

# ***Buildable Lands Report 2022***

***Whatcom County and City of Bellingham Presentation***

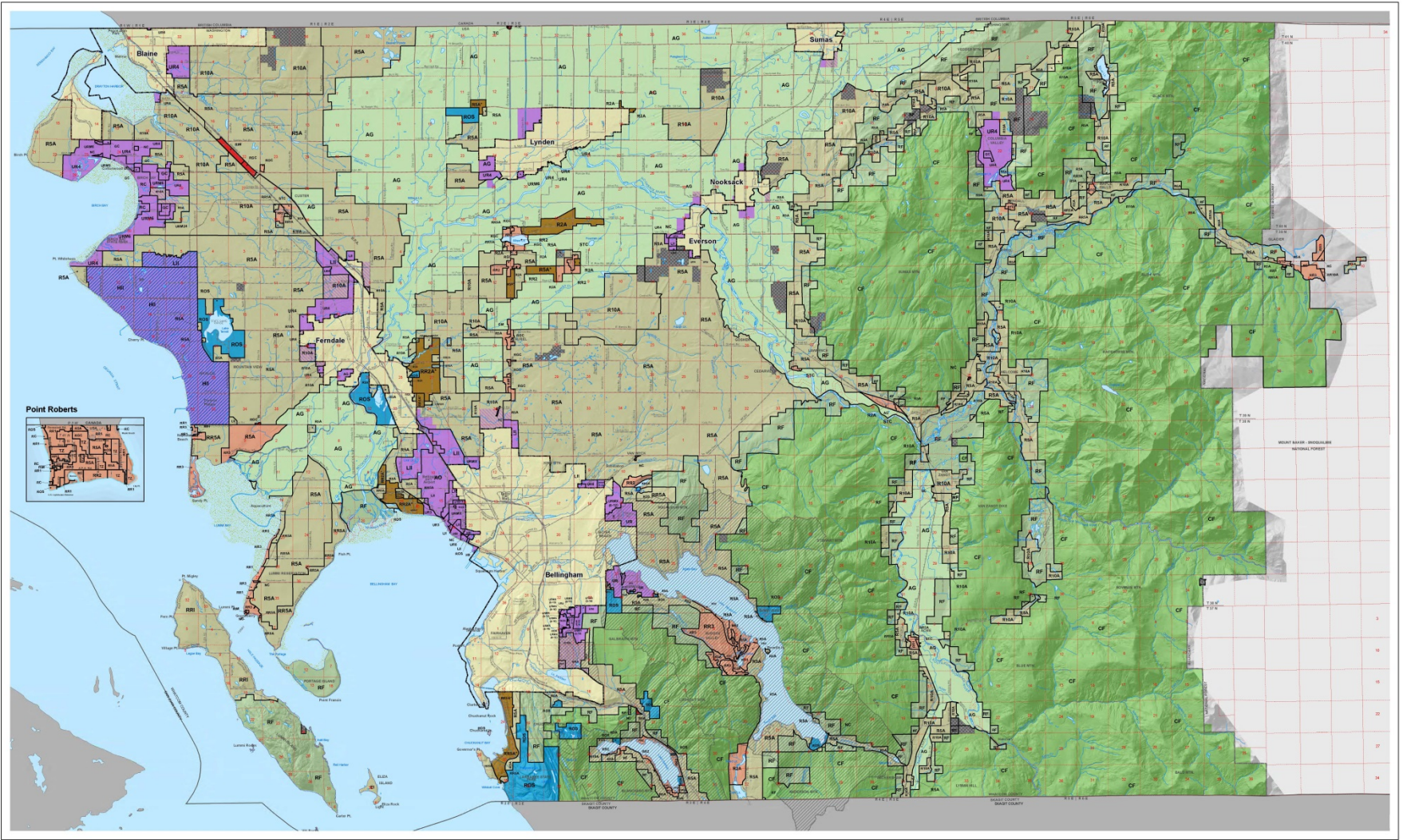
***at***

***Whatcom County Council  
Planning and Development Committee***

***November 9, 2022***

# Purposes of the Buildable Lands Program

- Determining whether a county and its cities are achieving urban densities within urban growth areas;
- Determining whether there is land that is suitable for development in the future; and
- Identifying reasonable measures, if necessary, to reduce the differences between comprehensive plan growth assumptions and actual development patterns.



