



PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Planning Division

210 Lottie Street, Bellingham, WA 98225

Telephone: (360) 778-8300 Fax: (360) 778-8302

MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council, Mayor Dan Pike and David Webster

FROM: Tim Stewart, Planning & Community Development Director

RE: 2008 Employment Lands Report

DATE: April 22, 2009

Attached is a 2008 City of Bellingham Employment Lands Report that was published April 15, 2009. The report provides a current overview of Bellingham's industry sectors, employment zones, and future employment capacity. The report includes statistical summaries of each of Bellingham's geographic employment centers, as well as a summary of existing land supply based on vacant and developable lands.

The 2008 City of Bellingham Employment Lands Report is the first phase of an in-depth study of this area's employment providers and future anticipated needs. The report is available online at: <http://www.cob.org/services/business/economic-development.aspx>.

Key report findings:

- A GIS analysis of the 2008 employment land supply found 998 net developable acres, most in the Northwest and North Central part of the City and Urban Growth Area.
- 56% of the available land is in the City's UGA, and one-half of that land is located within the long-term Phase III areas of the recently published Urban Services Area Phasing Plan (USAP).
- According to current land use and employment statistics, this would create the capacity for an additional 13,200 new jobs.
- Redevelopment estimates for the Old Town and Waterfront Districts show potential for about 9,200 additional new jobs.
- 34% of developed area in Bellingham's employment centers is dedicated to surface parking, and the average Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of those areas is 0.3, which could mean that multi-story development and structured parking may become more economically feasible as property values and market conditions evolve.

The Phase II economic analysis will build upon the 2008 Employment Lands report, as well as prior economic development planning to identify opportunities facilitating expansion of existing businesses, and to attract industry sectors identified as compatible with Bellingham's comprehensive planning goals. This project is part of the Planning & Community Development Department's 2009 work program.