

## Appendix

### **HORIZON 2040**

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#### **Documents adopted by Reference**

- Chapter III Environmental Analysis for Plan 2015 – adopted 5/20/1997



## CHAPTER III

# ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS ELEMENT

*"Man is that uniquely conscious creature who can perceive and express. He must become the steward of the biosphere. To do this, he must design with nature."*

*Ian McHarg*

### SEPA REQUIREMENTS

The State Environmental Policy Act or SEPA (RCW 43.21C) requires government officials to consider the environmental consequences of actions they are about to take, and seek better or less damaging ways to accomplish those proposed actions. They must consider whether the proposed action will have a significant, adverse environmental impact on the following elements of the natural and built environment: earth, air, water, plants and animals, energy and natural resources, environmental health, land and shoreline use, transportation, and public services and utilities.

SEPA empowers local government to protect environmental quality, and it requires state and local officials to make decisions consistent with the policy set forth in the act. When necessary, it can be used to supplement agencies' authority to address gaps in laws affecting environmental quality. Policies, plans, and regulations adopted under GMA are considered nonproject actions subject to SEPA review.

### SEPA AND GMA INTEGRATION

Sound planning requires establishing objectives, analyzing alternatives, selecting an alternative, and implementation. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is part of the planning process that analyzes and documents the environmental impacts and

tradeoffs of a proposed action. Ideally, environmental analysis is continuous throughout the planning process. Discussion of policies and specific land use categories is framed by analyses of the economic, social, and environmental consequences of those choices.

SEPA and GMA requirements are similar in many ways. Integration of SEPA with GMA eliminates duplication of effort and assures consistency between SEPA and GMA requirements. The planning processes for SEPA and GMA come together at several points:

**Public Participation.** Both SEPA and GMA recognize public participation and agency coordination as critical to the planning process.

**Existing Conditions.** Both SEPA and GMA require collection and analysis of information regarding existing conditions.

**Goals and Policies.** Goals and policies play an important role in the development of the GMA comprehensive plan, and the SEPA evaluation of plan alternatives.

**Impact Analysis.** GMA requires collection and analysis of data for natural resource lands, critical areas, the mandatory plan elements (land use, rural, housing, transportation, utilities, capital facilities) urban growth areas,

and the siting of essential public facilities. SEPA requires the County to analyze the significant adverse impacts to elements of the natural and built environment that are identified during scoping.

**Mitigation.** GMA requires strategies to reduce the impacts of growth on the natural and built environment. These same strategies satisfy SEPA requirements for identifying ways to mitigate the significant adverse impacts identified during scoping.

**Documents.** Both SEPA and GMA require preparation of documents for the public participation and decision-making process, but they each have specific guidelines on the information and analysis that must or should be included.

**Visioning and Scoping.** Yakima County conducted a formal EIS scoping process for **Plan 2015** in 1993. Prior to that, the Countywide visioning effort identified the issues of concern to County residents, forming the basis for **Plan 2015** goals and policies. In one sense, the visioning process and other public participation efforts leading to development of the plan's goals and policies are considered part of the scoping process, in that they address both the natural and built environment. The issues that were raised during both EIS scoping and the visioning process have become a major foundation of the environmental analysis contained in this section. These "Major Issues" separately described in each of the Elements are summarized in this Chapter.

## DEVELOPMENT AND ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES

Yakima County engaged several citizen committees to assist in development and analysis of **Plan 2015** goals, policies and objectives, alternatives and mitigation measures (see Plan Development, Chapter II). In the early stages of the development of **Plan 2015**, the environmental analysis took the form of presentations and issue papers made to the Shareholders Committee and Finance Task Force. Spirited discussion was prompted by the issues raised at each of their respective meetings, including such topics as:

- Rural lands classification
- Identification and mapping of rural lands based upon those classifications
- Potential development impacts and mitigation alternatives
- Responsibility for mitigation of impacts on public facility service levels
- Revised SEPA/GMA review process
- Set mitigation schedule

While the Shareholders focused their attention on the development of goals, policies, objectives, and land use alternatives, the Finance Task Force focused on the methods of addressing potential development impacts on public facilities and services. The Shareholders had the opportunity to deliberate on the impacts and potential mitigation measures associated with continued growth, and the Finance Task Force had the opportunity to review goals, policies and objectives related to capital facilities, utilities and land use.

From their deliberations, the Shareholders determined that the notion of rural transitional areas (areas transitioning from rural to urban character) and focused public investment areas or phased urban growth areas, should be tested in the land use alternatives. As **Plan 2015** came together, each plan alternative was analyzed for its impact on

various aspects of the natural and built environment.

The Planning Commission continued with this process through a series of public hearings and extensive deliberations that resulted in refinement of the Shareholders' Preferred Alternative B, that also contains features of the other two alternatives A and C. The Commission's work is expressed in the December 30, 1996 version of **Plan 2015**. Consequently, the environmental analysis is an integral part of each plan element. For example, the Purpose Statements for the plan goals and policies provide a link to the environmental analysis from the presentations and issues papers. Thus, the EIS is combined with **Plan 2015** in a document that not only lets the reader see the end result, but understand how it was derived. The EIS discusses the interrelationships, impacts, mitigation, and tradeoffs that were considered in the planning process. Upon adoption of **Plan 2015**, the final EIS will be incorporated into the appendices.

## **REGULATORY REFORM**

As early as February 1992, the Washington State Department of Ecology and the Department of Community Development were encouraging the integration of SEPA with GMA. Although the benefits of preparing an EIS in conjunction with a comprehensive plan were acknowledged, legislation was needed to facilitate and fund this SEPA/GMA integration. This came about through concerns over regulatory reform, especially as it affects the development review process.

An interim "emergency" rule encouraging integration of SEPA and GMA has been in effect since May 1994.

Yakima County received one of six state grants for pilot projects that effectively integrate SEPA and GMA. The goal of the

County's project was to simplify the land development review process by identifying and mitigating many of the costs and impacts associated with development at the comprehensive plan level. During its 1995 session, the state legislature passed ESHB 1724, (RCW 36.70C) to help implement the recommendations of the Governor's Task Force on Regulatory Reform through the integration of growth management and environmental review.

### **Yakima County SEPA/GMA Integration Pilot Project**

The Yakima County SEPA/GMA integration pilot project was designed to enable the County to address three key issues, each of which has application in a statewide context:

- Establish an integrated SEPA/GMA process to achieve regulatory reform in terms of both the time it takes to get through the review process and the ease of understanding what must be done;
- Determine a mitigation system, in the context of GMA and SEPA, that addresses the range of development issues, particularly for those lands already trending toward urban densities. Identify the roles of the regional service providers, including responsibility for various levels of mitigation, particularly in urban areas, and how mitigation will be financed; and
- Close the gap between the plan, SEPA review, and the mitigation measures resulting from SEPA review.

Yakima County has concentrated most of its integration effort around a basic implementation concern: regulatory reform based upon interrelated SEPA/GMA processes. The program developed by Yakima County used an integrated approach to identify system impacts, which could be

removed from the traditional formal review required by SEPA. System impacts, once *adequately* addressed in **Plan 2015** analysis, can be mitigated through a set of alternative mitigation measures, a "Cafeteria Plan" (See Appendix III-A). The pilot project developed a streamlined development review process and a model for mitigating system-wide project impacts. This approach reduces the level of environmental review at the application stage by focusing on site-specific impacts. In effect, the County invests its analytical resources in the evaluation of plan level, system-wide impacts instead of the case-by-case review of development applications.

After reviewing the results of the SEPA/GMA integration project, the County realized that the level of detail, which can be achieved in a Comprehensive Plan Programmatic EIS, may not yet prove adequate to allow the County to move immediately from **Plan 2015** adoption to implementation of the mitigation model. However, the process of integrating plan development with environmental evaluation has enabled the County to determine which systems are most critical in terms of potential adverse impacts. These will be prioritized for early inclusion in a mitigation model. Other source elements are in need of further research, and can only be addressed at the project or site-specific level.

Those processes will be modified once SEPA system level impacts that are adequately analyzed in **Plan 2015** merit streamlined review. The environmental review of certain selected systems include water supply, sewage disposal, roads, wetlands, habitat, floodplains, and geologic hazards).

Initially, some impacts will continue to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis until enough analysis is complete to allow them to be addressed in **Plan 2015**. These "transitional impacts" will be evaluated as

project-level impacts until additional analysis is completed, whereby they can be treated as system impacts. The added detail of subarea plans or facility master plans will allow transitional impacts to be evaluated as system impacts by the plan documents.

