

# Introduction

The Suquamish Rural Village Sub-Area Plan was developed as a continuation of the Kitsap County Comprehensive planning process. Suquamish was identified in the Kitsap County 1998 Comprehensive Plan as a Limited Area of More Intensive Rural Development (LAMIRD) demonstration project, which resulted in the *Suquamish Rural Village Plan*. The Kitsap County Department of Community Development and a Citizen Advisory Group, known as the Suquamish Community Council, in cooperation with the Suquamish Tribe, completed the plan in April 1999. The Kitsap County Board of Commissioners officially adopted this plan as a sub-area plan on April 19, 1999 under Ordinance 232-1999. See Appendix A for a brief discussion of Suquamish, the Port Madison Indian Reservation, the area's rich history and its zone designations prior to the 1990 Growth Management Act.

## 1998 Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan and Zoning

The Suquamish area was designated Rural Residential with a density of 1 dwelling unit/5 acres in the May 7, 1998 Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan (see Figure 1). The application of the Rural Residential designation established a base density from which to begin sub-area planning. However, the application of the designation did not reflect the existing land use pattern in Suquamish. Due to time constraints in developing the 1998 Comprehensive Plan, the County was unable to utilize the provisions established under Engrossed Senate Bill 6094, which defined areas of more intensive rural development.

## Interim Development Regulations

On June 15, 1998, the Board of County Commissioners adopted Emergency Ordinance 221-1998, a moratorium on acceptance of all building permits in the Suquamish area because of the development of small lot sizes which affected natural drainage patterns, traffic, stormwater runoff, parking and pedestrian access. On July 29, 1998 the Board of Commissioners adopted Ordinance 225-1998 amending Ordinance 221-1998 to lift the moratorium on applications for all building permits in the Suquamish area and established interim development regulations for the area. Ordinance 225-1998 divided the single Suquamish sewer service area into two separate areas to establish minimum lot sizes on existing unimproved lots. These interim development regulations were designed to remain in effect until the completion of the sub-area planning process. Ordinance 225-1998 defined the main requirements to be evaluated for the sub-area plan:

- 1) *identify the logical outer boundary of a Rural Village for Suquamish, in accordance with the requirements of the Growth Management Act (GMA) and the Comprehensive Plan;*

- 2) *determine what, if any, permanent development regulations are required to address the cumulative effects of development within the Suquamish area;*
- 3) *identify any infrastructure improvements that are required to deal with the cumulative effects of development in the area; and*
- 4) *identify and implement appropriate method(s) for funding such improvements.*

#### Limited Areas of More Intensive Rural Development

In 1997, the Washington State Legislature adopted changes to the GMA with Engrossed Senate Bill (ESB) 6094, defining areas of more intensive rural development. Among the changes were new definitions for rural character, rural development and rural services; all of which were not previously defined in the GMA. A new option, added for designation of lands within the “Rural Element,” was referred to as “Limited Areas of More Intensive Rural Development” or LAMIRDs. The GMA now includes specific criteria for the recognition of these areas pursuant to RCW 36.70A.040(5).

### **Rural Village Designation**

In accordance with the GMA [RCW 36.70A.070(5)(d)], the County, as part of the mandatory rural element portion of its 1998 Comprehensive Plan, designated LAMIRDs. The Comprehensive Plan identified potential candidate areas as limited areas of more intensive rural development, then defined as Rural Community, Rural Village, and Rural Industrial or Commercial. This list is included on pages 72 and 75 of the Rural and Resource Lands chapter of the 1998 Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan (amended June 10, 2002, December 8, 2003 and October 25, 2004). Suquamish was identified as a demonstration project to help develop and test criteria for designating Rural Villages and to define a process to be used to consider future designations.

#### Definition and Characteristics

A “Rural Village” is a predominantly built, mixed-use rural environment, which includes residential, commercial, industrial, community and recreational uses. It often contains a broad mix of land use and densities, including some urban densities, with varying parcel sizes throughout, and is served by public sewer and water.

Residential densities in the heart of the Rural Village vary in size. While recognizing existing densities, new development may not be allowed at the same density. Commercial and industrial uses will be small in scale, providing necessary services to the Village community.

#### Guidelines for Determining the Boundary of a Rural Village

In order to determine what should be included in the Suquamish Village, guidance was taken from the GMA, the Washington State Department of

Community Trade and Economic Development and the Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan. Significant elements from these documents were utilized to develop general guidelines for determining the Suquamish Village boundary.

