ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS INTRODUCTION

The alternatives considered during the SEPA review include the No-Action Alternative and three managed growth alternatives. The major difference between the alternatives is the manner in which growth is distributed throughout the County. The No-Action Alternative assumes a growth pattern that would continue to follow past trends. The three directed growth alternatives (Alternatives 2, 3 and 4) reflect the CWPP, goals of the GMA, and the community's vision for growth in Island County. Alternative 2 would direct growth to Municipal Urban Growth Areas, Alternative 3 would direct growth to Municipal Urban Growth Areas and Rural Community Centers, and Alternative 4 would direct growth to existing Private Residential Communities, Rural Community Centers, and Municipal Urban Growth Areas. The four alternatives and their environmental consequences are described below.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUMMARY

The proposal for which this EIS is being prepared is the adoption, by the Board of Island County Commissioners, of the Island County Comprehensive Plan, prepared consistent with the requirements of the Growth Management Act, passed by the Washington State Legislature in 1990. The comprehensive plan explains how the County will accommodate anticipated growth over the next 20 years, while maintaining those rural qualities of the island environment which are considered valuable to the citizens of Island County.

The draft SEPA EIS has been integrated with this draft Comprehensive Plan. The SEPA review analyzed alternatives for accommodating growth for the next 20 years in Island County, the probable significant adverse impacts of the alternatives considered, and potential mitigation measures to address these impacts. Four alternatives were analyzed:

• Alternative 1 - No Action	Existing plan, dispersed growth without locational controls to prevent sprawl.
• Alternative 2 - Major Urban Growth Areas	New comprehensive plan. Growth directed to: cities and their designated urban growth areas (UGAs).
• Alternative 3 - Rural Activity Centers	New comprehensive plan. Growth mostly directed to UGAs as well as rural activity centers (RACs). Some PRC expansion.
• Alternative 4 - Dispersed Growth	New comprehensive plan. Growth distributed more evenly to UGAs, RACs, and existing Private Residential Communities (PRCs)

Alternative 4 was selected as the preferred alternative. This alternative more accurately accounts for the current pattern of development in the County but constrains further expansion of this pattern in a manner that would result in sprawl. This pattern satisfies the vision of Island County,

complies with the goals and objectives of the GMA and CWPP, and reduces environmental consequences, to the extent possible, that would result from increased population growth in Island County. This Comprehensive Plan presents Alternative 4 as an optimal land use pattern and policies for directing growth to UGAs, RACs and PRCs, and for preserving the rural character of Island County.

Measures to mitigate potential environmental consequences that the new adopted Comprehensive Plan and future regulatory efforts could implement are described in Section III of this Comprehensive Plan. Unavoidable environmental consequences would still, however, result from growth in Island County. These include the following:

- New development in Island County will result in site specific grading, filling, excavation, removal of plants and trees, and other disturbances to the earth. Although these impacts cannot be eliminated, they can be mitigated through a sound comprehensive plan and well-designed mitigation measures.
- As growth occurs, there would be an increase in the source of air pollutants, potentially degrading air quality.
- As urban development continues, some increases in impervious surfaces would be expected, potentially decreasing groundwater recharge, reducing surface water flows during dry periods, and increasing flooding problems.
- As urban growth occurs, increases in pollutant sources associated with urban uses would occur, potentially contaminating surface waters and groundwater.
- Demand for potable water will increase as population grows.
- Some habitat loss will occur with new development.
- Demand for power and natural resources will grow with increased residential, commercial and industrial development.
- Increased population growth and new development may increase potential noise sources.
- The need for more housing units of various types increases with population growth.
- Potential sources of light and glare increase as more development occurs.
- Increased development of natural landscapes reduces overall aesthetic quality.
- Increase in population can decrease the supply of recreation opportunities.
- Increased population will result in increased traffic and demand for transportation system improvements.

New growth and development will result in increased demand for public services and utilities, including fire, law enforcement, school facilities, park and recreation facilities, stormwater facilities and sewer and solid waste collection services.

ALTERNATIVE 1 - NO-ACTION (EXISTING PLAN-SPRAWL)

Under Alternative 1, a new comprehensive plan would not be adopted. The existing plan and zoning regulations would provide direction for future growth in Island County. There would be no change in existing County policies regarding the overall distribution of future land use patterns, population distributions, employment, resource lands protection, and residential development. Growth would continue based on past trends and would not be linked to the capacity of capital facilities. Residential growth would continue to disperse to the rural areas of Island County.

Environmental Consequences

If the No-Action Alternative were selected, new growth and development would continue at its current patterns. Growth would continue to be dispersed, and continuing this trend may have more severe impacts on rural lands than the other alternatives. If no attempt is made by the County to control growth in rural areas, the pressure to develop natural resource lands would likely increase. Potential land use policy implications and environmental consequences of Alternative 1 are discussed below.

Land Use: Current trends of sprawling suburban development; uncoordinated regional growth; infrastructure and capital facilities are inadequate and expanded at significant taxpayer cost.

Density: Overall low densities. New lots could be created at residential densities ranging from 3.5 dwelling units per acre in the existing Residential zone, 5 acre lots in the Rural Residential Zone, and 20 acre lots in the Forest Management and Agricultural zones. Additionally, greater densities may be achieved in the Rural Residential, Forest Management, and Agricultural zones through the PRD and TDR process. Lots established prior to the effective date of the new zoning regulations which do not meet minimum lot size requirements will be considered legal non-conforming lots capable of supporting uses intended for the zone.

Infilling: Moderate to low in urban growth areas; infilling of existing plats neither encouraged nor discouraged.

Resource Lands: Possible reclassification to non-resource uses; existing zoning offers moderate protection of resource lands.

Rural Areas: Become more urbanized or suburban in nature; increased urban levels of service needed.

Urban Growth Areas: Cities continue to expand by annexing unincorporated urban growth lands developed at suburban standards.

Growth and Population: Haphazard growth (historic population trends reveal approximately 32% growth in cities and 68% growth in unincorporated areas of the County); sprawl development; high land consumption per capita in rural areas; timing not dependent upon capital improvement programs.

***North Whidbey** - Current growth management policy:* Under this alternative, development patterns continue subject to current policy. Approximately 50% of the expected North Whidbey growth would be directed into the Oak Harbor UGA. The remaining population would be directed into Private Residential Communities (35%) and the rural dispersed areas (15%).

***Central Whidbey** - Current growth management policy:* The Coupeville UGA would experience a limited amount of growth in the twenty year time frame. Eighteen percent of the expected population growth in Central Whidbey would be directed into the UGA. The remainder of the growth is nearly equally split between PRCs and the rural dispersed areas of the region.

***South Whidbey** - Current growth management policy:* Little growth would be accommodated by the Langley UGA (approximately 9% of growth). PRCs absorb about 50% of the expected growth. The other 40% of the population growth would be directed into the RCCs and rural dispersed areas.

***Camano Island** - Current growth management policy:* Under Alternative 1, about two thirds of growth would be directed into the existing PRC lots and the remaining third into the rural dispersed areas. There are currently no UGAs or RCCs on Camano Island.

Development Impacts

High land consumption (actual and per capita); substantial development outside of incorporated areas; city annexations of suburban land; urban development pressures to convert agricultural lands to non-resource use; urban expansion and development in floodplain areas; rural residential development encroaching into forest resource areas; impacts on critical areas; need for significant and costly public facilities and services.

Transportation: Auto-oriented; major investment in new roads.

Protection of Environment and Critical Areas: Flood Damage Protection Ordinance used for floodplain regulation; Environmental Policy and Zoning and Land Development Ordinances for other critical areas; inconsistent regulatory approaches and various interpretations in regional and site specific review of land use proposals.

Open Space Corridors/Greenbelt Areas: Lacks regional approach and incentives; forest, agricultural lands, and rural areas presently provide open space amenities.

Economic and Employment Areas: Single-family development pressure on existing economic, commercial, and industrial uses; economic development sited without regard to sufficiency of economic growth.

Public Services Facilities and Utilities: Provided based on existing plans. Proliferation of on-site septic systems and small water systems.

Community Identity: Communities become more homogeneous as growth and development connect communities together. Rural areas continue to receive suburban

sprawl. Loss of individual community identity may occur as discreet communities become mingled with others at their fringes.

Incentives to Achieve Comprehensive Plan Goals

Open Space Taxation Programs; Planned Residential Development, Transfer of Development Rights, bonus density and amenities.

Topography/Geology/Soils. The No-Action Alternative would result in detrimental effects on the geology and soils of rural areas, contributing to erosion problems such as landsliding, accelerated runoff and erosion due to changes in the landscape incurred by construction. Impacts from continued dispersed development would in turn diffuse the impacts of development throughout the County, rather than projecting impacts onto a few specific areas. The cumulative geologic impacts in the County would increase as growth continued and may not be immediately apparent due to their dispersed nature. The sources of cumulative impacts are often more difficult to gage and control than point sources. Ultimately, the geologic impacts under this alternative may pose more challenging problems in the future as the cumulative effects manifest throughout the County.

Air. Under the No-Action Alternative the lack of urban centers will reduce the ability to efficiently provide transit or other alternative transportation modes. The private automobile, a major source of air pollution, would continue as the primary mode of transportation. Commercial, industrial, and other stationary sources of air pollution would be allowed in rural areas of the County, potentially decreasing the air quality in the rural areas. Residential growth in rural areas would likely increase wood smoke pollution. Because more dispersed development would be allowed with Alternative 1, air quality impacts to the areas around the incorporated cities would more likely be less than under the other alternatives.

Water. Under Alternative 1, rural Island County may experience greater development and associated increases in impervious surfaces than under the other alternatives. The primary impacts associated with such a development pattern would be increased peak stormwater runoff during storms, causing greater risk of flooding and reduced surface water flows during dry periods. An increase in impervious surfaces would also reduce the amount of potential recharge into surface and groundwater. Reduced surface water flows can damage fish habitat and increase the potential concentration of pollutants in surface waters. Reduced groundwater recharge could increase the potential for seawater intrusion and contamination.

The dispersed pattern of development may also be associated with on-site septic system development, use of individual well systems, and greater potential for under-treated or untreated disposal of pollutants. All of these factors may contribute to a greater potential for generalized groundwater contamination under this Alternative.

A continuation of the existing land use and land use decision processes will result in continued sprawling development throughout the County. One of the results of this type of development will be the continuation of the proliferation of small, unconnected water

systems and individual wells. Uncontrolled proliferation of small water systems and individual wells could impact the existing groundwater supplies and could negatively impact the groundwater resource.

Plants and Animals. As new growth spreads throughout the rural area of Island County, existing habitat areas would be cleared and wildlife habitat lost. Streams and supported aquatic life would be affected by stormwater runoff from the new development, clearing and accelerated erosion. Erosion and consequent sedimentation of riparian areas and streams may damage habitat for aquatic organisms. Grading and clearing activities could threaten sensitive plant species. Existing functioning wildlife corridors which serve as habitat and migration routes may be severed under this alternative.

Because development under this alternative could occur on a scattered and widespread basis, the potential for significant County-wide negative impacts may be greater than under the other alternatives.

Energy and Natural Resources. Under Alternative 1, detached single-family residential development would continue to be the primary type of residential growth. Detached dwelling units may be less efficient in their energy consumption than multi-unit buildings. In addition, the scattered, widespread development pattern may result in a less efficient delivery system for electrical energy, poor access to natural gas, and increased reliance on wood heating fuel. Greater occurrence of single-occupant vehicle trips, and longer automobile trip lengths, may result from this alternative as compared to the other alternatives, in turn resulting in higher fuel consumption rates. These factors would combine to result in a relatively greater impact on energy sources than may occur under the other alternatives.

Environmental Health. Under Alternative 1, rural areas may experience an increase in noise levels due to increased population and associated traffic. In areas near the incorporated cities, noise impacts could be relatively less under this alternative, because growth is not concentrated in these areas. Noise impacts adjacent to airports would be the greatest under this alternative as more development occurs near these areas.

