

WHATCOM COUNTY
Planning & Development Services
5280 Northwest Drive
Bellingham, WA 98226-9097
360-676-6907, TTY 800-833-6384
360-738-2525 Fax



J.E. "Sam" Ryan
Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Whatcom County Council

THROUGH: J.E. "Sam" Ryan, Director *ger*

FROM: Wain Harrison, Long Range Planning Supervisor *W.H.*
Gary Davis, AICP, Senior Planner *GD*

DATE: November 2, 2010

SUBJECT: Rural Element Update

In an effort to clearly define in the Comprehensive Plan what types of uses and densities should be permitted within the "Rural" designation (outside of the designated LAMIRDs), staff proposes the following wording on page 9 and 10 of the Comprehensive Plan proposed amendments:

Policy 2GG-2: The Rural designation should include areas of traditional rural uses and densities. While the large majority of the Rural designation is characterized by densities at or below one unit per five acres, Generally, residential densities less than one dwelling unit per five acres are considered traditional rural densities, however the Rural designation may also include rural residential areas where higher densities have been established. More intensive development should be contained within Rural Community, Rural Tourism, or Rural Business designations, which are limited areas of more intensive rural development (LAMIRDs).

Policy 2GG-4: Permitted uses and densities within the Rural designation should reflect established rural character. Rezones within the Rural designation should be consistent with the established rural character and densities within the area proposed for rezoning.

In addition, staff proposes a revision to the last sentence in the text before "Goal 2HH Establish LAMIRD Criteria" on page 11. Hearings board decisions have found that Type I LAMIRD boundaries may be modified as long as the new boundary meets GMA criteria.

...The criteria listed under Goal 2HH were used to designate the Type I and Type III LAMIRDs in 2010 and should be used to designate future Type II and III LAMIRDs, and to evaluate future proposed modifications to Type I LAMIRDs.

Finally, in proposed policy 2HH-1.A.1 regarding designation criteria for Type I LAMIRDs (bottom of page 11), the phrase "residential and non-residential" should be changed to "residential or non-residential" to reflect the addition of residential-only LAMIRDs.

If you have any questions regarding the Rural Element update, please contact Gary Davis at extension 50246.