

# LAND USE CONSIDERATIONS

## NOVEMBER 2005

### EXISTING CONDITIONS

#### Residential Land Uses

The primary land use in the South Fidalgo Island Subarea is single family residential.

- Developed single family lots range from less than 1 acre to more than 10 acres
- Fidalgo Island recently experienced significant and rapid growth
- \$250,900 was the median home value in 2000 census

#### Commercial Land Use

- Isolated convenience stores and restaurants

#### Public Land Uses

- Fidalgo Island Elementary School
- Fire Stations
- Many parks and trails

### SUBAREA PLAN FEATURES

Existing land uses under County plan

Description of natural features (parks, open space)

Current densities & zoning recommendations

Identification of underutilized & non-conforming lands

### Potential tools and trade-offs :

#### Conservation and Reserve Developments (CaRDs)

- + Would allow for cluster developments to preserve open space
- Would create more density with smaller building sites, open spaces are not permanent

#### Current Use Taxation Program

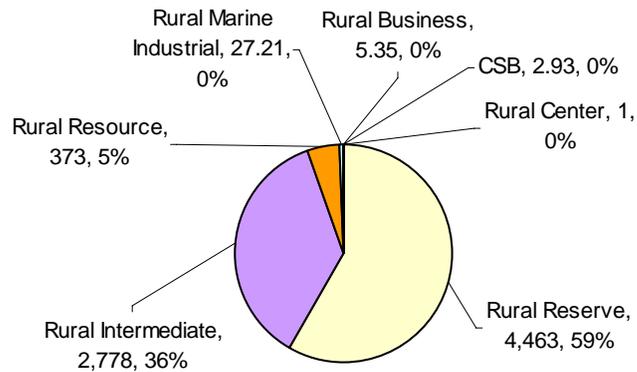
The state Open Space Act provides for current use appraisal of farm and agricultural lands, timberland, and open space land. Once land is classified, taxes are based on the current use value rather than highest and best use. The Assessor must maintain the current use value for as long as the property remains classified. At the same time, a record of the fair market value of the property is kept. The difference between the current-use value and the fair market value becomes the basis for computing the amount of additional taxes, penalties, and interest that may become payable upon a change of use or removal of classification.



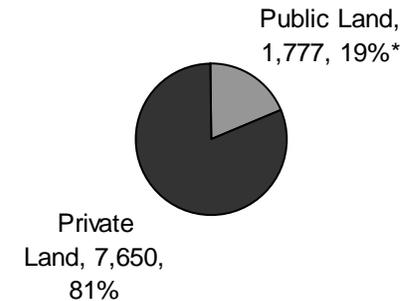
# WHAT IS THE CHARACTER OF THE LAND? NOVEMBER 2005

- About 19% of the subarea is publicly owned (state and county parks, roads, other public uses)
- 95% of the private land is zoned Rural Intermediate or Rural Reserve
- 4,311 acres (2,922 parcels) of private lands are vacant or only partially developed
- Development potential is dependent upon critical area constraints, water availability, access, and the owners' willingness to sell or develop.

**South Fidalgo Island Zoning**



**Public/Private Lands Split**



\* Public lands include: parks (county & state), utility lands, Samish Tribal lands, and roads. The water surface of the lakes is 600 acres.

■ Public Land ■ Private Land

# CAC CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS NOVEMBER 2005

- The intent of the Rural Reserve zone that includes “*Lands in this zoning district are transitional areas between resource lands and non-resource lands for those uses that require moderate acreage...*” is inappropriate in the context of South Fidalgo Island, while the “*purpose of the Rural Intermediate district is to provide and protect land for residential living in a rural atmosphere, taking priority over resource land uses...*” is a true reflection of the community vision.
- Further land division using the CaRD approach would result in the construction of new homes on lots that are as small as 5,000 square feet, a density that would endanger the rural character.
- The CaRD approach would also result in the platting of open space tracts that could be further subdivided, and/or would be difficult for homeowners to manage and maintain.
- Under the current Rural Reserve zoning, without CaRD subdivisions, owners’ abilities to create new home sites will be limited. This will increase land values and related taxes, and restrict family members from being able to afford building and living on South Fidalgo Island.
- Changing the Rural Reserve zoning to Rural Intermediate could enable further growth and development on the Island at densities up to one home per 2.5 acres. This would enable the remaining developable lands to be subdivided and developed without creating additional small lots with homes in close proximity and without creating more open spaces that could stimulate more future development or become liabilities for owners.



# RECOMMENDED CODE CHANGES NOVEMBER 2005

## Prohibit in South Fidalgo:

- CaRD subdivisions
- Aircraft landing field
- Animal clinic/hospital
- Animal preserve
- Campgrounds
- Fish hatchery
- Group care facility
- Home based business 2
- Indoor shooting club
- Kennels
- Mortuary
- Outdoor recreational facilities
- Storage of unlicensed or inoperable vehicles
- Outdoor storage of processed or unprocessed materials in quantities greater than 500 cubic yards that are not a public health hazard
- Outdoor storage of materials that are a public health hazard
- Public marinas
- Retail and wholesale nurseries/greenhouses
- Seasonal worker housing
- Seasonal roadside stands over 300 square feet

- The county should examine the current adopted procedures for administrative and hearing examiner reviews and approvals of trails, and primary and secondary trailheads, adult group care facilities, cemeteries, churches, community clubs, preschools, retriever/dog training facilities and stables and riding clubs.
- The County should also review current excessive building coverage areas and minimal setbacks.

