



Skagit County Planning & Development Services

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Staff Report

From: Dale Pernula, AICP, Director
Re: Bayview Ridge Subarea Plan 2013 Update
Date: October 3, 2013

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Background

The Bayview Ridge Subarea is a 3,944-acre “non-municipal urban growth area,” located in the Skagit Valley approximately one mile west of the city of Burlington and one-and-a-half miles northwest of the city of Mount Vernon. Although situated within an agricultural valley, the Bayview Ridge Subarea is distinct from the surrounding farmland due to both its location on a topographic bench above the Skagit River floodplain and its history of urban development.

The Bayview Ridge Subarea includes the Skagit Regional Airport and a mix of existing urban levels of commercial, industrial, and residential properties, plus rural residences and some farms. The remaining undeveloped properties are generally large, providing an opportunity for multiple uses and master site planning.

The Bayview Ridge Subarea Plan, which was last amended in 2008, forecasts a total population of 5,600 residents (3,800 new residents) at Bayview Ridge by 2025. The Board of County Commissioners has committed that Bayview Ridge result in a livable, walkable community; that it contain opportunities for expansion of business park-like light industrial development; and that development at Bayview Ridge pay for itself.

GMA and Planning for Growth

Skagit County is required by the Washington Growth Management Act to plan for growth and avoid rural sprawl. The County and its cities have agreed on a goal of directing 80% of future population to urban growth areas, and only 20% to rural areas.

Urban growth areas (UGAs) are incorporated communities (i.e., cities, towns) and adjacent lands, where urban growth is encouraged. Non-municipal urban growth areas—like Bayview Ridge—are not adjacent to or affiliated with a city or town. Outside of UGAs, growth can occur only if it is not urban in nature (e.g., rural, natural resource lands, open space).

Expansion of our existing cities is constrained due to surrounding resource lands or island geography. That's why in 1997, Skagit County chose Bayview Ridge, which is outside the floodplain, not prime farmland, and not timberland, as a location for additional urban-level densities.

Process History

After first designating Bayview Ridge for urban growth in 1997, the County drafted a “subarea plan”—a subset of the County’s Comprehensive Plan particularized to Bayview Ridge. Subarea plans guide the creation of development regulations, which govern the land uses and permit procedures for land development. Skagit County drafted a Bayview Ridge subarea plan in 2004, but then labored through several years of appeals that were not resolved until December 2009.

The County began the implementation process in 2010 with a series of outreach events, including a service providers’ workshop, a visioning meeting, and a community survey. The County, Port of Skagit, and landowners spent 2012 working with Makers Architecture and Urban Design to develop a draft Planned Unit Development (PUD) code and associated design standards for the Bayview Ridge Subarea. That effort produced a quality framework that would allow the County and community to:

- Envision how large-scale mixed use and residential development could occur in the UGA;
- Ensure development results in a high-quality livable, walkable area consistent with the community’s vision;
- Properly integrate school-siting into the development process.

Skagit County has placed the Planned Unit Development and design standards code on hold at this time so that it can continue to evaluate school siting issues before moving forward with allowing residential development to occur.

State law allows counties and cities to modify their comprehensive plans only once per year. Although the Bayview Ridge Subarea Plan 2013 Update is one of several comprehensive plan amendments on this year’s docket, PDS is publishing this staff report separately from the other proposed amendments to provide additional background information on the subarea plan and because the other comprehensive plan amendment proposals have already been released. More information on the other comprehensive plan amendment proposals is available at www.skagitcounty.net/planning (click on “Annual Comprehensive Plan 2012 Petitions”).

