



DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE (DS) AND REQUEST FOR COMMENTS ON SCOPE OF NON- PROJECT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS)

Proposal Name: Net to Gross Acreage Density Calculation Policy
2021 Comprehensive Plan Amendment App. #940172

**Lead Agency/
Proponent:** Pierce County Planning and Public Works Department

Date of Issuance: December 29, 2020

Agency Contact: Erik Jaszewski, Associate Planner
(253) 798-3752 | erik.jaszewski@piercecountywa.gov

Application Number: 950347

Proposal Description: The proposal would change policies and regulations governing how Pierce County calculates the number of housing units allowed per acre in urban areas. The existing calculation is based on net developable acreage, which subtracts the acreage of roads and environmentally constrained lands from a site's total gross acreage. In contrast, the proposal would base the density calculation solely on a site's total gross acreage. The revised density calculation would be used in calculating regulated maximum residential density, base density, and minimum density. The proposal would include amendments to the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan (Goal LU-26 and Policy LU-26.1) and Pierce County Code (PCC 18A.15.020).

Proposal Objectives:

1. Increase housing production and housing affordability
2. Increase efficient use of land in Urban Growth Areas to reduce sprawl
3. More effectively achieve allowed maximum densities
3. Allow for more flexibility in neighborhood layout and design
4. Maximize use of existing utility infrastructure
5. Reduce lot development costs
6. Provide more regulatory predictability in development process
7. Simplify interpretation and application of regulations

Location: The proposed policies and regulations would apply within the Urban Growth Area in unincorporated Pierce County.

Determination:

The Pierce County Planning and Public Works Department has determined that this proposal is likely to have a significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental checklist submitted by the proponent is attached to this notice. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c) and will be prepared. The EIS will analyze impacts and alternatives broadly and at the level of detail appropriate for this nonproject proposal in accordance with WAC 197-11-442 and WAC 197-11-443.

Significant Impacts (preliminary):

- Transportation, Traffic, and Parking
- Fire Service
- Police Service
- Schools
- Parks and Recreation
- Water Supply and Utilities
- Air Quality
- Housing
- Climate
- Plans and Policies


Reasonable Alternatives (preliminary):

1. Net to Gross Acreage Density Calculation (proposal)
2. Net to Gross Acreage Density Calculation *in Centers & Corridors zones*
3. Net Acreage Density Calculation *subtracting environmentally constrained areas only*
4. Density Using Floor Area Ratio Method
5. No Action

Scoping: Agencies, tribes, and members of the public are invited to comment on the scope of the EIS including alternatives, probable significant adverse impacts, and mitigation measures. **Scoping comments are due no later than January 29, 2021** and may be submitted in writing via email to erik.jaszewski@piercecountywa.gov.

Responsible Official: Melanie D. Halsan – Planning and Public Works Assistant Director
2401 South 35th Street, Suite 2
Tacoma, WA 98409

Date: December 29, 2020

SEPA Responsible Official: 
(for) Melanie D. Halsan