These elements include:

- Identify residential parcels that were platted prior to July 1, 1990, according to chapter 36.70A RCW, particularly noting those at urban densities of less than 3 units/acre;
- Identify all commercial, industrial and community services platted prior to July 1, 1990;
- Identify existing structures;
- Identify the existing public services, ie, water and sewer;
- Address: (a) the need to preserve the character of existing natural neighborhoods and communities, (b) physical boundaries such as bodies of water, streets and highways, and land forms and contours, (c) the prevention of abnormally irregular boundaries, and (d) the ability to provide public facilities and public services in a manner that does not permit low-density sprawl; and
- Identify critical areas (ie, wetlands, areas of geological concern, frequently flooded areas, fish and wildlife conservation areas, critical aquifer recharge areas or wellhead protection zones and resource lands).

Once all of these elements were identified for the Suquamish area, a logical outer boundary was established. Staff and community input were utilized to determine those areas which were not an obvious inclusion or exclusion in the Suquamish Village. For example, some parcels on the south end of Suquamish were larger than parcels included in the heart of the Suquamish Village and they were not part of the sewer service boundary. However, these parcels were included because they were part of an existing neighborhood and since many are located on the shoreline, were potential candidates for septic failure that may need future sewer hook-up. On the north end of the Suquamish Village, the County Park was debated for inclusion due to its presence in the community. The irregularity of the northern boundary is due to the inclusion of three parcels that were identified as part of the park. The community requested the line be drawn around those parcels to keep the integrity of the park within the Suquamish Village boundary.

This plan is designed to address the impacts that vehicles, non-motorized facilities, parking and similar transportation facilities have on the character of Suquamish. It will set forth a series of projects, processes and recommendations that will help mitigate the impacts and preserve Suquamish as a community consistent with the previously published vision documents.

## **Vision for Suquamish**

Suquamish is a rural, historic waterfront community on the Port Madison Indian Reservation, which is defined by strong natural borders in northeast Kitsap County. The Port Madison Indian Reservation is located on the western and northern shore of Port Madison Bay. The reservation also fronts Agate Pass on the western side. Bainbridge Island is located on the eastern side of the Pass. The Agate Pass Bridge connects Bainbridge Island with the Reservation on the Kitsap Peninsula.

Increased growth pressures are threatening the Suquamish Village's natural boundaries. Increased development was beginning to exceed the capacities of the infrastructure systems. Transportation infrastructure and drainage systems were no longer adequate, open space diminished and the rural character of the town changed. Tribal members living in Suquamish and non-Indian residents who moved to Suquamish for its rural qualities and remote location found their chosen lifestyle at risk. However, any vision for Suquamish must balance the preservation of the rights of Tribal members and of non-Indian property owners to enjoy the reasonable use of their land.

The Suquamish Village will make its visitors feel welcome, but not rely solely on tourism as a mechanism for economic health. Economic and cultural diversity shall be celebrated and enhanced for the benefit of all residents of Suquamish. The Suquamish Village's native Indian history and presence shall be enhanced and remain a visible part of the Suquamish experience.

The downtown should remain the heart of Suquamish where residents and visitors will gather together to celebrate traditions and experience daily living. Suquamish will offer small business districts for small-scale neighborhood convenience stores or public services.

It shall become a community where one can enjoy its open spaces and recreational opportunities as well as safe and pleasurable walks along a system of public roadways, which link the neighborhoods to each other and to the commercial districts. The Suquamish Rural Village shall welcome all social and economic groups. It shall provide a sense of community, and the Tribe and the County shall work cooperatively.

## **Public Participation**

A community planning process began in the spring of 1992, with the intention that the community, through design committees, would be instrumental in the development of the Suquamish Community Plan. Design committees consisting of interested community members were created to focus on specific issues such as drainage, housing, traffic, utilities and parks. These committees met weekly to develop goals, policies and regulations for community review. A series of public meetings was held to begin the review process and encourage involvement

among interested community members. The committees, County, Tribe and community worked cooperatively to assemble pertinent information. During the meetings, information was gathered to further refine the community's vision.

Although the Suquamish Community Plan was completed in 1993, the County never adopted the Plan until April 19, 1999, under Ordinance 232-1999. At the time of initial completion, Kitsap County's primary focus shifted from community planning efforts to a much broader policy document, the Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan, ie, the County's vision utilizing a twenty-year planning period under the Growth Management Act.

The Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan delineates a series of steps that shall be performed to formally designate a LAMIRD in the rural area. This includes refining the list of potential candidate areas; developing criteria for locating physical boundaries; identifying the types and amount of growth that should be allowed to occur within designated areas; and developing implementing regulations and design guidelines to ensure that development occurs in a manner consistent with rural character. Policies are provided at this time to create a framework for carrying this work forward.

