



Growth Management and Comprehensive Planning

Meeting of Elected Officials from Whatcom County

August 29, 2024

1:00 Lynden City Hall Annex

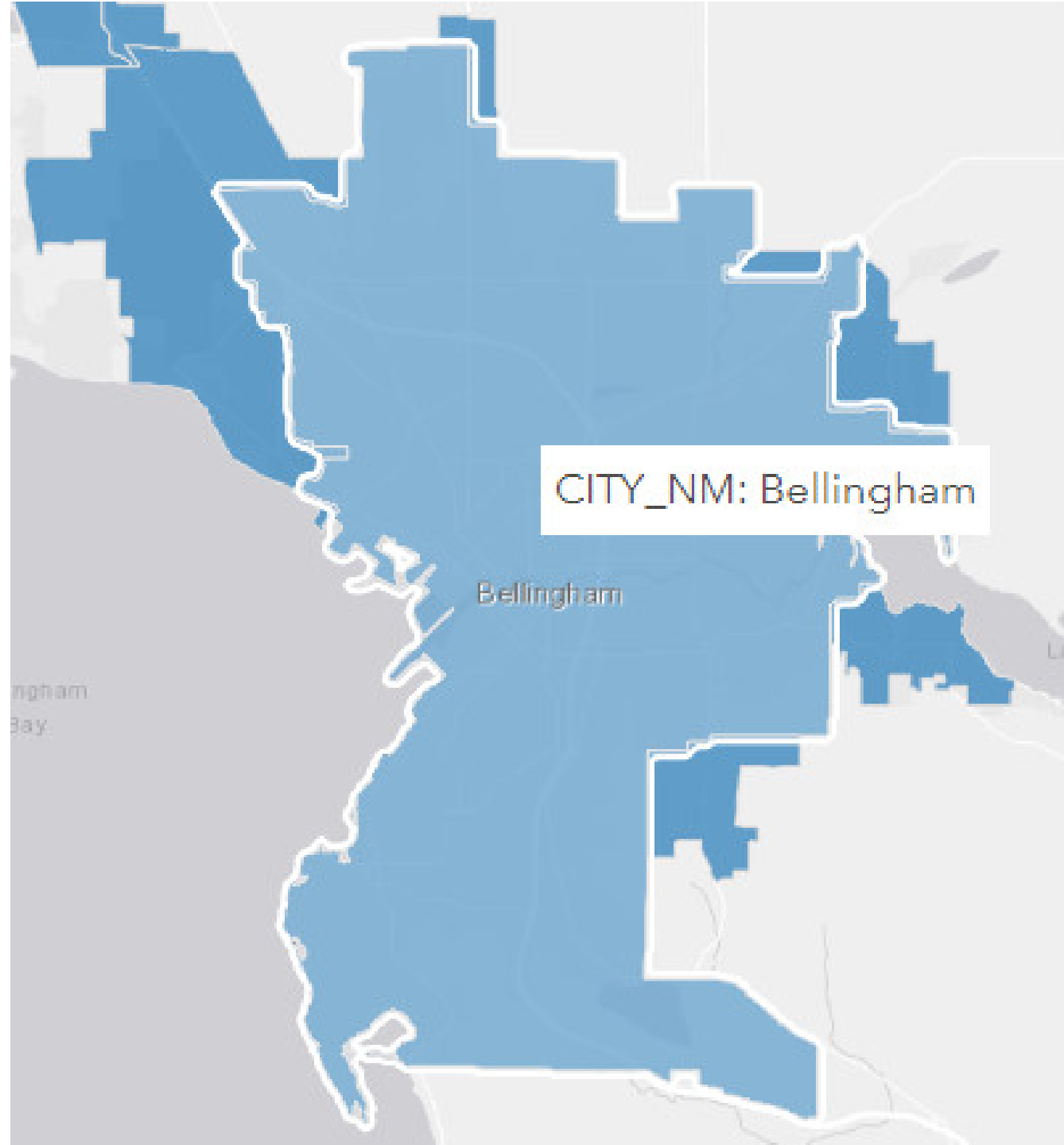
Bellingham City Limits and UGA

City Limits: 18,048 acres
(excludes 1487 acres of water)

