

CITY OF PULLMAN

Public Works and Planning Departments

325 S.E. Paradise Street, Pullman, WA 99163
(509) 338-3220 or (509) 338-3213 Fax (509) 338-3282
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Pullman Planning Commission

FROM: Pete Dickinson, Planning Director *PD*

FOR: Meeting of January 24, 2007

SUBJECT: Reevaluation of Pullman's Urban Growth Area

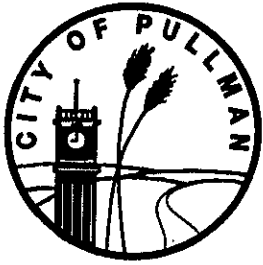
DATE: January 19, 2007

During the last Planning Commission meeting, staff indicated that the City Council would be conducting a discussion about reexamining Pullman's urban growth area (UGA) at the Council meeting of January 9. This discussion did occur, and the Council is expected to continue its deliberations on this topic at its meeting of February 6. Enclosed is the memorandum produced for the Council's January 9 meeting.

Included also are preliminary maps showing possible UGA configurations for the years 2027 and 2057. On these maps, "LDR" means Low Density Residential and "HDR" refers to High Density Residential. These UGA maps show only the acres needed in a given land use category for the target years, based on the analysis described in the City Council memo. Planning staff is certain the city will add more commercial and/or industrial land to its urban growth area to expand its potential employment base and offer more convenient shopping opportunities to all sectors of the community, and the locations of these additional commercial/industrial districts will be part of our future discussions.

At your meeting of January 24, staff requests that the Commission entertain input from the general public and provide appropriate direction to staff.

Enclosures



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MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Johnson and Pullman City Council

FROM: Pete Dickinson, Planning Director *PD*

FOR: Meeting of January 9, 2007

SUBJECT: Urban Growth Areas

DATE: January 4, 2007

In his cover memo for this agenda item, city supervisor John Sherman described the Council's recent interest in reevaluating Pullman's urban growth areas. This interest is well-founded because Pullman has experienced strong growth over the past few years. The city's 2006 population estimate was 27,030, an increase of 2,082 people since the census year of 2000. This translates into a 1.39 percent annual growth rate, as compared to a 1.36 percent annual population increase for Washington state as a whole over this same period.

Construction activity within the city reflects this rise in population. The table below displays the number of housing units occupied here since 2000. It shows that almost 15 percent of Pullman's total housing stock was added in the past six years alone.

TABLE 1		
TOTAL NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS AND NUMBER OF NET DWELLING UNITS ADDED FROM 2000-2006, BY HOUSING TYPE, IN PULLMAN		
HOUSING TYPE	TOTAL NUMBER OF UNITS (AS OF 1/07)	NUMBER OF NET UNITS ADDED FROM 2000-2006
Single Family	3,685	465
Multi-Family	6,796	1,148
Manufactured Homes	544	26
TOTAL	11,025	1,639

To further illustrate the level of recent property development in Pullman, the following table presents information on the number of acres consumed by various land uses since the city's Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1999.

TABLE 2 TOTAL NUMBER OF ACRES OCCUPIED AND NUMBER OF ACRES OCCUPIED FROM 1999-2006, BY LAND USE, IN PULLMAN		
LAND USE	TOTAL NUMBER OF ACRES OCCUPIED (AS OF 1/07)	NUMBER OF ACRES OCCUPIED FROM 1999- 2006
Low Density Residential	1,414	320
High Density Residential	401	91
Commercial	331	89
Industrial	262	40
Parks	103	7
Public Facilities	211	0
Washington State University	1,910	288
TOTAL	4,632	835

NOTES: "Occupied" acres in this table are those that have been built upon or are approved for construction through the city's site plan or subdivision process. For example, the proposed Wal-Mart project is included in the above totals. Also, the expansion of certain land uses within the city, such as WSU, occurred due to annexation.

