

COMMENTS

RECEIVED FROM PUBLIC HEARINGS HELD ON NOVEMBER 16TH AND 17TH AND DECEMBER 7TH AND 8TH, 2005 FOR PURPOSES OF PUBLIC INPUT ON ISSUES INCLUDED IN THE SCOPE OF THE 2006 KITTITAS COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Issues:

- Evaluation of the Urban Growth Areas and Urban Growth Nodes for Kittitas County
- Affordable housing in Kittitas County
- Related to adoption of other county plans - focus on transportation and recreation

URBAN GROWTH AREAS AND URBAN GROWTH NODES

Relate water policy to water rights UGA's and UGN's.

Watershed planning should be incorporated in other land use planning.

Buildable lands study should be available for decisions that apply to Commercial and Industrial zoning.

Consider vertical space in inventory of Commercial and Industrial lands.

Urban Growth Areas and Nodes need a fresh look at the policies the County and the cities use in decision making.

The distribution of population projections through a formula and the inclusion of the second home factor need to be resolved now.

Easton should be looked at as a "rural services area" because of the amount of public lands in the Easton area.

It should be noted that UGA's have services available and UGN's not necessarily. Important to recognize this distinction.

Ronald UGN does have water service available.

The question about the Nodes being LAMIRDS (local areas of more intense rural development) as CTED maintains must be at the core of the policy decisions affecting UGN's.

Mother-in-law apartments within city limits and urban growth areas can assist in increasing densities in urbanized areas and at the same time provide for more affordable housing.

The City of Cle Elum has adopted the accessory dwelling unit policy.

Water rights for lands over 2 acres in size to be annexed is City of Cle Elum policy.

In a GMA court case (Medina vs.) affordability of housing connected to density - 1 unit/acre or less is standard.

Cle Elum availability of approximately 1,300 new residential units includes single, multi-family, manufactured and condos. Business park zoning available. Suncadia providing 25-

30 condo units in works. Garden Court planned for 26 units - maybe more. Victorian Towne Center in city will provide residential and commercial. All of this is infilling. Some new plats in waiting review for 5,000 - 7,000 square foot lots.

Municipalities need to provide incentives for building affordable housing.

Could have \$0.00 dollars invested in land and housing is still expensive. Going vertical can help affordability.

Second home owners do not have the same impacts as full time home owners (ex. Children in the schools).

Providing affordable housing should be included in the Performance Based Cluster Plat provisions for density bonus.

Direct correlation between density and quality of roads.

Worth the time for Kittitas County to rethink the whole concept of UGN's and rethink UGA's as well.

Easton is better described as a "Rural Service Area" than a UGN. Calling it a UGN means it will soon be very urban.

County and cities should promote in-filling within the cities and the UGA's.

Water policy of County should address the future and acknowledge the current use and location of all wells.

Impervious surfaces limits should be implemented to recognize impact on aquifer recharge.

County should gather watershed info. into useable format and acknowledge cities sources.

County should recognize the property tax revenues generated in the UGA's and where the revenues go as UGA's are annexed and expanded.

Suggestion that cities develop a reimbursement fee structure for developing in a UGA - recognizes developing at a higher standard than that of the County.

All of the industrial growth should occur where a City can provide the water.

Inventory of industrial lands should include lands that are outright owned not necessarily for lease by the county such as the airport property.

The subject of rural convenience stores must be carefully defined to avoid rural strip malls.

Overall location of commercial and industrial zoned properties in County must be based on a valid set of criteria.

County must keep in mind that there are *MANY* types of industries when considering policies.

Industry and commercial do not have to be single-story sprawl. Keep multi-story option.

Affordable Housing

The IFC requirements for snow load for all housing construction (particularly manufactured housing) makes some forms of "affordable housing" less affordable.

Policy to reinforce a new mindset about affordable housing - i.e. support a "no projects" mindset.

Carriage houses or cottages, smaller square feet in designed communities within cities and Urban Growth Areas and Nodes may offer more affordability through better use of expensive land.

Mother-in-law apartments within city limits and urban growth areas can assist in increasing densities in urbanized areas and at the same time provide for more affordable housing.

In a GMA court case (*Medina vs.*) affordability of housing connected to density - 1 unit/acre or less is standard.

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Subdivision requirements should include a ratio of multi-family (perhaps 4 plexes) to single family lots. This would be a requirement vs. an incentive.

In Jackson Wyo. workers in a resort area commute over a dangerous pass to affordable homes - is that the choice we want to make by doing nothing?

General policy statement - the cities and county **MUST** work more together.

There are abandoned and unoccupied homes in the cities that could be a resource for affordable existing housing.

Knowing employment by sector (industrial, public inst., retail, etc.) key knowledge needed to address affordable housing needs and locations.

Wages in county not up there with prices of new housing.

West side developer workers impacts to housing in County not assessed - need the info.

Cost of land is negative to encouraging the use of lots for more affordable Manu. Housing.

