

Bellingham UGA

Five Year Review Areas and Property Owner Requests

July 10, 2007

Introduction

The following pages provide information on each of the 5-Year Review Areas (5YRA's) and the Property Owner Request Areas. This is a compilation of analysis from the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), the City of Bellingham's staff report of August 2005, and County staff's report to the Planning Commission in February 2006.

Additional analysis of the 5YRA's and issues surrounding them are contained in the issues matrix document staff prepared for the May 22, 2007 Committee meeting.

The estimates given for "developable acres" and "population accommodation" are based on previous analysis by City and County staff. The "developable acreage" is derived from subtracting the City's estimated right-of-way, critical areas, and public facilities from the gross acre total. The "population accommodation" estimate is derived by multiplying the developable acres by an assumed overall density for each area, multiplying again by a persons-per-household figure of 2.1 (suggested by the City to represent a mix of multi- and single-family housing), and subtracting a vacancy rate of 5% (again suggested by the City to represent a mix of multi- and single-family housing). All these areas currently have rural zoning; the assumed densities were developed by County staff based on developers' conceptual development proposals, on assumed densities in adjacent areas, and on terrain. The resulting estimates are rough, but provide a means of comparing the development capacity of 5YRA's and property owner requests.

Recommendations

The City of Bellingham Planning Commission and City Council have recommended including all the 5YRA's except Toad Lake, and adding the property requested by owners Meas and Lipscomb. That recommendation assumed an overall density within the 5YRAs of approximately 10 units per net acre, which well exceeded the deficit of 5,215 people that had been estimated under the City's adopted 25% maximum safety factor scenario (overall effective safety factor of 17%). Because the County Planning Commission recommended using no safety factor, they did not make recommendations on the 5YRA's or their densities, except to add the 36-acre Queen Mountain area, which is bounded on three sides by existing UGA and city boundaries.

In the matrix document presented at the Committee's May 22 meeting, County staff recommended inclusion of the King Mountain and Queen Mountain. Compared with the other 5YRA's and property owner requests, staff believes the location of these areas represents the most logical extension of the existing UGA and allows for efficient extension of infrastructure with few impacts on rural areas of the County. According to the estimated population accommodation figures, these areas accommodate approximately 2,649 people, exceeding the estimated population accommodation deficit of 1,772 assumed under the 10% safety factor scenario.

BEAR CREEK FIVE –YEAR REVIEW AREA

Size (Gross Acres): 480

Estimated Developable Acres: 58

Estimated Population Accommodation: 833

Existing Zoning: Rural, one dwelling per 5 acres (R5A).

Environmental Features

The area is extensively constrained by critical areas. Bear Creek (a salmon-bearing stream) and associated tributaries and wetlands occupy over 200 acres of the area. The Bear Creek system drains north to Silver Creek, which is a tributary to the Nooksack River and Bellingham Bay.

Existing Development Patterns

Homes are primarily located on parcels averaging from two to five acres, fronting on both sides of Aldrich Road where City water has been extended. Other homes on parcels ranging from five to ten acres in size are predominantly south of the east-west portion of Aldrich Road.

Most vacant parcels in the area range from five to twenty acres. There are some larger vacant parcels, most notably 76 acres fronting on Northwest Drive and 25 acres south of that property.

Cornwall Church of God with an associated residence occupies 20 acres at 4518 Northwest Drive, in the southwest corner of the area. The Church owns an undeveloped adjacent parcel approximately 46 acres in size.

Transportation Network

According to the analysis conducted as part of the 2004 Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and the 2006 Transportation Analysis for Cordata PUD Full Build-out, significant transportation network improvements would be necessary for efficient circulation if this area is included in Bellingham's UGA. The road projects listed below were identified in the FEIS as necessary to provide an efficient street network for traffic circulation as the UGA develops at urban densities over the 20-year planning period. Arterial roads would include sidewalks and bicycle lanes where feasible.

- 1.5 miles of new secondary arterial connecting West Horton Rd. to Pacific Highway.
- 0.6 miles of new secondary arterial connecting Slater Rd. to Aldrich Rd.

- Roundabout or signal at the intersection of Aldrich Rd. and West Horton Rd.
- Roundabout or signal at the intersection of Northwest Dr. and West Horton Rd.
- Roundabout or signal at the intersection of Northwest Dr. and Smith Rd.
- Signal at the southbound ramps of the Interstate 5 - Slater Rd. interchange.
- Signal and eastbound left turn lane at the northbound ramps of the Interstate 5 – Slater Rd. interchange.

