

ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

A. BACKGROUND

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:

Skagit County 2005 GMA Update Proposal

2. Name of Applicant:

Skagit County Planning & Development Services

3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person:

Skagit County Planning & Development Services
1800 Continental Place
Mt. Vernon, WA 98273
(360) 336-9410
Contact: Kirk Johnson, Senior Planner

4. Date checklist prepared:

February 10, 2006

5. Agency requesting checklist:

Skagit County Planning & Development Services

6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable):

There will be public hearings before the Skagit County Commissioner to take comments on the proposal. The first public hearing dates have been set for March 21, 2006 to consider amendments to Countywide Planning Policies, Comprehensive Plan policies, and development regulations and March 23, 2006 to consider Comprehensive Plan/Zoning Map amendment proposals. Planning Commission review and final Board approval will be required prior to adoption of any amendments.

7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain.

Not known at this time.

8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal.

1. Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Land Use Element, Skagit County Comprehensive Plan, Skagit County Department of Planning and Community Development, January 13, 1994.
2. Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Land Use Element, Skagit County Comprehensive Plan, Volume I: FEIS Text and Appendices A-G, Skagit County Department of Planning and Community Development, June 30, 1994.
3. Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Land Use Element, Skagit County Comprehensive Plan, Volume II: Appendices H-L, Skagit County Department of Planning and Community Development, June 30, 1994.
4. Addendum to the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Land Use Element, Skagit County Comprehensive Plan, Skagit County Department of Planning and Community Development, May 24, 1995.

5. Addendum to the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Land Use Element, Skagit County Comprehensive Plan, Skagit County Classification and Designation of Natural Resource Lands, Skagit County Planning and Permit Center, May 23, 1996.
6. Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan, Skagit County Planning and Permit Center, November 13, 1996.
7. Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan, Skagit County Planning and Permit Center, May 2, 1997.
8. Addendum (Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments and Development Regulations Intended to Satisfy Skagit County's Outstanding GMA Obligations, Including Resolution of Issues Connected to Pending Appeals before the Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board) to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Final Environmental Impact Statement, Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement, and Supplement Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan, February 3, 2000.

9. Do you know of pending applications for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal? If yes, explain.

None known

10. List any government approvals of permits that will be needed for your proposals, if known.

Skagit County Board of Commissioner approval is required for any amendments to the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan, Countywide Planning Policies, Comprehensive Plan/Zoning Map, or Skagit County Code.

11. Give a complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site. There are several questions later in this checklist which ask you to describe certain aspects of your proposal. You do not need to repeat those answers of this page.

The proposal consists of the following components and is intended to achieve compliance with the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) update requirement found at RCW 36.70A.0130(4).

1. Amendments to the Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) that a) update the County population allocations through 2025, b) modify the urban commercial and industrial acreage allocations under CPP 1.1 for certain municipal Urban Growth Areas to account for projected employment growth to 2025; and c) move provisions regarding rural commercial and industrial development from CPP 1.1 to CPP 2.
2. Amendments to the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan to reflect changes in local needs and circumstances, new data, and changes in state law since the last adoption of Comprehensive Plan amendments. The Proposal would reorganize the Comprehensive Plan by consolidating 16 chapters or "elements" into 12, and modifying the format and streamlining policies to improve readability and user-friendliness.
3. Amendments to Skagit County Code, Title 14, Unified Development Code, to ensure consistency within the code and with the Comprehensive Plan policies; to clarifying certain processes and requirements; and to address typographical errors and inadvertent additions or omissions. Minor changes will also be made to Title 15, Buildings and Construction, to correct outdated references to the Planning and Development Services Department; and to delete a chapter, 15.20, that is now addressed in Title 14 (14.34, Flood Damage Prevention).
4. Amendments to the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan/Zoning Map, that are necessary to comply with the Growth Management Act, to reflect local needs and circumstances, and to advance comprehensive planning goals. Skagit County received more than 100 Map amendment requests from property owners, members of the public, municipalities, and others. The Planning and Development Services Department and several County advisory bodies have also recommended

changes to the map. All of these map proposals are shown on a map titled Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment Requests, 2005 GMA Update. The Proposal consists of a "Preferred Alternative" map that includes only those amendment proposals determined by the Planning and Development Services Department to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan land use designation criteria and the Growth Management Act, and timely to be considered as part of this update process.

2. Location of the proposal. Please give sufficient information for a person to understand the precise location of your proposed project, including a street address, if any. If a proposal would occur over a range of area, please provide the range or boundaries of the site(s). Please provide a legal description, site plan, vicinity map, and topographic map if possible. While you should submit any plans required by the agency, you are not required to duplicate maps or detailed plans submitted with any permit applications related to this checklist. (Indicate if maps or plans have been submitted as part of a permit application.)

