

# Chapter 2

## Land Use, Community Character, and Design

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### Introduction

The Land Use Element addresses future land use within the Bayview Ridge Subarea. It represents the County's policy plan for urban growth through the year 2015. The Land Use Element specifically considers the general distribution and location of land uses, the appropriate intensity and density of land uses given development trends, and provides policy guidance for new residential, industrial, and commercial development.

Community character and quality of life are intangible yet critical aspects of community development. The pattern of urban development created by the Bayview Ridge Subarea Plan should strengthen community identity and reflect local values and opportunities. Because large areas will be developed over the twenty-year period, how that development does or does not strengthen and fit with the existing community is a key issue. Requiring a high quality of community design helps create a sense of place. Retaining the sense of the existing landscape, maintaining views, and requiring appropriate scale and amenities in new developments are key components to strengthening community character.

### Existing Land Use

The Bayview Ridge Subarea encompasses 4,011 acres with a mix of industrial, commercial, residential, and wetlands/buffers land uses, as well as vacant land. The Subarea is separated from the surrounding agricultural valley by both arterial streets and topography. This separation allows the Subarea to maintain its unique identity. Existing land use within Bayview Ridge is summarized in Table 2-1.

Land use within the Bayview Ridge Subarea is influenced by the long-term needs of the Skagit Regional Airport, an essential public facility (see Chapter 11). Much of the Subarea lies within the Airport Environs Overlay (AEO) zoning district. Preserving the utility of the airport while assuring public safety is an important land use compatibility issue. This issue is more thoroughly addressed in the *Skagit Regional Airport Land Use Compatibility Study* (Reid Middleton, June 2000).

Additionally, the Subarea has a long history of industrial and residential development and infrastructure investment, from public and private entities, outside the Skagit Regional Airport property. For example, the Subarea includes more than one mile of frontage on the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railroad line. This rail line is currently underutilized. Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railroad upgraded its switching capabilities in Burlington to serve this section of track. Additionally, an extensive network of underground electrical distribution lines as well as high capacity high voltage line running along SR 20 also serves the area. The high voltage lines are sufficient to serve additional sub-stations as may be required by heavy industrial users. Similarly, two large natural gas lines run along the southern part of the Subarea and are

**Table 2-1  
Bayview Ridge Existing Land Use**

<b>Use</b>	<b>Total Acreage</b>
Skagit Regional Airport	761
Industrial Development	601
Commercial Development	0
Residential Development	494
Wetlands/Buffers	1,023
Vacant, Developable Land	1,132 <sup>1</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,011</b>

Note: Calculations for Table 2-1 can be found in Appendix A.

<sup>1</sup>Does not include 244 acres of wetlands and wetland buffers in residential areas. Wetlands and/or wetland buffers are protected by the County’s Critical Area Regulations. However, allowed residential densities from these areas can be transferred to other portions of the same ownership. For purposes of determining the potential number of housing units for each alternative, no deduction has been made for wetland and/ or wetland buffer acreage in residential zones.

available to serve industrial and other uses. Public water service is provided to a majority of the Bayview Ridge Subarea by Public Utility District of Skagit County (PUD No. 1). Distribution lines in the area range from 3 inches to 18 inches in diameter. In 1999 a new 2.9 million gallon storage reservoir was constructed. As of 2000, there were approximately 726 residential and commercial meters in the Subarea. Further, a sanitary sewer system is provided and maintained by the City of Burlington. The City of Burlington’s wastewater treatment plant is currently undergoing a two-phase expansion project. Phase I was completed in 2001 and Phase II is expected to be completed in 2005. Finally, Verizon Communications recently installed redundant fiber optic lines to serve the Fredonia Business Park, a 130-acre industrial park in the southwest portion of the Subarea. The fiber optic lines provide state-of-the-art communications options for commercial and industrial uses. The combination of modern infrastructure and the location of the Subarea along SR 20, surrounding the Skagit Regional Airport and bound by residential development at urban densities on the East, make the Subarea unique and ideally suited for further development.

## **Existing Community Character**

13,000 years ago, retreating glaciers deposited gravelly material, creating this unique setting, a plateau with an incredible panorama of gorgeous, fertile Skagit County farmlands, San Juan Islands, salt water, and two mountain ranges. That is a gift of nature and the basic soul of Bayview Ridge. It defines the essence and the character of the area.

In 1933 what is now known as the Skagit Regional Airport was first built as a military facility in Bayview Ridge. Over time, Bayview Ridge developed sporadically; the industrial base and urban density residential elements developed concurrently but independently. The industrial area developed because of available land outside of primary agricultural lands, while the residential subdivisions and golf course communities were created to take advantage of the spectacular

setting. Public and private utility and infrastructure created a climate of development, but without a common theme, strategy, or particular sense of community. In more recent years the State of Washington passed the 1990 Growth Management Act and the Bayview Ridge area has evolved into an independent, non-municipal Urban Growth Area without a Subarea Plan to support it.