2023 Population: 95,960

Density: 5.3 people per acre

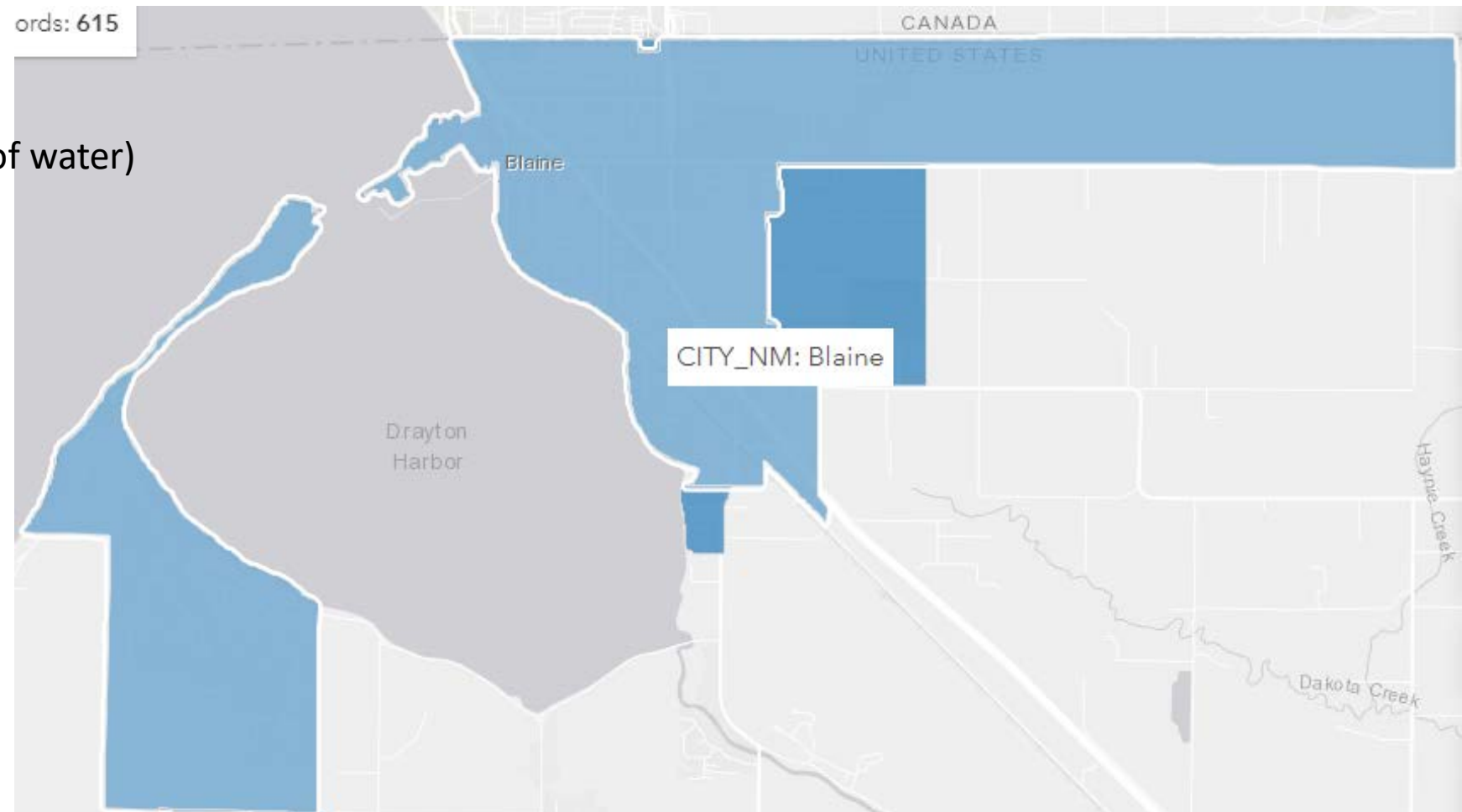
UGA Area: 4,934 acres



Blaine City Limits and UGA

City Limits: 3,571 acres
(excludes 1,964 acres of water)
2023 Population: 6,310
Density: 1.8 people per acre

UGA Area: 499 acres



Data Source: City area and maps from October 2020
data set from geo.wa.gov/datasets/

