June 27, 2006

Darryl Piercy
Director
Kittitas County Community Development Services
411 N. Ruby St.
Suite 2
Ellensburg, WA 98926

Dear Mr. Piercy,

RE: Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments by RIDGE and others

This letter is to submit proposed text amendments to the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan to be considered in 2006. We propose the amendments in a constructive spirit of reform with the hope that we might bring our Comprehensive Plan into compliance with the Growth Management Act and into step with the needs of a county that is experiencing unprecedented growth. This growth has brought economic opportunity. It has also threatened a quality of life that motivated new arrivals to come and existing residents to stay in Kittitas County. To fully realize the opportunities that growth affords, we must address the problems that it causes.

This submission is made by RIDGE, a Washington State non-profit corporation but we have been joined by a variety of organizations and individuals and one city, each of whom we understand has indicated their participation in this submission by executing a duplicate copy of the signature page of the docketing application. These organizations and individuals include Futurewise, and Fowler Creek Conservation, James Boyle of Ronald, Marty Kaatz, Beverly Heckart and Hal and Gloria Lindstrom of Ellensburg. (in the event that a signature page for a party named in this letter, should not be attached to the filing, then you should not consider them a party of this filing). The proposed amendments incorporate the experience and insight of a broad cross-section of Kittitas County citizens as well as Futurewise, the pre-eminent state-wide organization with expertise in these matters.

We believe that each of the amendments contained in this submission are worthy of the commissioners’ acceptance and we desire that each of them be adopted as written or in
substance within the revised Comprehensive Plan. However, in the event that the Commissioners were to reject one or more of the proposals we would ask that they not allow that decision to affect their consideration of any of the other proposals. Likewise, if the Commissioners were to adopt some functional equivalent to any of our proposals, we would consider that a positive step. In one case, for example, with respect to LAMRDs, we have simply offered recommendations of an approach to the subject that we would like to see adopted.

Relying on the advice provided by the planners in your office we have offered the proposed amendments as an attachment to the docketing form. That attachment is formatted so as to show only the affected portions of the existing Comprehensive Plan in “bill form” with new language underlined, deleted language struck out and unaffected surrounding language not marked up. Electronic or color-printed versions of this document will show the supporting statements in the color brown. The supporting statements are offered as answers to the four general questions contained in section V of the docketing form. No amendments are proposed for those sections of the Comprehensive Plan that are not included in this document.

We will be happy to forward an electronic version of the proposed text amendments if it would assist you in processing and posting this submission. I will contact you to make those arrangements.

RIDGE and each of our co-submitters request that we be made parties of record concerning the all parts of the 2006 Comprehensive Plan amendment process and that we be informed in writing of all County Commission and Planning Commission hearings and study sessions where these amendments are to be discussed. We understand that Kittitas County Code requires that public hearings be held in 2006 on all amendments docketed on or before June 30, 2006.

Please find enclosed, our completed amendment docketing form, attached co-filers, signature pages, attached proposed amendments and supporting statements and a check in the amount of $300 for the filing fee. Please feel free to contact me if I can be of assistance in your processing of these proposals.

Sincerely,

Doug Kilgore

Vice President and Registered Agent

cc: Matt Andersen, Winston & Cashatt
    Tim Trohimovich, Futurewise
    Dina Lund, Fowler Creek Conservation
    Jim Boyle
    Beverly Heckart
    Marty Kaatz
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT DOCKETING FORM

I. CHECK THE APPROPRIATE BOXES

COMP PLAN MAP [x] COMP PLAN TEXT [x]

NOTICE: If the amendment you are applying for is within an URBAN GROWTH AREA or you are proposing a UGA expansion of the Ellensburg, Cle Elum, or Roslyn UGA you are required to docket your item with that City as well. You must contact the appropriate City for filing deadlines, fees, application, and costs.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. APPLICANT'S NAME: RIDGE (and others see attached)
   MAILING ADDRESS:
   POB 927
   Roslyn, WA 98941

   E-MAIL ADDRESS: kilgore@televar.com
   BUSINESS PHONE: HOME PHONE: 509-649-2377

B. AGENT'S NAME: Doug Kilgore
   MAILING ADDRESS:
   POB 622, Roslyn WA 98941

   E-MAIL ADDRESS: kilgore@televar.com
   BUSINESS PHONE: 509-649-2377

III. FOR MAP AMENDMENTS

A. TAX PARCEL NUMBER(S): N/A
   ACREAGE: 
   SITE ADDRESS: 
   OWNER(S): 
   MAILING ADDRESS: 
   
   HOME PHONE: 

   (Additional sheets may be attached if more then one parcel is involved)
EXISTING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DESIGNATION: N/A

EXISTING ZONING: N/A

PROPOSED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DESIGNATION: N/A

PROPOSED ZONING DESIGNATION: N/A

THE PRESENT USE OF THE PROPERTY IS: N/A

SURROUNDING LAND USE: N/A

SERVICES: N/A

Please provide the following information regarding the availability of services.

The site is currently served by sewer _____; septic_____ (check one)
Sewer purveyor (if on public sewer system): ____________________________

The site is currently served by a public water system _____; well_____
Water purveyor (if on public water system): ____________________________

The site is located on a public road _____; private road ______ (check one)
Name of road: ____________________________

Fire District #: ____________________________
IV. FOR TEXT AMENDMENTS

Identify the sections of the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance that you are proposing to change and provide the proposed wording (attach additional pages if necessary)

See attached text amendments and supporting statements

V. FOR ALL AMENDMENTS

A. Why is the amendment needed and being proposed?

See attached text amendments and supporting statements

B. How does the proposed amendment consistent with the County-Wide Planning Policies for Kittitas County?

See attached amendments and supporting statements

C. How is the proposed amendment consistent with the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan?

See attached amendments and supporting statements

D. How have conditions changed that warrant a comprehensive plan amendment?

See attached amendments and supporting statements
VI. SUPPORTING INFORMATION (ATTACH THE FOLLOWING)

A. **SITE PLAN OF THE PROPERTY WITH THE FOLLOWING FEATURES:** buildings; points of access, ABUTTING roads, and parking areas; septic tank and drainfield and replacement area.

B. Application is hereby made for A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT to authorize the activities described herein. I certify that I am familiar with the information contained in this application, and that to the best of my knowledge and belief such information is true, complete, and accurate. I further certify that I possess the authority to undertake the proposed activities. I hereby grant to the agencies to which this application is made, the right to enter the above-described location to inspect the proposed and or completed work.

