

Rural and Resource Lands Chapter

Rural Character in Kitsap County

Kitsap county's rural area consists of a unique and sensitive balance of differing land features, landscape types and land uses. Rural land uses consist of both dispersed and clustered residential settlements, farms, and small-scale commercial uses that serve rural residents as their primary client. Rural landscapes encompass the full range of natural features, including forested expanses, rolling meadows, ridge lines and valley walls, distant vistas, streams and lakes, shorelines and other sensitive areas.

The rural area is, however, more than just a description of physical characteristics. For the residents of Kitsap County, the term rural also defines a philosophy of living and a quality of life. This quality of life includes a sense of quiet, community and a slower pace of life.

It is this multi-faceted physical character and lifestyle that County residents wish to maintain and enhance through the Comprehensive Plan.

This Rural and Resource Lands Chapter is divided into the following sections:

Introduction

The Introduction describes the intent of the Rural and Resource Lands Chapter.

The Planning Context section discusses the requirements of the Washington Growth Management Act

The Existing Characteristics and Issues section provides a description of rural lands within the context of Kitsap County and summarizes prior rural planning efforts.

The Goals & Policies provide direction in the following areas:

Rural Lands Goals set the framework for how future growth in Kitsap County's rural area will be guided by the Comprehensive Plan;

Rural Area Designations establishes the criteria for designation of rural lands;

Rural Public Services and Facilities describes the appropriate levels of service for rural areas;

Rural Residential Lands provides direction for rural residential development patterns;

Rural Communities and Villages describes potential areas that may be appropriate for more intensive development and lays out a ~~framework and policy direction~~ for planning in those areas; and

Resource Lands provides resource designations and policy direction for resource use in the rural area.

The intent of the Rural Lands Chapter is to preserve and enhance the rural character of Kitsap County. This chapter designates areas in Kitsap County as appropriate for rural and resource activities, both residential and non-residential, over the long term. The Comprehensive Plan is intended to preserve and protect rural character by reducing the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped rural land to more intensive uses.

Of the many reasons which motivate people to live in Kitsap, an attractive rural environment is one of the most frequently cited. Rural characteristics -- including the abundance of trees, perception of low-density development patterns, access to recreation, views of water and mountains, and a quiet, unregimented atmosphere -- all have a strong appeal to new and old residents alike. Because these characteristics can change or diminish as population grows, the challenge for the Comprehensive Plan is to preserve the function, appearance, and lifestyle of the rural area in the face of continued population growth in the County.

The Rural and Resource Lands chapter contains descriptions of rural land uses as well as goals and policies to carry out the chapter's purpose. The provisions of this chapter are distinct from those for Urban Growth Areas. It is the intent of the plan that development be planned, directed and monitored to ensure that the type and amount of growth is consistent with the Kitsap County-wide Planning Policies and with this Comprehensive Plan.

The goals and policies of other chapters, such as Land Use, will further aid the County in the preservation and enhancement of Rural and Resource Lands.

Planning Context

The Growth Management Act provides that "Counties shall include a rural element including lands that are not designated for urban growth, agriculture, forest or mineral resources. The rural element shall permit appropriate land uses that are compatible with the rural character of such lands and provide for a variety of rural densities and uses and may also provide for clustering, density transfer, design guidelines, conservation easements and other innovative techniques that will accommodate appropriate rural uses not characterized by urban growth" (RCW 36.70A.110(5)).

Decisions by the Central Puget Sound Growth Management Hearings Board (Board) are another source for policy direction in the rural area. The primary direction from the Board which guided composition of the 1998 Plan is summarized below:

An overall pattern of urban growth is prohibited in the rural area and on resource lands. "Pattern" in the context of residential development means the number, location and configuration of lots.

A residential land use pattern of 1 and 2.5 acre lots is an urban land use pattern. The intensity of physical improvements on rural land can, alone, determine whether a proposal crosses the line between permissible rural growth and impermissible urban growth.

While counties have the authority to allow pre-existing urban intensity uses to continue in the rural area, the expansion or enlargement of such uses is prohibited.

The citizens of Kitsap County also wish to maintain the rural character that makes the county unique. By identifying the features that contribute to the important rural qualities in the county, these features can be preserved and protected for future generations. This chapter of the Plan is intended to achieve the goals of the Growth Management Act and further the desires of the County residents.

Existing Characteristics and Issues

Rural areas of Kitsap County typically have a variety of land uses. These include residential (both stick-built and manufactured), home-based businesses, commercial activities serving the daily needs of rural residents, industrial activities and resource-based activities such as forestry, agriculture and mineral extraction. Commercial and industrial areas are scattered throughout the county and contain a variety of uses.

A variety of parcel sizes occurs in Kitsap County's rural areas. These reflect historical land use practices, and range from small, urban-sized lots in existing communities (i.e. 2,250 square foot lots in Driftwood Keys and Indianola) to several square miles (sections) of undivided land in forested areas (as in the Holly area). Within this range are lots and parcels of every imaginable size and shape. Subdivisions have occurred in both a planned and unplanned fashion over the years. Some developments have

occurred through a planned unit development (PUD) process that allowed up to one dwelling unit per acre in an organized, planned and clustered fashion. Other divisions occurred through a large-lot platting process with very little County review. Still others occurred through the short-subdivision process with slightly more County involvement. This has resulted in a rural platting pattern that is hard to serve with utilities and public services, and creates problems for future planning. Distinctions between urban and rural development are blurred; both types are scattered and intermixed across the County's landscape.

