

BELFAIR URBAN GROWTH AREA PLAN

December 2003

Updated February 2022



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Belfair Urban Growth Area Plan

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Introduction

Background & Purpose

Unincorporated Belfair is the primary commercial center in the Northeast corner of North Mason County. In 2003 Mason County identified Belfair as an Urban Growth Area (UGA) of approximately 2,400 acres. The current population within the UGA is approximately 1,100. However, Belfair serves residents within a larger rural geographic area with a population of approximately 23,000 as well as tourists visiting the Hood Canal and unique Theler Wetlands.

Given Belfair’s status as an Urban Growth Area, its location, market conditions, and planned infrastructure investments, a substantial increase in population and land use activities are expected within the UGA boundaries over the next twenty-plus years. Mason County’s 2016 Comprehensive Plan projected a 2036 combined population of 4,720 for Belfair and nearby Allyn, an increase of 1,730 or 58% growth over 20 years. However, past projections of major growth have not been born out. The County’s 1994 population estimate for the UGA projected up to 4,000 people by 2014, significantly above actual growth. The Market Analysis (see Appendix 2) completed in 2003 with this plan projected a growth rate ranging from 3-5% annually, suggesting a population just under 2,000 for the UGA by 2020 at the high end. Actual results have come in closer to the Market Analysis projections, however, the Market Analysis also identified several factors that could accelerate growth: available developable land, infrastructures improvements and amenities, and demand for multifamily housing. As of 2021, the County is reviewing permits for several urban single family and multifamily developments that would



Figure 1. Belfair Context

achieve the lower 2036 Belfair growth target years ahead of the planning horizon. While the general planning horizon of this Plan is twenty years, a key goal of the Belfair Planning Committee was to consider a much longer time period in the formulation of the Plan and its recommendations. Consequently, this means planning for ultimate populations well above current levels.

While new development is on the rise in Belfair, the town is developing a particular character or ‘theme’ based around the Theler Wetlands as a conservation, recreation, and education destination. The Pacific Northwest Salmon Center constructed in 2009 has cemented this theme and is a tourism draw and located just abutting the Belfair UGA. It is anticipated that 300,000 people will visit the Salmon Center annually.

Belfair is home to over 180 businesses located mostly along State Route 3 (SR-3), a busy arterial cluttered by power lines and competitive signage. Ongoing planning efforts have focused on a desire to make the town more attractive and pedestrian-friendly by allowing continued infill development and housing near the commercial village. Recent construction of the sewer system in and improvements to SR-3 will encourage such downtown development. These improvements and other water quality measures have helped begin environmental clean-up of pollution in several lower rivers and streams in and around Belfair.

Belfair appears to be primed for growth. The planned sewer and transportation improvements will stimulate downtown development while regional projects, such as the Tacoma Narrows Bridge and the industrial development of Puget Sound Industrial Center-Bremerton (PSIC-Bremerton) to the north, increase growth pressure on the entire Belfair UGA. Expansion of commercial and industrial activity in the northeast part of the UGA will add much needed family-wage jobs for area residents. The addition of pedestrian facilities, continued development of a consistent town theme, an improved local economy and the on-going programs at the Pacific Northwest Salmon Center will serve to make Belfair a destination well into the foreseeable future.

Planning Process

Original Plan 2002-2004

The County hired the consultant team of MAKERS Architecture and Urban Design (lead consultant), Berk and Associates, Heffron Transportation, and MacLeod Reckord in November 2002 to assist the community in developing the Belfair sub-area plan. The consultant team worked directly with Mason County and Belfair Planning Committee members to facilitate the process.

Specific events and activities included:

- **November 26, 2002 – Planning Committee Meeting:** This was the project kick-off meeting and included introduction of the consultant team, County staff members, and Planning Committee

members. Together, the team discussed the project scope and procedures, direction for economic study, and committee members’ individual thoughts and objectives, and summarized information collected to date.

- **January 21, 2003 – Planning Committee Meeting:** Following up the last meeting, the project team summarized planning activities including site visit, review of background planning information and base map preparation. The team then reported on the existing conditions, “Mirror on the Community,” from an outsiders’ perspective. Chris Mefford of Berk and Associates presented the findings from market study. The team discussed the upcoming workshop.
- **February 8, 2003 – Workshop #1:** There were about 80 people attending the first workshop at Belfair Assembly of God Church. Following introductions about the plan by Makers, Chris Mefford summarized economic conditions and opportunities. The workshop involved small group sessions taking part in mapping exercise and visual preference surveys. The mapping exercise gave each group a chance to identify problems, issues, and opportunities related to land use and development, streetscape and circulation, and parks and recreation on the map which then be hung up on the wall and be presented to the group as a whole.
- **February 18, 2003– Planning Committee Meeting:** The consultant team summarized results from the first workshop. Makers led a discussion on sketch preliminary alternatives related to redevelopment ideas, circulation improvements, land use/population patterns, connections, and design character.



Figure 2. Workshop #1: Map exercise and visual preference survey

discussion. Before adjourning, the team discussed the format and outreach for the second workshop.



Figure 3. Workshop #2

- **April 26, 2003 – Workshop #2:** Makers presented a summary the results from the first workshop to the numerous community participants. The consultant team then presented three land use alternatives, transportation options, and trails and open spaces options. Afterward, the participants were broken into small groups to evaluate land use alternatives and circulation options and to prioritize trails and open spaces options.
- **May 20, 2003 – Planning Committee Meeting:** Makers presented the results of the second workshop and presented preliminary ideas for preferred alternative including plan concept, land use, circulation, parks and trails, and community design.
- **August 19, 2003 – Planning Committee Meeting:** Makers summarized comments on draft plan and draft design standards. Meeting participants discussed proposed zoning district boundaries and designations.
- **August 26, 2003 – Planning Committee Meeting:** Participants reviewed the draft design standards.
- **October 27, 2003 – Updated UGA Plan Draft and Development Regulations are submitted to the Planning Committee:** Committee members have the opportunity to review the plan and draft development regulations prior to the final public workshop.
- **November 8, 2003 – Workshop #3:** More than 130 participants attended this workshop to review the final draft plan and development regulations. Participants completed surveys

prioritizing key plan actions and provided a range of comments on plan and development regulation details.

- **November 18, 2003 – Planning Committee Meeting:** After reviewing survey results from the workshop and discussing final changes to the plan, the Planning Committee voted to recommend adoption of the plan.
- **April-December, 2004 – Public Hearings and Workshops:** The Planning Advisory Commission held a series of five public hearings and several workshops on the recommendation and related amendments between April 2004 and October 2004. A final public hearing was held on December 7, 2004.
- **December 28, 2004 – Adoption:** The Mason County Board of Commissioners voted to adopt the UGA plan, related development code amendments, and zoning map.

2020-2021 PLAN UPDATE

Since 2004 major progress has been made on the infrastructure investments recommended in the Belfair UGA plan. Because these investments are expected to trigger significant near-term growth, the County decided to pursue a Planned Action Environmental Impact Statement and ordinance for the Belfair UGA to facilitate growth reflective of a community-supported vision. This UGA plan was updated in conjunction with the work on the Planned Action Ordinance. Because the update process took place in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, all meetings and engagement activities took place remotely using a variety of online platforms.

Specific events and activities included:

- **May 19, 2020 – Kick-Off Meeting:** The project team held a kickoff meeting to initiate the Planned Action EIS and UGA Plan update. The consultant team, which included staff from BERK Consulting, Makers, and Transpo Group, met Mason County staff, and reviewed the project scope and schedule. The group discussed public engagement strategies in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and timing for the scoping and visioning phase of the project. The group also identified goals, timing, and data needs for the existing conditions report, to be shared as part of the public outreach and visioning process.
- **September 8, 2020 – Staff Workshop:** The team refined objectives of the EIS and plan update, reviewed objectives from the original UGA plan adopted in 2004 and discussed current conditions. BERK staff provided an overview of current zoning, potential property development in the area, and changes to the UGA under consideration. Transpo Group staff briefed the group on the planned SR-3 bypass and its effects in the UGA, and Herrera staff summarized hydrography and environmental conditions.
- **November/December, 2020 – Online Open House:** BERK staff produced an online open house as an education and engagement tool. Similar to an in-person open house, the online open house included information about the project, maps, and interactive features. Participants were able to add comments to maps showing potential UGA and zoning revisions. An online survey

was also hosted at the same page, soliciting participant priorities for the future of the area and feedback about zoning and UGA boundary proposals.

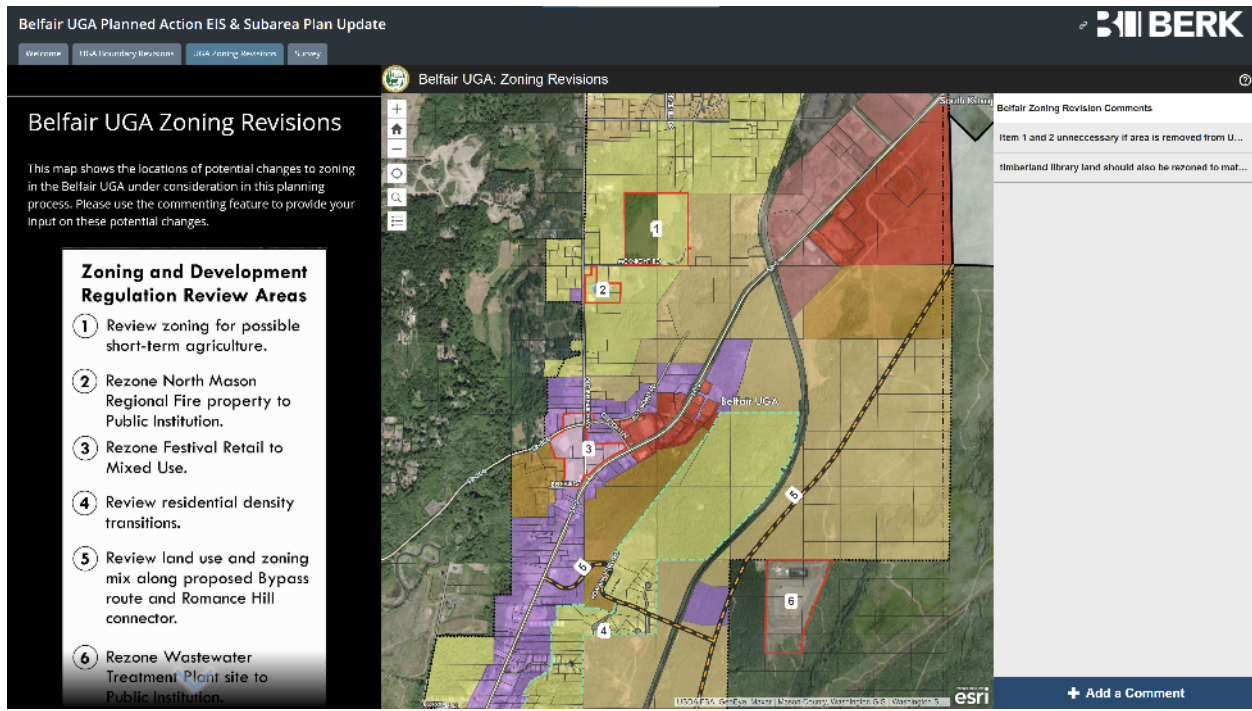


Figure 4. Online Open House interactive map of proposed zoning changes

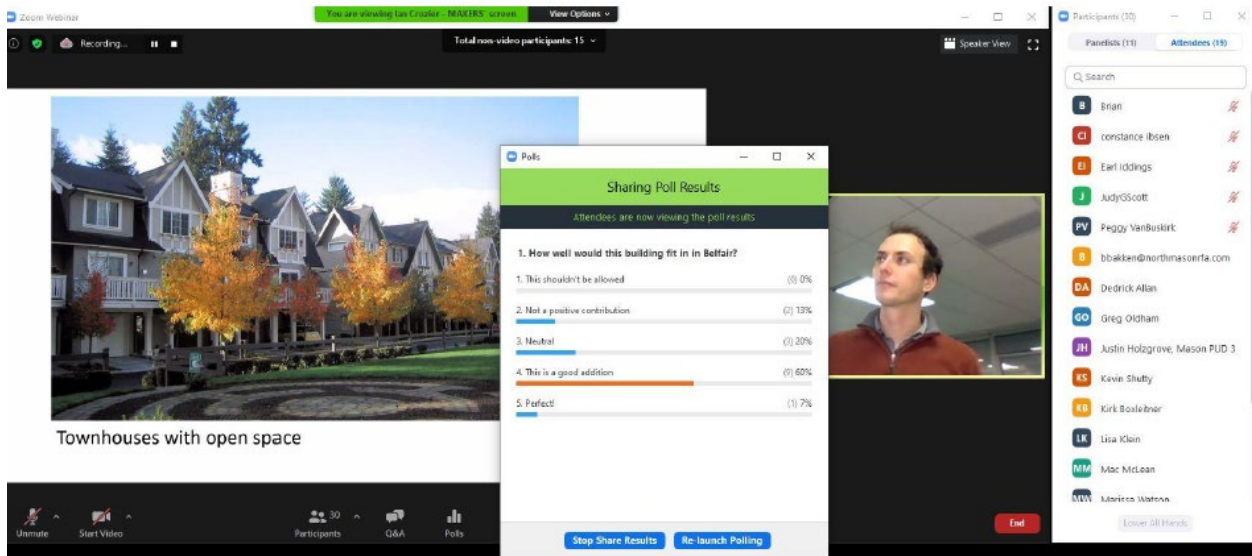


Figure 5. Online Community Workshop visual preference survey

- April 19, 2021 – Planning Advisory Commission Meeting/Community Meeting.** As part of the regularly scheduled Planning Advisory Commission meeting, the County held a community meeting under RCW 43.21c.440(3)(b) to share an early Planned Action Ordinance framework and Subarea Plan adjustments.
- April-May 2021 Draft EIS Comment Period** – With the issuance of a Draft EIS, the County held a 30-day comment period to solicit tribal, agency, and public comments. The Final EIS was published in February 2022, and provides responses to comments.
- Subarea Plan and Planned Action Ordinance adoption following public meetings and hearings.** In spring and summer 2021, public meetings and hearings were held with the Planning Advisory Commission and Board of County Commissioners.