**Relationship to Other Plans**

**Countywide Planning Policies**

Countywide Planning Policy 1.1<sup>1</sup> (GMA Goal 1) encourages development in urban areas where adequate public facilities exist or can be provided in an efficient manner. Pertinent specific policies include:

1.1 *Urban growth shall be allowed only within cities and towns, their designated UGAs, and within any non-municipal urban growth areas already characterized by urban growth, identified in the County Comprehensive Plan with a Capital Facilities Plan meeting urban standards. Population and commercial/industrial land allocations for each UGA shall be consistent with those allocations shown in the following table:*

**Table 2-2  
UGA Population and Commercial/Industrial Land Allocations**

<b>Urban Growth Areas</b>	<b>Residential Population (2015)</b>	<b>Commercial/Industrial Land Allocations (New)</b>
Bayview Ridge	3,420	750

1.2 *Cities and towns and their urban growth areas, and non-municipal urban growth areas designated pursuant to CPP 1.1 shall include areas and densities sufficient to accommodate, as a target, 80 percent of the county’s 20-year population projection.*

1.3 *Urban growth areas shall provide for urban densities of mixed uses and shall direct development of neighborhoods which provide adequate and accessible urban governmental services concurrent with development. The GMA defines urban governmental services as those governmental services historically and typically delivered by cities, and includes storm and sanitary sewer systems, domestic water systems, street cleaning services, fire and police protection services, public transit services, and other public utilities associated with urban areas and normally not associated with non-urban areas.*

1.4 *Urban growth areas shall include greenbelt, open space, and encourage the preservation of wildlife habitat areas.*

<sup>1</sup> Amendments to the Countywide Planning Policies (2000) were found to be non-compliant with the Growth Management Act due to alleged violations of the Framework Agreement by the Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board in Case No. 00-2-0049c. This order is under appeal to Superior Court.

## Bayview Ridge Subarea Plan

### *Land Use*

The Bayview Ridge Subarea Land Use Plan, shown in Figure 7, is based on a vision of how the area should grow and develop while protecting a high quality of life and equitably sharing the public and private costs and benefits of growth. The concept of the Plan supports the existing urban land use patterns, takes the unique condition of the Skagit Regional Airport into consideration along with the unique natural features of the Subarea, and establishes the framework for urban governmental services and facilities in the Bayview Ridge community. The overall intent of the Plan is to create a cohesive community, providing for an urban level of development with urban services.

It is recognized that urban development within the Subarea will occur over time. Any portions of the Subarea not designated and zoned for urban development at this time will be placed within a rural classification. Development within any rural area will be required to be clustered so as not to preclude future urban development.

Future land use within the Bayview Ridge Subarea will build on the existing land use pattern and will encompass residential, limited commercial, business/industrial, and aviation-related uses. Future land use designations within the Urban Growth Area include: Bayview Ridge Residential (BR-R), Bayview Ridge Community Center (BR-CC), Bayview Ridge Light Industrial (BR-LI), Bayview Ridge Heavy Industrial (BR-HI) and Aviation – Related (AVR). Parks and/or open space are included in each land use designation as appropriate.

As noted, almost all of the Bayview Ridge Subarea lies within the AEO zoning district. This district promotes land uses compatible with the airport and prohibits certain uses. Prohibited uses include those within which the occupants cannot move quickly out of harm's way (i.e., hospitals, nursing homes, churches and new K-12 schools), above ground storage of flammable materials or other hazardous substances which are not incidental to the primary use, and mobile home parks. Each of the Subarea land use designations and associated zoning regulations are consistent with the AEO zone.

The eastern portion of the Subarea is designated for residential development. The BR-R designation encompasses both the existing residential development south of Peterson Road and undeveloped properties between Peterson Road and the hillside to the north. BR-R is a residential zone, which may accommodate a variety of housing types and options including detached single-family residences, apartments, condominiums, duplexes, townhouses and accessory dwelling units. Due to the constraints of the airport safety zones, densities are limited to an average of four units per acre. It is recognized that future residential densities in the Bayview Ridge area could increase to as many as six units per acre in the event that additional population is allocated through Countywide Planning Policies or the area is identified as a suitable "receiving zone" as part of a larger countywide Transfer of Development Rights program.

Neighborhood shopping and service uses are not available now within the Subarea. Both residents and employees must travel outside the Subarea for day-to-day needs such as groceries, business and professional services, restaurants, etc. Space for public gatherings is also lacking.