_Doug Vilsare for RIDGE_  
Signature of Authorized Agent  
Date 6/27/06

_Doug Vilsare for RIDGE_  
Signature of Land Owner of Record (required for application submittal)  
Date

Revised 07/06/05
VI. SUPPORTING INFORMATION (ATTACH THE FOLLOWING)

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Signature of Authorized Agent

Date  June 26, 2006

Signature of Land Owner of Record (required for application submittal)  Date

Futurewise 1617 Bayliss
Seattle WA 98122
206-343-0681
tim@futurewise.org

Revised 07/06/05
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Signature of Authorized Agent  
Date

Signature of Land Owner of Record (required for application submital)  
Date

Kittitas County Conservation Coalition

Paul J. Sharp, DVM  Chairman

Paul H. Thompson, DVM

PO Box 23
Thorpe WA 98946

6/29/06

Revised 07/06/05
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[Signature of Authorized Agent]
[Date 6-29-06]

Barbara E. Newman, Coordinating Secretary
Citizens Against Sprawl

[Signature of Land Owner of Record (required for application submittal)]
[Date]
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Signature of Authorized Agent

Date

Signature of Land Owner of Record (required for application submitted)

Date

[Fingerprints and signatures]

Revised 07/06/15
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Signature of Authorized Agent

Signature of Land Owner of Record (required for application submittal) Date

Alan C. Clute
Vivian Dawn Douglass
Dennis Douglass
Michael R. Hoban
Karen Hoban
Dina Lund

ALAN C. RUNTE
VIVIAN DAWN DOUGLASS
Dennis Douglass
MICHAEL R. HOBAN
Karen Hoban
Dina Lund
6-28-06
6-28-06
6-28-06
6-28-06
6-28-06

Revised 07/06/05
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Signature of Authorized Agent

\[Signature\]

Date

6-29-06

Signature of Land Owner of Record (required for application submittal)

\[Signature\]

Date

Revised 07/06/05
B. How does the proposed amendment consistent with the County-Wide Planning Policies for Kittitas County?

C. How is the proposed amendment consistent with the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan?

D. How have conditions changed that warrant a comprehensive plan amendment?

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______________________________
Signature of Authorized Agent

______________________________
Signature of Land Owner of Record (required for application submittal)

Date 6-27-06

Date 6-27-06

* Rezone requests require separate Request to Rezone application and fee.

G DRIVE/CIDS FORMS/DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS/COMP PLAN AMENDMENT
UPDATED:7-1-06
Proposed 2006 amendments of the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan presented by RIDGE, Futurewise and others (see attached cover letter)

Note: These proposed text amendments are formatted so as to show only the affected portion of the existing Comprehensive Plan in “bill form” with new language underlined, deleted language struck out and unaffected surrounding language not marked up. Electronic or color-printed versions of this document will show the supporting statements in the color brown. The supporting statements are offered as answers to the four general questions contained in section V of the docketing form. No amendments are proposed for those sections of the Comprehensive plan not included in this document.

EXECUTIVE STATEMENT
H. The County-Wide Planning Policies allocate 55% of the projected population to the unincorporated County. The Board of County Commissioners believe that the unincorporated county is not adequately represented in the Kittitas County Conference of Governments and therefore, any amendments to the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan or Development Regulations, originating from the Kittitas County Conference of Governments, shall be reviewed by the Kittitas County Planning Commission for recommendation before consideration by the County Commissioners for adoption.

Why proposal is needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment?
The Kittitas County Conference of Governments is comprised of duly elected officials representing all of Kittitas County Governments. Since all comprehensive plan amendments must be reviewed by the planning commission anyway, there is no need to single out amendments recommended by the Conference of Government and removing the provision may improve relations between the different local governments in our community.
How proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies?
The proposed amendment would upgrade the status of the Kittitas County Conference of Governments from the inferior status accorded to it by the existing Comprehensive Plan.

CHAPTER TWO: LAND USE

2.2 GENERAL GOALS AND POLICIES

(Revised)
GPO 2.11 Kittitas County does not have any plans to adopt provisions for impact fees at this time and as such, any reference to impact fees in this comprehensive plan not be included. Kittitas County shall conserve and protect existing open space, farmland and forest land and
shall support conservation and protection of connected corridors and public access to open
space as mitigation for any development that is proposed or approved involving conversion of
forests or agricultural lands (whether or not the forestland or agricultural land is
designated as resource land of long-term commercial significance). Such corridors and public
access provisions may be established through voluntary agreements, conservation easements,
purchase or other instruments as appropriate and available.

Why proposal is needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment:
Cumulative conversions of existing forest and agricultural lands, and open space to residential real estate
have reduced such rural amenities as, public access to public lands and other open space for hunting,
fishing or other recreational purposes, habitat connectivity and the visual integrity of a rural landscape
and may otherwise harm property rights of existing property owners due to reduced water availability to
senior water rights holders and interference with traditional farming, ranching, and forest practices.

How proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies:
Within the fiscal portion of the Comprehensive Plan (GPO 5.29) impact fees are already enabled. This
change would revise GPO 2.11 to become consistent with that existing policy. It would also provide an
important revised policy addressing the need to protect the working landscapes on which forestry,
farming, ranching, and tourism depend.

*******

(Revised) GPO 2.11A Much of Kittitas County receives little natural precipitation and is highly
susceptible to fire hazard during much of the year. Meanwhile, more people are moving to
previously uninhabited forest and rural areas. As this number increases, the need to provide
adequate and efficient fire services to these areas also increases.. Prior to approval new cluster
developments and subdivisions shall be required to demonstrate availability of water sufficient
to provide 1,000gpm (as referenced in the FireWise Program document) so that fires can be
efficiently and adequately fought and appropriate resources can be directed toward saving the
forest.

Why proposal is needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment?
Recent rezones in Kittitas County have increased the number of homes in the forest and wildland fire
interface. These new homes/developments are not currently required to have fire hydrants. Cluster
development increases the density and thus the risk and potential for forest fires.

How proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies?
This proposal simply details the method by which the intent of the existing GPO 211A can be fulfilled.
It will also help protect neighboring properties from the increased fire threat that denser development
and more people bring to forest, farm, and range land.

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(New) GPO 2.12 To ensure that the impact of certain land use decisions are adequately
analyzed, in the event that any of the following requested actions should come before the
County, a Determination of Significance with respect to the action shall made with respect to
those requested actions and the County shall prepare an environmental impact statement as
per the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) for:

1. Any proposed comprehensive plan amendments (including creation of any Urban
Growth Node (UGN) or Urban Growth Area (UGA), rezones or subdivisions that would
permit an increase in the intensity of use on the affected land to a level of one or more
unit(s) per twenty acres.
2. Any proposed comprehensive plan amendments, rezones or subdivisions involving
conversion of use from forest or agricultural use to residential, commercial or industrial
use.
3. Any proposed comprehensive plan amendments, rezone or subdivision that would
require an amendment of the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan.

Further, no rezone shall be approved except as part of a comprehensive plan amendment.

Why proposal is needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment?
Currently in Kittitas County many land use decisions including rezones or subdivisions are routinely
deemed to be “non-project actions” and are granted “determinations of non-significance” for
purposes of the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). As such, the key decisions enabling a
greater intensity of land use are made without the benefit of analysis of impacts on capital facilities,
infrastructure, public services, transportation, recreation, housing critical habitat and water resources.
In recent years the number of such decisions has increased and the cumulative impacts have
multiplied. It is time to take account of the impacts caused by these proposed actions at the time they
are being proposed.

How proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies?
Kittitas County Code already provides for the application of the SEPA process where proposed
actions are determined to be of significant impact. This new policy would simply apply the existing
process categorically to those actions listed within the proposed GPO.

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New GPO 2.12A Where subdivisions involving conversion of use from forest or agricultural use
to residential, commercial or industrial use are approved they shall be clustered and connected
open space shall be reserved within or adjacent to the subdivision with appropriate easements
for public access, habitat and recreational use. The County shall encourage and require such
features in any approved rezone or subdivision within the designated area(s).

Why proposal is needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment?
Cumulative conversions of existing forest and agricultural lands, and open space to residential real estate
have reduced such rural amenities as, public access to public lands and other open space for hunting,
ﬁshing or other recreational purposes, habitat connectivity and the visual integrity of a rural landscape
and may otherwise harm property rights of existing property owners.

How proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies?
This proposal would amend the Comprehensive Plan to be consistent with those provisions of the
GMA that encourage enhancement of open space.

******

New GPO 2.13 Whereas a large inventory of platted but undeveloped lots currently exist in
Kittitas County, prior to any further approval of any rezone, or subdivision of lands to allow
more intense use of those lands, the County shall undertake a process of monitoring the
number type and location of such lots. The County shall then regularly update that assessment.
New subdivisions, rezones permitting a more intense use of the affected lands will not be approved unless it can be demonstrated that such approvals are necessary to accommodate projected population growth for Kittitas County and the applicable incorporated cities, Urban Growth Areas (UGA) or Urban Growth Nodes (UGN) as per population allocations prepared by the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM). Such approvals shall be counted and assigned according to OFM population allocations.

Why proposal is needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment?
In Kittitas County parcels of land are rezoned and/or subdivided without consideration or demonstration of the need for additional residential lots in particular regions of the County in order to accommodate projected population growth assigned or projected for the applicable jurisdiction. In recent years a large inventory of undeveloped lots has accumulated while new subdivision approvals continue.

How proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies?
Current policies of Kittitas County and the GMA already require that land-use planning be done in coordination with OFM population allocations. The proposed GPO 2.13 would simply enable this policy to be carried out more effectively.

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New GPO 2.14 Consistency of Development Regulations, Zoning Map and Zoning Regulations with Comprehensive Plan: Kittitas County’s development regulations, including its zoning map and zoning regulations, shall be consistent with and implement the adopted Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan. Any amendments to the development regulations, including the zoning map or zoning regulations shall be consistent with and implement the adopted Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan.

New GPO 2.15 Consistency of County Activities and Capital Budget Decisions with the Comprehensive Plan: Kittitas County shall perform its activities and make capital budget decisions in conformity with the adopted Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan.

Why proposal(s) are needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment?
A comprehensive plan is a guide to a community’s desired future. A comprehensive plan is implemented in many ways including public investments in capital facilities and services, education, incentives, and regulations. Unless these measure are consistent with and carryout the comprehensive plan, the county will not achieve its desired future. For this reason comprehensive plans and development regulations must be consistent.

Kittitas County’s comprehensive plan and zoning regulations are not consistent, they should be made consistent as part of the 2006 comprehensive plan and development regulations update. Further, there is concern that some rezones may not be consistent with the comprehensive plan, so policies should be so be adopted to maintain consistency between the comprehensive plan and development regulations and to ensure the county’s activities are consistent with its comprehensive plan. The Resource Lands Advisory Committee (RLAC) also recommended that the comprehensive plan’s Land Use Map and the Zoning Map should be consistent. These policy changes will help achieve the future preferred by Kittitas County, its citizens, and its property owners. In order to avoid the liability of non-compliance with the GMA the County must update the zoning regulations and zoning map so
they are consistent with and implement the comprehensive plan and adopt the following new GPO policies:

**How proposal(s) are consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies?**
The Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies must be presumed to be consistent with the Growth Management Act (GMA) and if they are found to be inconsistent with the GMA they must be amended to become consistent. RCW 36.70A.040, requires consistency between the comprehensive plan, including the future land use map, and development regulations, including the zoning map. Further, the GMA requires that Kittitas County “shall perform its activities and make capital budget decisions in conformity with its comprehensive plan.” These new GPO’s will assist Kittitas County in meeting these requirements.

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**New GPO 2.20** The County shall conduct and maintain a comprehensive survey of groundwater resources and aquifers and shall identify all critical aquifer recharge zones. This survey shall be initiated in 2007 and shall be completed in 2008.

**Why proposal is needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment?**
There currently no authoritative resource available to Kittitas County planner’s (CDS) regarding water resources and as a result planning decisions are made without regard to the environmental impact of proposed land actions on groundwater in Kittitas County. There is no complete County map of aquifers, groundwater sources and critical aquifer recharge areas compiled together with information regarding their safe yield. There is no coordination of information that is available from the USGS, maps with Water Resource Inventories and statistics on Domestic Water Use, and Ground Water Use versus Surface Water (Irrigation) use. With the rapid growth and development in the headwaters of the Yakima River, Kittitas County must adopt a more authoritative and comprehensive system to map its water resources so that impacts from proposed land use actions may be evaluated and the resource be protected.

**How proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies?**
This proposal is consistent with existing GPOs 2.67, 2.68, 2.69 which call for but have not resulted in the completion of an aquifer and groundwater survey covering all of Kittitas County.

******

**Amended GPO 2.109K** Kittitas County recognizes that local tax burden on private lands is increased when private land is changed to public ownership. Such changes should be discouraged. In recent years Kittitas County has experienced a significant conversion of acreage from forest and agricultural purposes to residential real estate use. Much of this land was formerly a part of large corporate timber holdings adjacent to public lands. This conversion has had the consequence of restricting or eliminating public access to many acres of land that historically have been available for fishing, hunting and other recreational purposes. In addition this conversion has fragmented the connectivity and reduced the functionality of wildlife habitat. County planning policies shall support public acquisition of private lands for public uses such as recreation and/or preservation of critical habitat and habitat connectivity and shall cooperate with private land owners, organizations, qualified land trusts, state...
agencies, tribal and local governments interested in protecting our diminishing open space, public access and wildlife habitat. This policy is also intended to enhance Kittitas County’s economic development including tourism.

Why proposal is needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment?
The loss of open space due to conversions to residential real estate of resource lands formerly used for hunting, fishing and recreation has increased pressure on recreational lands and the remaining open space. It has also in some cases curtailed access to public lands. The amenity of access to open space has enabled much of the increased economic development and expansion of tourism in Kittitas County in recent years.

How proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies?
A policy that constrains the County from acquiring private land for public purposes now is likely to discourage improvements that would enhance the revenue picture for the County by increasing economic development. The existing policy may also be inconsistent with existing fiscal policies that may involve acquisition of private land needed for public infrastructure or facilities as well as for recreational purposes.

New GPO 2.110 Overlay Districts: An Overlay District is a planning mechanism that seeks to protect and enhance the character of the district for generations to come. It is a wise investment in property values.