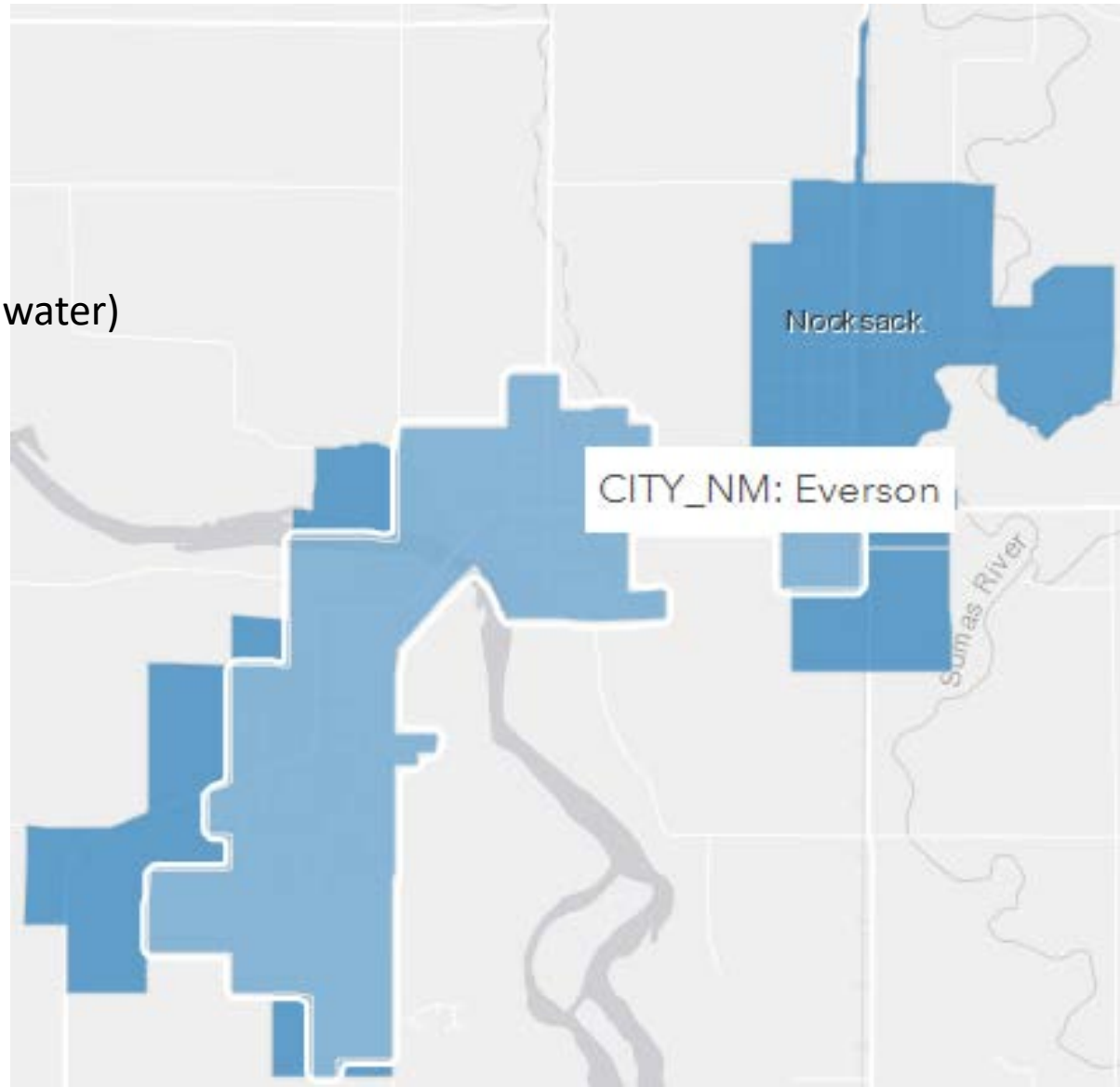
Everson City Limits and UGA

City Limits: 8864 acres
(excludes 19 acres of water)

2023 Population: 3,135

Density: 3.6 people per acre

UGA Area: 413 acres



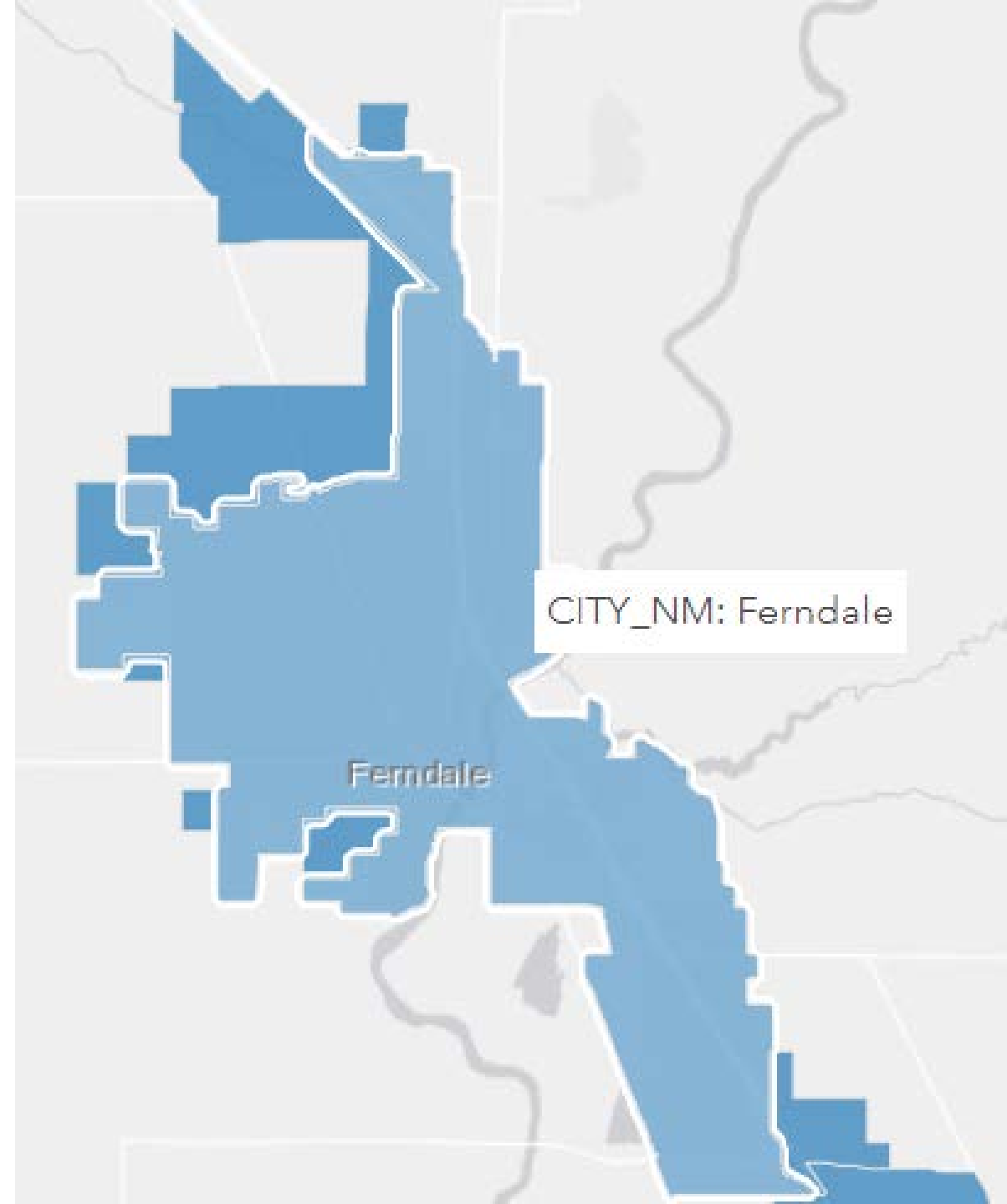
Ferndale City Limits and UGA

City Limits: 4,499 acres
(excludes 64 acres of water)