Summary of the Proposal

Skagit County is proposing revisions to the adopted 2008 Subarea Plan to add 110 acres of industrial zoning at Bayview Ridge adjacent to the airport and business park, replacing an equivalent amount of residential, community center, and urban reserve zoning. This proposed update of the Bayview Ridge Subarea Plan includes the following:

- **More industrial land.** This biggest change from the adopted subarea plan would designate 110 acres of residential zoning nearest the airport to light industrial, replacing an equivalent amount of residential, community center, and urban reserve zoning. Allowed densities would not increase.
- **New policies** that would allow changing the size of the community center zone, or expanding the light industrial zone under certain conditions.
- **Moving** the community center zone to both sides of Peterson Road.
- **Updates** to the Capital Facilities chapter to reflect current plans and conditions.
- **Miscellaneous updates** to correct grammar, names, facts, and figures.

Analysis

PDS has drafted these revisions to the Subarea Plan at the direction of the Board of County Commissioners to (a) designate additional light industrial zoning at Bayview Ridge nearest the airport, and (b) make the minor changes necessary to facilitate a future Planned Unit Development ordinance. The expansion of light industrial zoning at Bayview Ridge is consistent with the Envision Skagit 2060 citizen committee recommendations for additional county industrial zoning and the Board's desire to expand opportunities for industrial uses and job creation near the Port's airport and business park, and minimize land use conflicts between the airport and residential areas.

PDS believes that an additional 110 acres of industrial zoning is all that the County can designate at this time under the Countywide Planning Policies. Additional industrial/commercial allocation could become available after the Port and Skagit Council of Governments complete their countywide industrial lands inventory as part of the 2016 revision of the Countywide Planning Policies and County Comprehensive Plan.

Recommendation

Planning & Development Services has prepared this proposed revision to the Subarea Plan following the direction of the Board of County Commissioners to provide for additional commercial/industrial zoning adjacent to the Skagit Regional Airport. PDS recommends approval.

Consistency

Generally

GMA requires the Comprehensive Plan and each of its components (such as this Subarea Plan) to be internally consistent. The text of the Subarea Plan itself cites the relevant Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) that support its policies. The changes to the Subarea Plan proposed in this update are relatively modest, and do not conflict with the CPPs or the rest of the Comprehensive Plan.

Additional Light Industrial Land

The proposed subarea plan land use map (subarea plan figure 7) maps a 109.5 new acres of light-industrial zoning. The following analysis demonstrates how the County can map additional industrial acreage at Bayview Ridge consistent with existing Countywide Planning Policies.

Countywide Planning Policy 1.1 allocated 750 acres of “new,” undeveloped, fully-developable¹ commercial/industrial land to the Bayview Ridge UGA through 2025. The 2008 Bayview Ridge Subarea Plan mapped 665.5 of those 750 developable acres to three commercial/industrial zones (Community Center, Heavy Industrial, and Light Industrial) as shown in the table below.² The remaining 84.5 acres were left unmapped.

2008 SUBAREA PLAN Bayview Ridge Zoning	
Zone	Developable Acres
Community Center	30.5
Heavy Industrial	272
Light Industrial	363
Sub-Total Commercial/Industrial	665.5
Unmapped	84.5
ALLOCATED TOTAL	750

The proposed revision to the subarea plan reduces the Community Center zone by 25 developable acres to 5.5 developable acres, which removes from the map an additional 25 acres of commercial/industrial zoning for a total of 110 acres that are designated for Bayview Ridge but unmapped. The proposed revision to the subarea plan would map those 110 acres as light industrial, displacing 33 acres of BR-CC and 55 acres of BR-R zoning.

Public Process

As a legislative land use proposal, the County follows the process outlined in **Skagit County Code Chapter 14.08**, which includes a written public comment period, public hearing before the Planning Commission, recommendation by the Planning Commission, and then final decision by the Board of County Commissioners.

Public Notices

Skagit County has issued a variety of notices related to the Subarea Plan implementation process, which started in early 2010.

- Mailers for a Community Workshop on April 21, 2010, sent to about 900 residences within the subarea and up to 300 feet outside the subarea.

¹ Existing roads/right of ways and wetlands and their associated buffers are not included as “developable acreage.” Developable acreage includes lands needed for infrastructure, for example roads, stormwater, and utilities.

