

I ask you to envision a small stream trickling innocently down saturated Sumas Mountain from previous snow and ice, but, then the rains begin. By early evening of the second day the intensity of the rain increases causing that innocent appearing stream to become swollen and then a raging torrent of silt-laden brownish water. The power becomes greater with the addition of gravel and small rocks tearing at the banks on its decline down a 35% grade from a distance of 2 miles. The bombardment continues on root balls of cut trees and then on non harvested trees close to the swollen torrent. Now the action of the water and its contents carve into the stream bed exposing huge boulders, some the size of small automobiles. The boulders become dislodged from the mountainside and increase the potent mix cascading uncontrollably down the steep grade. It has now become a full blown landslide. As it approaches the more level terrain, the mixture spreads out in appearance for several hundred yards wide tearing at everything in its path for a distance of approximately one half mile. The stream now becomes a series of streams following the path of least resistance toward the more level terrain. As the force of the slide abates, the area is inundated with spear shaped tree trunks, mud, and the huge boulders. This event happened on Mt Baker Hwy at M.P. 16 on January 8, 2009 at 3:30 A.M. Fortunately no lives were lost and but a few structures damaged. The landscape was devastated and will remain scarred for some time.

In township 40, range 5E, section 21, the same as the footprint of the proposed Balfour village, exists the East side of Sumas Mountain with some of those 35% grades. Maps of geological hazard sites indicate the presence of alluvial fans on those very same slopes and terrain below them. The affect of a slide with the same magnitude as on Mt Baker Hwy would border the catastrophic given the closeness of homes proposed for that area.

Are the wishes of a few who have a substantial vested interest in a high density development more great than the moral issues of responsible development and the welfare of the unsuspecting? Responsible development does not place families in the areas of potential harm.

The council has a moral obligation to the overall welfare of the citizens of this county. By adopting the LAMIRD, the high population density becomes a non issue in the described area.

Respectfully submitted,

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