

# Summary

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In December 1999, Snohomish County contracted with ECONorthwest to prepare this report, which describes methods to be used by the County and its cities in meeting state requirements for a buildable lands analysis. This report covers only the first step of a full buildable lands analysis: determining and getting agreement on methods to be used by jurisdictions to collect, analyze, and present information about land supply and demand. It provides a written description of protocols for data collection and analysis, but not the databases or analyses themselves, which will be developed later based on the methods described in this report.

## PURPOSE

This report describes cooperative, interjurisdictional methods for estimating the amount of buildable land for Snohomish County and its 20 cities that address:

- State requirements, especially as described in the buildable lands guidelines document issued by the Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED).
- Both five-year and annual data collection requirements
- Data needed to conduct the five-year buildable land analysis, and estimated costs of collecting and maintaining it
- The strengths and weaknesses of systems now used by Snohomish County jurisdictions that generate information related to buildable lands
- Funding priorities for allocating the state buildable lands grant funds within Snohomish County
- A schedule of tasks and responsibilities for completing the integrated buildable lands inventory.

Consistent with the GMA requirements, this buildable lands methodology applies only to buildable land supply evaluation within UGAs. It does not address buildable land supply evaluation outside the UGA in rural and resource areas.

While the State's Buildable Lands Program requires land inventories (land supply), the term *buildable lands analysis* does not really cover the full State requirements, which include an evaluation of *land need* also. Thus, the methods described in this report address not only *land supply*, but also (to a lesser extent) *land demand*.

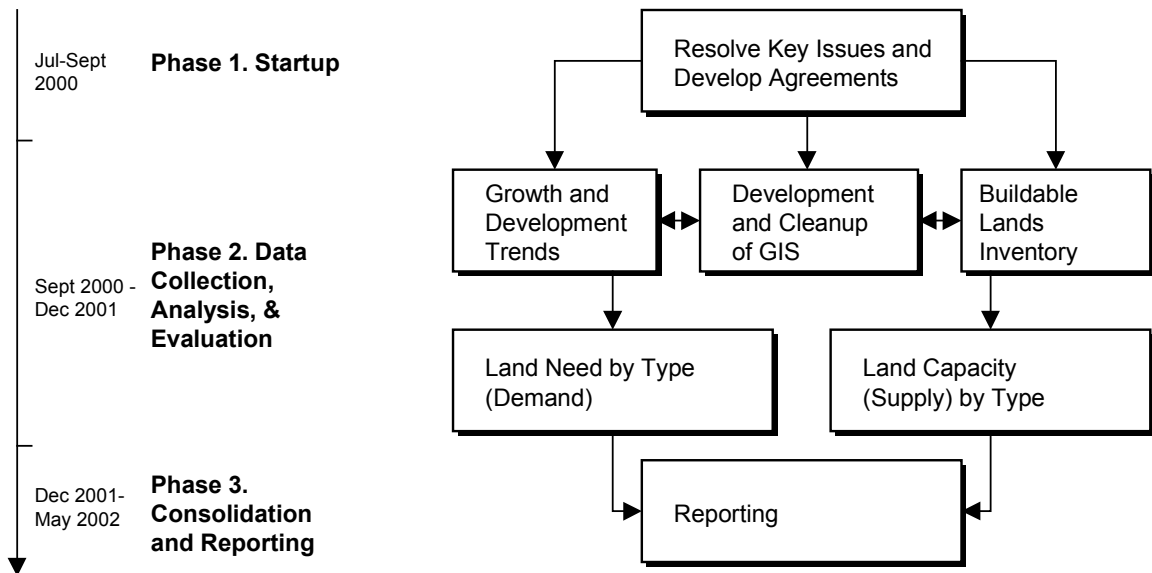
## OVERVIEW OF PROJECT PHASES AND SCHEDULE

The work program is divided into three principal phases:

- *Phase 1: Startup.* Work the County needs to do to prepare for implementation of the remaining parts of the work program
- *Phase 2: Data Collection, Analysis, and Evaluation.* Gathering and assembling the data on development history, demand for land, the buildable lands inventory, evaluation of the data consistent with GMA requirements; and
- *Phase 3: Consolidation and Reporting.* Comparing land inventory data with development trends, and land need estimates. Preparation of the 5-year report.