Whereas there exist numerous sub-regions within the County that possess desirable characteristics that may be threatened by over-development, in 2007 Kittitas County shall undertake and conclude a public process by which such sub-region(s) are identified and policies and overlay districts are adopted by which development shall be discouraged or managed in such a way as to preserve those specific rural landscape features and functions found to be worthy of protection.

Policy and planning tools to be considered and that may be adopted include but are not limited to enabling language to create such overlay districts. Each overlay district include a set of regulations that is applied to property within the overlay zone in addition to the requirements of the underlying or base zoning district, and may provide requirements (or incentives) intended to protect a specific resource and to guide and direct development in certain areas, and may create community design review boards.

Common Overlay District Ordinances elements could include:

- Design Standards
- Open Space Preservation
- Site design standards
- Parking
- View protection
- Circulation and access
- Lighting and utilities
- Signage
- Building dimensions and layout
- Redevelopment of existing property
- Architectural standards

6 6/27/2006
Incentives may include:
- TDRs (transfer of development rights)
- PDRs (purchase of development rights)
- compensation to landowners
- purchase of lands

GPO 2.110 A

Interchange Overlay Districts: Interchange Overlay Districts can be designed and regulated in a manner that will lure travelers to spend more time in our towns. They may be thought of as entryway corridors. Setting interchange goals and policies will help alleviate future misunderstanding and confrontation concerning land use decisions.

Elements to be included in Interchange Overlays:
Setting standards for the areas adjacent to the interchanges involves the following:

1) Identifying the current land uses that are adjacent to the interchange. What do these uses suggest about the characteristics of the interchange? Is that good or bad?
2) What characteristics of future development should be adjacent to the interchange?
3) What characteristics of future development should not be adjacent to the interchange?
4) Does the current land use pattern complement the downtown?
5) What types of future development would have a negative impact on the businesses located in the downtown?

This approach allows the County to accomplish two essential but often forgotten tasks: identify the incompatible development before it occurs and identify the outcomes it wishes to achieve.

Why proposal is needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment?
As development increases in Kittitas County’s rural areas, cities and urban growth areas, planners and citizens have an increasing need for more flexible planning tools to identify and achieve specific planning goals unique to a particular district, whether that should be a freeway interchange or a rural area.

How proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies?
The two overlay district GPO’s are consistent with the existing Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies and merely enable plans to “overlay” existing plans, without conflicting with them.

******

New: GPO 2.111 Dark Skies: The County shall support planning policies and ordinances that set forth provisions for outdoor lighting consistent with Dark Sky Ordinance and/or requirements currently in place within the City of Roslyn and on the Suncadia Master Planned Resort.

Why proposal is needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment?
As development expands in Kittitas County and especially in rural areas of Kittitas County, light pollution and glare threaten our view of the stars and planets in the night sky. As energy costs increase the energy-saving benefits of lighting systems that protect the sky from excessive light directed up rather than down upon the earth also increase. Increased growth need not require the loss of the dark night sky. A county-wide policy and ordinance would protect it.
How proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies?
The proposed policy would not conflict with existing policies but would increase the quality of life in Kittitas County.

******

New GPO 2.112 Designation Criteria Kittitas County shall undertake a process of developing criteria for application of its Comprehensive Plan designations. This process shall be complete by December 1, 2006.

Why proposal is needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment?
There is currently a high level of controversy and conflict over rezones in Kittitas County. One technique for reducing these controversies and conflicts is to spell out clear criteria for where the county’s comprehensive plan designations are to be applied. “Comprehensive plan designation” is the term for each category on the future land use map. The comprehensive plan has designation criteria for agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance in existing policy GPO 2.114B, but that is the only designation with designation criteria. We also have some recommendations for improving those criteria in another section of our recommendations.

Since comprehensive plan designations are sometimes implemented by more than one zoning district, a policy should be adopted identifying which zones are consistent with each comprehensive plan designation. Some counties do this in table format. This type of policy makes it clear which zones can be located in areas designated for a particular comprehensive plan designation.

Including designation criteria for each comprehensive plan designation and a policy on which zones implement the various comprehensive plan designations would provide more predictability for property owners and the community, reduce conflicts, make the comprehensive plan more useful as a guide to decision making, and make land use decision making fairer, more efficient, and quicker. These policy changes would certainly benefit Kittitas County, its residents, and its property owners.

How proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies?
The Kittitas County Comprehensive plan contains various designations, but currently lacks a complete set of criteria by which to judge which designation should be applied in a given circumstance. By developing such a system of criteria, it might more successfully achieve consistent application of provisions of the Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies.

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New GPO 2.113 Roslyn Historic District: Whereas the City of Roslyn has been designated National Historic District, Kittitas County will consider the impact of land use actions on lands adjacent to the City of Roslyn that would have a negative impact on the protection of the historic character of the National Historic District and other recognized historic features surrounding the City of Roslyn.

Why proposal is needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment?
The City of Roslyn was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1978 and has maintained its historic character with a process of design review and the formation of a Historic Preservation Commission. In order to protect this national asset it is important that the County avoid land use actions adjacent to the City that would threaten its historic status.

How proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies?
County Planning Policies already include sections for such historic districts as Liberty. This proposed
GPO would include a similar planning policy covering the City of Roslyn.

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Urban Growth Nodes

Recommendation
As will be explained below in more detail, the urban growth nodes seem to be a hybrid between urban growth areas and limited areas of more intense rural development. Urban growth areas must meet the requirements for urban growth areas and cannot, by definition, be allowed in the rural area or on resource lands.

Limited areas of more intense development (LAMIRDs) maybe allowed in rural areas, but only if they comply with the Growth Management Acts requirements for them. We have the following recommendations:

1. All references to Urban Growth Nodes should be deleted from the plan.

2. In the rural element, create a section for LAMIRDs that complies with the requirements of the Growth Management Act. This section should have appropriate GPO’s, one of which must reflect the realities of the services currently available. Piped water and sewers necessary to serve LAMIRDs are allowed, although by definition they are not urban services. Another GPO should be written stating LAMIRD’s should have logical outer boundaries [LOB] which cannot be expanded and urban services cannot be extended beyond the LOB in order to prevent urban sprawl.

3. A GPO should perhaps be created directing the formation of a local citizens council within the LAMIRD,s to provide for representation of the people in decisions made by county government concerning LAMIRD’s.

4. We also have some recommendations for specific areas.

a. At the time UGN's were formed not enough attention was given to their ability to provide urban services. Because Ronald is contractually restricted as to the area it can supply urban services (especially water and sewer- both of which are supplied via contract with the City of Roslyn) it is unable to provide these services outside the boundaries of its water district (Kittitas County Water District #2). Ronald cannot thereby “function in much the same way as an UGA”.