*Project level impacts* are generally site-specific. These impacts on public facilities and services and the natural environment can only be determined by specific analysis of individual development proposals. For example, site-specific review will still be needed for such impacts as road access, soil suitability, aesthetics, and drainage at the permit application stage.

The following matrix, Table III-1 illustrates the systems impacts that have been initially identified for inclusion in the mitigation model. Potential mitigation methods for each system are also identified. The matrix was developed as part of the County's citizen participation process, working with the Shareholders and Finance Task Force. This matrix is the foundation of Yakima County's mitigation model for **Plan 2015** implementation.

In developing **Plan 2015**, the County used a public participation process to help define the systems that are most critical in terms of potential impacts. The Finance Task Force also recommended a priority for funding sources that the County could use to address the capital facilities requirements that will come with the County's growth. During the course of future SEPA analysis, priorities can be set for implementing the plan in terms of systems and/or subareas.

### **Mitigation Model Implementation**

Subarea Plans and Facility Master Plans are the two primary approaches to furthering the development of the mitigation model. These plans will serve to link the countywide

evaluation of impacts in **Plan 2015** and the attributed mitigation measures for individual development based upon project size, type and location.

### **Subarea Plans**

Subarea plans will contain detail that is not present in the countywide plan. The added detail will enable transitional system impacts to be evaluated for the subarea, rather than case-by-case review.

The following areas could be expected to undergo continued pressure for development. These areas could therefore be the focus of subarea plan development:

- Terrace Heights
- North Selah
- West Valley
- Buena
- Cowiche

### **Facility Master Plans**

Similarly, updates of facility master plans for public facilities may provide sufficient detail to allow a transitional impact to graduate from project level to system level review. Completion of facility master plans must be accompanied by amendments to corresponding **Plan 2015** elements (transportation, utilities and capital facilities, etc.)

### **How the Mitigation Model Would Work**

Once the mitigation model is up and running, development proposals could participate in a streamlined review process, consisting of the

following steps:

1. The applicant for development submits an application that includes information needed to determine system impacts.
  - A. Location
  - B. Size/density/intensity (acres, dwelling units, square feet, etc.)
  - C. Proposed Land Use
2. The County compares the proposed land use to the land use category in the **Plan 2015**:
  - A. If consistent, proceed to step 3.
  - B. If not consistent, the applicant may pursue an amendment to **Plan 2015** in order to make the plan and proposed land use consistent.
3. The County compares the proposed project to the goals and policies of **Plan 2015**, using a consistency review checklist;
  - A. If consistent, proceed to step 4.
  - B. If not consistent, modify proposal to be consistent and proceed to step 4 or proceed with traditional process for reviewing development proposals.

<b>DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION ALTERNATIVES</b>		<b>CAFETERIA PLAN MITIGATION</b>											
<b>SYSTEM IMPACTS</b>		Impact Fees	System Development Charges	Other Mitigation Payments	Land Dedication/Protection	Donate Facilities, Equipment & Furnishing	Wetland Creation	On-Site Stormwater Retention	Community Wells	Transfer Development Rights	Land Banking	County Satellite System	Greenway Program (or similar structure)
Water Supply		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Sewage Disposal		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Roads		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								
School		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								
Parks		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Police				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Fire		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Courts				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Corrections				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Solid Waste				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Libraries				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Transit				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Non-motorized Transportation				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Stormwater		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					
Wetlands			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Habitat			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Flood Plain Protection				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Geological Hazards									<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			

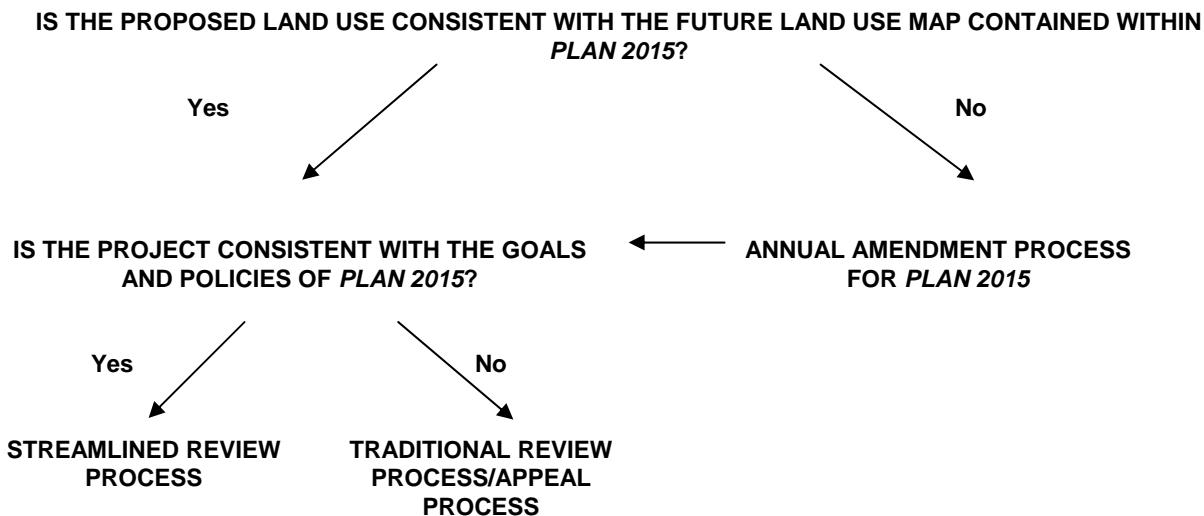
**Table III-1 Development Impacts & Mitigation Alternatives.**

4. The County determines mitigation obligations from standardized impact information. The development proposal's system impacts have been accounted for in **Plan 2015**, supporting sub-area plans and facility master plans. Therefore no further review of system impacts is required (refer to Table III-1, Cafeteria Plan Matrix).
5. The applicant selects mitigation techniques from the cafeteria plan
6. The County conducts the review of project impacts. This step would be much faster and simpler because man impacts will have been identified and quantified through the stream lined review process for system impacts.

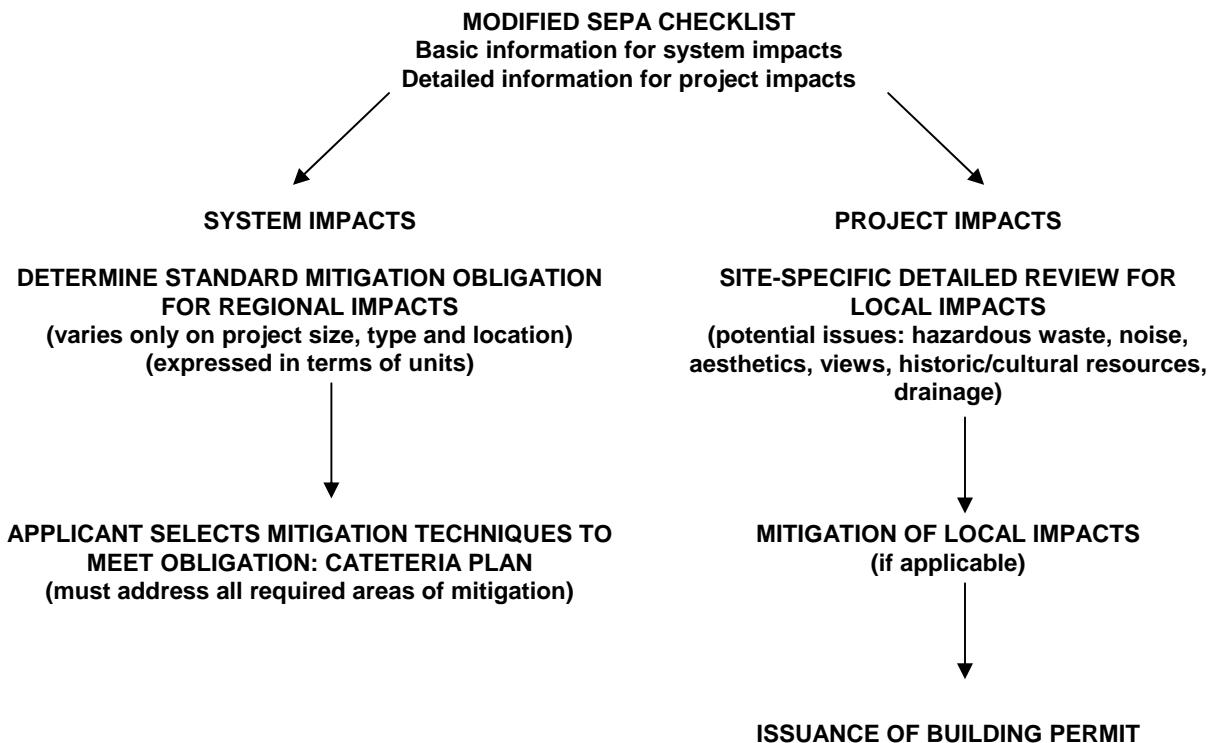
The following diagrams illustrate how this

process would work.

