

6.0 Land and Shoreline Use

Land use planning in Clark County is guided by the GMA, which was adopted to ensure that development occurs in a planned manner, that there are adequate services available, and that critical resources are protected. The GMA requires that comprehensive plans establish land use designations and growth boundaries to guide development and ensure that the land supply can accommodate projected demands for housing and employment over a 20-year period. All of these characteristics of the county's growth impact qualities of life and the ability of the County and its cities to provide adequate and affordable housing for its citizens. Planning for shoreline areas of Clark County is also guided by the Shoreline Management Act, which was adopted to provide orderly development of shorelines, protect shoreline ecology, preserve public access to shorelines, and ensure adequate shoreline area for water dependent uses.

6.1 Setting

Clark County is part of the Portland Metropolitan Area. Its land use and transportation patterns are tied to the economic context of the larger region: one-third of the county's labor force, more than 60,000 workers, commutes to Portland on a daily basis, while only 11,000 commute in the opposite direction. The lack of a sales tax in Oregon has led to significant reduction in retail sales, reducing both investment and tax revenues for local

governments. However, County and City policies have been instrumental in shifting those patterns. The north county cities have seen population growth rates above state levels

as have the eastern port cities. Land use in Clark County is made up of predominantly forest lands in the eastern side of the county, and scattered agriculture, parks/open space, and rural lands throughout the remaining portions of Clark County. Commercial, residential, and industrial land uses are the predominant land uses within the County's incorporated cities and towns. Clark County land and shoreline use has remained relatively unchanged since 2007. Over the last seven years, minor comprehensive plan designation and zoning changes have occurred, both within incorporated cities and unincorporated Clark County.

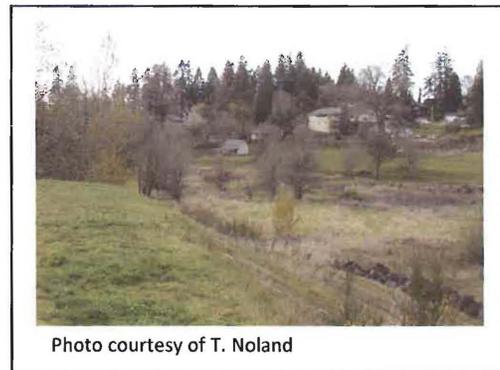


Photo courtesy of T. Noland

6.1.1 Population

Clark County's population is estimated at 448,800, making it the 5th most populous county in Washington State. Clark County has a very evenly spread population between rural and city regions with only 52% of the population residing in incorporated areas. The county was the fastest-growing in the state in the 1990s, and was second-fastest over the past decade. This growth was spurred by in-migration of new residents. Beginning in 2000 and continuing to 2010, growth started to decline, and in 2010, more people moved out of the county than moved in for the first time since 1984. However, even with this decline of in-migration, between 2000 and 2010 Clark County still experienced a 28.3% increase in population which is above the state increase of 18.2%. Vancouver is the largest city in the county and the fifth largest in the state, with a population of 167,400, making up 72% of the county's incorporated population. The next largest city is Camas with a population of 20,320 making up 9% of the incorporated population (OFM, 2015).

When compared with the state and nation, Clark County's population has a greater proportion of its population under 18 years old, and a smaller proportion of middle-age and older residents. Table 6-1 provides demographic data about Clark County in relation to similar demographic data for Washington State.

The county is less diverse in terms of race and ethnicity than the state. In 2013, 87.7% of Clark's population was white compared with 81.2% at the state level and 77.7% nationally. Just over 8% of Clark County's population is Hispanic or Latino, versus 11.9% of the state and 17.1% of the nation (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015).

Table 6-1. Demographic Comparison: Clark County and Washington State

	Clark County	Washington State
Population estimate for 2015	448,800	6,968,170
Population 2000	345,238	5,894,121
Percent change, 2000 to 2015	28.3%	18.2%
Population by age, 2013		
Under 5 years old	6.5%	6.4%
Under 18 years old	25.6%	22.9%
65 years and older	13.2%	13.6%
Females, 2013	50.6%	50.0%
Race/ethnicity, 2013		
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	87.7%	81.2%
Black	2.1%	4.0%
American Indian, Alaskan Native	1.1%	1.9%
Asian, Native Hawaiian, Other Pacific Islander	5.3%	8.6%
Hispanic or Latino, any race	8.4%	11.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts

6.1.2 Community Framework Plan

The Community Framework Plan embodies the countywide planning policies required by the GMA and envisions urban growth areas (UGAs) with specific boundaries and rural centers within larger natural resource and rural areas. The Framework Plan emphasizes distinctions between urban, rural and resource lands to maintain a range of options to ensure the quality of life valued by county residents. It encourages growth in UGAs and rural centers, with each area center separate and distinct from the others. These centers of development are of different sizes; they contain different combinations of housing, shopping, and employment areas. Each provides places to live and work. The centers are oriented and developed around neighborhoods to allow residents the ability to easily move through the center and to feel comfortable within areas that create a distinct sense of place and community.

The Community Framework Plan was adopted in 1993, as Clark County’s long-term vision of what the county could become. Conceptual in nature, it proposed changing past trends which if left unchecked, could result in problems similar to those experienced by other regions that failed to adequately plan for future growth, such as inadequate infrastructure, reduced ability to provide emergency services, and diminished quality of life.

In order to achieve this development pattern, each of the UGAs designates a mix of land uses with housing, businesses, and services appropriate to its character and location.

Residential development appropriate to the needs of the workers and residents in these areas is encouraged nearby. Outside of UGAs, the land is predominantly rural with farms, forests, open space, and large lot residences. Shopping and businesses are located in rural centers.

A primary goal of the Framework Plan is to provide housing in close proximity to jobs, resulting in shorter vehicle trips and allowing densities along corridors that support transit.

Most of northern Clark County remains in rural use, with some resource-based industries. The Community Framework Plan continues to guide the development of each jurisdiction’s growth management Comprehensive Plans.

The Land Use and Shoreline Use Elements for the County’s 20-year comprehensive plan determines the general distribution, location and extent of the uses of land, where appropriate, for agriculture, timber production, housing, commerce, industry, recreation, open spaces, public utilities, public facilities, and other uses, as well as transition to urban areas consistent with the Framework Plan (see Figure 1-1a). These comprehensive plan elements include population densities, building intensities, and estimates of future population growth both inside and outside of the UGAs. The Environmental Element within the Comprehensive Plan contains policies to protect shoreline and critical areas, and also directs the development of regulations to address land use-related issues such as protection of groundwater resources, stormwater run-off, flooding, and drainage problems.