Each of the four hills in Pullman experienced its share of growth since 1999. Almost all of the single family house construction occurred on Sunnyside Hill (180 acres) or Military Hill (132 acres). As would be expected, the vast majority of high density housing (81 acres) was built on College Hill. It is also no surprise, due to the location of Port of Whitman County and Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories land holdings, that most of the industrial growth (35 acres) occurred on College Hill. The majority of commercial development (64 acres) happened (or is scheduled to happen) on Pioneer Hill.

The discussion regarding reevaluation of urban growth areas is timely in that the city is embarking on an update to its six-year water facilities plan with the assistance of consultant HDR, Inc. As part of this plan, the consultant has asked the planning

department to prepare population and land use forecasts for three target years: 2013, 2027, and 2057 (i.e., 6, 20, and 50 years into the future). The preliminary figures formulated by the department for use in the water plan are shown in the table below. The total city population is forecasted for each target year; these figures are derived from the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) predictions for Whitman County from 2010 to 2025 (extrapolated for the 2027 and 2057 population projections). The acres needed for each land use category are based on the number of housing units and commercial/industrial land demanded for a given population in Pullman. Each "acres needed" figure includes a 100 percent "market factor" (i.e., the number of actual acres needed for each land use category is doubled to promote optimal operation of the real estate market [so that, for example, the personal preferences of a few property owners do not restrict city growth]).

TABLE 3			
FORECAST FOR TOTAL POPULATION IN 2013, 2027, AND 2057 AND FORECAST FOR ADDITIONAL ACRES NEEDED FOR SPECIFIED LAND USE CATEGORIES BY 2013, 2027, AND 2057 (CUMULATIVE), IN PULLMAN			
	2013	2027	2057
Population	29,230	34,650	46,000
ADDITIONAL ACRES NEEDED (CUMULATIVE)			
	2013	2027	2057
Low Density Residential	300	1,168	2,984
High Density Residential	116	448	1,144
Commercial	70	272	696
Industrial	56	216	552
TOTAL ACRES NEEDED	542	2,104	5,376
NOTES: Population forecasts are based on OFM 2010-2025 population forecasts for Whitman County (extrapolated beyond 2025). A 100% market factor is incorporated into each acreage figure.			

Once a determination has been made as to the number of acres demanded for each target year, it is important to identify the amount of vacant land available in the existing urban growth area. The table below displays the number of vacant acres within the present city limits and the current urban growth area outside the city limits. The land use categories in the table are derived from the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Plan Map.

TABLE 4 NUMBER OF VACANT ACRES WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS, NUMBER OF VACANT ACRES IN THE URBAN GROWTH AREA OUTSIDE THE CITY LIMITS, AND THE TOTAL NUMBER OF VACANT ACRES WITHIN THE URBAN GROWTH AREA, EXISTING, IN AND AROUND PULLMAN			
LAND USE CATEGORY	VACANT ACRES WITHIN CITY LIMITS	VACANT ACRES IN URBAN GROWTH AREA OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS	TOTAL VACANT ACRES WITHIN URBAN GROWTH AREA
Low Density Residential	599	239	838
High Density Residential	368	33	401
Commercial	207	811	1,018
Industrial	174	82	256
TOTAL	1,348	1,165	2,513
NOTES: Portions of the urban growth area outside the city limits that are unavailable for development because they are already occupied by dense land uses or because they contain significant environmental features (e.g., the Magpie Forest owned by WSU north of Westwood Drive) are excluded from the above figures. Acreage figures include land currently distant from city services (e.g., the "Rolling Hills" property, located approximately one mile east of the intersection of State Route 270 and Airport Road, is included). The urban growth area includes all land inside and outside the city limits planned for potential city growth, as displayed in the Pullman Comprehensive Plan. Land use categories are derived from the Pullman Comprehensive Plan.			

Table 5 on the following page combines the information contained in Tables 3 and 4 to show the extent to which the current urban growth area would accommodate the city's growth for the target years of 2013, 2027, and 2057.