The level of public services in rural areas is lower than one would find in urbanized areas. Rural areas generally are less accessible, with narrow two-lane roads. Fire flow is limited or nonexistent, septic systems and private wells prevail, and emergency response times are longer than in more urban areas.

Protection and preservation of "rural character" is a significant issue. This character is very difficult to define since each person has his or her own perception as to what it is. Recent efforts in local community planning and design studies have attempted to address this issue and are listed as follows:

- 1990 County-Wide Growth Management Act Symposium "The Next 100,000"
- Rural Policy Roundtable (1993)
- Hansville Community Plan (1993)
- Suquamish Community Plan (1993)
- South Kitsap Rural Design Study (1993)
- Kingston Community Plan (Spring 1993)
- Voices of Kitsap (January 1996)
- The County Greenways Plan (June 1996)

RURAL AND RESOURCE LANDS

These planning efforts are described in Appendix 10 to this Comprehensive Plan. These efforts vary in their geographic focus and emphasis. Some have been partially implemented, while others remain as goals for future consideration. Taken together, however, they have resulted in a fairly complete list of the key characteristics of the rural area, which includes the following:

- # Two-lane roads with gravel shoulders;
- # Driveways disappearing into the forest with no house visible;
- # Trees as a backdrop to open fields and meadows;
- # Mountain or water vistas;
- # Agricultural lands, including rolling pastures and meadows;
- # Farm buildings, including original farmhouses;
- # Clusters of housing at the water's edge;
- # Sense of community;
- # Quietness;
- # Stream corridors, wetlands and floodplains; and
- # Forested areas.

Recognizing these characteristics, it is possible to develop a general idea of what the citizens of Kitsap County perceive "rural" to be and to manage growth in a way that continues and enhances these features. Consistent with those perceptions, it is the overall intent of this plan to:

- # Preserve and enhance the rural character of Kitsap County;
- # Allow and encourage continued resource-based activities within the rural areas;
- # Develop zoning and other development regulations consistent with implementation of this plan.

- # Consider design criteria which will guide development in the rural areas, including provisions for housing design and buffers along rural roads.
- # Protect, enhance and comprehensively map critical areas and natural environmental systems;
- # Address the provision of adequate and appropriate infrastructure in the rural area through capital facilities programs;
- # Ensure that all new development conforms to all provisions of the Uniform Fire Code as adopted by Kitsap County including those provisions pertaining to access and minimum fire flow requirements;
- # Provide adequate and safe transportation systems within rural areas, pursuant to appropriate road standards, which preserve and enhance rural character;
- # Require that all new rural development conforms to the Coordinated Water System Plan of Kitsap County; and
- # Adopt adequate and appropriate levels of service standards for public services including public water service, and fire and police protection in the rural areas.

This Plan recognizes that, because of historical land use practices, the rural area currently contains greater development capacity than required to accommodate planned rural growth over the next twenty years. This Plan does not intend to create significant additional capacity in the rural area overall. While the Plan recognizes past development patterns, it does not perpetuate urban growth in the rural area. Lifestyle and housing options will need to be reconciled over time with the need to clearly define and manage rural growth.

Goals and Policies

Goals and policies contained in this section address issues related to appropriate development and environmental protection within rural areas in order to preserve and enhance the county's rural atmosphere.

Goals

1. To retain the rural character of the county outside of designated urban areas.
2. To establish development standards which help preserve the county's rural character.
3. To provide a variety of densities in the rural areas to make more efficient use of land, maximize the return on public infrastructure investment, and provide for affordable housing opportunities.
4. To encourage the clustering of residential uses in certain rural and resource areas.
5. To maintain appropriate levels of service for public services and facilities in rural areas.
6. To protect natural resource lands from incompatible adjacent uses.
7. To preserve and enhance natural resource-based activities, such as agricultural, forestry, mineral extraction and aquaculture (as addressed and defined in the Kitsap County Shoreline Management Plan) in the rural areas.
8. To minimize the conflict between forestry and residential land uses.

9. To retain land suitable for timber production and encourage the continued practice of forestry within the county.
10. To identify and evaluate incentives for landowners to conserve shorelines and resource lands and to continue resource-based activities.
11. To ensure proper installation, use and maintenance of septic systems.

Policies

Rural Area Designations

RL-1 The rural area designations shown on the Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map include areas that meet one or more of the following criteria:

- # **Areas not designated for urban growth or as natural resource lands, where a possibility exists for less intensive agriculture, forestry and mineral resource management and utilization;**
- # **Areas not needed for the next 20 years to provide land for population or employment growth;**
- # **Areas which serve as a buffer between resource activities and conflicting land uses;**
- # **Areas where the open-space character of the land is to be protected for scenic qualities, recreational activities and environmental functions;**
- # **Areas in which significant environmental constraints make the area generally unsuitable for intensive urban development;**
- # **Areas where existing and future uses do not typically require urban-level services and facilities and services are not readily available;**

Areas where a rural area designation will help foster more logical boundaries for urban public services and infrastructure.

RL-2 Land use designations in the rural area include the following:

Urban Reserve: The Urban Reserve designation is used on the Comprehensive Plan Map to indicate areas that are potentially suitable for inclusion in the Urban Growth Area. Urban Reserve areas are intended to recognize:

- a. designated Urban Joint Planning Areas, to reflect areas proposed by the Cities for designation as an Urban Growth Area and which are subject to a joint planning process;
- b. designated Urban Study Areas, which are intended to resolve issues regarding potential land uses; and
- c. lands contiguous or adjacent to designated Urban Growth Areas which are deemed necessary to hold in reserve for potential future inclusion within an Urban Growth Area in response to future needs as reflected in revised or updated population or employment forecasts or allocations.