# WHATCOM COUNTY Title 20 Zoning & Comprehensive Plan Designations

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DESIGNATIONS

- Incorporated City Limits
- Urban Growth Area
- Urban Growth Area Reserve
- Major/Port Industrial UGA
- Rural
- Rural Neighborhood
- Rural Community
- Rural Business
- Agriculture
- Rural Forestry
- Commercial Forestry
- Mineral Resource Lands
- Public Recreation

## TITLE 20 ZONING DESIGNATIONS

- URBAN RESIDENTIAL**
- URMX** Urban Res.-Mixed Use
  - URMX10-24** Urban Res.-Mixed Use 10-24 Units/Acre
  - URMX6-12** Urban Res.-Mixed Use 6-12 Units/Acre
  - URMX6-10** Urban Res.-Mixed Use 6-10 Units/Acre
  - URM24** Urban Res.-Medium Density 24 Units/Acre
  - URM18** Urban Res.-Medium Density 18 Units/Acre
  - URM12** Urban Res.-Medium Density 12 Units/Acre
  - URM6** Urban Res.-Medium Density 6 Units/Acre
  - URS** Urban Res.-5 Units/Acre
  - UR4** Urban Res.-4 Units/Acre
  - UR3** Urban Res.-3 Units/Acre

- RURAL RESIDENTIAL**
- RR3** Rural Res.-3 Units/Acre
  - RR2** Rural Res.-2 Units/Acre
  - RR1** Rural Res.-1 Unit/Acre
  - RR5A** Rural Res.-1 Unit/5 Acres
  - RR10A** Rural Res.-1 Unit/10 Acres

- RURAL RESIDENTIAL**
- RR1** Rural Residential Island
  - TZ** Transitional-R5A/RR1
- RURAL**
- R2A** Rural-1 Unit/2 Acres
  - R5A** Rural-1 Unit/5 Acres
  - R10A** Rural-1 Unit/10 Acres

- RESOURCES**
- AG** Agriculture
  - CF** Commercial Forestry
  - RF** Rural Forestry
  - MRL** Mineral Resource Lands (Overlay Zone)

- COMMERCIAL**
- RGC** Rural General Comm.
  - CC** General Commercial
  - TC** Tourist Commercial
  - NC** Neighborhood Commercial
  - STC** Small Town Commercial
  - RC** Resort Commercial

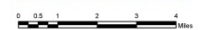
- INDUSTRIAL**
- HI** Heavy Impact Industrial
  - LI** Light Impact Industrial
  - GM** General Manufacturing
  - RIM** Rural Ind. Manuf.
  - AO** Airport Operations

- OTHER**
- ROS** Recreation Open Space
  - EI** Eliza Island

**R5A<sup>\*</sup>; RR5A<sup>\*</sup> - Rural Residential Overlay District**  
- Title 20 20 32 252  
**Water Resource Protection Overlay District**  
- Title 20 20 71  
**Transferable Development Rights (TDRs)**  
**TDR Receiving Areas** - All URM/RV Zones except Bennett Cr  
**TDR Sending Areas** - Lake Whatcom Watershed (same boundary as Lake Whatcom portion of Water Resource Protection Overlay Zone) excluding Sudden Valley

# See Ord. 2015-001

USE OF WHATCOM COUNTY'S GIS DATA IMPLIES THE USER'S AGREEMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:  
Whatcom County disclaims any warranty of merchantability or warranty of fitness of this map for any particular purpose, other express or implied. No representation or warranty is made concerning the accuracy, completeness or quality of data presented on this map. Any user of this map assumes all responsibility for use thereof, and neither Whatcom County nor its employees shall be liable for any damage, loss, or liability arising from any use of this map.