Existing Conditions

Land Uses

Within the UGA, Belfair’s commercial area is a three mile stretch along SR-3. From outsider’s perspectives, physically, this corridor can be divided into 3 nodes or areas. The most prominent commercial node is what is often referred to as Belfair’s downtown, centered around the Old Belfair Highway and Clifton Lane intersections. The downtown is anchored by two grocery stores and contains local and franchise restaurants, gas stations, car dealers, convenience and personal service uses, etc. The second node is an area at the south end of the UGA around the community center, school, and library. Together, these core uses function as Belfair’s civic center and are in good physical condition. Most of the surrounding areas, on the other hand, are underutilized and potentially redevelopable. The Multi-Use Corridor between these two nodes is the third commercial area. It includes a mix of small-scale retail, service, offices, churches, residential uses and the Salmon Center, a regional environmental learning center and tourist draw.

While most sites within the downtown area and SR-3 corridor to the south feature some form of development, there are numerous opportunities for commercial infill development and redevelopment. Construction of the sewer system in the early 2010’s greatly increased commercial and residential development opportunities in Belfair; planned SR-3 bypass will further strengthen development potential when built. The SR-3 corridor east of the railroad on the plateau provides substantial future commercial development opportunities.

Belfair currently contains about 450 residential units within the UGA. Single family homes make up the vast majority of the units. These uses are scattered mostly along the SR-3 corridor west of the railroad and in the vicinity of Old Belfair Highway in the northwest portion of the UGA.

The UGA has seen significant residential growth since the original UGA plan was adopted, with overall units up about 50% since 2003, though still below earlier projections. Prior to the Growth Management Act residential growth in the rural areas outside of the UGA was substantial. Due in part to the size of the UGA, there are many areas that provide future opportunities for new housing. First and foremost is the area surrounding the downtown commercial core – where sites can accommodate a variety of housing within walking distance of services and amenities. Other housing opportunities are the lower flanks of the hillsides east

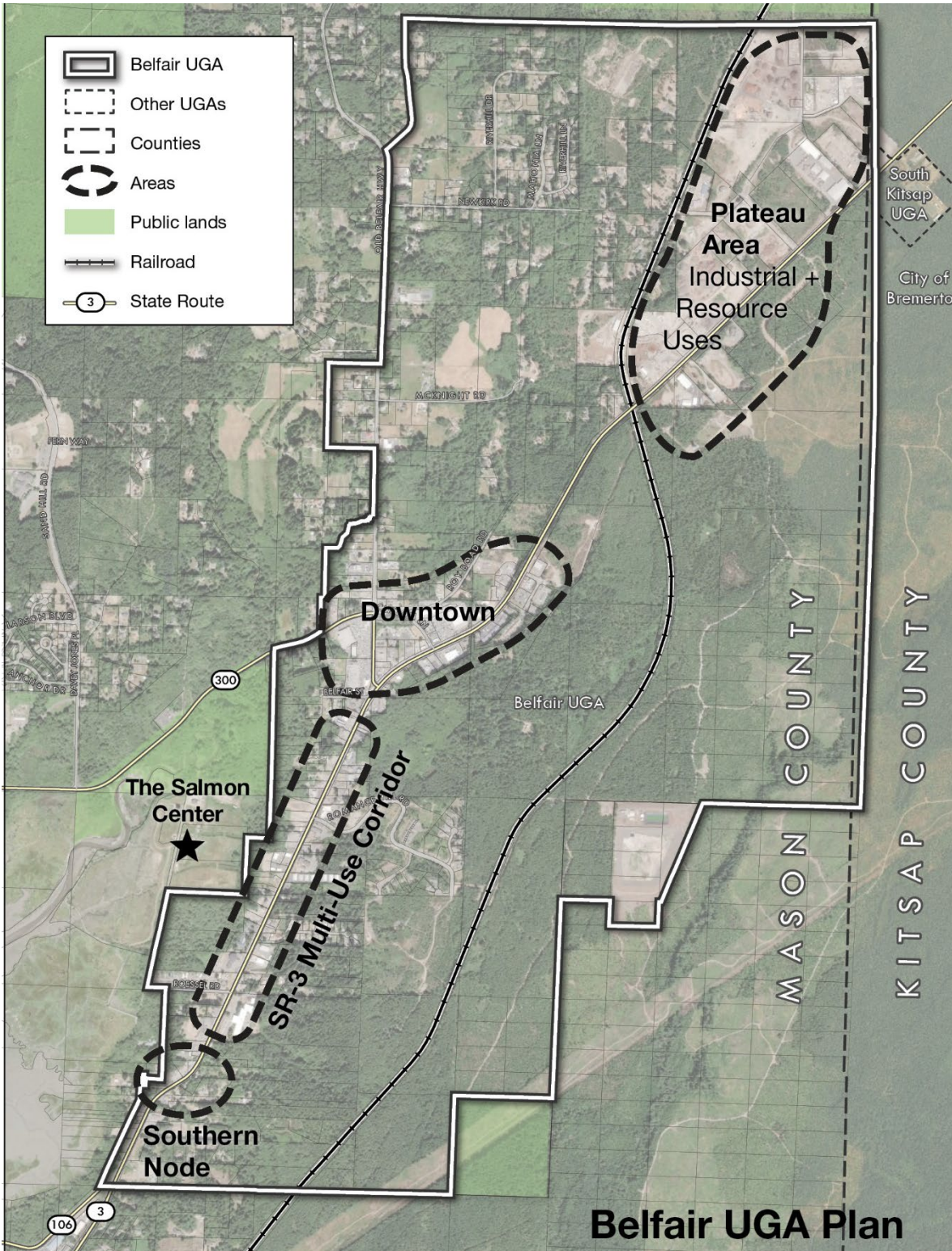


Figure 1. Important Areas in Belfair UGA

of SR-3 – which contain substantial view opportunities towards the Olympic Mountains and Hood Canal. Both of these areas contain environmental constraints, however, including some wetlands, waterways, and steep slopes. While these factors may limit some development, they can provide opportunities to enhance the quality of housing and environment if designed well.

The most substantial housing opportunities in the UGA may be on the plateau – between SR-3 and the future SR-3 bypass route, where the land is relatively flat and there are few environmental constraints. Here there is a great opportunity to create cohesive new residential neighborhoods. Connections to the rest of the community will be important.

Also, on the plateau in the north of the subarea are the UGA’s current industrial sites. These are likely to continue in this use due to the highway and rail access and limited environmental and land use constraints.

Circulation

There are only two main north-south roads in Belfair; SR-3 and NE Old Belfair Hwy. SR-3 is the primary access to town which also functions as a state highway connecting to Shelton to the south and Bremerton to the north. Because there is no parallel route through the whole UGA, accidents on SR-3 can cause extensive delays. Based on the Plan’s transportation analysis, most of the accidents happening along the corridor are at driveway intersections. There are approximately 100 driveways on SR-3 between Cokelet Lane and SR-106 alone. NE Old Belfair Highway, the other north-south access road extends from SR-3 northward, serves mostly local uses. The SR-300/Clifton Lane corridor is one of the few east-west corridors in the UGA. SR-300 links rural areas to the west with Old Belfair Highway, and Clifton Lane links both with SR-3 in the downtown core. The recently completed Romance Hill Road, close to a half mile south of the downtown area is the only public roadway connecting with SR-3 south of downtown. All other streets south of downtown are private dead-end roads.

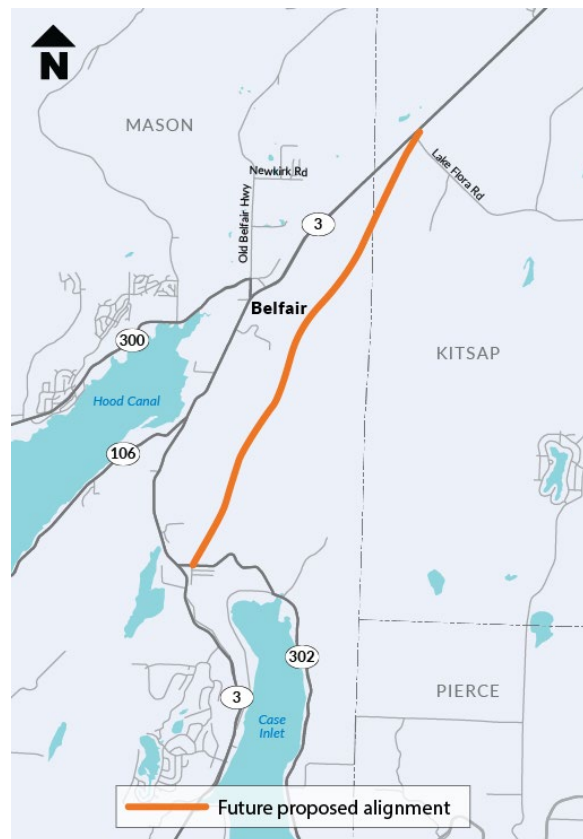


Figure 2. SR-3 bypass proposed alignment.
Source: WSDOT

With the lack of street grid system, local access relies solely on SR-3 and NE Old Belfair Highway. There is no other alternative route. A planned alternative north/south route on the plateau, however, would provide a second route through the Belfair area. The planned route extends from SR-3 near the UGA's eastern boundary and travels southwesterly on the plateau to connect back with SR-3 south of the UGA. Within the UGA a connection to the bypass via Romance Hill Road is planned. Considering growth projections for the UGA and current traffic conditions, major transportation improvement in Belfair will be needed over time. This includes improvements to SR-3, the planned alternative north/south route as well as other local access roads.

Natural Environment

Belfair has tremendous amount of natural habitat within the UGA. The Theler Wetland at the far west end of the UGA is a 135-acre natural jewel for Belfair. It provides trails along Hood Canal, Union River Wildlife area and the Salmon Center west of SR-3.

Wetlands: To the north there are extensive and sensitive stream and wetland systems. Low lying areas along the Union River in the northwest corner of the UGA have been designated by the County as a Class II Critical Aquifer Recharge Area (see 3.2 Water Resources in the EIS).

Hillsides: Steep slopes parallel much of the east side of the SR-3 corridor from the downtown area southward – providing substantial view opportunities towards the water and mountains. A relatively flat plateau lies to the east of the ridge.

Forests: Much of the UGA is well-forested. These areas are colored dark green in Figure 3.

The uncolored areas in Figure 3 are developed sites, while the medium shade of green includes other wooded areas (secondary growth). The light brown areas illustrate recently logged areas or dry meadows.