Similar to other parts of Washington State and the rest of the nation, Clark County’s economy has experienced higher-than-average unemployment and consequently a lack of development activity since the last comprehensive update in 2007. This has resulted in land use patterns that have remained relatively constant.

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6.1.3 Housing

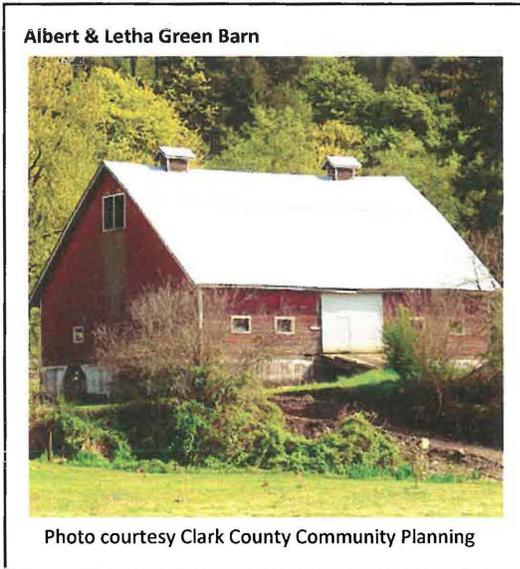
The goal of the Community Framework Plan with regard to housing is to make adequate provision for existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community. These policies are intended to coordinate the housing policies of all the jurisdictions to identify sufficient land to accommodate a range of housing types and prices for existing and future residents.

Clark County's median household income outpaces the nation and the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Housing affordability in the county is better than the MSA overall, but lags the national benchmark for affordability.

About 60% of Clark County's housing stock has been built since 1980. In comparison, just over 40% of the nation's housing stock was constructed after 1980.

Housing affordability is often measured by the ratio of median home price to median household income. This ratio is essentially the number of years needed to pay for a median-priced housing unit if, in theory, 100 percent of income were applied to the principal until it was paid off. Clark County's index (4.6) is less affordable than the national average (3.7), but compares well to the Portland MSA overall (5.2) (Clark EDC).

6.1.4 Historic and Cultural Resources



Albert & Letha Green Barn

Photo courtesy Clark County Community Planning

Much of the county has been identified as having a high probability for archaeological resources, in part because of the area's rich history and its importance as a settlement location. Many of the high probability areas are located along streams, rivers, and other water bodies. When applications for development are submitted, a pre-determination of the probability rating is required. The model helps staff determine whether an applicant is required to investigate potential resources further in order to protect them from development, or how to mitigate impacts. More intensive development pressures can make it difficult to prevent historic or cultural resources from being disturbed, though having more land available for development does not preclude those pressures from occurring. Land that remains undeveloped or in rural uses can result in protecting resources from future disturbances.

6.2 What has changed since 2007?

Clark County and its incorporated cities have experienced relatively minor changes in population, housing and land use since 2007. The total population within Clark County has increased by 1% since 2007 to 448,800 people. This slight increase was almost entirely within incorporated cities and towns, having virtually no increase outside the UGAs. Land uses have remained mostly constant, with some minor changes scattered throughout the county mostly occurring in Camas, La Center, and Yacolt.

As the population in Clark County has continued to increase, so has the need for housing. From 2000-2014, Clark County's estimated total housing units increased from 134,030 to 172,965, amounting to a 29% increase. Vacant and renter-occupied units were also on the rise, but so was household income and the ability for individuals to secure adequate housing.

The county lost 6% of its employment base in the economic downturn starting in 2008, worse than the nation and state. Unemployment was aggravated by higher than average job losses for Clark County residents working in Portland, as Oregon State also experienced economic challenges during this period. In 2013 the downward employment trend in Clark County reversed and job growth began accelerating, with unemployment rates dropping from a high of 15.3% in 2009 to 8.4% in 2013.

While there was a major update of Clark County's SMP in 2012 to comply with amendments to the State Shoreline Management Act, the changes were relatively minor, simplifying shoreline designations, making them more consistent with the cities, protecting shoreline environmental functions, while encouraging public access and water-dependent use.

A Rural Lands Task Force was established to examine and make recommendations on how the County could facilitate more efficient use of its rural and resource lands.

6.2.1 Population

Population within Clark County has increased since 2007, at a rate slower than seen in fairly recent history. Between 1970 and 2007 Clark County was experiencing an average annual growth rate (AAGR) of 3.3%. The City of Ridgefield remains the fastest growing population between 2007 and 2014 with an AAGR of 7.3%. Between 2005 and 2007 the unincorporated areas of Clark County had a higher growth rate than incorporated areas (3.2% vs 2.8%); since 2007, incorporated areas are now growing more by a slim margin (.6% vs 1.2%).

Table 6-2 provides a summary of population statistics from 1970 to 2014 for each of the local governments in the county. Given the trend in percent change and AAGR (Table 6-3) the county can expect population to increase, especially in incorporated areas. Annual growth rates for Clark County between 2010 and 2013 have been just under 1%. From April 2013 to April 2014, the County's population grew 1.5%, and 2% from April 2014 to April 2015 (OFM, 2015).

Table 6-2. Population throughout Clark County (1970-2014)

Year	Population In Geographic Divisions									
	Clark County	Unincorporated	Incorporated	Battle Ground	Camas	La Center	Ridgefield	Vancouver	Washougal	Yacolt
1970	128,454	74,487	54,267	1,438	5,790	300	1,004	41,859	3,388	488
1980	192,227	134,974	57,168	2,774	5,681	439	1,062	42,834	3,834	544
1990	238,053	173,844	64,115	3,758	6,798	483	1,332	46,380	4,764	600
2000*	345,238	166,279	178,959	9,322	12,534	1,654	2,147	143,560	8,595	1,055
2005	391,675	188,955	202,545	14,960	15,460	2,095	2,630	154,800	11,350	1,160
2006	412,938	196,090	207,410	15,810	15,880	2,315	3,225	156,600	12,270	1,220
2007	418,070	201,135	213,865	16,240	16,280	2,440	3,680	160,800	12,980	1,370
2008	424,733	206,830	217,370	16,710	16,700	2,510	4,015	162,400	13,480	1,470
2009	432,002	210,415	220,785	17,150	16,950	2,545	4,215	164,500	13,870	1,470
2010*	427,044	203,339	222,024	17,571	19,355	2,800	4,763	161,791	14,095	1,566
2011	433,418	204,610	223,390	17,780	19,620	2,835	4,975	162,300	14,210	1,585
2012	438,287	205,885	225,365	17,920	20,020	2,985	5,210	163,200	14,340	1,605
2013	443,817	207,710	227,790	18,130	20,320	3,015	5,545	164,500	14,580	1,615
2014	442,800	210,140	232,660	18,680	20,880	3,050	6,035	167,400	14,910	1,620

*Denotes decennial census years.

