



## KITTITAS COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

411 N. Ruby St., Suite 2, Ellensburg, WA 98926

CDS@CO.KITTITAS.WA.US

Office (509) 962-7506

Fax (509) 962-7682

# Rural Land Use Designations Kittitas County

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Draft

Kittitas County's Rural Land Use designations have been established to balance the differing natural features, landscape types and land uses within the land use designation. The County's Rural land uses consist of dispersed and clustered residential developments, farms, ranches, wooded lots, recreational developments and small scale commercial and industrial uses that serve rural residents as their primary customer. Kittitas County's rural landscapes encompass a full range of natural features including wide open agriculture and range land, forested expanses, mountain slopes, rolling meadows, ridge lines and valley walls, distant vistas, streams and rivers, shorelines and other sensitive areas. The State of Washington defines rural character, rural development and rural governmental services in the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 36.70A.030 (15), (16), and (17) as follows:

Rural Character refers to the patterns of land use and development established by a county in the rural element of its comprehensive plan:

- a. In which open space, the natural landscape, and vegetation predominate over the built environment;
- b. That foster traditional rural lifestyles, rural based economies and opportunities to both live and work in rural areas;
- c. That provide visual landscapes that are traditionally found in rural areas and communities;
- d. That are compatible with the use by wildlife and for fish and wildlife habitat
- e. That reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low density development
- f. That generally does not require the extension of urban governmental services.
- g. That is consistent with the protection of natural surface water flows and ground water and surface recharge and discharge areas.

Rural development refers to development outside the urban growth area and outside agricultural, forest, and mineral resource lands designated pursuant to RCW 36.70A.170. Rural development can consist of a variety of uses and residential densities, including clustered residential development, at levels that are consistent with the preservation of rural character and the requirements of the rural element. Rural development does not refer to agriculture or forestry activities that may be conducted in rural areas.

Rural governmental services or rural services include those public services and public facilities historically and typically delivered at an intensity usually found in rural areas, and may include individual wells, domestic Group A and B water systems, individual septic systems, community septic systems, Class A reclaimed water systems, fire and police protection services, transportation and public

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DARRYL PIERCY, DIRECTOR

ALLISON KIMBALL, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

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transit services, and other public utilities associated with rural development and normally not associated with urban areas. Rural services do not include storm or sanitary sewers, except as otherwise authorized by RCW 36.70A.110 (4).

### GENERAL RURAL LAND USE POLICIES

In order to promote conservation and preservation of open space innovative planning tools shall be encouraged including but not limited to clustering and density shifting.

Master Planned Resorts (MPRS) may be approved in all rural designations in accordance with:

- (1) RCW 36.70A.360, *Master planned resorts*;
- (2) County Comprehensive Plan policies; and,
- (3) County Development Regulations.

Innovative measures and techniques for conserving water and aquifer recharge shall be encouraged.

Consider the development and implementation of a Transfer of Development Rights program.

*For future discussion: (Land use designations should meet most/all/some/a majority of the criteria listed in each sub designation)*

# Rural Land Use Designations

## RURAL TRANSITIONAL AREAS

### PURPOSE AND INTENT

Purpose is to implement GMA planning goals related to future population growth and projections for any city, to increasing viable open space, protecting critical areas, and providing adequate infrastructure, transportation and utility corridors for balanced and sustainable future growth.

This land use designation sustains rural character by focusing projected development around existing cities consistent with planned transportation and urban utility corridors. Focusing growth into these areas will reduce pressures on farmlands and less populated rural areas where infrastructure, public services and facilities are more difficult or expensive to provide.

This category is also intended to minimize public service expenditures by encouraging infill and redevelopment of individual lots. To attain this objective, the designation incorporates cost-effective development policies related to community water systems, preferential use of developed road networks and planned transportation corridors, density shifting, and for the creation of and maintenance of open space.

Ultimately, rural transitional policies are intended to maintain the sense of rural character while these lands remain outside UGAs, but with the understanding that at some point in time the rural transitional area will become associated with the city's next era of projected population growth. These policies also provide incentives to accommodate economically feasible future urban conversion when additional urban land is needed.

### POLICIES

Subdivision projects shall be planned with logical transportation and utility corridor extensions.

Density shifting, clustering and other innovative techniques are encouraged within this land use designation.

This land use designation shall encourage development in areas least suited for agriculture.

### DESIGNATION CRITERIA

Criteria 1. Land use designation shall be immediately adjacent to designated UGAs.