These areas are given an interim low density designation of 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres as a means of preventing establishment of land uses or land use patterns that could foreclose planning options and eventual development or redevelopment at higher urban densities. Designated Urban Reserve lands that are determined to not be needed or appropriate for urban development pursuant to a defined planning process will be re-designated as Rural through the Comprehensive Plan amendment process.

Rural Residential. This designation is intended to promote low-density residential development consistent with rural character. This designation is applied to areas that are relatively unconstrained by environmentally

sensitive areas or other significant landscape features, and also recognizes areas that are already committed to a pattern of smaller rural lots. The maximum residential density in the Rural Residential designation shall be one dwelling unit per five acres.

Rural Protection. The objective of this designation is to promote low-density development in keeping with rural character and to protect significant environmental features. Environmental features may include significant visual, historic, natural features, wildlife corridors, steep slopes, wetlands, streams and adjacent critical areas. A residential density of one dwelling unit per 10 acres is appropriate for this designation.

Forest Resource Lands. These lands meet the criteria for designation of forest resource lands of long-term commercial significance. The forest resource lands criteria is discussed in detail in Resource Lands Inventory section of the Land Use Appendix. The primary use for these lands is commercial timber production. A residential density of 1 dwelling unit per 40 acres is allowed in this designation as long as it does not interfere with timber management and harvesting activities.

Interim Rural Forest. This designation is applied to larger parcels of land in contiguous blocks that are forested in character, that have been actively managed for forestry and harvested, or that are currently taxed as timber lands pursuant to state and county programs. These lands have been considered for designation as long-term commercial forestry and are subject to ongoing litigation regarding their status. Lands not meeting the criteria for Forest Resource lands designation will remain in the Interim Rural Forest designation until completion of Phase II of the forestry review process. This designation permits timber harvesting and management, along with resource-supporting commercial or industrial activities, and residential uses at a density of 1 dwelling unit per 20 acres.

Date: First Annual review of amendments for the County Comprehensive Plan.

Existing areas characterized by more intensive development – defined in this chapter as *Rural Communities, Rural Villages* and *Commercial/Industrial Areas* – may be designated in the future according to the provisions of the Plan. Future designations must consider the mandate to preserve rural character, ensure compatibility with adjacent land uses, and the requirement to effectively limit and contain such areas.

RL-3 Kitsap County will use the land monitoring and evaluation program established to help implement the Comprehensive Plan to track the type, location, amount and rate of growth in the rural area. Growth will be evaluated to ensure that it is consistent with Plan assumptions and policies. Based on the findings of this monitoring, the County will consider the need to further evaluate or limit the amount or rate of growth in the rural area or to modify its development regulations to ensure that rural character is maintained and that urban growth does not occur in the rural area.

Implementation Strategies and Programs

1. Interim Rural Forest. The County has initiated a two phased process to review forestry issues. Phase I of the forestry review process focused on criteria for designation of forest resource lands as defined under the Growth Management Act. The County will undertake a second phase of the forestry review process, which will assess those lands designated as interim Rural Forest that do not meet the criteria for designation as Forest Resource Lands. Issues to be addressed during Phase II of the forestry review may include appropriate uses, residential density, incentive programs to encourage continued timber production, habitat protect, and retention of existing rural character. *Target*

2. Rural Capacity and Lot Aggregation.

- (a) The County’s land monitoring and evaluation program, developed pursuant to this plan, will track and report on the amount and rate of growth occurring in the designated rural area annually. The County will identify any trends that are inconsistent with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.
- (b) Kitsap County recognizes the substantial number of existing lots located in the designated rural area as a result of past practices. Existing capacity is significantly greater than the rural target population allocation for the twenty-year planning period. The County will research and evaluate possible incentives that could be used to encourage the aggregation of existing small lots in the rural area. The County will review this information in the context of actions that may be considered pursuant to RL-3.

Rural Public Services and Facilities

RL-4 Kitsap County, cities adjacent to the rural area and other agencies providing services to the rural area should adopt standards for facilities and services in the rural area that protect basic public health and safety and the environment, but are financially supportable at rural densities and do not encourage urban development.

RL-5 Public spending priorities for facilities and services within the rural area should be as follows:

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| <p># Maintain existing facilities and services that protect public health and safety; and</p> <p># Upgrade facilities and services when needed to support planned rural development at rural service level standards but not to create capacity for urban growth.</p> | <p>program will include consideration of the following issues:</p> |
| <p>RL-6 Extension of sanitary sewer service shall generally not be allowed in the rural area “except in those limited circumstances shown to be necessary to protect basic public health and safety and the environment and when such services are financially supportable at rural densities and do not permit urban development” (RCW 36.70A.110(4)).</p> | <p># Appropriate buffer widths from property boundaries, existing and potential resource uses, other residential development, rights-of-way and other appropriate factors;</p> <p># Design to preserve environmentally sensitive areas and to harmonize with topography and landscape features;</p> <p># Design to maintain or enhance predominant rural character, scenic views and open space corridors;</p> <p># Need, feasibility and cost of service delivery to the cluster development;</p> <p># Maximum appropriate number of units to be accommodated in individual clusters and separation between clusters;</p> <p># Potential use of density bonuses or transfer of development rights as an incentive to encourage cluster development and retain important rural resources;</p> |
| <p>RL-7 Road and access standards should provide all-weather access for emergency response vehicles while preserving and enhancing rural character.</p> | <p># Mechanisms to preserve those portions of parcels dedicated to open space uses, such as conservation easements;</p> <p># Means to encourage resource activities and to ensure compatibility between resource and residential land uses;</p> |
| <p>Rural Residential Lands</p> | |
| <p>RL-8 Permit residential uses in rural areas consistent with the existing and planned rural character of the area in which they locate.</p> | <p># Appropriate provisions to preserve rural character;</p> <p># Specification of open space requirements or criteria such that open space is not a secondary requirement;</p> |
| <p>RL-9 The designated rural area should have low residential densities which can be sustained by minimal infrastructure improvements, cause minimal environmental degradation, and which will not cumulatively create the future necessity or expectation of urban levels of service.</p> | <p># Incentives such as density bonuses for open space;</p> <p># Locating cluster development carefully to avoid checkerboard patterns;</p> <p># Mandatory clustering in areas where extensive critical areas exist or where there are undesignated high-quality resource lands; and</p> |
| <p>RL-10 Kitsap County will consider a clustering program for residential development in the rural area. This</p> | |

