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ALL COUNCIL MEMBERS
WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL

November 2, 2009

Whatcom County Council
311 Grand Avenue
Bellingham, WA 98225

RE: Removal of Vista/Malloy area from the Ferndale UGA

Dear Council Members:

We own 20 acres of land located near the northern city limits of Ferndale. The subject property is located between Vista Dr. and Malloy Road, and is bounded on the north by Aldergrove Road. We have owned this property for over 45 years. During most of this time, the property has had an urban residential designation indicating the zoning on the parcel would be changed to an urban density as soon as city water and sewer became available. Further, the property has been in the Ferndale UGA since the UGA was first established in the early 1990's. Unlike some of the more distant annexations the city of Ferndale has considered, this property is just a stones throw from existing residential development, and according to the city, can be easily served by city services.

Other attributes include:

- The area is served by two major north-south arterials, Vista Drive and Malloy Road.
- Proximity to two schools is a highly sought after characteristic of a neighborhood. The subject property is within walking distance (or a 5 min. drive) to elementary, middle school and high schools; including the recently proposed second Ferndale High School to be located nearby on Church Road, which will likely generate even more residential growth.
- The city has plans to extend sewer and water to the Grandview industrial area which will pass near the west boundary of our property. The topography of our site facilitates the extension of utilities.
- There is an existing 24" water main in Aldergrove Rd. bordering our property on the north.
- The city is growing north; our site is in the path of logical growth without 'leap frogging'.

- The property is not suited for, and has never been used for agriculture, so no farmland would be lost to future development

While it may be argued that Ferndale's 1996 UGA analysis was too aggressive and resulted in an over estimation of growth and an oversized UGA, our concern today is the county executives' estimate of 1.4% annual growth might be too low. It is lower than the GMCC estimate of 1.6%, slightly lower than the county's own consultant @ 1.45%, lower than Ferndale's comp plan @ 2% and lower than OFM's estimate; which, if I calculated correctly, is over 2% per year. The city of Ferndale points out that in only 10 of the last 50 years has the countywide growth rate been at, or less than the 1.4% predicted by Pete. In fact, in thirteen of the fifty years, the growth rate was double the rate predicted by the county executive. Mr. Kremen's proposal anticipates population growth rates at all time historic lows for all of the next 20 years. This is unrealistic and is likely to result in future population projections that are woefully low, and an undersized UGA; who benefits from that? The problem of an undersized UGA is that more pressure is placed on rural and agricultural lands and facilities are often undersized and inadequate to meet future demand; a lose/lose situation.

The removal of these future urban areas from the UGA removes the possibility of coordinated planning. The county has little incentive to plan for an area that will not be developed and that may be annexed in the future. And, the city has little incentive to plan for an area without assurances that its action will result in inclusion in the UGA. The property ends up in a sort of perpetual purgatory, that benefits no one.

In conclusion, we strongly urge you to keep the Vista/Malloy area in the city of Ferndale's UGA (please see area 1 exhibit 1 of Ferndale's UGA proposal attached). Ferndale has already reduced its UGA by nearly 1000 acres and the remaining UGA is the minimum required to meet reasonable growth projections. At the very minimum, the existing Vista/Malloy UGA, as depicted on may UGA-4 attached, should be extended north to Aldergrove Rd. which is a natural line of demarcation. It's hard to tell from the map, but it appears that part of our property may be in the UGA and part in the proposed UGA reserve.

The GMA planning goal number one is to "encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner" (RCW 36.70A .020(1)). The Vista/Malloy area of Ferndale meets these parameters. Cities are the most desirable and efficient place to accommodate growth; cities like Ferndale will allow Whatcom County to achieve important county-wide goals including but not limited to:

- Increased housing affordability.
- Growth that more fully pays for itself by more efficient utilization of infrastructure and city services.
- Protection of farm and resource lands.
- Commute trip reduction.

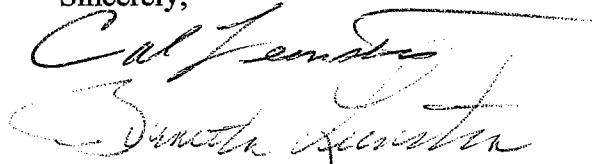
- Increased support of public transit.
- More effective utilization of schools and many other reasons.

We have been patiently waiting for over 45 years for city utilities to be extended to our area; now, on the eve of that event, it seems like a particularly inappropriate time to relegate our property to reserve status when it qualifies in every way for outright inclusion in the UGA. Given that the subject property is practically on the border of Ferndale's city limits and city services will soon be extended to our area, it is an attractive candidate for annexation. Therefore, it doesn't make any sense to re-designate the subject area as a UGA reserve just to have property owners go through the process re-establishing UGA status a short time later.

