

**Camas North Shore Subarea Plan
Phase 2
Frequently Asked Questions and Community Conversations**

August 2022

The City developed this set of Frequently Asked Questions to respond to questions and concerns we are hearing from the community during Phase 2 of the planning process. The [Phase 1 Frequently Asked Questions](#) document provides additional background information on the subarea plan (e.g., the purpose of a subarea plan, state requirements for planning) and is available on the [North Shore Engage Camas](#) site.

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[How much development would the current draft concept plan allow in the North Shore and how does it compare with what existing zoning would allow?](#)

ANSWER:

The tables below show the potential dwelling units, residents and jobs anticipated in the North Shore subarea based on a set of development assumptions and reflecting the proposed densities for each land use category included on the North Shore draft [preferred concept map](#). The draft map and proposed densities may still be refined based on community feedback.

In the tables below, "Revised Existing Zoning" reflects the existing zoning when accounting for the Lacamas Lake Elementary and Legacy Lands parcels, which are zoned for residential development but are now owned by the City and will no longer be developed for housing. While the Legacy Lands acquisitions protect 160 acres of open space for our community, the tradeoff is that these lands can no longer contribute to our housing needs.

Based on projections from the Washington State Office of Financial Management, the City of Camas is projected to grow by approximately 11,800 residents by 2040 (a 47% increase). **Per the Camas Housing Action Plan, we will need an additional 4,589 dwelling units to accommodate new members of the community and to provide a much needed diversity of housing options.** The proposed densities would accommodate approximately 2,970 units, meaning we still need an additional 1,620 units outside of the North Shore.

	Capacity		
	Dwelling Units	People	Jobs
Existing Zoning	1,820	4,915	2,829
Revised Existing Zoning	1,312	3,542	2,586
Draft Preferred Concept	2,969	8,017	1,399

	Compared to Existing Zoning			Compared to Revised Existing Zoning		
	Dwelling Units	People	Jobs	Dwelling Units	People	Jobs
Draft Preferred Concept	+ 1,149	+ 3,102	- 1,430	+ 1,657	+ 4,475	- 1,187

The community does not want development in the North Shore, so why is the City moving forward with the subarea plan?

ANSWER:

If the subarea plan is not adopted, the North Shore can still develop under the existing zoning. While the subarea plan would increase density in some parts of the subarea, it would allow us to focus development in more appropriate locations within the North Shore. While the City has heard from some members of the public that they do not want to see any development, this is not the only message we have heard from the community. We are also hearing about the need for more affordable housing and a desire from property owners who wish to see their properties develop in a way that meets the community’s vision. Property owners have a legal right to develop their land and the City cannot prevent the development of private property. It’s important to remember that the property owners in the North Shore are members of our community, and they should have a hand in guiding the future of the area.

The City’s goal is to create a subarea plan that strikes a balance between the different priorities and perspectives within our community and reflects the [vision established during Phase 1](#) of the project. Because there are differing needs and wishes, it is not possible for the subarea plan to be exactly what each individual in this community would like to see. However, we want to create a subarea plan that balances different perspectives and reflects input from all community members. We are working hard to listen to the community and make adjustments to the plan.

We encourage you to read the [“What we heard and what we did”](#) handout, which summarizes some of the key messages that we have heard from the community, Steering Committee and Community Advisory Committee, and identifies how the City has incorporated this feedback into the project.

The North Shore is the wrong place for development, so why are you encouraging development there and not somewhere else?

ANSWER:

It is important to remember that most of the land in the North Shore is in private ownership and property owners have a right to develop their land. This is true whether the subarea plan is adopted or not. Furthermore, the subarea plan does not encourage development. Instead, it aims to develop a plan and new

development standards that will guide future development in a way that is consistent with the community's vision.

The Camas Housing Action Plan identifies the need for 4,589 dwelling units to accommodate new residents. The subarea plan would accommodate 2,970 units. **If these housing units are not at least in part located in the North Shore, then they would go somewhere else in Camas.** While we're hearing that some community members don't want the North Shore to develop, we're also hearing frustration that existing neighborhoods are changing and seeing more development. Simply put, there is no one perfect place for development that the entire community will agree on. The North Shore provides an area within city limits with enough space to accommodate some of our anticipated new growth and where many of the largest property owners want to develop their properties.

Why isn't the City listening to the community when we say we want to preserve open space?

ANSWER:

Since annexing the area, the City has purchased over **160 acres** in the North Shore in direct response to the community's calls for preserving open space along Lacamas Lake. The City's acquisition increased the share of land designated for open space/recreation in the North Shore from 6 percent to **16 percent**. This is a significant increase in open space; further, this does not include the additional parks/open space that would be required, within individual developments.

While our acquisition preserved 160 acres for open space/recreation, it also reduced the amount of land available for housing at a time when our community is growing. Increasing the development density north of the Legacy Lands strikes a balance between preserving open space and making room for new members of our community.

Why are you increasing density on the Mills Property?

ANSWER:

The subarea plan would actually **reduce** the maximum number of houses permitted on the remaining Mills Property. In 2019, the City acquired 26 acres of the Mills Property as part of the Legacy Lands acquisition (parcel "A" below). This property is zoned Multifamily Residential-10¹ (MF-10) and could have accommodated approximately 140 dwelling units.²

The two remaining parcels are both currently zoned for multifamily development. The middle parcel (parcel "B") is currently zoned MF-10, and the Draft Preferred Concept would change this to single-family, reducing the maximum density from 10 dwelling units to 5.7 dwelling units per acre. The subarea plan would **reduce** the maximum number of dwelling units on parcel B from approximately 250 to 140 dwelling units.