Limiting the use of clustering such that clustering does not become the predominant pattern of development throughout the rural area.

RL-11 Kitsap County will consider development of a program to preserve undeveloped rural shorelines as open space. The objective of the program would include, but is not limited to, preservation of rural shorelines in an undeveloped state, including appropriate provision of public access to shorelines. This program should address the following issues:

Minimum parcel size and shoreline frontage requirements;

Protection of sensitive areas including steep slopes;

Appropriate receiving areas for development capacity and density transferred from open space parcels; this could include transfers to contiguous, unconstrained upland parcels in the same ownership (internal transfer), or transfer to other designated receiving sites in the urban or rural areas (external transfers), such as Rural Villages designated pursuant to this chapter;

Provisions for clustering, subject to the guidelines developed pursuant to RL-9;

a reasonable density bonus to encourage preservation of shorelines;

Compatibility of the proposed development and receiving site with rural character and any adjacent resource activities;

a management plan for resource activities occurring on or adjacent to the transfer site;

Covenants, conservation easements, or other mechanisms to ensure preservation of the shorelines as open space; and

Appropriate planning and review requirements for each shoreline open space proposal.

RL-12 Design standards, development practices and private covenants for subdivisions in the rural area should not include extensive paved surfaces, marked changes in grade from pre-development site conditions, elaborate entrance signs, extensive lawns and other landscaping, regulation of house color or design or other features typical of urban or suburban residential development.

Implementation Strategies & Programs

1. Rural Clustering. Develop provisions that permit clustering of residential development in Rural areas. The program should address the issues identified in Policy RL-10. The process for developing the provisions should include public involvement and the participation of interested property owners and Tribes. *Target Date: 1999-2000.*

2. Shoreline Open Space Preservation. Develop a program that explores opportunities for preserving undeveloped rural shorelines as open space. Mechanisms may include transfer of development capacity to upland areas. The program should address the issues identified in Policy RL-11. The process for developing the provisions should include public involvement and the participation of interested property owners and Tribes. *Target Date: 1999.*

Rural Communities and Villages

A 1997 amendment to the Growth Management Act permits counties to define “limited areas of more intensive development” subject to a number of guidelines and criteria (RCW 36.70A.070(5)(d)). These amendments provide an opportunity to help reconcile Kitsap County’s historical land use pattern with the requirements of GMA.

As exceptions to the types of development generally permitted in rural areas, these areas allow identification, recognition and designation of existing areas with established development patterns. These existing areas may be permitted to accommodate limited additional growth through infill, new development or redevelopment. The types of growth permitted include intensification or new development of small-scale recreation or tourist uses that rely on a rural setting or location; and intensification of isolated non-residential development or new development of isolated cottage industries and isolated small-scale businesses. The areas may contain public facilities and services, which must be limited to what is necessary to serve the limited area and which does not permit low density sprawl.

“Limited areas of more intensive development” must have been in existence as of July 1, 1990. Each area must be defined and contained by a logical outer boundary that limits and contains the extent of more intensive development. The boundary must be delineated predominantly by the built environment (i.e., existing development) but may include limited undeveloped land. Establishment of the boundary must address: the need to preserve the character of existing natural neighborhoods and communities; physical boundaries; prevention of abnormally irregular boundaries; and the ability to provide public facilities and services. Counties must adopt measures to ensure that these areas are limited and contained.

In January, 1998, Kitsap County prepared an issue paper summarizing past efforts to define

local rural character; the requirements for designating limited areas of more intensive development; potential criteria for designating these areas; and descriptions of a range of “candidate areas” that could be categorized and considered for designation as rural “communities,” “villages,” and commercial or industrial areas. The issue paper is contained in Appendix 10. A series of discussions and public workshops were also held to determine participants’ preferences for the rural area; photographs documenting the results of a visioning survey are also contained in Appendix 10. The Planning Commission also held a public hearing in February, 1998 and provided guidance on these rural issues.

This Comprehensive Plan outlines the series of steps that should be performed to formally designate limited areas of more intensive development in the rural area. This includes refining the list of potential candidate areas; developing criteria for locating physical boundaries; identifying the types and amount of growth that should be allowed to occur within designated areas; and developing implementing regulations and design guidelines to ensure that development occurs in a manner consistent with rural character. These issues will be addressed in an implementation program that the County will pursue over the next one-to-two years. Policies are provided at this time to create a framework for carrying this work forward. Two demonstration projects are recommended – for Manchester and Suquamish – which will be used to help develop and test criteria for designating Rural Villages and for defining a process that will be used to consider future designations.