Land and Shoreline Use. Under the No-Action Alternative, no new County-wide Comprehensive Plan would be adopted. The existing Comprehensive Plan and zoning would not be updated and would continue to serve as the major land use policy guide for the County. UGAs would not be designated and new growth would be permitted to disperse to rural areas of the County as allowed by existing zoning.

The County would not be in compliance with the requirements of the GMA and the CWPP. The GMA requires development of a comprehensive plan that contains land use, housing, transportation, public facilities, utilities, and rural elements. The elements of the comprehensive plan must be internally consistent, as well as consistent with the Optimal Land Use Map. The existing comprehensive plan does not respond to these requirements. The No-Action Alternative provides little predictability in land use development, leading to difficulties in providing urban services, a requirement of the GMA and CWPP.

Residential development would continue to follow current trends. Single-family homes would be the predominant housing type and few new multi-family homes would be developed in the unincorporated County. Housing would most likely continue to be a problem for households below median income. Residential development may be attracted to less expensive land away from existing incorporated cities or developed areas.

Sources of light and glare would gradually increase throughout the County under the No-Action Alternative. The most noticeable changes would be in rural areas.

Development pressure could result in loss of vegetation along waterways and wetlands, destroying some scenic views. Views of scenic ridges and shorelines could also be lost. Spread of development in rural areas could eliminate open space views and rural ambiance. As growth spreads throughout the rural areas of the County, the rural character of these areas may convert to a more developed, suburban character. Commercial and industrial land uses may also locate in rural areas and contribute to the loss of rural character.

With the No-Action Alternative, the designation of recreation and open space areas would be less than with the other alternatives.

More disruption or destruction of cultural sites would likely occur with the No-Action Alternative because undeveloped rural areas would be disturbed. However, this alternative probably provides the greatest opportunity to discover unknown cultural sites in rural areas.

Under this Alternative, the dispersed development pattern would potentially place the most pressure to convert natural resource lands to other uses.

Transportation. Under the No-Action Alternative, the dispersed pattern of growth may impair the County's ability to anticipate and plan transportation improvements. Decisions regarding road improvements, transit service, non-motorized facilities and other transportation improvements would be made in reaction to development as it occurs.

The single occupant vehicle would continue to be the primary mode of transportation. The dispersed, low density pattern of development in the rural areas would not support transit or other alternative modes of transportation, such as ridesharing, vanpools, or demand-generated transit. Therefore, Alternative 1 would likely increase automobile trip lengths and associated maintenance needs of the County road system.

Due to reliance on the private automobile and the relatively poor ability to anticipate the need for transportation services, this Alternative may result in some increased congestion. Residents may also experience decreased mobility as transportation improvements lag behind new development and growth.

Traffic hazards associated with traffic congestion in rural areas may also increase under this Alternative. In addition, as more people drive through hazardous areas associated with built and natural features, the potential for accidents due to these causes will increase.

Public Services. A continuation of the dispersed pattern of development would contribute to a more inefficient system of fire and emergency service protection. This Alternative would continue the County's extensive reliance on volunteer fire fighters. Development in the rural areas near forested areas could increase the potential for fires, threatening the forest resource base and adjacent structures. Continued infilling of small privately owned and managed water systems with lacking or inadequate fire flow facilities (i.e., storage tanks, appropriately sized water lines) may result in decreasing quality of fire protection services, leading in turn to greater health and safety hazards and risk of property loss than with the other alternatives.

Lower density, scattered development would make it more difficult for the Sheriff's Office to respond to calls in a timely efficient manner. Longer times to respond to calls would also reduce the amount of time for patrol officers to engage in pro-active interaction with the community.

As the County's population grows, demand for services will increase and the associated service area will grow. Future departmental needs may include personnel, transportation, building maintenance and operation, youth center recreation and youth counseling, an information center and a County library system. The dispersed population base may make it difficult to provide services efficiently. Also, additional satellite offices including law enforcement, courts, engineering, permitting, and health and social services, to serve the rural area may be necessary.

Under the No-Action Alternative, new or expanded school facilities would be needed throughout the County. The continued spread of development to rural areas would limit the efficiency of serving these areas. Bus service would not be as efficient under this alternatives as it would be under the other alternatives .

As population disperses throughout the rural County, it may become more difficult for the County to efficiently provide recreational services to rural area residents. Access to recreational services may become more limited. However, because rural area residents may not have high expectations for recreational services, the increased need for such services may not be significant.

Utilities. Rural areas with low densities would become more developed, requiring communication services. Greater distribution distances would be required to serve these areas.

Under the No-Action Alternative, the scattered low density pattern of development would contribute to a more complex drainage network and more potential for development in flood prone areas. These factors would contribute to drainage systems that are more likely to be subject to failure. In addition, the cost of maintaining such a system would likely be greater than under the other alternatives.

New development in rural areas would likely result in individual and community septic systems as the most common form of sewage disposal rather than connections to wastewater treatment plants. Such systems may increase the potential for localized and undetected groundwater and surface water contamination.

A continuation of a scattered pattern of residential development would result in an inefficient, costly solid waste collection system. In addition, curbside recyclable pickup and other solid waste reduction opportunities may be limited for rural area residents.

ALTERNATIVE 2 - MUNICIPAL URBAN GROWTH AREA EXPANSION

For Alternative 2, high-density residential growth and commercial/light industrial employment opportunities would be directed to cities and their designated urban growth areas where adequate facilities, services, and utilities are provided for future growth.

Under Alternative 2, a new comprehensive plan would be developed for Island County. The plan would direct growth to designated municipal urban growth areas (UGAs). Cities and towns together with the unincorporated portions of the UGAs would accept a majority of the County's 20-year population forecast. The cities/town would develop land use policies directing employment growth to major commercial and light industrial centers within the UGAs. Island County would direct employment growth to UGAs. A variety of incentives such as clustering and maximum lot sizes would be implemented to promote development in UGAs. Urban Growth Areas would provide a full mix of land uses; high-density, single-family, and multi-family residential; commercial; light industrial; public and government; and recreational and open space.

Public facilities, services, and utilities would be provided throughout the urban area. Urban services would generally not be provided outside of UGAs.

Designated rural areas would be retained for rural lifestyles and would discourage urban forms of development. Rural landscape features and lifestyles would be retained by establishing overall low rural residential densities through massive downzoning. Rural residential cluster development options would allow for a variety of densities in rural areas while maintaining rural character.

Designated natural resource lands (agriculture and forest) would be protected and conserved. Natural resource land conversion to non-resource uses would be discouraged by designating commercial farmland and timberland for long-term conservation and utilization. Mineral resources of long-term commercial significance would be protected through implementation of Comprehensive Plan policies.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) would be utilized to shift development from natural resource lands and certain critical lands (like wetlands), to Municipal UGAs.

A system of open space areas, corridors, and greenbelt networks would be created through planning or plan implementation. Critical area regulations would be established to achieve consistency with environmental policies in the Comprehensive Plan.

Environmental Consequences

Alternative 2 would necessitate composition of a new comprehensive plan that would direct future growth to established municipal UGAs where public facilities, services and utilities would be provided. These services would typically not be available outside of the UGAs. Growth would be concentrated resulting in less impacts on rural lands than Alternative 1. The

pressure to develop natural resource lands would also be less likely. Potential land use policy implications and environmental consequences of Alternative 2 are discussed below.

Land Use: Land designated as either UGA, resource land, or rural area; high-density mixed land use (multi-family and single-family residential, commercial, and limited industrial) in UGAs; conservation of resource lands and retention of rural landscape features and lifestyles beyond growth areas.

Density: High-density in UGAs; overall low-density in resource and rural areas achieved through aggressive implementation of regulatory and non-regulatory mechanisms. Lots established prior to the effective date of the new zoning regulations which do not meet minimum lot size requirements will be considered legal non-conforming lots capable of supporting uses intended for the zone.

Infilling: High in UGAs; limited in resource and rural areas, some limits to infilling of existing plats or non-conforming lots outside of UGAs.

Resource Lands: Protected and conserved for resource management and utilization; innovative land use techniques developed and put into practice (TDRs, conservation easements, cluster development requirements); UGAs become receiving areas for TDR program.

Rural Areas: Rural landscape features and lifestyle retained.

Urban Growth Areas: City purveyor of urban government services; urban development standards established; land cost and availability impacts housing cost and development starts.

Growth and Population: Oak Harbor, Coupeville, and Langley and the unincorporated portions of the UGAs (approximately 80% of projected population to reside in UGAs and 20% allocated to rural areas and resource lands); high-density development in urban areas; overall low-density in rural areas; low land consumption per capita; timing not as relevant due to location, but facility capacity should be available within relatively short time period; shift in distribution to growth inside urban areas.

North Whidbey - Growth directed to the expanded UGAs: In order to determine how much population could fit into the Oak Harbor UGA a rough inventory of residential lands was performed. For those unimproved residential lands within the incorporated UGA, the intended density for each property was applied, which was then used to determine the approximate number of dwelling units that could be constructed. The Oak Harbor average household size (2.64 persons per dwelling unit) was then multiplied by the total approximated number of additional dwelling units. Potential population capacity for the unincorporated UGA was determined by reducing all residential properties to a generic base urban density and applying the Oak Harbor average household size. Additionally, the Oak Harbor comprehensive plan lays out several large scale developments that are planned. These developments could accommodate a large degree of expected growth if they are carried out as planned. Although it is not practical, the current incorporated and unincorporated Oak Harbor UGA is large enough to accommodate all of the predicted North Whidbey population growth over the next twenty

years. Approximately 89% percent of the incoming population would be absorbed by the Oak Harbor UGA, with very little growth occurring in PRCs and rural dispersed areas.

***Central Whidbey** - Growth directed to the expanded UGAs:* In order to accommodate the degree of growth that Coupeville would experience under this alternative, the town would be required to expand its UGA boundary and/or change current densities within the town. Upon analysis of residentially zoned lands within Coupeville and the application of a generic density to each residential parcel (depending on its intended use; high, medium or low density), an approximate potential number of dwelling units can be determined. This figure was then multiplied by the Central Whidbey population factor (2.4 persons per dwelling unit). Additional residentially zoned parcels would then be required to increase density in order to accommodate some additional population. Because of the limitations of development within Coupeville, a fully contained community at the scale of an RCC would be required in order to absorb the level of population concentration expected in the Central Whidbey region.

***South Whidbey** - Growth directed to the expanded UGAs:* A high percentage of growth in the South Whidbey region is directed into the Langley UGA. Under this alternative, Langley would be required to change its UGA boundary and/or change densities within the boundary. Population capacity of Langley has been calculated by first figuring the potential number of parcels at base density in residentially zoned lands in the incorporated portion of the UGA. A Langley population factor of 2.35 persons per dwelling unit was then applied to the potential number of units. In the existing unincorporated portion of the UGA a generic urban density was applied to all lands zoned for residential use. Finally, additional land would be required in order to accommodate the large influx of population. The Langley UGA would take in most of the South Whidbey growth (about 78%).

***Camano Island** - Growth directed to the expanded UGAs:* Currently there are no UGAs in the Camano Island region. In order to successfully implement this development strategy a fully contained new community at the scale of an RCC would be required to be established. This community would offer the only mandated area for population concentration in this region. The same amount of growth would occur in PRCs as in Alternative 1, but the rural dispersed growth would be reduced relative to the RCC population gain. The remainder of the population would be directed into the new fully contained community.

Development Impacts

Low land consumption (actual and per capita); some, but limited rural development outside of UGAs; no conversion of or encroachment on agricultural, forest, mineral, and critical areas; compensatory regulations such as TDRs provided; little or no public facility or service extensions beyond UGAs.

Transportation: Multi-modal; ferries, air, bus, pedestrian/bicycle; lowest investment in roads.

Protection of Environment and Critical Areas: Development of additional environmental policy; creation of critical area regulations to be consistent with environmental policy; land use classifications and zoning to be sensitive to environmental constraints and critical areas.