On July 15, 1998, the Board of County Commissioners held a public hearing on Emergency Ordinance 221-1998 and the Planning Commission recommendation. The hearing was continued to July 27, 1998 and the Board of County Commissioners issued their decision on July 29, 1998 as Ordinance 225-1998 which implemented Interim Development Regulations for Suquamish. These adopted interim development regulations would be in effect for the duration of the planning process in order to review and revise the Suquamish Community Plan. The interim development regulations would control building standards in areas most affected by critical stormwater drainage, more closely reflect those of urban sized lots, and address issues of setback and lot coverage.

The County undertook planning, design and construction of stormwater and other infrastructure improvements as recommended in the 1993 Suquamish Community Plan, and set the process in motion to get adequate drainage in the Suquamish Community in the next 3-5 years. The Suquamish Area Citizens Council was reactivated to participate in and support execution of the 1993 Suquamish Community Plan.

Once the Interim Development Regulations were in place, staff began a process to revise the Suquamish Community Plan. This process began with the formation of the new Suquamish Community Council (SCC), which was appointed by the Board of County Commissioners in September 1998. Staff held nine meetings with the SCC and interested public, beginning September 1998 and continuing through March 1999.

The process of forming the SCC began earnestly in August of 1998, and the Council convened for its first meeting in September 22, 1998 at the Suquamish Community Church. During meetings, throughout the fall and winter, the Council worked with the Department of Community Development on the development of draft criteria for designating limited areas of more intensive rural development. The Draft Criteria were presented to the Planning Commission for consideration during a public hearing on January 19, 1999. On January 26th, the Planning Commission sent their recommendation to the Commissioners which required that the Draft Criteria be remanded to the planning staff for revision and inclusion as part of the Suquamish Community Plan, rather than being approved for use as general criteria for all areas of more intensive rural development

Planning staff continued to work with the Suquamish Tribe, the Community Council and the public on the Suquamish Rural Village Sub-Area Plan, and the final draft was completed on March 15, 1999. On March 16, 1999 the Kitsap County Department of Community Development issued a Determination of Significance and Adoption of Existing Environmental Document for the Draft Rural Village Sub-Area Plan and the necessary amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Development regulations. The public appeal period for the Determination ended on April 2, 1999 and there were no appeals filed.

On March 23, 1999, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the draft Suquamish Rural Village Sub-Area Plan, and corresponding Zoning Ordinance, map and associative amendments. The hearing was continued to March 30, and the Planning Commission forwarded its recommendation on the Sub-Area Plan and corresponding amendments to the Commissioners on April 1, 1999. The Board of County Commissioners held a public hearing on April 12, 1999 to consider the Planning Commission's recommendation. The hearing was continued to April 19th for decision and the Board of County Commissioners adopted the Suquamish Rural Village Sub-Area Plan, dated March 15, 1999.

In October 2004, Kitsap County commenced an evaluation and public participation process for the five-year update of the Suquamish Rural Village Sub-Area Plan, as previously adopted by the Board of Commissioners. The County wanted to ensure that the review considers the full range of the community's diversity, interests and concerns. Therefore a steering committee consisting of the Suquamish Tribe, friends of Miller Bay, Suquamish Elementary school, and other members of the community was established. Meetings were held almost monthly to review changes and updates necessary to the Rural Village Sub-Area Plan.

Necessary expansions or revisions to the plan contents were determined through an assessment of changes in current conditions and input from the working group members and the community at large to address topics not covered or

covered only briefly in the 1999 plan. Corresponding changes to the implementation language were developed to reflect the identified needs. The Steering Committee held its last meeting on November 17, 2005 reviewing the draft plan page by page, prior to forwarding the draft Suquamish Rural Village Sub-Area Plan to the Planning Commission for its review beginning November 22, 2005.

## Population and Housing

The Suquamish Rural Village contained approximately 1,955 persons as of January 1999, with an average household size of 2.55 persons.

As of January 1999, the single largest type of housing structures, based upon Kitsap County Assessor’s categories, is single-family detached units, which account for more than 82.5% of the total supply (see Figure 2 and table below). Mobile/manufactured homes represent the second largest share of housing types in the Suquamish Village, accounting for 16% of the total supply. Multi-family structures (two units or more, including duplexes) account for less than 2% of the total supply.

Suquamish Housing Structures

| <b>TYPE *</b>            | <b>UNITS</b> | <b>PERCENT</b> |
|--------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| Single Family            | 667          | 82.5           |
| Mobile/Manufactured Home | 131          | 16.2           |
| Duplex                   | 6            | 0.7            |
| Cabin                    | 4            | 0.5            |
| Multi-family (2+ units)  | 1            | 0.1            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>             | <b>809</b>   | <b>100</b>     |

**\*Based upon Kitsap County Assessor’s Categories**