- Criteria 2. Lands at the time of adoption of the ordinance designated or zoned Urban Residential, Rural Residential, Suburban, Ag 3, Rural 3, Ag 5, or Rural 5 and lands that otherwise are located adjacent to and logical extensions of UGA's.
- Criteria 3. Lands located within the logical expansion of urban utility corridors.
- Criteria 4. Lands with the potential to receive services within the 20 year planning period.
- Criteria 5. Lands that are included within and identified by the Kittitas County Transportation Plans.
- Criteria 6. Lands that have not been identified as mineral resource land.
- Criteria 7. Lands that are not designated Commercial Agriculture, Commercial Forest, and Mineral Lands.
- Criteria 8. May include lands which have public values that must be protected under state law including but not limited to:
  - i. Shorelines
  - ii. Wetlands
  - iii. Sensitive fish and wildlife habitat
- Criteria 9. May include lands which have been mapped as floodway, or which have excessively steep slopes, unstable soils or other mapped critical area feature is predominant.

#### DENSITY

- Standard 1. An average of 1 dwelling unit per 3 or 5 acres within the contiguous land use designation.
- Standard 2. There are portions of the county that have parcels that have been created that are less than 3 acres. In these areas the density shall be the existing density.
- Standard 3. Property may not be further divided once the average of 1 unit per 3 or 5 acres density is reached until such time as the property is included in the UGA.
- Standard 4. Development shall be clustered and the use of shadow platting shall be required in order to plan for future incorporation into the UGA.

# RURAL RESIDENTIAL AREAS

## PURPOSE AND INTENT

The Rural Residential category provides a broad choice of areas within rural Kittitas County where rural lifestyles can be sustained. This category is intended to maintain rural character by creating and maintaining larger parcel sizes, which may allow individual wells and septic systems on each parcel or community wells or community septic systems, or other innovative technologies.

## POLICIES

The use of public water systems or community wells to conserve resources shall be encouraged.

Group A water systems and innovative waste water disposal systems are encouraged.

Density shifting, clustering and other innovative techniques are encouraged within this land use designation.

Parcel creation in this land use designation shall minimize conflicts with nearby resource lands.

## DESIGNATION CRITERIA

- Criteria 1. Lands outside Urban Growth Areas and the Rural Transition designation.
- Criteria 2. Lands located outside of the Commercial Agriculture or Commercial Forest land use designations.
- Criteria 3. Lands located within a fire district.
- Criteria 4. Lands served by established county and or state road networks which are in existence or can be logically extended as provided in the Kittitas County Transportation Plan.
- Criteria 5. Lands at the time of adoption of the ordinance designated or zoned Rural Residential, Ag 3, Rural 3, Ag 5, or Rural 5.
- Criteria 6. Lands that otherwise are located adjacent to and are logical extensions of this land use designation.
- Criteria 7. Lands that do not require extension or provision of public/urban levels of services. Utility Services may be provided by Public Utility Districts or Private Utility providers.
- Criteria 8. May include lands which have public values that must be protected under state law including but not limited to:
  - iv. Shorelines
  - v. Wetlands
  - vi. Sensitive fish and wildlife habitat
- Criteria 9. May include lands which have been mapped as floodway, or which have excessively steep slopes, unstable soils or other mapped critical area feature is predominant.

## DENSITY

- Standard 1. The average density across the contiguous land use designation shall not exceed 1 unit per 3 acres.
- Standard 2. Newly created 3 acre parcels shall require, at a minimum, community water and septic systems. Newly created 5 acre parcels may be served by individual wells and onsite individual septic systems.
- Standard 3. Clustering and other innovative techniques are encouraged and recommended for parcels in this land use designation.

# RURAL WORKING LANDS

## PURPOSE AND INTENT

These areas are rural in character and may have access or limited access to services and infrastructure. These lands are found outside of UGAs and Rural Transitional Areas. These lands may separate designated Commercial Agriculture or Commercial Forest lands from other more intense land use designations.

It is recognized that Rural Lands by definition, do not include agricultural, forestry and mineral lands that have been classified as resource lands with “long-term significance.” Resource lands with long-term commercial significance are considered in the Natural Resources Lands section of the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan.

Rural Working Lands may include, however, viable resources uses, which do not fit all of the criteria for inclusion in the resource land designation. It is recognized that this area may have agriculture or forest land practices of small scale and/or commercial significance. In many cases public roads and infrastructure are not available to serve the area and may not be available in the 20 year planning period.

## POLICIES

Density shifting, clustering and other innovative techniques are encouraged within this land use designation.

Group A water systems and innovative waste water disposal systems are encouraged.

This land use designation shall encourage development in areas least suited for agriculture.

Recognize agriculture as an important economic activity and support the working lands in the county.