**Figure 7 – Bayview Ridge Subarea Plan: Land Use Plan**

The Bayview Ridge Community Center (BR-CC) designation provides a central location for community businesses and public uses that are relatively small in size, consistent with the needs of the local area employees and residents. The BR-CC designation applies to a 15-acre area along Peterson Road, designed to be accessible to both the residential and business areas. Common open space/greenbelts will be integrated into the master plan for the commercial properties.

The Bayview Ridge Aviation-Related (BR-AVR) designation provides for uses directly related to the airport and encompasses the airport runways, taxiways, the terminal, and their immediate environs. The BR-AVR zone also provides for amenities related to the airport terminal such as a restaurant.

The Bayview Ridge Light Industrial (BR-LI) zone, which provides for light manufacturing and related uses, encompasses the majority of the Port of Skagit County ownership, the Paccar Technical Center, and additional properties east and south of the airport. This zone is designed for compatibility with the Skagit Regional Airport and establishes performance standards, including restrictions on building height and particulate and smoke emissions. Where the BR-LI zone abuts residential properties, buffers are required to protect the residential development.

A portion of the existing industrial area located at the southwest corner of the Subarea is designated for Heavy Industrial (BR-HI) uses as well as those uses allowed in the BR-I zone. Washington Alder and Lignotech are located in this area.

Open space will be required for each new development project consistent with the *Skagit Regional Airport Land Use Compatibility Study* findings. A 25-acre community park is also planned for the area. Additionally, community open space and pocket parks, along with areas for employee recreation, will be addressed in the master site planning process.

There are a few areas outside the Urban Growth Area, but within the Subarea, that abut the Bayview Ridge Residential (BR-R) area that will be rezoned to Urban Reserve (URv). These lands are on the fringe of the Urban Growth Area. The Urban Reserve (URv) designation is intended to protect areas from premature land division and development that would preclude efficient transition to urban development. The URv designated lands are intended for future urban development and are identified as the primary areas to be included in the Urban Growth Area in the future. These lands may be added to the Urban Growth Area, as needed to accommodate any future population allocations, through amendments to the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan.

The 78-acre tract of land south of Josh Wilson Road will retain its current Rural Reserve (RRv) designation.

Table 2-3 shows the land available for development in each of the land use designations.

**Table 2-3  
Bayview Ridge Existing Land Use**

<b>USE/ZONING</b>	<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>Developed Acres</b>	<b>Roads/ Right of Ways</b>	<b>Wetlands/ Buffers</b>	<b>Developable Acres</b>
Aviation-Related	761	754	7	N/A	Infill
Community Center	15	0	0	7	8
Heavy Industrial	411	92	22	147	150
Light Industrial	1,741	441	46	625	629
Bayview Ridge Residential	705	343	59	124	303
<b>Sub-Total (UGA Total)</b>	<b>3,633</b>	<b>1,630</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>903</b>	<b>1,090</b>
Rural Reserve	78	30	0	19	48
Urban Reserve	300	56	6	101	238
<b>SUBAREA TOTAL</b>	<b>4,011</b>	<b>1,716</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>1,023</b>	<b>1,376</b>

Note: Calculations for Table 2-3 can be found in Appendix A.

***Community Character and Design***

Enhancing the community character of Bayview Ridge is an important part of the Subarea Plan. Providing a sense of place for current and future residents of the Bayview Ridge Subarea is vital. The intent of the Subarea Plan is to accommodate new growth in a manner that is consistent with the Skagit Regional Airport operations as described in the *Skagit Regional Airport Master Plan* and respects and enhances the quality of life currently enjoyed by residents in Bayview Ridge. The natural beauty and community setting shall be protected by providing public spaces and creating or maintaining open spaces in a strategic manner. Private and public development decisions should reinforce a clear distinction and separation between industrial and residential areas, except when they are coordinated through a master planned development process.

Community design can be thought of as those elements of the community environment that convey the visual impressions of that community and contribute to the community’s character. The various elements of community design can be grouped into several broad categories: (1) the natural setting; (2) the existing development; (3) the potential for future development; and (4) the public and private infrastructure, such as streets, sidewalks, lighting, landscaping, and above ground and underground utilities, storm water systems, fiber optic cables, water and sewer.

Community character and design are often shaped by a community’s development standards. Flexible development standards are critical for both the existing and future residential community. The use of flexible and incentive-based regulatory tools often results in better designed and community supported developments. Developers are given incentives in the form of zoning flexibility, property tax breaks, or density and other bonuses while the community benefits from greater open space, aesthetically pleasing landscaping and the use of good design techniques.

Goals, objectives and policies that promote community character and design are found throughout the Bayview Ridge Subarea Plan since each element of the Plan impacts the character of the Subarea.

## Goals, Objectives, and Policies

### Goal 2A Provide for urban development within the Bayview Ridge UGA, which integrates existing and proposed uses, creating a cohesive community.