TABLE 5 SURPLUS (+) OR DEFICIENCY (-) OF VACANT ACRES IN THE EXISTING URBAN GROWTH AREA TO ACCOMMODATE FORECASTED ACRES NEEDED BY LAND USE CATEGORY FOR THE YEARS 2013, 2027, AND 2057, IN AND AROUND PULLMAN			
LAND USE CATEGORY	2013	2027	2057
Low Density Residential	+538	-330	-2,146
High Density Residential	+285	-47	-743
Commercial	+948	+746	+322
Industrial	+200	+40	-296

Using the assumptions contained within this analysis, the above table shows that the current urban growth area is sized appropriately to accept anticipated growth through the year 2013. At the target year of 2027, however, the model indicates that 330 additional acres of low density residential land and 47 more acres of high density residential property should be included within the urban growth area. As expected, much more land would be needed to accommodate forecasted growth 50 years into the future. The amount of commercial acreage in the current urban growth area is a notable exception to this demand for more property.

Certainly, there are many factors for a community to consider when it is reevaluating its urban growth area. Does the city wish to grow in a pattern similar to its historical development? Should it seek to become more compact, or more dispersed? While a community might have sufficient vacant land assigned to a land use category, are there more appropriate locations for that land use? Are there political or economic reasons for including or excluding certain properties within an urban growth area? These and many other questions are commonly asked in any reassessment of a community's growth area. Obviously, public input on these issues should be solicited frequently during the review process.

The guiding principles in this reevaluation process are contained in the city's Comprehensive Plan. The current plan envisions an urban growth area that

accommodates foreseeable growth while recognizing the city's limitations for efficient public service delivery and its respect for the value of prime agricultural land. Developing an urban growth area is an exercise in balancing competitive forces. If the urban land supply is too small, growth may be stifled, and land costs may be unnecessarily inflated. If the urban land supply is too large, the arrangement may promote sprawl and the development of property far removed from urban services upon which city residents rely.

As noted by the Council in its 2006 adopted goal to "work with Whitman County in a mutually beneficial manner to reevaluate and update the Comprehensive Plan as it pertains to Urban Growth Areas," cooperation with county officials will continue to be very important throughout this process. In his cover memo, John Sherman addressed recent discussions conducted by city and county representatives in this regard. Since the county now allows for more housing in areas that were formerly restricted substantially to agricultural activities, any reconsideration of the city's urban growth area should occur within the broader context of planning for land use and service delivery in the greater Pullman area. The best case scenario from the perspective of city planning staff would be for the city to formulate a joint plan with the county for the area surrounding Pullman; this joint plan would provide maps designating appropriate areas and for future city growth and county land use activity and set forth policies to guide development in these areas.

In order to gather information and initiate its review of this matter, the Planning Commission participated in a discussion of urban growth areas at its meeting of December 13, 2006. At that time, planning staff informed the Commission that several owners of property outside the city's current urban growth area have expressed interest in possibly annexing their land to the city, including parcels along Albion Road, Johnson Road, and the Pullman-Moscow corridor. Staff also stated that any expansion of the city's growth area would logically incorporate the route of the proposed South Bypass. Staff concluded by saying that it will likely present multiple alternatives for urban growth area revisions, including with each a description of anticipated impacts. One member of the public, Cheryl Morgan of 102 Hayward Road, spoke at the session; she stated that she was concerned about the prospect of being included within the city's urban growth area because she enjoys the pastoral quality of life under the county's jurisdiction. In its discussion, the Planning Commission recognized the need to engage in the reevaluation process and expressed interest in continuing the dialogue, possibly with the City Council at a joint meeting on the subject.

In summary, this is an exciting time in Pullman with all of its recent activity and more high quality development expected in the coming years. It is important to facilitate this expected growth by collaborating with all stakeholders to shape the future of this fine community.

