



KITTITAS COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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Memorandum

To: Kittitas County Planning Commission

From: Darryl Piercy, Director
Joanna Valencia, Planner II

Date: August 9, 2006

Subject: Comprehensive Plan Update and Annual Amendments

Planning Commissioners,

2006 is unique in that we are undertaking both the Annual Amendment process to the Comprehensive Plan and the 10 year Comprehensive Plan Update within a similar time frame and parallel path. You will begin hearings on this process on August 21, 2006 at 6:30 pm at the Hal Holmes Center, at which time we will begin with the Annual Amendment requests that have been docketed for your consideration. Each of these docketed items are being provided as separate applications and should be acted on as individual applications. In other words a separate motion and action for each. Please refer to the three ring binder titled *2006 Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan Amendment and Update* for details on each of these applications. You should also be aware that these docketed items will ultimately need to be consistent with the Annual Update; as such you may not want to take final action on your recommendation until you have heard all testimony as part of the update process.

Your tentative schedule for the week of August 21, 2006 is as follows. All meetings will begin at 6:30 and be held at Hal Holmes Center in Ellensburg.

- Monday, August 21 – Annual Amendments
- Tuesday, August 22- Carry over of Annual Amendments, if necessary then Regular Agenda for the 22nd
- Wednesday, August 23- Comprehensive Plan Update. 1) Consideration of the recommendation from Resource Lands Advisory Committee. 2) Urban Growth Areas and Urban Growth Nodes
- Thursday, August 24 - 1) Carry over discussion and testimony as necessary from August 23, 2) Affordable Housing Element, 3) Incorporation of other county plans 4) Miscellaneous Items.

The Update discussion and elements are driven by action taken by the Board of County Commissioners through the adoption of Resolution Number 2005-148 on November 1, 2005 and is included in your binder for reference. This resolution set the scope of work and the elements to be addressed in the update process. This resolution followed considerable public process both in terms of weekly meetings

DARRYL PIERCY, DIRECTOR

ALLISON KIMBALL, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

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with the Board of County Commissioners since May of 2005 and through a series of “Speak Outs” where community input on the scope of work was obtained. A SEPA review of the scope of work was conducted and a determination of non-significance was issued on November 7, 2005. No appeal to the SEPA determination was filed.

The following information in this memorandum intends to outline the scope of the work elements adopted by the Board of County Commissioners and provide background on the work to date and any recommendations staff may have in regards to each work element. In addition, as attachments, we have included a variety of documents we believe will assist you in your discussions.

Scope of Work Item 1 - Evaluation of existing UGA's and UGN's

Staff has been working with the Cities towards development of the UGA boundaries of each City. The Kittitas County Council of Governments recently adopted official population projections for the county and for each city jurisdiction. These population numbers have allowed the city jurisdictions to evaluate their future growth needs and identify what if any alterations are needed to the urban growth areas. It is the County which sets the Urban Growth Area Boundary for each city jurisdiction; however the County Wide Planning Policies identifies a cooperative process in which this is accomplished. The County has looked to each city jurisdiction to offer specific recommendations and justification for modification or expansion of the Urban Growth Areas. As each jurisdiction is developing an updated plan on different time lines, not all requests or analysis are available from each jurisdiction. We offer the following regarding the currently identified needs and process for each jurisdiction and their respective Urban Growth Areas.

City of Kittitas

The city has not yet completed their efforts to update their Comprehensive Plan. However the city has docketed a request to extend the UGA boundary to include their Waste Water Treatment Plant. The City has also supported, through council action, and increase to the size of the Urban Growth Area, by a private land owner. This is also a docketed item in the annual update.

City of Ellensburg

The city has indicated through the Council of Governments process for population allocation that they anticipate accommodating a significant portion of the county's overall growth for the 20 year planning period. The city continues to work through their public process and at this time it is anticipated that there may be demonstrated need for expansion of the Urban Growth Boundary. Prior to the hearing date there should be a much clearer picture of the need and location for any proposed expansion to the UGA.

City of Cle Elum

In discussions with the city(s) it is anticipated that a small section of land near the new “roundabout” to establish the appropriate line between Cle Elum and Roslyn will be included within the Cle Elum UGA. No other changes are anticipated.

City of Roslyn

No changes in the UGA boundary are anticipated.

City of South Cle Elum

No changes in the UGA boundary are anticipated

Urban Growth Nodes

Urban Growth Nodes (UGNs) are a unique feature of the planning landscape in Kittitas County. UGNs were identified as Thorp, Easton, Vantage, Ronald, and Snoqualmie Pass. The concept of UGNs was to recognize communities with urban characteristics such as established residential, commercial, and industrial settlements.¹

Since adoption of the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan the Growth Management Act has been amended to provide for Limited Areas of More Intense Rural Development (LAMIRD)² LAMIRDs have specific requirements regarding the overall size of the area identified for development which is based on a pre-existing development pattern. This designation appears to be well suited for at least three of the existing UGNs, namely Thorp, Easton and Ronald.