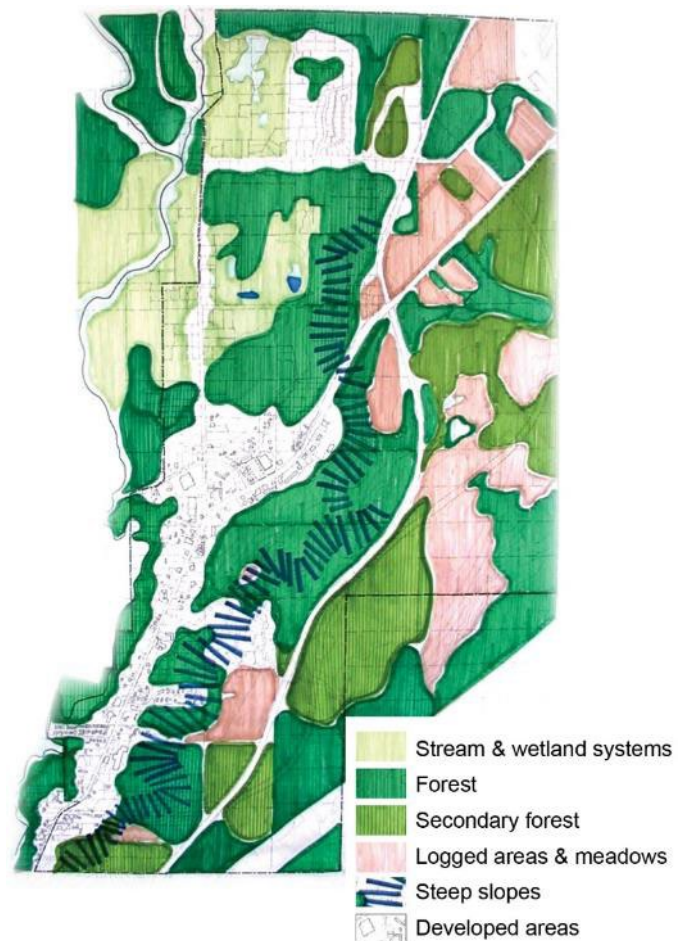


Figure 3. Belfair Natural Areas



Figure 4. View of the Theler Wetland area from the ridge above SR-3.



Figure 5. The Theler Wetland Trail

The community members proudly consider these wetlands, waterways, hillsides and forest land areas as the treasure for their community that need to be protected for next generation to enjoy. Considering population projections, however, participants recognize that structured open space with ballfields and active recreational uses are sorely needed within the UGA.

Pedestrian Network and Trails

The pedestrian network in Belfair is limited. There are few sidewalks in general and thus it's difficult to walk safely and comfortably within the community. Although Theler Wetland trail system is a wonderful exception, it does not connect to other natural habitat and neighborhood areas. There is a strong support from community members to expand the trail system throughout the community in different loops that connects different land uses together. This trail system can be used as another alternative route for pedestrians and bikers to get around in town.

Economic Conditions

According to the 2003 economic analysis, the Belfair UGA had experienced very low growth in the previous decade, while rapid growth occurred in the rural areas around the UGA. New land-use policies for Mason County, related to GMA, suggest that growth will come to Belfair UGA at a higher rate than previously experienced. Large amounts of vacant land within the UGA present an opportunity for a housing developer to exploit economies of scale; developing a substantial pool of housing stock in the same area helps keep prices down. Among potential opportunities, the absence of multi-family housing is most notable and reportedly in strong demand. An influx of seniors provides a strong demand in senior housing. Increased demands for retail space will come with the population growth. Though much of this demand will likely occur in existing commercial centers that currently attract Belfair shoppers, new retail in Belfair attracted by this growth would also benefit from changes in spending habits of existing residents, thereby increasing capture rates for the trade area. In addition, lodging development opportunities appear to exist, based on strong intra-regional tourism and limited competition from existing lodging establishments. Industrial uses appear challenged by large amounts of competing commercial land available nearby. The UGA's large, undeveloped parcels, however, are also an asset for industrial development and may prove attractive to businesses that do not need the apparent accessibility advantages offered nearby.

Plan Overview

Vision

The community's vision for Belfair's future begins with a feeling for the land. This feeling is reflected not only by an appreciation for the area's scenic natural setting, precious water resources, and diverse wildlife habitats, but also by the knowledge that the land is an important human resource. Care for the land is critical to the community's economic health and long-term sustainability. For this reason, the plan emphasizes measures to protect local streams and wetlands, locates growth where conditions are most suitable, includes sustainable development standards, and takes greatest advantage of the area's assets as an attraction to visitors and an amenity for residents and workers.

Economic vitality is a second critical community goal. For Belfair to grow and prosper, local jobs must accompany residential growth, and the economy must diversify to include industrial, professional and service, and tourist-based businesses. To this end, the plan includes three separate concentrations of commercial activity, each appealing to a different economic sector. Additionally, recommendations for development standards, design guidelines, and public works focus on supporting new development that is compatible with Belfair's unique assets and economic potentials. A two-phased approach to highway improvements will assist the downtown core in the short term and allow larger, diverse growth in the plateau over time, as well as address critical near- and long-term transportation challenges.

Finally, participants in this planning process have expressed a desire for a more cohesive community with a more integrated, positive identity. This means enhancing the area's visual quality. It means ensuring that new buildings are friendly in their design and planning new residential development to create neighborhoods, not just housing. It means providing the pedestrian and bicycle routes so that people can use local businesses and enjoy the community amenities without having to get in their cars. It also means protecting green belts of trees so that the area retains its "community in a forest" character. These are the issues toward which many of the design and park and open space recommendations are directed.

The community's vision is not a passive one. It cannot be attained without a lot of hard work and cooperative effort. But the raw materials are there to make this vision a reality. The area will grow over time, and this growth can be shaped so that the whole community will benefit. The sewer line and improvements to SR-3 will give the central part of the community opportunities it has not had in the past, and the Salmon Center, library, and clinic will help to activate the south part of the UGA. The challenge is to make the most of this opportunity in time. And in the long term, the community's potential is even more dramatic. Positive, cooperative master planning of the lands on the plateau early can reap big rewards for the participants.

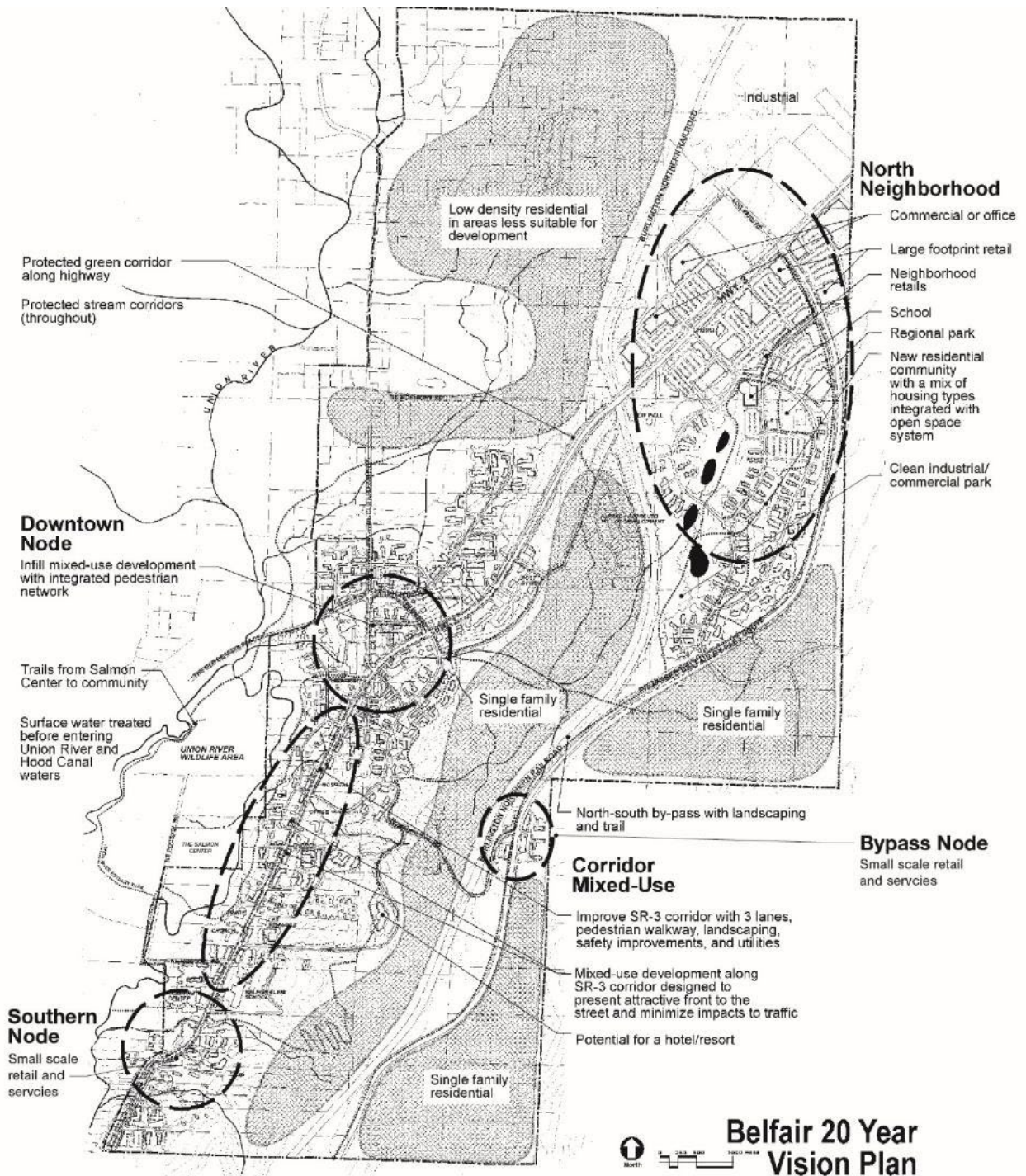


Figure 6. Belfair 20-year vision

The illustrations on the following pages depict some of these opportunities. They show what Belfair’s future could be like. The development of the individual properties is not likely to be like what is shown. This is a conceptual plan that will change over time, but the overall qualities and general patterns of development are a distinct possibility if the plan’s recommendations are implemented.

A Look at The Future

Southern Node

So, what will a visitor to Belfair see if he or she returns to the area in about 15 or 20 years? Our fictional visitor might well start at the south end near where the new Salmon Center is located. Here is truly a regional attraction, explaining the ecology of the area and providing children of all ages many opportunities to engage in the learning about the land that supports them. She heads south to a small cluster of shops and services and an inn where she can spend the night. Heading north again, our visitor has the option of following the scenic trail along the marsh or the walkway along SR-3. She chooses the walkway so that she can enjoy the street's boulevard-like character and new array of mixed-use buildings. She notices that traffic is steady but not congested, thanks to the new bypass and the fact that many of the local property owners have made a special effort to consolidate their driveways and landscape their street fronts. It makes a huge difference from what she remembers at the turn of the century. Even with the new buildings, she can see views of the inlet to the west.