Whatcom County Review and Evaluation Program

**Methodology**

*Approved February 10, 2022*

Prepared for:  
Whatcom County



Prepared by:



**Buildable Lands Report 2022**

Whatcom County Review and Evaluation Program

July 7, 2022



Revisions to  
State Guidelines

Development of  
Local Methodology

Data Collection  
& Analysis

Buildable Lands  
Report

**2018**

**2019**

**2020**

**2021**

**2022**

Stakeholder  
Interviews

Property Owner  
Survey

Stakeholder  
Workshop



# Data Reporting Tool (2016-2021 Development Data)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	
1									
2		Whatcom County Review and Evaluation Program							
3		Data Reporting Tool					City: <b>Bellingham</b>		
4									
5		<b>5. Building Permit Data</b>		<a href="#">Map Exhibit Link</a>					
6									
7	Sort	Permit Number	Parent Parcel	Parcel	Address	Zone	Development Type	Gross Land Area (±)	Gross Area
8	1	CMB2015-00245		380307541240	4273 JAMES ST	RS SF_7200 MF_7200 FAR_0	Single Family	33,084	
9	2	CMB2015-00123		380332474207	2204 WESTCOTT ST	RS SF_10000 MF_0 FAR_0	Single Family	7,308	
10	3	CMB2015-00309		380307528345	4332 WINSLOW CT	RM SF_0 MF_4300 FAR_0	Single Family	5,202	
11	4	CMB2015-00085		370306555479	512 40TH ST	RS SF_12000 MF_0 FAR_0	Single Family	15,449	
12	5	CMB2015-00127		370308238189	4710 BROAD ST 201	RS SF_20000 MF_0 FAR_0	Single Family	7,900	
13	6	CMB2015-00142		380224081332	2929 LAFAYETTE ST	RM SF_4000 MF_4000 FAR_0	Single Family	5,994	
14	7	CMB2015-00046		380224545189	2704 KULSHAN ST	UV SF_0 MF_2500 FAR_0	Single Family	4,998	
15	8	CMB2015-00108		380319121132	2418 BROADWAY ST	RS SF_5000 MF_0 FAR_0	Single Family	4,985	
16	9	CMB2015-00104		380318242552	4071 KINGSTON ST	RS SF_10000 MF_0 FAR_0	Single Family	5,979	
17	10	CMB2015-00305		380201250414	4772 SPRING VISTA LOOP	C//RM SF_5833 MF_5833 FAR_0.4	Single Family	4,339	
18	11	CMB2015-00306		380201248411	4768 SPRING VISTA LOOP	C//RM SF_5833 MF_5833 FAR_0.4	Single Family	2,913	
19	12	CMB2014-00086		380319418128	410 E NORTH ST	RS SF_5000 MF_0 FAR_0	Single Family	4,990	
20	13	CMB2015-00218		380332488412	1124 NEWTON ST	RS SF_10000 MF_0 FAR_0	Single Family	14,040	
21	14	CMB2015-00063		370201558021	1502 24TH ST	RS SF_5000 MF_0 FAR_0	Single Family	4,901	
22	15	CMB2015-00113		370201558016	1504 24TH ST	RS SF_5000 MF_0 FAR_0	Single Family	4,898	
23	16	BLD2014-00286		380318130326	3930 AFFINITY LN	C SF_0 MF_2500 FAR_0.4	Multifamily	290,789	
24	17	CMB2015-00260		380201250424	4776 SPRING VISTA LOOP	C//RM SF_5833 MF_5833 FAR_0.4	Single Family	3,210	
25	18	CMB2015-00261		380201246424	4780 SPRING VISTA LOOP	C//RM SF_5833 MF_5833 FAR_0.4	Single Family	2,005	