The area of Suquamish was chosen as the first demonstration site and resulted in the Suquamish Rural Village Subarea Plan. It was completed in April 1999 by the Kitsap County Department of Community Development and a citizen advisory group, known as the Suquamish Community Council, in cooperation with the Suquamish Tribe. This

plan by the Kitsap County Board of Commissioners on April 19, 1999, under Ordinance # 232-1999. Through this demonstration project, it was concluded that further testing needs to be done to determine what similarities or differences may exist in developing criteria for other limited areas of more intensive rural development throughout the County. Citizen advisory groups will be a key component in this process.

Categories of Potential Candidate Areas

Existing areas in rural Kitsap County that may be considered for designation as “limited areas of more intensive development” include the following:

Predominantly Residential Areas. These occur in different sizes and scales with relatively small lots and a dense land use pattern. These areas typically have a strong sense of identity and are commonly thought of as a distinct neighborhood or community. Some small-scale commercial services may be present. Most of these existing residential areas are located along the shores of Puget Sound or Hood Canal, surrounding lakes or adjacent to ferry terminals. Many were originally platted as vacation or recreational subdivisions and, over time, developed into permanent residences and defined communities. Smaller areas may have community water systems and individual septic systems, while larger areas may be served by public or community water and/or water systems. Larger areas of this type may have a broader range of local commercial services, institutional facilities (schools, churches, meeting halls), and recreational services such as parks, boat launches and playgrounds.

Mixed-Use Areas. These existing unincorporated areas are characterized by a relatively broad mix of residential, commercial, community, recreational and often industrial activities. Land uses and

densities are essentially urban in character and are typically served by public water and sewer. They are generally larger and more diverse than the predominantly residential areas described above. While these areas could also be considered for inclusion in the Urban Growth Area (based on existing densities and the presence of urban services), they are located at some distance from the urbanized portion of the county and from existing cities. While some growth potential exists, there may also be facility constraints to extensive development (e.g., sewer facility limitations).

Commercial and Industrial Areas.

Commercial and industrial areas are dispersed throughout Kitsap County and include both isolated sites devoted to a relatively small-scale commercial/ industrial uses and existing areas of more intensive development. Typical examples of the range of commercial and industrial uses in the rural area of the county includes cross-roads commercial development (gas station, mini-mart or grocery store); neighborhood shopping centers; isolated heavy commercial or industrial businesses; and small industrial parks. Uses are not necessarily “rural” in character (i.e., supporting agriculture or other “traditional” rural activities). These areas may be currently served by on-site or public sewer and water.

The Comprehensive Land Use map identifies a number of commercial and industrial properties in the rural areas. The sites designated on the map include existing developed parcels and undeveloped land. The boundaries of these areas are considered preliminary and will be reevaluated and redefined as appropriate to meet the rural provisions of the Growth Management Act and this plan. The undeveloped portions will be considered for future development pursuant to criteria in RL-24. Kitsap County will use a master planning process to establish the final boundaries of these limited areas of more intensive development. These include Streible’s Corner, Pioneer Way, Lemolo, St.

Hwy. 3, George’s Corner, Bond Rd./Gunderson Rd., Luoto Ct., Hansville and S’Klallam.

Categories and examples of candidate areas potentially meeting the general descriptors for these types of rural places are summarized below. These lists are representative not exclusive; additional areas may be considered.

- # Rural Community – predominantly residential with some commercial and community services. Examples include Indianola, Hansville, Driftwood Key, Southworth, and Sunnyslope;
- # Rural Village – a mixed-use community, with a broad mix of land use and densities, and community, recreational, institutional services and public facilities; there may be different scales of villages. Representative examples include Manchester, Suquamish and Keyport;
- # Industrial or Commercial – isolated areas (approximately 28) of generally small-scale commercial or industrial activity, ranging in size from .5 acres to 20 acres. Uses include light manufacturing, construction, storage yards, and machinery rebuilding and repair. Representative examples include Sunnyslope, Parkwood, Long Lake, Hansville, Dickey Road, Luoto Court, Pioneer Way, Streibles Corner (Bond Rd.) and Lemolo.
- # Rural Historic Town – a designated historical town with potential for residential, mixed use, commercial, and limited industrial/waterfront development or redevelopment that can be done in keeping with the historic character of the area. Port Gamble is the only example of this category.

RL-14 A Rural Community consists primarily of residential development at varying densities, but also provides for a limited mix of non-

residential uses – such as churches, schools, grocery stores, community centers, or other similar uses – to serve local residents. A gathering place to promote a sense of community is an important feature of a Rural Community.

RL-15 A Rural Village serves as an activity center for the surrounding rural area and may include several or all of the following land uses, if supported by necessary utilities and other services and if scaled and designed to protect rural character:

- a. Retail, commercial and industrial uses to serve the surrounding rural population and to provide support for resource industries and tourism.**
- b. Residential development, including single family dwelling housing on small lots.**
- c. Public facilities and services, such as community services, churches, schools, and fire stations.**

RL-16 New development should be designed to strengthen the desirable characteristics and the historic character of rural communities and villages, be supported by necessary public facilities and services, and be compatible with historic resources and nearby rural or resource uses. Development should be kept compact, promoting pedestrian travel within the designated area.

RL-17 Existing small isolated commercial developments that are currently legal uses in the rural area should be recognized. Existing development should not be expanded beyond the limits of the existing zoning unless and until such areas are designated according to the policies and process established for designating limited areas of more intensive development.

RL-18 Commercial and industrial development in the rural area may locate in designated rural villages and communities, if utilities and other services permit, to provide employment, shopping, services and housing opportunities that will reinforce the health of these communities and convenience of rural residents.