## **TWO – PATH APPROACH**



## STREAMLINED REVIEW PROCESS



### **Updating the Mitigation Model**

The mitigation model is intended to be dynamic. As time passes, the appropriate mitigation measures and their characteristics will change. An update procedure for the model will be necessary.

The update procedure includes periodic review, tied to the formalized amendment procedure for **Plan 2015**. It is important to maintain the link between GMA and SEPA, not only to achieve integration in the planning and initial implementation stages, but throughout the life of the plan. The procedure will involve:

1. Annual updates to **Plan 2015**;
2. Incorporation of facility master plans and subarea plans; and,
3. Assessment of cumulative impacts of development and mitigation.

## **DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES**

### **DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION**

#### **Scope of Environmental Review**

This chapter serves as the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for **Plan 2015**. In essence, the proposed action can be described as achieving compliance with the state's Growth Management Act. The DEIS provides a broad overview of the environmental impacts of future development under four alternative scenarios. This DEIS was prepared according to State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21C) requirements. The scope of the DEIS was established through a process which included public notification of affected agencies and requests for comments identifying which issues should be addressed. The scope was also influenced by the input of the Shareholders Committee and the Finance

Task Force.

The following is the list of major issues utilized in the environmental analysis of **Plan 2015**. Each issue is described and evaluated within the referenced element:

#### **MAJOR ISSUES**

##### Natural Setting

Critical Areas  
Water Supply  
Water Quality  
Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat  
Wetlands  
Geologically Hazardous Areas  
Shorelines/Flood Plains  
Air Quality  
Sustainability

##### Economic Development

Adequate Infrastructure/Land Supply  
Business Recruitment/Retention  
Future Economic Base  
Role of Government in Economic Development

##### Land Use

Phased Urban Growth  
Transition of Urban Land Uses  
\*Cluster Development  
\*Maintaining Livability  
Rural Character and Density  
Incompatible Development

##### Housing

Affordable Housing  
Housing Type/Mix

##### Parks and Open Space

Location of Open Space  
Relation of Open Space Needs to Resource Lands and Critical Areas  
Open Space Corridors and Greenbelts  
Public vs. Private Open Space

Cost of Open Space

**Utilities**

Service Extensions  
Coordination of Service Providers  
Concurrency and Implications for Growth  
Environmental Sensitivity

**Transportation**

Safety  
Mobility  
Economic Development  
Alternative Transportation Modes  
Neighborhood Transportation Needs  
Transportation Demand Management  
Funding

**Capital Facilities**

Mitigation of Development Impacts  
Infrastructure Cost Recovery  
Siting of Essential Public Facilities  
Service Agreements  
Focused Public Investment  
Level of Service in Urban and Rural Areas  
Regional Infrastructure and Service Delivery

**Non-Project Action**

The adoption of a comprehensive plan is classified by SEPA as a non-project action. A non-project action is defined as an action which is broader than a single site specific project and involves decisions on policies, plans or programs. The EIS for a non-project proposal does not require site-specific analyses; instead, the EIS discusses impacts and alternatives appropriate to the scope of the non-project proposal and to the level of planning for the proposal.

**Phased Environmental Review**

SEPA encourages environmental review to begin at the earliest possible stage in the

planning of a proposed project, and provides that the analysis be at a programmatic level. A programmatic EIS allows the flexibility of completing a broader analysis of environmental impacts early in the planning process, before individual, site-specific projects are proposed. It also allows for analysis of the proposed **Plan 2015** alternatives and provides environmental consideration prior to adoption of a preferred alternative.

Yakima County is using phased review, as authorized by SEPA, in its environmental review of growth management planning actions. The analysis in this DEIS Draft **Plan 2015** will be used to review the environmental impacts of other actions, including subarea plans, implementing development regulations and, where applicable, individual projects. In addition to this DEIS Draft **Plan 2015**, the County intends to conduct additional environmental review of such actions as they are drafted in a phased process. This permits incremental review when subsequent implementing actions require a more detailed evaluation and as additional information becomes available.

## **DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVE GROWTH SCENARIOS**

### **Development of Alternatives**

Four alternative growth scenarios were developed to meet the requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act. SEPA requires the inclusion of a No-Action Alternative as well as other reasonable alternatives. Alternative A is the No-Action Alternative.

The Shareholders Committee was created in part to help develop **Plan 2015's** goals and policies. The Shareholders Committee is comprised of representatives of the building

industry, business interests, agricultural interests, city interests, and general citizens. The representatives of this wide spectrum of interests developed a balanced set of land use policies that are reflected in Alternative B.

The Growth Management Act requires comprehensive plans to designate urban growth areas (UGAs) where urban growth should be encouraged because it is already characterized as urban, or is needed for urban growth and can be or is currently receiving urban level services like public sewer. Outside the UGA, growth should occur only if it is not urban in nature. The third alternative, Alternative C, most strictly adheres to this mandate in its assignment of densities and growth patterns within the rural lands and resource lands of the County.

Alternative D, the Planning Commission's Preferred Alternative refines the Shareholders' work and incorporates features from the other alternatives that will provide greater flexibility for individual landowners while protecting valuable resource lands.

## SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVE GROWTH SCENARIOS

**Alternative A:** (See Figure III-1A & B)  
Under this alternative, the comprehensive plan would be based on the existing zoning designations and regulations. Development would occur in accordance with existing plans. This is the no-action alternative required under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). No formal distinction would be made between the urban growth lands, the rural lands, and the economic resource lands. These lands would be treated as they would under current development regulations.

**Alternative B:** (See Figure III-2A & B)  
*Unincorporated Urban Growth Areas:*

Development in unincorporated portions of designated UGAs would be phased through the Utilities and Capital Facilities elements, to be guided into the areas of focused public investment that can accommodate urban densities. The County would enter into interlocal agreements with each jurisdiction to determine the appropriate phase/focused public investment area boundaries.

*Rural Lands:* Development of rural lands would be largely self sufficient with rural land use categories and densities as recommended by the land use policies. Rural transitional areas would be designated adjacent to established UGAs to recognize the unique conditions of these rural lands which have already developed at suburban densities not unlike those found in nearby urban lands. These transitional areas would be encouraged to continue densifying, through cluster development and community water and sewer systems where feasible, to a point where they could be interconnected and/or served by extension of local public services and facilities.

*Economic Resource Lands:* Economic resource lands would be protected from incompatible land uses through a relatively low-density requirement. Minimum lot sizes would be 20 and 40 acres for General and Exclusive Agricultural zoned land, respectively, and 80 acres for designated Forest Resource Land. In addition, there would be a one-time-only small lot segregations permitted.

**Alternative C:** (See Figures III-3A & B)  
*Unincorporated Urban Growth Areas:* Development within unincorporated portions of designated UGAs would be similar to the pattern established in Alternative B. Within the unincorporated urban growth areas, focused public investment areas would be established based upon the level of service

that would be provided. Development would be phased based upon these established areas. Development outside of a focused public investment area would be discouraged.

*Rural Lands:* Development in rural lands would be primarily self sufficient with rural land use categories and densities similar to those recommended by the land use policies, but no transitional areas would be designated. Development within rural settlement areas would not be encouraged in order to deter urban level development within rural lands. Existing lands that have developed at densities nearing urban standards would still be considered rural, and further development at such densities would be discouraged.

*Economic Resource Lands:* Development of designated Agricultural, and Forestlands for residential use would be discouraged through elimination of the current small lot segregation regulations. Minimum lot size would be 40 acres for all designated agricultural land and 160 acres for designated forest resource lands.

**Alternative D:** (See Figures I-1A, B & C in Chapter I, the Policy Plan Element). This alternative is a refinement of the Shareholders' work by the Planning Commission, as a result of hearing testimony and extensive deliberation. Alternative D's foundation is in Alternative B, with some attributes or features of Alternatives A and C, which are discussed below.

