

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
**WHATCOM COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**

1

June 16, 2009

Special Meeting

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1 The Planning Commission and County Council held a joint session to hear UGA proposals.

2

3 **Call To Order:** The meeting was called to order, by County Council Chair, Seth  
4 Fleetwood, in the Whatcom County Council Chambers at 4:00 p.m.

5

6 **Roll Call – Planning Commission:**

7 Present: Jean Melious, Rabel Burdge, John Lesow, Ken Mann, John Belisle, Geoff Menzies,  
8 John Steensma, Sean Wilson, David Hunter.

9

10 **Roll Call – County Council:** Seth Fleetwood, Laurie Caskey-Schreiber, Bob Kelly, Carl  
11 Weimer, Bob Kelly, Barbara Brenner.

12

13 **Staff Present:** David Stalheim, Pam Brown

14

15 Everson UGA

16

17 Rollin Harper made the presentation.

18

19 They support alternative Y.

20

21 They have a 2008 population of 2,170 in the city. The population of the Everson UGA,  
22 combined with the city is 2,395. They estimate a population of 4,343 in 2031.

23

24 The County came up with a surplus of residential land of 28 acres. Everson estimates a  
25 surplus of 24 acres. Regarding commercial and industrial land the County shows a 52 acre  
26 surplus while Everson shows a surplus of 42 acres.

27

28 They propose a land swap which adds a portion of the UGA and removes a greater  
29 portion. The portion proposed to be removed is mainly floodplain and the portion to be  
30 added would be more suited for urban development.

31

32 Nooksack UGA

33

34 Rollin Harper made the presentation.

35

36 They are not asking for any changes to the UGA boundary.

37

38 The 2008 population for the city was 1,090 and with the UGA it was 1,147. They estimate  
39 a 2031 population of 2,296. Nooksack has continued to grow the past several years, even  
40 with the economic downturn.

41

42 There is an employment base of 206 people and they would like to see future employment  
43 shifted to Sumas because Nooksack doesn't have the industrial or commercial land base.

44

45 In the County's land capacity analysis they show an excess of 12 acres. Everson shows a  
46 7 acre surplus.

47

48 Sumas UGA

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1  
2 Rollin Harper made the presentation.  
3  
4 The 2008 population of the city was 1,264. Including the UGA the 2008 population was  
5 1,279. They also chose option Y which estimates a 2031 population of 2,072 although  
6 they feel this is 100 to 200 people short.  
7  
8 There is a current employment population of 254. It is estimated that Sumas will have  
9 391 jobs which includes Nooksack transferring an additional 100 jobs. However, the  
10 consultant's employment figures seem to be quite low.  
11  
12 The County shows a 37 acre surplus for residential land. They think there was an  
13 artificially low deduction for infrastructure and with this adjustment they estimate a  
14 surplus of 18 acres.  
15  
16 Sumas is impacted by wetlands, the amount of which the City and County could not agree  
17 on. Wetland mitigation needs to be examined further.  
18  
19 Columbia Valley UGA  
20  
21 David Stalheim made the presentation.  
22  
23 The 2008 estimated population was 3,924. The future population is estimated at 5,000  
24 people.  
25  
26 The employment was 90 with part of that being in the Kendall area which has been  
27 proposed to be removed from the UGA. The growth allocation requested is 455.  
28  
29 The gross developable acreage is almost 600. The net acres available are 233. The net  
30 acreage needed to accommodate the estimated population is 123 so the surplus is 110  
31 acres.  
32  
33 Cherry Point UGA  
34  
35 David Stalheim made the presentation.  
36  
37 The population in the area is 0 because this is an industrial area.  
38  
39 The estimated employment is 1,942. The additional employment allocation is 760  
40 employees.  
41  
42 The land capacity analysis was difficult to do because it's a major industrial user. There is  
43 5,836 gross acres. There are quite a bit of critical areas and buffers so the net acreage is  
44 1,468.  
45  
46 The County does have some park property along the edge of the UGA which was  
47 considered to be taken out but staff has decided to leave it in because of the requirement  
48 for open space corridors between UGAs.

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1  
2 One of the things missing is the transportation demand management policy. Any employer  
3 that has more than 100 employees should put together a transportation demand  
4 management program. Staff is proposing to add a policy to the Comprehensive Plan and  
5 language to the Zoning Code to address this.