RL-19 Subject to criteria that will be developed by the Planning Commission and interested citizens, the Planning Commission and elected officials should identify and designate rural areas of more intensive development, consistent with the requirements of GMA.

RL-20 Limited areas of more intensive development should be evaluated, defined and designated according to criteria that accomplish the intent of these policies and the Growth Management Act. The criteria would be used to help interested citizens, the Planning Commission and elected officials identify and designate rural areas of more intensive development.

RL-21 Changes to land use designations for limited areas of more intensive development should be addressed via a local community planning process. This process would incorporate local knowledge, experience and preferences to determine appropriate area-specific land uses, development standards, design guidelines, and public service needs. Specific issues that should be considered in this planning process include:

A Appropriate area boundaries.

- # Rural character of the subject area and surrounding area.
- # Appropriate mix of uses, densities and intensities.
- # Feasibility, cost and need for public services.
- # Significant natural constraints or features to be preserved.
- # Provision for a monitoring and evaluation process.
- # Benefits to the local community

RL-22 The planning process for each limited area of more intensive development should include use of an advisory committee composed of area residents, interest groups, Tribes and county representatives. Kitsap County should develop a scope of work for each area which outlines the structure of the planning process, the proposed schedule, issues to be addressed, and roles of the various participants.

RL-23 Two demonstration projects should be conducted and evaluated to help develop practical information regarding workable criteria and procedures for considering future designations within the rural area. Manchester and Suquamish are recommended for consideration as Rural Villages. They are designated Rural Village Study Areas on the Comprehensive Plan map. The boundaries shown on the Plan Map are considered preliminary and for the purpose of allowing a planning process to move forward. Such mapped boundaries are not intended at this time to fulfill all the requirements for designation of boundaries of limited areas of more intensive development.

RL-24 For identified commercial/industrial areas, changes to permitted uses and development standards should be permitted through a master plan

process. This process would incorporate local knowledge, experience and preferences to determine appropriate area-specific land uses, development standards,

- # Appropriate area boundaries.
- # Rural character of the subject area and surrounding area.
- # Appropriate mix of uses and intensities.
- # Feasibility, cost and need for public services.
- # Significant natural constraints or features to be preserved.
- # Provision for a monitoring and evaluation process.

RL-25 In general, development regulations for industrial development in designated industrial areas should consider the following:

- # Greater setbacks, reduced building height, floor/lot ratios, and maximum impervious surface coverage standards in comparison to standards for urban industrial development.
 - # Maximum protection of sensitive natural features.
 - # Building and landscape design that respects the aesthetic qualities and character of the rural area, and provides substantial buffering from the adjoining uses and scenic vistas.
 - # Building colors and materials that are muted, signs that are not internally illuminated and site and
1. To protect natural resource lands from incompatible adjacent uses.
 2. To preserve and enhance natural resource-based activities such as agriculture, forestry, mineral extraction and aquaculture (as addressed and defined in the Kitsap County Shoreline Management Plan) in the rural areas.

design guidelines, and public service needs. Specific issues that should be considered in this planning process include:

- # building lighting that is held to the minimum necessary for safety.
- # Uses requiring substantial investments in infrastructure such as water, sewers or transportation facilities shall be scaled to avoid the need for public funding of infrastructure.

RL-26 Home-based cottage-type businesses and industries shall be allowed and encouraged in the rural areas, provided such activities are compatible with the site and surrounding area.

Resource Lands

This Comprehensive Plan and Map designates rural, forest, agricultural lands and mineral resource lands. The classification and designation of resource lands and activities is intended to help keep these lands available for resource production. These resource-based uses are often intermixed or occur together with residential development within the county's rural areas.

Goals

3. To identify and evaluate incentives for landowners to conserve resource lands and continue resource-based practices.
4. To encourage the preservation of lands identified as commercial quality aggregate deposits.
5. To identify commercial-quality mineral deposits in Kitsap County including, but

not limited to, aggregates, sand, rock and metals.

6. To discourage the conversion of identified aggregate lands to uses incompatible with extraction activities.

Policies

Resource Land Designations - Agricultural Lands

Agricultural land is defined by the Growth Management Act as “land primarily devoted to the commercial production of horticulture, viticulture, floriculture, dairy, apiary, vegetable, or animal products or of berries, grain, hay, straw, turf, seed, Christmas trees, or livestock, and that has long-term commercial significance for agricultural production” (WAC 365-190-050). Long term commercial significance “includes the growing capacity, productivity and soil composition of the land for long-term commercial production, in consideration with the land’s proximity to population areas, and the possibility of more intense uses of the land.”

Agricultural activities in the county consist primarily of small hobby farms. According to the Census of Agriculture, commercial farming activities are very limited. Prime agricultural soils are scattered throughout the county. In some instances, areas with the best agricultural soils (such as Silverdale) have already been developed with other uses. For these reasons, this plan does not propose lands for designation as prime agricultural lands. In the event of new data on agricultural lands or activities in the county, this issue could be revisited.

RL-27 At this time, the County finds no areas of long-term commercial significance for agricultural use and therefore, does not designate agricultural resource lands at this time.

RL-28 Although there are no areas within the county considered for suitable for long-term commercially significant agricultural production, farming and agricultural activities are an important rural activity. As such, they are allowed and encouraged in the designated rural areas of the county.

Forest Lands

The GMA requires that counties identify and protect “...forest lands that are not already characterized by urban growth and that have long-term significance for the commercial production of timber.” Forest land is defined as “land primarily devoted to growing trees for long-term commercial timber production on land that can be economically and practically managed for such production.”

The GMA lists a number of factors that should be considered in making this determination, including existing land use, soils, availability of public facilities and services, compatibility with surrounding comprehensive plans, and economic factors.