*Urban Growth Areas:* Development within unincorporated portions of the designated UGAs would be basically as proposed in Alternative B, except that additional policy guidance is given to strengthen protection of existing agricultural operations, to reduce the size of urban areas where services cannot be provided within the twenty-year time frame of

the cities'/service providers' plans, and to provide better guidance as to where future Urban area expansions should be encouraged.

*Rural Lands:* The rural development policies of this Alternative provide additional options for landowners. All of the categories are subject to a flexible parcel threshold policy. Several of the categories carry density allocation provisions, which allow grouping of residential lots on smaller parcels, with the balance of the property providing the overall density (i.e., houses per acre) for the category to be maintained. The notable exception is in the Rural Transitional category, which has a twenty percent density bonus as an incentive to encourage clustering. Transitional areas have also been expanded over those shown in Alternative B in both the upper and lower valley to accommodate a sizable share of future rural growth, and to set the stage for longer-term inclusion within urban growth areas. Alternative D's Rural Self Sufficient Category carries a five-acre average, unless the parcel is beyond reasonable response distance from a fire station, in contrast to the flat ten-acre average in Alternatives B and C. The Rural Remote/Extremely Limited Development Potential map category has been expanded to include floodways of the Yakima and Naches Rivers.

*Economic Resource Lands:* Alternative D carries the same eighty-acre parcel size as alternative B for designated Forestlands, with some additional policy direction to protect resource use from incompatible adjacent development. This Alternative establishes an overall minimum parcel of one quarter, quarter section (i.e., forty acres) within a single Agricultural Resource category. Two caveats: A small lot segregation to separate an existing residence once every fifteen years is provided. Other small lot divisions are allowed by special exception process to

provide additional flexibility where portions of the farm can be developed without impacting agricultural operations. Buffering, special setbacks for nonagricultural uses and a

density allocation provision are provided in Alternative D to minimize the effect of nonfarm development in agricultural lands.

**Table III-2 General Comparison of Residential Densities (Units/Acre)**

	ALTERNATIVE A	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C	ALTERNATIVE D
<b>UNINC. URBAN</b>	6/1 to 2/1	4/1	4/1	4/1
<b>RURAL</b>				
<b>Self-Sufficient</b>	2/1 to 1/1	1/10	1/10	1/10 to 1/5 #
<b>Remote Rural</b>	1/1	1/40	1/40	1/40
<b>Rural Settlement</b>	6/1	4/1	1/2	4/1
<b>Transitional</b>	2/1 to 1/1	3/4 w/cluster	none	1/2.5 (1/2 if clustered)
<b>ECONOMIC RESOURCE</b>				
<b>Agricultural</b>	1/20*	1/20**	1/40***	1/40****
	1/40*	1/40**		
<b>Forest</b>	1/2	1/80***	1/160***	1/80***

Note: The rural subcategories are fully described within the Land Use Element.

\* Exclusive & General Ag. Zones allow one additional small lot once every 5 years, in addition to owner occupied segregation.

\*\* Allows creation of one additional small lot once only.

\*\*\* No small lot provision.

\*\*\*\* Allows owner occupied segregation every 15 years. Other divisions by special exception permit.

# Clustering optional; 5 acre average lot sizes within fire district and 5 road miles of station.

### **Major Differences and Similarities**

All alternatives are evaluated on the same 255,253 OFM Middle Range population forecast for the year 2015. However, the distribution of this population varies between the alternatives, particularly within the rural lands of the County. Furthermore, the buildout capacities vary widely between Alternative A and Alternative B and C.

Alternative A results in a sprawling development pattern which consumes more vacant urban, rural, agricultural and forestland than the other two alternatives. Existing zoning under Alternative A would continue to allow a high level of development which would accommodate several times the existing population.

Alternative B is the closest to representing the strategy shaped by the Shareholders

Committee. It implements the requirements of GMA, while customizing densities and categories to reflect the local conditions in Yakima County. It represents a refinement of the Rural Land Use Planning effort engaged in the early 1980's but offers a wider array of rural categories and density choices.

Alternative C provides the greatest direction regarding where future development should take place and in what form. It goes further in meeting the strict intent of GMA than the other two alternatives, but offers somewhat less flexibility in siting new development outside of incorporated areas.

Alternative D, the Planning Commission's preferred scenario has its greatest differences in the rural and resource categories. It takes a closer look at transitional lands outside urban growth areas, allows for clustering, but maintains an overall one unit per two-acre

average in rural transitional areas. It also allows for a distinction between Rural Self Sufficient areas that have adequate emergency service and road access. It also allows clustering at the same average density to reduce infrastructure costs (i.e., wells and roads). Like Alternative C, it proposes one Ag. Resource category but provides significant flexibility to address the variety of farming and land forms found in Yakima County.

## **FULL DESCRIPTIONS OF GROWTH ALTERNATIVES BY LAND USE TYPE**

### **Urban:**

*Alternative A:* Growth would continue to follow past trends. The 1974 County zoning ordinance would remain in place within the UGAs, except in the existing Yakima Urban Area, where the 1986 Yakima Urban Area zoning ordinance would apply. Changes in zoning would occur on a case-by-case basis. Public facility capacity would be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Lack of planned allocation of resources within the UGA would result in a continued patchwork development pattern that has generally forced city and County capital improvement plans to react to, rather than anticipate growth.

*Alternative B:* This alternative would promote phased growth in the UGA. The first phase would encourage growth in development incentive corridors or areas through focused public investment in capital facilities and utilities. These corridors/areas could follow selected major arterials and water/sewer utility corridors, or they might represent the "inner tier" of growth nearest to the existing city limits. The second tier represents the remaining urban growth area outside the investment corridors/areas. These areas would be jointly identified with each city. Where water and/or sewer are not available,

future urban transition would be facilitated by interim cluster developments. These developments would be served by community wells and/or septic systems that can eventually be connected to urban systems and developed at higher densities.

*Alternative C:* This alternative is similar to Alternative B but development in the second tier would be relatively limited. The County would not encourage substantial growth in these areas until urban services are extended. Where water and/or sewer are not available, future urban transition would be facilitated by interim cluster developments. These developments would be served by community wells and/or septic systems that are eventually connected to urban systems and developed at higher densities.

*Alternative D:* The Planning Commission's preferred alternative is virtually identical to Alternative B. Urban Land Use policies clarify the measures designed to protect agricultural uses in transition. Emphasis is given to delivery of urban services through focused public investment and other institutional or service provider alternatives. Policies favor directing future urban growth toward Rural Transitional lands, where feasible.

### **Rural:**

*Alternative A:* Growth would continue to follow past trends. The 1974 County zoning ordinance would remain in place throughout the rural lands. The densities allowed throughout the rural land vary from one unit per acre to six units per acre. The continued development under existing zoning would alter the current rural character and density of these lands. Changes in zoning would occur on a case-by-case basis.

*Alternative B:* Development of rural lands would be largely self-sufficient. Designated self-sufficient areas would develop at a

relatively low density of one unit per 10 acres to retain existing rural character, protect groundwater supplies, and prevent sprawl. Residential development within remote rural and extremely limited development potential areas would be allowed at one unit per 40 acres due to the inaccessibility of services, with potential for flexible parcel sizing, provided the density standard is maintained. Rural settlement areas would be retained and, where water and sewer are available, infill development would be encouraged at four units per acre to retain their "village" character. Rural transitional areas would be designated adjacent to urban growth areas to recognize the unique conditions of these rural lands, which have developed at densities approximating those found in nearby urban areas. These transitional areas would be encouraged to continue densifying, through cluster development, to a point where they could be served by extension of local public services and facilities. Clusters, served by community water (and, in appropriate cases, sewerage systems), would allow densities of 3 units per 4 acres.

*Alternative C:* Development in rural lands would be similar to that proposed in Alternative B for the self-sufficient and remote rural areas, but no transitional areas would be designated. Development within rural settlement areas would be limited to one unit per two acres to deter urban level development within rural lands. Existing areas that have developed at densities nearing urban standards would still be considered rural, and further development at such densities would be discouraged.

*Alternative D:* Development in rural lands would be similar to Alternative B in terms of land use categories, but the mapping is somewhat different. Lands in agricultural use that were previously designated rural are now designated as resource lands. All rural

categories have additional parcel size flexibility. Rural Self-Sufficient areas are subject to performance criteria related to access and emergency services, and this difference affects most of the category. Clustering is provided to allow landowners greater flexibility and infrastructure cost savings. The Transitional areas have been carefully expanded to include those areas already committed to a one unit per two and one half average density near the urban areas. A density bonus of twenty percent is provided for clustering and community water supply is required. Rural Settlement areas now include White Swan.