Table 6-3. Population Change throughout Clark County (1970-2013)

Area	1970-2005		2005-2007		2007-2013	
	% Change	AAGR	% Change	AAGR	% Change	AAGR
Clark County	204.9%	3.3%	6.7%	3.3%	5.9%	0.8%
Unincorporated	153.7%	2.8%	6.4%	3.2%	4.5%	0.6%
Incorporated	273.2%	3.9%	5.6%	2.8%	8.8%	1.2%
Battle Ground	940.3%	7.1%	8.6%	4.2%	15.0%	2.0%
Camas	167.0%	2.9%	5.3%	2.6%	28.3%	3.6%
La Center	598.3%	5.9%	16.5%	7.9%	25.0%	3.2%
Ridgefield	162.0%	2.9%	39.9%	18.3%	64.0%	7.3%
Vancouver	269.8%	3.9%	3.9%	1.9%	4.1%	0.6%
Washougal	235.0%	3.6%	14.4%	6.9%	14.9%	2.0%
Yacolt	137.7%	2.6%	18.1%	8.7%	18.2%	2.4%

AAGR: average annual growth rate

6.2.2 Land and Shoreline Use

A comparative spatial analysis between the 2007 and 2014 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Maps was conducted for Clark County and its incorporated cities, in order to determine changes in land use designations since the 2007 Comprehensive Plan was adopted. Altogether the region experienced roughly a 9.5% change in land use between 2007 and 2014. Most of these changes can be explained by minor, localized changes, predominantly occurring within the incorporated cities and their UGAs (summarized in Table 6-4). Unincorporated Clark County (areas outside of the UGAs) experienced a roughly 1% change in land use designations between 2007 and 2014. Although corrections of errors in mapping and topology may account for most of this change, the County also annually reviews requests for changes to zoning and land use designations, some of which have been granted.

Table 6-4. Land Use Designation Change by Area

Area	Land Use Designation Changes between 2007 and 2014
Unincorporated Clark County:	Clark County experienced very minor changes to land use designations, with roughly 4,000 acres (a 1% change), some of which could be attributed to mapping discrepancies and annual reviews.
City of Battle Ground:	Battle Ground and its UGA experienced a change in roughly 1,200 acres, (a 9% change) mostly within mixed use designations, with lands changing from industrial, parks/open space, and rural-5 designations, to urban residential, mixed use, and employment center designations.
City of Camas	Camas and its UGA experienced a change in roughly 3,000 acres (a 14% change), mostly from urban residential, single-family and light industrial designations to parks/open space, commercial and industrial designations.
City of La Center	La Center and its UGA experienced a change in roughly 500 acres (a 15% change), most of which is likely attributed to mapping discrepancies from a water designation to urban residential, mixed-use, and industrial. There was likely no real significant reduction to water bodies between 2007 and 2014.
City of Ridgefield	Ridgefield and its UGA experienced a change of roughly 1,000 acres, a 9% change, mostly changes from employment center and office park designations to industrial and light industrial designations.
Vancouver	Vancouver and its UGA experienced a change of roughly 7,500 acres (a 6% change), mostly changes from employment center and general commercial designations to industrial and light industrial designations.
Washougal	Washougal and its UGA experienced a change of roughly 1,100 acres (a 10% change), mostly from Employment Center designation to commercial and Industrial designations.
Town of Yacolt	Yacolt and its UGA experienced a change of roughly 150 acres (an 18% change), mostly from Rural designations to Parks/Open Space and industrial designations.

6.2.3 Mineral Resource Development Practices

State law requires the identification and classification of mineral resource lands from which the extraction of minerals occurs or can be anticipated, and to designate known mineral deposits. Changes in these regulations prompted the County to initiate a study to better implement the surface mining overlay. Changes to both the mapping and County regulations for mineral resource lands were adopted in November 2014.

6.2.4 Floodplain Management

From 2009 to 2012, FEMA undertook a Flood Insurance Study in Clark County to update decades old 100-year floodplain maps and provided other recommendations to reduce flood hazards. The study resulted in changes to the base flood elevations and revisions to the FIRMS. The County’s adoption of the new FIRMS and other requirements allows the County to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program. The Program makes federally-backed flood insurance available for all structures and allows for a 25% discount for property owners to purchase flood insurance.

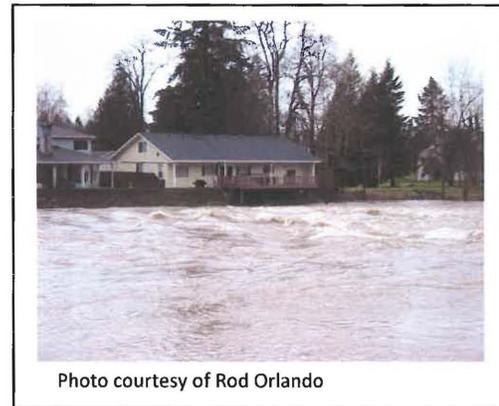


Photo courtesy of Rod Orlando

6.2.5 Shoreline Management

A major update to Clark County’s SMP was approved by the Department of Ecology and took effect on September 12, 2012. The SMP update involved an inventory of all shoreline resources, revisions of goals, policies and regulations, including incorporating critical area protections, and a development of a restoration plan in compliance with amendments to the SMA. The SMP goals and policies have been incorporated into Chapter 13 of the Comprehensive Plan. The regulations incorporated information from the Flood Insurance Study and the Shoreline Designations are now consistent with floodplain maps. The SMPs are now more consistent across all jurisdictions in Clark County, incorporate provisions for public access, provide greater protection of shoreline habitat, and encourage water dependent uses.

6.2.6 Housing Patterns

As the population in Clark County has continued to increase, so has the need for housing. From 2000-2014, Clark County’s estimated total housing units increased from 134,030 to 172,965, amounting to a 29% increase. Vacant units and renter-occupied units were also on the rise, but so too was household income and the ability for individuals to secure adequate housing. In addition to growing populations, the average persons per households also increased to 2.75 with no significant difference between owner and renter occupied housing. Table 6-5 provides information on occupancy by housing type from 1990 to 2013.