Portions of Kitsap County are heavily forested and are held in both small and large tract ownership. In the larger tracts, a few major timber owners actively harvest, log or cultivate their land for commercial forest production. Many other forest lands are on smaller parcels, some of which are less than 40 acres in size. These smaller parcels are forested on a limited basis or are used for other commercial forestry activities.

Existing land use patterns surrounding the commercial forest areas impact the potential for forestry in some areas. Some urban level residential densities along the shoreline and suburban densities scattered throughout the county have resulted in a development pattern in which much of the forested areas of the county are within one mile of developed residential areas. In these areas, large-scale

commercial forestry activities may not be feasible.

The Plan establishes an interim rural forestry designation that recognizes existing and potential forestry activities and acknowledges that forestry uses are appropriate in rural areas of the county. The interim designation recognizes that Kitsap County needs additional time to resolve the forest resource land and related rural land use issue. The delay in the Superior Court decision, coupled with the accelerated work program for the Comprehensive Plan, resulted in insufficient time available to address the issue adequately. The interim designation will preserve the County's options during this review.

At the time of adoption of the revised 1998 Comprehensive Plan, Kitsap County began a two-part approach to resolving the forest resource issue in the Comprehensive Plan. Phase I included a review of long-term commercial forestry in Kitsap County and adoption of criteria for designating forest resource lands.

In Phase II of the forestry review process the County will convene an advisory committee of interested parties to discuss and recommend a potential program for encouraging forestry activities within rural areas. This program would apply to rural forested lands that have been determined to not meet the criteria for designation as resource lands of long-term commercial significance, and may include development of guidelines and criteria for clustered residential development, at appropriate densities, in conjunction with rural forestry. The advisory committee, appointed by the Board of Commissioners, will be comprised of affected property owners, neighborhood and environmental interests and Tribes, and will strive to reach consensus; the County may hire a mediator or facilitator in furtherance of this objective.

The County's intent is to complete phase II in time for inclusion with the First Annual

review of amendments for the County Comprehensive Plan.

RL-29 Areas appropriate for rural forestry are recognized through an Interim Rural Forestry designation. The interim forestry designation permits on-going forestry activities, supporting resource-based uses and residential development at a maximum density of one dwelling unit per twenty acres. This interim designation will be reviewed following completion of Phase II of the forestry review process.

RL-30 As part of future review and consideration of issues in Phase II of the forestry review process questions associated with parcel size, appropriate uses and land use compatibility, retention of existing rural character, and forest cover characteristics, will be addressed.

Mineral Resource Lands

The intent of the mineral resource designation is to protect identified significant sand, gravel and rock deposits. Commercial quality deposits should be recognized as non-renewable resources and managed accordingly.

At this time, information on commercial-quality deposits is limited. Areas with mineral deposits have been identified primarily through the use of surface mining permits issued by the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR). In addition, individual property owners have provided information regarding mineral resource designations on their properties.

RL-31 Mineral resource sites with valid surface mining permits through DNR, and sites identified by individual property owners shall be given a Mineral Resource designation on the Land Use Plan Map. This designation

permits mineral resource extraction activities and accessory supporting industrial uses. Residential uses are also permitted, to a maximum density of one dwelling unit per twenty acres.

RL-32 This Mineral Resource designation will serve as interim protection of mineral resource areas until a comprehensive geologic study is undertaken to determine the extent of additional mineral deposits. Appropriate long-term designations and revision of this chapter may follow this study.

Rural Resource Incentive Programs

The purpose of rural resource incentive programs is to promote the continued viability of resource-based activities in designated areas and to minimize the potential for conflict between these uses and surrounding residential areas. Two potential programs are described in this plan. These are residential clustering and transfer of development rights.

Residential Clustering. Residential clustering provides a means to plan and design sites so as to provide substantial separation from resource-based activities, to preserve resource lands, yet to permit an appropriate level and form of rural residential development.

RL-33 Clustering shall be permitted and encouraged in all designated natural resource areas of the county, subject to the provisions of Policy RL-34, below, consistent with preservation of rural character and subject to the rural provisions of the Comprehensive Plan and the Growth Management Act.

RL-34 The County will develop and consider a clustering program for residential development in designated resource areas. This

program has a target date of the year 2000 and shall include consideration of the following issues:

- # Appropriate buffer widths from property boundaries, existing and potential resource uses, other residential development, rights-of-way and other factors.
- # Design to preserve environmentally sensitive areas and to harmonize with topography and landscape features.
- # Design to maintain or enhance predominant rural character, scenic views and open space corridors.
- # Need, feasibility and cost of public service delivery to the cluster development.
- # Maximum appropriate number of units to be accommodated in individual clusters.
- # Potential use of density bonuses as an incentive to encourage cluster development.
- # Minimum site size.

Transfer of Development Rights.

Transfer of development rights (TDR) permits the “right to develop” (measured in residential units) to be severed from one property (the “sending” site) and transferred to another location (the “receiving” site). The sending site is preserved in its existing state and the receiving site may be developed at a higher density. A properly devised TDR program could act as an incentive for preservation of shoreline areas, forest lands, agricultural lands and mineral resource lands in Kitsap County.

RL-35 The County shall consider creation of a TDR program for appropriate designated resource lands. Development of such a program should consider the following:

Identification of appropriate “sending” and “receiving” sites. The transfer of development rights may be limited to specific parcels, land use designations or geographic areas. Transfers of rights could be considered from a designated resource site or area to a Rural Village, designated according to the Comprehensive Plan, or to defined locations within the Urban Growth Area.

