



## Executive Summary

---

**Issue Description:** Policy Direction from Board of County Commissioners on the Rural Wooded Incentive Program.

**Meeting Date:** April 1, 2009

**Commissioner District:** All

**Attendees:** Larry Keeton, Director, DCD

Scott Diener, Policy and Planning Manager, DCD

Katrina N. Knutson, Planner, DCD

**Action Requested At This Meeting:** Policy direction on the Rural Wooded Incentive Program.

**Recommendation:** The Department of Community Development recommends the Board of County Commissioners provide policy direction on the Rural Wooded Incentive Program.

**Justification:** A moratorium is currently prohibiting the use of the Rural Wooded Incentive Program and will expire on July 25, 2009. In order to meet all legislative requirements, including a State Agency mandated 60-day comment period, the Department will need to take action as soon as possible.

**Background:** The Department of Community Development gave a presentation on the historical and background information regarding the Rural Wooded Incentive Program to the Board on March 2, 2009. On March 4<sup>th</sup> and March 9<sup>th</sup>, DCD staff met individually with each Commissioner to answer further questions and discuss the program. Below is a summary of those discussions:

### Open Space/Trail System

Board Concerns	Board Ideas
1) How will trails be maintained? By whom?	1) Allow agricultural practices in open space
2) Is it feasible for a public agency to own open space? Associated cost concerns.	2) Set trail system for each project prior to approval
3) Open space ownership.	3) County-wide trail summit.
4) Remain in tax exemption?	4) Open space is a valuable asset to the citizens of Kitsap County is a public good.

### Housing/Density

Board Concerns	Board Ideas
1) Density concerns in the rural area. Rural/Urban split in jeopardy. 4-fold increase in density is too much.	1) Reduce the density allowed in the Rural Wooded zone.
2) Concerns regarding the County's ability to serve high rural population.	2) 80 acre zoning.
3) Current required cluster size too small.	3) Increase cluster size to allow for more pervious surface.
	4) Rezone to Forest Resource Land which is 1du/40 acres.

### Forest

Board Concerns	Board Ideas
1) Clear-cutting of open space.	1) Require approved Forest Management Plan
2) Impacts to wildlife	2) Preserve tree canopy as much as possible.

### General Ideas

1) Approach each Rural Wooded application like a Master-Plan. This would give the County greater over-sight as to the amount of homes, open space and associated trails. Look at each proposal one-by-one. Per statute, the Board would have final approval/veto power.
2) Financial impacts to fire, police, roads etc. are a major concern.
3) Board of County Commissioners hold a "Meeting of the Minds". At this meeting, the Board would discuss and decide what principles they can agree on regarding RWIP.

Based on discussions with the Board, DCD proposes the following alternatives:

**Rural Wooded Incentive Program Alternative Matrix**

	<b>RWIP Alternatives</b>	<b>Misc</b>	<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
<b>Alternative 1</b>	Lift Moratorium: Maintain existing program	Monitor Phase I; complete Phase I audit before subsequent phase release	Would allow property owners to utilize program the Growth Board deemed consistent. Could result in large amount of permanent open space. Would allow for County evaluation of program.	Would not address concerns of Board of Commissioners that were reasons for enacting the moratorium. Allows for more density in the Rural Wooded zone than some Commissioners are comfortable with. Who is owner of open space?
<b>Alternative 2</b>	Repeal program	Forest practices may still occur.	Lands located with in Rural Wooded zone would be allowed to develop at 1 dwelling unit per 20 acres. Tribes and KCRP would likely be pleased. Less staff time needed without program.	Public benefits (eg, trails) may be impacted or deleted. Large property owners would likely be disappointed.
<b>Alternative 3</b>	Repeal Program and work with large land owners on master-planned communities	Master Planning allowed under RCW 36.70A.360.	County would have the ability to work directly with OPG and design area more carefully than could occur under RWIP.	Open space requirements under master planning are not as stringent as RWIP program. Landowners may not be willing to participate.
<b>Alternative 4</b>	Repeal Program and rezone to Forest Resource Lands	Forest practices may still occur.	Would provide for a lower density in the most sensitive portions of Kitsap County. Would allow for 1 dwelling per 40 acres.	Possible takings; public benefits may be impacted. Many of the rural parcels are already subdivided into 20 acre parcels.
<b>Alternative 5</b>	Amend Program: Forest Management Plan	Notice to title of properties; limit per-tract harvesting to certain acreage every XX amount of years	This option would allow for clustered housing while keeping the 75% open space. Additionally, the County would have greater control over what happens on the open space. Forest Management Plan (logging) could fund trails, maintenance, and stewardship activities.	Additional work for property owners. Most Rural Wooded property owners are already educated in how to manage forests. Prudent of open space owners to properly maintain open space: prevents large amount of work in the future. Who would own open space?
<b>Alternative 6</b>	Amend Program: Show centers of economy	Applicant would need to demonstrate center(s) of economy that would support the cluster(s)	Large clusters and large amounts of clusters would not be able to be located where there is no nearby or adjacent "center of economy" to support the density.	This option would make the program highly unusable for many Rural Wooded property owners. Likely only the Port Gamble area could develop.
<b>Alternative 7</b>	Amend Program: Trails Management Plan	A trails management plan, including funding schemes, would need to be provided Forest harvesting be used to support trails management.	A trails management plan could provide the County with a detailed plan for the public use of the open space. Such a plan would carve out where trails are to be located and how they are going to be maintained (homeowners association, etc). This option could be used in conjunction with other options. Logging of open space could provide funding for trails.	This option does not address the density concern or forestry.