Table 6-5. Housing Occupancy by Type, 1990 - 2013

Housing occupancy type	1990	2000	2004	2013	Percent Change 2000-2013
Total housing units	92,849	134,030	148,993	169,730	26.6%
Vacant Units (percent)	4,409(4.7%)	6,822 (5.1%)	3,538 (2.4%)	10,952 (6.5%)	60.5%
Occupied units	88,440	127,208	145,455	158,755 (93.5%)	24.7%
Owner-occupied units	56,872	85,551	98,903	102,020 (64.3%)	19.2%
Renter-occupied units	31,568	41,657	46,552	56,758 (35.7%)	36.2%

According to the U.S census, housing cost exceeding 30% of a resident’s income is considered a problem, or a housing burden. The majority of the occupied units between 2009 and 2013 are paying prices the U.S census categorizes as a moderate burden (between 30% and 49.9%). An indicator of affordability of rental housing is provided in Table 6-6.

Table 6-6. Occupied Housing Units Paying Rent, 2009 - 2013

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Total Occupied Rental Units*	53,254	49,267	54,122	55,668	54,297
Rent as a Percent of Income	Number of Units (%)				
Less than 15%	5,112 (9.6%)	4,927 (10.0%)	4,330 (8.0%)	4,342 (7.8%)	5,375 (9.9%)
15.0 - 19.9%	6,550 (12.3%)	6,355 (12.9%)	6,170 (11.4%)	7,126 (12.8%)	7,059 (13.0%)
20.0 - 24.9%	5,592 (10.5%)	5,863 (11.9%)	7,198 (13.3%)	7,515 (13.5%)	7,276 (13.4%)
25.0 - 29.9%	7,456 (14.0%)	7,390 (15.0%)	8,046 (14.9%)	6,346 (11.4%)	7,819 (14.4%)
30.0 - 34.9%	7,030 (13.2%)	3,941 (8.0%)	5,845 (10.8%)	6,624 (11.9%)	4,887 (9.0%)
35.0% or more	21,515 (40.4%)	20,791 (42.2%)	22,569 (41.7%)	23,770 (42.7%)	21,882 (40.3)

Source: US Census Bureau American Fact Finder, Selected Housing Characteristics

*Excludes units where gross rent and/or household income were not reported.

Publicly-supported housing is available in Clark County through the Vancouver Housing Authority (VHA) and at least 7 other non-profit agencies providing housing or housing assistance. VHA administers subsidized housing units for 7,500 Clark County residents and VHA workforce housing includes properties for 5,000 people. VHA subsidized housing includes owned/managed properties (1,104 units) and Housing Choice Voucher subsidies paid by VHA to private landlords (about 2,300 units). The average household income in VHA subsidized housing is \$14,096. 61% of the households in VHA subsidized housing are elderly people or people with disabilities. VHA owns 4 emergency shelters for youth families. In 2010, the number of people 75 and over living in households experiencing poverty increased 63.9% (1,945 households) over 2000; Female Householder, No Husband Present with related children under 18 years increased by 171% between 2000 and 2010 (8,132 households); and Married-Couple Families with related children under 18 years increased 45% between 2000 and 2010.

6.2.7 Historic and Cultural Resources

In addition to the historic and cultural resource sites that were inventoried in the 2007 analysis, other sites have been added. The following table (Table 6-7) gives the number of known sites within each jurisdiction.

Table 6-7. Existing Historic Resources in Clark County.

Location	Type	Number of Resources
County	Clark County Register	4
	Inventoried, not registered	29
	National Register	0
Battle Ground	Clark County Register	9
	Inventoried, not registered	36
	National Register	2
Camas	Clark County Register	6
	Inventoried, not registered	29
	National Register	2
La Center	Clark County Register	1
	Inventoried, not registered	6
	National Register	0
Ridgefield	Clark County Register	6
	Inventoried, not registered	58
	National Register	5
Vancouver	Clark County Register	39
	Inventoried, not registered	149
	National Register	17
Washougal	Clark County Register	1
	Inventoried, not registered	29
	National Register	0
	Washington Heritage Register	2
Yacolt	Clark County Register	0
	Inventoried, not registered	2
	National Register	0

Source: Clark County Department of Assessment and GIS, 2014.

6.3 Environmental Impacts

6.3.1 What methodology was used to analyze impacts to land and shoreline use resulting from each of the alternatives?

Population, housing, and economic data was collected to understand the future trends and needs for human habitation in Clark County. A spatial comparison was conducted between Clark County existing mapping and that for each alternative, based on land use data provided by the County and using GIS technology. Raw data from each comparison was gathered and analyzed through various tables and charts. Once the changes to land use types and locations from the existing Comprehensive Plan was tallied for each alternative, compliance with all applicable plans and policies was also evaluated to

determine how well each of the alternatives would support population growth, housing availability, and economic growth.

6.3.2 What are the impacts to land and shoreline use from each alternative?

Land and shoreline use controls play an important role in urban development because they dictate the way land is used, conserved, and developed. As part of a large urbanizing region, the County is working towards managing its land use in a way that will facilitate new population growth while maintaining proper environmental conservation. Each alternative was analyzed for its proposed changes to comprehensive plan land use designations, as well as land use zones and their potential impacts to housing, population, and historic and cultural resources throughout the County. A more detailed summary is provided in the table for each of the alternatives below.

Alternative 1 – No Action Alternative

This alternative would maintain the existing 2007 Comprehensive Plan as currently updated (see Figure 1-1a and Figure 1-1b). There would be no change in the UGAs, policies or implementation ordinances. This analysis incorporated the planning assumptions described in Chapter 1, and concludes that there are no impacts not otherwise identified in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan EIS.

The 2007 EIS indicated variability in projected land capacity to accommodate the projected population growth, which at that time was slightly higher than the planning assumptions used in this analysis. Market factor, urban/rural population dispersion, and city projections for redevelopment and densities accounted for this variability which resulted in a deficit of land to accommodate the projected growth or a slight surplus, depending on which factors were adjusted. The projected growth target for 2035 of 577,431 is roughly 2% less than the 584,310 target used in the 2007 analysis, indicating that the use of the existing UGAs together with the urban reserve and urban holding overlays provides an effective strategy to respond to growth declines and pressures that are inevitable over a 20-year horizon.