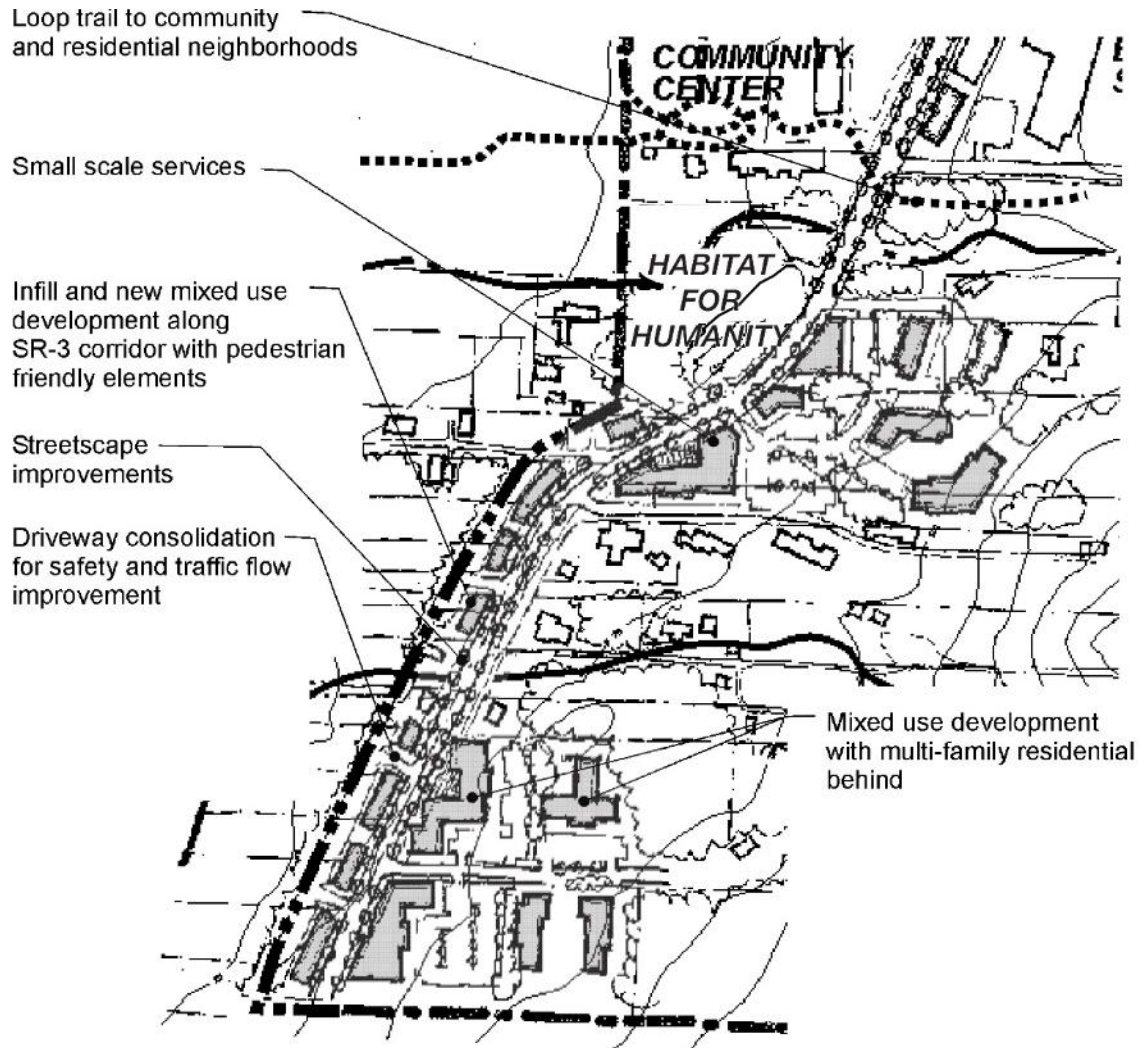


Illustration of Southern Node Planning Objectives



Figure 7. Southern node planning objectives.

Downtown Area

Entering the downtown, our visitor is surprised to see a number of multi-story residences surrounding a small but lively shopping area. The new residential neighborhood that has grown up around the old core provides a lot of people and activity. Some of the old landmarks are still there, in many cases spruced up to fit with the newer development. She notices that it is easy to walk around the downtown, small pathways providing easy access to inviting shops, cafes, professional services, and studios. The little plaza in the center with the outdoor seating is just the place to meet a friend for a cup of coffee. Right across the highway, the Saturday flea market is really hopping. There seem to be people from all over looking for treasures. Maybe she should stop and look for that old Johnny Cash record she needs for her collection. But she decides that, if she wants to visit the whole community, she'd better see what's happened on the plateau.

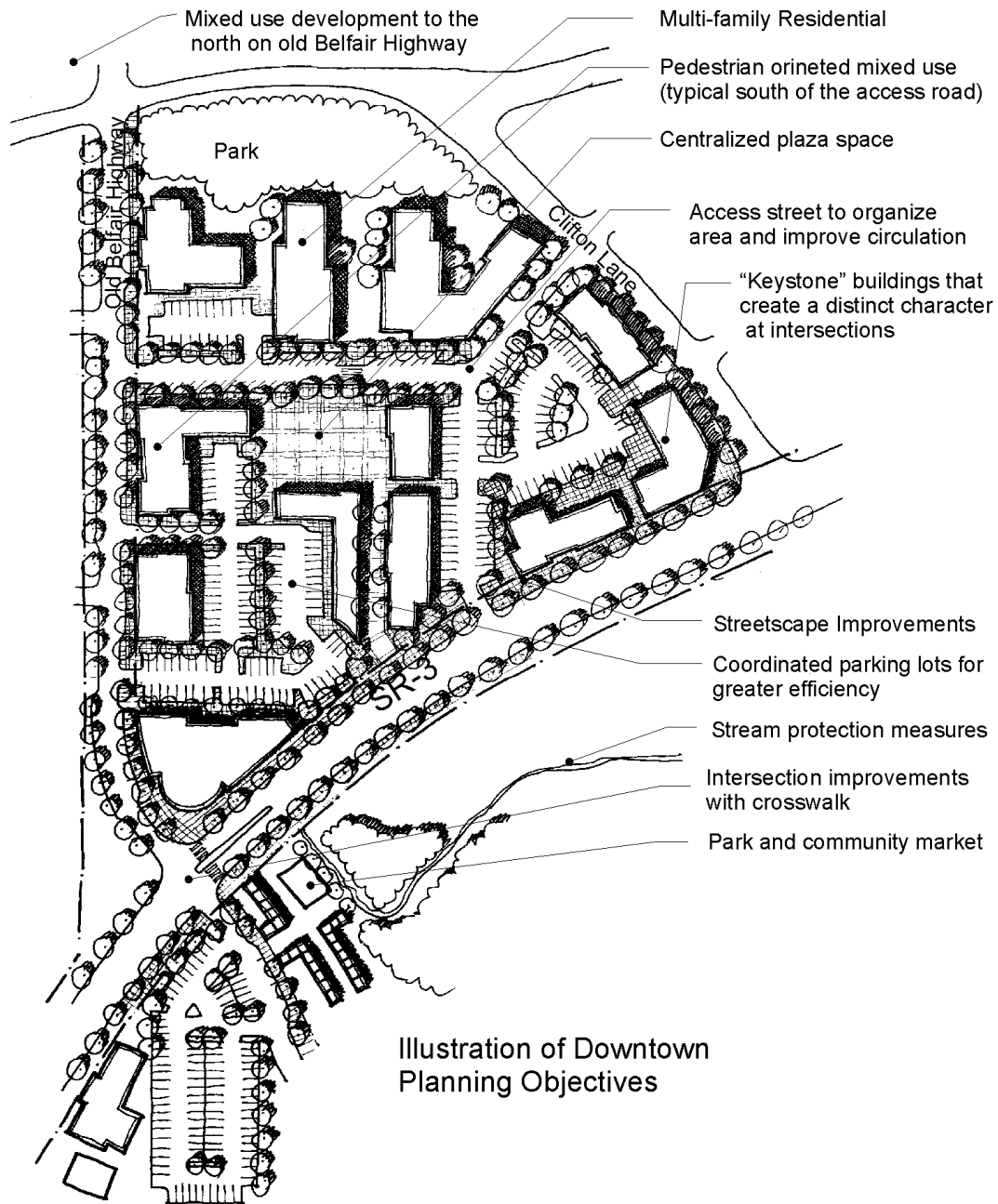


Figure 8. Downtown Area planning objectives.

Northern Plateau

It's a bit of a walk up from the downtown, but the footpath is pleasant. She notices that even with the new development, there is a lot of green left. The creeks seem as free flowing as ever, with a lot of native vegetation around them to help them stay healthy and protect the water quality. Our wandering visitor also notices that the new residential development really seems to fit in with the surroundings. The smaller streets, swales, rural footpaths, landscaping with native vegetation, and sensitive site planning really make a difference. Here is proof that sustainable development makes sense, not only for the environment, but for the lifestyles as well.

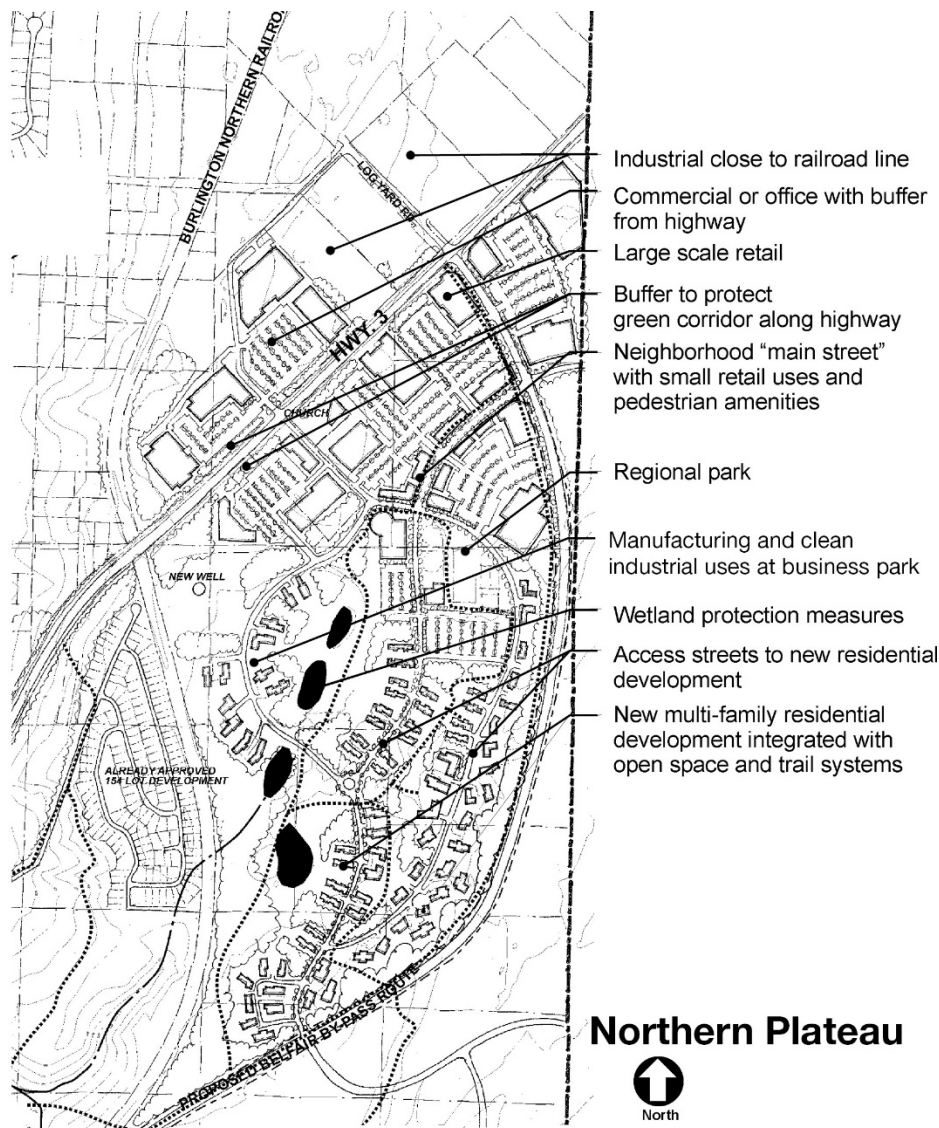


Figure 9. Northern Plateau planning objectives

Finally, she reaches the crest of the ridge, and here she sees the biggest changes. There is a new, attractive shopping center integrated with a business park, several ball fields and a new neighborhood with a wide mix of housing types. It may not have the intimate charm of the downtown, but someone has really done a good job of planning and designing the area. Jobs, services, amenities, and residences are all here. The wetlands provide an interesting backdrop, and all the major features seem connected with ribbons of open space. And, located near the intersection of old SR-3 and the new route, it is convenient for all. Looking across the highway, she can see new retail development and perhaps just a glimpse or two of the light industrial activities lined up along the rail siding.

Heading back toward her room at the Salmon Center Inn, she wishes that she had brought her bike with her. It would be an easy roll along either the SR-3 trail or the Romance Hill connection. But the walk gives her time to consider what she’s seen. What strikes her is that, for a rural community, Belfair is really a place of contrasts; old and new, a small town setting with some sophisticated aspects, and a place where the old hamburger joint and the new coffee shop can coexist. Most importantly, she ponders about how the three centers complement one another, each adding to the community as a whole. It provides more choices, a richer mix of experiences and, literally, something for everyone.

Maybe, she thinks, she’ll stay another day or two, maybe kayak the canal, maybe look for that old Johnny Cash record, perhaps explore the job market a bit, and—what the heck—it can’t hurt to do a bit of house hunting. Just for fun...