Division of rural county into 3 and 5 acre lots will chew up developable land and lends to sprawl - not the intent of *GMA*.

More privately paid infrastructure needed to keep roads decent as rural lands become more populated.

Higher density (more affordable) lots should be mandatory for every subdivision within the County and the Cities.

Zoning codes should recognize the need for affordable housing throughout the County and the cities.

Transportation Planning

Direct correlation between density and quality roads.

Joint planning with the County and the Cities should occur through transportation plans and should be an ongoing formal process (example Bender Road - County and Ellensburg).

Planning and acquisition of parking for access to Yakima River should be a part of recreation and transportation planning.

State Route 903 needs improvement through Roslyn according to the WSDOT.

Roslyn opposed to routing SR 903 through the Urban Forest zone.

Having SR 903 through Roslyn helps commerce.

Park and ride programs should be coordinated and developed jointly by the Cities and the County.

An east/west passenger rail system should be promoted by the Cities and the County.

Native plants should be used in developing new roads and retrofitting existing roads.

John Wayne Trail should be completed and interconnection with Irene Rinehart City Park and Westside Park should be coordinated and developed with County and Ellensburg working together.

Improve access to the Yakima River should be a County priority.

Impact fees may be needed to address transportation issues related to growth in UGA's.

Road safety must be improved - a priority for the County.

Within the UGA's, must have Recreation and Transportation Plans coordinated between the County and the City.

The Cities and the County should leave impact fees on the table for discussion as the County and the Cities grow.

County and Cities should adopt inter-local agreements for planning/transportation and recreation in the UGA's.

Transportation Plans of Cities and County should show truck routes.

County and Cities and the private sector should promote tourism in a joint manner.

County should endorse the recreation plan "on the ground." Development regulations a method.

Incremental goals (benchmarks) to set priorities should be made and monitored against.

County must have a designated collector plan as part of the transportation grid in the Transportation Plan and it must be reflected in Comprehensive Plan (densities, etc.).

A portion of the Recreation Plan should resemble the Transportation Plan showing interconnections of trail systems and it must be reflected in Comprehensive Plan policies.

Access for emergency vehicles still a very important public safety issue - keep the emphasis on this matter.

Recreation Planning

The County needs to look at the John Wayne Trail with regard to:

How big is it in attracting tourists?

Should it be paved to enhance use?

Should it be opened to snowmobiles in the winter?

The County needs to ask "Should Suncadia be open to public snowmobile use?"

An increase in the real estate excise tax to fund recreation enhancements is preferable to impact fees.

Current property taxes do not allow County to adequately fund impacts of new housing on need for recreation preservation and enhancements.

Keep impact fees on the table.

Potential for increased pollution of Lake Cle Elum through more development allowed in bad soils for septic systems not good for recreation and tourism.

County should talk with State Agencies in charge of Yakima River fishery. Specifically, the increased number of white fish in the river and their impact on the fly fishing species. Could negatively effect the tourism \$ assoc. with fly fishing.

Traditional trails and roads used to access forest need to be preserved:

- acknowledgement that insurance for landowner is difficult issue
- perhaps upper county recreation district and County can help

Recreation really is a 200 year out issue not a 20 year out issue.

Public Works provide any maps or documents showing trails and other access in times past - i.e. help define traditional and provide an inventory.

County should explore ability to lease these accesses from DNR, Forest Service, etc.

John Wayne Trail should be completed and interconnection with Irene Rinehart City Park and Westside Park should be coordinated and developed with County and Ellensburg working together.

Improve access to the Yakima River should be a County priority.

A portion of the Recreation Plan should resemble the Transportation Plan showing interconnections of trail systems and it must be reflected in Comprehensive Plan policies.

We need a policy in the Comprehensive Plan to address the use of the precious resource - water - on golf courses.

County should work closely with state agencies to address issues which could be harmful to the fly fishery on the "blue ribbon" Yakima River (example: the proliferation of whitefish and the potential for squaw fish).

County and Cities should do more education on critical areas within the UGA's.

Traditional roads and trails for recreation should be identified in the official County plans as appropriate.

Because private individuals close off access for liability reasons (no insurance available), the Recreation District (upper county) should deal with this problem immediately.

Recreation should be addressed as a 200 year issue/plan.

Dark skies have value in recreation and should be recognized as a priority in County planning.

Access to hunting is important to tourism and should be mentioned in County plans as such.

County should be purchasing rights of way of traditional trails and roads to keep them open to citizens. See funding suggestions.

Wildlife corridors from Easton to Elk Heights should be protected from development and considered for multi-use compatible human activity.

County should produce maps of historic roads and trails.

Recreation user fees to fund suggestions should be implemented.

County should have Parks Dept. and fund with user fees, real estate excise taxes, impact fees or something else acceptable.

The Parks dept. is needed for ORV's, snowmobiles, horse access, portable toilets, etc.