Availability of Public Services and facilities

Schools: The area is mostly within the Ferndale School District, except for an area in the southwest corner that is in the Bellingham School District, and in the southeast corner that is in the Meridian School District.

Sewer and Water: City water extends along Aldrich Road throughout the eastern portion of the area. There is no public sewer within the area. Sewer exists at the west end of Horton Road, near the southeast corner of the area. Bellingham extended water along Northwest Road in 2000 to the Cornwall Church campus at the southwest corner of the Bear Creek area.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space:

With several drainages and extensive wetlands, this area has high potential for the establishment of conservancy open space areas, and an urban separator open space corridor which could include east-west trail connectivity.

UGA Suitability

Though inclusion of this area would create a logical boundary connecting existing UGA area west of Northwest Drive with the Cordata area already in the City, environmental issues constrain potential development. Extensive wetland areas and the existence of salmon-bearing tributaries to the Nooksack Delta make urban densities less desirable than in other potential UGA areas. Urban densities would also create impacts on the transportation system, requiring future capital projects both inside and outside the UGA. This area may be suitable for future inclusion in the UGA if the need for additional land supply is documented in subsequent UGA reviews, and potential impacts are adequately addressed.

CORDATA NORTH FIVE –YEAR REVIEW AREA

Caitac / Others

Size (Gross Acres): 671 (581 Caitac, 90 Others)

Estimated Developable Acres: 217 (200 Caitac, 17 Others)

Estimated Population Accommodation: 3,866 (3,591 Caitac, 275 Others)

Existing Zoning:

Rural, one dwelling per 10 acres (R10A) for most of the Caitac ownership, and Rural, one dwelling per 5 acres (R5A) for the remainder.

Existing Development Patterns

Approximately 581 acres is owned by Caitac, USA Corp. The Caitac property has been partially developed as the North Bellingham Golf Course. The remainder of the Caitac property is used for Agriculture (Hay and grazing). Cordata North contains some single-family homes along Guide Meridian and Larson Road, home occupations, and small businesses along the Guide Meridian.

Environmental Features

This area contains more than 100 acres of critical area features, such as streams, slopes, and wetlands. The streams in this area are within the Silver Creek/Nooksack Delta watershed, and are salmon-bearing streams. Agriculture protection soils cover portions of the area along the northwestern boundary along Smith Road, as well as from the southern boundary extending to the middle of the review area.

Access/Transportation Network

According to the analysis conducted as part of the 2004 Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and the 2006 Transportation Analysis for Cordata PUD Full Build-out, significant transportation network improvements would be necessary for efficient circulation if this area is included in Bellingham's UGA. The road projects listed below were identified as necessary to provide an efficient street network for traffic circulation as the UGA develops at urban densities over the 20-year planning period. Arterial roads would include sidewalks and bicycle lanes where feasible.

- 1.5 miles of new secondary arterial connecting West Horton Rd. to Pacific Highway including roundabouts or signals at the intersections of Aldrich Rd. and Northwest Dr.
- 0.8 miles of new secondary arterial extending Kelly Rd. to Cordata Parkway.
- 0.6 miles of new secondary arterial connecting Slater Rd. to Aldrich Rd.
- Roundabout or signal at the intersection of Aldrich Rd. and West Horton Rd.

- Roundabout or signal at the intersection of Northwest Dr. and West Horton Rd.
- Roundabout or signal at the intersection of Northwest Dr. and Smith Rd.
- Signal at the southbound ramps of the Interstate 5 - Slater Rd. interchange.
- Signal and eastbound left turn lane at the northbound ramps of the Interstate 5 – Slater Rd. interchange.
- 1.1 miles of new secondary arterial connecting Cordata Parkway to Smith Road.
- Intersection reconstruction with new signal and turn lanes at the intersection of Smith Road and Guide Meridian.

Availability of Public Services and facilities

Schools: The majority of the area is served by the Meridian School District. The District will require a new site for a school as this area develops.

Sewer and Water: City sewer does not currently exist beyond the city limits, but the City plans to place sewer beneath Guide Meridian when WSDOT widens it to four lanes.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space:

With several drainages and extensive wetlands, this area has high potential for the establishment of conservancy open space areas, which could include east west trail connectivity. The North Bellingham Golf Course occupies 163 acres of the property.

UGA Suitability:

Owners of the Caitac property have produced a concept plan that includes a mix of single and multi-family housing, a retail commercial and office center and public uses such as a school site, parks and open space. Inclusion in the UGA would extend the boundary more than a mile north of the current boundary and City limits. Significant traffic impacts have been identified, requiring extensive capital projects both inside and outside the UGA. This area may be suitable for future inclusion in the UGA if the need for additional land supply is documented in subsequent UGA reviews, and potential impacts are adequately addressed.