The majority of unincorporated Clark County has moderate to moderate-high or high probability for containing archaeological resources. Among the 432 historic resources identified in Clark County, only 103 of them lie outside of the UGAs. Confining growth to existing UGAs as required by the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, could increase the pressure to remove urban historic resources, usually structures such as homes, schools, and churches, to make way for higher density and higher intensity development. Identification of mitigation measures for potential impacts would occur at a project-specific level. Alternative 1 is similar to the other Alternatives in that there do not appear to be many opportunities for reducing impacts to these types of resources.

Table 6-8. Summary of Impacts: Alternative 1 - No Action

Element	Impact
Population	No additional impact than identified in the 2007 EIS. Adequate capacity exists to accommodate projected growth.
Land & Shoreline Use	Localized impacts. No additional impact than identified in the 2007 EIS. Most growth accommodated in UGAs.
Housing	No additional impact than identified in the 2007 EIS. Adequate capacity exists to accommodate projected housing demand.
Historic & Cultural	Localized impacts. No additional impact than identified in the 2007 EIS.

Alternative 2 – Countywide Modifications

Alternative 2 proposes Countywide modifications to rural land use designations, as well as some minor local changes to UGAs.

Rural County Area:

The proposed changes to rural County lands would help organize and consolidate the Comprehensive Plan land use designations County-wide.

Rural Lands

The 2016 Comprehensive Plan proposes to consolidate comprehensive plan land use designations, and create a “Rural Lands” designation which will be implemented by R-5, R-10, R-20 zones. It would change some rural zones from R-20 to R-10. The impacts would be minimal since only approximately 20% of the 266 parcels in the R-20 zone are 20 acres or more in size. The change in zoning would have the potential for approximately 139 new 10-acre parcels to be created in the Rural zone.

Resource Lands (see Table 6-9)

- 1) The proposal would create one “Forest” comprehensive plan land use designation (rather than the Tier I and Tier II designations currently in existence), and would be implemented by Forest-80 and Forest-20. This change would also eliminate FR-40 zoning, replacing it with FR-20, reducing the minimum lot area in that zone. The impacts of the change in zoning are minimal since only 10% of the 10,304 parcels are 40 acres or more in size. The change in zoning would have the potential for approximately 414 new 20-acre parcels to be created in the Forest zone.
- 2) The County proposes to reduce the minimum parcel size for agriculture land from twenty (AG-20) to ten acres (AG-10). The impacts of the change in zoning are moderate. Less than 18% of the 2,609 parcels are 20 acres or more in size. The change in zoning would have the potential to create approximately 1,512 new 10-acre lots. This could increase property valuation and diminish the ability of the County to attract larger scale agricultural operations.

Rural Centers

This alternative would change the “Rural Center Mixed Use (RC-MX) Overlay “and “Rural Center Residential” comprehensive plan designations to one “Rural Center” comprehensive plan designation implemented by Rural Center Commercial -1 (RC-1) and Rural Center Commercial-2.5 (RC-2.5) zones, and Rural Center Commercial – Mixed Use (RC-MX) overlay.

Table 6-9. Proposed Rural Center and Rural Commercial Designations

Current Comprehensive Plan	Current Zoning	Proposed Comprehensive Plan	Proposed Zoning	Impact
Rural Center Mixed Use (RC-MX) Overlay		Rural Center (RC)	Rural Center Mixed Use (RC-MX) Overlay	No impact, this is a change in name only for the Comprehensive Plan.
Rural Center Residential	RC-1 RC-2.5		RC-1 RC-2.5	No impact, this is a change in name only for the Comprehensive Plan.
Rural Commercial (CR)	CR-1	Rural Commercial (CR)	CR-1	No impact, this is a change in name only for the Comprehensive Plan.
Rural Center Commercial (RC)	CR-2		CR-2	No impact, this is a change in name only for the Comprehensive Plan.

Urban Reserve

These lands are on the fringe of the UGAs. This designation is intended to protect areas from premature land division and development that would preclude efficient transition to urban development. Currently there are Urban Reserve and Industrial Reserve overlay comprehensive plan designations. They are currently implemented with the Urban Reserve 10 zoning overlay and Industrial Urban Reserve-20 zoning overlay. This alternative would designate one comprehensive plan overlay: Urban Reserve (UR) that would be implemented by a UR-10 zoning overlay for future urban residential development and UR-20 for all other types of future urban land development. This proposed designation change would not change the intent or implementation of the protection. Table 6-10 summarizes the proposed changes. There are approximately 577 acres of proposed Rural and Agricultural zoning under the Urban Reserve overlay.

Table 6-10. Proposed Urban Reserve Overlay

Current Comp plan map	Current Zoning map	Proposed Comp plan map	Proposed Zoning map	Impact
Urban reserve	Urban reserve-10 (UR-10)	Urban reserve overlay	Urban reserve-10 overlay (UR-10)	No impact. This is a change in name only for comp plan
Urban reserve overlay	Urban reserve-10 overlay (UR-10)		Urban reserve-20 overlay (UR-20)	No impact. This is a change in name only for comp plan
Industrial urban reserve overlay	Industrial urban reserve-20 overlay		Urban reserve-20 overlay (UR-20)	No impact. This is a change in name only for comp plan
Railroad industrial urban reserve overlay	Railroad industrial urban reserve overlay		Urban reserve-20 overlay (UR-20)	No impact. This is a change in name only for comp plan

Urban Growth Areas:

Commercial Comprehensive Plan Designation

These changes are proposed to consolidate multiple urban commercial comprehensive plan designations (Neighborhood, Community and General) into one Commercial (C) designation for approximately 2,900 acres scattered throughout the county. Table 6-11 summarizes the proposed changes. This action would not result in any new impacts since this is a change in name only and the underlying zoning would remain the same.

Table 6-11. Proposed Commercial Designations

Current Comprehensive Plan	Current Zoning	Proposed Comprehensive Plan	Proposed Zoning	Impact
General Commercial (GC)	General Commercial (GC)	Commercial	General Commercial(GC)	No impact, this is a change in name only for the Comprehensive Plan.
Community Commercial (CC)	Community Commercial (C-3)		Community Commercial(C-3)	No impact, this is a change in name only for the Comprehensive Plan.
Neighborhood Commercial (NC)	Neighborhood Commercial (C-2)		Neighborhood Commercial(C-2)	No impact, this is a change in name only for the Comprehensive Plan.

Public Facility (PF)

The County proposes to create new Public Facility comprehensive plan and zoning designations which would include existing schools, utilities and government buildings and facilities. Table 6-12 indicates how the proposed changes would be implemented. This action would not result in any new impacts since this is a change in name only and the land uses regulated by the underlying zoning would not be affected.