Open Space Corridors/Greenbelt Areas: Open space corridors/greenbelt networks identified and established; resource lands and rural areas protected.

Economic and Employment Areas: Fewer economic development and employment opportunities in rural areas than under Alternative 1 as commercial and industrial growth is directed to UGAs.

Public Services Facilities and Utilities: Fully provided in UGAs. Urban scale utilities discouraged outside of UGAs. Interties and larger and well-managed rural water systems are encouraged over small, uncoordinated and poorly managed systems through continued implementation of the Coordinated Water System Plan and similar planning tools.

Community Identity: Provides opportunities to develop sense of place and character for UGAs. Rural character is retained.

Incentives to Achieve Comprehensive Plan Goals

Innovative land use techniques developed, for example: cluster development options, density bonus, open space retention programs, maximum lot size and TDRs program. Since UGAs are receiving areas for TDRs and higher density development is not allowed outside of UGAs, developers may be more likely to pay for TDRs to build at higher densities than with Alternative 3.

Topography/Geology/Soils. The UGAs would experience a large amount of growth, with significant geological impacts in newly developed areas. Incentives such as clustered housing, density bonuses, and maximum lot sizes would decrease the acreage per capita of land developed, thus decreasing the impacts on soil and geologic resources. The relatively small amount of new development permitted in rural areas would result in few impacts to natural resource lands. Concentrating the development in specific areas would simplify mitigation planning and reduce the overall cumulative impacts. Monitoring impacts would be more easily accomplished under this alternative than under Alternative 1.

Air. Because Alternative 2 would allow only a relatively small amount of new growth to disperse into the rural parts of the county, rural air quality impacts related to automobile and wood stove emissions and industrial activities would be less than with Alternative 1. Some impacts, however, from automobile and wood stoves would still be felt.

In the UGAs, the concentration of growth may increase the overall impact of vehicle emissions, wood stove smoke, and industrial development on air quality. However, relatively higher densities of residential development may support transit or alternative modes of transportation. The concentration of residential development and retail/commercial services may also reduce overall vehicle trip lengths and increase non-

motorized transportation opportunities. These factors may combine to mitigate the overall air quality impacts in urban areas.

Water. Under Alternative 2, the rural areas would not experience a significant amount of new growth. Therefore, rural area impacts associated with development and increased impervious surfaces would be less than described under Alternative 1.

In the UGAs, more intensive and increased development could result in increased flooding and water quality impacts. However, the potential for more efficient building techniques may help to minimize impervious surfaces and associated water impacts. In addition, concentration of growth in the UGAs would provide greater potential for development of sanitary sewer systems, thereby reducing the potential for flooding and surface and groundwater contamination. Because development under Alternative 2 may be more intensive than under Alternative 1, the potential for introduction of urban contaminants into the surface and groundwater system may be increased. However, there may be greater opportunities to control stormwater in urban areas. Since development within UGAs would affect a limited area relatively fewer surface and groundwater resources would be potentially impacted with this alternative.

Alternative 2 would ensure that public water supply would be provided within the UGA boundaries. This would be accomplished through the planned expansion of existing systems. There would be relatively little increased demand in the rural areas, thereby protecting existing small systems. With well-planned and managed water systems serving the majority of new population growth, problems of sea water intrusion and depletion of ground water resources will likely be less severe in the rural areas than under Alternative 1.

Plants and Animals. In the rural areas, less habitat damage would result from Alternative 2 than under Alternative 1. Stream and riparian habitat could be impacted in the rural areas that are downstream from the UGAs.

In the UGAs, concentration of new growth would impact habitat areas to a greater degree than under Alternative 1. Disruption of streams and riparian areas in and downstream of UGAs would damage habitat for fish and other aquatic life. Wildlife movement corridors could be disrupted or fragmented as a result of new development.

Energy and Natural Resources. Under Alternative 2, new rural growth would continue to require energy resources. Rural growth, although limited, would continue to be dispersed. Such a pattern of development would require an extensive distribution system to serve relatively few consumers. New residents may have limited or no access to certain energy resources, such as natural gas.

Concentrated growth in the UGAs may provide for a more efficient delivery system and widest access to all energy resources. Urban style development and the urban population base may also provide greater opportunities for energy conservation. However, concentrated growth may also create obstacles in siting electric and gas utilities. Development pressure, increased land costs, and "not in my backyard" attitudes may increase the difficulty and cost for energy utilities to acquire land and develop facilities.

Environmental Health. Rural noise impacts would be similar to, but less than, those described for Alternative 1. In the UGAs, increased noise from a concentration of people, activity, and traffic would be expected. Noise impacts from Whidbey Island NAS would be less than Alternative 1 because development would not be concentrated in areas subject to aircraft noise.

Land and Shoreline Use. Under Alternative 2, Island County would adopt a new comprehensive plan. The new plan, together with amended development regulations, would bring the County substantially into compliance with the GMA and CWPP. Other plans and policies would be made consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The updated Comprehensive Plan and development regulations would provide the policy bases for evaluation of future proposed land use actions.

Single-family residential development in rural areas would be less than Alternative 1, and more multi-family residential housing would be provided in the designated UGAs. Residential developments would be planned with a goal of providing a diversity of housing opportunities to help ensure a fair, equitable, and rational distribution of low-income, moderate-income, and special needs housing. However, establishment of UGAs may limit land supply and create potential shortages in housing, thereby increasing costs.

Cluster developments would be allowed and encouraged, to preserve open space when achieving specified open space requirements and minimizing encroachment on existing land uses. Because of restrictions in the amount of development in rural Island County, rural housing may become more expensive than would occur under Alternative 1.

Light and glare would gradually increase slightly in the rural areas but would be primarily concentrated in the UGAs.

The low density rural character of the rural areas would be minimally impacted. In the UGAs, a gradual transition from the existing development pattern to a more urban character would occur. The rural areas would experience a limited amount of development which could result in less impacts to agricultural, forest lands, and view corridors compared to Alternative 1.

Urban style development in the UGAs may result in the loss of scenic lands and of certain view corridors. Overall, the character of some land in the UGAs may change from natural and undeveloped to a developed urban appearance.

As development occurs in UGAs, open space would be designated through planning policies. These policies should provide more recreation areas than with Alternative 1.

Under Alternative 2, historic and cultural sites would be more likely to remain undisturbed in rural areas than with Alternative 1. Loss of historic structures in UGAs could be accelerated through redevelopment efforts due to increased development pressure in those areas.

With Alternative 2, there would be less pressure to convert natural resource lands in the rural areas. Most growth would be concentrated in the UGAs. Resource lands in a UGA would feel the greatest pressure to convert to other uses.

Transportation. Under Alternative 2, the dispersed rural population may continue to contribute to a less efficient road system, longer trips, and reliance on the private automobile. However, because new growth in the rural area is limited, these impacts may be minimal and would be less than under Alternative 1.

In the UGAs, the potential for congestion would likely increase as the population grows. The concentrated population base, however, would be more likely to be able to support corrective measures plus transit and other alternative modes of transportation within and between developed UGAs. Public investment to improve the transportation infrastructure may be needed to avoid congestion in these areas.

In the rural areas, traffic hazards would increase less than under Alternative 1. In the UGAs, traffic hazards would increase due to the concentration of people and vehicles in and around the UGAs. As high capacity transit use increases, the potential for a significant accident involving these vehicles would also increase.

Public Services. Some limited expansion of fire and emergency services in the rural areas may be required. Expansion or creation of water systems with inadequate fire flow capability would occur to a lesser degree than with Alternative 1. Concentrated growth in the UGAs would require expansion of fire stations and services in these areas.

The major emphasis on law enforcement services would be in the UGAs. These areas would require additional police personnel, stations, and support staff. Because urban style development in the UGAs would be relatively compact, police response time may be maintained or improved.

The more concentrated population growth in the UGAs may allow the County to continue to provide most services from current locations. Expansion of the existing offices and development of some new offices as described under Alternative 1, however, would be necessary to serve the increased population. Some satellite offices may also continue to be necessary.

Over-crowding of existing school facilities could occur with concentrated growth in UGAs. New school facilities, expansion of existing facilities, and new school staff would be necessary in the UGAs.

In rural areas, demands for recreational services would be similar, but to a lesser degree, than those described in Alternative 1. Urban area residents may have higher expectations and needs for recreational programs than the rural population.

Utilities. The communications distribution system to serve the UGAs would be more compact and efficient than would be likely in the rural areas. Planning for new communication services may be more predictable and the population base may be more capable of supporting optional communication services. As population becomes more concentrated, sites for distribution facilities, antennas and towers may be more difficult to acquire and develop.

The concentrated pattern of growth and associated runoff could impact existing stormwater facilities, requiring major improvements. Until improvements are made, the urban areas may experience increased flooding or contamination of stormwater runoff.

In the UGAs, there would be increased use of existing sanitary sewer facilities and there may be a need to convert septic tanks to sanitary sewer systems. Expansion of the existing sewer system and development of a new sewer system would be a costly, long-term capital investment: Until the new system is complete, the urban areas would be at increased risk for groundwater and surface water contamination.

The need for solid waste facilities, such as transfer stations and compost/recycling facilities, would increase in the UGAs. At the same time, siting of such facilities in urban areas would become increasingly difficult with population growth and potential conflicts with nearby residential uses.

ALTERNATIVE 3 - EXPANSION OF RURAL COMMUNITY CENTERS AND MUNICIPAL URBAN GROWTH AREAS

Under Alternative 3, growth would be directed to Municipal UGAs as well as Rural Community Centers (RCCs). The RCCs are non-municipal urban growth areas identified for mixed-use, medium-density residential growth and rural commercial services. Light Industrial/Business Park Areas would be located in UGAs, RCCs and pre-designated areas. Rural Residential and Residential designations are also considered to accommodate the diverse needs of a Rural Community.

Under this alternative, a new Comprehensive Plan would be developed for Island County. The plan would direct intensive urban growth to designated UGAs. The UGAs would accept an increased proportion of the County's 20-year population forecast as compared to Alternative 1, but less than under Alternative 2. The cities/town would develop land use policies directing employment growth to major commercial and light industrial centers. A variety of incentives such as clustering, density bonuses, and maximum lot sizes, would be implemented to promote development in UGAs. UGAs would provide a full mix of land uses: high-density, single-family, and multi-family residential; commercial; light industrial; public and government; and recreational and open space. TDRs would be used to shift development from natural resource and critical lands to higher density areas, but would not be required in UGAs.

Island County would primarily direct rural employment growth to Rural Activity Centers (RACs) such as rural business centers, existing highway commercial areas and rural neighborhood businesses, and to light industrial/business park areas. These areas would be designated for mixed-uses, limited commercial services and light industrial uses (i.e. manufacturing). RACs, such as rural neighborhood businesses and existing highway commercial areas, would allow for neighborhood businesses and for improvements and expansion at existing commercial business areas that are outside of Municipal UGAs, RCCs and rural business centers. Outside of Municipal Urban Growth Areas and Rural Community Centers, substantial downzoning may be necessary.

Public facilities, services, and utilities would be provided throughout the urban area. Fewer urban services would be provided outside of Municipal UGAs, with limited non-county urban

services provided in rural community centers. A land use progression would be established to accommodate future growth and the designation of new UGAs.

As with Alternative 2, Alternative 3 includes designated natural resource lands (mineral resources of long-term commercial significance, agriculture and forest) that will be protected and conserved. A system of open space areas, corridors, and greenbelt networks would be created through planning or plan implementation.

Multiple modes of transportation would be developed. Air, vehicular, ferry, bus, and pedestrian/bicycle access would be provided. This alternative emphasizes the use of public transit (buses) to serve designated Rural Community Centers and to provide service between RCCs and UGAs. There would be an investment in improving road capacity within and between RCCs and UGAs. Emphasis would be placed on access from surrounding areas to each RCC and UGA, with only minor improvements in arterials and state highways.