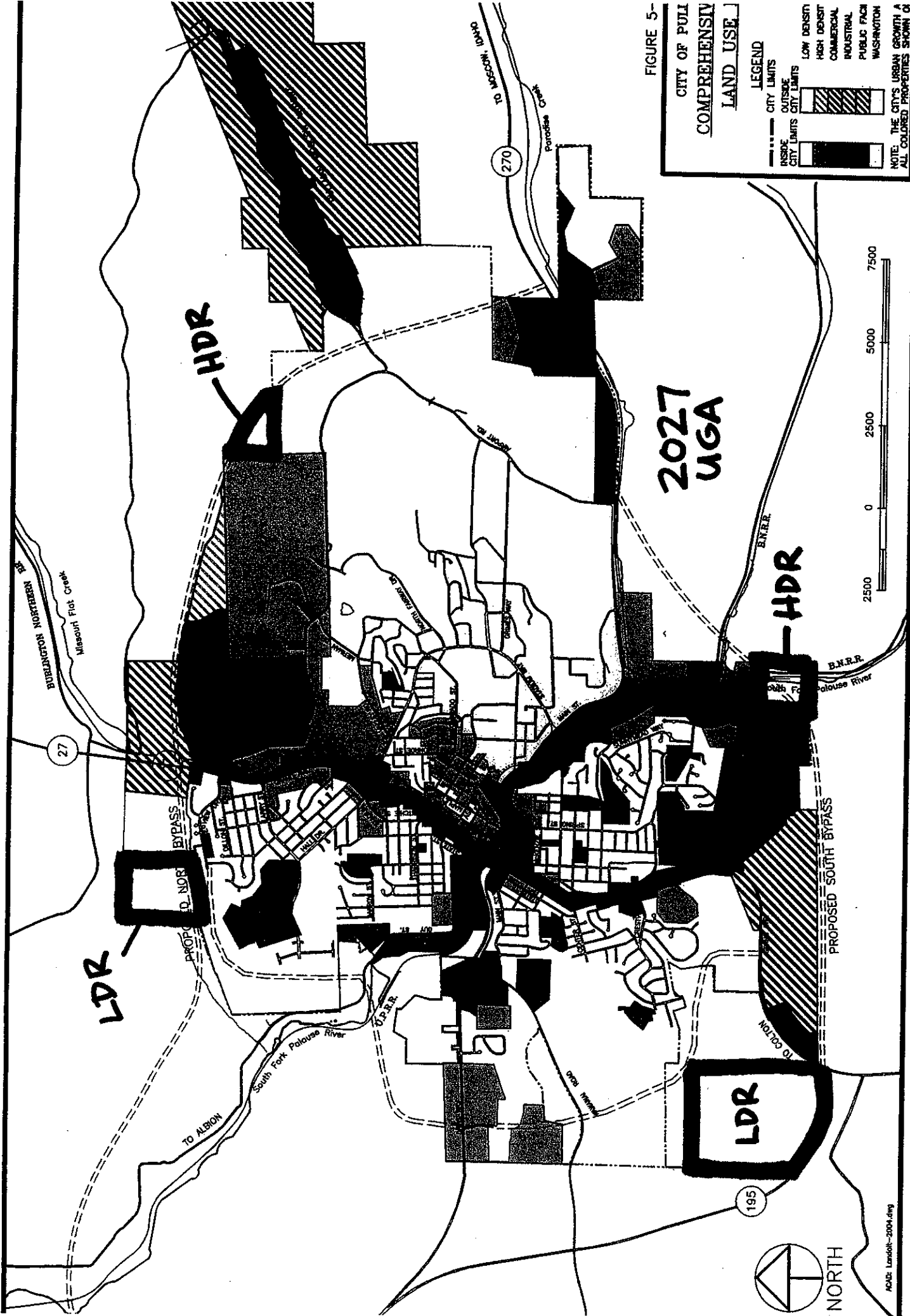


FIGURE 5-

**CITY OF PULLMAN
COMPREHENSIVE
LAND USE**

LEGEND

- - - - - CITY LIMITS
 - - - - - CITY LIMITS OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS
 [Solid Black] LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
 [Diagonal Hatching] HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
 [Cross-hatching] COMMERCIAL
 [Dotted] INDUSTRIAL
 [Dotted] PUBLIC FACILITIES
 [Dotted] WASHINGTON

NOTE: THE CITY'S URBAN GROWTH AREA IS SHOWN IN ALL COLORED PROPERTIES SHOWN ON THIS MAP.



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