

Executive Summary: Proposed Buckley Zoning Changes

The Buckley Planning Commission has put in many long nights working on the zoning portion of the Land Use Element of the Buckley Comprehensive Plan; these zoning changes reflect the land use, economic, and social issues enunciated by Buckley citizens during public open house meetings, Planning Commission meetings, hearings, letters, phone calls, and e-mails. The new zoning map is a result of long deliberation and careful thought to plan for the economic and social situation on the ground today, as well as to plan for anticipated future scenarios, such as an aging-in-place population or housing demand changes.

Reasons for zoning changes:

- Retention of small-town character. Overwhelmingly, Buckley citizens state they wish to retain their small-town character. This proposal controls how development happens in Buckley to preserve character.
- Requirement of zoning at urban density. This proposal also creates concurrency with Buckley's Comprehensive Plan, allowing Buckley to qualify for Public Works Trust Fund monies.
- Economic diversity. A larger local population base is needed for businesses to thrive in Buckley. The zoning proposal also allows for a wider range of housing types: working-wage, executive-salary and one- and two-person households are all covered, because this proposal allows for these housing types.
- Neighborhood orientation. A common refrain during the planning process is that Buckley citizens liked their neighborhoods and wanted increased mobility. This proposal is neighborhood- and community-oriented.
- Flexibility. This proposal allows more flexibility in building placement on the lot, and also allows for more uses in the zones.

What this zoning proposal does:

- Supplies land for between 1300-1400 housing units, on approximately 507 net buildable acres.
- Increases flexibility for businesses and residents by expanding permitted uses and building siting.
- Guides commercial and residential design to promote an attractive and consistent civic identity and character.
- Allows Buckley to accommodate rapid population growth in the region via a wide range of housing types while discouraging uncontrolled growth.
- Attempts to supply land to accommodate working-wage housing.

What this zoning proposal does not do:

- Allow wall-to-wall large houses shoehorned in on small lots. The code restricts this type of building.
- Mandate what you can or can't build. 'Encourage' is common language throughout.
- Expressly raise residential taxes as a result of zoning. The literature is clear that house size, year built, comparable neighboring homes, and number of bathrooms guide assessed valuation, not zoning designation. Plus, I-747 limits yearly city tax increases to 1% of total revenues as well.
- Create expensive sprawl and develop inefficiently, wasting precious taxpayer resources to extend city services to a few, thus destroying valuable open land outside of city limits.

What changed from last time?

- Central area residential: total area smaller and minimum lot size larger.
- RB by Hinkleman: remains the same (as NMU).
- HDR area: smaller.
- Citizen suggestions incorporated: e-mail mailing list, elements of plan available for viewing in more places, increased notification (reader board on 410, newspaper articles, expanded web site), Open House to view and comment on changes.

The process from here:

- Receive and deliberate on hearing input.
- Make any final adjustments.
- Present proposal to City Council.
- Present zoning changes to Washington Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development by August 1, 2005.

Zoning Proposal Background:

The Planning Commission must balance the community's desires, continuing population growth, land use, and economic development in its zoning proposal.

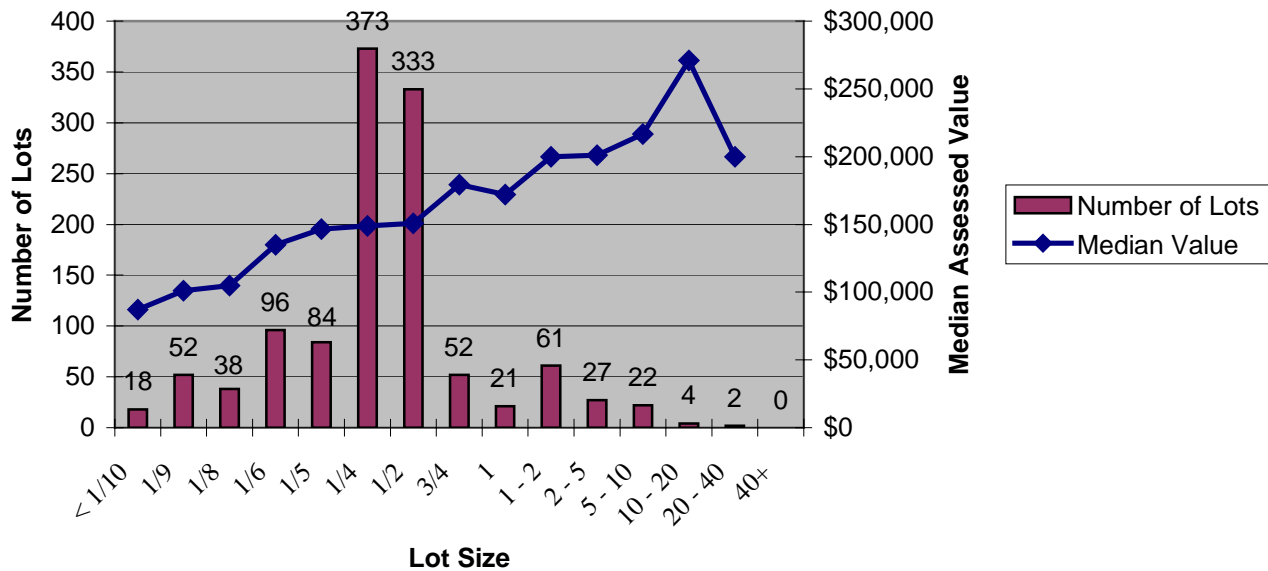
The zoning proposal is based heavily upon replicating past development patterns and community desires, enunciated through public meetings, hearings, comments, letters, phone calls, and e-mails. The zoning proposal plots future growth to closely match past development patterns. That is: the ratio of future smaller lots to larger lots is similar to what is on the ground today.