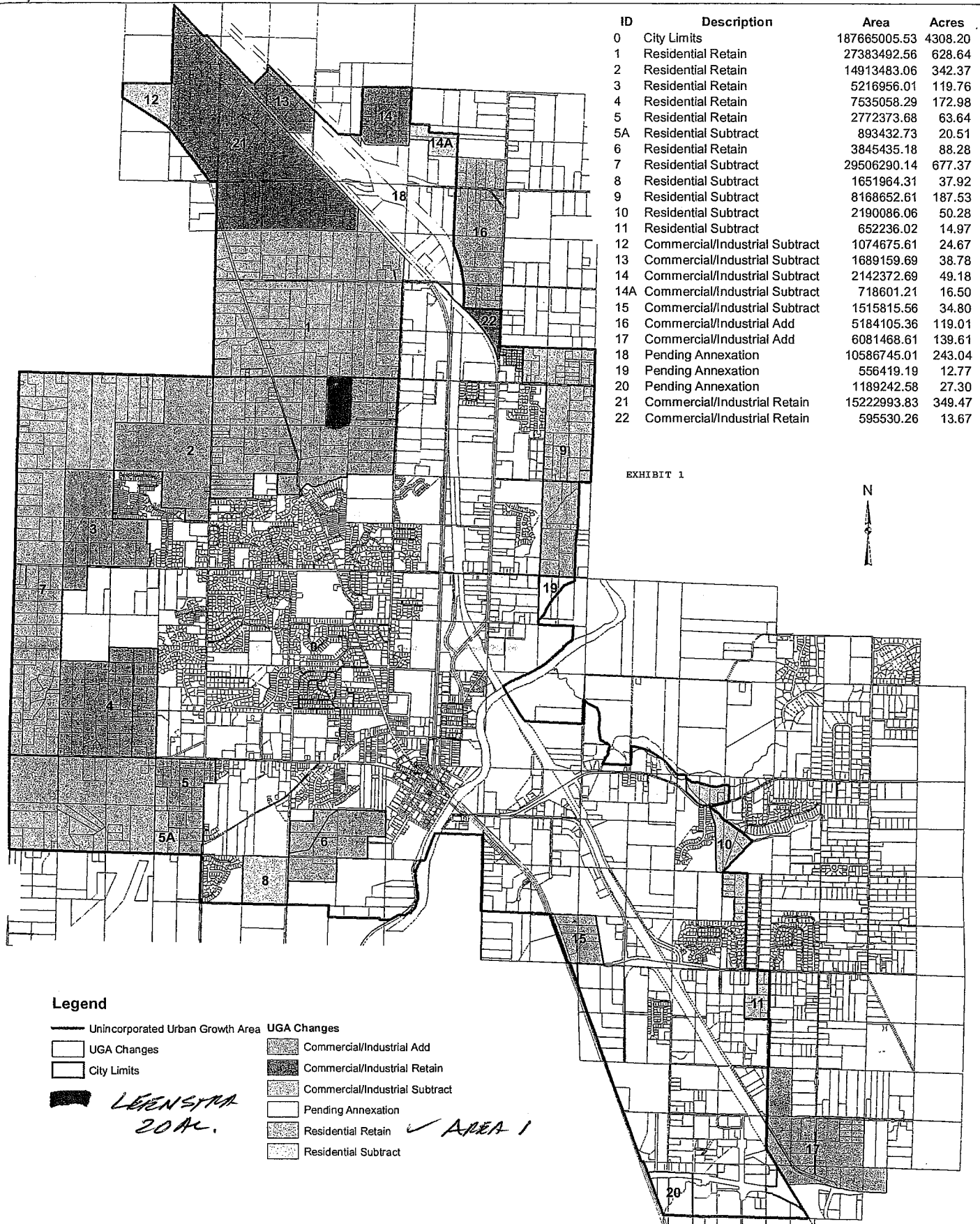
The obvious conclusion is that adequately sizing Ferndale's UGA is a critical step to directing population growth to urban areas. We urge you once again to retain the Vista/Malloy area in the Ferndale UGA.

Thanks for listening, and your anticipated positive resolution.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signatures of Cal Leenstra and Bernetta Leenstra. The signature of Cal Leenstra is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right. The signature of Bernetta Leenstra is also in cursive and is positioned below the first signature.

Cal Leenstra
Bernetta Leenstra



ID	Description	Area	Acres
0	City Limits	187665005.53	4308.20
1	Residential Retain	27383492.56	628.64
2	Residential Retain	14913483.06	342.37
3	Residential Retain	5216956.01	119.76
4	Residential Retain	7535058.29	172.98
5	Residential Retain	2772373.68	63.64
5A	Residential Subtract	893432.73	20.51
6	Residential Retain	3845435.18	88.28
7	Residential Subtract	29506290.14	677.37
8	Residential Subtract	1651964.31	37.92
9	Residential Subtract	8168652.61	187.53
10	Residential Subtract	2190086.06	50.28
11	Residential Subtract	652236.02	14.97
12	Commercial/Industrial Subtract	1074675.61	24.67
13	Commercial/Industrial Subtract	1689159.69	38.78
14	Commercial/Industrial Subtract	2142372.69	49.18
14A	Commercial/Industrial Subtract	718601.21	16.50
15	Commercial/Industrial Subtract	1515815.56	34.80
16	Commercial/Industrial Add	5184105.36	119.01
17	Commercial/Industrial Add	6081468.61	139.61
18	Pending Annexation	10586745.01	243.04
19	Pending Annexation	556419.19	12.77
20	Pending Annexation	1189242.58	27.30
21	Commercial/Industrial Retain	15222993.83	349.47
22	Commercial/Industrial Retain	595530.26	13.67