Figure S-1 provides a conceptual overview of how the three phases fit together with the GMA data collection requirements described in Appendix A, and an approximation of time elapsed for each element.

**Figure S-1. Relationship of work program and schedule to GMA requirements**



The work program shown in Figure S-1 is based on a 22-month schedule beginning July 2000. The startup phase would last approximately 2-3 months depending on the length of time needed to get agreements in place, and whether the County decides to use a consultant to assist in implementation. The data collection portion of the second phase would last approximately 6-12 months: the biggest uncertainty here is the time at which the County can have its various GIS data layers (including assessment data) in a readily accessible format. The data analysis portion of the second phase would last 6-9 months. The reporting phase would last about 3-6 months, depending

on the amount and type of local review and revision.

## **OVERVIEW OF PROJECT PHASES AND TASKS**

Following is a brief overview of work program tasks by phase. Each phase of the project, and the specific methodologies are described in more detail in the chapters 4, 5 and 6.

### **PHASE I: START-UP**

The Start-up Phase includes work the County needs to do to prepare for implementation of the remaining parts of the work program. Much of the work that one would otherwise expect to find at the start of a buildable land analysis will already have been completed as the part of the project this report summarizes. Methods and data sources have been identified, and various jurisdictions have reviewed and agreed to those methods. This Phase includes:

- Agreement on final methods, definitions and jurisdictional data collection responsibilities;
- Agreement on project management and coordination;
- Staffing and staff assignments;
- Consultant search and selection (if consultants are used); and
- Project kick-off meeting(s).

The Start-up Phase lays the groundwork for the remaining tasks in the work program. It also sets in place systems for how the project will be managed, coordination with local jurisdictions, and any additional county policies that may be needed to implement the buildable lands program.

### **PHASE II: DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND EVALUATION**

This Phase provides a detailed description of tasks with recommendations about procedures for collecting and monitoring data on land capacity, growth and development, land needs (demand) estimates, planned and actual densities, policies, and interjurisdictional coordination. A summary of the outputs of this phase is presented below (the specific methods are described in Chapter 5).

#### **Buildable Land Demand Analysis (Type and Density of Development)**

1. *Development history.* Determine residential densities and intensities of commercial and industrial development achieved during the period 1 January 1995 to 31 December 2000 in cities and unincorporated UGAs:

- a. Calculate single-family residential net densities in recorded formal plats during 1995-2000 in cities and unincorporated UGAs by comprehensive plan and zoning designation.
  - b. Calculate single-family residential net densities in recorded short plats during 1995-2000 in cities and unincorporated UGAs by comprehensive plan and zoning designation.<sup>1</sup>
  - c. Calculate multiple family residential net densities for new apartments/condos from building permits issued during 1995-2000 in cities and unincorporated UGAs by comprehensive plan and zoning designation.
  - d. Summarize net residential density results by generalized/regional comprehensive plan designation categories (low, medium, and high density residential) by city and unincorporated UGA.
  - e. Calculate net floor area ratios for new commercial and industrial structures from building permits issued between 1 January 1995 and 31 December 2000 in cities and unincorporated UGAs by comprehensive plan and zoning designation.
  - f. Summarize net floor area ratio results by generalized/regional comprehensive plan designation categories (commercial and industrial) by city and unincorporated UGA.
2. *Land Need Calculation.* Determine remaining residential, commercial, and industrial land requirements necessary to achieve the adjusted<sup>2</sup> Countywide Planning Policy 2012 population and employment targets by city and unincorporated UGA:
- a. Document the number of net new housing units developed by type (single-family and multiple family including subsets of each) and density range from 1 January 1992 to 31 December 2000 for each city and unincorporated UGA.
  - b. Calculate remaining housing unit needs by type and density range for the 2001-2012 period for each city and unincorporated UGA using 1992-2000 past trend analysis and extrapolation, combined with relevant adopted housing policy direction, to reach adjusted 2012 population targets (also add in any “redeveloped” housing units from land supply calculations)

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<sup>1</sup> This step is only necessary for jurisdictions where lots created by short subdivision during 1995-2000 constitute a substantial number or proportion of total lots recorded during 1995-2000.