We recommend that the town of Ronald and the community of Pine Loch Sun III, which abuts Ronald, has it’s own water system but cannot expand it, be classified as Category 1 LAMIRD’s. Both communities qualify as LAMIRD’s under the Growth Management Act [RCW 36.70]. Other communities within the UGN (Evergreen Ridge, Evergreen Valley and Bakers Acres) which are served by the Evergreen Water System (a Class A system) and can meet the requirements for LAMIRDs can also be given that designation.

b. The Thorp UGN, which currently has about 93 water hookups in it’s water district, and has another 60+ available based on existing usage levels and water rights, is approximately one-third (1/3) larger than it’s water district boundaries. Thorp could also be classified as a Category 1
LAMIRD and its limits set at its logical outer boundary. Proper infilling will probably utilize the 60+ potential water hookups.

c. The Easton UGN is served by a water district but has no sewer system. Each residence is served by an individual septic system. The Boundaries of the Easton UGN are much too large and without a sewer system additional development will cause too much waste to be introduced into the soil creating health hazards.

d. Snoqualmie Pass and Vantage have both sewer and water systems. Vantage is serviced by a private sewer operator. Do they have enough capacity to serve the projected population for the next 20 years without upgrades that may be too expensive for the areas residents and taxpayers to absorb?

Why proposal is needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment?  
The Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development in their November 2, 2004 letter to Kittitas County Board of County Commissioners the commented that: “Both the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and county-wide planning policies indicates several urban growth nodes have been designated and mapped because they exhibit urban characteristics. This language indicates that these urban growth nodes are Category 1 LAMIRD's - Easton, Snoqualmie, Thorp, Vantage and Ronald.” This can most clearly be seen in GPO 2.97 which sets as a goals to “[r]educe the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development” which is a rural requirement with “[i]nclude sufficient vacant and buildable land” which is an urban requirement.

In Ordinance No. 2005-40 the Kittitas County Board of County Commissioners have stated on Page 13, 23(D): "The Board of Commissioners finds that the policies for dealing with land use issues in the Urban Growth Nodes (UGN's) needs review during the 2006 updating of the Comprehensive Plan to determine the actual land use capacity, taking into account the availability of urban services, including but not limited to, sanitary sewer, potable water and emergency services to better resolve growth related issues in UGN's and Urban Growth Areas (UGA's). We agree that such a review is needed and that is the basis for our recommendations above.

How proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies?  
The proposals for UGN’s would bring the comprehensive plan into compliance with the GMA and would increase the quality of life in Kittitas County.

CHAPTER THREE: HOUSING ELEMENT

New GPO 3.21 Kittitas County shall support policies that increase and maintain the availability of affordable housing, throughout the County. Affordable housing shall be defined as housing that can be afforded by families or individuals earning no more than 75% of the median income for Kittitas County.

New GPO 3.23 Kittitas County shall undertake and maintain survey of existing housing stock in all Kittitas County communities and shall identify those areas of the County where a sufficient stock of affordable housing is not available or where population trends indicate that
it will not be available in the near future. This survey shall include a comprehensive assessment of housing prices and rental rates, existing residential patterns, demographic trends, projected population growth, age of residents, household size, and special needs, if any.

New GPO 3.24 Kittitas County shall employ a variety of strategies to increase and maintain the availability of affordable housing as per Strategy 3.21, below.

3.5 KITTITAS COUNTY HOUSING STRATEGIES

New Strategy 3.21 Encourage the development of new and maintenance of existing affordable housing stock dispersed throughout Kittitas County through employment of a variety of strategies including but not limited to:

3.21 (a) Approval of accessory dwelling units, cooperative housing and, within urban growth areas, mixed-use (commercial/ residential) developments.
3.21 (b) Establishment of minimum affordable housing requirements for new planned unit developments.
3.21 (c) Use of density bonuses for new housing developments that include at least 10% affordable housing within urban growth areas.
3.21 (d) Use subsidies and grants, such as Block Grants from HUD’s Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG), Hope VI program (supporting redevelopment of run-down structures as mixed-income developments) and the Home Investment Partnership (HOME) (for re-development of community facilities for housing), for homebuyer and renter assistance and home-buying counseling, Housing Trust Fund, and low-income housing tax credits.
3.21 (e) Use of non-profit community housing land trust that will own and lease land and/or structures to homeowners and guarantee permanent affordability of the homes in the event of resale.
3.21 (f) Identify areas of Kittitas County where affordable housing is most scarce and target programs to encourage development of affordable housing in those areas.

Why proposal is needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment?
The upward pressure on real estate prices from buyers of 2nd and 3rd homes has caused significant increases in land values and home prices throughout Kittitas County. This increase is pushing home ownership beyond the reach of working families. The 2000 census calculated the median income of Kittitas County to be $32,546 per household and that 19.6% of individuals and 10.5% of families live below the poverty line. Much of the new employment resulting from increased development will be in the form of low wage service jobs in retail, and hospitality. If these workers are to live in the communities where they are employed, more will need to be done to encourage creation and maintenance of a stock of affordable housing.

How proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies?
Current policies call for affordable housing, but these policies are explicitly set forth only in the Master Planned Resort sections of the Comprehensive Plan. These proposed GPOs and strategies, extend existing policies beyond the MPR to the entire county. Affordable housing plans are required by the GMA and these proposed changes would assist the County in producing a Comprehensive
Plan that is consistent with the GMA.

CHAPTER FOUR: TRANSPORTATION

GPO 4.14 To recognized non-motorized travel as a viable, energy-efficient transportation mode by developing a county-wide non-motorized system plan and by assessing, improving and maintaining existing non-motorized facilities. In connection with any new development Kittitas County shall require construction of sidewalks and pathways to enable safe, non-motorized transportation alternatives and motorized wheelchairs. As future transportation plans are prepared or existing infrastructure upgraded such projects shall include insertion of trails and pedestrian pathways to accommodate non-motorized transportation modalities such as walking, bicycling, and horse riding. Kittitas County shall also undertake a process of assessing and upgrading existing transportation plans and infrastructure to address increased safety concerns of non-motorized transport as levels of traffic increase.

Why proposal is needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment?
As development increases in Kittitas County, traffic increases hazards for those traveling by foot, bicycle, horse, and wheelchair. In addition new development does not always include accommodation for non-motorized methods of transportation. As energy prices increase, investments in infrastructure that enable safe, non-motorized transport, are increasingly worthwhile.

How proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies?
Existing policies already support non-motorized travel. These amendments simply strengthen existing policy in this area. Current fiscal policy also calls for new development to pay its fair share of the cost of development. Provisions that include sidewalks and pathways for non-motorized travel within such developments are consistent with existing fiscal policies.

CHAPTER FIVE: CAPITAL FACILITIES PLAN

Amended: 5.2.2(B) Parks and Recreation

As growth continues to occur both in the urban and rural areas of Kittitas County, there may be increased impacts on existing recreational areas and a demand for additional recreational areas and opportunities. In order to address the potential demands and impacts, Kittitas County shall work cooperatively with other local governments and state agencies to provide has taken the approach that incorporated communities should be responsible for organized recreational opportunities and park systems, and while the County is responsible for the unorganized, passive recreational opportunities. The parks and recreational facilities needed to accommodate growth shall be provided in areas convenient to serve the new development and existing residents. The County shall give particular emphasis to establishment of trail systems that connect with existing public and private trail systems and that provide public access to public and private open space. These efforts may be carried forward in cooperation with incorporated cities and or park and recreation districts within Kittitas.

