

ASSOCIATED PROJECT CONSULTANTS, INC., P.S.

PROFESSIONAL CONSULTING ENGINEERS • LAND USE • CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANTS

October 19, 2009

Whatcom County Council Members
Whatcom County, WA

RE: Comments regarding the Birch Bay UGA; Paul Garrett and Whisper Lake Developments, Inc. Properties

Dear Council Members,

On behalf of two properties that are in the **SHORT TERM UGA** planning area of Birch Bay, we offer the following information for your consideration. These properties are in the process of development at urban densities and both are within walking distance of the planned town center node (Alderson/Blaine Rd). **We respectfully request that both these properties remain in the UGA.**

HISTORY

Paul Garrett: The Garrett property has a preliminary plat approval for 97 single-family lots and a 10-year vesting right (2015). In order to maintain the servicing agreement with Birch Bay Water and Sewer District, this property must remain in the UGA. RR Ranch, a fully developed subdivision, surrounds the property to the north and east. In addition to the Garrett property, the County should consider retaining RR Ranch, since it is urban development within the UGA and does not change capacity. This will help to make the UGA boundary more rational. This property is within the 2004 Birch Bay Community plan/vision.

Whisper Lake: The owners had been working on a plan to start "SOFTBALL CITY", a regional softball facility. The Camp Horizon property, managed by the County Parks Department would compliment the park by providing living quarters for teams that would visit the county from the USA and Canada. The owner petitioned the District for water and sewer and was annexed into the District by the County Boundary Review Board in 1994, then added to the STPA by Whatcom County in 1997. In 1998, WC Ordinance #98.031 amended the zoning map from R10A to URM6, see attached history). This site is currently being reviewed for a complete subdivision application for a 145 lot single-family subdivision. This site abuts the proposed town center proposed under the County Executive's plan and the 2004 Birch Bay Community plan/vision.

PROPERTY DATA

	Zoned SF Units	Zoned Population	Actual SF Units	Actual Population
Paul Garrett; 65 acres, 24.5 developable acres, UR4, approved plat for 97 SF units	260	624	97	233
Whisper Lake 38 acres, 27.4 developable acres, URM6, preliminary plat Application pending	228	547	145	348
Total	488	1171	242*	581*

* Note: This represents a 50% reduction in unit count and population.

RATIONALE

Whisper Lake and the Garrett property represent logically located development very close to the planned town center node supported by the County Executive and the Community plan/vision. The properties are currently designated short-term urban growth area and both are in the process of development to urban density. The development plans on both properties have been designed to respect environmentally sensitive areas and because of this, will not be built to the maximum zoned density.

POPULATION FACTS

The population projections by both the Executive's plan and the Community plan are as follows:

Executives plan	3239 population
BB Community plan	4329 population

As you can see there is a shortage of about 1000 people between the two plans.

The October 9th Staff memo to the Planning Commission from David Stalheim demonstrated that it is very difficult to remove the planning areas A, B, C, D from the Executive's UGA. In fact, I have shown that the numbers planned in Areas A, B, C are overly optimistic. Here are the comparisons regarding population:

	Staff Population	Actual Population
Area A, Lincoln/Shintaffer Rd	663	247*
Area B, Lincoln/Blaine Rd	125	68*
Area C, Alderson/Blaine Rd	255	255*
	1043	570
Difference in Population		473 people

*See attached maps

By adding in the Garrett and Whisper Lake Property, the population is only 108 people, slightly over the projection (581 – 473 = 108 people). The Planning Commission Staff Report stated:

“Staff is not recommending removal of all to the study Areas A, B, C, D, or any specific study area. In fact, staff would request the planning commission to reconsider whether reductions are warranted at all. Unlike other Urban Growth Areas associated with most small cities where the population allocation was increased over the historic share, Birch Bay’s allocation is at the low end of the EIS. Thus, a surplus of capacity in the context of Birch Bay is significantly different than a surplus in other urban areas (Blaine, Everson, Ferndale, Nooksack) where the high historic growth share was selected, and then increased by 50%.”

I would concur that by including these two sites, the Council is well within the percentage of accuracy in predicting population over the 20-year period.