Environmental Consequences

Alternative 3 would require development of a new comprehensive plan to direct intensive urban growth to designated Municipal UGAs and RCCs, and to direct rural growth to rural areas. Public services would be provided in UGAs and to some extent in RCCs. Rural landscape features and lifestyles would be preserved through a variety of rural densities. This alternative blends the concepts presented in Alternative 2 with the recognition that rural Island County residents desire the same public services and some of the same conveniences which are enjoyed by their urban counterparts. In rural areas, infill development would be targeted in existing developed areas. As with Alternative 2, growth would be concentrated resulting in less impacts on rural lands than with Alternative 1. The pressure to develop natural resource lands would also be less than Alternative 1.

Potential land use policy implications and environmental consequences of Alternative 3 are discussed below.

Land Use. Land designated as either UGAs, RCCs, resource land, or rural area; high-density mixed land use (multi-family and single-family residential, commercial, and limited industrial) in UGAs and RCCs; conservation of resource lands and retention of rural landscape features and lifestyles beyond growth areas; RCCs provide moderate-density mixed land use (residential and commercial services).

Density. High-density in Municipal UGAs; moderate-densities in RCCs; overall low-density in resource and rural areas. Lots established prior to the effective date of the new zoning regulations which do not meet minimum lot size requirements will be considered legal non-conforming lots capable of supporting uses intended for the zone.

Infilling. High in Municipal UGAs and RCCs; limited in previously platted areas, non-conforming lots, and on resource lands. .

Resource Lands. Protected and conserved for resource management and utilization; innovative land use techniques developed and put into practice (TDRs, conservation easements, cluster development requirements);.

Rural Areas. Rural landscape features and lifestyle retained; rural agriculture and rural forest designations used to balance resource land conservation against population immigration and natural increases.

Urban Growth Areas. City purveyor of urban governmental services; urban development standards; RCCs, as non-municipal UGAs provide alternative to city environment; RCC development standards established.

Growth and Population. A higher proportion of growth directed to urban areas; high-density development in urban areas; orderly progression of growth outside of Municipal UGAs with mixed-use, moderate-densities in RCCs and overall low densities in rural areas; timing of growth based on availability and adequacy of public facilities, services, and utilities; shift in population distribution to urban areas.

North Whidbey - Growth directed into the expanded UGAs and RCCs: This alternative mirrors that of Alternative 2 because there are no RCCs in the North Whidbey region. Additionally, it would not make environmental or economic sense to create one since Oak Harbor could accommodate this portion of the population quite easily. As a result, the Oak Harbor UGA would still accommodate about 86% of the expected growth. The remaining population created under this alternative would be absorbed by PRC lots and the rural dispersed areas.

Central Whidbey - Growth directed into the expanded UGAs and RCCs: Currently there are no RCCs in this region, but under this alternative a new fully contained community at the scale of a rural village would be required in order to accommodate some concentrated growth beyond that of the Coupeville UGA.

South Whidbey - Growth directed into the expanded UGAs and RCCs: The Langley UGA still experiences a heavy growth rate but to a much lesser extent than Alternative 2. Population is based on near total buildout at a relatively high urban density within the existing incorporated and unincorporated UGA. Modification of the current UGA boundary may be required for successful implementation of this alternative. The remainder of the population is absorbed by the Clinton and Freeland RCCs. The population capacity for these two RCCs has been determined by taking an inventory of all existing plats and residentially zoned parcels that lie within the RCC boundary. A generic density of 3.5 dwelling units per acre was then applied to all residentially zoned parcels. Once the approximate number of dwelling units was calculated the South Whidbey population factor (2.5 persons per dwelling unit) was applied. Roughly 29% of the incoming population would be directed into the Langley UGA. The greatest concentration of population would occur in the two RCCs that collectively, would accommodate about 45% of the South Whidbey growth.

Camano Island - Growth directed into the expanded UGAs and RCCs: Once again this region does not currently have any UGAs or RCCs. As a result, a fully contained new community at the scale of a rural village would be required to be established. This community would act as a center for population concentration, but to a lesser extent than that of an RCC, as in Alternative 2. The fully contained community that would be

established under this alternative would accommodate roughly 10% of new growth with the majority (about 70%) being placed in existing PRC lots.

Development Impacts

Low land consumption (actual and per capita); rural development outside of Municipal UGAs and RCCs no conversion of or encroachment on agricultural, forest, mineral, and critical areas via performance standards; compensatory regulations such as TDRs provided; rural residential cluster development required; little or no public facility or service extensions beyond Municipal UGAs and RCCs, although limited expansion in facility and service capacities may be needed to accommodate existing development.

Transportation. Multi-modal: ferries, air, bus, pedestrian/bicycle; moderate road investment to increase capacity between RACs, RCCs and UGAs.

Protection of Environment and Critical Areas. Development of additional environmental policy; amendment of existing critical area regulations to be consistent with environmental policy; land use classifications and zoning to be sensitive to environmental constraints and critical areas.

Open Space Corridors/Greenbelt Areas. Open space corridors/greenbelt networks established in implementation of plan, resource lands and rural areas protected.

Economic and Employment Areas. Mixed use in Municipal UGAs, RCCs and RACs; reduction of some single-family residential development in rural areas would be offset by mixed use development in RACs; rural economic growth in the county; less constraints on land supply.

Public Services, Facilities and Utilities. Fully provided to Municipal UGAs. Limited services and utilities in RCCs and RACs by non-county providers. Discouraged outside of UGAs and RACs.

Community Identity. Provides opportunities to develop sense of place and character for municipal urban growth areas and RCCs. Rural character is retained.

Incentives to Achieve Comprehensive Plan Goals

Innovative land use techniques developed, for example: cluster development options, density bonus, open space retention programs, maximum lot size and TDRs. Developers may be reluctant to pay for TDRs with this Alternative if they can get higher densities in other ways without paying for TDRs.

Topography/Geology/Soils. Since development will be limited in rural areas, impacts on geologic resources will likely be less than Alternative 1. Because increased development will occur in Municipal UGAs as well as in RCCs and RACs, impacts will be more widely spread than in Alternative 2. Any development in rural areas will need to be closely monitored to reduce impacts caused by construction. Natural resource lands would be at risk for development if not specifically protected in the Comprehensive Plan.

Further economic development would be directed towards existing developed areas, which would reduce the potential for impacts.

Air. In the rural areas outside of the RACs, little new development would occur. Therefore, air quality impacts would be minimal. Under Alternative 3, the designated Municipal UGAs, RCCs and RACs would experience impacts similar to those described for the UGAs under Alternative 2. Since development would be concentrated into Municipal UGAs and RCCs throughout the County, the impacts would be more dispersed throughout the County than with Alternative 2.

Water. As with Alternative 2, Alternative 3 would create the most significant impacts to surface and groundwater in the Municipal UGAs and RCCs. These impacts would be similar to those described for the UGAs under Alternative 2. Because the RACs are dispersed around the County and may not have sanitary sewage treatment systems, they may impact more surface and ground water resources than the UGAs.

Under Alternative 3, water supply within the Municipal UGAs would be fully provided through the coordinated planning process. Existing systems would expand to provide needed supplies. In addition, limited supply expansion would be accomplished within the RCCs. Any development of water supply outside of these areas would be of a non-urban scale. Because nearly all of the development would occur in these areas, water demand would be most concentrated under this alternative. This alternative, while posing the greatest potential for localized exhaustion of the groundwater supply, will also provide for service to a greater proportion of the population by well-managed water systems, which may offset any threat of localized ground water depletion.

Plants and Animals. Under Alternative 3 the impacts to rural habitats would largely be limited to indirect impacts associated with nearby urban style development. This includes potentially disrupting large feeding, nesting, and/or movement corridors, and increased reliance on humans for food and shelter.

In the Municipal UGAs, RCCs and RACs, impacts to plants and animals would be similar to the UGA impacts described for Alternative 2. However, because Alternative 3 contains more discrete areas with the potential for new development, the potential for downstream aquatic habitat damage and fragmentation or destruction of habitat areas is greater in and around designated growth areas.

Energy and Natural Resources. Because most of the new growth would occur within designated areas, Alternative 3 provides the most efficient delivery system, the greatest opportunity for conservation, and the widest access to energy resources.

Environmental Health. Because the rural areas would experience little new growth, noise levels would remain unchanged from current conditions. In the Municipal UGAs, RCCs and RACs, noise would increase due to the concentration of population in these areas. As with Alternative 2, noise impacts from Whidbey Island NAS would be minimized by discouraging development near air operations.

Land and Shoreline Use. As with Alternative 2, under Alternative 3, Island County would adopt a new comprehensive plan. The new plan, together with amended development regulations, would bring the County substantially into compliance with the GMA and CWPP. The new plan would require that other plans and policies be consistent and would provide the policy basis for evaluation of future proposed land use actions.

Under Alternative 3, single-family residential development in rural areas would be less than Alternative 1 but more than Alternative 2, since development would be allowed within RCCs. High-density mixed land use would be limited to Municipal UGAs and moderate-density mixed land use would be provided in RCCs and RACs. Residential developments would be planned with a goal of providing a diversity of housing opportunities to help ensure a fair, equitable and rational distribution of low-income, moderate-income and special needs housing.

Because more mixed density residential would be allowed in more areas in the County, the impacts to affordability may be less significant than Alternative 2.

Direct exposure to light and glare in the rural areas, outside of the RACs, would generally remain the same as existing conditions. Light and glare levels would increase and be concentrated in the Municipal UGAs, RCCs and RACs. Because Municipal UGAs are larger and are associated with existing cities/town, these areas would continue to be the greatest source of light and glare. Indirect light and glare impacts on rural areas would likely occur as urban "glow" from the Municipal UGAs, RCCs and RACs becomes visible after dark, resulting in eroded visibility of the night sky.

Under Alternative 3, the rural areas would experience little impact on existing aesthetic resources. Most or all of the rural areas outside of the RACs would remain largely unchanged from current conditions. In the Municipal UGAs and RCCs, aesthetic impacts would be similar to those described for Alternative 2. In the RACs, a gradual transition from the current rural character to a more suburban developed appearance would occur.

As development occurs in UGAs and RACs, open space would be established through implementation of planning policies. Encouragement of cluster developments with required open space would also provide more lands for recreational opportunities. Alternative 3 should provide more open space and recreational opportunities than Alternatives 1 and 2.

Under Alternative 3, the rural areas outside of the RACs would be the most protected from disruption of historic or cultural sites. Impacts to historical and cultural resources in the Municipal UGAs and RCCs would be similar to those described under Alternative 2.

Under Alternative 3, impacts to designated natural resource lands would be similar to those described for Alternative 2. For RCCs and RACs in close proximity to designated natural resource lands, the potential for conversion and/or land use conflicts may be greater.

Transportation. Under Alternative 3, the rural transportation system and rural area traffic hazards would remain largely unchanged from existing conditions.

Transportation impacts and traffic hazards in the Municipal UGAs and RCCs would be similar to those described for urban areas under Alternative 2. Compared to the Municipal UGAs, the average density and geographic size of the RCCs is relatively limited. Therefore, the RCCs may be less able to support transit or other alternative transportation modes and may have continued reliance on the private automobile. However, because services will be located near residential areas, vehicle trips may be shorter and the opportunity for non-motorized trips may be greater.

Public Services. Minimal new fire or sheriff services would be required in the rural areas outside of the RACs to maintain existing levels of service. Within the Municipal UGAs and RCCs impacts would be similar to those described under Alternative 2.

Impacts would be similar for government services, schools and recreation facilities as to those described under Alternative 2.

Utilities. Impacts to communications and water and stormwater facilities would be similar to those under Alternative 2.

Impacts to sewer/septage and solid waste facilities would also be similar to those under Alternative 2. In the rural community centers, the issue of septic tank conversion to sanitary sewer system may be more problematic because of the relatively lower population base. If this transition does not occur, the rural community centers may be at relatively higher risk for septic system failure and groundwater contamination.

