

2004 Clallam County Growth Management Update

Update to the Clallam County County-wide Comprehensive Staff Report to the Clallam County Planning Commission

November 5, 2004

*Prepared by the Clallam County Department of Community Development
223 East Fourth Street, Port Angeles (360) 417-2321*

Case Number: 2004-0003

Initiated By: Clallam County

Subject: Updates to the Clallam County County-wide Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 31.02 C.C.C.

Geographic Area: Unincorporated Clallam County

Planning Commission Public Hearing Date: November 17, 2004

Board of Clallam County Commissioners Public Hearing Date: *To be Scheduled After Receive Recommendation from Planning Commission.*

1.0 Issue

Updates to the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA), RCW 36.70A, added or amended definitions to clarify the intent of the state legislature of what is meant by the terms rural character, rural development, rural governmental services, and urban growth. Updates to the GMA under RCW 36.70A.200 added that essential public facilities include "state or regional transportation facilities as defined in RCW 47.06.140" and "secure community transition facilities as defined in RCW 71.09.020."

2.0 Proposed Amendments

Clallam County is proposing the following updates to the County-wide Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 31.02 C.C.C:

1. Add definitions for rural character, rural development, and rural governmental services as defined in RCW 36.70A.030 (14, 15, 16).
2. Amend definition for urban growth under CCC 31.02.050 (34) consistent with RCW 36.70A.030 (17).
3. Amend the definition for essential public facilities under CCC 31.02.050 (17) and related Plan provisions to include transportation facilities of significance as defined in RCW 47.06.140 and secure community transition facilities as defined in RCW 71.09.020.

The specific proposed Plan additions and amendments are as follows:

CCC 31.02.050, Definitions (New)

"Rural character" refers to the patterns of land use and development established by a county in the rural element of its comprehensive plan:

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(a) In which open space, the natural landscape, and vegetation predominate over the built environment;

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(b) That foster traditional rural lifestyles, rural-based economies, and opportunities to both live and work in rural areas;

(c) That provide visual landscapes that are traditionally found in rural areas and communities;

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(d) That are compatible with the use of the land by wildlife and for fish and wildlife habitat;

(e) That reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development;

(f) That generally do not require the extension of urban governmental services; and

(g) That are consistent with the protection of natural surface water flows and ground water and surface water recharge and discharge areas.

"Rural development" refers to development outside the urban growth area and outside agricultural, forest, and mineral resource lands designated pursuant to RCW 36.70A.170. Rural development can consist of a variety of uses and residential densities, including clustered residential development, at levels that are consistent with the preservation of rural character and the requirements of the rural element. Rural development does not refer to agriculture or forestry activities that may be conducted in rural areas.

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"Rural governmental services" or "rural services" include those public services and public facilities historically and typically delivered at an intensity usually found in rural areas, and may include domestic water systems, fire and police protection services, transportation and public transit services, and other public utilities associated with rural development and normally not associated with urban areas. Rural services do not include storm or sanitary sewers, except as otherwise authorized by RCW 36.70A.110(4).

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CCC 31.02.050, Definitions (Amended)

(17) "Essential public facilities" include those facilities that are typically difficult to site, such as airports, State education facilities and State or regional transportation facilities as defined in RCW 47.06.140, State and local correctional facilities, solid waste handling facilities, and inpatient facilities including substance abuse facilities, mental health facilities, group homes, and secure community transition facilities as defined in RCW 71.09.020.

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(34) "Urban growth" refers to growth that makes intensive use of land for the location of buildings, structures, and impermeable surfaces to such a degree as to be incompatible with the primary use of such land for the production of food, other agricultural products, or fiber, or the extraction of mineral resources, rural uses, rural development, and natural resource lands designated pursuant to RCW 36.70A.170. A pattern of more intensive rural development, as provided in RCW 36.70A.070 (5) (d), is not urban growth. When allowed to spread over wide areas, urban growth typically requires urban governmental services.

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31.02.130 Forest land issues (Amended)

(5) Essential Public Facilities in Forest Lands. Essential public facilities are public capital facilities of a County-wide or State-wide nature which are typically difficult to site. Those facilities which require locations where land use conflicts are minimized could be sited in commercial forest lands when suitable sites cannot be located within existing urban growth areas or rural areas.

Deleted: These facilities include airports, State education facilities, State or regional transportation facilities, State and local correctional facilities, solid waste handling facilities and in-patient facilities, such as substance abuse, mental health and group homes.

31.02.285 Public utilities, facilities and services (Amended)

(8) Essential Public Facilities. [Policy No. 17] Essential public facilities are public capital facilities of a County-wide or State-wide nature which are typically difficult to site. Siting of these facilities in forest or rural lands should be considered because these types of facilities might require locations where land use conflicts are minimized. Essential public facilities may be located in designated commercial forest or rural lands provided the County finds that such facilities cannot otherwise be located in urban areas, are largely self-contained or served by urban governmental services in a manner that adjacent rural or urban development is not promoted, and the facility does not cause nuisances (noise, dust, light, etc.) on adjacent properties that cannot be adequately mitigated. The siting of essential public facilities in resource lands should not interfere with resource management on adjacent resource lands.

Deleted: These facilities include airports, State education facilities, State or regional transportation facilities, State and local correctional facilities, solid waste handling facilities and in-patient facilities, such as substance abuse, mental health and group homes.

3.0 Analysis

The proposed changes described under Section 2.0 of this Report are consistent with updates to the GMA. Adoption of these changes will help clarify what comprehensive plan terms such as rural character, rural development, rural governmental services, and urban growth mean consistent with the intent of the GMA.

The proposed amendment to the definition of “essential public facilities” under CCC 31.02.050 (17) adds to the list of what the GMA considers are such facilities. RCW 36.70A.200 directs local governments to establish a process for identifying and siting essential public facilities. The related proposed changes under CCC 31.02.130 (5) and CCC 31.02.285 (8) delete duplicate definitions of “essential public facilities.”

4.0 Recommendation

Based on the proceeding analysis, staff recommends approval of the proposed amendments described in Section 2.0 of this Report.