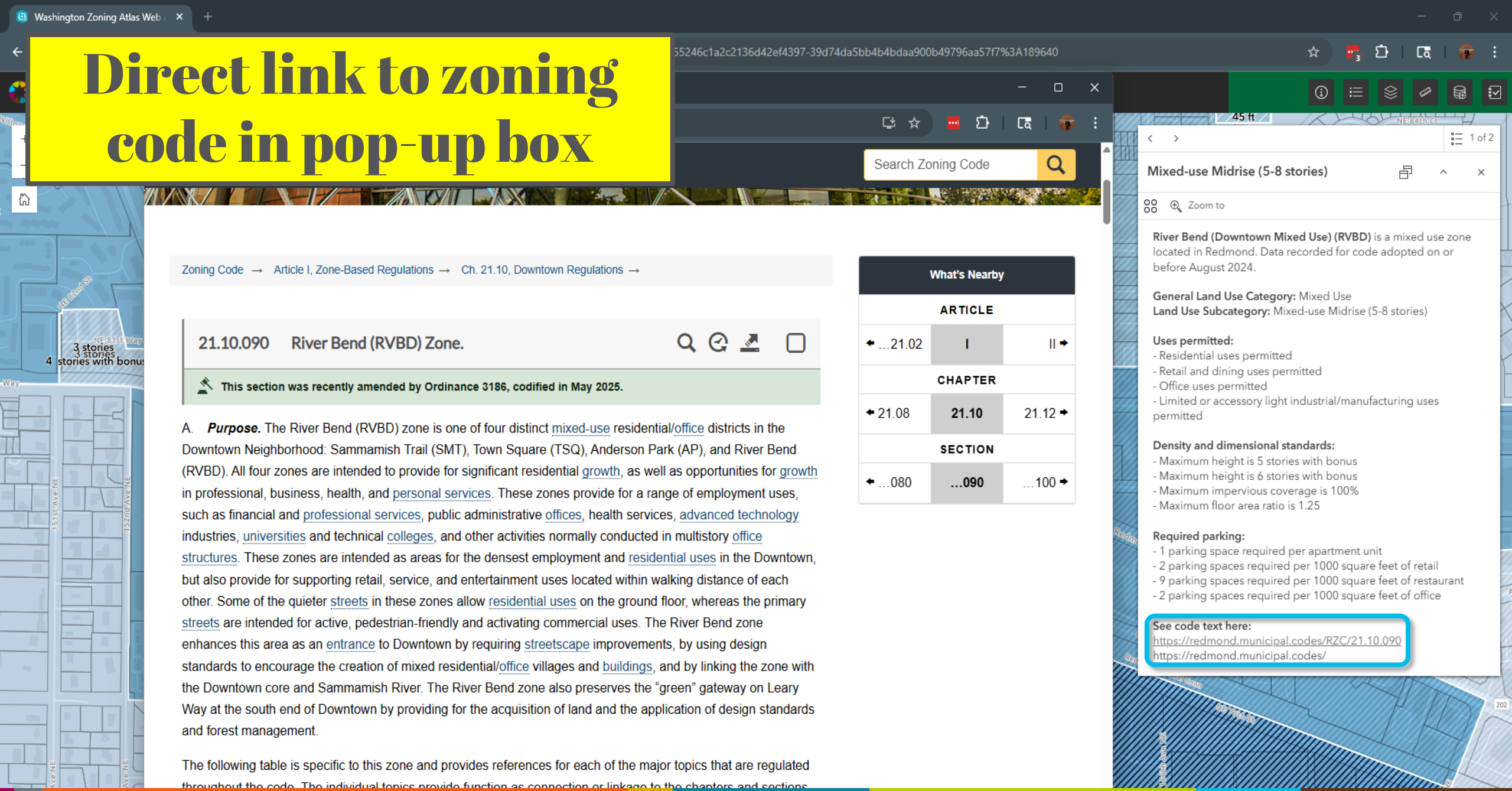
Overlay transit stops and routes

(2022 data from WSDOT)