Strategic Concept

The planning concept translates the community’s vision described on the previous pages into a set of key ideas that, in turn, form the basis for the individual planning recommendations. In Belfair, the community’s vision means that public and private partners work together to develop a linear sequence of nodes—each with its own function and character—linked with an extensive trail system. Belfair’s downtown area will be the most important of these nodes and the focal point for civic and cultural activities.

Actions to encourage the Salmon Center development will attract visitors from all over the region, helping to fuel the local economy. And, the northern node will provide room to grow over the decades. Establishing zoning and guidelines that will direct new development to create a high-quality development with a mix of uses is critical. Improvements to SR-3 and guidelines to direct growth along the highway form another set of actions that are necessary to ensure good circulation and that the three nodes work together as a unified whole. The third major direction framing a number of planning recommendations and design standards is the community’s desire for a high-quality, sustainable environment.

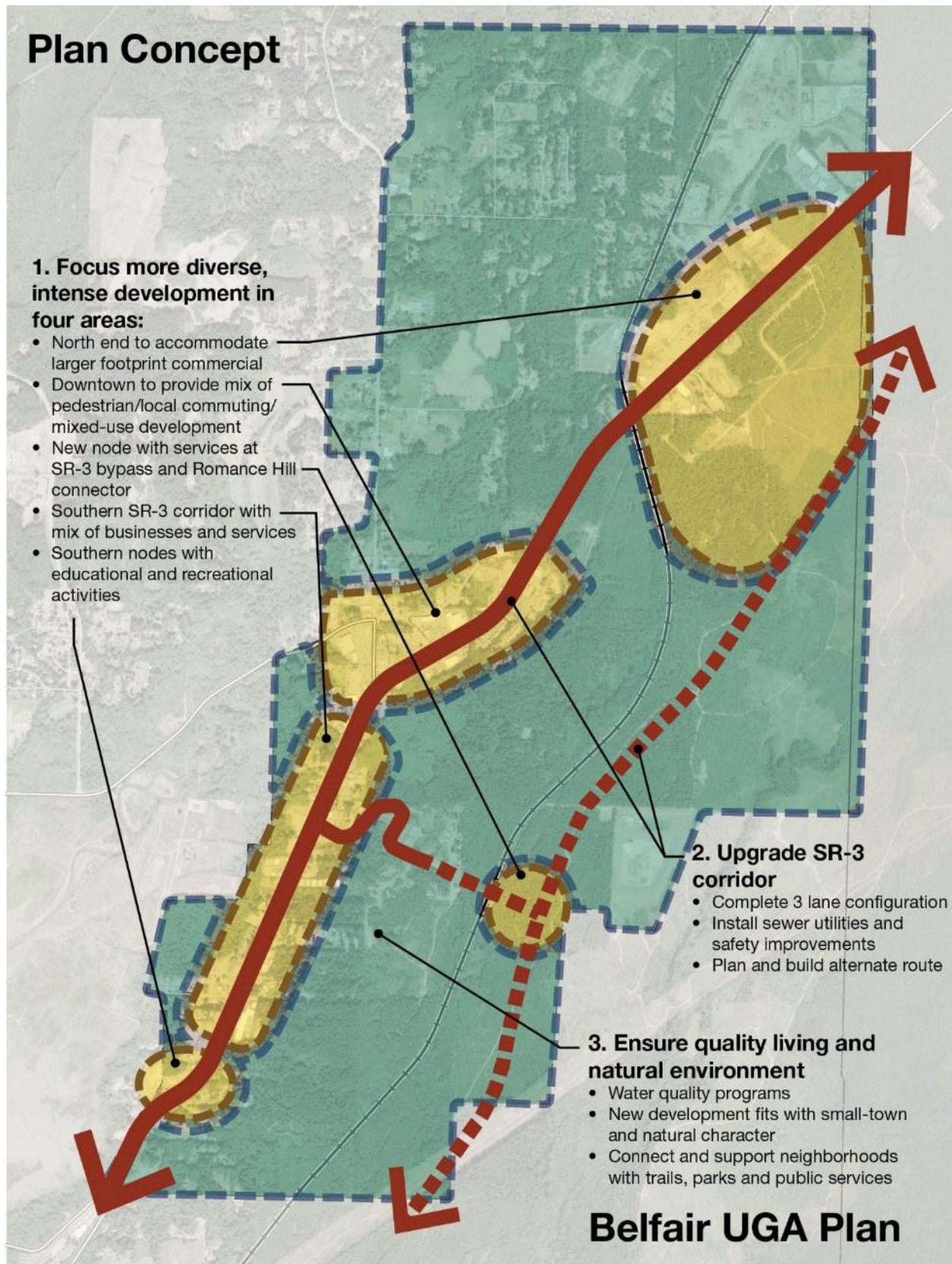


Figure 10. Plan concept

Recommendations

Land Use and Community Design

Zoning regulations and design standards will be a critical tool in implementing the community's design objectives. Six different land use designations are proposed and sited to concentrate development in the commercial nodes, allow for residential development to accommodate projected growth, and protect sensitive natural areas. These designations include:

- Mixed-Use – intended to provide for a wide variety of uses along much of the SR-3 corridor and other areas.
- General Commercial – intended to provide for the full range of commercial uses to serve Belfair and the surrounding region.
- Business-Industrial – intended to provide for employment growth in the Belfair area by encouraging manufacturing, wholesale trade, and office uses.
- Residential – intended to provide opportunities for residential development within the Urban Growth Area. Includes subdesignations of R-4, R-5, and R-10 (numbers referring to the average number of units allowed per acre. Regulations provide flexibility by encouraging clustering of development on the sites that can best support development.
- Master Planned Mixed Use - intended to provide for large-scale master planned developments with a mix of employment and residential uses in the north part of the area.

The chart on the following page identifies the difference between the zones, while the map on page 28 identifies the locations of each designation.

Table 1. Comparison of Zoning Designations

Proposed Zones					
Use and Key Provisions	General Commercial (GC)	Mixed-Use (MU)	Business Industrial (BI)	Residential (R-4, R-5, R-10)	Master Planned Mixed Use
ALLOWED USES					
Pedestrian Retail	●	●			●
General Commercial	●	●			●
Office	●	●	●		●
Residential		●		●	●
Industrial/ Manufacturing/ Wholesale	○	●	●		●
DENSITY PROVISIONS AND KEY DESIGN STANDARDS*					
Height limit	3 stories	3-5 stories	3 stories	3-4 stories	5 stories
Residential density (units/acre)	Not permitted	No specified limit	Not permitted	10 for R-10 5 for R-5 4 for R-4	No specified limit
Front yard landscaping area*	0-30'	0-30'	30-60'	10-30'	0-30'

● = Permitted use;

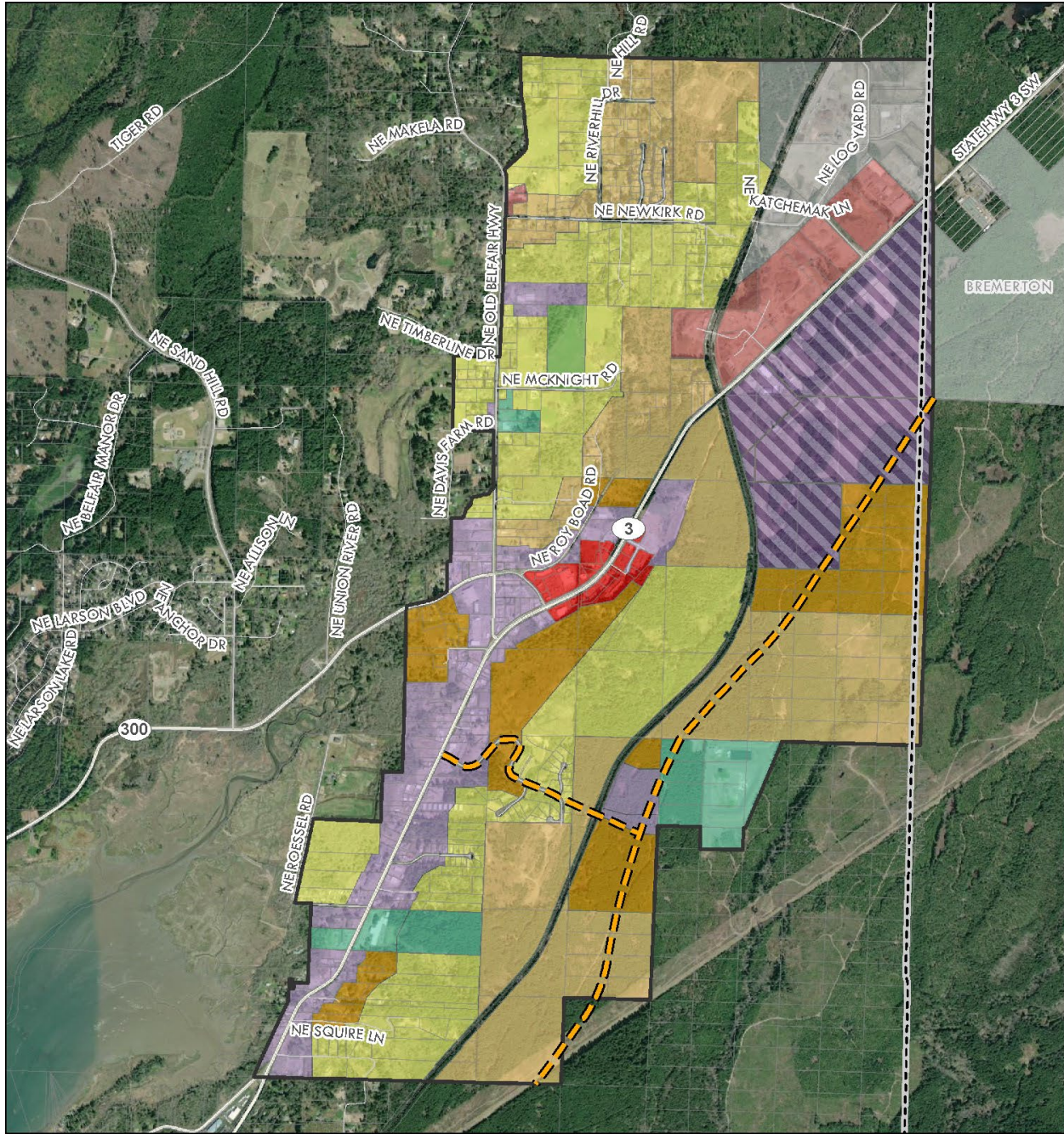
○ = Permitted only in the GC-BI Overlay Area

No Symbol = Use not permitted

See [Mason County Municipal Code Chapters 17.20-17.35](#) for details

Description of Uses

- **Pedestrian Retail** – Small scale retail trade uses (excluding auto-oriented uses), eating and drinking places, hotels and motels, personal service uses.
- **General Commercial** – The full range of commercial uses including retail trade and shops, eating and drinking places, hotels and motels, auto-oriented uses, finance, insurance, and real estate uses, and service uses.
- **Office** – Professional office.
- **Residential** – Multi-family and/or single-family residential uses.
- **Industrial/Manufacturing/Wholesale** – Manufacturing, assembling, warehousing, repairing, fabricating, and processing.



Map Date: February 2022

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Belfair UGA Boundary UGAs Parcels Approximate Bypass & Connector Route | <p>Belfair UGA Zoning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Industrial General Commercial General Commercial and Business Industrial Long Term Agricultural Medium Density Residential | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixed Use Master Planned Mixed Use Multi Family Residential Public Facility Single Family Residential |
|---|---|--|

Figure 11. Proposed land use designations

LU-1: Amend UGA Boundary

Adopt recommend changes to the Belfair Urban Growth Area (UGA) boundary. The proposed changes add one area with an essential public facility to the UGA and remove a parcel of publicly held forest land that is unlikely to be developed. These changes are consistent with the goals of the Growth Management Act and the vision of this UGA plan.

- A. Expand the UGA boundary by approximately 54.5 acres to include the Belfair Wastewater and Water Reclamation Facility, plus adjacent County-owned properties.
- B. Reduce the UGA by approximately 40.6 acres in the southeastern corner of the UGA to remove a property owned by Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) that is unlikely to be developed and which is not readily accessible from the rest of the UGA.