Identification of the appropriate number of units that may be transferred consistent with maintaining land use compatibility and that are necessary to create an effective incentive.

Provisions for protection of significant landscape features, environmental sensitive areas, scenic views, rural character, and open space corridors.

Measures necessary to ensure that land use impacts to properties adjacent to the receiving site are mitigated.

Potential use of density bonuses to encourage TDR participation at critical “sending” locations, such as shoreline areas, significant stands of timber or other identified areas.

Monitoring and evaluation procedures to ensure that proposed “receiving” locations have adequate public services and facilities to absorb the additional development and that rural character is maintained.

Resource Lands Activities

RL-36 Industrial uses associated with mineral resource extraction or forestry activities are also permitted in designated Mineral Resource and Interim Forestry areas.

RL-37 Agriculture, mineral and forestry uses shall be allowed and

encouraged in the rural areas of Kitsap County. Such uses should not be considered to constitute a nuisance within rural areas if conducted within generally accepted management practices and in compliance with applicable laws which regulate such activities.

RL-38 Land use activities within or adjacent to resource lands shall be sited and designed to minimize conflicts with and impacts on resource lands. Mitigation may be accomplished through the use of setbacks, buffers and other requirements.

RL-39 In all rural areas, the following language shall be attached to both plats and building permits: *“Notice: the subject property is within or near land in which resource activities are permitted and encouraged, including a variety of activities which may not be compatible with residential use for certain periods of limited duration. In addition to other activities, these may include noise, dust, smoke, visual impacts and odors resulting from harvesting, planting, surface mining, quarrying, application of fertilizers, herbicides, and associated reclamation and management activities. When performed in accordance with state and federal law, these resource activities are not subject to legal action as a nuisance.”*

RL-40 The use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for all resource activities is encouraged.

Forestry

RL-41 Normal Best Management Practices, such as spraying, logging, slash burning, shall not be impeded within the designated Forest Resource Lands

and Interim Forestry area, provided all applicable environmental laws and regulations are followed.

RL-42 In the rural areas adjacent to designated Forest Resource Lands and Interim Forestry lands, no residential building shall be allowed within 100 feet from any property line unless (1) the applicant for a building permit acknowledges the possible occurrence of resource activity on the adjacent property, and (2) waives any damages which might occur to the residence or occupants because of such activities which are conducted within generally accepted management practices and in compliance with applicable laws which regulate such activities. Such waivers must be filed with the County Auditor.

RL-43 Kitsap County should notify nearby landowners and occupants of the likely continued use of lands designated Forest Resource Lands and Interim Rural Forestry for resource production.

RL-44 Kitsap County should work with the Department of Natural Resources, Tribes, community groups and private forest landowners to promote long-term preservation of forest lands.

RL-45 Incentives for continued resource uses should be developed, including but not limited to:

- # Providing relief from special levies, assessments, and/or local improvement districts
- # Instituting density transfers
- # Promoting economies of scale through cooperative resource management and marketing for small landowners.
- # Developing expedited permit review processes for forestry-related

activities which involve stewardship, habitat restoration, and/or resource management plans that include “best management practices.”

- # Cooperating with state agencies and tribes to expedite regulatory review and technical assistance to cooperating landowners.
- # Establishing incentives for consolidation of non-conforming and non-buildable lots.
- # Requiring subdivision site designs to minimize conflict with nearby forestry activities.
- # Encouraging fee-simple purchase, less than fee-simple purchase, purchase with leaseback or other methods to acquire forest land.

RL-46 Kitsap County shall consider adopting the 1997 Urban-Wildland Interface Code as part of its wildfire protection program.

Mineral Resources

RL-47 Commercial quality mineral resource deposits are recognized as non-renewable resources and managed accordingly.

RL-48 In the rural areas adjacent to designated Mineral Resource lands, no residential building shall be allowed within 100 feet from any property line unless (1) the applicant for a building permit acknowledges the possible occurrence of resource activity on the adjacent property, and (2) waives any damages which might occur to the residence or occupants because of such activities which are conducted within generally accepted management practices and in compliance with applicable laws which regulate such activities. Such waivers must be filed with the County Auditor.

- RL-49** Presently, the plan recognizes those sites with valid surface mining permits from the State Department of Natural Resources as well as those which have been identified by the property owner as mineral resource lands. Those mineral lands which now appear on the Land Use Plan Map which have been identified by the property owner must submit a geologic study, conducted by a qualified geologist, pertaining to the presence of commercial quality mineral deposits by the second annual review of the plan in order to keep such a designation. Mineral Resource lands may only be added or deleted during the annual review of the adopted Comprehensive Plan. Any additions or deletions will be based upon submission of a geologic study, conducted by a qualified geologist, pertaining to the presence, or lack of commercial quality mineral deposits.
- RL-50** A geologic study to identify commercial quality deposits shall be undertaken after the adoption of the comprehensive plan. Such a study, where feasible, should be undertaken in conjunction and cooperation with other geologic studies as required, such as the study of aquifers.
- RL-51** Information regarding significant commercial quality deposits identified in the survey shall be shared with the property owners. If extraction is viable, can be provided with services and can be made compatible with surrounding land use, the County should encourage the development of the resource.
- RL-52** The County shall consider the need for long-term supplies of mineral resources and establish criteria so that it may, if necessary, designate deposits of long-term commercial significance.
- RL-53** Exhausted mining sites are required to be reclaimed in a manner consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Plan.
- RL-54** The County shall coordinate with the State Department of Natural Resources to ensure that future reclamation plans are consistent with the comprehensive planning for the site and surrounding area.