Why proposal is needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment?
While Kittitas County continues to rely on areas outside of incorporated cities to accommodate a majority of its projected population growth, existing policy places the entire burden of maintaining organized recreational opportunities and park systems on incorporated cities that enjoy none of the property tax revenue from growth occurring outside their boundaries. Currently, a boat launch on the eastern boundary of Kittitas County is the only organized recreational facility operated by Kittitas County. In order to meet the needs of all County citizens the County should at least enable itself to play a larger role in this arena. Facilitation and cooperation with the establishment of public trails would be a good place for this expanded role to be initiated.

**How proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies?**
This amendment would expand the current role of the County in developing organized recreational opportunities and park systems. It would serve to make the Comprehensive Plan consistent with those provisions of the GMA calling for planning of recreational resources for all citizens in the County.

### 5.3 GOALS, POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

**Amended** GPO 5.29 Future development:

A. Future development **may** be required to pay its fair share of the capital improvements needed to address the impact of such development, and may pay a portion of the cost of the replacement of obsolete or worn out facilities. Upon completion of construction, "future" development becomes "existing" development, and shall contribute to paying the costs of the replacement of obsolete or worn out facilities as described in GPO 5.28 (A), above.

B. Future development's payments may take the form of, but are not limited to, voluntary contributions for the benefit of any public facility, impact fees, mitigation payments, capacity fees, dedications of land, provision of public facilities, and future payments of user fees, charges for services, special assessments and taxes. Future development shall not pay fees for the portion of any public facility that reduces or eliminates existing deficiencies.

**New GPO 5.144a Special taxing districts that benefit part or all of the county shall be supported when they are also supported by a majority of voters in within the district.**

**Why proposal(s) are needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment?**
In 2005 voters approved the formation of The Kittitas County Parks and Recreation District No. 1 whose boundaries include incorporated cities and unincorporated rural lands in Upper Kittitas County. This District will enable citizens to tax themselves to provide services and receive donations of land that Kittitas County may decline to provide or accept. County Planning policy should not oppose creation of such districts where local residents support them.

**How proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies?**
The proposed amendment would add a new policy and delete existing GPO 8.34 but would be consistent with other aspects of the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies.

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Libraries
(Amended Table of Service Providers)

GPO 5.97 Library Services Cities of Kittitas, Cle Elum, Ellensburg, Roslyn/Kittitas County via agreements and direct services and/or support for existing and new services.

(note, this section of 5.97 is excerpted from a larger portion of text, the rest of which does not relate to the subject of Library services)

New GPO 5.115 Libraries: As growth continues to occur both in the urban and rural areas of Kittitas County, there are and will be increased impacts on existing library services and an increasing demand for additional library services. In order to address the potential demands and impacts, Kittitas County shall undertake responsibility for developing and financing the coordination of existing and new library services that serve all areas of Kittitas County.

Why proposal is needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment? While Kittitas County continues to rely on areas outside of incorporated cities to accommodate a majority of its projected population growth, existing policy places the entire burden of maintaining public libraries on incorporated cities that enjoy none of the property tax revenue from growth occurring outside their boundaries. In order to meet the needs of all County citizens the County should at least enable itself to play a larger role in this arena. This could take the form of more support for existing library systems within incorporated cities or eventually in the form of a County Library System.

How proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies? This amendment would expand the current role of the County in supporting public libraries. It would serve to make the Comprehensive Plan consistent with those provisions of the GMA calling for planning of public infrastructure for all citizens in the County.

CHAPTER EIGHT: RURAL LANDS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

(Proposed to be deleted in entirety and replaced as part of the 2006 review and update to the Comprehensive Plan)

The State of Washington’s land-use regulation, called the Growth Management Act, suggests that rural lands be a separate element in a county’s comprehensive plan. While Kittitas County considers it more logical to include the rural lands element with the other land-use categories of urban, resource, critical areas, etc., there has been a request that it be discussed in a chapter of its own. This Chapter 8 is to honor that request.

Recent clarification at the state level about rural lands has outdated some prior planning and where there is a conflict between this chapter and past GMA products, the older documents will conform to this chapter as adopted December 1997.

Rural lands planning and implementation in Kittitas County is a complex process due to the
variety of topographic, biologic, economic, and climatic zones it includes. The vast amount of land currently designated as rural lands (over 33% of the county’s land mass) as compared to more urbanized counties (King 15%) or those where resource lands predominate, makes rural lands planning in Kittitas County more difficult. Rural lands in Kittitas County are now, and have historically been, a mix of resource lands, rural neighborhoods, and varied developments scattered throughout the county. Liberty, diversity, and flexibility are and have been characteristic of these rural uses and as such make it difficult to fix them into the rigid molds and divisions that orderly planning documents envision. This diversity and independence was demonstrated in many of the rural areas of the county where extensive subarea planning (1993-1996) resulted in many hours of public participation, but very little uniformity or consensus.

Kittitas County has a thirty-year history of land use planning. The present patterns of development and conservation are a result of the combination of efforts in planning and market-driven forces. Sometimes plans have not been met (such as Central’s plan for 15,000 students in the 1960’s which led to the destruction of city neighborhoods via “urban renewal” condemnations). Sometimes plans have been changed (agricultural lands from 1 acre minimum lot sizes to 3 and 20 acre minimum lot sizes and forest lands from 1 acre minimum lot sizes to 20 and 80 acre minimum lot sizes) or ignored (the states’s siting of Interstate-90 through the best farm ground instead of using a route north of the City of Ellensburg with its rocky ground and sunny exposures). However successful this planning was or wasn’t, throughout the last three or four decades, considerable time and expense has been devoted in Kittitas County government planning. That tradition continues under the state land use regulations called the Growth Management Act and its present requirements.

How has history and that planning effort affected our rural lands? What are rural lands? The state defines them by default as lands which are not urban, UGA, or resource lands. In this county, historically there have been large tracts broken into small divisions, but also small tracts gathered together into larger holdings or farms. Diverse activities have taken place there. Small industries, farms, ranches, mines, saw-mills, tree-growing, animal keeping, holdings of all kinds, guest ranches, dance halls, roadside cafes, gas stations, hotels, agricultural processing plants, feedlots, airports, day care centers, schools, churches, game farms, and conservancies have all located on what the state would call rural lands in Kittitas County.

Continuation of this diversity on rural lands is imbedded in the WAC recommendations and also in Governor Locke’s message as he vetoed parts of ESHB No. 6094 on May 19, 1997. He vetoed Section 8 saying, “Section 7 of this bill provides all the direction needed by counties to plan for the rural element, including guidelines for rural development. Governor Locke went on to say, “Section 7 provides that the rural element shall permit rural development ... for a variety of rural densities, uses, essential public facilities ... rural governmental services ... businesses to serve the local population ... infill existing development, small-scale recreational or tourist uses and cottage industries and small-scale businesses.”