ALTERNATIVE 4 - EXPANSION OF PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES, MUNICIPAL URBAN GROWTH AREAS AND RURAL COMMUNITY CENTERS

Under Alternative 4, the majority of new growth would be directed to UGAs. Growth outside of Municipal UGAs would be directed to Private Residential Communities (PRCs) and Rural Community Centers (RCCs). The PRCs are existing platted communities, including subdivisions and Planned Residential Developments (PRDs). Scaled-down versions of RCCs would also be designated to receive new growth.

As with Alternative 3, under this alternative, a new Comprehensive Plan would be developed for Island County. The plan would direct intensive urban growth to designated Municipal UGAs and Non-Municipal UGAs (Rural Community Centers). The Municipal UGAs would accept an increased proportion of the County's 20-year population forecast relative to the no-action alternative. The cities/town would develop land use policies directing employment growth to major commercial and light industrial centers. A variety of incentives such as clustering, density bonuses, and maximum lot sizes, would be implemented to promote development in UGAs. UGAs would provide a full mix of land uses: high-density, single-family, and multi-family residential; commercial; light industrial; public and government; and recreational and open space. TDRs would be used to shift development from natural resource and critical lands to higher density areas, but would not be required in UGAs.

As under Alternative 3, Island County would primarily direct rural employment growth to RACs. Public facilities, services, and utilities would be provided throughout the urban area. Urban services would generally not be provided outside of Municipal UGAs, except for limited non-county urban services that may be provided in RCCs and RACs. A land use progression would be established to accommodate future growth and the designation of new UGAs.

Existing rural residential neighborhoods would be designated to receive the bulk of new rural growth through infilling and moderated development of adjacent lands. A variety of densities would be provided in rural areas while maintaining rural landscape features and lifestyles. Outside of Private Residential Communities, Urban Growth Areas (both municipal and non-municipal) and Rural Activity Centers, substantial downzoning may be necessary. Urban forms of development would be discouraged in rural areas.

As with Alternatives 2 and 3, Alternative 4 includes designated natural resource lands (mineral resources of long-term commercial significance, agriculture and forest) that would be protected and conserved. A system of open space areas, corridors, and greenbelt networks would be created through planning or plan implementation.

Multiple modes of transportation would be developed, but not to as great a degree as under Alternative 3. Public transit (buses) would provide service between Rural Community Centers and Municipal UGAs. Limited transportation improvements are possible for the PRCs, as they are spread out and relatively isolated. In this scenario, UGAs and RACs would be "hubs", providing services to the outlying PRCs. Transportation service between the hubs can be accomplished relatively efficiently, while little opportunity exists for increased efficiency in transportation from the PRCs to the hubs.

Environmental Consequences

Alternative 4 would require development of a new comprehensive plan to direct intensive urban growth to designated UGAs (both municipal and non-municipal) and direct rural growth to designated PRCs, RACs and rural areas. Public services would be provided in Municipal UGAs and to some extent in RCCs and RACs, with privately-owned and operated utilities available at the PRCs. Rural landscape features and lifestyles would be preserved through implementation of policies which strongly discourage rural sprawl. By blending the concepts presented in Alternatives 2 and 3 with the recognition that many new residents of the County are attracted to shoreline residential areas, and that a shutdown of new development in these areas is not likely to be met with widespread acceptance, Alternative 4 is more realistic and responsive to the demands and desires of new and existing residents than the other alternatives. In rural areas, infill development would be targeted in existing developed areas. As with Alternative 2 and 3, growth would be concentrated resulting in less impacts on rural lands than with Alternative 1. The pressure to develop natural resource lands would also be less than Alternative 1.

Potential land use policy implications and environmental consequences of Alternative 4 are discussed below

Land Use. Land designated as either Municipal UGA, RCC, RAC, PRC, resource land, or rural area; high-density mixed land use (multi-family and single-family residential,

commercial, and limited industrial) in Municipal UGAs; conservation of resource lands and retention of rural landscape features and lifestyles beyond growth areas; RCCs provide moderate to high density mixed land use (rural residential and commercial services), PRCs provide moderate to high density residential development with little or no commercial development.

Density. High-density in Municipal UGAs; moderate to high densities in RCCs and PRCs; overall low-density in resource and rural areas. Lots established prior to the effective date of the new zoning regulations which do not meet minimum lot size requirements will be considered legal non-conforming lots capable of supporting uses intended for the zone.

Infilling. High in UGAs, RCCs, and PRCs; limited on non-conforming lots, in resource areas and rural lands.

Resource Lands. Protected and conserved for resource management and utilization; innovative land use techniques developed and put into practice (TDRs, conservation easements, cluster development requirements); UGAs (both municipal and non-municipal) become receiving areas for TDR program.

Rural Areas. Rural landscape features and lifestyle retained; RACs maintain existing rural community identities; rural mineral, agriculture and rural forest designations used to ensure resource land conservation.

Urban Growth Areas. City is purveyor of urban governmental services; urban development standards; rural community centers provide alternative urban environment; RCC development standards established.

Growth and Population. A higher proportion of growth directed to urban areas; high-density development in urban areas; orderly progression of growth outside of urban areas with mixed-use, moderate to high residential densities in RCCs and PRCs, and overall low densities in rural areas; timing of growth based on availability and adequacy of public facilities, services, and utilities.

North Whidbey - Growth directed into the UGAs, RCCs and PRCs: Oak Harbor still absorbs more than 75% of the population growth over the next twenty years but additional choice is offered through the availability of some additional PRC lots. Potential population for PRC lots has been taken from the 1995/1996 land-use inventory. It has been determined by calculating how many PRC lots remain unimproved and applying the North Whidbey average household size (3.1 persons per dwelling unit) to this figure. The allocation of population to the Oak Harbor UGA has been calculated by assuming that there will be partial infill of all unimproved residential lands in both the incorporated and unincorporated areas of the UGA. The remaining population is placed in the rural dispersed areas.

Central Whidbey - Growth directed into the UGAs, RCCs and PRCs: In an effort to be sensitive to the water problems that Coupeville experiences, the UGA does not experience tremendous growth under any alternative. Under Alternative 4 this sensitivity persists. Additionally, this alternative does not require the Central Whidbey region to

establish a new fully contained community, rather directs remaining growth into the PRC lots. Once again, PRC lot availability is based on what lots remain unimproved.

South Whidbey - Growth directed into the UGAs, RCCs and PRCs: This alternative attempts to concentrate growth in all three categories, thus reducing the overall growth pressures. Langley UGA is allocated population based on partial filling of both the incorporated and unincorporated portions of the UGA. The RCCs of Clinton and Freeland experience growth based on a reduced rate of infill as compared to Alternative 3. PRCs absorb the remaining population which has been calculated by looking at unimproved lots and applying the South Whidbey growth rate to those lots. Alternative 4 would reduce the burden on RCCs and the UGA by placing 41% of new growth in the existing PRC lots.

Camano Island - Growth directed into the UGAs, RCCs and PRCs: This alternative would not require the establishment of a fully contained community. Population would be directed primarily into existing PRCs. The level of infill of PRC lots is based on how many unimproved lots are available in the Camano region and then applying the Camano average household size (2.3 persons per dwelling unit) to that total. Because establishing a new fully contained community is not required under this alternative, the majority of new growth would be placed in already existing PRC lots.

Development Impacts

Low land consumption (actual and per capita); rural development outside of Municipal UGAs, RCCs and PRCs; RCCs designated for mixed-uses (medium density residential and rural commercial services); no conversion of or encroachment on agricultural, forest, mineral, and critical areas via performance standards; compensatory regulations and programs such as TDRs provided; rural residential cluster development required; little or no public facility or service extensions beyond UGAs, although limited expansion in facility and service capacities may be needed to accommodate existing development.

Transportation. Multi-modal: ferries, air, bus, pedestrian/bicycle; moderate road investment to increase capacity between RACs, RCCs and Municipal UGAs.

Protection of Environment and Critical Areas. Development of additional environmental policy; amendment of existing critical area regulations to be consistent with environmental policy; land use classifications and zoning to be sensitive to environmental constraints and critical areas.

Open Space Corridors/Greenbelt Areas. Open space corridors/greenbelt networks established in implementation of plan, resource lands and rural areas protected.

Economic and Employment Areas. Mixed use in UGAs and RACs; reduction of some single-family residential development in rural areas would be offset by mixed use development in RCCs and RACs and moderate density residential development in PRCs; rural economic growth in the county.

Public Services Facilities and Utilities. Fully provided in Municipal UGAs. Urban-scale services and utilities discouraged outside of UGAs. Limited services and utilities in RCCs, RACs and PRCs by non-county providers.

Community Identity. Provides opportunities to develop sense of place and character for urban growth areas, PRCs and RACs. Rural character is retained.

Incentives to Achieve Comprehensive Plan Goals

Innovative land use techniques developed, for example: cluster development options, density bonus, open space retention programs, maximum lot size and TDRs.

Topography/Geology/Soils. Since development will be limited in rural areas, but will be allowed near existing residential developments, impacts on geologic resources will likely be less than Alternative 1 but greater than in Alternatives 2 and 3. Because increased development will occur in UGAs (municipal and non-municipal) as well as in RACs, impacts will be more widely spread than in Alternative 2. Any development in rural areas will need to be closely monitored to reduce impacts caused by construction. Natural resource lands would be at risk for development if not specifically protected in the Comprehensive Plan. Further economic development would be directed towards designated and/or existing developed areas.

Air. In the rural areas outside of the RACs and PRCs, little new development would occur. Therefore, air quality impacts would be minimal. Under Alternative 4, the designated UGAs (municipal and non-municipal), RACs, and PRCs would experience impacts similar to those described for the UGAs under Alternative 2. Since development would be concentrated into UGAs, RACs, and PRCs throughout the County, the impacts would be more dispersed throughout the County than with Alternative 2.

Water. As with Alternatives 2 and 3, Alternative 4 would create the most significant impacts to surface and groundwater in the UGAs (municipal and non-municipal), RACs, and PRCs. These impacts would be similar to those described for the UGAs under Alternative 2. Because the RACs and PRCs are dispersed around the County and may not have sanitary sewage treatment systems, they may impact more surface and ground water resources than the UGAs.

Under Alternative 4, water supply within the Municipal UGAs would be fully provided through the coordinated planning process. Existing systems would expand to provide needed supplies. In addition, limited supply expansion would be accomplished within the RCCs, RACs and PRCs; additional water supplies may need to be developed for new growth within PRCs. Water demand would be less concentrated under this Alternative than under Alternatives 2 or 3.

Plants and Animals. Under Alternative 4 the impacts to rural habitats would largely be limited to indirect impacts associated with nearby urban style development. This includes potentially disrupting large feeding, nesting, and/or movement corridors, and increased reliance on humans for food and shelter.

In the UGAs (municipal and non-municipal) and RACs, impacts to plants and animals would be similar to the UGA impacts described for Alternative 2. Additional impacts can be expected to be associated with infilling of existing plats and PRDs. Impacts to wildlife in rural areas would be much less than under Alternative 1.

Energy and Natural Resources. Under Alternative 4, growth is more dispersed than under Alternatives 2 and 3, requiring greater energy resources and higher energy costs. This Alternative may also provide the greatest obstacles to new energy facility siting and development, as described under Alternative 2.

Environmental Health. Because the rural areas would experience little new growth, noise levels would remain essentially unchanged from current conditions. In the UGAs (municipal and non-municipal), RACs, and PRCs, noise would increase due to the concentration of population in these areas. As with Alternative 2, noise impacts from Whidbey Island NAS would be minimized by discouraging new development near air operations. However, some aircraft noise may be expected to impact new residents within PRCs in noise zones as infilling occurs.

Land and Shoreline Use. As with Alternative 2 and 3, under Alternative 4, Island County would adopt a new comprehensive plan. The new plan, together with amended development regulations, would bring the County substantially into compliance with the GMA and CWPP. The new plan would require that other plans and policies be consistent with it and would provide the policy basis for evaluation of future proposed land use actions.

