

To: Foothills Subarea Committee
From: Dennis Balcom, Deming Resident

Background for the proposed policies for Deming.

Deming is not like the other small towns in the Foothills Area. The Deming Valley (from Nugent's Corner / Cedarville area in the west to Deming Town / Marshal Hill area in the East) has a long history as a regional center for the Mount Baker Area. When logging was the main industry of the area much commerce and development located in Deming Valley to support that industry. As logging diminished and small independent mills closed, that development diminished. New industries moved in over the years because of its historical regional nature.

A hub of commerce and economic vitality

Many of the urban elements that the Foothills Subarea Committee is hoping to develop with policies in the Columbia Valley are already in existence in the Deming Valley. In the west end of the valley, Nugent's Corner has a regional grocery store serving the Foothills and Acme area. In addition banking service, dental office, as well as food and service businesses are located in this area. Moving east up the valley there is an auto parts supply store, and few light manufacturing businesses (an air freshening products manufacture, a log home manufacturing business, and a winery). There are two trucking companies with many trucks each making the Deming Valley their home base. Two machine shop and welding businesses are located in the Deming valley (one at Nugent's Corner and one on the Old Deming Road). A racetrack that attracts completion from out of state and operates several months out of the year is located at the middle of the valley.

At the east end of the valley, Deming Town has its Small Town Commercial area driven by the long history of commerce being located here. Even though the small mills have closed and disappeared, all though the tree cross section at the Deming Post office showing the arrival of Columbus in its age rings has been removed, and yes even though the world famous Deming Tavern Stakes are no more, commerce still remains in Deming Town. Another Dental office as well as several food and service businesses operate in the town of Deming to supplement those at Nugent's Corner. The Deming Library is growing and making plans to expand and build a meeting space several thousand square feet in size. The Nooksack Casino is a thriving entrainment business drawing people from all over the county and Canada, not only for the gambling but also the entertainment events. It also supports the area with additional food service and gas station. The Tribe has also located their construction company in Deming. The Tribal businesses have the potential of becoming the foundation for growth in commerce and business that logging use to be for the town of Deming.

In the other small towns of the Foothills Subarea, commerce is supported largely by recreation and tourism. In the Deming Valley commerce is supported by hundreds of people daily who travel through town not just for recreational trips but also daily commuting. Deming Valley is the crossroads of two state highways intersecting north - south (Highway 9) and east - west (Mt. Baker Highway). This again contributes to the regional character of the Deming Valley making it a natural hub for the local region.

Regional Center

Three other factors contribute the nature of Deming being a regional center for the area. One is that the Mount Baker School District has located its regional campus in Deming as well as its administrative offices. The School District also has located a preschool program in town to serve the regional area. School events at the junior and senior schools brings people into the town on a regular basis. Peripheral events and organizations that are an extension of the school

populations and facilities (such as youth sports leagues and youth organizations) bring people into the Deming Town for their events through out the year.

Secondly the Nooksack Tribe has made Deming the regional center for their governmental and human services. There are three building complexes in the Town of Deming that support all the management and staff needed to operate all their governmental duties, business operations, and human services provided to tribal members. In addition the Tribe has located several educational facilities in the town of Deming as well as a facility supporting a regional preschool program. All of these provide jobs here in the county and bring people from outside the town to conduct daily business with the Tribe.

Thirdly the Deming Valley has regional annual events that bring people to the area. Many events through out the year are organized at the Deming Log Show grounds located at the western end of the valley. This facility has grown beyond the one event a year in June for busted up Loggers. It now hosts several re-occurring annual events from chainsaw carving, gun and knife show, travel trailer and auto show and so on. It is also used for many organizations and businesses in the county for their private events such as picnics drawing people from around the county. One of the large events held in Deming Valley is the August Blues festival originating at the River's Edge Christmas Tree Farm on the old Deming Road and recently moved to the Deming Log Show Grounds. This has grown into an event that attracts people from outside the county as well as many of the county residents.

Deming, not yet Urban but not strictly Rural

All of this goes to create many of the urban elements of the Deming Valley region but we lack the large population that the Columbia Valley area has so the tendency is see Deming as just another quaint town in the Foothills like Kendall, Maple Falls, and Glacier when it is not. But even population wise, if you were to look at the Deming Valley as a whole and not just the Deming Town at the east end of the Valley, our population would be closer to the Columbia Valley than they would be to the other small towns. I think it was a major disservice to the Deming Community to split the Deming Valley between two Subareas. When the case was made to keep Nugent's Corner in the Lynden Nooksack Valley Subarea, Deming should have stayed with them. The Deming Valley should be master planned together, not divided. But Deming Town is in the Foothills so here are some suggestions for policies specific to Deming.

Policy Ideas for Deming to be considered by the Foothills Subarea Committee.

Proposed Matrix Goal- Enhance the small towns of Deming, Kendall, Maple Falls, and Glacier as vital, vibrant and distinct areas, within which the community can meet, mingle, shop and take care of daily errands.

Land Use

Discourage development (residential and commercial) on steep slopes and hills boarding the northern side to the Deming Valley, preserving the current forestry uses of those slopes and hills according to best forestry practices.

Encourage increased residential density first in the Deming Small Town residential area bordered by Mount Baker Highway, Old Deming Road, McCauley Road, and the Deming Small Town Commercial area. Then if population growth warrants and infill has occurred in the Deming Small Town residential area, consider higher residential density in the Valley floor north of Mount Baker Highway but not up the steep slopes and hills. This policy is not to be interpreted as a ban against

forestry uses according to best forestry practices of the steep slopes and hills along the Deming Valley. Forestry uses should be in accordance with water source protection policies.

Land use decisions for non-tribal land in the Deming STC area should encourage and enhance commercial development decisions by the Nooksack Tribe for the Tribal lands in and around the Deming STC to create a atmosphere of economic re-development in the community.

Housing

Recognizing the tendency of residential uses in a Small Town Commercial area tend to diminish over time and the impact of the Nooksack Tribe and Mt. Baker School District converting residential property into non-residential uses, higher residential densities should be encouraged in the Small Town Residential area west of the Deming STC area.

Increased residential density in the Deming Small Town Residential area should be single-family units with lot sizes large enough to promote a “rural” atmosphere yet still allow for the higher density in the Small Town Residential area that is multiple units per acre.

Recognizing that Small Town Commercial boundaries are ridged against expansion, commercial use of land in the Deming STC should be encouraged. Residential density in the Deming STC area may be multi family units provided parking is provided for. Single-family units in the Deming STC are not banned by this policy. Residential development in the Deming STC area should encourage mixed commercial and residential buildings and provide parking for this mixed use.

Utilities

Development of adequate water service for the Deming STC and the Deming Small Town Residential Area should be encouraged to support those land uses.

Recognizing new regulations for septic systems will make septic systems less cost efficient and less feasible as a treatment option in the Deming STC and the Deming Small Town Residential areas due to their higher density and smaller lots, alternative waste treatment development should be encouraged in these areas. The GMA lack of recognition of waste treatment as an approved service in rural areas should not be applied to discourage alternative waste treatment options to septic systems in the Deming STC or the Deming Small Town Residential Area.