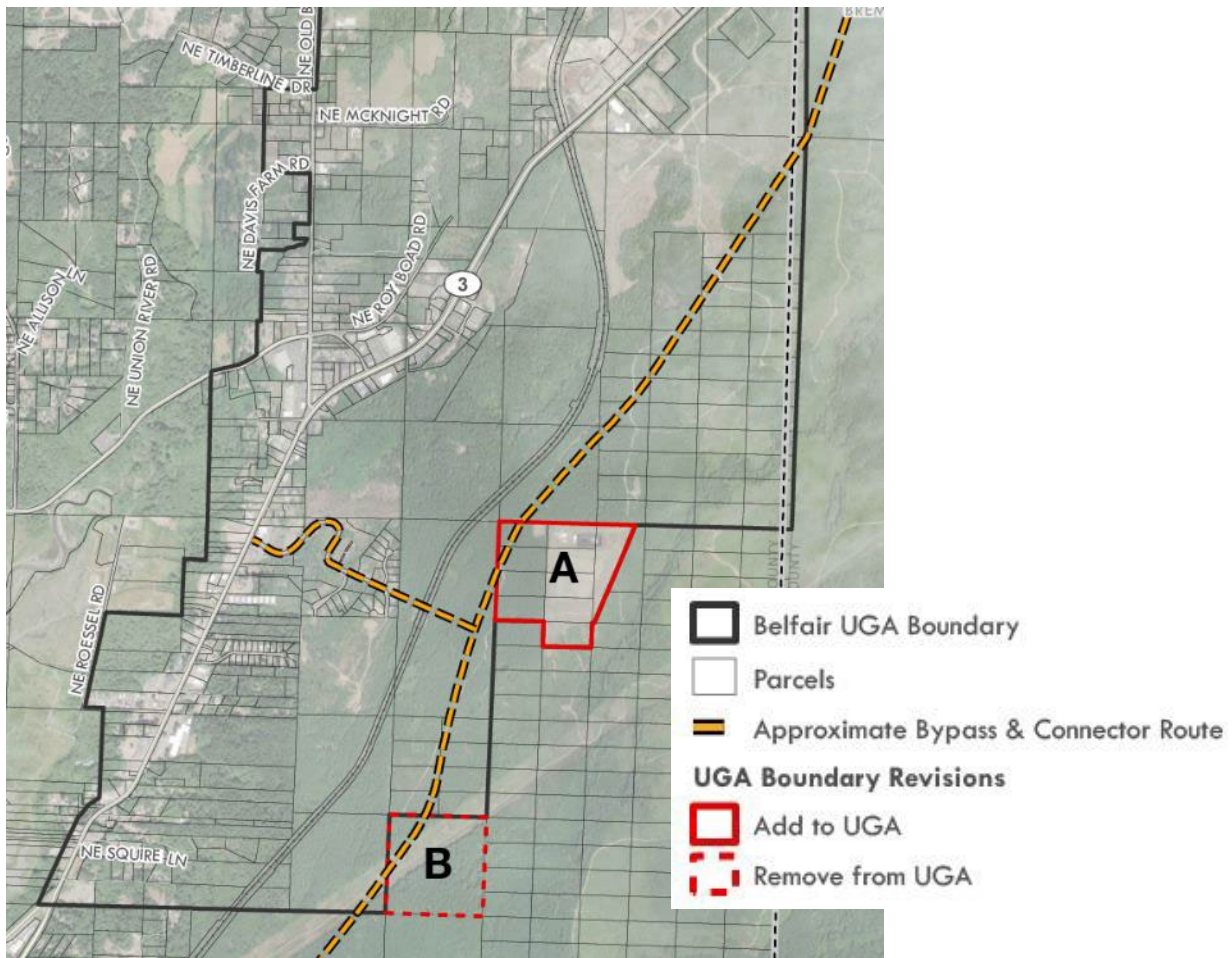


Figure 12. Proposed UGA boundary revisions

LU-2: Mixed-Use (MU) Designation

Purpose

The primary purpose of the Mixed-Use designation is to provide for a mix of uses along the SR-3 corridor, in downtown Belfair, and at the future crossroads of Romance Hill Road and the planned SR-3 bypass. Permitted uses include commercial, office, and residential uses. By allowing a broad array of uses, property owners have more choice in how the land can be developed. Design standards require pedestrian-friendly design in downtown Belfair with either landscaping, small open spaces, or pedestrian-oriented building facades. Design standards also encourage pedestrian and vehicular connectivity between properties. Building heights up to three or five stories are permitted depending on the area – otherwise, no specific density limits are provided (as they will be limited by parking requirements, natural site constraints, and market constraints).

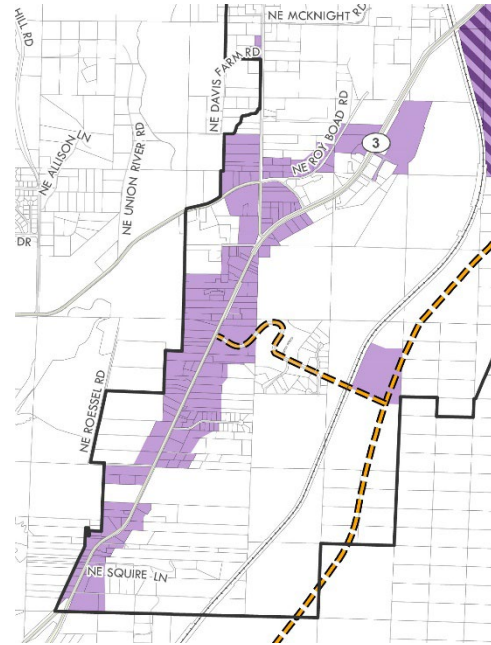


Figure 13. MU Land Use Designation

Locations

Along the SR-3 corridor south of downtown, surrounding the GC designation in downtown, and at the Romance Hill Road and planned SR-3 bypass crossroads.

Permitted Uses

A mix of public, professional office, light industrial, retail, service, and multi-family residential uses.

Height Limits and Density

Three to five story height limit depending upon location. Five-story buildings may be allowed along the east side of the SR-3 corridor where views can be maximized and impacts minimized. Buildings on the west side of SR-3 must not reach an elevation of more than 35 feet above grade level within 150 feet of the roadway, although taller heights could be considered with a Special Use Permit. Overall residential densities are limited by height limits, parking, site constraints, and design standards.

Design Standards

Design standards promote good site planning, pedestrian and vehicular access, extensive landscaping, and human-scale building design. It will be important to minimize or reduce the number of vehicular access points off SR-3.



Figure 14. *Development examples consistent with the vision for the Mixed-Use zone.*

LU-3: Create the Master Planned Mixed-Use (MP-MU) Designation

Purpose

The purpose of this district is to provide for large-scale master planned developments. This district allows a mix of commercial and residential uses with a focus on business/industrial park development and multifamily housing. By allowing a broad array of uses, property owners have more choice in how the land can be developed. Design standards encourage landscaping, particularly along the SR-3 corridor to retain the wooded character of the area and between non-compatible uses to minimize negative impacts of parking, service, and/or industrial areas on multifamily uses in the zone. Design standards also promote safe vehicular and pedestrian connectivity, development of pedestrian-oriented spaces, and appropriately scaled building design.

Locations

Between SR-3 and the bypass in the northern-east part of the UGA.



Figure 15. MU Land Use Designation

Permitted Uses

A mix of professional office, light manufacturing, retail, service, and multi-family residential uses.

Height Limits and Density

Height and bulk standards in the MU zone apply, meaning building heights of five stories are allowed.. Residential densities are limited by height limits, parking, site constraints, and design standards.

Design Standards

Area-wide standards for site design, building design, and landscaping promote good site planning, pedestrian and vehicular access, extensive landscaping, and human-scale building design. Requirements for master planned developments reinforce design standards for landscaping, pedestrian and vehicle circulation, and open space. New vehicular access points off SR-3 should be minimized.



Figure 16. *Development examples consistent with the vision for the Master Planned Mixed-Use zone.*

LU-4: General Commercial (GC) Designation

Purpose

The primary purpose of the GC designation is to provide areas that offer a wide range of consumer goods and services for both Belfair UGA residents, regional residents, and the traveling public. An additional purpose is to provide a Business-Industrial Overlay (GC-BI) Area that allows both commercial uses and services and industrial related uses on those properties close to the railroad and/or already engaged in industrial-related uses (see LU-5 Business Industrial Designation on page 38). Design standards encourage landscaping, particularly along the SR-3 corridor to retain the wooded character of the area and minimize negative impacts of parking, service, and/or industrial areas. Design standards also promote safe vehicular and pedestrian connectivity, development of pedestrian-oriented spaces, and appropriately scaled building design.

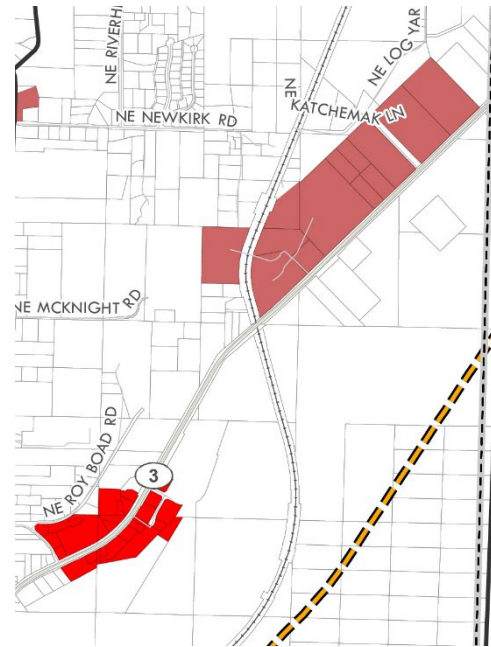


Figure 17. GC and GC-BI Land Use Designations

Locations

Existing commercial areas at the northeast end of downtown along SR-3 and GC-BI overlay properties on the plateau along the SR-3 corridor.

Permitted Uses

Allows for the full range of commercial uses, including retail trade and shops; finance, insurance, and real estate uses; and professional office and service uses. Industrial/manufacturing/wholesale uses are permitted in the General Commercial – Business-Industrial (GC-BI) Overlay (see Figure 17) as long as they comply with the applicable buffer requirements for the BI classification. Residential uses are not permitted.

Height Limits and Density

Three-story height limit.

Design Standards

The most important design goals are to enhance pedestrian and vehicular safety – particularly along SR 3. This means consolidating existing driveways, where possible, and minimizing new access points for new development and adding sidewalks and landscaping features along SR-3. Smaller scale signage should be a key design component of these areas to reduce the visual pollution of the SR-3 corridor. Design standards should encourage pitched roofs and use of natural building materials that can contribute to Belfair’s visual character and identity. Non-pedestrian-oriented facades should be screened, especially on SR-3 and in pedestrian areas.



Figure 18. Development examples consistent with the vision for the General Commercial zone.

LU-5: Business – Industrial Overlay Designation (BI)

Purpose:

The primary purpose of this district is to provide for the location and grouping of industrial enterprises and activities involving manufacturing, assembly, fabrication, processing, bulk handling and storage, research facilities, warehousing and heavy trucking. It is also a purpose of this zone to protect the industrial land base for industrial economic development and employment opportunities.

These purposes are accomplished by:

- Allowing for a wide range of industrial and manufacturing uses.
- Limiting retail uses to those necessary to directly support industrial activities.
- Prohibiting residential uses.

Substantial landscape buffers are required for those properties adjacent to the SR-3 corridor, otherwise Business-Industrial properties are exempted from most site planning and building design guidelines to maximize flexibility for the uses.

Locations:

Properties in the northeast corner of the UGA. Provisions for the BI designation are also applicable to industrial, manufacturing, and wholesale uses in the GC-BI overlay areas along the SR-3 corridor (see LU-4 on page 36).

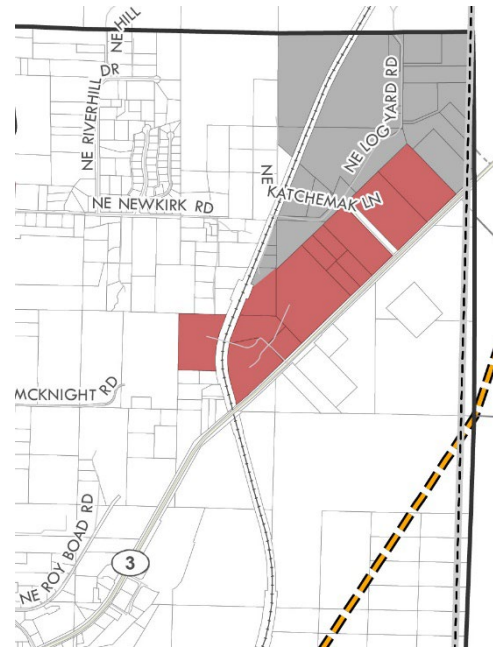


Figure 19. BI and GC-BI Land Use Designations

Permitted Uses:

A combination of manufacturing, institutional, wholesale trade, professional office, and service uses.

