Chapter 2 Alternatives

1 What alternatives are being considered?

Four alternatives have been developed in order to provide a meaningful range of options for consideration by the public, neighboring agencies, and other interested parties. The alternatives are summarized briefly, followed by additional detailed discussion on each.

Alternative 1
Alternative 1 (No Action) assumes development will occur incrementally over time. A total of 1,330 single-family dwelling units are assumed for this alternative, which would generate 3,591 new residents. There are no multi-family units, commercial or office development or schools assumed in Alternative 1. The Main Property in Alternative 1 is based on current residential zoning. However, the North Triangle is shown as Mixed Use in the City’s Comprehensive Plan and would require rezone/reclassification. Sensitive areas, such as wetlands, wildlife, and surface water, would be protected as required by the City’s SAO.

Alternative 2
Alternative 2 (MPD Proposal) represents the Applicant’s proposal under the City’s MPD Ordinance. This alternative includes 930 single-family and 320 multi-family units, for a total of 1,250 dwelling units and 3,103 new residents. This scenario includes 390,000 total square feet of commercial and office space on the North Triangle property as well as a new 10-acre elementary school site. Because it is an MPD, this
Alternative also includes a substantial amount of open space, as required by City ordinance. A more complete description of the MPD proposal can be found in the MPD application, submitted to the City of Black Diamond on May 11, 2009.

**Alternative 3**

Alternative 3 (Mitigated MPD Proposal) would also follow a master planned approach and would be subject to the MPD ordinance requirements. In order to lessen or “mitigate” impacts, Alternative 3 includes a greater amount of land set aside for open space particularly surrounding sensitive areas, provides all school facilities on-site, and includes less residential and commercial development. This alternative has 25 percent fewer residential units (938) and a population at build out of 2,328. Alternative 3 has proportionately less commercial/office square footage (225,000) than Alternative 2, reflecting a lower demand based on fewer households.

**Alternative 4**

Alternative 4 (Fiscally Balanced MPD) has the same land use acreages as Alternative 2, but with a lower number of total residential units (1,075 units) and resulting population (2,674). This reflects the provision in the City’s MPD Ordinance that MPD proposals have a positive fiscal impact on the City at each stage of development. The reduced number of residential units allows the revenues generated by the commercial development to be balanced by the costs associated with servicing the larger population. In order to create this alternative, the total office and commercial square footage from Alternative 2 was held constant.

This alternative is provided strictly as a “bookend” to illustrate the number of housing units that result in a fiscally balanced (neutral) economic status for the City. As a result, this alternative is not further explored or analyzed in detail within the EIS.
2 What elements are included in Alternative 1 – No Action

As shown in Exhibit 2-1, the majority of Lawson Hills that is within the city limits is zoned for low density residential, which would allow for development of 4 to 6 units per acre. For purposes of this Final EIS, a minimum lot size of 7,200 square feet (sf) was assumed, which results in approximately 5 units per acre. In developing the parameters for the number of dwelling units in Alternative 1, the following assumptions were made:

- Sensitive areas and buffers associated with streams and wetlands were not considered developable land. Landslide hazard areas and severe coal mine hazard areas were excluded as well. No exclusion was made for terrestrial species or erosion hazard areas.
- Development was based on an average of 4.94 units per acre, with standard subdivision layout, with no provision for varying lot size or clustering dwelling units.
- No adjustments were made based on the location and shape of lots, sensitive areas, or for the practicality of providing a rational street system that might affect the total number of lots. The total available acres were simply divided by the lot size plus a street adjustment.

