

## **Land Use Element**

### **Appendix LU-1 – Buildable Lands Report Summary**

The following provides the background for developing the *2012 Buildable Lands Report for Snohomish County* and methodology used in the Report to create the data included in the charts and tables below that served to establish Granite Falls' population and employment capacity.

**BACKGROUND:** The 2012 Buildable Lands Report responds to the review and evaluation requirements of the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) in RCW 36.70A.215, commonly referred to as the “buildable lands” statute. The report was prepared by staff from the County and the cities using the Snohomish County Tomorrow (SCT) process.

The 2012 report is the third buildable lands review and evaluation report completed by Snohomish County and its cities. It is based on the methods and approaches first developed and used by the county and cities for the two previous buildable lands reports prepared by Snohomish County Tomorrow in 2002 and 2007. The current report evaluates whether there is sufficient suitable land within UGAs to accommodate the forecasted residential, commercial and industrial growth anticipated through the end of the 20-year GMA planning period.

If the results of the buildable lands review and evaluation reveal that planned densities are not being achieved or that deficiencies in buildable land supply exist within UGAs, cities and counties are required to adopt and implement measures, other than adjusting urban growth areas, that are reasonably likely to ensure sufficient buildable lands throughout the remaining portion of the 20-year GMA planning period.

**METHODOLOGY:** Using geographic information systems (GIS) technology, the analysis began with a spring 2011 extract of all Assessor parcel records within incorporated and unincorporated portions of the Snohomish County urban growth area (UGA). Parcels with additional development potential were classified into one of four categories:

- Vacant – parcels without structures.
- Partially-used – parcels where existing structures use a portion of the site and where additional development is possible without demolition.
- Re-developable – parcels with existing structures that are expected to be demolished and replaced with new and more intensive uses.
- Pending – parcels with pending applications for new construction.

Structures existing as of April 1, 2011 were considered developed and counted as part of the population or employment base, while everything proposed, built or occupied after that date was counted as future capacity for the 2012 report.

Future land use information was then transferred to individual parcels using the City's zoning classifications within the City limits and Comprehensive Plan designations for parcels within unincorporated urban areas.

Unbuildable land area in developable parcels was then removed from the buildable lands inventory for parcels affected by: critical areas and buffers (steep slopes, wetlands, streams and lakes, frequently flooded areas); major utility easements; future arterial rights-of-way and land needed for other capital facilities (schools, parks, etc.). The unbuildable land estimate within parcels was further increased by 5% to account for unmapped critical/unbuildable areas.

Observed development densities (represented as housing units and/or jobs per buildable acre) derived from an analysis of actual residential, commercial and industrial development activity within both City and County plan and/or zone designations were then applied to the parcel-level estimates of buildable acres. This resulted in an estimate of additional housing units and employment capacity by parcel.

The resulting additional capacity estimates were then reduced to account for development uncertainties. These reductions pertained to uncertainties regarding: ability to obtain necessary capital facilities and services to support urban development over the next 20 years; removal of land for miscellaneous public/institutional uses (churches, schools, municipal purposes, etc.); and market availability (property that is held out for development over the next 20 years).

Once these adjustments for uncertainties were made, the additional residential and employment capacities were aggregated from parcels to the city and UGA compared with the adopted population and employment targets, contained in Appendix B of the Countywide Planning Policies for Snohomish County.

The figures and tables provided in the following pages were taken directly from the *Results by UGA* section of the *2012 Buildable Lands Report for Snohomish County*.