“The GMA does not set out one plan for rural areas that all counties must follow,” two other statewide groups acknowledged in a joint publication (January 1997) by the League of Women Voters of Washington and the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development. They point out that “local jurisdictions have the flexibility to develop a plan that will meet local needs.”
As in all of Kittitas County zoning, rural lands planning must take into account that public ownership is a huge factor. Small private ownerships total approximately 24 to 28% of the land in Kittitas County. Because of this planing decisions that do not include control of publicly managed land will have little effect here. Also, because most of the public ownership is of lands often thought to be of rural character (i.e., agriculture, timber, farmland, range, and public outdoor recreation) local officials will not be able to determine and protect rural character without the ability to mandate cooperation from the public "owners". The benefit or burden of vast acreage of public lands needs to be considered when assessing how much public benefit rural lands might be expected to provide (i.e., trails, scenic areas, open space, habitat, etc.). Requiring public benefits from private lands in Kittitas County not only involves finding a method of compensation, but may be needlessly duplicating uses already available on public lands. What is this rural character we all think we know, but find so difficult to describe? Synonyms include Arcadian, bucolic, rustic, pastoral, and sylvan, and definitions say "country" as in "not city". Common planning definitions suggest that the natural environment dominates the built environment in rural areas. GMA documents allude to the necessity for jobs and residences located within rural areas rather than resource lands. Tourists might expect certain scenic landscapes as they speed past. In fact, some cities or localities have developed a rural "theme park" mentality to cater to tourists. Traditional Kittitas County rural families think of rural areas as a place without conveniences where you earn your living. Others might conceive of these areas as bedroom communities and may even want to curtail economic activities by the rural people already living there.

The assumption is that some people move to the rural areas to "escape" the cities, but they intend to have all of the conveniences of the city and often want to continue their city jobs and salaries. If fewer people in the rural areas is a goal of GMA or Kittitas County, the central problem of making cities and urban growth areas (UGAs) more desirable living places must be addressed. As the Land Use Study Commission pointed out in the 1996 annual report, "... it is not possible to dictate that people must live in the urban area. People may choose to live in the rural area for many reasons such as lifestyle, schools, housing cost, traffic, safety, and amenities. Unless the urban growth areas are desirable places to live, it will be difficult to achieve the anti-sprawl goals of GMA."

Further studies into why people want to leave cities (not just Kittitas County, but also the cities west of here) and what can be done to make them more liveable are appropriate to finding a solution. In a conference held at Central Washington University in 1996, Mayor Kemmis, of Missoula-Montana, said that unfortunately most of the things that make the most liveable urban areas desirable, have now been prohibited by municipal planning and zoning (i.e., narrow streets, a residential/retail mix, closer spacing). Perhaps county government in Kittitas County can take the lead in examining and correcting the factors within our municipalities that lead to rural "flight." If there is a preference on the part of a substantial segment of the county population to live in the rural lands rather than in or near the towns and cities of the county, a basic part of the county's rural lands planning might focus on attempting to help change those conditions within the municipalities.

Are large numbers of people in the rural areas really a problem? How much population transfer from urban to rural areas can take place while still calling rural areas "rural?" Kittitas County has struggled with this question without finding an answer. Population allocation is a guessing game in Kittitas County where so many of the people have out of county
residences such as college students, “snow-birds”, Seattle area commuters, and vacation homeowners. Seasonally-occupied homes have different impacts on services than do those occupied by permanent residents. These impacts need to be studied.

There exists a generalization that 5 acre minimum lot sizes might preserve “rural character.” The County Planning Department has GIS data showing over 603,716 acres eligible for consideration as rural land. If so, Kittitas County will retain rural character for a long time based on the five acre density criteria. State planners are concerned about “urban sprawl” with less than five acre minimum lot sizes. However, over the past fifteen to twenty years Kittitas County has experienced “rural sprawl” through the adoption of 20 acre minimum lot sizes, which has caused the conversion of farm land into weed patches. Small lot zoning with conservation easements for agriculture, timber, or open space may be preferable to the wasteful “sprawl” developments of large lot zoning and could be more conducive to retaining rural character. Where do our rural neighborhoods fit into the lot size debate? In Kittitas County there are rural settlements of all sizes and descriptions, some resembling small-towns and others simple “crossroads cluster.” While attaining higher densities, these areas remain rural in character.

Density alone may not describe rural character but the “appearance” of density might. More and more “appearance”—rather than actual substance or function—seems to be the goal of planning. Perhaps our rural lands do not have to be rural, they just have to “appear to be rural” to satisfy those aggressively demanding that government mandate “ruralness.” However, the government’s ability to require citizens to appear to be rural, or urban, or tidy, or artists, or professors, or bureaucrats, or farmers, is limited in a free society. Land use regulation probably would work best in a totalitarian society, but we do not yet allow our government to dictate where each person will live and what work and lifestyle they will adopt. Cities cannot even require their own employees to live within the city limits and indeed, many do not.

Can our free society require its rural citizens to appear to be peasants, or to actually be indentured to their own property in an agrarian role? Can we require that everyone living in a rural area be rustic? Can we force people to leave unless they adopt or reject certain behaviors? Will “growth management” become such a totalitarian process that it will dictate economic pursuits and lifestyles? To an extent it does. Can it tell people where to live and what they must do for a living? We have begun to accept size of residence requirements but have not yet adopted a county-wide uniform house color. Is that next? Can we require that all rural residents adopt and portray a rural or agrarian lifestyle even if unsustainable? Will we establish rural reservations and urban ghettos in the name of planning? The extent to which this may be done is being described in the Chapter.

With the complexity and diversity of the various subjects and issues outlined in this introduction, coupled with the flexibility needed, this chapter, to the extent possible, contains the goals, policies, and objectives addressing the rural land needs of Kittitas County.

Why proposal is needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment? The existing introduction to the Rural Element of the Comprehensive Plan is less of an introduction to a planning policy, than an extended diatribe demeaning the entire project of planning for rural
lands. The introduction is loaded with rhetorical questions and sarcastic remarks that do little to guide planners and the public in any good faith effort to meet the goals of the Growth Management Act with respect to Rural Lands. The Introduction to the Rural Lands Chapter should be re-written, in a fashion that is without a bias hostile to proper planning on rural lands.

**How proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies?**
The GMA requires the Comprehensive Plan to include a planning element for Rural Lands. An introduction to that section of the Comprehensive Plan that acknowledges this obligation would serve to make the Comprehensive Plan consistent with the GMA.