Height Limits and Density:

Three-story height limit.

Design Guidelines:

Provide a wide landscaping buffer along SR-3 to screen uses from highway. Driveway and access guidelines to enhance safety on SR-3.

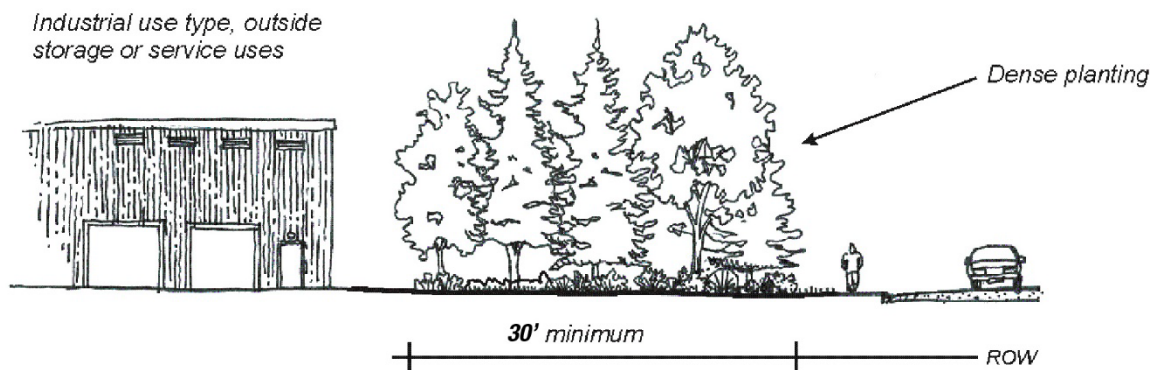


Figure 20. Required landscape screen for Business-Industrial uses along the SR-3 Corridor.

LU-6: Multi-Family Residential (R-10) Designation

Purpose

The purpose of the R-10 District is to provide sites for multi-family residential development that are within walking distance of commercial areas and services within the Belfair UGA. The designation provides for a density of ten dwelling units per acre. Clustering of the dwelling units and properties is encouraged to protect open space and water quality, reduce infrastructure needs, and enhance energy efficiency.

Locations

Within or adjacent to development nodes and commercially zoned areas within a normal walking distance of one-half to three-quarters of a mile. Locations generally are areas not significantly impacted by critical areas and slopes.

Permitted Uses

Apartments, townhomes, and other multi-family uses – which may be clustered on site(s). These areas will provide housing opportunities for seniors, singles, childless couples, and low-income families, and other people who want to be close to services and amenities and prefer not to maintain a yard.

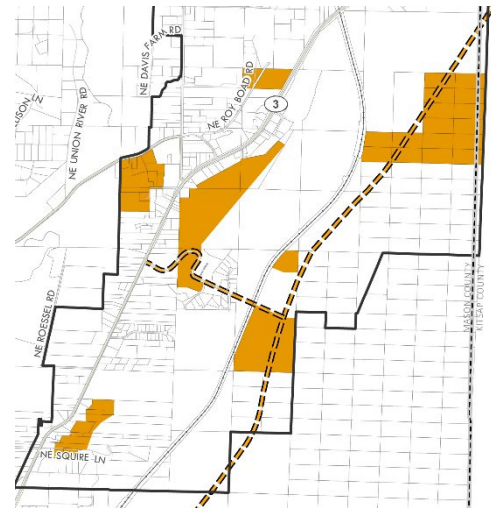


Figure 21. R-10 Land Use Designation

Height Limits and Density

Four stories. Maximum density of ten dwelling units per acre, and a minimum density of ten units per net developable acre. Development may be clustered as long as the average density for a property or applicable properties does not exceed the 10 units per acre limit.

Design Guidelines

Design guidelines will be important to minimize environmental and visual impacts of developments and provide amenities for residents. Consider density incentives that encourage the use of sustainable design principles in site design, access, building design, and landscape. Protection of creeks and wetlands is critical – these features should be preserved and integrated into the development as an asset and amenity for residents. Open space and play areas will be important, particularly for young families. Pedestrian access – between developments and to provide access to parks, open space, commercial, and civic uses – is also very important.



Figure 22. Development examples consistent with the vision for the R-10 zone.

LU-7: Medium Density Residential (R-5) Designation

Purpose

The purpose of the R-5 District is to provide sites for moderate density residential development within the Belfair Urban Growth Area. The district allows for a density of five dwelling units per acre, except where “critical lands” are present – which reduce the permitted density. Clustering of the dwelling units and properties are encouraged to protect open space and water quality, reduce infrastructure needs, and enhance energy efficiency. Multi-family dwelling units are permitted as long as they do not exceed the density requirement and minimize impacts to adjacent single-family dwelling units.

Locations

Generally away from development nodes and commercially zoned areas, beyond a normal walking distance of one-half to three-quarters of a mile.

Permitted Uses

This generally includes cottages, attached singled family, and detached single family uses. Where uses are clustered to concentrate infrastructure and preserve sensitive natural areas or open space, the housing could include townhouses or small-scale apartment buildings.

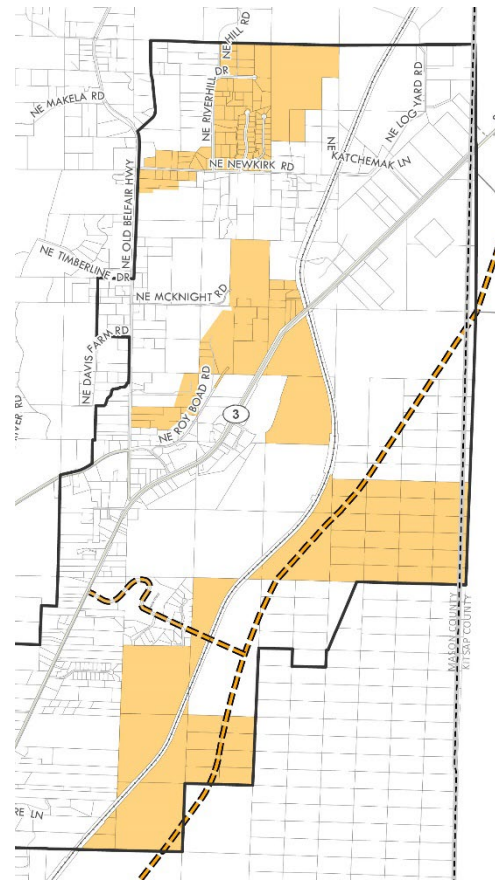


Figure 23. R-5 Land Use Designation

Height Limits and Density

Three-story base height limit. Maximum density of five dwelling units per gross acre, and a minimum density of four units per net developable acre.

Design Guidelines

Design guidelines for single family will focus on site planning and access issues. For example, new developments should be integrated with open space, local and regional trail systems, and sensitive natural areas. Use of sustainable design principles is encouraged.



Figure 24. Development examples consistent with the vision for the R-5 zone.

LU-8: Single-Family Residential (R-4) Designation

Purpose

Purpose: The purpose of the R-4 designation is to provide sites for detached single family residential development within the Belfair UGA. The designation allows for a density of four dwelling units per acre. Clustering of the dwelling units and properties is encouraged to protect open space and water quality, reduce infrastructure needs, and enhance energy efficiency. Multi-family dwelling units are conditionally permitted as long as they do not exceed the density requirement and minimize impacts to adjacent single-family dwelling units.

Locations

Restricted to sites containing critical areas and slopes as development is expected to be clustered into the more suitable building areas. Away from development nodes and commercially zoned areas, beyond a normal walking distance of one-half to three-quarters of a mile.

Permitted Uses

Detached single family uses and duplexes are permitted at a lower density due to topography or natural site constraints. Where uses are clustered to concentrate infrastructure and preserve sensitive natural areas or open space, the housing could include townhouses or small-scale apartment buildings.

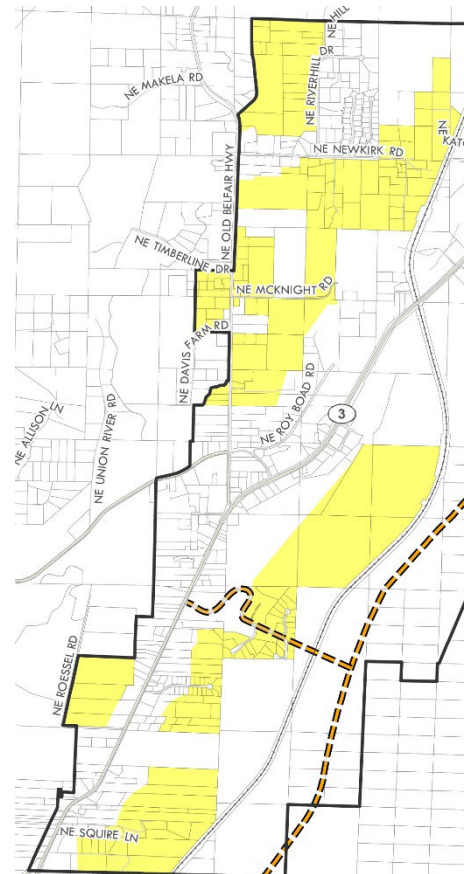


Figure 25. R-4 Land Use Designation

Height Limits and Density

Thirty-foot base height limit. Maximum density of four dwelling units per gross acre, and a minimum density of three units per net developable acre

Design Guidelines

Integrate developments with open space, trails, and natural areas. Encourage use of sustainable design principles.



Figure 26. Development examples consistent with the vision for the R-4 zone.

LU-9: OTHER LAND USE ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Long Term Agricultural (LTA) Designation

The purpose of the LTA designation is to support commercial agriculture and provide open space within the Belfair UGA. Applicable sites are on the east side of Old Belfair Highway north of the downtown area. This designation permits single family uses and agriculture-related uses. The base residential density is one dwelling unit per 10 acres. However, density credits of up to three dwelling units per acre are permitted provided that the increased density is transferred to lands outside the LTA designation but within the UGA.

B. Restrict Adult Businesses

Restrict the siting of adult businesses in the UGA. The community wishes to strongly discourage adult businesses and minimize their presence in the UGA. The County should involve the Belfair community in their development guidelines for adult businesses in Mason County.



Figure 27. LTA Land Use Designation

Transportation

Significant progress has been made since 2003 in implementing the transportation recommendations of the subarea plan. The list below shows the updated transportation recommendations for the subarea.

	Location	Improvement
T-1	NE Old Belfair Highway/ NE Newkirk Road	Two-Way Stop: Two-way left-turn lane along NE Old Belfair Highway
T-2	NE Old Belfair Highway/ SR 300/NE Clifton Road	Roundabout with northbound, southbound, and eastbound right-turn lanes, plus a westbound right-turn slip lane.
T-3	NE Clifton Road/NE Roy Boad Road	Single lane roundabout
T-4	SR 3/ Log Yard Road	Roundabout with two (2) southbound through lanes (tapered to one lane after the intersection) and westbound and northbound right-turn slip lanes.
T-5	SR 3/ Ridgepoint Boulevard	Single-lane compact roundabout.
T-6	SR 3/ NE Clifton Road	Either install a roundabout or provide signal modifications and a second eastbound left-turn (from NE Clifton Road to northbound on SR 3). The additional eastbound left-turn would require widening SR 3 to a 4-lane cross section between NE Clifton Road and Ridgepoint Boulevard.
T-7	SR 3/ SR 300	Single lane roundabout.
T-8	SR 3/ Romance Hill Road	Roundabout with separate southbound through and left-turn lanes.
T-9	SR 3/ SR 302	Roundabout with separate southbound through and left-turn lanes.
T-10	SR 3 Freight Corridor/ Log Yard Road	Single lane roundabout.
T-11	SR 3 Freight Corridor/Romance Hill Road	Single lane roundabout.

Parks, Trails, Open Space, and Public Facilities

P-1: Expand stream corridor, wetlands, and critical areas protection

The preliminary zoning recommendations call for lower densities in most of these areas. Maintain and enforce the current critical areas ordinance. Proposed regulations and design guidelines also encourage clustering of development to protect these resources. See Water Quality Recommendations below for additional measures to protect water quality and stream integrity.