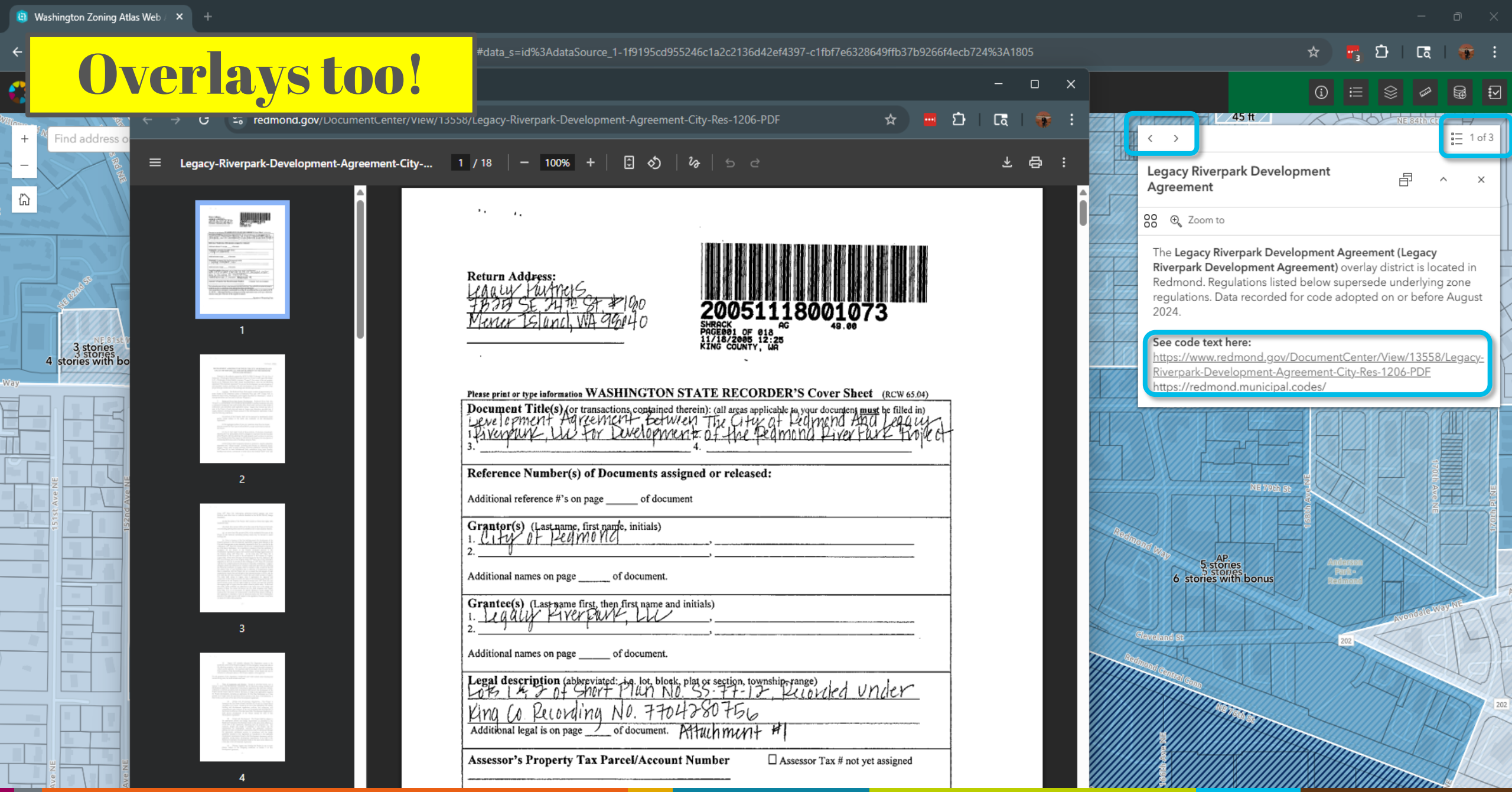
Click on a zone for a summary pop-up box



Direct link to zoning code in pop-up box

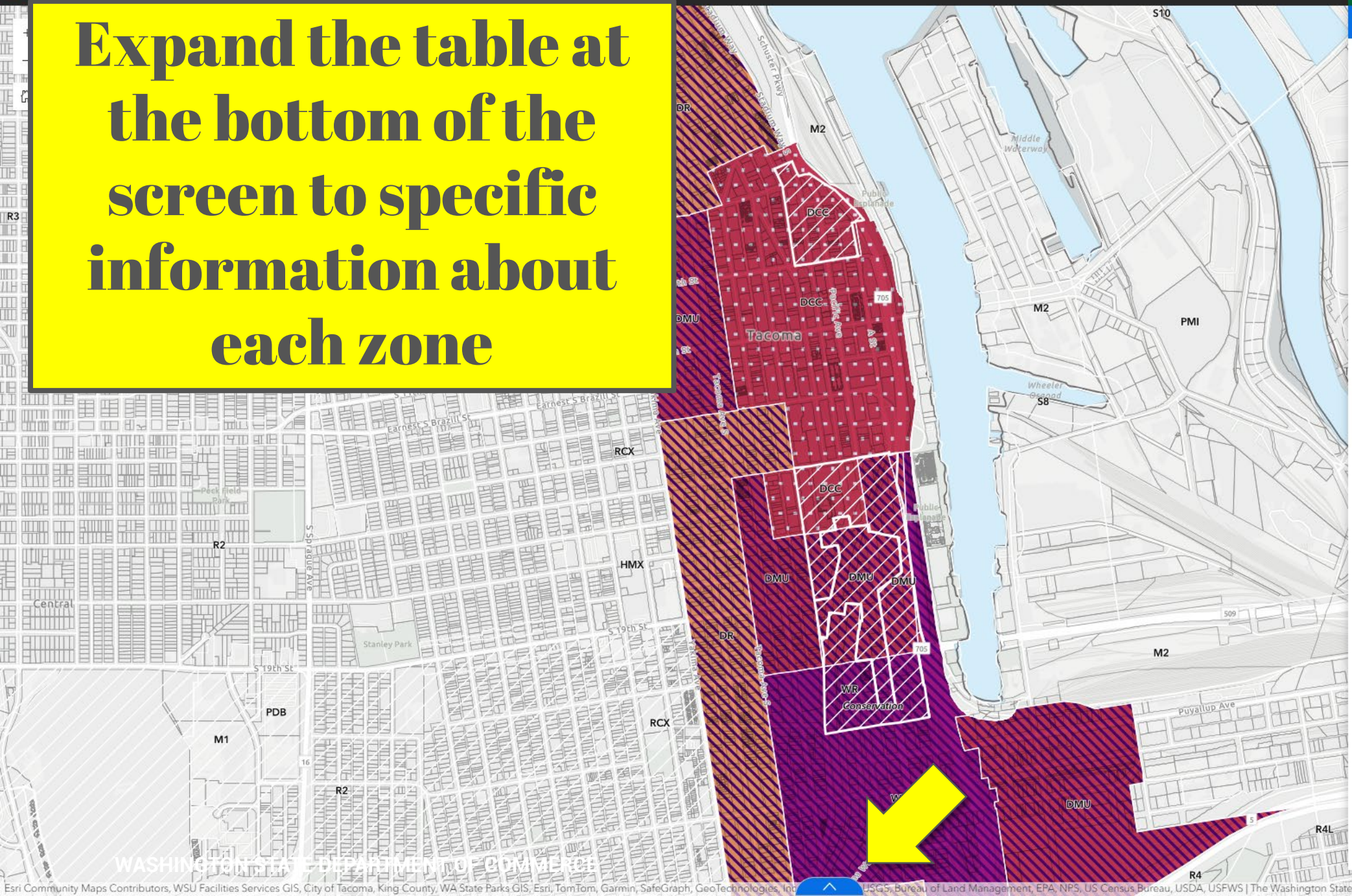


Overlays too!