2023 Population: 16,330

Density: 3.6 people per acre

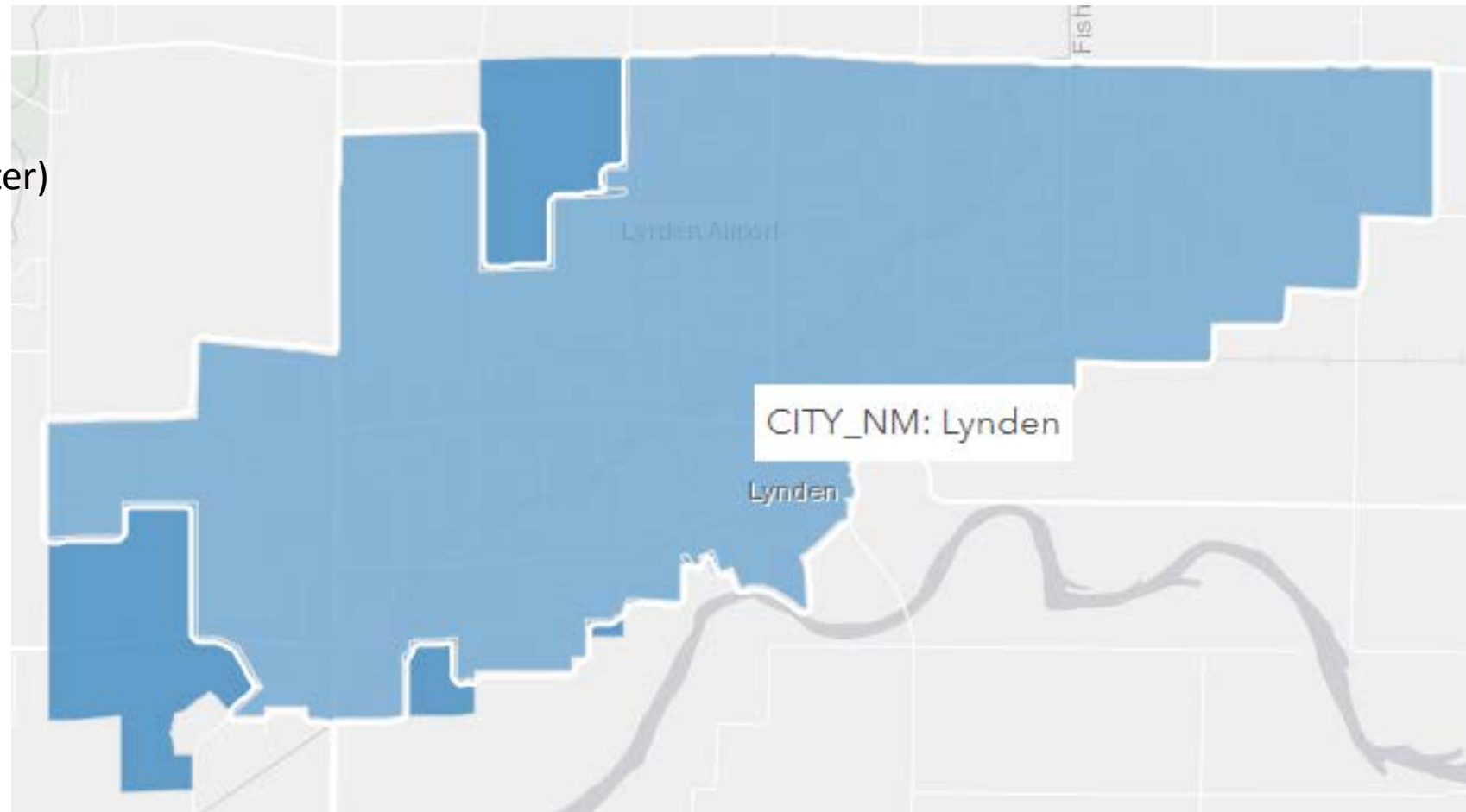
UGA Area: 1,436 acres



Lynden City Limits and UGA

City Limits: 3,475 acres
(excludes 13 acres of water)
2023 Population: 16,520
Density: 4.8 people per acre

