



KITTITAS COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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Frequently Asked Questions from May/June Open Houses

1. How and where did the population projections come from?

In October of 2005 the COG adopted the high population projection provided by the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) for the planning period of 2005 -2025. This provided for a population projection for the entire county of 52,810 people in the year 2025. The Kittitas County Conference of Governments (COG) formally adopted a revised formula for population allocation to all cities, urban growth areas and urban growth nodes within Kittitas County at their meeting on April 26, 2006.

As a result of these two actions the population projections for 2025 for each jurisdiction are as follows:

Jurisdiction	Allocation %	2025 Population
Roslyn/UGA	2.5%	1,320
S. Cle Elum/UGA	2%	1,056
Kittitas/UGA	3%	1,584
Cle Elum/UGA	19%	10,034
Ellensburg/UGA	45%	23,764
Kittitas County		
Urban Growth Nodes	10%	5,281
Non Urban County	18.5%	9,771
Totals	100%	52,810

2. How is the Upper County Vision Plan going to be implemented in the Comprehensive Plan Update?

Currently CDS staff is reviewing the recommendations contained within the Upper Kittitas County Vision Plan and is working on putting together some possible policy direction and recommendations for Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioner review and consideration.

3. I am concerned about the water/wells in Kittitas County. What is being done towards water studies in the county?

Kittitas County continues to work with regional and local entities for watershed planning. Kittitas County has also just recently received funds from CTED to develop an inventory of well data.

4. What is an Urban Growth Area (UGA) and Urban Growth Node (UGN)?

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Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) are those areas designated by an incorporated city and approved by the county, in which urban growth is encouraged. Urban Growth Areas are suitable and desirable for urban densities as determined by the sponsoring city's ability to provide urban services.

Urban Growth Nodes (UGNs) are those existing unincorporated areas in which are established town sites or communities having at a minimum: a community water system, established residential, commercial and industrial densities, and other vestiges of urban development, with defined boundaries established by the County.

5. What is a LAMIRD?

“Limited Areas of More Intensive Rural Development”, or LAMRIDs, are areas within the unincorporated rural area that are developed at densities to intense to be considered rural development. The State Growth Management Act (GMA) requires LAMIRD designation to prevent additional low-density sprawl in the rural area by minimizing and containing the higher density areas. As part of the scope of work for the Comprehensive Plan, Kittitas County is currently taking a look at the Urban Growth Nodes (UGN) to see if these would be more properly designated as LAMIRDS.

6. What steps are being taken to provide for affordable housing?

Kittitas County revised development code in 2006 to allow for Accessory Dwelling Units, Accessory Living Quarters and Special Care Manufactured Homes that promotes affordable housing.

7. What type of coordination is occurring with between the county and cities?

Kittitas County is working closely with the cities of Ellensburg, Roslyn, South Cle Elum, Kittitas and Cle Elum as they move forward with their individual Comprehensive Plan Updates.

8. How do we protect the “night sky” for Kittitas County?

Where appropriate, development has been conditioned to require lighting to be downward shaded and directed. Development of a “dark sky” ordinance could be considered to address this issue.

9. What is being done to protect existing public access to forest/recreation areas in Kittitas County?

Where existing legal access exists Kittitas County is insuring that this access be identified and included in any new land use application. Where public access crosses private lands Kittitas County has worked with individual land owners to maintain access. Use of the Public Benefit Rating System has been a useful tool in maintaining public access.

10. Why is cluster development being allowed on Commercial Forest lands?

Loss of economic viability of Commercial Forest lands due to the closing of key wood mills serving the county has triggered concern of the economic viability of commercial forest lands. Of particular concern is the Commercial Forest lands located in the Teanaway Drainage Basin. Cluster development allows for development of such lands while also encouraging the setting aside of open space to be kept in historic timber use.

11. What's a Charette?

Charette is a planning term commonly used for a workshop.

12. Why did the Resource Lands Advisory RLAC get formed?

As part of the Scope of the 2006 Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan, the Board of County Commissioners passed Resolution 2005-148 to form a Resource Lands Citizen Advisory Committee

to deal with items related to Resource Lands in addition to the mandatory elements identified in RCW 36.70A.070.

13. Will lots that are already created and existing be grandfathered in?

Yes, if you have an existing legally created lot, that lot will be grandfathered in.

14. Will rezones that have occurred to density less than 20 acres be grandfathered in?

The RLAC recommendations propose to create 4 zones: 1. Commercial Forest with an 80 acre density, 2. Commercial Agriculture with a 20 acre density and 3. Rural with a 20 acre density, and 4. a Rural Transition zone with a 5 acre base density. All rezones that have occurred in the Rural land use designation to densities less than 20 acres will be changed to a base density of 1 unit per 20 acres.

15. Will there be an opportunity for people to opt in/out of new development provisions?

The policies and regulations in place at the time of application will be applicable.

16. Will the RLAC recommendation eliminate rezones?

The recommendations of the RLAC would limit rezones in that they would only occur when a Comprehensive Plan Land Use map designation change is approved within the context of the yearly review cycle.

17. Will I be able to subdivide if I have less than 20 acres?

Yes, under the RLAC proposal densities less than one unit per acre is allowed subject to the elements of the Public Benefit Rating System

18. Presently I own property in the 1 unit per 3 acre zoning that has greater development rights than Commercial Agriculture. Why should we diminish our development rights and then buy them back from somebody who has less development rights?

The RLAC proposal is not intending to diminish your development rights; however the method in which your land can be developed may change. The RLAC proposal allows for a base density of 1 unit per five acres using the Public Benefit Rating System and Cluster development. Additional density to 1 unit per 2.5 acres would be allowed through the transfer of development rights. This actually increases the development potential of an individual property currently zoned R-3

19. What incentives are being provided for large landowners to keep lands in agricultural production? How do we protect natural resource lands?

The Resource Lands Advisory committee is proposing the creation of a Transfer of Development Right (TDR) and Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program to allow the transfer and purchase of development rights for the Commercial Agriculture and Commercial Forest designations. The development of such programs would allow for lands designated as such to maintain the commercial use, but allow for the land to still obtain development value by selling off development rights.

20. What is a “Rural Transition Overlay”?

A “Rural Transition Overlay” is an area being proposed to be designated within the Rural land use designation that will identify areas of the County for growth beyond 20 years. These areas can also be used in the TDR/PDR program as way to provide for the identification of “receiving areas” for development rights from the Commercial Agriculture zone.

21. What is a Transfer of Development Right?

Transfer of development rights (TDR) is a market based technique that encourages the voluntary transfer of growth from places where a community would like to see *less* development (called sending areas) to places where a community would like to see *more* development (called receiving areas). The sending areas can be environmentally-sensitive properties, open space, agricultural land, wildlife habitat, historic landmarks or any other places that are important to a community. The receiving areas should be places that the general public has agreed are appropriate for extra development because they are close to jobs, shopping, schools, transportation and other urban services.

TDR is driven by the profit motive. Sending site owners permanently deed-restrict their properties because the TDR program makes it more profitable for them to sell their unused development rights than develop their land. Developers buy the development rights and use them to increase the density of receiving site projects; they do that because these larger projects are more profitable than the smaller projects allowed when development rights are not transferred. In addition to making property owners and developers happy, TDR solves a seemingly intractable dilemma for communities: it gives them a way to achieve critical land use goals using little or no public funding.

22. Will there be other opportunities for public participation and input in the Comprehensive Plan process?

Public hearings before the Planning Commission are tentatively scheduled for the third week in July. Public Hearings will also be held before the Board of County Commissioners. In addition, comments continue to be taken as the 2006 Update progresses forward.