The Draft Preferred Concept would **retain** the current maximum density on parcel C, which would accommodate approximately 265 dwelling units.

¹ Approximately 6 acres are zoned Business Park. This acreage is not included in the dwelling units estimate.

² This assumes approximately 30% of the land would be used for roads, utilities, or landscaped areas and open space. This is a common industry standard used to estimate the percentage of land that could contain buildings and land that is required for access, infrastructure, and other uses.



All in all, the City's efforts, including the Legacy Lands acquisition and the proposed subarea plan densities, would likely result in fewer houses being built on the Mills Property. The maximum number of dwelling units allowed by current zoning on the Mills Property is 654 dwelling units. The maximum number of dwelling units allowed on the Mills Property with the preferred concept plan is 407 dwelling units.

How can we prevent or reduce the loss of tree cover?

ANSWER:

Camas has made some recent strides in enacting better protections for our trees. Our tree ordinance was adopted in 2018 and stipulates several protection measures, including requiring developers to replace trees at a specific ratio. Development that was permitted before the ordinance was adopted in 2018 was not held to these standards, and therefore many recent developments do not reflect these new protections.

With the North Shore Subarea Plan, unique development standards and code requirements will be prepared for the North Shore area. This means the North Shore design standards as well as the zoning requirements could provide additional protections for existing tree cover. For example, standards in the North Shore could require a higher tree density on site and a higher tree replacement ratio, as well as encouraging the identification of landmark or heritage trees that could be further protected.

The City will be working on the North Shore design standards and zoning code after the subarea plan is complete. The public will have an opportunity to be a part of that process and the code will require adoption by the City Council.

Won't development in the North Shore increase pollution in Lacamas Lake?

ANSWER:

The health of Lacamas Lake is a top concern for the City and the pollution levels in Lacamas Lake, Round Lake and Fallen Leaf Lake must be addressed. The City is currently partnering with the Washington Department of Ecology on efforts to develop a lake cleanup plan. While the North Shore subarea plan includes measures to protect water quality, the reality is most of the pollution is coming from Lacamas Creek, oftentimes miles away

from the lake itself.³ Simply put, the majority of the pollution is originating from outside of the subarea and outside of city limits.

This isn't to say that Camas shouldn't be mindful of potential pollution from the subarea, only that the North Shore is a small piece of a much larger solution. Future development in the North Shore will be required to capture and treat stormwater runoff onsite, consistent with City and State stormwater requirements.

Why aren't we using transfer of development rights in the North Shore?

ANSWER:

The City is currently exploring the potential for a transfer of development rights (TDR) program in Camas. TDR programs are a way for a city to encourage the voluntary transfer of development from places where a community would like to see less development (referred to as "sending areas") to places where a community would like to see more development (referred to as "receiving areas"). TDR is a voluntary program and requires that a property owner agree to transfer their development rights to another property. The City cannot legally require the owner to participate. If City Council decides to pursue a TDR program, it would take approximately **X years** for a citywide TDR program to be adopted into Camas' municipal code. In the meantime, any development applications would be vested⁴ under the existing zoning.

The community and City could consider including something in the subarea plan that would encourage the use of TDR if a citywide program were established. For example, the subarea plan could include a policy that states sending and receiving areas should be evaluated at the time a citywide TDR program is under development. The subarea plan could also encourage "cluster development" in the North Shore, which is a similar concept to TDR but does not require an agreement between two property owners. Cluster development allows a developer/property owner to concentrate dwelling units in one area in order to preserve the remainder of the property for open space and other natural features.

Is this going to ruin views from across the lake and other viewpoints?

ANSWER:

To a large extent, views have been protected via the acquisition of 160 acres of land along Lacamas Lake. Some views will likely change due to development, and this comes back to the need to balance different priorities and rights within in our community. We need to preserve views where possible while respecting private property rights and providing jobs and housing for our growing community. Development on the south side of the lake was not restricted by property owners on the north side, and we need to find a middle-ground that works for everyone.

Was the aerial graphic presented at the open house on August 17th representative of the proposed density?

ANSWER:

Yes. The aerial sketch was created using a 3D modeling software program (SketchUp). The proposed density for each land use category (higher density residential, lower density residential, etc.) was applied to the corresponding areas within the North Shore, and 3D buildings were added based on the permitted density. The model also accounted for areas with limited development potential (e.g., wetlands) and requirements for road networks, open space and other areas that would not contain buildings.

³ Lacamas Creek Partnership for Clean Water:

https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias_1962/37698/lacamas_creek_partnership_for_clean_water.aspx

⁴ "Vested" means that an application for development must be reviewed/held to the standards of the municipal code in place at the time it was accepted for review by the City. Changes to the code (for example, adoption of the City's tree ordinance) cannot be applied retroactively to applications submitted before the changes were adopted.

Do we have the road capacity to support new development? How will it get paid for and when would it be constructed?

ANSWER:

Not today, but the City is confident that the proposed road network can be constructed over time and in tandem with development. The City prepared a trip generation and roadway connectivity assessment based on the draft preferred concept plan. The assessment concluded that the proposed roadway connections are expected to provide adequate roadway capacity to support the land use designations.

For development of larger collector or arterial roads, the City will often work with developers to help fund the upsizing of facilities (make larger) to accommodate planned growth for the larger area. These larger roads to serve growth are also funded through grants, loans and impact fees. Improvements to NE 38th Avenue, NW Friberg-Strunk Road, and the North Shore Sewer Project are examples of projects funded with grants, loans, and impact fees.