UGA Area: 535 acres

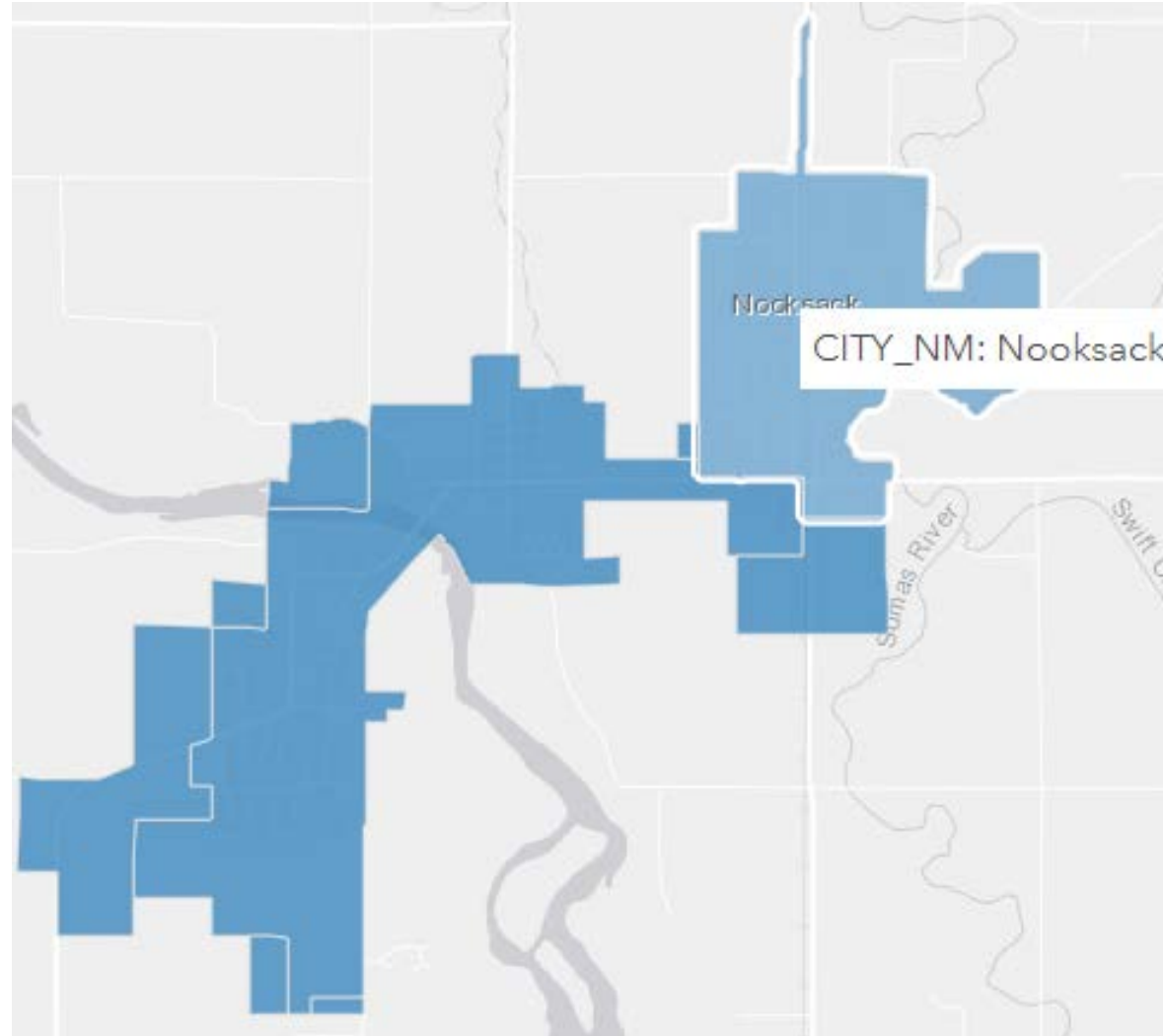


Data Source: City area and maps from October 2020 data set from geo.wa.gov/datasets/

Nooksack City Limits and UGA

City Limits: 557 acres
(no acres of water)
2023 Population: 1,560
Density: 2.8 people per acre

UGA Area: 0 acre



Data Source: City area and maps from October 2020
data set from geo.wa.gov/datasets/