Limited assessor information also available for parcels

Expand the table at the bottom of the screen to specific information about each zone



Legend

Zoning Attributes

Density & Dimensions

Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

Minimum FAR in effect

Minimum FAR

Bonus FAR

Zones and overlays

- > 4 - 10
- 3.0-4.0
- 2.0-3.0
- 1.0-2.0
- 0.5-1.0
- <0.5
- 0.0 - 0.0

Base FAR

Zones and overlays

- 4.0+
- 3.0-4.0
- 2.0-3.0
- 1.0-2.0
- 0.5-1.0
- <0.5
- Unknown

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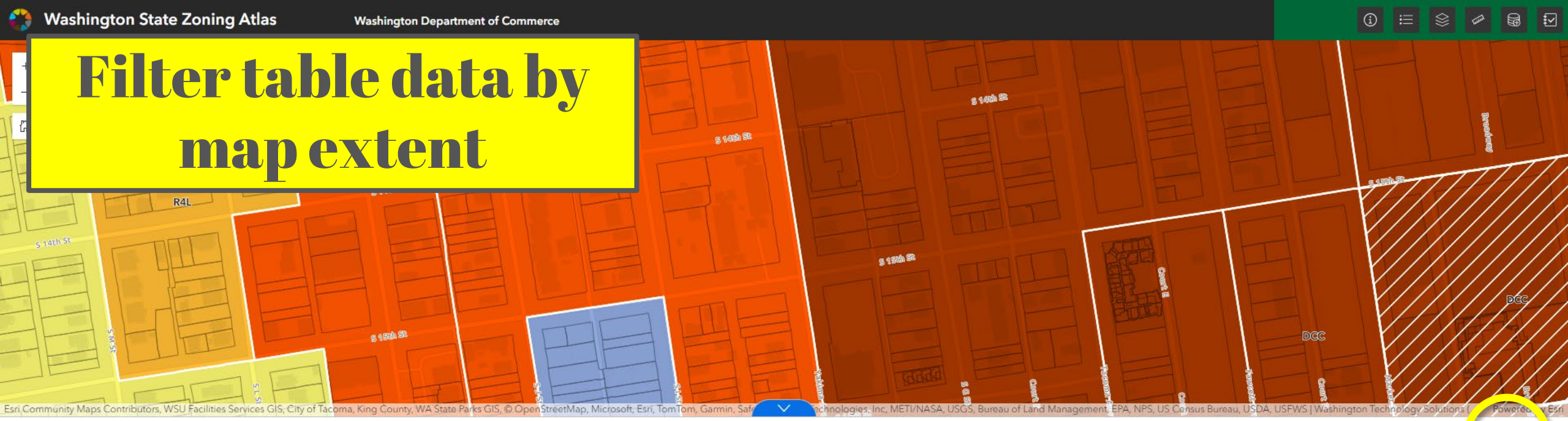
Esri Community Maps Contributors, WSU Facilities Services GIS, City of Tacoma, King County, WA State Parks GIS, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, USGS, Bureau of Land Management, EPA, NPS, US Census Bureau, USDA, USFWS | The Washington State Zoning Atlas was developed by a team incl... Powered by Esri

Expand the table at the bottom of the screen to specific information about each zone

Jurisdictions | Overlay Labels | Zone Labels | Overlay Information | Zone information | Urban Growth Areas | Year adopted | Waterbodies | Counties | Current Parcels (2025) | Minimum FAR - Overlays | Minimum FAR