6  
7 A dinner break was taken from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

8  
9 Birch Bay UGA

10  
11 David Stalheim made the presentation.

12  
13 The 2008 population was estimated at 5,290. The 2004 Birch Bay Community Plan  
14 estimates an additional 4,329 over the 20 year planning period.

15  
16 Employment is 436 people. There is no allocation in the existing plan for employment so  
17 historic figures were looked at which lead to an estimate of another 489 employees.

18  
19 The gross developable acreage is 2,352. The net developable acreage is 760. The acreage  
20 needed to accommodate the population allocation is 537 acres. This leaves a surplus of  
21 223 acres.

22  
23 No changes to the UGA are being proposed, but because there is excess land for the  
24 estimated population areas have been identified that could be removed.

25  
26 Blaine UGA

27  
28 Terry Galvin made the presentation.

29  
30 They recognize that their UGA is too large. The UGA is 3,725 acres. They propose to  
31 remove approximately 2,600 acres. The areas they would like to see retained are 452  
32 acres east and 650 acres west of Blaine.

33  
34 There is a current population of 4,467 in the city and an additional 1,100 in the UGA. They  
35 anticipate a population of 8,317 over the 20 year planning period.

36  
37 They agree with the employment projections.

38  
39 They would like to see an interlocal agreement stating the County will work with Blaine  
40 regarding Birch Bay issues.

41  
42 There are two areas, not currently in the UGA, they would like to study for future  
43 inclusion.

44  
45 Ferndale UGA

46 Dennis Rhodes and Jori Burnett made the following presentation.

47  
48 The current population is 11,080.

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1  
2 They are requesting a net reduction of 350 acres (900 gross acres) of residential UGA.  
3  
4 They request an upward adjustment to the employment allocation.  
5  
6 An additional 250 gross acres are proposed for their commercial and industrial UGA.  
7  
8 Ferndale voiced it's displeasure with the Growth Management Coordinating Council  
9 (GMCC) and Whatcom County Planning saying they had a predetermined outcome and the  
10 land capacity analysis is flawed.  
11  
12 Their requests, Comprehensive Plan and citizen desires are being ignored.  
13  
14 The land capacity analysis adopts a 2008 OFM multi-family occupancy of 91.7 percent  
15 rather than the 93.3 percent proposed by the County.  
16  
17 Adopt the Ferndale Buildable land assumptions for densities.  
18  
19 Adopt a standard infrastructure deduction of 29 percent.  
20  
21 If the proposals are adopted they anticipate a reduction in the UGA of an estimated 234  
22 percent of capacity to 118 percent capacity.  
23  
24 They want a UGA reduction of no more that 750 acres, which shows they want to reduce  
25 their UGA but not to the extent the County is requesting.  
26  
27 Lynden UGA  
28  
29 Jack Louws and Amy Harksell made the presentation.  
30  
31 They propose an increase to the residential land allotment and retain all of the industrial  
32 land currently in the UGA.  
33  
34 They anticipate a population of 18,118 in 2031 and approximately 3,500 new jobs.  
35  
36 They have fallen short in their residential land supply over past several years. Based on  
37 their land capacity analysis they need about 246 net acres more, or 354 gross acres to  
38 accommodate the 2031 population.  
39  
40 Growth will be to the west.  
41  
42 They realize they need to protect agricultural land while growing. Lynden's growth has  
43 accounted for less than 3 percent of the reduction of farmland over the last 100 years  
44  
45 Their population estimate is within the approved water plan.  
46 Bellingham UGA  
47  
48 Tim Stewart and Dan Pike made the presentation.

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1  
2 They can accommodate 113,000 people. They currently have a population of  
3 approximately 75,750. They have approximately 13,550 in the UGA.

4  
5 They anticipate an employment growth of approximately 18,800.

6  
7 They request that the County not make any significant changes to their UGA.

8  
9 The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

10  
11 Minutes prepared by B. Boxx.

12  
13  
14 WHATCOM COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION ATTEST:

15  
16  
17  
18  
19 \_\_\_\_\_  
Jean Melious, Chair

\_\_\_\_\_

David Stalheim, Secretary

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21  
22  
23  
24  
25