



**MAYOR'S OFFICE**  
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Whatcom County P&DS

January 28, 2010

Whatcom County Council  
311 Grand Street, Suite 105  
Bellingham, WA 98225

RE: Changes to the Bellingham Urban Growth Area (UGA) Boundary

Dear Whatcom County Council:

This letter is to urge the Whatcom County Council to avoid making further changes to the Bellingham UGA boundary until the City completes its 2011 comprehensive plan update process. The City has already started this process.

In 2009, Whatcom County completed an extensive review of Bellingham's UGA boundary as part of the required 10-year UGA update review process. The City of Bellingham followed this process closely. In May 2009, our City Council adopted Resolution 2009-14 urging the County to make no changes to the City's UGA boundary until the City completed its 2011 comprehensive plan update process. In September 2009, when the County's plan to modify the Bellingham UGA boundary became more clear, City Council President, Barry Buchanan, and I sent the County a letter supporting the County's proposal. In November 2009, the County adopted Ordinance 2009-071 maintaining Bellingham's UGA boundary except for the Lake Padden Watershed portion of the Yew Street area which the County placed in an "UGA Reserve."

Currently, the County is dealing with two issues regarding the UGA boundaries that it adopted for the County's cities in November 2009. First, there is an upcoming March compliance hearing before the Growth Board to determine whether the County has adequately completed its 10-year UGA update review process and its UGA boundaries are GMA compliant. The City understands that the appellants in this Growth Board case and the County have recently asked the Growth Board to delay this hearing to give the parties time to explore settlement of the appeal. The City opposes any settlement that further changes the Bellingham UGA boundary.

The other issue faced by the County is whether or not to include on the County's 2010 Comprehensive Plan docket proposals to add Caitac and the Lake Padden Watershed portion of the Yew Street area to Bellingham's UGA. County staff has asked for the City's position on

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these docket requests. Both of these areas were reviewed at length during the County's 10-year UGA update process and neither of these areas was included in the Bellingham UGA by the County's adoption of Ordinance 2009-071. The City believes that the docketing of these items now is premature until the City determines whether it needs additional lands to accommodate its population and employment growth as part of its 2011 comprehensive plan update process.

The City supported the County's actions in 2009 to retain the previous Bellingham UGA boundary with the exception of the Lake Padden Watershed portion of the Yew Street area which was placed in a "UGA Reserve". The City is using these UGA boundaries in performing the analysis necessary to complete its 2011 comprehensive plan update process. The City is opposed to any further changes to its UGA boundary until it completes its 2011 comprehensive plan update process and will consider appealing any such changes to the Growth Board.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Pike". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dan" and last name "Pike" clearly distinguishable.

Dan Pike, Mayor  
City of Bellingham

cc: Bellingham City Council  
Tim Stewart  
David Stahlheim  
Pete Kremen