<sup>2</sup> Adjusted for annexations to April 1, 2001

- c. Calculate net buildable land area needed by generalized/regional comprehensive plan designation category to accommodate the remaining housing unit needs for the 2001-2012 period at net residential densities observed from 1995-2000 for each city and unincorporated UGA.
  - d. Document net new commercial and industrial employment added from March 1990 to March 2001 for each city and unincorporated UGA.
  - e. Calculate remaining commercial and industrial employment growth anticipated for the 2001-2012 period for each city and unincorporated UGA using 1990-2001 past trend analysis and extrapolation, to reach adjusted 2012 employment targets (also add in employment associated with any “redeveloped” employment sites from land supply calculations)
  - f. Calculate net buildable land area needed by generalized/regional comprehensive plan designation category (commercial and industrial) to accommodate the remaining commercial and industrial employment anticipated for the 2001-2012 period at net commercial and industrial floor area ratios observed from 1995-2000 for each city and unincorporated UGA.
3. *Comparison.* Compare the results of steps 2(c) and 2(f) to the results of step k below to determine if an adequate supply of buildable land exists within UGAs.

### **Buildable Land Supply Analysis**

The principal steps are:

- a. Classify all land as developed, under-utilized/redevelopable, partially-vacant, vacant, or undevelopable.
- b. Estimate total acres of land by comprehensive plan designation.
- c. Estimate total vacant acres of land by comprehensive plan designation.
- d. Estimate total unbuilt acres of partially-vacant parcels by comprehensive plan designation.
- e. Estimate total under-utilized/redevelopable acres by comprehensive plan designation
- f. Calculate gross potentially buildable acres by comprehensive plan designation (c + d + e)

- g. Calculate total acres considered built-out (developed), by comprehensive plan designation (b – f)
- h. Estimate acres of land with environmental constraints/critical areas which preclude development on remaining developable acres by comp plan designation and type of critical area:
  - (1) Wetlands and buffers
  - (2) Streams and buffers
  - (3) Geologically hazardous areas
  - (4) Aquifer recharge areas
  - (5) Fish and wildlife habitat
  - (6) Frequently flooded areas
- i. Calculate total estimated gross buildable unconstrained land area by comprehensive plan designation (f – h)
- j. Estimate the amount of the total estimated gross buildable land area by comprehensive plan designation that is:<sup>3</sup>
  - (1) Required for future rights-of-way
  - (2) Required for other future public purposes
  - (3) Considered unlikely to have adequate water/sewer facilities provided during the remaining portion of the 20-year planning period
  - (4) Considered unlikely to be made available for development during the remaining portion of the 20-year planning period
- k. Calculate total estimated net buildable land area by generalized/regional comprehensive plan designation categories to compare with estimated land requirements (i – j).

### **Phase III: Consolidation and reporting**

The final phase builds on the data gathered in Phase 2 to answer the key policy questions required by the GMA and presents a framework for the preparation of the five-year growth monitoring report. Those

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<sup>3</sup> Jurisdictions should ensure that these land estimates do not double-count land already removed from the buildable land supply due to previous consideration of environmental constraints in step h or market availability in determining land classification in step a.

policy questions are described in the Phase 2 analysis requirements above.

This section concludes with a description of the report development and review process and a proposed outline of the five-year growth monitoring report for Snohomish County.

## SCHEDULE OF TASKS

Figure S-2 shows a general schedule of tasks, by phase and month. The schedule assumes the project will begin in July 2000 and be completed by May 2002. The deadline for completing the five-year growth monitoring report is September 2002. The figure also shows that some Phase II tasks can begin during Phase I.

**Figure S-2. Schedule of tasks**

Tasks	2000					2001					2002													
	Phase I					Phase II					Phase III													
	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
<b>Phase I: Startup</b>																								
1.1 Assignment of County Project Manager	█																							
1.2 Project Organization		█																						
1.3 TAC Kick-Off Meeting			█																					
1.4 Consultant Selection				█																				
1.5 Coordination of County, City, and Consultant Data Collection					█																			
<b>Phase II: Data Analysis</b>																								
2.1 Standardized Comprehensive Plan And Zone Categories		█																						
2.2 Buildable Lands Inventory			█																					
2.3 Growth And Development History				█																				
2.4 Development Pipeline					█																			
2.5 Estimate of Land Demand and Capacity																								
<b>Phase III: Consolidation and Reporting</b>																								
3.1 Consolidation																								
3.2 Five-Year Growth Monitoring Report																								

## PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

### PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING

The County will manage the work program. The likely manager is Steve Toy, who will be assisted by staff in his department. Other County staff will assist Toy on various aspects of the work:

- **County Assessor.** The assessment staff are not staff to the project, but some time from assessment staff will probably be needed occasionally to make sure the assessment data are correct and being interpreted properly. The budget for the work program assumes that this small amount of time is covered as part of typical inter-office coordination between planning and assessment staff: there is no specific budget allocation for assessment staff.
- **GIS.** The County is updating its GIS capabilities, and particularly its ability to use assessment data, which is critical to the methods proposed in this project. These activities are already part of the County's current effort to establish basic GIS functionality using a countywide parcel base map. One key feature of the County's GIS

development plan involves a decentralized approach for user creation and maintenance of centrally-stored GIS data. As such, the cartography section of County Planning and Development Services has developed significant GIS capabilities that will be applied to this project.

In addition to County staff, each city will have staff involved in data collection and review. For jurisdictions with staff planners, the expectation is that they would have these responsibilities (see Chapter 5 for a discussion of specific tasks). For small jurisdictions with no planners, some of the work may be able to be done by city staff, or County staff or consultants may need to do the bulk of the technical work.

The work program also presumes modest review and assistance from service providers, but such assistance is presumed to be standard coordination and does not have a budget allocation.

## **PROJECT REVIEW**

The work program presumes that the current Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) remains in place for this project: representatives may change, but the interests represented should not. For the bulk of the project, it is the TAC that provides technical review.

At a few key places in the work program, more extensive public review will be desirable. The public body that this project reports to is Snohomish County Tomorrow (SCT), and, ultimately, the County Council and City Councils. As with any other GMA planning process, there are also opportunities for cities and the County to gather public input on the development of the buildable lands data and analysis by holding public workshops, meetings with stakeholder groups, and planning commission workshops. Through these forums, the general public will have an opportunity to review and comment on the data and materials being developed to address the buildable lands requirement at the individual city or UGA level.

## **PROJECT COSTS**

A key issue in the implementation of the buildable lands work program is the cost to the County and cities. Table S-1 summarizes estimated project effort and cost by jurisdiction type.<sup>4</sup> The estimates show a total project cost of about \$350,000. The majority of the project costs is for labor (\$339,000). We estimate that the project will require about 11,500 hours of staff time to complete at a melded hourly rate of \$30 per hour.

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<sup>4</sup> The cost estimates do not reflect the use of consultants to implement portions of the buildable lands program.



Because the County is the designated coordinating entity for this project, and because they will be responsible for a substantial amount of the technical work, 61% of total project cost is allocated to the County. The TAC recommends that the small cities in “Group 4” be eligible for buildable lands funding, but that they be given the option of participating in the buildable lands data collection effort as a condition of receiving the funding. For Group 4 cities that decide not to participate, the County agrees to do the necessary buildable lands work for them. Funds initially allocated to the small cities that “opt out” in this way would be retained by the County to help cover the costs of doing their work.

A more detailed discussion of the cost estimates, including rate assumptions, city groupings, and detailed labor estimates is presented in Appendix D.

**Table S-1. Estimated project effort and cost (all costs in thousands)**

Jurisdiction type	Staff Hours	Labor Cost	Direct Cost	Total Cost	% of Total Cost
Snohomish County	7,128	\$210	\$4	<b>\$214</b>	61%
Consultants	0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>	0%
Group-1 Cities (3)	1,486	\$44	\$2	<b>\$46</b>	13%
Group-2 Cities (8)	1,932	\$57	\$3	<b>\$60</b>	17%
Group-3 Cities (4)	506	\$15	\$1	<b>\$16</b>	4%
Group-4 Cities (5)	448	\$13	\$1	<b>\$14</b>	4%
Subtotal All Cities	4,372	\$129	\$7	<b>\$136</b>	39%
<b>Total County, Consultant, All Cities</b>	<b>11,500</b>	<b>\$339</b>	<b>\$11</b>	<b>\$350</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: ECONorthwest, 2000