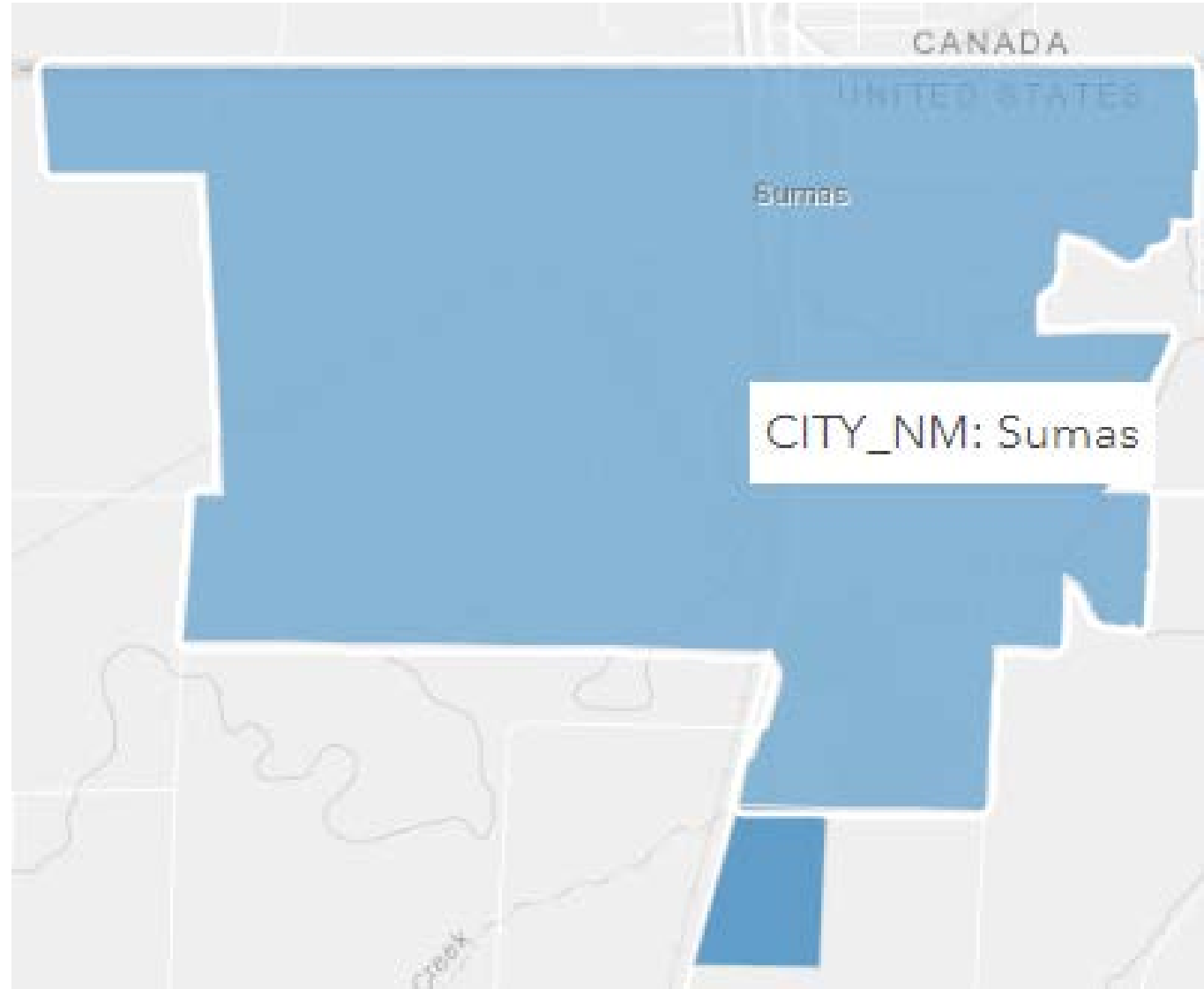
Sumas City Limits and UGA

City Limits: 941 acres
(no acres of water)

2023 Population: 1,810

Density: 1.9 people per acre

UGA Area: 27 acres



Data Source: City area and maps from October 2020 data set from geo.wa.gov/datasets/

Overview of Land Base and Population Data

	Total Area	Land Area	Water Area	2023	Density		Population
City	Acres	Acres	Acres	Population	Pop/Acre	UGA Area	in UGA
Bellingham	19,526	18,048	1,478	95,960	5.3	4,934	37,108
Blaine	5,517	3,571	1,946	6,310	1.8	499	
Everson	883	864	19	3,135	3.6	413	
Ferndale	4,563	4,499	64	16,330	3.6	1,436	
Lynden	3,488	3,475	13	16,520	4.8	535	182
Nooksack	557	557	-	1,560	2.8	-	
Sumas	941	941	-	1,810	1.9	27	