STUART-SMITH FIVE –YEAR REVIEW AREAS

Size (Gross Acres): 656

Estimated Developable Acres: 194

Estimated Population Accommodation: 0 (Commercial / Industrial uses proposed)

Existing Zoning:

Rural 5 acre (R5A), General Commercial (GC) at Smith/Guide Meridian intersection

Existing Development Patterns

The area is sparsely developed with large lot single-family homes. Most of the existing homes in this area are located along Guide Meridian, Smith Road, Kelly and Kline roads.

A commercial area is located at the southeast corner of the Guide Meridian / Smith Intersection. Businesses include a service station, truck, trailer and car dealerships, vehicle repair shops, sale of wood products, gifts, flowers, and other home and yard products, etc.

Environmental Features

The area lies in three separate watersheds, Ten Mile, Silver Creek/Nooksack Delta, and Squalicum Creek. Spring Creek is a salmon-bearing stream that flows through the southern portion of the area and drains to Squalicum Creek through the City to Bellingham Bay. The central part of the area is crossed by tributaries of Silver Creek, a salmon-bearing stream that flows into the Nooksack River and Bellingham Bay. A small area of the northeast corner along Smith Road is within the Ten Mile watershed. Wetlands are scattered throughout the area.

Transportation Network

According to the analysis conducted in support of City of Bellingham staff reports to the Bellingham Planning Commission in September 2005, significant transportation network improvements would be necessary for efficient circulation if this area is included in Bellingham's UGA. The road projects listed below were identified as necessary to provide an efficient street network for traffic circulation as the UGA develops at urban densities over the 20-year planning period. Arterial roads would include sidewalks and bicycle lanes where feasible.

- 1.5 miles of new secondary arterial (Deemer Rd.) connecting Kellogg Rd. to Kelly Rd.
- Intersection reconstruction with new signal and turn lanes at the intersection of Smith Road and Guide Meridian.

Availability of Public Services and facilities

Schools: The area is within the Meridian School District.

Sewer and Water: City sewer does not currently exist beyond the city limits, but the City will place sewer beneath Guide Meridian when WSDOT widens it to four lanes. Sewer and water exist within a quarter mile, on Guide Meridian near Horton.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space:

Trails and open space corridors could potentially extend through the area along the Spring Creek corridor, connecting City trails with rural Whatcom County.

UGA Suitability:

This area is being proposed for commercial and industrial development. Given a 10% safety factor within the UGA, and assuming 15% land availability factor for vacant and redevelopable commercial and industrial property (a reduction from the existing property total that assumes 15% of property may not be available), the land supply methodology indicates that no additional commercial or industrial land is needed. However, the City believes a 25% land availability factor is necessary for estimating the need for *redevelopable* commercial property; if a 25% land availability factor is used, it is estimated that 85 gross acres of commercial and industrial land would need to be added to the UGA. This area may be suitable for future inclusion in the UGA if the need for additional commercial and industrial land is documented in subsequent UGA reviews.

KING MOUNTAIN FIVE-YEAR REVIEW AREA

Size (Gross Acres): 285 (130 Alliance, 155 Others)

Estimated Developable Acres: 94 (68 Alliance, 26 Others)

Estimated Population Accommodation: 2,625 (1,899 Alliance, 726 Others)

Existing Zoning:

The majority of the area is Rural, one dwelling per 5 acres (R5A); the area around the peak of King Mountain is zoned Rural Residential-2 Units/Acre (RR2)

Existing Development Patterns

Alliance Properties owns approximately 130 acres in this area, which are generally undeveloped. Other properties include large-lot homes along Van Wyck Rd.

Environmental Features

The terrain is hilly with slopes ranging from 15% to 45% in the northeastern portion of King Mountain. Spring Creek runs in a north/south alignment through the area. Some properties in the western portion of the area have significant wetlands associated with Spring Creek.

Transportation Network

Access to the west portion of the area is from Van Wyck Road and Horton Road. From the south, James Street extends to the top of King Mountain from East Bakerview Road. With urban development James Street could be extended through this area to connect with Van Wyck and Horton Road, thereby providing an important connection to Meridian and a more efficient circulation pattern for the larger area.

According to the analysis conducted in support of City of Bellingham staff reports to the Bellingham Planning Commission in September 2005, significant transportation network improvements would be necessary for efficient circulation if this area is included in Bellingham's UGA. The road projects listed below were identified as necessary to provide an efficient street network for traffic circulation as the UGA develops at urban densities over the 20-year planning period. Arterial roads would include sidewalks and bicycle lanes where feasible.