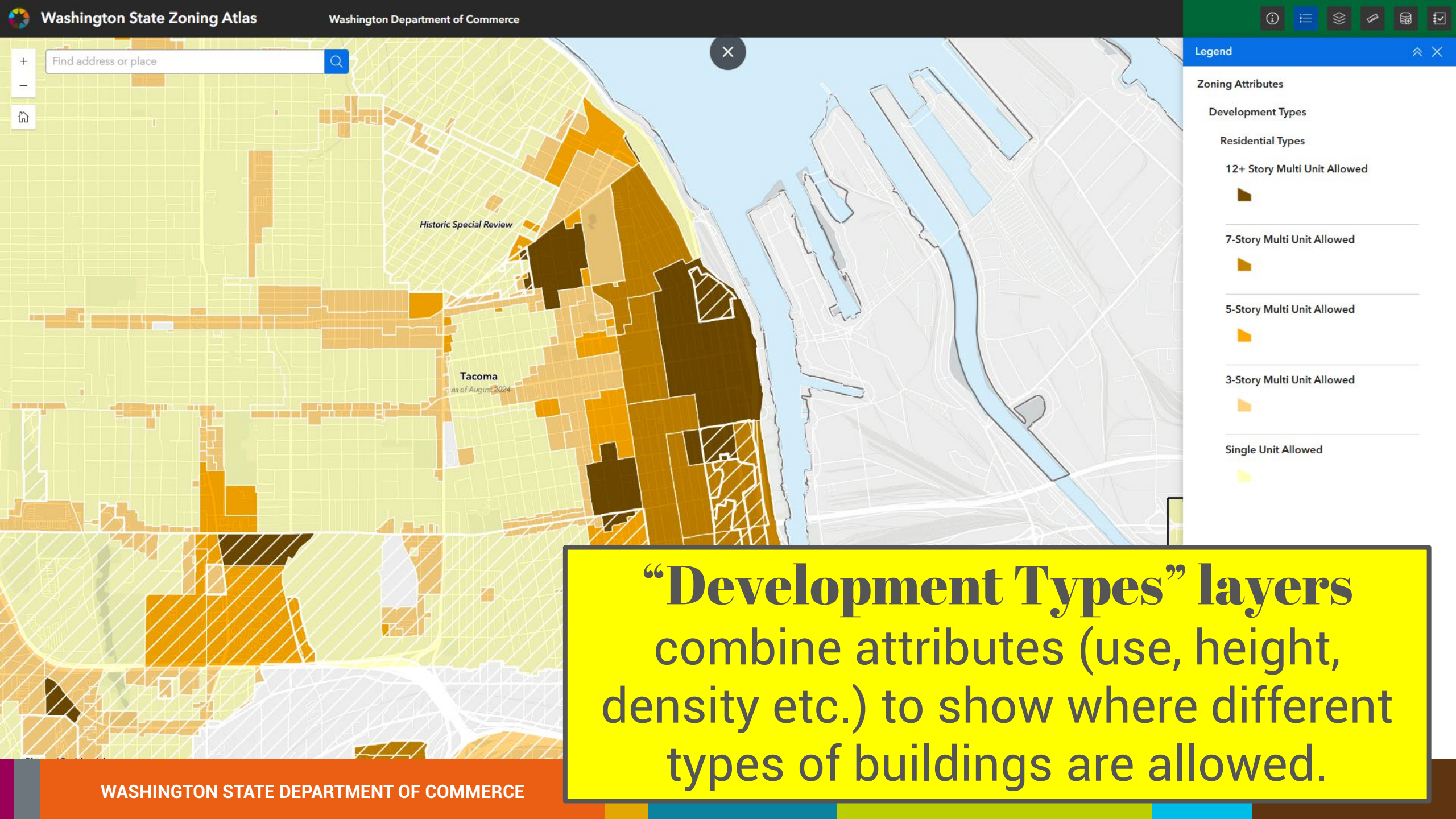
OBJECTID	GEOID	Jurisdiction Na...	County FIPS Co...	County Name	Zone ID/Abbre...	Zone Name	General Zone ...	Specific Zone C...	Use - R
162303	5370000	Tacoma	053	Pierce	DMU	Downtown Mixed-Use Dis...	Mixed Use	Mixed-use High Rise (9+ s...	Permitted
162304	5370000	Tacoma	053	Pierce	DMU	Downtown Mixed-Use Dis...	Mixed Use	Mixed-use High Rise (9+ s...	Permitted
162305	5370000	Tacoma	053	Pierce	DMU	Downtown Mixed-Use Dis...	Mixed Use	Mixed-use High Rise (9+ s...	Permitted
162310	5370000	Tacoma	053	Pierce	M1	Light Industrial District	Industrial	Light Industrial/Flex	Limited/A
162316	5370000	Tacoma	053	Pierce	M2	Heavy Industrial	Industrial	Heavy Industrial	Limited/A
162323	5370000	Tacoma	053	Pierce	NCX	Neighborhood Commerci...	Mixed Use	Mixed-use Midrise (5-8 sto...	Permitted
162324	5370000	Tacoma	053	Pierce	NCX	Neighborhood Commerci...	Mixed Use	Mixed-use Midrise (5-8 sto...	Permitted
162325	5370000	Tacoma	053	Pierce	NRX	Neighborhood Residentia...	Multi-unit Residential	Multi-unit Lowrise (up to 4...	Permitted
162326	5370000	Tacoma	053	Pierce	PMI	Port Maritime and Industrial	Industrial	Industrial Airport/Seaport	Limited/A
162470	5370000	Tacoma	053	Pierce	RCX	Regional Commercial Mix...	Mixed Use	Mixed-use Midrise (5-8 sto...	Permitted