**Economic Resource:**

*Alternative A:* Growth would continue to follow past trends. The 1974 County zoning ordinance, including the small lot provision, would remain in place throughout the economic resource lands. Continued development within these productive lands will alter their pastoral character of the land and cause land use conflicts between incompatible land uses. Changes in zoning would occur on a case-by-case basis.

*Alternative B:* Economic resource lands would be protected from incompatible land uses through a relatively low-density requirement. Minimum lot sizes would be 20 and 40 acres for General and Exclusive Agricultural land, respectively, and 80 acres for designated Forest Resource Land. In Agricultural Resource areas, a small lot segregation, as allowed under existing zoning, would be permitted.

*Alternative C:* Development of designated Agricultural, and Forestlands for residential use would be discouraged through elimination of the current small lot segregation regulations. Minimum lot size would be 40 acres for all designated agricultural land and 160 acres for designated forest resource

lands.

**Alternative D:** Development of Resource Land for nonfarm or nonforest and residential use would be limited by minimum parcel sizes of one per quarter-quarter section (i.e., 40 acres) for Agricultural lands. Provision for farmworker housing is permitted and segregation of an owner-occupied dwelling would be allowed every fifteen years in order for a farm family to remain on the land. Nonproductive portions of the property may be divided and sold, subject to an Exception Permit Process, and a density allocation policy is established to encourage grouping of dwellings to protect agricultural operations. Incompatibility issues would be handled through buffering, setbacks, and disclosure covenants. Forest Resource lands would be subject to an eighty-acre minimum, additional buffering, and setback provisions to reduce use compatibility problems.

## **BUILDOUT CAPACITY OF ALTERNATIVES**

The Demographics Element, (Chapter V) details population projections used by Yakima County in drafting **Plan 2015**. OFM's recommended middle range twenty-year forecast of 255,253 persons is used in the Land Use Element (Chapter VII) to evaluate whether the supply of vacant buildable land can accommodate expected growth. Each alternative has more than adequate capacity to accommodate this population growth and market choice, as noted in the Land Use and Housing Elements (Chapters VII and VIII).

## **SUMMARY OF RELATIVE IMPACTS, POTENTIAL MITIGATION MEASURES, AND UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS**

### **Unavoidable Adverse Impacts**

Under all alternatives, unincorporated Yakima County will increase substantially in

population and associated land development. Consequently, with additional growth will come unavoidable impacts. These include:

1. Increased use of land for both urban and rural development
2. Increased loss of open space, habitat, agricultural and forest watershed land
3. Increased need for building and maintaining public infrastructure
4. Increased overall travel demand and traffic congestion
5. Increased demand for transportation system improvements
6. Increased demand for public and private utilities
7. Increased demand for public services, including fire and police protection; library and park/recreation services; schools; health care; and social and human services
8. Increased surface water runoff causing increased erosion, surface water pollution, and groundwater impacts
9. Increased emissions to air
10. Increased noise levels

A series of tables in matrix format (Tables III-3 through III-10) has been used to summarize the relative impacts of the four alternatives at the end of each Plan Element, where appropriate. It is organized to be consistent with the **Plan 2015** elements and incorporates Major Issues raised during EIS scoping and the ongoing public participation process. Potential mitigation measures found in the goals and policies are identified for each of the Major Issues categories (Table III-11). In some cases, no significant adverse impacts were identified for an identified Major Issue, but are listed in the environmental matrices to communicate that the issues were considered in the SEPA/GMA process, but did not emerge as significant adverse impacts.

**Table III-3 Environmental Matrix - Natural Setting**

MAJOR ISSUES	SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS			
	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D
Critical Areas: Water Supply	<p>Additional population throughout the County will cause a greater demand on the existing water supply. The potential use of domestic groundwater sources for irrigation purposes will dramatically increase demands placed on sources of potable water. Lack of state enforcement of restrictions on water use for irrigation by exempt wells will continue to undermine protection of water supply.</p>			
	The existing pattern of development will put the most pressure on water resources as more wells are drilled throughout the rural lands. Additional irrigation of residential areas will also decrease the water supply.	The demand on water supply will be the greatest in the urban growth areas, as well as the rural settlement and transitional areas where development will be served mostly by community water systems.	Development would be concentrated in already urbanized areas served by public water. The impact on water supply in the rural lands would be minimal.	Same as Alternative B, except that there will be expanded use of community water systems in Self - Sufficient and Agricultural Resource areas. The Rural Transitional category is expanded, but the overall residential (hence well) density is reduced with clustering to one unit per two acres. The effect of this alternative will be to protect ground water supplies by increasing reliance upon regulated community wells instead of individual exempt wells. In the long term, well standards, monitoring and overall density reduction should allow better utilization of ground water sources.

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Critical Areas: Water Quality	Increased densities and impermeable surfaces in the rural lands will affect water quality and increase stormwater runoff. Higher density unsewered areas may cause groundwater contamination.	Additional development in rural settlement and transitional areas will affect water quality as impermeable surfaces increase.	The greatest impact to water quality will occur in the urban growth areas as impermeable surfaces increase and non-point pollution sources are more difficult to control.	Alternative D policies encouraging development in areas served by public or community sewer systems will reduce the impact on water quality. Greater policy commitment to regional sewer service in urban areas and reduction in the overall density of Rural Transitional cluster development will decrease septic waste discharge to soils and thereby reduce likelihood of septic/well contamination. The lower density within the rural lands will lessen the area covered by impermeable surfaces, which in turn will reduce stormwater runoff.
Air Quality	Wood stove and gravel road dust pollution will be significant as development occurs in a dispersed pattern throughout the County.	Wood stove, auto emissions, and gravel road dust will increase in the rural settlement and transitional areas as densities increase in these areas.	Concentrated development in urban growth areas will increase auto and wood stove emissions in these areas.	Applying concurrency to access roads and providing specific policy direction to give greater priority to paving gravel roads in Rural Transitional and Settlement Areas will improve air quality.
Critical Areas: Fish and Wildlife Habitat	Wildlife habitat will be destroyed by human activity associated with development and clearing. Development will also lead to a fragmentation of riparian corridors.			
	Dispersed development throughout the County will disrupt wildlife migration corridors and create a greater impact on individual habitats.	Habitat areas will be impacted most in transitional areas and urban growth areas. Development in rural lands will have a minor impact on these habitats.	Fish and wildlife habitat and migration corridors will be impacted the least in rural lands as development occurs at a very low density.	Similar to Alternative B, except that clustering in the expanded Rural Transitional and other rural categories should result in more open space that can be used as habitat. Designation of floodways as Extremely Limited Development Potential will also enhance habitat retention.

Critical Areas: Wetlands	Development allowed under existing zoning will substantially impact the wetland system in the County as piecemeal development occurs. Mitigation of these impacts will occur on a case-by-case basis.	Development within UGAs, rural settlement, and transitional areas will impact the wetland system in these areas. Clustering provisions will allow siting of development in areas of least impact.	Urbanization of specified areas will result in the loss of wetlands within urban growth areas.	Expanded use of cluster development in this alternative will allow development to occur that is sensitive to the existing wetland system.
Critical Areas: Geologically Hazardous Areas - Steep Slopes	Development activity under each alternative may create unstable earth conditions and changes in topography.			
	The existing pattern of development will place the greatest amount of pressure on these areas as development is allowed at higher densities throughout the County.	Development within transitional areas will cause a higher impact on unstable slopes in these areas as densities increase.	Low-density development within the rural lands will lessen the impact on unstable slopes. Significant impact may be evident in urban growth areas in areas of steep slopes.	More precise use of Extremely Limited Development Potential category and expanded use of clustering will allow development to avoid unstable slopes, thereby reducing the impact on the natural environment and adjacent properties.
Critical Areas: Shorelines/ Floodplains	The continuation of existing development patterns in shoreline / floodplain areas will decrease the stability of these environments and increase the threat to built structures.	Development pressures on shoreline areas within transitional areas will decrease despite higher densities due to the use of clustering.	Shoreline areas within the rural lands will be protected by a very low-density threshold. The greatest impact on shoreline areas will occur in the urban growth areas.	Expanded use of the Extremely Limited Development Potential map category within floodways, coupled with plan policies encouraging clustering, will provide better protection for Shorelines and floodplains.
Achieving Sustainability	The existing pattern of development is not sustainable. The consumption of land at the current rate will dramatically impact the natural environment within the planning period.	The proposed development patterns will provide a balance between the desire for development options and the needs of the natural environment.	The concentration of development within urbanized areas will provide the least impact on the environment but provide fewer options for the landowner.	Alternative D land use policies provide a higher variety of densities and development options than B and C. It encourages greater reliance on community water systems and the retention of a sustainable development pattern.