Staff has conducted an analysis of each UGN regarding the levels of urban services available. Information regarding water, sewer, fire response, police, schools and other items was developed. The outcome of this research is included in the attachment material. Decisions regarding the future make-up of these areas are needed. Snoqualmie Pass and the Vantage UGNs have sub area plans that have been developed. Other UGNs have gone through various levels of subarea planning although these plans were not adopted into the Comprehensive Plan. Staff recommends the Planning Commission consider further analysis of each of these areas through the subarea planning process. Each area should be prioritized regarding the need and timing of the planning process. It appears appropriate that through this subarea planning process a determination as to the viability of a particular area to be designated as an Urban Growth Area or as a LAMIRD could be determined. It is suggested that the UGN designation be dropped as under the Growth Management Act this designation does not exist and with the introduction of the LAMIRD designation is no longer necessary in our Comprehensive Plan.

Scope of Work item 2 - Affordable Housing Element

Areas of Chapter 3 of the existing Comprehensive Plan need to be updated to reflect current information. Elements of each of the Cities Comprehensive Plans will be update through the individual jurisdictions effort under their planning process.

Kittitas County amended the development code in early 2006 to allow for Accessory Dwelling Units, Accessory Living Quarters, and Special Care Manufactured Housing. This action was taken in anticipation that these elements would be required as part of the 2006 update process. The intent of this development code addition was to provide for an additional inventory of living space that would be affordable in relationship to conventional housing stock and rental properties. The GPO's and Strategies outlined in Chapter 3 are consistent with the goals of this element under GMA. Staff recommends the addition of two GPO's as follows:

GPO 3.21

Allow for the placement of Accessory Dwelling Units as a permitted use within the Urban Growth Areas and as a Conditional Use in the areas outside the UGA's.

GPO 3.22

Encourage and allow for mixed use development and high density development within the Cities and Urban Growth Areas.

¹ Kittitas County Countywide Planning Policies, Section 5, Policy A

² RCW 36.78A.070(5) (d) adopted in 1997 as an amendment to the Growth Management Act.

Scope of Work Item 3 - Resource Lands Advisory Committee (RLAC) Recommendations

The RLAC has developed a set of specific recommendations to encourage and support the concept of preserving resource lands in Kittitas County. The RLAC proposal is based on the concept that development patterns and pressures throughout the county affect the viability of resource lands. As such the answer to resource lands preservation and protection needs to address land use issues on a county wide scale. The recommendations of the RLAC are included in your binder for review.

Scope of Work Item 4 - Related Adoption to Other Plans

The Comprehensive Plan should incorporate by reference other plans as adopted by the county. This would include the Countywide Transportation Plan, the six year road improvement plan, the County recreation plan including the facilities inventory, the Capital Facilities Plan, the Solid Waste Management Plan and other plans developed outside the Comprehensive Planning process. It is recognized that these plans are dynamic in nature and are modified and updated on a regular basis. As such, adopting these plans by reference allows County policy to be fresh and consistent with the current information available.

The County should also consider the adoption by reference City plans on similar topics for those land areas within the UGA's and the development regulations which implement those plans.

Coordinated planning, especially in the development of infrastructure is highly encouraged under the Countywide Planning Policies³

Scope of Work Item 5 – Miscellaneous Items

The items identified in this work task in general deals with improved communication efforts between the County and the Citizens in an effort to keep them better informed and involved in the land use process.

The County has recently improved the use and frequency of the County web pages to improve the quality and level of information available. Continued use and improvement of this method of information dissemination should be encouraged and be identified by policy in the Comprehensive Plan.

In addition, recommendations from the Upper County Vision Plan regarding public notification should be incorporated. This includes a broader area of direct mail notification for land use applications, publishing in the upper county newspapers and posting the property site that is the subject of the proposed land use action.

It is recommended that a new "Public Participation" discussion be added to the Comprehensive Plan consistent with the public notification requirements of RCW 36.70A.035 and recommendations from the public as outlined above.

Other Mandatory Elements

Amendments to the Growth Management Act require that the Comprehensive Plan include an "Economic Development" element, a "Recreation and Parks" element and a "Utilities Element."

³ See page 4 "Urban Growth Areas" of the Countywide Planning Policies

Utilities Element

It is the intent of CDS to recommend that existing updated maps of all utilities in Kittitas County will serve to meet the requirements of the Utilities Element as outlined in RCW 36.70A.070. Areas of Chapter 6: Utilities of the existing Comprehensive Plan need to be updated to reflect current information. Additionally, the following GPO is recommended for inclusion, per direction from the Board in regards to alternatives for wind farms in Kittitas County.

GPO 6.35 Develop a process for siting Wind Farms in identified remote areas of the County in which a combination of topography and setbacks from turbine locations to non-project boundaries allow for minimal impacts. Such Wind Farm Resource Overlay Districts shall be designated as Major Industrial Development.

Recreation and Parks

Staff intends to use the County Recreation Plan/Outdoor Recreation Inventory, adopted by reference as meeting the requirements of the Recreation and Parks element.

Economic Development

Staff is working on completing a proposed Economic Development chapter, based on input from the open houses and speak outs. This new chapter is part of the package of attachments included for your review.