P-2: Create a centralized plaza space within the retail zone downtown

The plaza would be the focal point of social, cultural, and civic activities in Belfair. The plaza should be designed and sized large enough to hold the local farmers market. The plaza should be relatively informal in its design and feature space for outdoor dining and socializing, pedestrian amenities, and landscaping features. Proposed design guidelines address attractive pedestrian connections within the core.

P-3: Develop a park near downtown

One possible location for the park is on the east side of SR-3 near the Old Belfair Highway intersection. This site could be assembled from underused County property and donated land. It would be a good location for a farmers market and other civic activities benefiting from highway exposure and a central location. Incorporate a farmers market at the site. The park should be clearly visible from the street and contain sufficient parking. Improved crosswalks should be installed to connect this site to the downtown core. See Recommendation T-7.

P-4: Develop parks in conjunction with new residential development on the plateau

New residential development should include smaller neighborhood parks. The area also provides the best opportunity for a larger park towards the northern end of the plateau to serve the north Mason County region. The larger park should include active uses, such as ballfields, that draw from the greater Belfair area.

P-5: Expand the system of trails associated with the Theler wetlands

The existing trail system should be extended and a new trail added along the eastern fringe of the wetlands area paralleling SR-3 and connecting the Salmon Center with future corridor developments, the downtown area, and the proposed downtown park. (See P-4.)

P-6: Install a trail/bikeway system along Sr-3

Provisions for pedestrian and bicycle travel are important for both local and regional circulation. Part of the SR-3 widening to three lanes in the south should include, at a minimum, sidewalks and widened shoulders for bicycles. Pedestrian/bicycle trails should be added to SR-3 sections that already feature three lanes wherever there is sufficient right-of-way.

P-7: Develop a system of connected trails on the plateau

A combination of multi-purpose trails and walking trails connecting residential areas with parks, open spaces, commercial uses, and other neighboring residential areas should be constructed. The network should include a north/south trail paralleling the bypass route. Trail connections to the plateau retail center and the SR-3 corridor are also very important. Implementation could be a partnership between the developer(s), the County, and the State (associated with bypass construction). Trails should be carefully designed to avoid erosion steep slopes.

P-8: Create a trail and sidewalk system that loops within and around the downtown area

This would be a walking trail that would connect future residential areas on the fringe of downtown with the wetlands, proposed downtown park and plaza spaces, and natural areas.

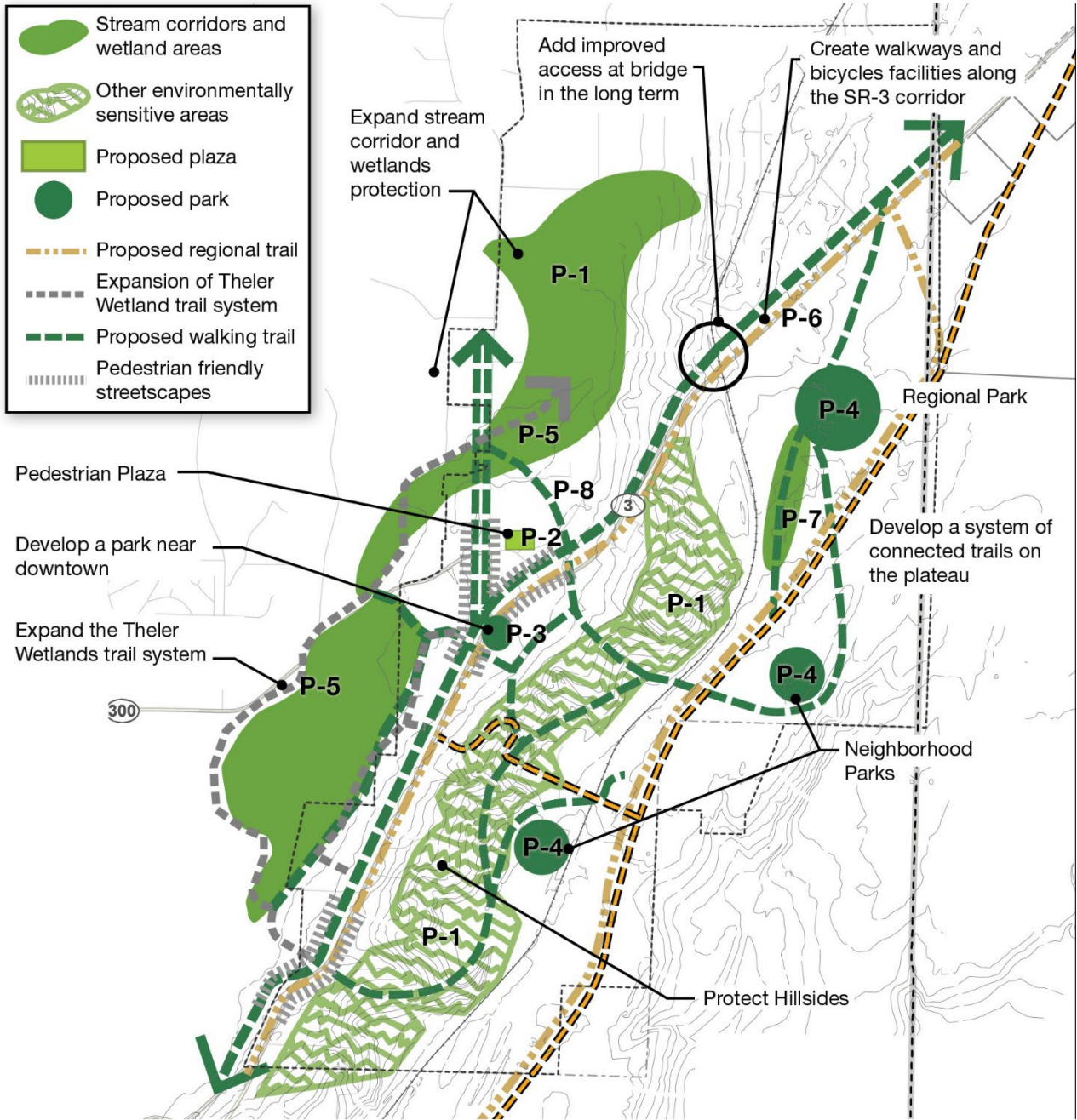


Figure 28. Parks, trails, and open space recommendations map

Water Quality Recommendations

~~W-1: install sanitary sewer trunk line within the next 5 years.~~

~~This is an essential first step in upgrading water quality while accommodating growth. The County is currently engaged in planning a trunk line extension into Belfair within the next approximately five years.~~

RECOMMENDATION COMPLETE

W-2: undertake a program of local water quality facilities to reduce pollutants in local streams and in the canal and detention and infiltration facilities (where feasible) to improve flow rates in streams.

Prior to 20th century settlement, the low-lying wetland areas along Union River and Hood Canal retained and filtered storm water runoff before it entered the bay. Now, not only do human activities add considerable pollutants, the development has reduced the land's ability to naturally clean the water. It is especially important to prevent run-off from new roads and pavements from flowing directly into natural streams without prior treatment. One way to lessen this problem is to, over time, install a series of treatment facilities that filter out the pollutants through a system of ponds and swales. An example of this type of facility is planned to handle the water from the new clinic development near Romance Hill Road. This system could be studied as a prototype for other applications.

W-3: Continue current collaborative, inter-agency efforts to monitor and upgrade water quality and quantity.

W-4: Encourage an education and volunteer program encouraging local residents and property owners to adopt "best practices" regarding stream and wetland maintenance and low impact development.

The Salmon Center and local schools may provide excellent opportunities to initiate educational programs.

Implementation Strategy

Participants in the Belfair Sub-Area Plan envision their community evolving from a “pass through” center on the SR-3 corridor to a cohesive, multi-dimensional community with a strong, intimately scaled downtown, attractive residential neighborhoods, an upgraded highway corridor with a second north-south link, a new Salmon Center that along with the area’s environmental setting serves as a regional draw, and a new mixed-use development on the plateau. This is an ambitious vision. It will require years of sustained efforts on the part of all community interests including business and landowners, residents, environmental advocates, and Mason County and Washington State agencies.

Unincorporated communities implementing improvement plans generally face additional challenges because they do not have a self-contained local government specifically addressing their concerns. County governments, because of their broad geographic jurisdiction and rural context, generally find it difficult to focus on the needs of a single urban growth area. In addition, there is no formal local organizational structure to initiate improvement actions or coordinate efforts as is typical in even a small town.

Because of these challenges, it is especially important that local citizens cooperate to initiate improvement efforts and consistently advocate county and state governments for the necessary public actions. Therefore, successful implementation of the Belfair plan depends on the ability of the various local interests to organize and cooperate for mutual benefit.

Current conditions and community priorities identified during the planning process suggest a three-phase implementation strategy. The first phase, to be initiated immediately is to create a sound framework for future work by establishing the necessary regulatory provisions, planning for SR-3 corridor and sewer line construction and organizing local interests to initiate small scale downtown improvements. Given the current economic climate and the time it takes to secure public funds and most of the immediate visible improvements will likely be rather modest, such as a new small business, consolidated driveways, or a renovated property. But such actions are necessary to provide the spark for later efforts. As in the case of building a camp fire where you need to start with tinder and twigs before you can pile on the big logs, community redevelopment often requires starting with small, immediately achievable efforts and not waiting for the larger projects.

Phase 2 should complete the initial infrastructure improvements along the SR-3 corridor necessary for the redevelopment of the urban growth area and hopefully add the Salmon Center as a regional attraction. During this phase, downtown interests should also accomplish the highest priority projects to

take advantage of the corridor improvements and encourage the development of close-in residential development. In addition, planning and funding acquisition of the by-pass corridor be initiated. It is during this period that the community will begin to see both major public improvements and increased interest in substantive higher quality private development.

During Phase 3, the community, the County and the State should work together to complete the north-south bypass, extend utility lines and capitalize on the work of the previous phases. By this time, if the real estate market has matured, development should be in full swing with infill redevelopment around the downtown, along the corridor and on the plateau.

It is difficult to estimate the timing of these three phases for several reasons:

- Development trends depend on the growth of the regional and South Kitsap Peninsula economy, both of which are difficult to predict at this time.
- The short-term effect of the new sewer line in stimulating local growth is also difficult to predict.
- The funding of major public infrastructure is currently difficult, given the budget difficulties at all levels of government.
- The timing of positive projects such as the Salmon Center and regional trails is also unpredictable.

Given these uncertainties, the general timing of the various recommended actions cannot be overly specific. Of course, during this time certain critical needs or funding opportunities may arise that spur or delay a specific recommendation.

Implementation Updates

Since 2004, significant progress has been made towards implementation of the UGA plan recommendations, including:

- Adoption of development regulations and other regulatory actions. (Recommendations LU-2 and 4 through 8).
- SR-3 conversion to three lanes, addition of sidewalks and shoulder bike lanes, and driveway consolidation throughout Belfair’s core. (Recommendation T-1 in original plan)
- Design and construction of the sewer trunk line. (Recommendation W-1)
- Construction of the Salmon Center (at a different location than originally proposed in the 2004 plan) and some trail improvements near the center. (Recommendation P-5)
- Planning and funding for SR-3 bypass. (Recommendation T-6 in original plan)
- Design and construction of the sewer trunk line. (Recommendation W-1)

Successful progress on these projects demonstrates the hard-work and dedication of Belfair residents, the County, and agency partners, and sets the stage for future growth in line with the community’s vision. Much work remains to be done. With the infrastructure investments in Belfair, property

development will likely accelerate, increasing the need for stakeholders to work together to implement the recommendations in this plan to provide parks and open space amenities, and to improve walking and driving conditions in Belfair’s downtown. The following efforts should be completed within the next 15 years as growth and property development take place:

Future and on-going efforts

Updated development regulations and UGA boundary (Recommendations LU-1 and 3).

Continue water quality improvement efforts. (Recommendations W-2 through W-4).

Plan driveway consolidation/streetscape improvements for properties along SR-3. This is a necessary adjunct to the SR-3 street improvements. (Recommendation P-6)

Establish a downtown improvement task force to initiate collaborative projects such as pedestrian network, farmer’s market/park, etc. (Recommendation LU-1, P-2, P-3, and P-9)

Complete intersection and pedestrian improvements in downtown. (Recommendations P-5 and P-6)

Construct alternate North-South SR-3 bypass route. (Recommendation T-6 in original plan)

Add park and other needed community services. (Recommendations P-4 and P-8)

Complete trail system. (Recommendations P-1 through P-9)