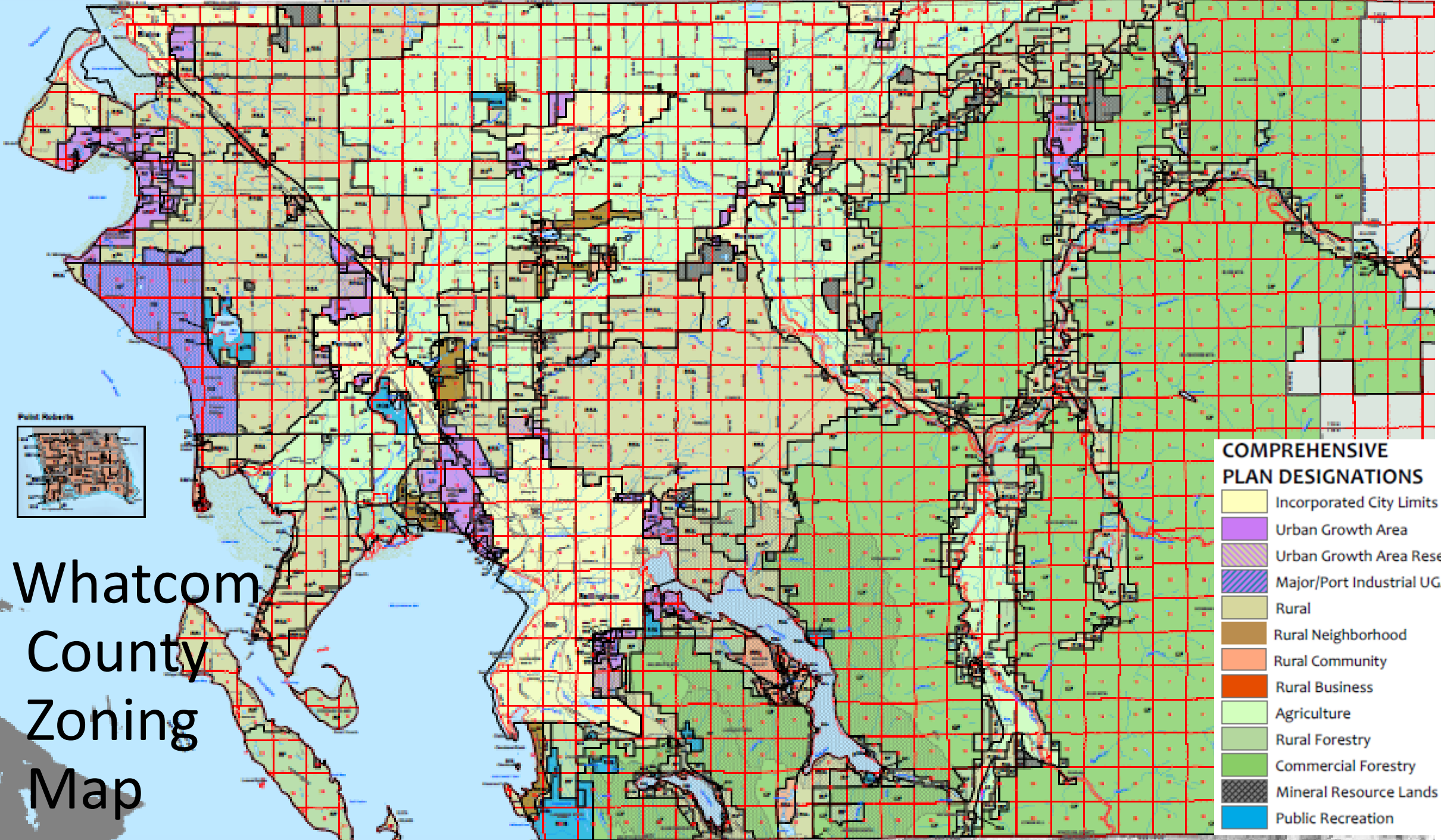
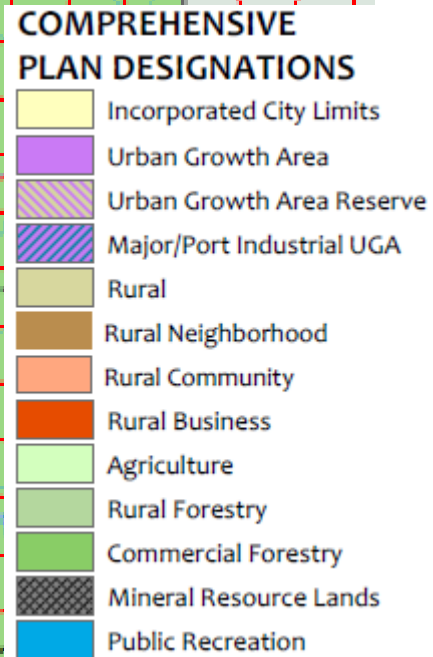
Projected Growth

PLANNING DATA									
	WA OFM		Growth				Projected Growth		
	2013	2023	Total	2013-2023	Annualized	2045	Total	2023-2045	Annualized
Whatcom County									
Bellingham	82,148	95,960	13,812	16.8%	1.6%	132,422	36,462	27.5%	1.5%
Blaine	4,886	6,310	1,424	29.1%	2.6%	10,496	4,186	39.9%	2.3%
Everson	2,557	3,135	578	22.6%	2.1%	4,543	1,408	31.0%	1.7%
Ferndale	12,387	16,330	3,943	31.8%	2.8%	27,291	10,961	40.2%	2.4%
Lynden	12,886	16,520	3,634	28.2%	2.5%	26,580	10,060	37.8%	2.2%
Nooksack	1,364	1,560	196	14.4%	1.4%	2,091	531	25.4%	1.3%
Sumas	1,423	1,810	387	27.2%	2.4%	2,862	1,052	36.8%	2.1%
Total Urban WC	117,651	141,625	23,974	20.4%	1.9%	206,285	64,660	31.3%	1.7%
Unincorporated Whatcom County	88,370	94,175	5,805	6.6%	0.6%	115,417	21,242	6.6%	0.9%
Whatcom County	206,021	235,800	29,779	14.5%	1.4%	321,702	85,902	26.7%	1.4%

Population Source: [WA OFM](#)

Growth Source: [Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan: Growth Projections May 22, 2024](#), p. 11, Fig. 7

Whatcom County Zoning Map



Open discussion

- Based on the UGA maps, is this where your city wants to grow?
- Does each city have enough UGA for the next 20-year plan?
- Is your city growing fast enough; or too fast?
- What does the housing look like for your future population?
- Is it possible to create enough housing to get ahead of the curve?
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Industry and Jobs

Job Type	People with Jobs
Government	14,000
Health Care and Social Assistance	13,000
Retail Trade	11,000
Manufacturing	9,000
Accommodation and Food Service	9,000
Construction	8,000
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	4,000
Administration and Waste Services	4,000
Agricultural, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	4,000
Other	17,000
Total	92,000

Industry and Jobs

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Retail Trade	11,000
Manufacturing	9,000
Accommodation and Food Service	9,000
Construction	8,000
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	4,000
Administration and Waste Services	4,000
Agricultural, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	4,000
Other	17,000
Total	92,000
Whatcom County Population 2022	230,677
Whatcom County Population 2045	321,702
Percent increase	39%