Filter table data by map extent

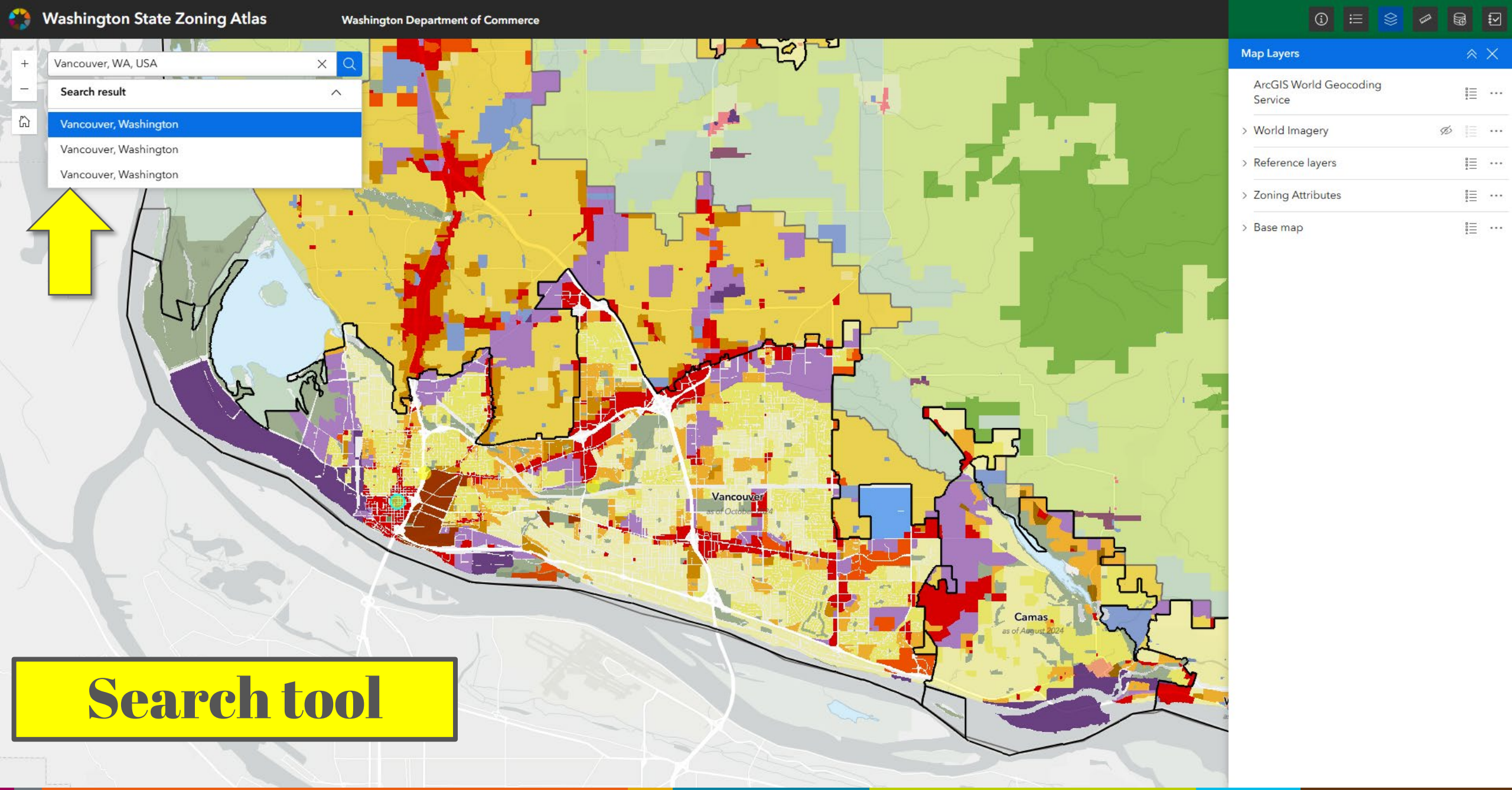


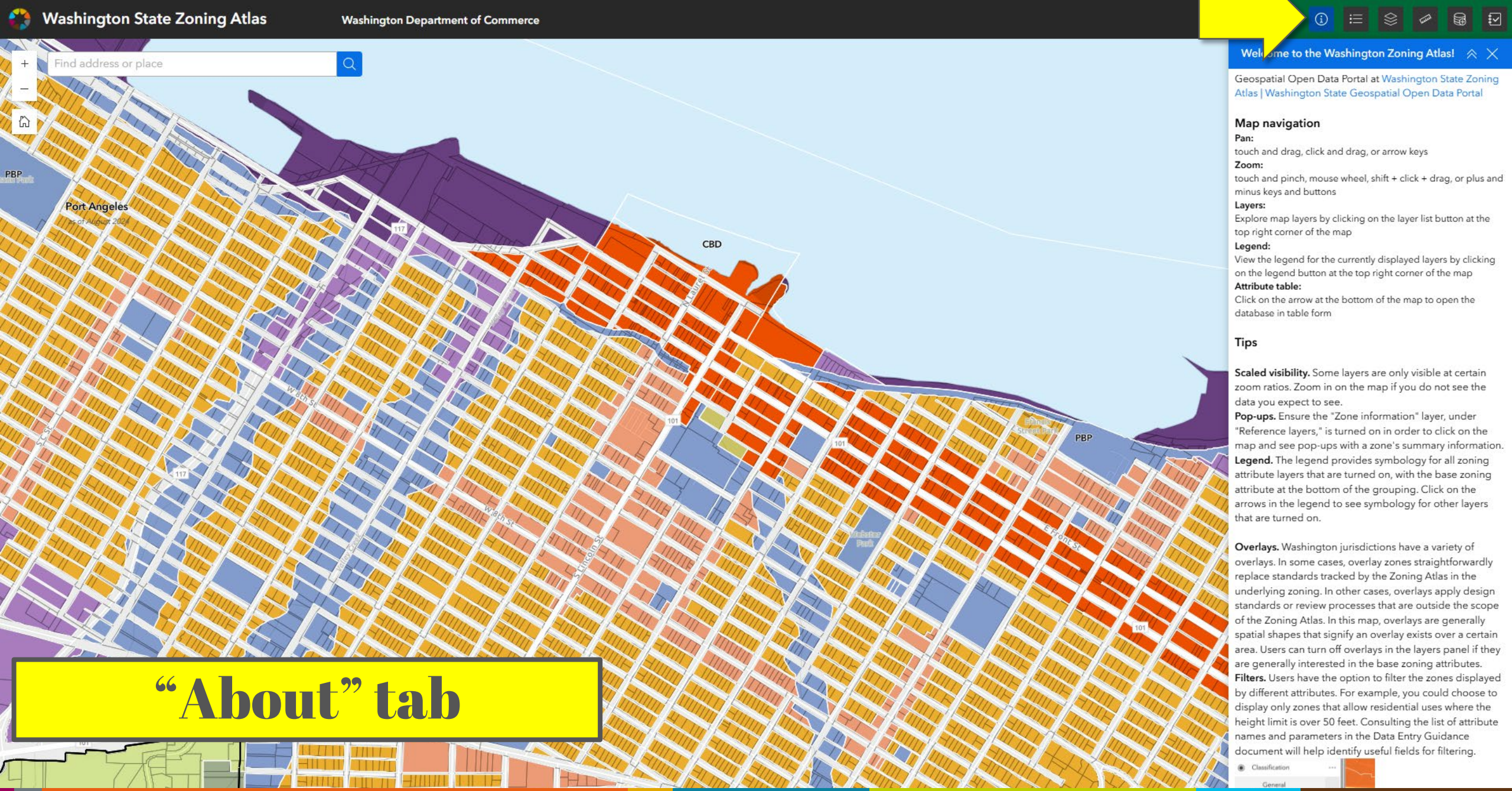
Jurisdictions | Overlay Labels | Zone Labels | Overlay Information | Zone information | Urban Growth Areas | Year adopted | Waterbodies | Counties | Current Parcels (2025) | Specific Classification | Current Parcels -