**Rural Lands Revised or New GPOs**

*Revised GPO 8.7 Private owners should not be expected to provide public benefits without just compensation. If the citizens desires open space, or habitat, or scenic vistas that would require a sacrifice by the landowner or homeowner, all citizens should be prepared to shoulder their share in the sacrifice. All property owners shall be treated fairly and their rights respected. All properties shall be entitled to reasonable economic uses consistent with the county’s rural vision. Permit processes and decisions shall be timely, predictable and fair to the property owner who applied, their neighbors, and the community.*

*Deleted GPO 8.12 Descriptions of rural character included in the Comprehensive Plan shall not be used as a criteria in the evaluation of an individual project application.*

**Why proposal is needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment?**
The current GPO’s should be amended or removed as they may serve to constrain Kittitas County from meeting other planning goals necessary to a proper rural lands planning policy relative to rural lands.

**How proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies?**
By allowing descriptions of rural character to be used as criteria for individual project applications, the Comprehensive Plan would enable County Actions taken with respect to individual projects to conform to Planning Policies that may include descriptions of rural character as an element.

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*New GPO 8.12 Kittitas County shall provide for a variety of rural densities and uses, provided however that rural densities shall not exceed one dwelling per five acres outside limited areas of more intense rural development. Comprehensive Plan and zoning regulations shall be updated to provide that the allowed density does not exceed one dwelling unit per five acres outside of urban growth areas and limited areas of more intense rural development.*

*New GPO 8.54 Clustering may allow smaller lots while maintaining densities of no more than one dwelling unit per five acres and providing for a variety of rural densities. The resource tracts, the portions of the land not included in building lots, shall be permanently protected from development and shall result in large, unfragmented areas characteristic of Kittitas County’s rural area. The resource tracts should link up with other resource tracts and habitats. The building lots shall be buffered and screened from roads, neighboring properties,*
and critical areas. Resource tracts are encouraged to be made available to the property owners and the public for hunting, fishing, accesses to federal lands, and other characteristic rural uses.

Why proposal(s) are needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment?
Retaining the quality of life that keeps people and businesses in Kittitas County will require protecting the county’s rural character. Protecting rural character will help maintain the traditional uses that Kittitas property owners and residents have made of the rural area such as ranching, farming, logging, hunting, fishing, and other forms of recreation. Protecting rural character will help prevent development from overwhelming the limited water resources in the county and protect senior water rights holders from the costs of having to enforce their water rights against users of exempt wells. Rural developments often exempt wells and large rural development can significantly reduce the water available to senior water rights holders. Protecting rural character will also help prevent taxpayers from having to pay dramatically higher taxes to serve developments in areas that are costly to provide with public facilities, such as roads, and services, such as schools and Sheriff protection. Protecting rural character will also help business and employment opportunities built on a high quality of life or recreation and tourism.

For these reasons, the Growth Management Act (GMA) requires the protection of rural character and prohibits urban growth outside urban growth areas. The GMA created three state agencies to interpret the GMA and to hear appeals alleging that cities, counties, or state agencies are in violation of the GMA. Kittitas County is in the jurisdiction of the Eastern Washington Growth Management Hearings Board. The Eastern Washington Growth Management Hearings Board, in defining what is urban growth and what is allowable rural development, has held that in rural areas no more than one housing unit per five-acres is allowed outside limited areas of more intense rural development.1

The GMA also recognizes that the rural area includes a variety of different areas with different needs and opportunities. For this reason the GMA, in RCW 36.70A.070(5)(b), requires a variety of rural densities and uses.

We understand that the county is concerned that property owners not bite off more than they can chew as to the size of their lots. It would be unfortunate if property owners had lots so large they cannot appropriately manage them. The solution to this problem is well-crafted clustering provisions that maintain a variety of rural densities but allow smaller lots. The balance of the property would then be permanently maintained in forest, pastures, and habitat. Well-done clusters should be screened and buffered from roads and nearby uses and maintain the connected open spaces characteristic of rural Kittitas County.

How proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies?
Current planning policies have allowed certain approvals of densities that exceed the legal limit of one dwelling per five acres outside of urban growth areas and limited areas of more intense rural development. In order to bring the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and zoning regulations into compliance with the GMA the County must update the comprehensive plan and zoning regulations so

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1 City of Moses Lake v. Grant County, EWGMHB Case No. 99-1-0016 Final Decision and Order pp. *5 – 6 of 11 (May 23, 2000). See also Diehl v. Mason County, 94 Wn. App. 643, 655-57, 972 P.2d 543, 547-49 (1999) (Residential densities of one housing unit, or more, per 2.5 acres “would allow for urban-like development” and are prohibited outside urban growth areas including in rural areas).
that the allowed density does not exceed one dwelling unit per five acres outside of urban growth areas and limited areas of more intense rural development and to provide for a variety of rural densities. To achieve conformity with the GMA it may also be necessary to amend the County’s clustering ordinances to achieve the one dwelling per five acre standard set forth in the GMA.

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(Amended and moved to 5.144A, above) GPO 8.34 Special taxing districts associated with urban growth should be opposed on rural lands

Deleted: GPO 8.62 Habitat and scenic areas are public benefits which must be provided and financed by the public at large, not at the expense of individual landowners and homeowners.

Why proposal(s) are needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment?
As stated, GPO 8.62 unduly constrains the County from implementing planning goals related to protection of habitat and scenic areas that are important features of Rural Lands policy. As growth has increased on rural lands the importance of maintaining these protections has increased. Our proposed property rights policy above, addresses these concerns.

How proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies?
Removal of GPO 8.62 would enable Kittitas County to more flexibly meet the requirements of the GMA and fulfill important planning goals for rural lands in Kittitas County.

Amended: GPO 8.65 If Kittitas County chooses to acquire additional lands for habitat and scenic areas, it may consider a variety of methods of financing, including grants of state or federal funds, or other instruments a method of financing which does not rely on the property tax should be found.

Why proposal(s) are needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment?
As stated, GPO 8.65 unduly constrains the County from exercising certain financing options that it may otherwise wish to pursue for purposes of financing acquisition of lands for habitat or scenic areas. For example, the County may wish to implement an excise tax on new homes or subdivisions and use those funds to finance such purposes, but the current policy would constrain that choice. The County should keep its options open with respect to methods of financing such purchases.

How proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies?
The proposed amendment would be consistent with existing fiscal policies that enable the County to require New Growth to pay the cost of growth, part of which may include the financing of acquisition of lands for habitat or scenic areas.

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Amended: GPO 8.66 The County should recognize the abundance of habitat, scenic areas and views on publicly-owned lands when assessing the need for additional such lands. Efforts to connect habitat and open space on private lands to habitat and open space on public lands shall be encouraged and efforts to retain access to public lands shall be encouraged.

Why proposal(s) are needed and how conditions have changed to warrant the amendment?
In the years since this provision was drafted, development on rural lands adjacent to publicly owned lands have had the effect of reducing the functionality of public lands by reducing their connectivity.
to other tracts of public land and open space. To maintain the abundance of habitat, scenic areas and views on public land, and to maintain access to public lands GPO 8.66 should be amended. 

**How proposal is consistent with Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies?**

The amendment is not inconsistent with the existing Comprehensive Plan and Planning Policies and merely extends them.