Industry and Jobs

Job Type	People with Jobs	New Jobs by 2045
Government	14,000	5,500
Health Care and Social Assistance	13,000	5,100
Retail Trade	11,000	4,300
Manufacturing	9,000	3,600
Accommodation and Food Service	9,000	3,600
Construction	8,000	3,200
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	4,000	1,600
Administration and Waste Services	4,000	1,600
Agricultural, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	4,000	1,600
Other	17,000	6,700
Total	92,000	36,800
Whatcom County Population 2022	230,677	
Whatcom County Population 2045	321,702	
Percent increase	39%	

Data Source: [2022 Whatcom County Economic Profile](#)

Whatcom County Historical Employment Growth by Sector, 2010 to 2021

Industry	2010	2021	Growth	Percent Change
Resources & Utilities	2,829	3,343	514	18.2%
Construction	4,885	7,556	2,671	54.7%
Manufacturing	7,738	8,699	961	12.4%
Wholesale Trade	2,425	2,629	204	8.4%
Retail Trade	8,099	8,450	351	4.3%
Transport & Warehousing	2,073	2,344	271	13.1%
Healthcare Services	9,347	13,494	4,147	44.4%
Accommodations & Food Services	6,413	6,148	-265	-4.1%
Other Services	15,893	17,247	1,354	8.5%
Government	13,718	12,247	-1,471	-10.7%

Total Employment – Middle Projection

	2023	2025	2031	2035	2045	2023 to 2045 Growth
Bellingham	70,384	70,243	75,049	78,176	85,556	15,172
Birch Bay	577	576	615	641	702	124
Blaine	3,251	3,244	3,466	3,610	3,951	701
Cherry Point	2,288	2,284	2,440	2,541	2,781	493
Columbia Valley	62	62	66	69	75	13
Everson	943	941	1,006	1,048	1,147	203
Ferndale	9,934	9,914	10,592	11,034	12,075	2,141
Lynden	8,345	8,328	8,898	9,269	10,144	1,799
Nooksack	369	368	393	410	448	79
Sumas	695	694	741	772	845	150
Other / Rural	15,785	15,753	16,831	17,532	19,188	3,403
County Total	112,633	112,407	120,098	125,101	136,912	24,279

Industrial – Middle Projection

	2023	2025	2031	2035	2045	2023 to 2045 Growth
Bellingham	13,083	13,057	13,950	14,531	15,903	2,820
Birch Bay	103	103	110	114	125	22
Blaine	1,518	1,515	1,618	1,686	1,845	327
Cherry Point	2,089	2,085	2,228	2,321	2,540	450
Columbia Valley	26	26	28	29	32	6
Everson	407	406	434	452	495	88
Ferndale	4,457	4,448	4,752	4,950	5,418	961
Lynden	2,809	2,803	2,995	3,120	3,415	606
Nooksack	134	134	143	149	163	29
Sumas	452	452	482	502	550	98
Other / Rural	4,302	4,293	4,587	4,778	5,229	927
County Total	29,381	29,322	31,328	32,633	35,714	6,333

Open Discussion

- How can we promote more industry in the County?
 - Or do we really want to?
- Can we focus the job growth to where the population will grow to minimize work travel time?
- How does “work from home” fit into the next 20-year plan?

Agricultural Needs

Farms and Acreage	2022	2017
Number of Farms	1,582	1,712
Land in farms (acres)	102,886	102,523
Average size of farm (acres)	65	60

Farms by size	2022		2017	
1-9 acres	611	39%	701	41%
10 to 49 acres	654	41%	662	39%
50 to 179 acres	214	14%	233	14%
180 to 499 acres	60	4%	74	4%
500 to 999 acres	29	2%	30	2%
1,000+ acrea	14	1%	12	1%
Total	1,582		1,712	

Agricultural Needs

Total Revenue	2022		2017	
Market value of products sold	510,266,000	97%	372,850,000	98%
Government payments	3,983,000	1%	1,047,000	0%
Farm-related income	10,639,000	2%	8,323,000	2%
Total farm production expenses	(407,274,000)		(325,138,000)	
Net cash farm income	117,614,000		57,082,000	

Income Sources				
Source	2022		2017	
Dairy	204,503,000	40%	180,488,000	48%
Fruit	183,511,000	36%	114,628,000	31%
Cattle	28,070,000	6%	25,399,000	7%
Nursery	48,551,000	10%	19,226,000	5%
Potatoes	17,573,000	3%	11,803,000	3%
Other	28,058,000	5%	21,306,000	6%
Total	510,266,000		372,850,000	

Agricultural Needs

Farm by Value of Sales	2022		2017	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Less than \$2,500	738	47%	891	52%
\$2,500 to \$4,999	155	10%	166	10%
\$5,000 to \$9,999	160	10%	146	9%
\$10,000 to \$24,999	121	8%	151	9%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	80	5%	61	4%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	62	4%	40	2%
\$100,000 or more	266	17%	257	15%
Total	1,582		1,712	

Open Discussion

- Does the data change your perception of agriculture in Whatcom County?
- How can we promote more profitable agriculture in our county?
- What changes can the County Council implement that would promote agriculture in Whatcom County?
- Some of the fastest growing cities (Lynden, Everson, Nooksack and Sumas) are surrounded by good agricultural land:
 - Do we allow this land to be used for development?
 - Is there any land that we feel must remain in agriculture?

Where do we go from here?

- Do we need another meeting of the elected officials?
- Do we need to lobby the State for any changes in the GMA?
- How can we create affordable housing with all the challenges before us?