OBJECTID	GEOID	Jurisdiction Na...	County FIPS Co...	County Name	Zone ID/Abbre...	Zone Name	General Zone ...	Specific Zone C...	R
162701	5370000	Tacoma	053	Pierce	DCC	Downtown Commercial C...	Mixed Use	Mixed-use High Rise (9+ s...	Permitted
162702	5370000	Tacoma	053	Pierce	DCC	Downtown Commercial C...	Mixed Use	Mixed-use High Rise (9+ s...	Permitted
162703	5370000	Tacoma	053	Pierce	DCC	Downtown Commercial C...	Mixed Use	Mixed-use High Rise (9+ s...	Permitted
162704	5370000	Tacoma	053	Pierce	DCC	Downtown Commercial C...	Mixed Use	Mixed-use High Rise (9+ s...	Permitted
162709	5370000	Tacoma	053	Pierce	DMU	Downtown Mixed-Use Dis...	Mixed Use	Mixed-use High Rise (9+ s...	Permitted
162711	5370000	Tacoma	053	Pierce	DR	Downtown Residential Dis...	Mixed Use	Mixed-use High Rise (9+ s...	Permitted
162717	5370000	Tacoma	053	Pierce	HMX	Hospital-Medical Mixed-U...	Public and Semi-Public Use	Public and Semi-Public Use	Permitted
162746	5370000	Tacoma	053	Pierce	NCX	Neighborhood Commerci...	Mixed Use	Mixed-use Midrise (5-8 sto...	Permitted
162917	5370000	Tacoma	053	Pierce	R4L	Low-Density Multiple-Fam...	Multi-unit Residential	Multi-unit Lowrise (up to 4...	Permitted
162940	5370000	Tacoma	053	Pierce	RCX	Regional Commercial Mix...	Mixed Use	Mixed-use Midrise (5-8 sto...	Permitted

