

2015 Comprehensive Plan Update---Futurewise and Pilchuck Audubon Society Recommendations

1. Support Alternative 1. Why?
 - A. Meets goals of GMA and Vision 2040.
 - B. Puts more growth into Everett—our only Metropolitan city
 - a. Best Transit Infrastructure
 - i. Sounder
 - ii. Sound Transit
 - iii. Amtrak
 - iv. Community Transit/SWIFT BRT
 - v. Island Transit
 - vi. Skagit/Whatcom Transit
 - vii. Everett Transit
 - viii. Light Link Rail—will know by next year
 - b. Stakeholder's are working to build more transit-oriented development (TOD) around Everett Transit Station (Everett Station District Alliance)
 - c. Better opportunity for affordable housing
 - d. Better access to hospitals, university/colleges/events center, riverfront/port/I-5 and major highways, Everett Mall
 - e. County Seat
 - C. If population not in Everett it will definitely go into the SWUGA. Why this is not good?
 - a. Transportation infrastructure is lacking and expensive
 - b. Impacts to existing neighborhoods/environmental impacts
 - c. Increase pressure to expand UGA into more rural land exacerbating a and b.
 - d. No transit planned which means more car usage, which means more climate impacts.
2. RUTAs—Need to eliminate. Gives false hope to current and future landowners that their land will be included in the UGAs even though the expansions are not needed and so it cannot be included.
3. Do not reduce the allowed densities for the low density residential designation from 4-6 units per acre to just 4 units per acre. A higher minimum density
 - a. Creates more affordable housing and efficient use of land
 - b. Reduces costs to both taxpayers and developers
 - c. Minimum of 7 dwelling per acre makes transit pencil outTherefore, we recommend changing the Low Density Residential zoning to 7 du/acre.
4. Urban Centers—Our recommendations below help to meet Vision 2040 for walkable, compact and Transit Oriented Development that maintains local character.

- a. Complete Streets
 - b. Sidewalks/bicycle infrastructure commensurate with population and traffic patterns
 - c. Affordable housing for low- to med- income households under Snohomish County's Fair Share Housing methodology
 - d. 25,000 combined residential and employment density, with 15,000 being in residential units
 - e. Balance of residential, commercial, retail and recreational uses
 - f. Increase in tree canopy and Low Impact Development to minimize stormwater runoff
 - g. Eliminate minimum parking requirement
 - h. Good design guidelines to increase better flow of pedestrians and bicycles.
5. Rural Roads to Urban Level of Standards. This is a bad policy because it will just "kick the can down the road" to the taxpayer for needed infrastructure improvements and allow for more urban growth area expansions and urban sprawl. The county needs to show the methods and financing to bring rural roads up to the LOS of "C" in order to accommodate more growth in the rural areas, rather than downgrading the rural roads to urban LOS of D or E.
6. Urban Arterials-- We recommend that all urban arterials be built as complete streets, which means all urban county arterials should be built or improved with walkways, bicycle lanes and transit stops. Our urban arterials need to include other options for travel besides automobile use. According to the TE, "Snohomish County has made significant progress on its bicycle and walkway facility network; however, improvements are still needed to fill out the development of the County network." We recommend policies that will require complete streets with current and future development along urban county arterials.
7. Water Supply for Rural Development-- Water resources are in short supply in Snohomish County outside cities. We recommend two new policies to address this very important issue:
- a. Set allowed densities based on the available water resources and reserve adequate resources to support Snohomish County's economic base including agriculture and forestry.
 - b. Only allow comprehensive plan amendments, rezones, bonus densities and other measures that increase rural densities where adequate supplies of potable water are available that will not adversely affect surface and ground water.
8. Climate Change Policies in Natural Environment Chapter-- There is considerable evidence that land use and transportation planning can and must address global warming and adaptation. We recommend that the county incorporate the following proposed policies to address these issues.
- a. Reduce greenhouse gas emission consistent with Washington State's greenhouse gas reduction requirements.
 - b. When planning for and permitting development, locate new development in areas that are not likely to be adversely impacted by

the sea level rise, flooding or other changes in climate affected by global climate change.

- c. Begin adapting to the changes likely to be caused by global climate change.
9. Ten-Acre minimum for Commercially Designated Agricultural Land—This zoning is contributing to the loss of farming in Snohomish County. We recommend either increasing the minimum lot size and density to one dwelling unit per 40 acres or limited residential development in the county’s agricultural zone to farm related dwellings. Skagit County is successfully using both approaches. We also recommend that the county adopt policies to better protect agricultural lands from incompatible uses.
 10. Type 3 LAMIRDS/Commercial Freeway Zones—Based on case law outlined in our comment letter, we recommend the policies be amended to require that “small-scale, freeway interchange commercial uses” be isolated and small-scale. The development regulations applicable to these areas should also be update to incorporate these requirements.
 11. Oppose UGA Expansions/land swaps by Arlington and Sultan.
 - a. Arlington
 - i. expansion/land swap does not meeting GMA or CPPs
 - ii. De-annexation is not fair to current property owners and is unlikely to be approved by the city’s voters
 - iii. Physical boundary of I-5 needs to be respected because of urban growth impacting neighboring commercial farmlands (Island Crossing as the example) and the lack of funding for needed urban infrastructure and services, as well as transportation west of I-5 in this area
 - b. Sultan
 - i. Recommend only UGA reduction, with no expansion
 - ii. All residents in these areas are opposed
 - iii. Sultan’s current population projection has not come close to being met
 - iv. Plenty of buildable land with reduction and no expansion
 - v. City is not financially capable of supporting more growth
 12. Habitat Corridor—The Planning Commission recommended polices to allow for habitat corridors connecting our rural and urban areas. We support these policies.