Table 6-12. Proposed Public Facility Designations

Current Comprehensive Plan	Current Zoning	Proposed Comprehensive Plan	Proposed Zoning	Impact
Public Facility	All zones	Public Facility	Public Facility (PF)	No impact, this is a change in name only for the Comprehensive Plan.
			Airport (A)	No impact, this is a change in name only for the Comprehensive Plan.
			University (U)	No impact, this is a change in name only for the Comprehensive Plan.
Parks/Open Space	Parks/Open Space (P/OS)	Parks/Open Space	Parks/Open Space (P/OS)	No impact, this is a change in name only for the Comprehensive Plan.
	Parks/Wildlife refuge (P/WL)		Parks/Wildlife refuge (P/WL)	No impact, this is a change in name only for the Comprehensive Plan.

Urban Holding

When development policies require a legislative action prior to urban development occurring, the County applies the Urban Holding Overlay. In these cases, identified criteria are established that must be met in order to remove the urban holding zoning and allow the underlying urban zone to be applied. There are currently three Urban Holding zoning overlays: Urban Holding -10, Urban Holding-20, and Urban Holding-40, and no comprehensive plan Urban Holding overlay. For the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update, the County proposes to create an Urban Holding (UH) overlay comprehensive plan designation which would be implemented with a zoning overlay of Urban Holding -10 (UH-10) for residential and Urban Holding-20 (UH-20) for all other uses. Table 6-13 indicates how the proposed new comprehensive plan designation would be implemented and indicates the potential impacts from implementing this change.

Table 6-13. Proposed Urban Holding Overlay

Current Comprehensive Plan	Current Zoning	Proposed Comprehensive Plan	Proposed Zoning	Impact
None	Urban holding-10 overlay (UH-10)	Urban holding overlay (UH)	Urban holding-10 overlay (UH-10)	No impact. This is a change in name only for comp plan
None	Urban holding-20 overlay (UH-20)		Urban holding-20 overlay (UH-20)	No impact. This is a change in name only for comp plan
None	Urban Holding-40		Urban holding-20 overlay (UH-20)	Incremental impact with potential for increased density.

Battle Ground UGA Modifications

Battle Ground has a number of parcels (totaling less than 60 acres) with an Industrial (I) comprehensive plan designation and UH-40 and Business Park (BP) zoning that are currently in urban low residential use, including Whispering Meadows I and II, Camellia, and Windsong Acres. One parcel is vacant yet surrounded on four sides with urban low residential use. This action would change this area to urban low density residential, R1-20, UH-10 overlay. Table 6-14 summarizes how the current zoning would change under the proposal. No impacts are anticipated. This change would make the land use and zoning designations consistent with how properties are being used and reduce the potential for an incompatible land use to locate in the middle of residential use in the future.

Table 6-14. Battle Ground UGA Urban Holding Zoning

Current Zoning	Proposed Zoning	Impact
R1-15	R1-10, UH 10	No impact
R1-10	R1-10, UH 10	No impact
R1-7.5	R1-7.5, UH 10	No impact
R1-5	R1-5, UH 10	No Impact
R-16	R-18, UH 10	No impact
R-22	R-18, UH 10	No impact

Ridgefield UGA Modifications

This is a five-parcel expansion (approximately 155 acres) of Ridgefield’s UGA, which includes the Tri-Mountain Golf Course. It would add an Urban Holding (UH-20) Overlay and Public Facilities zoning. The proposal could have site specific impacts when urban holding is lifted, which would allow development for industrial or office use. Impacts are localized and would be mitigated during project review. This action would enhance the City’s recreational opportunities and have no adverse impacts to land use.

Vancouver UGA Modifications

1) Special Planning Areas

Three Creeks Special Planning Area

This planning area was created during the adoption of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan. The intent was to conduct further detailed planning efforts in the in the unincorporated urban areas around Hazel Dell, Felida, Lake Shore, Salmon Creek and the County Fairgrounds. The subarea planning effort is nearly complete and removal of the overlay is appropriate. Four subarea planning efforts were initiated: Highway 99, Pleasant Highlands, Discovery/Fairgrounds and Salmon Creek/University District. The Highway 99 Subarea Plan was adopted in 2008 (Clark County, 2008). The Pleasant Highlands Subarea Plan was initiated in 2012 and the effort continues.

Recommendations from the remaining two subareas are a part of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan update and EIS and are discussed in more detail below.

Discovery/Fairgrounds Subarea Plan

This subarea is generally bounded by NE 209th Street on the north; NE 29th Avenue on the east, NE 164th Street on the south, and NW 11th Avenue on the west. In the 2007 Comprehensive Plan the area was approved for zoning at urban densities with a considerable amount of land designated for Light Industrial (ML) uses. The subarea planning effort recognized the environmental constraints in the area and recommends changing most of the ML zoning to Office Campus or Business Park uses, an area of approximately 1,100 acres. The zoning designations allow for more environmentally compatible site design while allowing for more jobs per acre. (Clark County November 20, 2012 staff report to BoCC, <http://www.clark.wa.gov/planning/discovery/docs.html>).

Salmon Creek/University District Subarea Plan

This subarea is generally bounded by NE 190th Street alignment on the north, approximately NE 58th Avenue on the east, Salmon Creek and Interstate 205 on the south; and Interstate 5 on the west. An area of approximately 465 acres which is currently designated as urban low density residential would be re-zoned to accommodate mixed-uses and higher density residential uses. Moderate impacts to adjacent land uses can be expected which would be mitigated on a project by project basis. The change is consistent with Washington State University (WSU) and City of Vancouver vision for future development and promotion of jobs and housing.

2) Vancouver UGA Mixed Use

Land use designation of Mixed Use in approximately 115 acres of the northern part of the Vancouver UGA are proposed to be replaced with the corresponding County Urban Low, Medium, and High designations to better reflect existing development and zoning. The underlying zoning will remain the same, so no impacts are anticipated.

3) Vancouver UGA Urban Reserve

Urban Reserve Overlay designations in two areas in the north Salmon Creek Vancouver UGA are proposed to be removed and Rural (R) designation applied: 1) remove the Urban Reserve (UR-10) zoning designation along NE 50th between 199th and NE 179th and replace it with Rural (R-5); and 2) remove the Urban Reserve overlay on a parcel along NE 50th Avenue south of 199th and

retain the Agricultural zoning. No impacts are anticipated since the underlying zoning would remain.