In order to develop the total number of residential units, the first step is to convert the total (gross) acres into net acres, by removing the acreage determined to be “sensitive areas” as defined by the City’s SAO:

\[ 371 \text{ gross acres} - 102 \text{ sensitive areas} = 269 \text{ net acres} \]

Net acres were then converted to dwelling units by multiplying the number of net acres by the number of units per acre:

\[ 269 \text{ acres} \times 4.94 \text{ units/acre} = 1,330 \text{ units} \]

All units in Alternative 1 are assumed to be single family units, which generate 2.7 persons per household on average. This results in a total population of 3,591 residents.
Exhibit 2-1
Alternative 1 - No Action

Exhibits in this EIS are intended to provide a general graphical depiction of built and natural environment conditions and may not be accurate to the parcel level.
3 What elements are included in Alternative 2 – MPD Proposal

As shown in Exhibit 2-2, Alternative 2 assumes development of the 371-acre Lawson Hills area as an MPD, and as such includes a mix of residential, retail/commercial, office, educational, recreational, and open space uses. It assumes development will occur following the policies set forth in the City’s MPD Ordinance, including setting aside a substantial amount of passive and active open space as well as a “fiscally balanced” mix of uses.

The Applicant’s Objectives for Alternative 2 are:

- Utilize the Master Planned Development (MPD) ordinance and code to design and plan a master planned community that fulfills the Public Benefit Objectives by: providing employment uses; improving the City’s long-term fiscal performance; preserving special characteristics of the site within future site planning; protecting surface and groundwater quality; conserving water and other resources; providing a variety of housing options; preserving and enhancing open spaces and views of Mt. Rainier; and providing a coordinated system of pedestrian and bike facilities.

- Provide an appropriate ratio of commercial, retail, and office opportunities that are well integrated into the MPD to satisfy the demand for jobs and commerce created by the new households and the surrounding community.

- Propose a mix of uses that complements the range of existing and planned uses within the City of Black Diamond and the surrounding rural area; respects the character of adjacent neighborhoods and rural unincorporated areas; and utilizes existing availability and planned capacity of urban services, access opportunities, and infrastructure systems located in proximity to the site.

What is the Planning Horizon for Alternative 2?
Alternative 2 anticipates full development of the Lawson Hills area by 2025.
Exhibit 2-2
Alternative 2 - Proposed Master Planned Development

Exhibits in this EIS are intended to provide a general graphical depiction of built and natural environment conditions and may not be accurate to the parcel level.
• Implement the Black Diamond Urban Growth Area Agreement (BDUGAA) by preserving the City’s 50-acre In-City Forest land and annexing the 50-acre East Annexation Area, thus applying 100 Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) credits to the East Annexation Areas.

• Create a community that seeks to protect the naturally constrained areas of the site and surrounding area, including streams, wetlands, and surface and groundwater resources, through master planning concepts and, to the extent feasible, through low impact development technologies.

• Plan for and develop a proposal that is consistent with the applicable City policies, objectives codes, and ordinances.

• Create an economically-viable community that provides office, retail, other commercial uses, preserves open spaces, integrates open space corridors, recreational opportunities, essential public facilities, and a wide range of residential opportunities which are fiscally sound and able to aid in implementing necessary upfront infrastructure upgrades and generate an adequate financial return to justify the risk and cost of local and regional improvements to transportation, sewer, and stormwater facilities.

• Provide a range of residential and lifestyle opportunities at urban densities within the City’s Urban Growth Area (UGA) that adequately responds to dynamic market factors over time, is affordable to a range of income levels, and contributes to the City’s targets for accommodating growth under the Growth Management Act (GMA).
The land uses proposed in Alternative 2 are summarized in Exhibit 2-3 and are discussed in greater detail in the following pages.

### Exhibit 2-3

#### Alternative 2 – Proposed Land Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Estimated Acreage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Residential       | • 1,250 Dwelling Units (du):  
                    • 930 single-family  
                    • 320 multi-family  
                    • 7.58 dwelling units per acre  
                    • 3,103 residents | 165 acres |
| Commercial/Office | • 190,000 sf retail space  
                    • 200,000 sf office space | 35 acres |
| Open Space        | • Community parks, forested areas, and trails  
                    • Environmentally sensitive areas and buffers | 138 acres |
| School            | Elementary school site and play area | 10 acres |
| New Roads         | Internal road systems | 23 acres |
| **TOTAL**         | **371 acres** |
Alternative 3 anticipates full development of the Lawson Hills area by 2025.