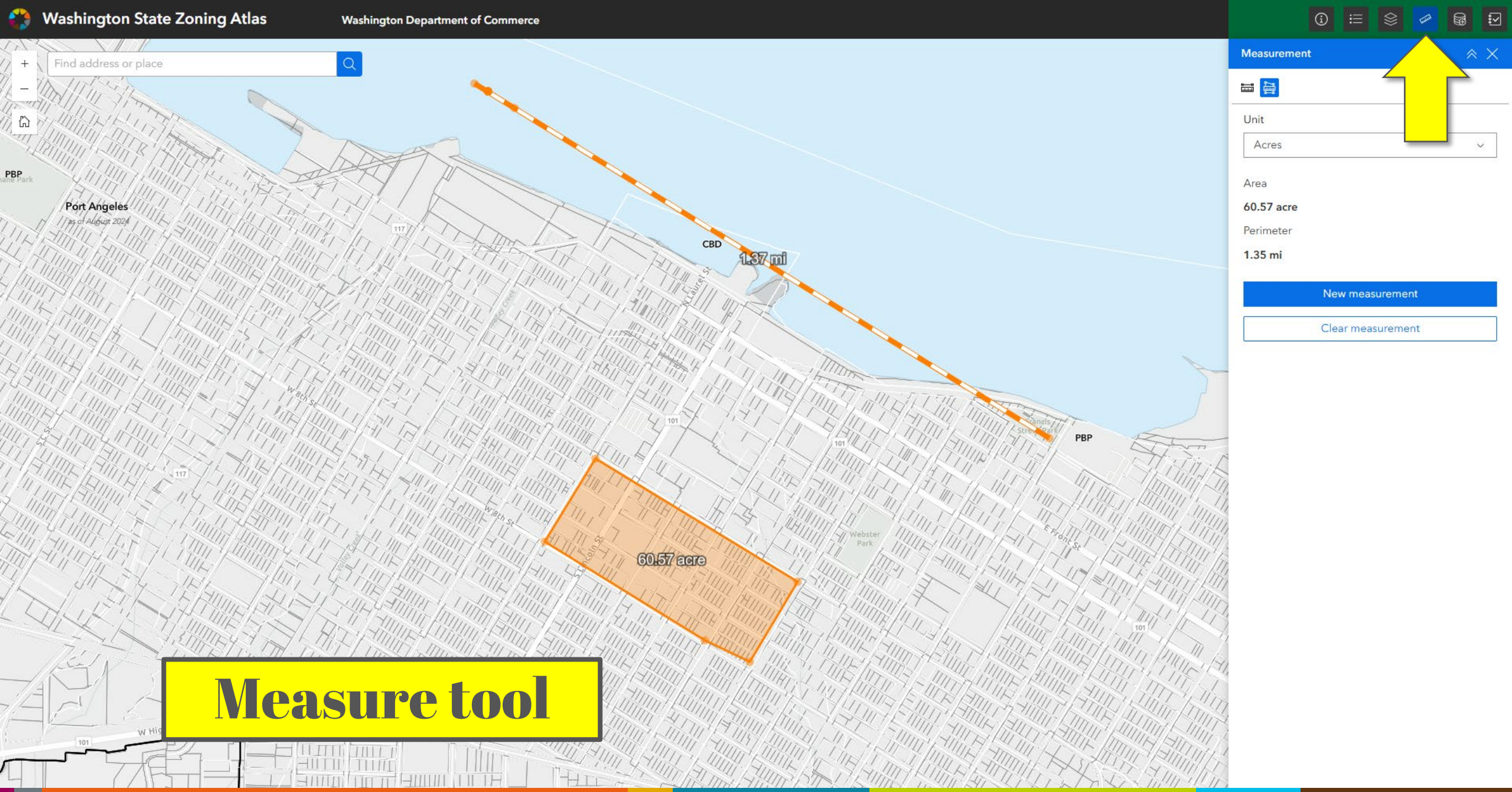


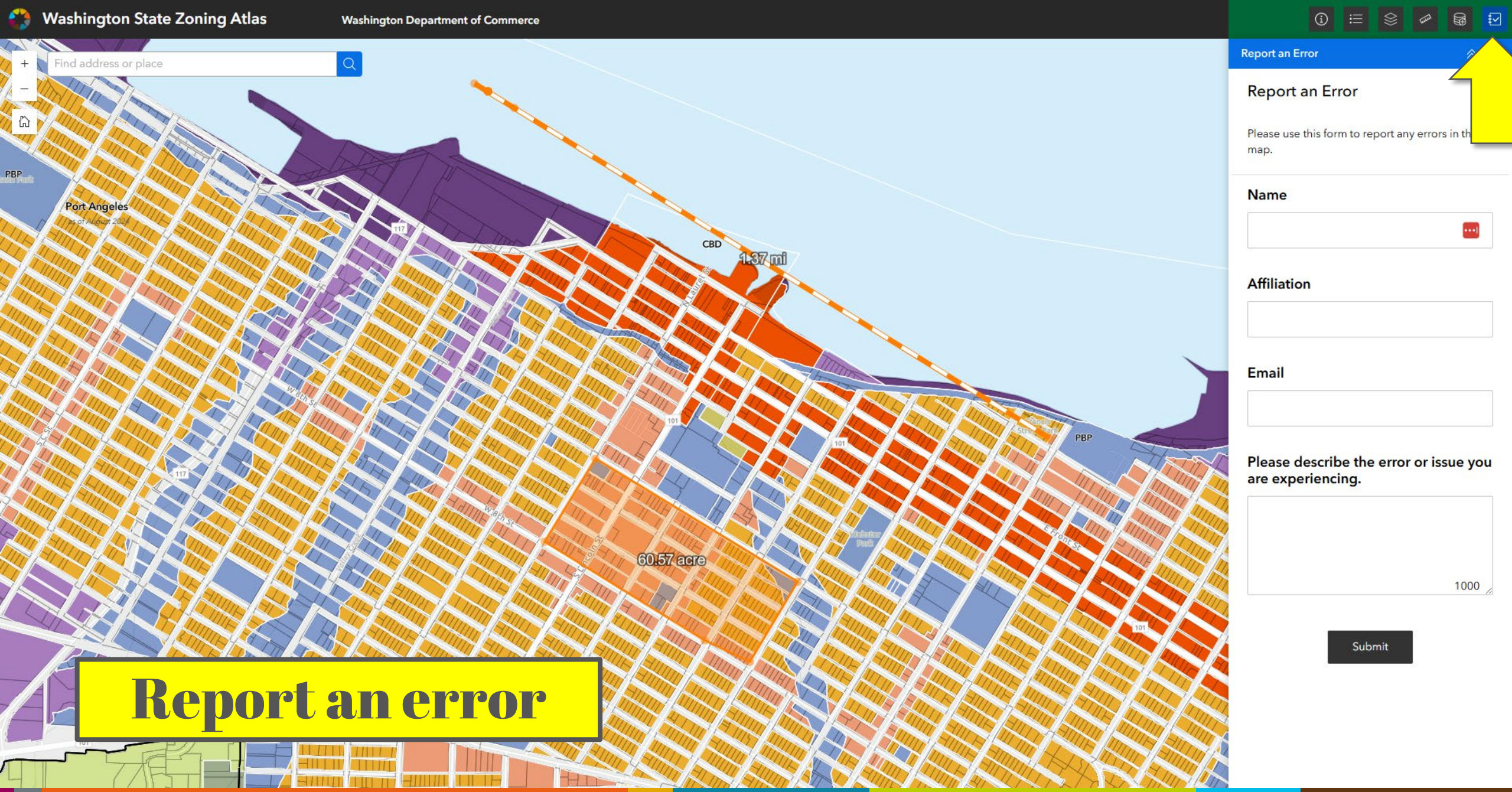
"Development Types" layers combine attributes (use, height, density etc.) to show where different types of buildings are allowed.