**Table III-4 Environmental Matrix - Economic Development**

<b>Major Issues</b>	<b>Significant Impacts</b>			
	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>
Adequate Infrastructure/ Land Supply	The random pattern of development under existing zoning will not ensure adequate infrastructure for industrial land in all areas.	The formation of focused public investment corridors will ensure adequate infrastructure for industrial development since these areas will be "fully served." Concurrency requirements will also ensure adequate infrastructure at the time development occurs.		As in Alternatives B and C, policies governing focused public investment corridors and concurrency will ensure adequate infrastructure upon development. Clustering and utility policies will facilitate timely, cost-effective utility service options. Local economic development goals are linked to land use category criteria to ensure adequate urban land supply.
Commercial/Industrial Land	The amount of buildable commercial industrial land will depend upon existing zoning.	The calculation of existing and future land use needs, as part of the comprehensive plan process will ensure that enough commercial and industrial land is designated to meet the requirements of future development.		The designation of industrial land, as part of Plan 2015 implementation, based upon updated calculations of land use needs will ensure adequate commercial and industrial land for future development. Map designation criteria provide explicit and closer links to local economic development goals.
Business Recruitment/ Retention	No significant adverse impact.			New goal and policies added to emphasize workforce training in business retention and recruitment. Specific map designation criteria link economic development needs and land use allocation.

Future Economic Base	As residential growth continues in rural lands, agriculture and forestry will become less viable and weaken the economic base of the County. Residential impacts on mineral resource extraction will increase costs of development.	No significant adverse impact.	Policies protecting natural resource lands will allow the County to maintain agriculture and forestry as a solid component of our economic base, even while other Plan policies and the efforts of other public and private interests continue to work toward diversifying the local economy.
Role of Government in Economic Development	No significant adverse impact.		Clarifies County role in providing sufficient land supply, and in workforce training and education.

**Table III-5 Environmental Matrix - Land Use**

<b>Major Issues</b>	<b>Significant Impacts</b>			
	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>
Phased Urban Growth	Existing zoning allows a wide range of development options in most areas of the County. As a result, development occurs in a dispersed fashion.	Development could occur in transitional areas prior to full development of the urban growth areas. Phased growth of the urban growth areas discourages leapfrog development.	Phased growth in the focused public investment areas prohibits leapfrog development. Very low densities in the rural lands discourages over-development.	Same as B.
Cluster Development	Clustering development would not be an option. Development would continue to be dispersed and overly consumptive. The cost of providing services and continued environmental degradation increases.	Cluster development within urban growth areas and Rural Transitional areas will require the use and proper maintenance of community water (and sewer) systems. The cost of services and environmental impacts is lessened.	Clustering is used only in urban growth areas and not on rural land. While services provisions and environmental impacts are the least costly, the marketplace offers fewer rural land and lifestyle choices.	Rural cluster development will allow densities that can be adequately served by community water and, where appropriate, sewer systems. To protect rural character in the expanded Rural Transitional areas, the density bonus for clustering is reduced from 50% to 20%. Clustering options are provided for Rural Self-Sufficient and Ag. Resource Categories, but without density incentives. Design standards ensure that connection to a larger system, when available, is facilitated.

Maintain Livability	A wide variety of development options exist under current zoning. The elasticity of the current land supply is not likely to diminish.	Options for development outside of urban growth areas (e.g., clustering in transitional areas) provide more elasticity to the land supply.	The buildable land supply will become less elastic as buildout of the urban growth areas occur.	The 50% open space requirement coupled with density reductions in the expanded Rural Transitional category and density increase in the Rural Self-Sufficient areas will provide considerable elasticity in land supply without diminishing the livability of urban areas. Policies are provided to ensure that the land supply in urban growth areas is reviewed at least every five years to determine if additional urban land is required.
Transition of Urban Land Uses	As growth occurs, existing land uses will change. Agricultural land within the urban growth areas will transition to more urban uses.			
	Existing zoning allows residential development in most areas of the County. Agricultural and forestland will be developed for residential use.	Transitional areas will develop up to urban-like densities as public water and sewer are extended. Ultimately these traditionally residential areas will include commercial and other uses.	Urban growth areas will experience the greatest amount of transition as development is focused in these areas. Rural lands will experience little change.	Policies that limit densities in advance of full urban services will provide basic protection for existing non-urban uses i.e., agriculture. Alternative D is careful to provide a continuum of protection for farm use from urban to rural, using setbacks, buffers, declarative covenants, title notification and other measures that alert purchasers to the potential problems associated with the adjoining non-urban use.

Rural Character, Density and Services	<p>Due to the fairly high densities allowed under existing zoning in the rural lands, these areas would lose their rural character as suburbanization occurs.</p> <p>The densities allowed within the rural lands under existing zoning cannot be supported with adequate services.</p>	<p>The transitional areas would experience a moderate increase in density and a slight change in neighborhood character. The amount of change within self-sufficient areas would theoretically be slowed.</p> <p>Transitional areas will be served by community water (and sewer) systems until public utilities are available. Other rural lands will be designated at a density that can be self-sufficient.</p>	<p>The amount of change in self-sufficient areas would be fairly insignificant. The pastoral character of the natural resource lands would be preserved through a very low-density threshold.</p> <p>Rural densities will be maintained at a very low density. These areas will not require urban level services.</p>	<p>Rural character is maintained by reducing Transitional density over that provided in Alternative B, encouraging clustering to maintain open space, limiting rural densities outside Transitional categories to 5, 10 and 40 acre averages and protecting agricultural/forest lands.</p> <p>Policies limiting densities in the rural lands will reduce the threat to public safety and welfare (e.g., groundwater contamination). Cluster development will allow densities that can be adequately served by community water (and sewer) systems.</p> <p>Transportation improvements and other emergency services are linked to land use by refined map designation criteria.</p>
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Incompatible Development	Existing zoning allows residential development within identified economic resource lands. This type of development heightens the conflict between residents and farmers/loggers.	The low densities proposed within the designated economic resource lands will reduce the number of land use conflicts. Land uses adjacent to and within these areas will be subject to specific setback and other requirements.	Alternative D densities within the economic resource lands, coupled with policies designed to mitigate impacts of residential uses, will substantially reduce land use conflicts. Setback and design requirements will also lessen the impact on viable natural resource lands. The impact of reducing the small lot provision (once every 15 years for a homestead) is balanced by the nonfarm dwellings/land divisions special exception process to provide flexibility and protection of farmlands for the long term.
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**Table III-6 Environmental Matrix - Housing**

<b>Major Issues</b>	<b>Significant Impacts</b>			
	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>
Affordable Housing	<p>The dispersed pattern of development allowed under existing zoning restricts low income housing in rural lands, because low-income households may lack reliable transportation to and from employment and services.</p> <p>Additional residential development in the rural lands without adequate infrastructure will lead to long-term costs, causing a rise in the cost of housing.</p>	<p>Low-income housing will be most accessible within urban growth areas, particularly within focused public investment areas. Opportunities for low-income housing may also be available in rural settlement and transitional areas.</p> <p>Cluster development allows more opportunity for affordable housing through smaller lot sizes in the transitional areas.</p>	<p>Focused public investment areas within urban growth areas will be the most likely area to locate low income housing, where public water and sewer are available.</p> <p>Housing in the rural lands will be less affordable due to the very low-density requirement. More land will need to be purchased for a single-family home.</p>	<p>The Rural Transitional areas are expanded and the clustering option is provided in Rural Self-Sufficient and Agricultural Resource categories. Policies allowing cluster development will reduce the amount of land and related infrastructure costs per dwelling unit and will encourage infill development within rural settlements and transitional areas as well as urban growth areas.</p> <p>Reduction of the density potential of Rural Transitional lands could affect the cost of land for rural housing.</p>
Housing Type/Mix	<p>Existing zoning allows the greatest flexibility in housing types and the largest mix of densities.</p>	<p>Cluster development offers an increased opportunity to site housing in the rural settlement and transitional areas.</p>	<p>The mix of housing is more distinct between the urban and rural lands. Less flexibility is provided in the rural lands.</p>	<p>Policies expanding the use of cluster development will allow more housing opportunities in the rural lands than Alternatives B and C.</p> <p>Farmworker housing options in the Ag. Resource category are clarified.</p>