## Suitable Land Tool (2021-2036 Buildable Land Capacity)

# Countywide Overview

# Planned and Achieved Densities

UGA	Residential			Commercial			Industrial		
	Planned Density (units/ac)	Achieved Density 2016-2021 (units/ac)	Difference	Planned Density (FAR)	Achieved Density 2016-2021 (FAR)	Difference	Planned Density (FAR)	Achieved Density 2016-2021 (FAR)	Difference
Bellingham									
City	7.2	11.5	4.3	N/A	0.22	N/A	N/A	0.24	N/A
County	6.0	1.3	(4.7)	N/A	0.26	N/A	N/A	0.29	N/A
Birch Bay	5.0	4.5	(0.5)	N/A	0.06	N/A	N/A	0.00	N/A
Blaine									
City	4.3	4.4	0.2	0.80	0.31	(0.49)	0.89	0.30	(0.59)
County	4.0	4.7	0.7	N/A	0.00	N/A	N/A	0.00	N/A
Cherry Point	N/A	0.0	N/A	N/A	0.00	N/A	N/A	0.11	N/A
Columbia Valley	4.0	4.9	0.9	N/A	0.05	N/A	N/A	0.00	N/A
Everson									
City	4.0	4.8	0.8	0.20	0.26	0.06	0.30	0.00	N/A
County	4.0	0.0	N/A	N/A	0.00	N/A	N/A	0.01	N/A
Ferndale									
City	4.0	6.4	2.4	N/A	0.09	N/A	N/A	0.20	N/A
County	6.0	0.3	(5.7)	N/A	0.00	N/A	N/A	0.21	N/A
Lynden									
City	5.0	7.1	2.1	NA	0.12	N/A	NA	0.26	N/A
County	6.0	1.7	(4.3)	N/A	0.00	N/A	N/A	0.00	N/A
Nooksack									
City	4.4	5.1	0.7	0.25	0.14	(0.11)	0.10	0.00	N/A
County	4.0	0.0	N/A	N/A	0.00	N/A	N/A	0.00	N/A
Sumas									
City	4.9	7.5	2.7	0.22	0.00	N/A	0.11	0.12	0.01
County	4.0	0.0	N/A	N/A	0.00	N/A	N/A	0.00	N/A
Non-UGA Areas	N/A	3.7	N/A	N/A	0.01	N/A	N/A	0.02	N/A

# Population

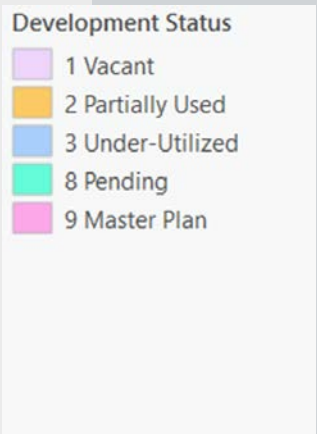
UGA	2016-2036 Population Growth Allocation	2036 Total Population Allocation	2036 Population Allocation Share	2016-2021 Population Growth Estimate	2021-2036 Remaining Population Growth	2021-2036 Population Capacity	Surplus (Deficit)	Surplus Percent
Bellingham	27,000	123,710	45%	6,280	20,720	31,392	10,672	9%
Birch Bay	4,593	12,822	5%	389	4,204	2,950	(1,254)	(10%)
Blaine	3,838	9,585	3%	551	3,287	11,324	8,037	84%
Cherry Point	0	43	0%	0	0	0	0	0%
Columbia Valley	1,170	4,448	2%	271	899	2,167	1,268	29%
Everson	1,080	3,907	1%	317	763	3,634	2,871	73%
Ferndale	5,942	19,591	7%	2,281	3,661	10,786	7,125	36%
Lynden	5,568	19,275	7%	1,668	3,900	8,467	4,567	24%
Nooksack	861	2,425	1%	174	687	1,283	596	25%
Sumas	760	2,323	1%	190	570	1,073	503	22%
<b>UGA Total</b>	<b>50,812</b>	<b>198,129</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>12,121</b>	<b>38,690</b>	<b>73,075</b>	<b>34,385</b>	<b>17%</b>



# Employment

UGA	2016-2036 Employment Growth Allocation	2036 Total Employment Allocation	2036 Employment Allocation Share	2016-2021 Employment Growth Estimate	2021-2036 Remaining Employment Growth	2021-2036 Employment Capacity	Surplus (Deficit)	Surplus Percent
Bellingham	19,688	75,000	62%	3,108	16,580	18,671	2,090	3%
Birch Bay	474	1,140	1%	55	419	573	154	13%
Blaine	1,823	5,159	4%	245	1,578	8,570	6,992	136%
Cherry Point*	735	2,883	2%	(141)	876	2,613	1,737	60%
Columbia Valley	312	444	0%	11	301	420	119	27%
Everson	523	1,312	1%	16	507	1,575	1,068	81%
Ferndale	3,478	9,372	8%	1,191	2,287	3,484	1,197	13%
Lynden	1,876	7,103	6%	622	1,254	4,038	2,785	39%
Nooksack	100	369	0%	8	92	355	263	71%
Sumas	387	1,145	1%	65	322	758	436	38%
<b>UGA Total</b>	<b>29,396</b>	<b>103,927</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>5,180</b>	<b>24,216</b>	<b>41,057</b>	<b>16,841</b>	<b>16%</b>