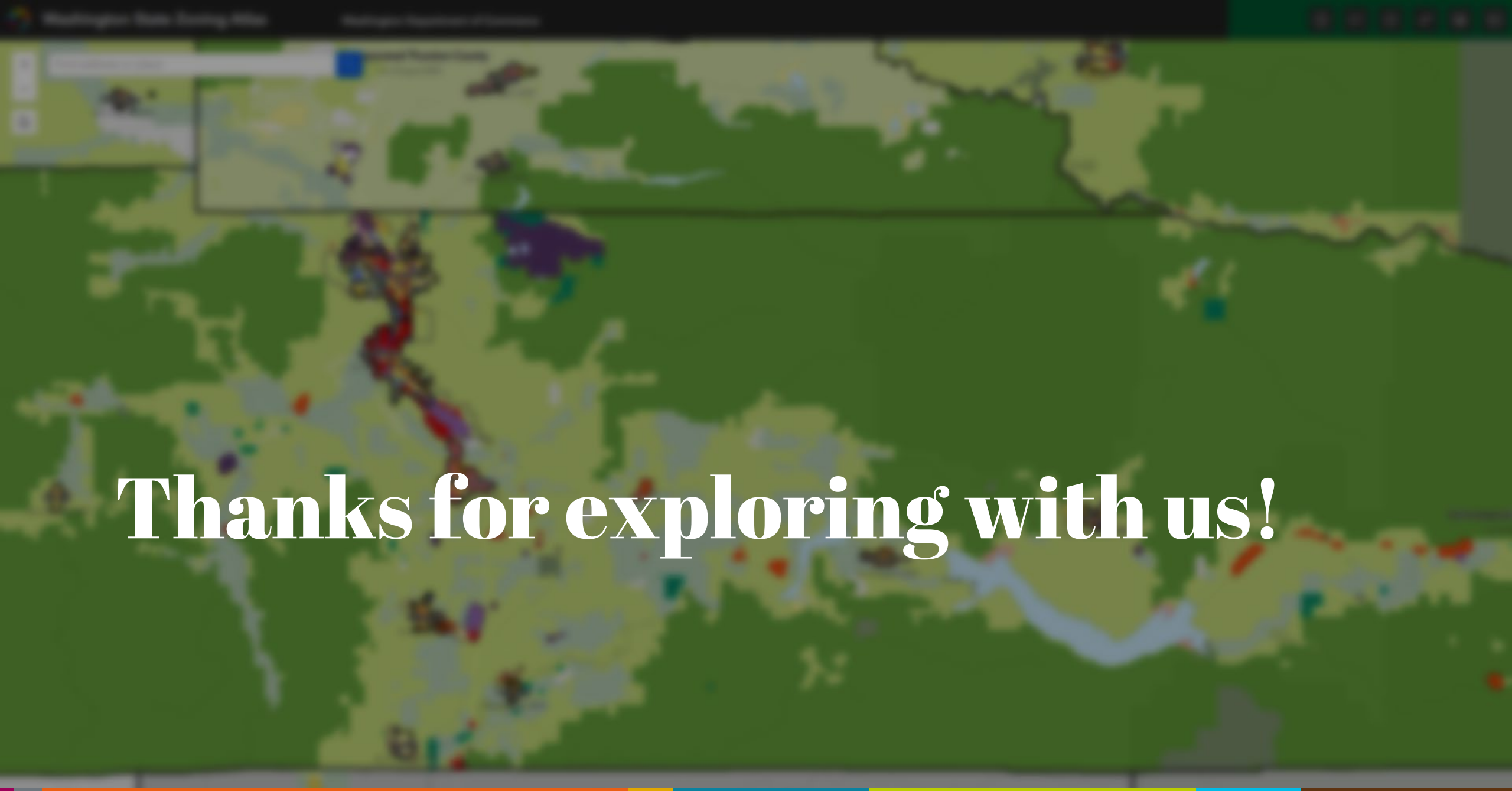

Washington State Zoning Atlas
Washington Department of Commerce
Vancouver, WA, USA
Search result
Vancouver, Washington
Vancouver, Washington
Vancouver, Washington
Map Layers
ArcGIS World Geocoding Service
World Imagery
Reference layers
Zoning Attributes
Base map
Vancouver
Camas
as of August 2024
Search tool


Washington State Zoning Atlas
Washington Department of Commerce
Find address or place
PBP
Port Angeles
CBD
PBP
Welcome to the Washington Zoning Atlas!
Geospatial Open Data Portal at Washington State Zoning Atlas | Washington State Geospatial Open Data Portal
Map navigation
Pan:
touch and drag, click and drag, or arrow keys
Zoom:
touch and pinch, mouse wheel, shift + click + drag, or plus and minus keys and buttons
Layers:
Explore map layers by clicking on the layer list button at the top right corner of the map
Legend:
View the legend for the currently displayed layers by clicking on the legend button at the top right corner of the map
Attribute table:
Click on the arrow at the bottom of the map to open the database in table form
Tips
Scaled visibility. Some layers are only visible at certain zoom ratios. Zoom in on the map if you do not see the data you expect to see.
Pop-ups. Ensure the "Zone information" layer, under "Reference layers," is turned on in order to click on the map and see pop-ups with a zone's summary information.
Legend. The legend provides symbology for all zoning attribute layers that are turned on, with the base zoning attribute at the bottom of the grouping. Click on the arrows in the legend to see symbology for other layers that are turned on.
Overlays. Washington jurisdictions have a variety of overlays. In some cases, overlay zones straightforwardly replace standards tracked by the Zoning Atlas in the underlying zoning. In other cases, overlays apply design standards or review processes that are outside the scope of the Zoning Atlas. In this map, overlays are generally spatial shapes that signify an overlay exists over a certain area. Users can turn off overlays in the layers panel if they are generally interested in the base zoning attributes.
Filters. Users have the option to filter the zones displayed by different attributes. For example, you could choose to display only zones that allow residential uses where the height limit is over 50 feet. Consulting the list of attribute names and parameters in the Data Entry Guidance document will help identify useful fields for filtering.
Classification
General

"About" tab


Washington State Zoning Atlas
Washington Department of Commerce
Find address or place
Measurement
Unit
Acres
Area
60.57 acre
Perimeter
1.35 mi
New measurement
Clear measurement
Port Angeles
as of August 2024
CBD
1.37 mi
60.57 acre
PBP
Measure tool


Washington State Zoning Atlas
Washington Department of Commerce
Find address or place
Report an Error
Report an Error
Please use this form to report any errors in th
map.
Name
Affiliation
Email
Please describe the error or issue you
are experiencing.
1000
Submit
PBP
Port Angeles
CBD
1.37 mi
60.57 acre
Report an error



Thanks for exploring with us!