**Table III-7 Environmental Matrix - Parks, Recreation, and Open Space**

Major Issues	Significant Impacts			
	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D
Location of Open Space	As development occurs under current zoning, particularly within the rural lands, accessible open space will need to be designated within limited rural lands to meet the demands of future residents.	Open space within the rural lands will be more accessible as more land is preserved through lower densities. Park and recreational facilities will be located near urban growth areas to serve urban populations and rural transitional areas.	The possible locations for public open space will be more diverse outside of urban growth areas due to the concentrated form of urban development.	Expanded use of clustering option in rural and agricultural areas increase likelihood of permanent private open spaces throughout the County. Designation of floodways as Extremely Limited Development Potential also increases open space protection. Inadequate property management of private open spaces could become source of nuisance.
Relation of Open Space Needs to Resource Lands and Critical Areas	Current zoning allows the creation of small-non-productive parcels on resource lands, which reduces the open space function of these lands.	Larger minimum lot sizes in the resource lands will preserve productive resource lands, which will allow the retention of private open space. Open space needs can be partially met through the preservation of these large tracts of lands.		Same as B and C, except that clustering of residential development in Ag. Resource could protect more open space in active farming areas.
Open Space Corridors and Greenbelts	Current zoning will allow more residential development within riparian corridors, which will limit the provision of open space corridors and greenbelts. Growth in rural lands between communities will limit greenbelts.	Low densities in the rural lands, particularly the riparian corridors, will allow the extension of existing open space corridors and greenbelts. Additional land will be available for the creation of additional corridors to link the various jurisdictions.		Mapping of Extremely Limited Development Potential areas that include steep slopes and floodways, along with clustering options for rural and ag. lands provide greater protection of private open spaces. Perceived abundance of open spaces could undermine efforts to generate support for acquiring and developing public parks and open space systems for the future.

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Public versus Private Open Space	The dispersion of growth resulting from current zoning will consume more land and limit the large tracts of private open space. Demand for additional public open space will increase.	The low densities allowed in the rural lands will limit extensive rural residential development and create more private open space. The concentrated densities in the urban areas will create more demand for public open space and park and recreational facilities within the urbanized areas.	As noted above, the clustering and other rural land use policies could result in greater amounts of private open space that is not accessible for public use. Perceived abundance of open spaces could undermine efforts to generate support for acquiring and developing public parks and open space systems for the future.
Cost of Open Space	The consumption of land in the rural lands will increase the demand for public open space, which provides maximum control but at the highest cost.	The low densities allowed in the rural lands will limit extensive rural residential development and create more private open space corridors and greenbelts. Fewer public dollars will need to be expended since private open space will be more plentiful.	Open space and current use tax assessment programs, if more broadly applied to private open space, could increase tax burden of other property owners. Acquisition of designated open space for public use would be less expensive.

**Table III-8 Environmental Matrix - Utilities**

Major Issues	Significant Impacts			
	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D
Service Provision	A dispersed pattern of growth will not lend itself to an efficient provision of services and will necessitate longer service extensions to scattered development.	A more concentrated pattern of growth within transitional and rural settlement areas as well as UGAs will limit the length of service extensions.	The concentration of growth within the urban growth areas will provide the most efficient provision of services.	Policies encouraging clustering in rural lands as well as the unincorporated urban growth areas will limit the physical length and costs of service extensions. Reduction of density in the Rural Transitional areas would decrease the likelihood of community septic systems that could be linked to a regional system in the future.
Coordination of Service Providers	Coordination between service providers will be minimal as development occurs in a sprawled pattern across the County.	Focused public investment corridors will coordinate service providers and guide the individual efforts of each agency. The methodical order of development will help each agency plan efficiently for the future, instead of responding to needs as they arise.		Policies governing service agreements, intergovernmental coordination, and focused public investment areas will increase the cooperation between service providers. Explicit references to need for regional wastewater solutions.
Concurrency and Implications for growth	Infrastructure improvements will not necessarily be concurrent with growth. Services and improvements will be supplied as the market demands.		Improvements will be concurrent with growth under the requirements of the Growth Management Act.	
Environmental Sensitivity	Satellite systems will be utilized on an as-needed basis throughout the County in response to threats to public health and safety.	Satellite systems will be utilized in the transitional and rural settlement areas and in the unincorporated urban growth areas.	Satellite systems will only be utilized in the unincorporated urban growth areas.	Expanded use of satellite systems is emphasized for both rural and urban lands. Thresholds for the use of satellite systems, including ownership and management are clarified to ensure the efficient distribution of management and financial responsibility of these systems while maintaining public health and safety.

**Table III-9 Environmental Matrix - Transportation**

<b>Major Issues</b>	<b>Significant Impacts</b>			
	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>
Safety	Ensuring the safety of the transportation system will be more costly as the extent of the system grows throughout the County.	The establishment of focused public investment corridors will focus safety improvements within these areas. Additional safety improvements will be prioritized by level of critical need.		
Mobility	Maintaining the transportation system will be more costly as the extent of the system grows throughout the County under existing zoning.	The concentrated form of development within the urban growth areas and the focused public investment areas will allow for more efficient and cost-effective maintenance of the transportation system.		
Economic Development	Under each alternative, truck traffic associated with commercial or industrial uses will have an impact on the transportation system. These impacts can be anticipated through zoning and designated uses in the Plan.			
Alternative Modes	The dispersed nature of development under existing zoning will make the use of alternative transportation modes difficult.	The concentrated form of development within the urban growth areas and the focused public investment areas will accommodate alternative transportation modes more easily.		
Neighborhood Needs	Under existing zoning, the resulting dispersed pattern of development will impact more neighborhoods with additional traffic.	The additional traffic from concentrated development within the urban growth areas and the focused public investment areas will impact fewer neighborhoods, particularly within the rural lands.	Same as B and C, but in addition, Transportation Improvement Plans will be more specifically linked to Plan Map categories by concurrency and TIP project rating criteria.	

Transportation Demand Management	The dispersed pattern of development under existing zoning would result in a less efficient and more costly method of transportation demand management as the extent of the system grows throughout the County.	The concentrated form of development within the urban growth areas and the focused public investment areas will allow for more efficient and cost-effective transportation demand management.	
Funding	Growth will occur throughout the County, which will create a demand for transportation improvements on a widespread basis, requiring more funds.	The establishment of focused public investment areas would concentrate the transportation improvements in areas of anticipated growth. As a result, funds will be used more efficiently and effectively than Alternative A.	Focused public investment in the urban areas, coupled with the link between density and road conditions in the Rural Transitional and Self-Sufficient areas will result in development within areas where road improvements have been made or are planned within the current TIP funding cycle.

**Table III-10 Environmental Matrix - Capital Facilities**

<b>Major Issues</b>	<b>Significant Impacts</b>			
	<b>Alternative A</b>	<b>Alternative B</b>	<b>Alternative C</b>	<b>Alternative D</b>
Mitigation of Development Impacts	Mitigation of development impacts will continue on a case-by-case basis, primarily under SEPA.	The analysis of development impacts of anticipated growth consistent with the County's comprehensive plan will determine mitigation requirements for future development.		
Infrastructure Cost Recovery	Cities and the County will continue to approach this problem on a case-by-case basis as annexations occur.	The coordination of infrastructure improvements between cities and the County will make it easier to determine methods of infrastructure cost recovery.		
Siting of Essential Public Facilities	No significant adverse impact.			
Service Agreements	The random pattern of development under existing zoning will make service agreements difficult.	Growth in anticipated areas will be managed by service agreements between districts, cities, and the County.		
Focused Public Investment	Infrastructure will be constructed on an as-needed basis as development occurs.	Focused public investment corridors will concentrate infrastructure improvements within these areas so that the land is "fully served" upon development.		Focused public investment more likely with this alternative's emphasis on regional services and community systems. Policies creating public investment corridors will improve service efficiency of public utilities.
Level of Service Measures	No significant adverse impact.			
Level of Service in Urban and Rural Lands	Urban levels of service may be found within rural lands as the market demands.	The level of service in rural lands will be consistent with the level of development in the different types of designated rural lands.	Urban levels of service will be found within urban areas while rural levels of service will be found within all rural lands.	Same as B, except that policies governing the type and level of service for each land category are more clearly distinguished in this alternative.
Regional Infrastructure and Service Delivery	The random pattern of development under existing zoning will regional coordination difficult.	The ability to anticipate growth in designated areas throughout the county will make it easier to coordinate and provide public facilities and services on a regional basis.		Alternative D provides a clear commitment to support equitable delivery of urban services within the UGAs. Policies regarding intergovernmental coordination will provide a foundation for the provision of regional services.