4) Vancouver UGA Urban Holding

The Urban Holding (UH) designation (577 acres) within two areas of the Vancouver UGA collectively known as Fisher Swale is proposed to be removed. No impacts are anticipated since the underlying Single Family zoning of R1-20, R-10, and R1-7.5 would remain.

Washougal UGA Modifications

This change is to correct an inconsistency between County and City zoning classifications within the northern portion of the Washougal UGA. No new impacts are anticipated. The proposal would replace City zoning of AR-16 (approximately 14 acres) and apply County zoning of R-18; replace R1-15 zoning (approximately 131 acres) with R1-10 zoning; and replace approximately 37 acres of Heavy Industrial zoning to Steigerwald and Port property to Parks and Open Space and apply Urban Holding (UH-20). Using Comprehensive Plan Table 14.1 City Zone to County Zone Consistency Chart, apply county zoning and urban holding-10 overlay.

The projected growth target for 2035 of 128,616 new residents would be accommodated within the existing UGAs and the areas with urban reserve and urban holding overlays. Using the planning assumptions listed in Chapter 1, 12,862 of those new residents would live in rural areas. Alternative 2 would add the potential for an additional 8,220 dwelling units in the unincorporated, non-UGA areas (one for every potential new lot created), or 21,865 new residents, which would easily accommodate the projected population growth for rural Clark County. Table 6-15 summarizes the general impacts to land and shoreline use associated with Alternative 2.

Table 6-15. Summary of Impacts: Alternative 2 Countywide Modifications

Element	Impact
Population	No impact. Adequate capacity exists to accommodate projected population growth.
Land & Shoreline Use	Minor to moderate impact on land and shoreline use because of the potential for conversion of resource uses to increasing rural residential densities.
Housing	The proposed rural lands upzoning could have a minor impact on housing. By reducing the minimum lot sizes, there is potential for an additional 8,220 new lots which could allow for new housing to be constructed.
Historic & Cultural	The proposed rural lands upzoning could have impacts on historic and cultural resources by allowing more intense development in some areas, thus increasing the potential for encountering artifacts and/or historic structures.

Alternative 3 – City UGA Expansion

This alternative assumes the same land and shoreline uses as indicated in the No Action Alternative, except that the UGAs of the Cities of Battle Ground, La Center, Ridgefield and Washougal would be expanded.

Battle Ground UGA Expansion

Alternative 3 would add 82 acres to the UGA along the existing east boundary as Mixed Use with an Urban Holding Overlay area near Dollars Corner, at the intersection of NE 219th Street and NE 92nd Ave.

This would change the existing rural zoning and allow for both commercial and residential development. The existing location and adjacent areas are mostly undeveloped land, with some residential properties scattered throughout. These Rural and Agricultural lands could experience a moderate impact through the UGA expansion, due to more dense urban development. This expansion would occur incrementally over time, which would keep the impact at moderate levels.

La Center UGA Expansion

Alternative 3 proposes to add 61 acres (56 parcel acres + 5 acres of ROW) to the UGA north of the existing La Center City UGA. The general impacts to land and shoreline use of Alternative 3 are summarized in Table 6-16. The purpose of the proposed UGA expansion is to accommodate the opportunity for additional businesses near Interstate 5. The Comprehensive Plan designation would be Commercial with an Urban Holding overlay. This facet of Alternative 3 would also add 17 acres to La Center's UGA on the northern city boundary to accommodate a new elementary school site. The Comprehensive Plan designation for the area is currently R-5 and would be changed to Public Facility. The existing agricultural land use would eventually be converted to commercial uses. This expansion would likely occur incrementally over time, which would keep the impact at moderate levels.

Ridgefield UGA Expansion

There are 111 Acres on the north side of the City of Ridgefield proposed for addition, near I-5 that would be converted from agricultural to residential uses. The current designation of Agriculture would be changed to a mix of low-, medium-, and mixed-use residential Comprehensive Plan designations, all with an Urban Holding overlay. As in the La Center UGA Expansion area, the existing agricultural land uses would likely be incrementally converted to commercial uses, which would keep the impact at moderate levels.

Washougal UGA Expansion

This feature of Alternative 3 would add approximately 41 acres to the City of Washougal UGA for residential development. The site is located on the northern edge of the existing UGA. The proposed addition currently has a Comprehensive Plan designation of R-5, and would be changed to Urban Low. This residential development would likely occur incrementally over time, which would keep the impact at low levels.

Table 6-16. Summary of Impacts: Alternative 3 City UGA Expansion

Element	Impact
Population	The proposed UGA expansions would have no impact. Adequate capacity exists to accommodate projected population growth.
Land & Shoreline Use	The proposed UGA expansions would have localized impacts to overall land and shoreline use given the minimal 312 acres of proposed change.
Housing	The proposed UGA expansions would have minor impacts to housing given the minimal 312 acres of proposed change.
Historic & Cultural	The proposed UGA expansions could intensify development in and near UGAs, increasing the potential for impact to cultural resources and/or historic structures. Impacts addressed on a project level.

Alternative 4 – Rural, Agriculture, and Forest Changes

As with Alternative 2, Alternative 4 incorporates changes in policy direction and land use/zoning. This alternative is proposed to essentially retrofit new zoning to the actual predominant lot sizes, while encouraging clustering options to preserve resource lands, open space, and non-residential agriculture uses and provide additional economic opportunities in the rural areas. The difference between this alternative and Alternative 2 is that an even higher density of development would be allowed outside of the UGAs in the county. This alternative would likely generate significant impacts to transportation (see also Chapter 7 of this SEIS) and public services (see also Chapter 8 of this SEIS). Under full build-out conditions, Alternative 4 could result in the creation of approximately 12,400 new lots, potentially impacting over 65,500 acres.

Rural Lands

Similar to Alternative 2, Alternative 4 would consolidate comprehensive plan land use designations, and create a “Rural Lands” designation; however, under this alternative the new designation would be implemented by R-1, R-2.5, and R-5 zones. It would reduce the minimum size requirements that apply to most rural residential lots, allowing increased density of residential development in rural areas, where adequate public facilities and services may not exist or be reasonably available. Approximately 9,880 new parcels could potentially be created with this proposed zoning change.

Resource Lands

Forest Resources

This alternative would change the existing Forest Tier I and Forest Tier II comprehensive land use designations to FR-10, FR-20, FR-40 and FR-80, which would be exactly mirrored by new zoning designations. This feature of the alternative would reduce the minimum lot area in some forest zones even further than Alternative 2. Approximately 563 new parcels could be created at full build-out with this zoning change.