Schools
Alternative 2 includes provision of a 10-acre elementary school site. Additional schools needed to support the population of this Alternative would be provided off-site (see Schools analysis in Chapter 3 for additional details).

Roadways
The road network assumed at build out of Alternative 2 is consistent with the City’s 2025 Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

4 What elements are included in Alternative 3 – Mitigated MPD?

Alternative 3 (Mitigated MPD Proposal) would also follow a master planned approach and would be subject to the MPD Ordinance requirements. As shown in Exhibit 2-4, Alternative 3 would include a greater amount of land set aside for open space, provide on-site school facilities, and have 25 percent fewer residential units than Alternative 2. Commensurate with a lowered residential population, commercial and retail square footages are also proportionately lower in Alternative 3.
Alternative 3 is considered the “mitigated” alternative because it takes into account the impacts generated by the Applicant’s proposal (as depicted in Alternative 2), and diminishes or reduces the impacts in a variety of areas. These include:

- **Land Use** – Cluster more intense development on less residential and commercial acreage, and locate that development farther from sensitive areas. Fewer units also mean a lower population, which results in less demand on the transportation, water, and wastewater infrastructure.

- **Transportation** – Reduced residential and commercial uses result in fewer trips on the local and regional transportation network, and fewer intersection improvements would likely be needed.

- **Open Space** – Provide more open space, particularly around sensitive areas, meeting the MPD Ordinance incentive to provide 50 percent of the total MPD area in preserved open space.
Exhibit 2-5
Alternative 3 - Mitigated MPD Proposal

Exhibits in this EIS are intended to provide a general graphical depiction of built and natural environment conditions and may not be accurate to the parcel level.
Alternatives

- **Public Services** – Assume the need for additional school sites are all provided for on the MPD site, and that individual school sites are at the maximum end of the range required by the Enumclaw School District.

- **Water Resources** (surface water, stormwater, groundwater) – Employ low impact development techniques to reduce impacts on surface waters and to treat and store stormwater.

**Residential**
Alternative 3 assumes 25 percent fewer residential units as Alternative 2, while maintaining the same single-family/multi-family split (75 percent single and 25 percent multi). The resulting residential population of this alternative is 2,328.

**Commercial/Office**
The commercial and office uses are proposed to occur primarily on the North Triangle parcel, and would also include mixed-use development. The office and retail uses are lower in this alternative, reflecting less demand due to a lower potential residential population.

**Open Space**
Alternative 3 assumes that, regardless of prior agreements, a total of 50 percent open space is preserved, to protect sensitive areas and their buffers, and to provide additional open space for passive and recreational uses.

**Schools**
Alternative 3 includes a 15-acre elementary school site.
5 What elements are included in Alternative 4 – Fiscally Balanced MPD?

Alternative 4 was developed as a case study to achieve the “fiscally balanced” status as required by the City’s MPD Ordinance, specifically that:

*The proposed project will have no adverse financial impact upon the city at each phase of development, as well as at full build-out. The fiscal analysis shall also include the operation and maintenance costs to the city for operating, maintaining and replacing public facilities required to be constructed as a condition of MPD approval or any implementing approvals related thereto.*

As such, this Alternative includes the same land acreages as Alternative 2, but with a fewer number of residential units. The number of units has been decreased so that in each operational year, the City’s budget is balanced between revenues and expenditures.

The land uses and estimated acreage for each are summarized in Exhibit 2-6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Estimated Acreage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>1,075 du</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>806 single-family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>269 multi-family</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>5.43 du/ac</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,674 residents</td>
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<td>Commercial/Office</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>200,000 sf office</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Roads</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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<td><strong>371 acres</strong></td>
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