² See Table 2-2 in the 2008 Bayview Ridge Subarea Plan.

- Advertisement in the Skagit Valley Herald on April 18, 2010, and an announcement in the Herald on April 19, 2010, inviting the public to attend the Community Workshop on April 21, 2010, at the Bay View School.
- Community survey posted on skagitcounty.net in early August of 2010 to assist the County in developing a PUD ordinance for the subarea. A press release reminding citizens to submit surveys by August 20 was posted on skagitcounty.net on August 16, 2010.
- Advertisement in the Skagit Valley Herald on April 7 and 15, 2013, inviting the public to attend presentation of implementation process of the Subarea Plan on April 16, 2013, in the Commissioners' hearing room at 8:30 a.m .
- Email notice to PDS listserv on April 12, 2013, regarding the presentation on April 16, 2013.
- Postcard mailed on July 3, 2013, to 900 residences within the subarea and up to 300 feet outside the subarea notifying them of the Community Meeting to be held on July 30, 2013, from 6 – 8 p.m. at the Bay View School.
- Email press release on July 3, 2013, and posting on skagitcounty.net notifying the public of the Community Meeting on July 30, 2013.
- Advertisement in the Skagit Valley Herald on July 18 and July 29, 2013, inviting the public to attend the Community Meeting on July 30, 2013.
- Email notice to PDS listserv of roundtable discussions scheduled for September 18 and September 25, 2013, at the Port of Skagit meeting room.
- Email notification to Skagit Regional Airport, WSDOT Aviation Division, identified pilots and pilots associations about the September 18, 2013, airport consultation meeting.
- Email notification to PDS listserv and email press release on October 3, 2013, announcing publication of this revised subarea plan
- Postcard mailed to approximately 900 residences within the subarea and up to 300 feet outside the subarea following publication of this staff report.

General Aviation Airport Consultation

Consistent with RCW 36.70.547, Skagit County has filed this staff report and the proposal with the Department of Transportation Aviation Division and held a formal consultation meeting with owners and managers, private airport operators, general aviation pilots, ports, and the Aviation Division on September 18, 2013. The transcript of that meeting is available at www.skagitcounty.net/bayviewridge.

SEPA Threshold Determination

The Skagit County SEPA Responsible Official has issued a SEPA addendum number 3 for the Bayview Ridge 2004 Final Environmental Impact Statement. Each of these environmental documents are available at www.skagitcounty.net/bayviewridge.

Fiscal Impacts Analysis

Skagit County has contracted with ECONorthwest to perform an analysis of the financial impacts from full development buildout at Bayview Ridge on the County and other service providers. That analysis, which is available in full at www.skagitcounty.net/bayviewridge, indicates that the net fiscal impact from buildout at Bayview Ridge under the 2008 adopted subarea plan would be a positive \$6.2 million to the County during the planning period. The net fiscal impact under the proposed revision to the subarea plan that adds an additional 110 acres of industrial zoning would

be a positive \$7.8 million. Neither scenario fully accounts for transportation costs, which Skagit County Public Works is still analyzing.

How to Comment

The Skagit County Planning Commission will hold a hearing on the subarea plan amendment proposal on Tuesday, November 5, at 6 p.m. at the address below. Public hearing testimony is generally limited to three minutes, so written comments are preferred.

You can submit written comments to **pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us** or to the address below, until Thursday, November 7 at 4:30 pm.

Skagit County Planning & Development Services
1800 Continental Place
Mount Vernon WA 98273

All comments must be received by the deadline and include (1) your full name, (2) your mailing address, and (3) the subject “Bayview Ridge Subarea and PUD proposal.” Comments not meeting these requirements will not be considered.

For More Information

Please visit the project website at **www.skagitcounty.net/bayviewridge** to download background documents and to sign up on our e-mailing list for updates about the project.