

**TOWN OF HAMILTON
AND SKAGIT COUNTY
DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE AND
REQUEST FOR COMMENTS ON SCOPE OF EIS**

Description of proposal: Environmental Review of proposed additions to the Town of Hamilton Urban Growth Area to implement the Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan and the Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan and provide for future growth and economic development consistent with the Growth Management Act and the Countywide Planning Policies. This process is intended to provide Skagit County with adequate information to take positive action on the planned Urban Growth Area, and to afford an opportunity for consideration of alternatives. The planned expansion of the Urban Growth Area is included in the adopted 2005 Town of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan; this is a more detailed look at the same proposal. A range of land use alternatives is presented, in order to maximize flexibility in the decision-making process and ensure adequate analysis of the impacts of each alternative. Proposed sites for Urban Growth Area Expansion include the 59 acre portion of the old Crown Pacific Log Yard located south of SR 20, north of the old Lyman/Hamilton Highway extending west to Cabin Creek Road, and 202 acres located north of SR 20 between Hamilton Cemetery Road and the Centennial Gravel Mine, and north to the Town Well site.

Proponent: Town of Hamilton with Skagit County as Co-Lead Agency
Location of Proposal: Town Limits and proposed unincorporated Urban Growth Area
Co Lead agencies: Town of Hamilton and Skagit County

Background: Environmental review of this concept was completed by the Town in 1994 and again in 2005 and no comments were received on either occasion. A series of Community Planning Workshops and Citizen Advisory Committee meetings are in process in 2006-2007 to gather public comments and guide the design of the proposed Urban Growth Area. Key goals for the Urban Growth Area Expansion include the following

1. Provide land outside of the floodway for construction of businesses, housing opportunities, commercial and industrial uses, school site, open space, parks, infrastructure and utilities.
2. Establish an overlay zone for the existing floodway area in the Town Limits to plan and implement restoration of stream and wetland buffers, habitat conservation areas, removal of structures and site cleanup, public access and open space.
3. Design and implement a floodway hazard mitigation strategy that includes creating sending zones for development rights in the existing floodway portion of the Town and the river reach between Sedro-Woolley and Concrete, receiving zone at the new Urban Growth Area located outside the floodway.
4. Site design shall include low impact, sustainable and green development features integrated into the plans and codes.
5. Preservation of the rural character of the area and minimizing the impact of new development on the existing homes in the area shall be a key goal.

EIS Required: The lead agency has determined this proposal is likely to have a significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c) and will be prepared. An environmental checklist or other materials indicating likely environmental impacts can be reviewed at our offices.

The lead agency has identified the following areas for discussion in the EIS:

1. Impact of land use change to existing rural area.
2. Environmental mitigation through low impact infrastructure design, sustainable development concepts and green building techniques.
3. Alternative designs for public infrastructure to meet long term needs including water rights, storm and sanitary sewer, streets and other utilities.
4. Alternatives that meet the project objectives and/or mitigate environmental impacts, including phased Urban Growth Area adoption, evaluation of other sites, no action.
5. Meeting needs for low income and affordable housing to serve relocated population that has significant human and social service needs.
6. Economic development opportunities and providing a jobs/housing balance.
7. Critical area protection including wetlands
8. Historic preservation and archeological sites.
9. Wild and Scenic Rivers Act ,Endangered Species Act, Clear Air Act, Farmland protection.
10. Redesignation of the County designated Rural Resource-Natural Resource Land zoned portion of the property for inclusion into the proposed Hamilton Urban Growth Area.

Scoping. Agencies, affected tribes, and members of the public are invited to comment on the scope of the EIS. You may comment on alternatives, mitigation measures, probable significant adverse impacts, and licenses or other approvals that may be required. ***The method and deadline for giving us your comments is: written comments by April 10, 2007 to Margaret Fleek, Hamilton Town Planner, 901 E. Fairhaven Avenue, Burlington WA 98233.***

Responsible Officials: Margaret Fleek and Brandon Black
Position/title: Town Planner, Town of Hamilton and Senior Planner, Skagit County
Phone: 360-755-9717 for more information
Address: 901 E. Fairhaven Avenue, Burlington, Washington 98233
Date: March 21, 2007
Signature: Margaret Fleek & Brandon Black

There is no agency appeal.