- 1.0 miles of new secondary arterial connecting James St. to E Horton Rd.
- 2.1 miles of new secondary arterial (East Horton Rd.) connecting Guide Meridian and Hannegan Rd.

Availability of Public Services and facilities

Schools: The majority of the area is within the Bellingham School District, except the 80-acre portion north of Van Wyck Road, which is in the Meridian District. The Bellingham District recently purchased a school site near the Calvary Temple Church.

Sewer and Water: The area is not currently served by water or sewer service. Water and sewer lines exist near the southern boundary of the area (James Street) and the western portion (Stuart and Deemer Roads). The City has built a 3-million gallon water storage reservoir on Kearney Street at the northern boundary of the Urban Growth Area. A new water storage reservoir is needed at the top of King Mountain to provide adequate fire flow to the residential development on the mountain.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space:

The City has commented that there is a need for a centrally located park site in the area, and the nearest park is at Sunset Pond, approximately one-half mile to the south. There is potential to set aside dedicated parkland and provide for trail connectivity. The Whatcom County Natural Heritage Plan has identified the King Mountain area as a high priority for preservation and park and trail development. The City of Bellingham Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan shows the potential for a trail corridor through the area.

UGA Suitability

The owner of the 130-acre alliance property has a conceptual plan for mixed density residential and neighborhood commercial uses. Its location adjacent to the existing UGA on three sides makes the King Mountain area a logical extension of the UGA, with the crest of King Mountain defining a natural boundary for urban growth. Annexation and development would allow completion of an urban transportation link between James Street and Van Wyck, and traffic impacts outside the UGA would be minimal compared with potential impacts associated with other 5YRA's. In comparison with other areas, this area appears to be the most suitable for addition into the UGA.

MEAS-LIPSCOMB PROPERTY OWNER REQUEST AREA

Size (Gross Acres): 80

Estimated Developable Acres: 45

Estimated Population Accommodation: 718

Existing Zoning: Rural, one dwelling per 5 acres (R5A).

Existing Development Patterns

The area is under single ownership and is currently undeveloped.

Environmental Features

The northern slope of King Mountain rises from the center of this area. The northern portion of the properties includes Spring Creek and wetlands.

Transportation Network

Van Wyck Road provides access to the southwestern corner of the area; other access would come from development in the King Mountain 5YRA.

Significant road improvements would be necessary for efficient circulation if this area is included in the Bellingham UGA. The road projects listed below were identified for the King Mountain area as necessary to provide an efficient street network for traffic circulation as the UGA develops at urban densities over the 20-year planning period. The Meas / Lipsomb area was included in the King Mountain analysis. Arterial roads would include sidewalks and bicycle lanes where feasible.

- 1.0 miles of new secondary arterial connecting James St. to E Horton Rd.
- 2.1 miles of new secondary arterial (East Horton Rd.) connecting Guide Meridian and Hannegan Rd.

Availability of Public Services and facilities

Schools: The area is within the Meridian School District.

Sewer and Water: The area currently does not have public sewer and water and is not adjacent to the existing UGA boundary. Extension of water and sewer would depend on development within the King Mountain area, if it is added to the UGA.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

recreational opportunities and become a link in an east-west greenbelt with trails between Hannegan Road and the Guide Meridian.

UGA Suitability

The owners have proposed a 360-unit mixed-density residential development. The area is not adjacent to the existing UGA and development would depend on the King Mountain area being added to the UGA and developed. This area may be suitable for future inclusion in the UGA if the need for additional land supply is documented in subsequent UGA reviews.

QUEEN MOUNTAIN FIVE –YEAR REVIEW AREA

Size (Gross Acres): 36

Estimated Developable Acres: 8

Estimated Population Accommodation: 96

Existing Zoning: Rural, one dwelling per 5 acres (R5A)

Existing Development Patterns

The area is under single ownership and is currently forested and undeveloped.

Environmental Features

The southeastern slope of Queen Mountain rises from the center of this area. There are little or no wetlands.

Transportation Network

No significant road improvements were identified in the FEIS as necessary for efficient circulation if this area is included in the Bellingham UGA. The City staff report regarding this area stated that an east/west arterial connection could “be explored” between James St. and Irongate Rd. along the existing Montgomery Rd.

Availability of Public Services and facilities

Schools: Bellingham School District

Sewer and Water: The site currently does not have public sewer and water, but sewer and water lines exist near the southeast corner of the property.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

This has the potential to provide open space, recreational opportunities and become a link in an east-west greenbelt with trails between Hannegan Road and the Guide Meridian.