Lands inside the unincorporated areas of Skagit County, WA located within Ranges 1-12 East and Townships 33-36 North, W.M., Skagit County, WA.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

Not Applicable

C. SIGNATURE

The above answers are true to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the lead agency is relying on them to make its decision.

Signature: _____

Date: February 10, 2006

D. SUPPLEMENT SHEET FOR NON-PROJECT ACTIONS

(do not use this sheet for project actions)

Because these questions are very general, it may be helpful to read them in conjunction with the list of the elements of the environment.

When answering these questions, be aware of the extent the proposal, or the types of activities likely to result from the proposal, would affect the item at a greater intensity or at a faster rate than if the proposal were not implemented. Respond briefly and in general terms.

1. How would the proposal be likely to increase discharge to water; emissions to air; production, storage, or release of toxic or hazardous substances; or production of noise?

The proposed amendments are not likely to result in any increase in discharge, emission, production or release any of the above beyond what is already occurring or permitted. Any specific development resulting from these amendments shall be subject to all applicable codes, regulations and statutes from the local, state and federal jurisdictions.

2. How would the proposal be likely to affect plants, animals, fish, or marine life?

The proposed amendments are not likely to have any affect on any of the above beyond what is already occurring or permitted. Any specific development resulting from these amendments shall be subject to all applicable codes, regulations and statutes from the local, state and federal jurisdictions.

3. How would the proposal be likely to deplete energy or natural resources?

The proposed amendments will not facilitate any depletion of energy or natural resources beyond what is already occurring or permitted.

4. How would the proposal be likely to use or affect environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated (or eligible or under study) for governmental protection; such as parks, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, threatened or endangered species habitat, historic or cultural sites, wetlands, floodplains, or prime farmlands?

The proposed amendments are not likely to have any negative affects. There are no significant changes proposed to how the county managed development in environmentally sensitive areas. Additional park land acres are proposed to be designated as Open Space of Statewide/Regional Significance. Any specific development resulting from these amendments shall be subject to all applicable codes, regulations and statutes from the local, state and federal jurisdictions.

Proposed measures to protect such resources or to avoid or reduce impacts are:

Any possible use or affect from any specific development resulting from the proposed amendments shall be subject to all applicable codes, regulations and statutes from the local, state and federal statutes.

5. How would the proposal be likely to affect land and shoreline use, including whether it would allow or encourage land or shoreline uses incompatible with existing plans?

The proposed amendments have been developed to respond to projected population and employment growth in Skagit County through the year 2025. The goal of the proposal is to channel most new population growth into the cities and their Urban Growth Areas, where services can best be provided, and in order to protect designated natural resource lands and maintain low densities and limit service needs in the rural area. The proposal contains no significant changes regarding shoreline use; in fact the Shoreline Element of the Comprehensive Plan remains unchanged. Any specific development resulting from the amendments shall be subject to all applicable codes, regulations and statutes from the local, state and federal statutes including the Shoreline Management Master Program.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce shoreline and land use impacts are:

The proposal contains new policies to limit residential and commercial activities in designated natural resource lands, specifically agricultural and forestry lands, that are not compatible with the use of those lands for natural resource production purposes. The proposal encourages the majority of projected population and employment growth to occur in cities and their urban growth areas, in a manner that uses land efficiently and provides amenities for urban residents. The proposal emphasizes provisions in the Growth Management Act that direct that new development in the rural area be generally limited to existing areas of more intensive rural development, rather than allowing new sprawling development in the rural area. Any possible use or affect from any specific development resulting from the amendments shall be subject to all applicable codes, regulations and statutes from the local, state and federal jurisdictions including the Shoreline Management Master Program.

6. How would the proposal be likely to increase demands on transportation or public services and utilities?

The proposed amendments have been developed to respond to projected population and employment growth in Skagit County through the year 2025. The goal of the proposal is to channel most new population growth into the cities and their Urban Growth Areas where public services including transportation can be provided in the most efficient manner possible. The proposal itself will not increase demands on public services and utilities.

Proposed measures to reduce or respond to such demand(s) are:

Policies in the transportation element encourage regional transportation planning, the development of public transportation systems and non-motorized transportation facilities, and innovative measures to reduce transportation demand. Requirements for new development in Skagit County include provisions to ensure that transportation facilities are provided in a timely manner to address increased transportation demand. Any possible use or affect from any specific development resulting from the amendments shall be subject to all applicable codes, regulations and statutes from the local, state and federal jurisdictions.

7. Identify, if possible, whether the proposal may conflict with local, state, or federal laws or requirements for the protection of the environment.

No