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DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING

STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY, TRADE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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February 5, 2009

Mr. Ron Henrickson  
Post Office Box 947  
Friday Harbor, Washington 98250

RE: Proposed amendment to Appendix One, altering the proportion of the projected population increase on San Juan Island allotted to Friday Harbor urban growth area.

Dear Mr. Henrickson:

Growth Management Services received your proposed amendments to San Juan County's comprehensive plan as required under RCW 36.70A.106. These materials were received on January 12, 2008, and processed with the Material ID No. 13810.

The proposed changes to Appendix One of the comprehensive plan appear to be aimed at clarifying and correcting the existing 2005 appendix. We note the allocation of population to urban growth areas is already addressed in **Section F, Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) Population Forecasts.**

This section states that the Growth Management Act mandates a goal of accommodating 50 percent of the county's total increase in population growth over a 20-year planning period. Although the Growth Management Act doesn't actually mandate a specific percentage of growth be directed towards urban growth areas, the county's choice to adopt a 50 percent target is consistent with Growth Management Act Goal (1) "Encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner," Goal (2) "Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development," and Goal (4) "Encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of this state, [and] promote a variety of residential densities and housing types..."

Under the subheading "UGA Goals for Growth" the existing plan states:

*"The overall GMA goal for UGAs is to plan for (1) future growth while reducing sprawl in rural lands, and (2) orderly growth within the County's towns. In order to accomplish this goal, countywide population growth is calculated for the first and last year of the expected planning time period, and **50 percent of that amount is allocated to the UGAs.**"*

Under the subheading "Designation and Location of Urban Growth Areas" the existing plan states:

*"Following the district-by-district calculations of population growth allocations whereby UGA growth is determined, the **total UGA growth population of the three districts should equal 50 percent of the increase for the County's overall population growth.**"*

The proposed amendments to **Table 8** align the population allocations to match these existing goals. The county has also proposed adding the following sentence to **Section D.** The Office of Financial Management Forecasts, under the subheading "County Unincorporated vs. Town of Friday Harbor Population Forecasts:"



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*"A goal of the county, consistent with the GMA, is to encourage new growth within the town. Consequently, 50 percent of the new population growth is allocated to the town, reference Table 8."*

In its present location this sentence could be read to indicate that 50 percent of *countywide* population growth is allocated to *the Town*. The county may consider clarifying this, as it appears the intent is that 50 percent of *San Juan Island* growth should be allocated to *the town and its associated UGA*.

Also, does this statement belong in Section D, which addresses countywide population forecasts from Office of Financial Management? The county may consider relocating the sentence to Section F, under the subhead "*Designation and Location of Urban Growth Areas*," in the paragraph that addresses Friday Harbor, which is followed by a subheading that addresses the 50 percent allocation to the other two (non-municipal) urban growth areas.

Finally, we note that Section F accurately states that "*UGA planning requires a coordinated effort between the county and Friday Harbor to achieve appropriate growth management through the UGA process.*" It might be worthwhile for the county and town to establish a regular forum to address the details of planning for urban growth areas, capital facilities, transition-of-governance and other issues.

If you have any questions or concerns about our comments, please call me at 360.725.3058.

Sincerely,



Tim Gates  
Senior Planner  
Growth Management Services

TG:bv

cc: Leonard Bauer, AICP, Managing Director, Growth Management Services  
David Andersen, AICP, Plan Review and Technical Assistance Manager, Growth Management Services