UGA Suitability

The County Planning Commission has recommended inclusion of this area because of its location adjacent on three sides to the existing UGA boundary. Like the nearby King Mountain area, it represents a logical extension of the UGA. This area appears to be among the most suitable for inclusion in the UGA.

TOAD LAKE FIVE-YEAR REVIEW AREA

Size (Gross Acres): 519, including the 21-acre Weinberg property owner request area.

Estimated Developable Acres: 70

Estimated Population Accommodation: 503

Existing Zoning:

Rural Residential two dwelling units per acre (RR2) in the northern and southeastern portion of the area, and Rural one dwelling unit per 2 acres (R2A) in the central portion, Rural one dwelling per 5 acres (R5A) in the southern and northwestern areas, and Recreation Open Space (ROS) at the southern end of Toad Lake.

Existing Development Patterns:

Approximately 200 acres are in the more westerly portion of the area and are accessed from Emerald Lake Road at Britton Road. The southeastern area of the RR2 zone is accessed from Toad Lake Road, and contains more undeveloped and unplatted land. Some lots have significant territorial views. Dwellings in the lake area are a mix of vacation cabins, and mobile homes.

Environmental Features

Toad Lake, surrounded by steep slopes. The extreme southern portion (about 50 acres) is within the Lake Whatcom Watershed.

Transportation Network

The major local access roads are Emerald lake Way and Toad Lake Road. Emerald Lake Way serves the main developed area, which has a small network of paved subdivision roads. Many dwellings in the RR2 zones are accessed by narrow graveled or dirt lanes, especially in the area near the lake.

No significant road improvements were identified in the FEIS as necessary for efficient circulation if this area is included in the Bellingham UGA. The City staff report regarding this area expressed concern that encouraging more development in this area could contribute to transportation level of service problems in the Sunset/Mt. Baker Highway corridor and take capacity from areas easier to serve with the full range of urban services.

Availability of Public Services and facilities

Schools: The area is within the Bellingham School District

Sewer and Water: The area is not served by City sewer or water. Sewer and water lines exist within a quarter mile of the area, at Britton Road and Roma Road, and at Britten Loop between Britten Road and Gloria Lane.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

There is a small recreational property at the southern edge of Toad Lake that is zoned ROS.

UGA Suitability

This is the only 5YRA the City did not recommend adding to the UGA. Existing development is not at an urban level (at least 4 units per acre) and future urban development would be problematic given the steep slopes. Developed mostly before 1990, it appears that much of the area would meet criteria for being designated a LAMIRD. There has been uncertainty as to whether a LAMIRD could be designated adjacent to a UGA. Staff has discussed the matter with CTED staff. They point out that Hearings Boards have found that LAMIRDs may be designated adjacent to UGAs under certain circumstances, particularly where urban level development does not exist and is not likely. Therefore, this area appears to be more suitable as a LAMIRD than as part of the UGA.

TEMPLETON PROPERTY OWNER REQUEST AREA

Size (Gross Acres): 60

Estimated Developable Acres: 11

Estimated Population Accommodation: 307 (revised from previous estimates)

Existing Zoning: Rural one dwelling unit per 5 acres (R5A)

Existing Development Patterns

The land use pattern in the surrounding area is mainly single-family dwellings with many vacant or underutilized parcels. The area is adjacent to the eastern edge of the City of Bellingham's Lake Padden Park golf course property.

Environmental Features

The area is within the Bellingham Bay/Chuckanut Creek watershed. The property slopes upward from Samish Way, with more severe slopes on the southern portion adjacent to I-5.

Transportation Network

No significant analysis has been performed regarding the potential traffic impacts from this area. Primary access would be via Samish Way, which would need to be upgraded to urban standards including pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

Availability of Public Services and facilities

Schools: The area is in the Bellingham School District.

Sewer and Water: The nearest water and sewer service is over one half mile away, on Samish Way at the mobile home development east of Yew Street. City Public Works staff has commented that extending utility service to the property would be extremely costly due to the distance utilities would have to be extended, and the necessity of installing pump stations for both water and sewer.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space:

The owner's conceptual development plan calls for pedestrian access to Lake Padden Park, and extension of the park in the southern portion adjacent to I-5.

UGA Suitability

This area was not recommended for inclusion by the City of Bellingham. Though the area is adjacent to the current UGA boundary and City Limits, it is approximately a mile east of the nearest potential urban-level development, farther removed from the city center than other areas under consideration. The

location plus the costliness of extending utilities indicate that the area may not be appropriate for urban-level development.