*Objective 2A-1 Manage urban land use patterns in the community to optimize and balance the types and locations of uses.*

- Policy 2A-1.1 Develop regulations for Bayview Ridge Heavy Industrial and Light Industrial zones that provide areas for industrial development compatible with Skagit Regional Airport and adjacent residential use, and are largely devoid of nuisance factors, hazards, or exceptional demands on public facilities.
- Policy 2A-1.2 Develop regulations for the Bayview Ridge Community Center area that provide for limited neighborhood shopping opportunities and a gathering place for community activities in a well designed setting, consistent with the character of the community.
- Policy 2A-1.3 Allow mixed use development in logical areas to provide opportunities for residents to walk to work and neighborhood shopping locations.
- Policy 2A-1.4 Develop regulations for the Bayview Ridge Residential area that provide for the enhancement of existing neighborhoods and transition of undeveloped lands to urban residential development consistent with the character of existing Bayview Ridge residential development.
- Policy 2A-1.5 Discourage uses that conflict with the continued operation of the Skagit Regional Airport, as identified in the *Skagit Regional Airport Master Plan*, through the Airport Environs Overlay (AEO) development standards.

*Objective 2A-2 Provide and maintain adequate infrastructure and an adequate level of urban services to accommodate proposed development.*

- Policy 2A-2.1 Coordinate with the City of Burlington and the special districts that serve Bayview Ridge to develop a Capital Facilities Plan specific to the Subarea.
- Policy 2A-2.2 Encourage the joint use of public facilities.



**Goal 2B Provide for rural development within the Bayview Ridge Subarea which complements the urban development within the adjacent UGA.**

*Objective 2B-1 Designate Urban Reserve areas adjacent to the Bayview Ridge UGA in order to preserve the opportunity for orderly and efficient transition from rural to urban residential land uses if and when needed in the future.*

- Policy 2B-1.1 Urban Reserve areas are intended to provide guidance for where the UGA may expand at some future date. Inclusion of land in an Urban Reserve area does not necessarily imply that any of the land within the district will be included within the UGA at some future date.
- Policy 2B-1.2 Urban Reserve areas shall abut the established UGA. The Urban Reserve area shall not include designated Agricultural - Natural Resource Lands.
- Policy 2B-1.3 Consideration shall be given to the following in the establishment and location of the Urban Reserve district within the Bayview Ridge Subarea:
- a. The efficiency with which the proposed reserve can be provided with urban services in the future;
  - b. The efficiencies with which the proposed reserve can be urbanized;
  - c. The proximity of jobs and housing to each other;
  - d. The protection of designated agricultural land and floodplains from nearby urbanization.
- Policy 2B-1.4 Develop regulations for the Urban Reserve area that requires clustering of development within designated areas outside the UGA so as not to preclude future urban residential development, and provide for a transition from rural to urban infrastructure.

*Objective 2B-2 Ensure that rural areas within the Bayview Ridge Subarea develop in a manner that complements the urban development in the adjacent UGA.*

- Policy 2B-2.1 All new land divisions shall create lots of 10 or more acres in size, unless proposed as a CaRD, in which the overall density is one (1) dwelling unit per five (5) acres.

**Goal 2C Strengthen community identity and maintain a high quality of life through creative, high quality design.**

*Objective 2C-1 Retain and strengthen the significant features of the natural landscape.*

- Policy 2C-1.1 The land use pattern and transportation network should respect existing land forms and should use existing natural features to provide definition between various parts of the Subarea.

Policy 2C-1.2 Require new residential and commercial development to be compatible with the existing landscape.

Policy 2C-1.3 Require new industrial development to retain natural vegetation in landscape areas and buffers not subject to development.

*Objective 2C-2 Adopt development standards, including design standards, that strengthen community character and identity.*

Policy 2C-2.1 Require that building height and scale reflect the character of the area and insure safe airport operations.

Policy 2C-2.2 Encourage the development of open space that is both aesthetically pleasing and has functional value. Functional open space includes the provision of land for aircraft safety as well as recreation opportunities.

Policy 2C-2.3 Require landscaping in all new commercial and industrial development, including streetscapes.

Policy 2C-2.4 Require that the Community Center development include a master plan and design review process, and that these processes incorporate public involvement.

Policy 2C-2.5 Develop and require implementation of distinct streetscapes for the residential, commercial, and industrial areas.

Policy 2C-2.6 Prohibit billboards and large signs in the Bayview Ridge Residential and Bayview Ridge Community Center zones in order to minimize visual clutter, enhance traffic safety, and maintain views of existing landforms.

Policy 2C-2.7 Assure that public buildings serve as models of quality design as well as community gathering places.

Policy 2C-2.8 Encourage public art in and around public buildings.

Policy 2C-2.9 Create and maintain physical and visual linkages throughout the Subarea.

Policy 2C-2.10 Establish “gateways” at major access points to the Subarea.