CAPITOL IMPROVEMENTS TO THE BLAINE ROAD

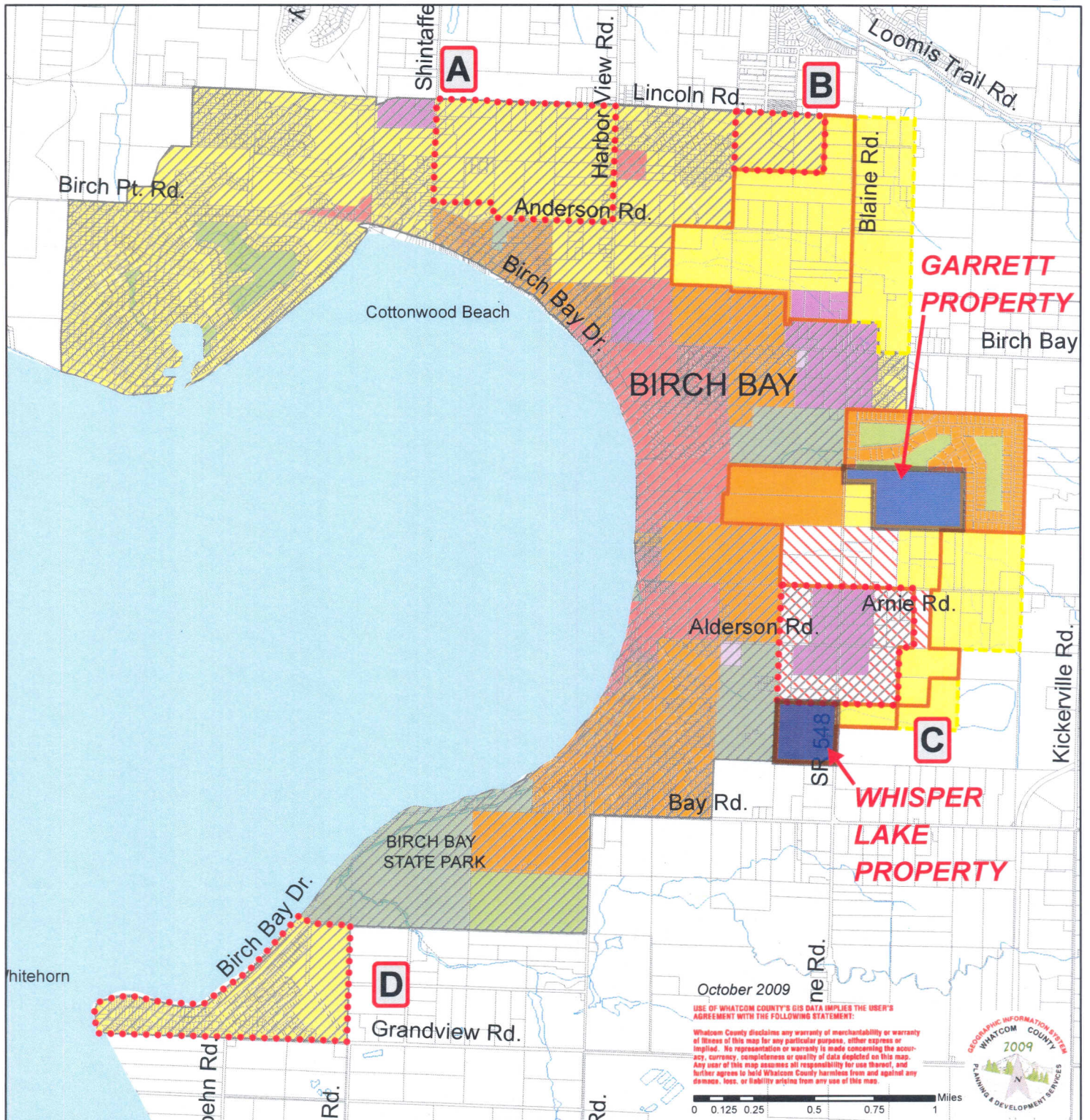
By including these two properties in the UGA, they will contribute to the improvements to the street and roadway system in Birch Bay. The Garrett property, Birch Bay Meadows, contributes \$100,000 to the street system as they go forward. Both the town center project and Whisper Lake properties will also certainly support the improvements specific to their development activity. The County must depend on private development to improve all or a part of the Blaine Road.

SUMMARY

Please add the two SHORT TERM UGA properties back into the new UGA boundary.



Douglas N. Campbell, P.E.
Principal



Birch Bay UGA - Community Plan 2004

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|--|------------------------|---|----------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
|  | Proposed UGA Boundary |  | Residential Low Density |  | Commercial, General |
|  | Proposed Urban Reserve |  | Residential Medium Density |  | Public Parks, Open Space |
|  | Proposed UGA Removal |  | Residential Multi-Family |  | Private Recreational, Open Space |
| | |  | Commercial, Resort, Neighborhood |  | Government |