## DESIGNATION CRITERIA

- Criteria 1. Lands outside Urban Growth Areas and the Rural Transitional Areas land use designation.
- Criteria 2. Lands that are not designated Commercial Agriculture, Commercial Forest, and Mineral Lands.
- Criteria 3. Lands may have agriculture or forest land practices of small scale and/or commercial significance.
- Criteria 4. May include lands which have public values that must be protected under state law including but not limited to:
  - i. Shorelines
  - ii. Wetlands
  - iii. Sensitive fish and wildlife habitat

- Criteria 5. May include lands which have been mapped as floodway, or which have excessively steep slopes, unstable soils or other mapped critical area feature is predominant.

DENSITY

- Standard 1. The average density across the contiguous land use designation shall not exceed 1 unit per 20 acres.
- Standard 2. Parcels may be created with a minimum lot size of 1 acre through clustering, density shifting or other innovative techniques as long as the average density of 1 unit per 20 acres is met. Overall density remains the same.

# RURAL CONSERVATION AREAS

## PURPOSE AND INTENT

These areas tend to be remote or have been historically rural in character. Large tracts of undeveloped open space exist. It is recognized that this area may have agriculture or forest land practices of small scale and/or commercial significance. Area may also be adjacent to designated resource lands. In many cases public roads and infrastructure are not available to serve the area.

## POLICIES

Development in this land use designation shall be limited to encourage conservation of open space.

Any development that occurs in this land use designation shall be required to use clustering, density shifting or other innovative techniques.

The County shall not extend county roads into lands designated as Rural Conservation Lands, unless identified as a transportation corridor in the Kittitas County Transportation Plan.

## DESIGNATION CRITERIA

- Criteria 1. Large undeveloped parcels with no direct county road or state highway access.
- Criteria 2. Lands in close proximity to Public Lands and private lands that have historically provided access to public recreation areas.
- Criteria 3. Lands previously designated as Commercial Forest and Commercial Agriculture land use.
- Criteria 4. May include lands classified under “open space” tax classification per RCW 84.34.
- Criteria 5. May include lands which have public values that must be protected under state law including but not limited to:
  - iv. Shorelines
  - v. Wetlands
  - vi. Sensitive fish and wildlife habitat
- Criteria 6. May include lands which have been mapped as floodway, or which have excessively steep slopes, unstable soils or other mapped critical area feature is predominant.

## DENSITY

- Standard 1. Density in this land use designation shall be an average of 1 unit per 80 acres.

- Standard 2. Maximum lot size is 1 acre unless otherwise determined by Environmental Health and Department of Health requirements.
- Standard 3. Development shall be clustered.

# RURAL RECREATIONAL AREAS

## PURPOSE AND INTENT

Kittitas County is known for the recreational opportunities that its varied landscape offers. From the crest of the Cascades where major ski resorts are located on Snoqualmie Pass to the Columbia River that offers recreation from fishing to water skiing Kittitas County provides citizens of Washington State as well as the rest of the country a wonderful recreational playground during all the seasons of the year. Because of its location, close to the major population centers of the Puget Sound region, many families are finding Kittitas County the location for their second homes.

These second home owners are not accounted for in the Washington State Office of Financial Managements population projections that Kittitas County is required to plan for under GMA. This land use designation is meant to accommodate these part-time residents.

This land use designation is for use in areas that may accommodate residential development associated with Kittitas County's recreation opportunities. This land use designation may also include large tracks of recreation land and public or private forest land where no residential development occurs.

## POLICIES

Development shall require Group A water systems with adequate water rights.

Development shall occur using clustering, density shifting and other innovative techniques.

Parcel sizes shall be limited to 1 acre unless otherwise determined by Environmental Health and Department of Health requirements.

## DESIGNATION CRITERIA

- Criteria 1. Lands adjacent to or associated with lands used for recreation.
- Criteria 2. Lands outside of UGA's and those designated Rural Transitional Areas.
- Criteria 3. May include lands that were designated Commercial Forest.
- Criteria 4. Lands designated as Master Planned Resorts.
- Criteria 5. May include lands beyond the existing county road or state route access network.
- Criteria 6. May include lands which have public values that must be protected under state law including:
  - i. Shorelines
  - ii. Wetlands
  - iii. Sensitive fish and wildlife habitat

- Criteria 7. May include lands which have been mapped as floodway, or which have excessively steep slopes, unstable soils or other mapped critical area feature is predominant.

DENSITY

- Standard 1. Density shall be an average of 1 unit per 80 acres across this land use designation.
- Standard 2. Lands at the time of adoption of the ordinance designated or zoned Agriculture-3, Rural-3, Agriculture-5, Rural-5, Forest and Range-20, Agriculture-20 shall maintain their existing density as allowed by those zones.
- Standard 3. Residential development shall be limited to cluster development with the maximum lot size being 1 acre.
- Standard 4. Lands included within this land use designation shall require a water right and a public water system for all residential development in areas that have a density of less than 1 unit per 80 acres.

## **DEFINITIONS**

Sprawl –

Rural Character