Under Alternative 4, single-family residential development in rural areas would be less than Alternative 1 but more than Alternatives 2 or 3, since development would be allowed within RCCs and PRCs. High-density mixed land use would be limited to Municipal UGAs, moderate to high density mixed land use would be provided in RCCs, and moderate to high density residential land uses would be provided in PRCs. Residential developments would be planned with a goal of providing a diversity of housing opportunities to help ensure a fair, equitable and rational distribution of low-income, moderate-income and special needs housing.

Because more mixed density residential would be allowed in more areas in the County, the impacts to affordability may be less significant than Alternatives 2 and 3.

Light and glare levels in the rural areas, outside of the RACs and PRCs, would generally remain the same as existing conditions. Light and glare levels would increase and be concentrated in the UGAs (municipal and non-municipal), RACs and PRCs. Because Municipal UGAs are larger and are associated with existing cities, these areas would continue to be the greatest source of light and glare. Indirect light and glare impacts on rural areas would likely occur as urban "glow" from the UGAs and RACs becomes visible after dark, resulting in eroded visibility of the night sky.

Under Alternative 4, the rural areas would experience little impact on existing aesthetic resources. Most of the rural areas outside of the RACs and PRCs would remain largely unchanged from current conditions, with the exception of infilling of existing rural lots

and rural activities such as logging. In the UGAs (municipal and non-municipal), aesthetic impacts would be similar to those described for Alternatives 2 and 3. In the RACs, a gradual transition from the current rural character to a more suburban developed appearance would occur. In the PRCs, infilling would give the areas a more suburban look.

As development occurs in UGAs (municipal and non-municipal), RACs, and PRCs, open space would be established through implementation of planning policies. Encouragement of cluster developments with required open space would also provide more lands for recreational opportunities. Alternative 4 should provide more dedicated open space and recreational opportunities than Alternatives 1, 2, and 3.

Under Alternative 4, the rural areas outside of the RACs and PRCs would be for the most part protected from disruption of historic or cultural sites. Impacts to historical and cultural resources in the PRCs would be similar to those described under Alternative 3 for the UGAs and RCCs.

Under Alternative 4, impacts to designated natural resource lands would be similar to those described for Alternatives 2 and 3. Where RCCs, RACs and PRCs are in close proximity to designated natural resource lands, the potential for conversion and/or land use conflicts may be greater.

Transportation. Under Alternative 4, the rural transportation system and rural area traffic hazards would remain largely unchanged from existing conditions.

Transportation impacts and traffic hazards in the UGAs (municipal and non-municipal) and RACs would be similar to those described for urban areas under Alternative 2. Additionally, traffic hazards can be expected to increase in proximity to PRCs, as infilling occurs and privately-maintained roads typical of many existing platted areas deteriorate. As with RCCs under Alternative 3, PRCs will not likely have the density capable of supporting public transportation. More vehicle trips and fewer non-motorized trips would likely be comparable to Alternative 3.

Because many existing platted areas are on or close to the shoreline, infilling of these areas is likely to cause greater impacts to the shoreline than under Alternatives 2 or 3, but less than Alternative 1. Additional new development may take place along the shoreline, increasing these shoreline impacts.

Public Services. Additional fire and sheriff services may be required to serve growth due to infilling and new development in PRCs to maintain current levels of service. Within the UGAs (municipal and non-municipal) and RACs impacts would be similar to those described under Alternative 2 for UGAs.

Impacts would be greater for government services and schools than those described under Alternatives 2 and 3, but not likely as great as under Alternative 1.

Utilities. Impacts to communications and water and stormwater facilities would be similar to those under Alternative 2.

Impacts to sewer/septage and solid waste facilities would also be similar to those under Alternative 2. In the RCCs, RACs and PRCs, the issue of septic tank conversion to sanitary sewer system may be more problematic because of the relatively lower population base. If this transition does not occur, the RCCs, RACs and PRCs may be at relatively higher risk for septic system failure and groundwater contamination.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS CONCLUSIONS

Alternative 1 would lead to the greatest inefficiencies in provision of services, utilities, and transportation. Economic growth is unpredictable. Following existing growth patterns would lead to sprawl and while environmental impacts would be more dispersed, the cumulative impacts would likely be generally greater than under the other alternatives.

Alternative 2 would have the most efficient systems of utility, services and transportation. Rural character would receive the greatest protection under this alternative. Economic impacts may be high with severe curtailment of development in rural areas, but economic growth would be encouraged and predictable within UGAs. Environmental impacts would be greatest where concentrated within UGAs. County-wide environmental impacts would likely be less than with any of the other alternatives.

Alternative 3 would have more efficient systems of utility, services and transportation than Alternative 1, but less so than under Alternative 2. Rural character would be protected under this alternative, with some impacts near RCCs and RACs. Economic impacts may be high with severe curtailment of development in rural areas, but to a lesser degree than under Alternative 2. Economic growth would be encouraged within Municipal UGAs and to some degree within RCCs and RACs; overall economic growth would be predictable. Environmental impacts would be greatest where concentrated within UGAs (municipal and non-municipal) and RACs. Greater county-wide environmental impacts would likely occur than under Alternative 2, but less so than under the other alternatives.

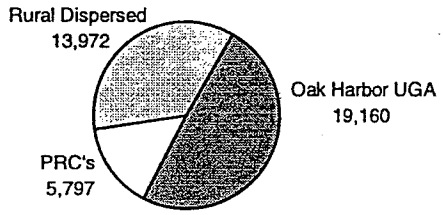
Alternative 4 would have the least efficient systems of utilities, services and transportation of the planned growth alternatives, but these systems would nevertheless likely be more efficient than under Alternative 1. Less rural character protection is afforded under this alternative than under Alternatives 2 and 3, with some impacts within and near RCCs, RACs and PRCs, but rural areas receive considerably greater protection than under Alternative 1. Of the planned growth alternatives, economic growth is least impacted under this alternative, and economic development has greater predictability than under Alternative 1. County-wide environmental impacts would be greater than under Alternatives 2 or 3, but would be less than those under Alternative 1. This alternative provides the greatest diversity. The benefits of diversity go far beyond maximizing personal choices while managing growth. They include accommodating smooth transitions for future expansion of urban areas, providing a greater ability to adapt to emerging technologies and greater flexibility in the provision of alternative services. A diversified economic base is less likely to experience catastrophic impacts from economic declines. A diversified community is more able to absorb new campus-based industries and respond to the needs of growing, cutting-edge industries.

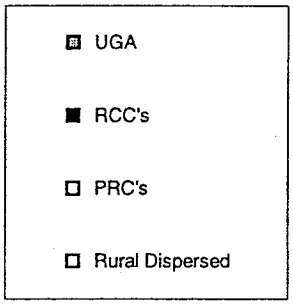
Figure 4.1 Existing and Projected Population Distribution - 1996 compared to 2016 - North Whidbey.

	Percent of Total NW Population				
	1996	2016 Alt 1	2016 Alt 2	2016 Alt 3	2016 Alt 4
Oak Harbor	49.2%	50.0%	60.3%	59.4%	57.4%
PRCs	14.9%	14.5%	11.1%	11.9%	13.9%
Rural Areas	35.9%	35.5%	28.7%	28.7%	28.7%

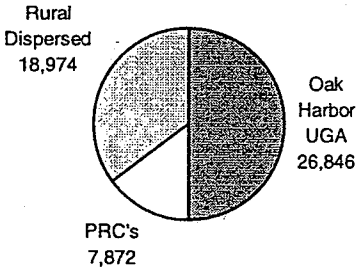
Figure 4.2 Existing and Projected Population Distribution - 1996 compared to 2016 - North Whidbey.

North Whidbey Population Share - 1996

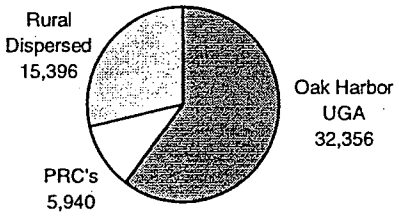




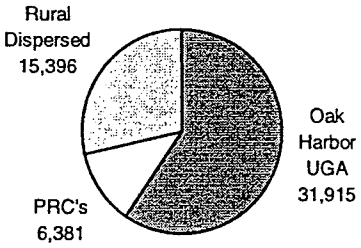
Alternative I - North Whidbey
Population in 2016



Alternative II - North Whidbey
Population in 2016



Alternative III - North Whidbey
Population in 2016



Alternative IV - North Whidbey
Population in 2016

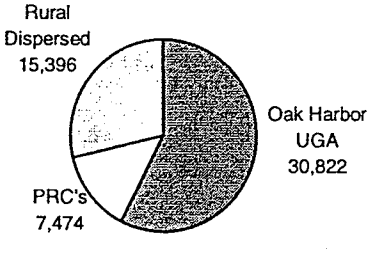
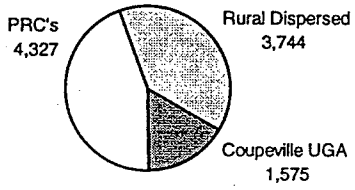


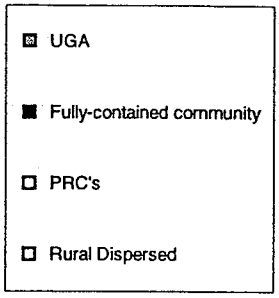
Figure 4.3 Existing and Projected Population Distribution - 1996 compared to 2016 - Central Whidbey.

	Percent of Total CW Population				
	1996	2016 Alt 1	2016 Alt 2	2016 Alt 3	2016 Alt 4
Coupeville	16.3%	16.8%	30.8%	28.4%	21.0%
Fully-contained new community	0.0%	0.0%	9.8%	7.4%	0.0%
PRCs	44.9%	44.6%	36.0%	38.4%	45.8%
Rural Areas	38.8%	38.6%	33.2%	33.2%	33.2%

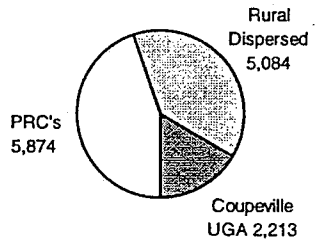
Figure 4.4 Existing and Projected Population Distribution - 1996 compared to 2016 - Central Whidbey.

Central Whidbey Population Share - 1996

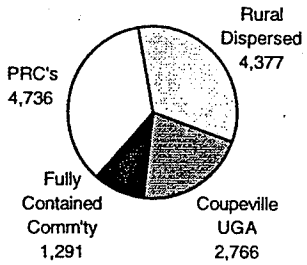




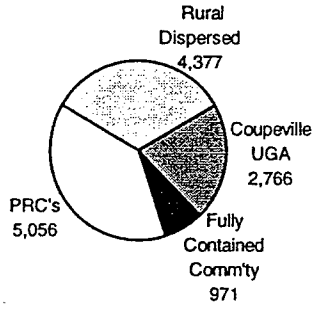
Alternative I - Central Whidbey
Population in 2016



Alternative II - Central Whdibey
Population in 2016



Alternative III - Central Whidbey
Population in 2016



Alternative IV - Central Whidbey
Population in 2016

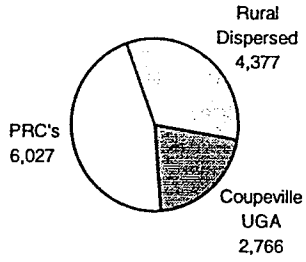
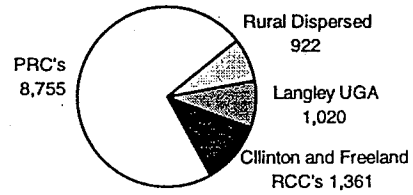


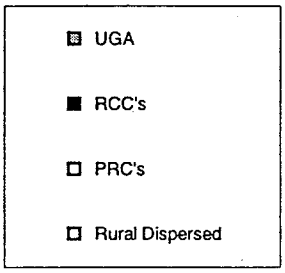
Figure 4.5 Existing and Projected Population Distribution - 1996 compared to 2016 - South Whidbey.