# Bellingham UGA



# Bellingham UGA Capacity for Population Growth (2021-2036)

Estimated Population Capacity: 31,392

Growth to Accommodate: 20,720

Capacity Surplus : + 10,672

# Bellingham UGA Capacity for Employment Growth (2021-2036)

Estimated Employment Capacity:	18,671
Growth to Accommodate:	<u>16,580</u>
Capacity Surplus:	+ 2,091

# Inconsistencies / Reasonable Measures

The City of Bellingham has not identified any inconsistencies between growth and the Comp Plan.

Therefore, the City has not identified any “reasonable measures” but does acknowledge that housing affordability is a critical issue that is driving Bellingham’s work program.



# Small City UGAs

# Small City UGA Capacity for Population Growth (2021-2036)

Estimated Population Capacity:	36,567
Growth to Accommodate:	<u>12,868</u>
Capacity Surplus:	+ 23,699

# Small City UGA Capacity for Employment Growth (2021-2036)

Estimated Employment Capacity: 18,780

Growth to Accommodate: 6,040

Capacity Surplus: + 12,740

# Small City Inconsistencies / Reasonable Measures

Five of the six small cities have not identified any inconsistencies between growth and their respective comprehensive plans.

Therefore, the these cities have not identified any “reasonable measures.”

# Birch Bay UGA

# Birch Bay UGA Capacity for Population Growth (2021-2036)

Estimated Population Capacity: 2,950

Growth to Accommodate: 4,204

Capacity Deficit: - 1,254



# Birch Bay UGA Capacity for Employment Growth (2021-2036)

Estimated Employment Capacity: 573

Growth to Accommodate: 419

Capacity Surplus : + 154

# Birch Bay UGA Inconsistencies / Reasonable Measures

*Reasonable Measures will be needed to address:*

**Residential Densities** - Achieved densities between 2016 and 2021 were below planned densities in Comp Plan Goal 2P.

**Population Growth** - Land capacity to accommodate the population projection adopted in Comp Plan Chapter 1.

**Single Family Housing** - Land capacity to accommodate the single family housing needs as set forth in Comp Plan Chapter 3.

# Columbia Valley UGA

# Columbia Valley UGA Capacity for Population Growth (2021-2036)

Estimated Population Capacity: 2,167

Growth to Accommodate: 899

Capacity Surplus : + 1,268

# Columbia Valley UGA Capacity for Employment Growth (2021-2036)

Estimated Employment Capacity:	420
Growth to Accommodate:	<u>301</u>
Capacity Surplus :	+ 119

# Columbia Valley UGA Inconsistencies / Reasonable Measures

*Reasonable Measures will be needed to address:*

- \* **Job Growth** - Growth that occurred between 2016 and 2021 was significantly below the planned growth projected in the *Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan* (Chapter 1).



# Cherry Point UGA

# Cherry Point UGA Capacity for Employment Growth (2021-2036)

Estimated Employment Capacity: 2,613

Growth to Accommodate: 876

Capacity Surplus : + 1,737

# Cherry Point UGA Inconsistencies / Reasonable Measures

*Reasonable Measures will be needed to address:*

- \* **Job Growth** - Growth that occurred between 2016 and 2021 was significantly below the planned growth projected in the *Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan* (Chapter 1).

# **Non-UGA Lands (Rural and Resource Lands)**

**Planned Population Growth: 16%**  
**Estimated Population Growth (2016-2021): 16%**

# Buildable Lands Report Review & Approval Process

- \* City/County Planner Group issued BLR – July 7, 2022
- \* County Planning Commission – public hearing – Oct 13, 2022
- \* County Council – public hearing – December 6, 2022 (*tentative date*)
- \* Adoption by County Council and each city council
- \* Adoption of “reasonable measures” if necessary



Countywide  
Planning  
Policies

Buildable  
Lands  
Methodology

Data  
Collection

Land Suitable  
for  
Development

Buildable  
Lands Report  
(2022)

Reasonable  
Measures

County and  
city comp  
plan updates  
(2025)





# Summary