Agricultural Resources

This alternative would change areas zoned AG- 20 to AG-10 and AG-5, reducing the minimum lot area in that zone. Approximately 1,958 new parcels could be created at full build-out with this zoning change.

The projected growth target for 2035 of 128,616 new residents would be accommodated with the use of the existing UGAs together with the urban reserve and urban holding overlays. Using the planning assumptions listed in Chapter 1, 12,862 of those new residents would live in rural areas. Alternative 4 would add the potential for an additional 12,401 dwelling units in the unincorporated, non-UGA areas, which would include capacity for approximately 32,987 new residents. The result could be that a greater percentage of the expected population growth would locate in rural areas instead of urban areas. Table 6-17 summarizes the general impacts to land and shoreline use associated with Alternative 4.

Table 6-17. Summary of Impacts: Alternative 4 Countywide Modifications

Element	Impact
Population	Minor to moderate impact. Adequate capacity exists to accommodate projected population growth.
Land & Shoreline Use	Minor to moderate impact on land and shoreline use because of the potential for conversion of resource uses to increasing rural residential densities.
Housing	The proposed rural lands upzoning could have a minor to moderate impact on housing. By reducing the minimum lot sizes, there is potential for an additional 9,305 new lots which could allow for new housing to be constructed. This would represent a housing surplus in the rural county areas.
Historic & Cultural	The proposed rural lands upzoning could have impacts on historic and cultural resources by allowing more intense development in some areas, thus increasing the potential for encountering artifacts and/or historic structures.

6.3.3 How do the potential impacts between the alternatives compare?

A comparison of general impacts is provided in Table 6-18. Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 would have minor, or minor to moderate impacts on land and shoreline use in Clark County. Since Alternative 1 does not propose any changes to the existing land use designations, there would be no impacts beyond what was analyzed in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan EIS. Alternative 2 proposes some land use changes to rural, agricultural, and forest lands, and which could result in approximately 8,220 additional new parcels with the potential to convert resource uses to rural residential. Some additional changes to UGA boundaries are proposed in Alternative 2. These would not result in any impacts to land use however, because the proposed changes are meant to match the actual existing land uses. Alternative 3 proposes two new urban areas in Battle Ground and La Center, but these expansions would have very minor impacts to land use given the small sizes of the proposed changes. Alternative 4 could potentially have significant adverse land use impacts within Clark County by allowing substantial residential uses, up to 12,400 new parcels, proposed outside of UGAs.

Table 6-18. Impact Summary Table

	Alternative 1 No Action	Alternative 2 Countywide Modifications	Alternative 3 City UGA Expansion	Alternative 4 Rural, Agriculture, and Forest Changes
Population	No impact. Proposed land use designations would adequately accommodate projected population growth.	No impact. Proposed land use designations would adequately accommodate projected population growth.	No impact. Proposed land use designations would adequately accommodate projected population growth.	No impact. Proposed land use designations would adequately accommodate projected population growth.
Land & Shoreline Use	Localized impacts. Most growth accommodated in and near existing UGAs. No additional impact beyond that identified in the 2007 EIS.	Minor to moderate impact on land use because of the potential for conversion of resource uses to increasing rural residential densities. Higher rural densities could also put more pressure on shorelines within the area for non-water dependent uses.	No impact. Small acreage of commercial and mixed use development is appropriate adjacent to existing UGAs.	Moderate impact on land use because of the potential for conversion of resource uses to increasing rural residential densities. Higher rural densities could also put more pressure on shorelines within the area for non-water dependent uses.
Housing	No impact. Adequate capacity exists to accommodate projected housing demand.	Has the potential to add 8,220 units to the housing stock in the rural area. More than is needed for population target.	Proposed mixed use has the potential to increase housing stock near UGAs.	Has the potential to add 12,400 units to the housing stock in the rural area creating a housing surplus based on the 2035 population target.
Historic & Cultural	Impacts addressed on a project level.	Impacts addressed on a project level.	Impacts addressed on a project level.	Impacts addressed on a project level.

6.3.4 Are there adverse impacts that cannot be avoided?

Significant adverse land use and shoreline impacts are avoided with Alternatives 1, 2, and 3, which are moderate strategies to accommodate growth over the next 20 years. The UGAs established in 2007 have adequate capacity, ensure flexibility to address changing circumstances, and provide the blueprint for investment of measured approaches to building infrastructure necessary to accommodate growth opportunities. According to the persons-per-household and estimated total housing of 172,965, the amount of available housing is sufficient to support the population of Clark County, however because the majority of the occupied units between 2009 and 2013 were paying prices the U.S census categorizes as a moderate burden (between 30% and 49.9% of income) a focus on providing affordable housing would ensure the growing population does not suffer an unreasonable housing burden.

The land use patterns proposed with Alternative 4, and to a lesser extent Alternative 2, would not support state regulations enacted to control sprawl in Washington State. Residential development in

rural areas usually leads indirectly to development of commercial facilities to serve the residential development. New residential development that could occur with build-out following this land use pattern would also lead to the need for new or improved roads and new facilities to provide essential public services (water, sewer, electricity, etc). Development of rural areas for low-density development also generally leads to greater vegetation and habitat loss with fewer opportunities to preserve wildlife habitat, as well as impingement on land available and used for agriculture or forestry.

6.4 Mitigation

No additional mitigation would be necessary for Alternatives 1, 2 or 3 since there would be no probable significant adverse environmental impacts associated with those alternatives. The indirect impacts to transportation and public services could be mitigated placing an Urban Holding overlay on newly upzoned areas so that adequate public infrastructure may be assured prior to development approval. Additional mitigation will be needed for Alt 4 in terms of a regional overview of possible impacts to land use related to shoreline development, wildlife habitat, and species recovery efforts.

6.4.1 Are there mitigation measures beyond regulations that reduce the potential for impacts?

Project specific mitigation measures would be imposed through SEPA/NEPA review that would reduce the potential for impacts.

Provisions for clustering under Alternatives 2 and 4 could help minimize the impacts from development pressure on natural and historic resources and incompatible land uses. Zoning code changes to allow lower minimum lot sizes under either Alternatives 2 or 4 could include requirements for cluster development when considering applications for subdivision. Siting clustered development can be done to minimize impacts to shorelines, floodplains, critical areas, and other resources. This mitigation measure could help reduce the effects of increased development on land and shoreline uses.