		Alternative 8		Alternative 9	
Amend Program: Reduce density:	Density could be amended from the limit of 1 dwelling unit to 5 acres, eg, 1 dwelling unit per 7 acres or 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres.	Amend Program: Increase cluster size:	Cluster size could be increased from the maximum of 25 units, eg, 40 units maximum per cluster		
	This option would allow for clustered housing, but with a lower density requirement. This option would put less pressure on rural resources and would have a lesser impact on the County's Growth Management efforts. *		Increasing the cluster size could allow for more compact development resulting in less land consumed by development.		
	Property owners may not wish to participate in the program if the density were to be reduced.				

\*Alternative 8: Reduced Density (Assuming 3,900 acres)

RWIP Program: # of Homes	
1du/5a	780
1du/6a	650
1du/7a	557
1du/8a	488
1du/9a	433
1du/10a	390
1du/15a	260

Based on discussions with the Board, DCD has come up with a set of decision criterion that will hopefully aid the Board in providing direction. They were created based on the guiding principles that were important to each Commissioner. Those criterions are:

- 1) **Density**
- 2) **Cost**
- 3) **Environmental**
- 4) **Public Benefit**

Based on discussions with individual Board members, DCD rated each alternative against the decision criterion. Scores are subjective and may be debatable, but staff believes them to be accurate.

**Alternative One: Life Moratorium: Maintain Existing Program**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Score</b>
Density	High <sup>1</sup>
Cost	Medium
Environmental Protection	Medium
Public Benefit	High <sup>2</sup>

**Alternative Two: Repeal Program**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Score</b>
Density	Low
Cost	Low
Environmental Protection	Medium <sup>3</sup>
Public Benefit	Low

**Alternative Three: Repeal Program: Work with OPG on Master-Plan**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Score</b>
Density	High
Cost	Low
Environmental Protection	Medium
Public Benefit	High

<sup>1</sup> The "high" in the density column indicates the highest amount of density as currently adopted.

<sup>2</sup> The "high" in the public benefit column indicates the current requirement of 75% of total project owner dedicated to permanent open space.

<sup>3</sup> This number depends on how individual property owners treat the land.

**Alternative Four: Repeal Program: Rezone to Forest Resource Land**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Score</b>
Density	Low
Cost	Low
Environmental Protection	Medium
Public Benefit	Low

**Alternative Five: Amend Program: Require Forest Management Plan**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Score</b>
Density	High
Cost	Medium
Environmental Protection	High
Public Benefit	High

**Alternative Six: Amend Program: Show Centers of Economy**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Score</b>
Density	High
Cost	Medium
Environmental Protection	Medium
Public Benefit	Medium

**Alternative Seven: Amend Program: Trails Management Program**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Score</b>
Density	High
Cost	Medium
Environmental Protection	Medium
Public Benefit	High

**Alternative Eight: Amend Program: Reduce Density**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Score</b>
Density	Low
Cost	Low
Environmental Protection	Medium
Public Benefit	Medium/High

**Alternative Nine**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Score</b>
Density	High
Cost	Low
Environmental Protection	Medium
Public Benefit	High