	Percent of Total SW Population				
	1996	2016 Alt 1	2016 Alt 2	2016 Alt 3	2016 Alt 4
Langley	8.5%	5.5%	34.7%	16.5%	8.8%
RCCs	11.3%	12.7%	10.0%	24.6%	18.6%
FCNC	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	15.2%
PRCs	72.6%	66.2%	48.5%	52.1%	50.5%
Rural Area	7.7%	15.1%	6.8%	6.8%	6.8%

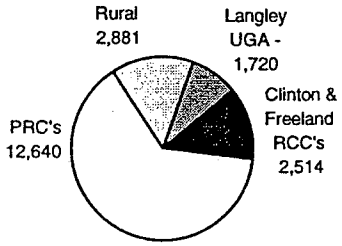
Figure 4.6 Existing and Projected Population Distribution - 1996 compared to 2016 - South Whidbey

South Whidbey Population Share - 1996

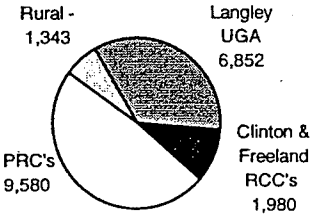




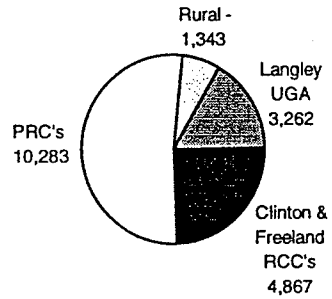
Alternative I - South Whidbey
Population in 2016



Alternative II - South Whidbey
Population in 2016



Alternative III - South Whidbey
Population in 2016



Alternative IV - South Whidbey
Population in 2016

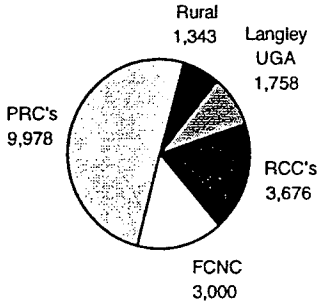
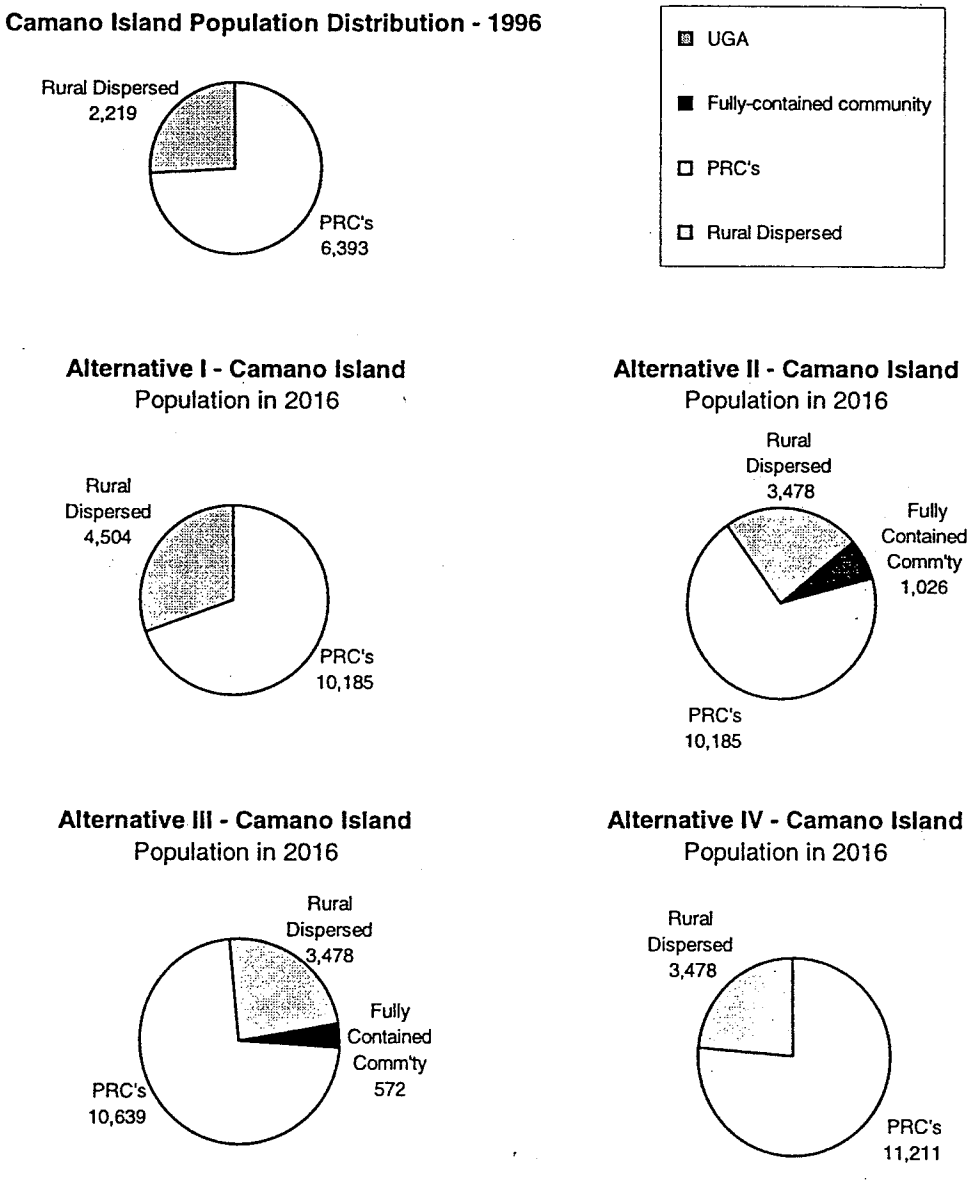


Figure 4.7 Existing and Projected Population Distribution - 1996 compared to 2016 - Camano Island.

	Percent of Total CI Population				
	1996	2016 Alt 1	2016 Alt 2	2016 Alt 3	2016 Alt 4
PRCs	74.2%	73.3%	69.3%	72.4%	76.3%
FCNC	0.0%	0.0%	7.0%	3.9%	0.0%
Rural Areas	25.8%	26.7%	23.7%	23.7%	23.7%

Figure 4.8 Existing and Projected Population Distribution - 1996 compared to 2016 - Camano Island.



MITIGATING MEASURES

Earth

Mitigation Measures

The following are potential mitigation measures that the Comprehensive Plan and future regulatory efforts could implement:

1. Direct urban development only to areas that are appropriate to development at urban densities, avoiding all designated geologic and soils hazards areas.
2. On slopes greater than 15%, maintain low residential densities.
3. In geologically hazardous areas prohibit all uses except those classified as low intensity uses, such as agriculture and recreation.
4. To preserve agrarian aspects of the rural lifestyle and maintain low intensity use, establish agricultural production as the highest priority use on identified prime agricultural soils.
5. On designated forest lands, establish silvaculture as the highest priority use.
6. Provide incentives and zoning designations, and apply other regulatory techniques to preserve prime agricultural soils for agrarian uses.
7. Adhere to guidelines established by the Washington State Department of Ecology for erosion and sediment control.
8. Require mandatory riparian, lacustrine, and steep slope vegetative buffers to limit erosion, siltation, and marine impacts during and after construction.
9. Establish permitting protocols that will examine projects in a cumulative manner and provide site specific mitigation to reduce impacts in the design phase, rather than try to mitigate problems after they have developed.

Unavoidable Impacts

New development in Island County will result in site specific grading, filling, excavation, removal of plants and trees, and other disturbances to the earth. Although these impacts cannot be eliminated, they can be mitigated through a sound comprehensive plan and well-designed mitigation measures.

Air

Mitigation Measures

The following are potential mitigation measures that the Comprehensive Plan and future regulatory efforts could implement:

1. Minimize trips lengths and reliance on private vehicle use by promoting a compact pattern of development in urban areas.

2. Prohibit land uses that create noxious or toxic air pollutants near residences, hospitals, or other incompatible land uses.

3. Increase awareness of the air quality impacts of vehicle emissions, wood stoves, and other activities through a public education program.

4. Require all new development, including those in rural areas, to have heating sources other than wood stoves.

5. Establish wood stove emission standards that exceed current state standards.

6. Establish outdoor burning bans in UGAs and RACs.

7. Island County could provide collection and recycling of land clearing debris from all sites where clearing and timber harvest occurs, thereby eliminating the need to burn unmerchantable timber and debris. On-site wood waste recycling options such as chipping machines could be provided.

8. Establish higher emission standards for new industrial and commercial uses that exceed state and federal standards.

Unavoidable Impacts

As growth occurs, there would be an increase in the source of air pollutants, potentially degrading air quality.

Water - Surface Water, Runoff/Absorption, Floods, and Groundwater

Mitigation Measures

The following are potential mitigation measures that the Comprehensive Plan and future regulatory efforts could implement:

1. Minimize water quality impacts in the UGAs, RACs and PRCs by encouraging a development pattern that minimizes impervious surface coverage, such as clustered development, multi-story buildings, or other innovative building designs.

2. Minimize water quality impacts in the rural areas by concentrating growth in the UGAs, RACs, and PRCs.

3. Provide for residential development patterns in the UGAs that will support a public sewer system.

4. Limit development activity in frequently flooded areas to low intensity uses, such as agriculture and recreation.

5. Require mandatory buffers of undisturbed vegetation for designated streams.

6. Provide for the transfer of development rights to allow development in appropriate locations, while protecting environmentally sensitive areas.

7. Encourage the retention of vegetation, wetlands, and the use of natural stormwater management facilities, such as bio-filtration swales.

8. Evaluate and enhance critical area regulations to reduce stormwater runoff, erosion, sedimentation, and flooding problems.

9. Increase standards for installation of new septic systems and for maintenance and inspection of existing septic systems.

10. Identify and establish procedures for increased protection of groundwater. Implement recommendations of the County Ground Water Management Program.

11. Develop and implement County-wide stormwater control plans.

12. Develop education programs to provide information on water resource protection and conservation.

Unavoidable Impacts

As urban development continues, some increases in impervious surfaces would be expected, potentially decreasing groundwater recharge, reducing surface water flows during dry periods, and increasing flooding problems.

As urban growth occurs, increases in pollutant sources associated with urban uses would occur, potentially contaminating surface waters and groundwater.

Water - Public Water Systems

Mitigation Measures

The following are potential mitigation measures that the Comprehensive Plan and future regulatory efforts could implement:

1. Promote a coordinated and connected water system by providing a compact and concentrated growth pattern in the UGAs, RACs, and PRCs.

2. Restrict new growth based on projected water availability.

3. Promote the use of coordinated and connected water systems and discourage development of small, independent water systems.

4. Require water conservation measures in new development.

5. Locate new wells inland, away from the coast and especially narrow points of land to reduce potential salt water intrusion.

6. The tools for coordinated water supply planning have been developed in the CWSP and GWMP. Implementation of the recommendations of these plans will promote good drinking water supply planning.

Unavoidable Impacts

Demand for potable water will increase as population grows.

Plants and Animals

Mitigation Measures

The following are potential mitigation measures the Comprehensive Plan and future regulatory efforts could implement:

1. Reduce development pressure and associated habitat loss by concentrating growth in a limited number of areas. Preserve riparian corridors and wetlands by cluster development that would minimize intrusion into significant habitat areas.
2. Provide for a County-wide open space network that preserves habitat areas and movement corridors for wildlife.
3. Establish low density land use designations in significant fish and wildlife habitat areas.
4. Develop standards that emphasize the preservation of natural vegetation, including widened buffer requirements and standards for the minimum removal and disturbance of vegetation.
5. Evaluate and revise critical areas regulations to enhance protection of habitat areas.
6. Establish a land acquisition program for especially significant habitat areas.
7. Develop a comprehensive habitat management program to protect natural resources in Island County.