**Table III-11 Mitigation Measures**

MAJOR ISSUES	MITIGATION
<b>Natural Setting</b>	
Critical Areas: Water Supply	<p>Policies requiring community water systems in certain areas will reduce the demand on water resources in the rural lands.</p> <p>Encourage water conservation efforts.</p>
Critical Areas: Water Quality	<p>Policies encouraging development in areas served by public or community sewer systems will reduce the impact on water quality. Reduction of rural density will lessen well/on-site septic system impacts. The lower density within the rural lands will lessen the area covered by impermeable surfaces, which in turn reduces stormwater runoff.</p>
Air Quality	<p>Support air quality control efforts by appropriate agencies.</p> <p>Implement policies that encourage dust suppression on gravel roads and during construction.</p> <p>Encourage development within areas served by paved roads.</p>
Critical Areas: Fish and Wildlife Habitat	<p>Policies should ensure the protection of significant fish and wildlife habitat areas.</p> <p>Development proposals impacting significant habitat areas should be limited and/or mitigation measures required.</p>
Critical Areas: Wetlands	<p>Cluster development policies will allow development to occur that is sensitive to the existing wetland system.</p>
Critical Areas: Geologically Hazardous Areas - Steep Slopes	<p>Policies restricting development on unstable slopes will reduce the impact on the natural environment and adjacent properties. Clustering in rural lands will provide flexibility to move development away from the critical area without loss of development density.</p>
Critical Areas: Shorelines/ Floodplains	<p>The existing Shoreline Management Program within the Critical Areas Ordinance establishes regulations for the protection of designated shorelines. Cluster development will help by providing flexibility to move development away from shorelines and critical areas.</p>
Achieving Sustainability	<p>Land use policies that provide a variety of densities and development options but require sensitivity to the natural environment will create a sustainable development pattern.</p>
<b>Economic Development</b>	
Adequate Infrastructure/ Land Supply	<p>Policies governing focused public investment corridors and concurrency will ensure adequate infrastructure upon development. Clear, explicit linkage to city economic development strategies emphasized by mapping criteria. Local economic goals help determine urban land supply needs.</p>

Commercial/ Industrial Land	The zoning designation of buildable commercial and industrial land based upon updated calculations of land use needs will ensure adequate commercial and industrial land for future development.
Business Recruitment/ Retention	None.
Future Economic Base	Policies protecting natural resource lands will allow the County to maintain agriculture as a solid economic base. Drafting clear and objective zoning performance standards will ensure that the exceptions process is appropriately applied to requests for nonfarm land divisions/development.
Role of Government in Economic Development	None.
<b>Land Use</b>	
Phased Urban Growth	The formation of focused public investment area focuses growth in fully served areas. Accompanying land use policies that limit densities outside these areas will restrict leapfrog development.
Cluster Development	Policies limiting densities in the rural and unserved urban lands will reduce the threat to public safety and welfare (e.g., groundwater contamination). Clustering development will allow higher densities that can be adequately served by community water and sewer systems. County maintenance and/or ownership of new systems provides qualified operation. Design standards ensure that tie into a larger system, when available, is facilitated.
Maintain Livability	Review the boundaries of the urban growth areas every five years to determine if additional urban land is required.
Transition of Urban Land Uses	Policies that limit densities in advance of full urban services will provide basic protection for existing non-urban uses i.e., agriculture. Additional policies that provide for setbacks and title notification alert purchasers to the potential problems associated with the adjoining non-urban use.
Rural Character, Density and Services	Policies limiting rural densities and protecting agricultural and forestlands will maintain the existing rural character of these areas.  Policies limiting densities in the rural lands will reduce the threat to public safety and welfare (e.g., groundwater contamination). Cluster development will allow higher densities that can be adequately served by community water and sewer systems.
Incompatible Development	Policies restricting the densities within the economic resource lands will substantially reduce land use conflicts. Setback and design requirements will also lessen the impact on viable natural resource lands.

<b>Housing</b>	
Affordable Housing	<p>Encourage public/private/nonprofit partnerships to provide low-income housing.</p> <p>Encourage local lending institutions to provide additional financing mechanisms for low-income housing.</p> <p>Policies allowing cluster development will reduce the amount of land and infrastructure costs required per dwelling unit.</p> <p>Encourage infill development within urban growth and transitional areas.</p> <p>Rehabilitate existing dwelling units.</p> <p>Work with the agricultural community and other interests to implement farmworker-housing policies.</p>
Housing Type/Mix	Policies allowing cluster development will allow more housing opportunities in rural settlement and transitional areas.
<b>Parks and Open Space</b>	
Location of Open Space	Policies guiding the types of open space and priorities for open space preservation will dictate the general location where open space will be feasible.
Relation of Open Space Needs to Resource Lands and Critical Areas	The Critical Areas Ordinance preserves open space corridors through the establishment of vegetative buffers along streams and rivers. Policies limiting development of resource lands will help retain private open space.
Open Space Corridors and Greenbelts	Policies guiding development within riparian corridors will allow for uses other than primarily residential development.
Public versus Private Open Space	Policies directing growth in the rural lands will retain existing private open spaces. Policies guiding the provision of park and recreational facilities will meet the demand for these facilities and open space as growth occurs. However, the perceived abundance of private open space could undermine efforts to create public parks and open spaces.
Cost of Open Space	The Open Space Tax Program grants tax breaks based on the current use of the land. Increased use of tax benefits to encourage preservation of open space may shift the tax burden to other property owners (i.e., those not participating in the open space tax program). Other financing measures to establish and develop community and regional parks will need to be implemented.

<b>Utilities</b>	
Service Provision	Policies regarding clustering in the rural lands as well as the unincorporated urban growth areas will limit the length of sewer and water service extensions and provide more efficient service provision in the future. Common development standards will be needed to ensure that utility systems can interconnect, where appropriate.
Coordination of Service Providers	Policies governing service agreements, intergovernmental coordination, and focused public investment areas will increase the cooperation between service providers. Completion of the Coordinated Water Systems Plan and the Sewerage General Plan for the County will ensure the level of detail needed to coordinate services is provided.
Concurrency and Implications for growth	Policies detailing the requirements of concurrency will ensure that infrastructure is concurrent with development.
Environmental Sensitivity	Policies outlining thresholds for the use of satellite systems, including ownership and management, will ensure the efficient distribution of management and financial responsibility of these systems while maintaining the public health and safety.
<b>Transportation</b>	
Safety	None (see Land Use Coordination).
Mobility	Maintaining the transportation system (e.g., streets, roads, bridges and culverts) will ensure that the quality of life and economic vitality of the County are not degraded.
Economic Development	Adequate level of service standards and development standards will ensure that truck routes and other roads are designed and constructed to accommodate the amount and type of use designated.
Alternative Modes	Policies guiding denser development into certain areas will increase the feasibility of alternative transportation modes.
Neighborhood Needs	Rural settlements and transitional areas receive additional points in County's rating system for prioritizing paving of access roads.
Transportation Demand Management	By proper and effective land use planning, adjacent land use demands on the transportation system can be directed to corridors that have excess capacity, or have future improvements planned.
Funding	The concentration of improvements in focused public investment corridors along with lesser demand for improvements in rural lands will decrease the amount of funding necessary.

<b>Capital Facilities</b>	
Mitigation of Development Impacts	Refinement of the County's mitigation model and cafeteria plan of mitigation measures will reduce analysis at the plan review level.
Infrastructure Cost Recovery	The formation of service agreements will include guidelines for infrastructure cost recovery formulas.
Siting of Essential Public Facilities	None.
Service Agreements	Policies governing intergovernmental coordination will provide the groundwork for future service agreements.
Focused Public Investment	Policies creating public investment corridors will improve service efficiency of public utilities.
Level of Service Measures	None.
Level of Service in Urban and Rural Lands	Policies governing the type and level of service for each type of land designation will create a distinction of levels of service between urban and rural lands.
Regional Infrastructure and Service Delivery	Policies regarding intergovernmental coordination will provide a foundation for the provision of regional services.