What type of household is in Buckley now?

| Household Size | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------|-------|
| | Block Group 1, Census Tract 702.07, Pierce County, Washington | Block Group 2, Census Tract 702.07, Pierce County, Washington | Block Group 3, Census Tract 702.07, Pierce County, Washington | Block Group 4, Census Tract 702.07, Pierce County, Washington | Average | Total | % |
| Total: | 391 | 405 | 260 | 518 | | 1574 | |
| 1-person household | 82 | 68 | 60 | 118 | 82 | 328 | 20.8% |
| 2-person household | 159 | 133 | 93 | 159 | 136 | 544 | 34.6% |
| 3-person household | 37 | 99 | 28 | 116 | 70 | 280 | 17.8% |
| 4-person household | 93 | 59 | 33 | 65 | 62.5 | 250 | 15.9% |
| 5-person household | 20 | 18 | 18 | 45 | 25.25 | 101 | 6.4% |
| 6-person household | 0 | 28 | 14 | 15 | 14.25 | 57 | 3.6% |
| 7-or-more-person household | 0 | 0 | 14 | 0 | 3.5 | 14 | 0.9% |
| Source: | | | | | | | |
| H16. HOUSEHOLD SIZE [8] - Universe: Occupied housing units | | | | | | | |
| Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 3 (SF 3) - Sample Data | | | | | | | |

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Median HH income 1999 (2000 Census) | |
| Census block group 702.07 (Buckley) | |
| Block Group 1 | 47,500 |
| Block Group 2 | 54,773 |
| Block Group 3 | 53,393 |
| Block Group 4 | 51,875 |
| average \$51,885 | |
| Source: | |
| P53. MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 1999 (DOLLARS) [1] - Universe: Households | |
| Data Set: Census 2000 Summary File 3 (SF 3) - Sample Data | |
| Buckley Housing | |
| median assessed value, all homes: | \$147,500 |
| median assessed value, 2000+ homes: | \$185,700 (median lot size: 9222 sq. ft.) |
| Source: Pierce County GIS database, 2005 data | |
| Mortgage possible with HH income: ~\$175,000 | |
| (5 % APR, 10% down, \$500 monthly debt obligations, \$4500 RE taxes) | |
| Source: http://mortgages.interest.com/content/calculators/earn-home.asp | |
| Buckley Selected Taxation 2001-2005 | |
| Small lot (<8000 sf) assessed value change | 21.9% |
| Medium lot (>8000 sf) assessed value change | 29.7% |
| Source: Pierce County GIS database, 2005 data, Pierce Co. Assessor | |

Buckley 2004 Assessed Value by Lot Size



Source: Pierce County GIS database, 2005 data

What are the numbers with this proposal?

| Land Category (ac.) | Current # Lots | Current % | Zoned Net Lot Capacity (Median Scenario) | Total # After buildout | Total % After buildout | Change |
|---------------------|----------------|-----------|------------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------|
| all < 1/10 | 288 | 24.3% | 406 | 694 | 30.0% | 5.6% |
| 1/4 | 373 | 31.5% | 725 | 1098 | 47.5% | 15.9% |
| 1/2 | 333 | 28.1% | 200 | 533 | 23.0% | -5.1% |
| 3/4 | 52 | 4.4% | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ |

Source data: Pierce County GIS database, 2005 data. Analysis: Buckley Planning Director

Recap:

- The Buckley Planning Commission has worked on the current zoning proposal for almost one year as of today.
- The Buckley Planning Commission must balance many considerations: land use, public input, funding sources (e.g. I-747), future growth and economic scenarios, etc.
- The Buckley community has stated a number of preferences, including:
 - Retain small-town atmosphere
 - Privilege neighborhoods
 - Increase parks
 - Connect neighborhoods and destinations
 - Preserve views
 - Increase economic development
 - Have our kids and parents live here
- The zoning proposal attempts to balance as many of these preferences as possible, knowing:
 - ~55% of Buckley residents live in a one- or two-person household.
 - The median household income cannot afford to buy the typical median home built in Buckley since 2000.
 - Medium-sized lots' assessed value has increased faster than small-sized lots.
- Therefore, the Planning Commission has taken a prudent approach, and has proposed future development to closely match past development to balance the community's wishes with the situation on the ground today, in order to develop flexibly and reach a broad cross-section of the community.