Unavoidable Impacts

Some habitat loss will occur with new development.

Energy And Natural Resources - Rate of Use, Sources/Availability, Nonrenewable Resources, Conservation, and Renewable Resources

Mitigation Measures

The following are potential mitigation measures that the Comprehensive Plan and future regulatory efforts could implement:

1. Promote energy conservation by providing a concentrated growth pattern that would permit energy efficient housing design.
2. Establish and designate commercially significant natural resource lands for long-term protection.
3. Encourage retrofitting existing structures for energy conservation.
4. Provide incentives for the use of renewable resources and conservation.

Unavoidable Impacts

Demand for power and natural resources will grow with increased residential, commercial and industrial development.

Energy And Natural Resources - Scenic Resources

Mitigation Measures

The following are potential mitigation measures that the Comprehensive Plan and future regulatory efforts could implement:

1. Preserve the rural visual character of much of the County by concentrating growth in a limited number of more intensive development areas.
2. Provide for the preservation of scenic agricultural lands, open spaces, forest lands, critical areas and other scenic resources.
3. Limit development in scenic rural areas to low intensity and low density uses.
4. Recognize natural resource lands as a scenic resource.
5. Provide for the preservation of vegetation, scenic views and viewsheds.
6. Limit building heights to preserve significant views.

Unavoidable Impacts

New development will alter the natural landscape and could block some views.

Environmental Health - Noise

Mitigation Measures

The following are potential mitigation measures that the Comprehensive Plan and future regulatory efforts could implement:

1. Concentrate population growth to a limited number of designated areas to preserve the quiet rural character of Island County.
2. Reduce noise problems by avoiding location of sensitive land uses (i.e. homes, schools and hospitals) near high level noise areas such as airport facilities.
3. Designate compatible land uses to minimize density of people in high aircraft noise areas.
4. Establish criteria for placement of vegetation zones/noise barriers between significant noise sources and adjacent noise sensitive land uses.
5. Establish noise level reducing standards for new construction in moderate and high aircraft noise areas.

6. Encourage use of alternative transportation modes within UGAs and/or RACs to help reduce increases in motor vehicle traffic and mitigate noise problems.

Unavoidable Impacts

Increased population growth and new development may increase potential noise sources.

Land And Shoreline Use - Relationship to Existing Land Use Plans and to Estimated Population

Mitigation Measures

The following are potential mitigation measures that the Comprehensive Plan and future regulatory efforts could implement:

1. Pursuant to GMA requirements, ensure that all other Island County plans and policies are consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Plan.
2. Establish location criteria for different land uses to be used in evaluating rezone requests and to help determine future growth areas.
3. Establish a process for inventorying existing land uses including vacant lands and updating as development occurs.
4. Ensure the future ability to respond to changing conditions and needs by establishing a process for regular review and amendments to the Future Land Use Plan.
5. Establish concurrency requirements to ensure that development is not permitted until public facilities and service capacity are adequate to meet the needs of the development.

Unavoidable Impacts

None identified.

Housing

Mitigation Measures

The following are potential mitigation measures that the Comprehensive Plan and future regulatory efforts could implement:

1. Minimize public service cost and associated housing costs by concentrating growth in UGAs , RACs and PRCs.
2. Accommodate a variety of housing needs by providing a range of residential densities, from low density rural residential development to higher density attached multi-family housing.
3. Promote housing affordability by encouraging a variety of housing types in appropriate locations, including common wall housing, accessory units, manufactured housing, clustered developments, and farm worker housing.

4. Identify surplus public lands that may be suitable sites for future development of low and moderate income housing.

5. Establish policies and incentives to support the availability of affordable housing.

Unavoidable Impacts

The need for more housing units of various types increases with population growth.

Light and Glare

Mitigation Measures

The following are potential mitigation measures that the Comprehensive Plan and future regulatory efforts could implement:

1. Require the use of directional shields and timers on new outdoor lighting.

2. Establish standards for building and landscape materials that would absorb, rather than reflect, light and glare.

3. Establish development standards that restrict the levels of light and glare that new development may emit.

Unavoidable Impacts

Potential sources of light and glare increase as more development occurs.

Aesthetics

Mitigation Measures

The following are potential mitigation measures that the Comprehensive Plan and future regulatory efforts could implement:

1. Provide for the preservation of agricultural and forest resource lands, and protect wetlands, fish and wildlife habitats, and steep hillsides.

2. Limit development in scenic rural areas to low intensity uses, such as agriculture and recreation uses.

3. Limit commercial development to UGAs, RACs, and designated areas.

4. Discourage strip retail and haphazard commercial development in rural areas.

5. Establish design standards and a design review process for new development.

6. Ensure that structures, roads and utility systems are designed and constructed to minimize the unnecessary alteration of the landscape and to preserve natural systems and scenic amenities.

Unavoidable Impacts

Increased development of natural landscapes reduces overall aesthetic quality.

Recreation

Mitigation Measures

The following are potential mitigation measures that the Comprehensive Plan and future regulatory efforts could implement:

1. Implement recommendations outlined in the County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan.
2. Establish an inter-connected open space network throughout Island County.
3. Identify priority areas for future open space acquisition.
4. Require that new development provide recreational open space to meet the established standards.
5. Seek funds to acquire new open space by assessing impact fees on new development, issuing open space bonds, or pursuing other funding sources.

Unavoidable Impacts

Increase in population can increase demand on the available supply of recreational facilities, lowering the level of service of recreational facilities.

Historic and Cultural Preservation

Mitigation Measures

The following are potential mitigation measures that the Comprehensive Plan and future regulatory efforts could implement:

1. Work with the Washington State Office of Historic Preservation to identify and document priority historic and/or cultural sites and establish criteria for evaluation of future sites.
2. Continue to carry out the objectives of the Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve, and continue to support the functions of the Central Whidbey Island Historical Preservation District Advisory Committee.
3. Continue to provide and develop additional incentives to preserve historic structures such as reduced tax assessments and the purchase of development rights.
4. Give high priority to the preservation of historic and cultural sites when redevelopment plans are reviewed.
5. Encourage the rehabilitation of historic structures.

Unavoidable Impacts

None identified.

Natural Resource Lands

Mitigation Measures

The following are potential mitigation measures that the Comprehensive Plan and future policy and regulatory efforts could implement:

1. Reduce development pressure on designated natural resource lands by concentrating growth in UGAs, RACs and PRCs, and away from resource lands.
2. Explicitly preserve resource lands through agricultural, forest, and mineral resource lands zoning designations, large minimum lot sizes and other zoning techniques, preferential tax treatment, TDR programs, and other creative techniques.
3. Reduce the potential for conflict between resource lands and adjacent uses by promoting special buffers, setbacks, and opportunities for clustered development.

Unavoidable Impacts

None identified.

Transportation

Mitigation Measures

The following are potential mitigation measures that the Comprehensive Plan and future regulatory efforts could implement:

1. Promote greater transportation system efficiencies, such as transit and other alternative modes of transportation, by creating designated areas with relatively higher residential densities.
2. Minimize trip lengths and maximize the opportunity for non-motorized transportation by locating services and employment centers near residential areas.
3. Establish a land use pattern that contributes to a decreased reliance on the private automobile. This may include residential densities that are high enough to support transit, location of services and employment near residential areas, and development standards that promote ease of access to transit and other alternative modes of transportation between UGAs, RACs and PRCs.
4. Assist in future transportation planning by clearly designating the location of future population concentrations and other traffic generators.
5. Pursuant to the GMA, establish levels of services for the future transportation system.

6. Identify specific transportation system improvements that would be necessary to maintain the established level of service.

7. Require funding and construction of major transportation facilities concurrent with new development.

8. Establish a land use pattern that would minimize future traffic hazards due to congestion and the need to build transportation system improvements through hazardous areas, such as floodplains and steep slopes.

9. Assist in the avoidance of future traffic hazards by providing some predictability and improved ability to plan needed improvements.

10. Seek additional funding for the correction of existing and projected traffic hazard areas.

Significant Unavoidable Impacts

Increased population will result in increased traffic and demand for transportation system improvements.

Public Services And Utilities - Fire/Law Enforcement/Government Services

Mitigation Measures

The following are potential mitigation measures that the Comprehensive Plan and future regulatory efforts could implement:

1. Emphasize a compact land use pattern that would increase the efficiency of fire and emergency service delivery.

2. Assist future fire service planning by providing direction regarding future population growth.

3. Establish levels of service for fire services, sheriff response times, and facilities that are adequate to meet the needs of new development.

4. Emphasize a compact development pattern that would increase the efficiency and economy of police and public safety service delivery.

5. Assist future service law enforcement planning by providing direction regarding future growth areas.

6. Prohibit new development until law enforcement services are adequate to meet the needs of the development.

7. Concentrate growth in designated areas to provide for better access and more efficient provision of County services.

8. Establish levels of service for administrative County services.

9. Consider enhancement of user fees and other techniques to fund needed increases in services.

Public Services And Utilities - Schools

Mitigation Measures

The following are potential mitigation measures that the Comprehensive Plan and future regulatory efforts could implement:

1. Provide concentration of growth in the UGAs and/or RACs to reduce reliance on school buses, reduce the length of school bus trips, and to increase the efficient use of existing and future school facilities.
2. Assist in future school needs planning by providing clear guidance on the direction of future growth.
3. Establish a level of service for school facility capacity.
4. Require impact fees on new development to pay a fair share of the cost of facilities needed to service the new student population of the development.

Public Services and Utilities - Parks and Other Recreational Facilities

Mitigation Measures

The following are potential mitigation measures that the Comprehensive Plan and future development regulations could implement:

1. Establish an inter-connected open space network throughout Island County.
2. Identify and document priority areas for future recreational facilities acquisition.
3. Assist future open space and recreational service planning by clearly designating future population areas.
4. Identify resources and criteria for additional recreational service funding.

Public Services And Utilities - Communications

Mitigation Measures

The following are potential mitigation measures that the Comprehensive Plan and future development regulations could implement:

1. Identify criteria for the location and evaluation of potential communication facilities.
2. Establish design standards and a design review process for evaluation of potential communication facilities.

Public Services and Utilities - Water/Stormwater

Mitigation Measures

The following are potential mitigation measures that the Comprehensive Plan and future development regulations could implement:

1. Plan and implement a County-wide stormwater control system by providing direction regarding future growth.
2. Minimize the potential increase in stormwater flows in the more intensively developed areas by encouraging a development pattern that minimizes impervious surface coverage, such as clustered development, multi-story buildings, or other innovative building designs. Provide stormwater detention facilities.
3. Limit new development in the floodplain to low-intensity uses, such as agriculture and recreation.
4. Encourage the retention of vegetation and use of natural stormwater management facilities, such as biofiltration swales.
5. Establish levels of service for stormwater facilities.
6. Establish concurrency requirements for stormwater facilities adequate to meet the needs of new development.

Public Services and Utilities - Sewer/Septage/Solid Waste

Mitigation Measures

The following are potential mitigation measures that the Comprehensive Plan and future regulatory efforts could implement:

1. Concentrate growth to provide for more efficient sewer system design and solid waste collection routes.
2. Assist future sewer and solid waste planning by providing direction regarding future population growth.
3. Accommodate public sewer systems and solid waste recycling programs by providing an adequate population base to support such services.
4. Prohibit the development of new community septic systems in the more intensively developed areas, except on an interim basis.
5. Provide coordinated planning for sanitary sewer when existing development patterns present adverse environmental impacts and unsanitary health conditions.
6. Provide for solid waste service planning on a regional, County-wide basis.
7. Over time, evaluate the need for expansion of existing solid waste facilities.

8. Over time, evaluate the need for enhancement of sanitary sewer output treatment processes.

Unavoidable Impacts

New growth and development will result in increased demand for public services and utilities, including fire, law enforcement, school facilities, park and recreation facilities, stormwater facilities and sewer and solid waste collection services.

Figure A.11 Clinton RCC