EXHIBIT 1

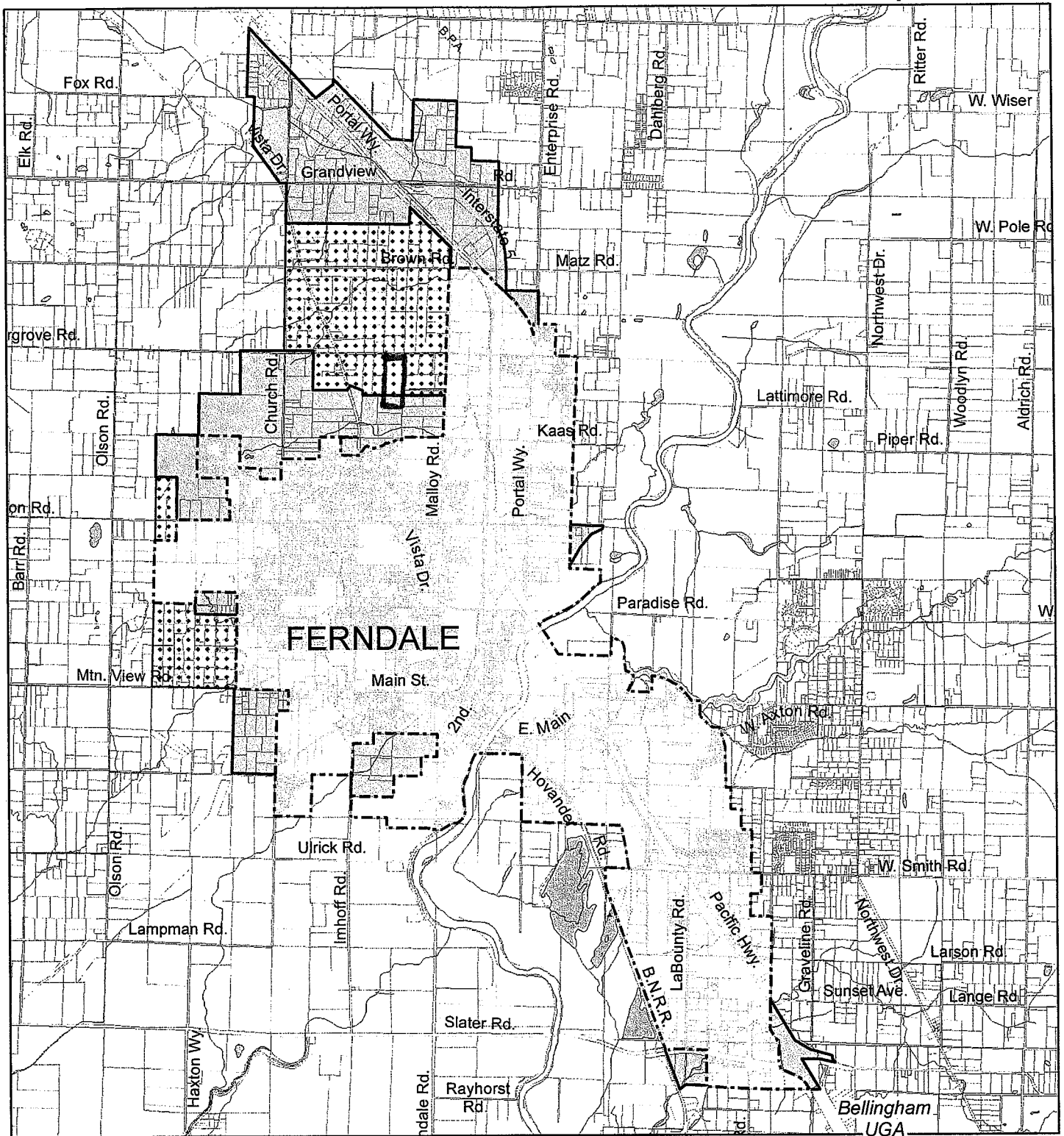


Legend

- Unincorporated Urban Growth Area
- UGA Changes
- City Limits
- *LEENSYA 20AC.*
- Commercial/Industrial Add
- Commercial/Industrial Retain
- Commercial/Industrial Subtract
- Pending Annexation
- Residential Retain ✓ *AREA 1*
- Residential Subtract

Ferndale UGA Proposal
 Approved by Ferndale City Council
 August 17, 2009

DISCLAIMER: USE OF THIS MAP IMPLIES THE USER'S AGREEMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:
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- Ferndale Urban Growth Area

-  Urban Growth Area
-  Urban Growth Area Reserve
-  LEENSTRA ZOAC

Whatcom County
Comprehensive Plan
-August, 2009

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