



## **Memorandum**

**DATE:** March 19, 2009

**TO:** Shoreline Planning Commission

**FROM:** Joseph W. Tovar, FAICP, PDS Director  
Steven Cohn, Senior Planner

**RE:** Point Wells Subarea Plan CPA Study Session

---

---

As staff reviewed Shoreline's Comprehensive Plan, we determined that the vision for development of the Point Wells site was virtually non-existent. With upcoming discussions in Snohomish County about the Point Wells development, we concluded that it would be prudent for Shoreline's plan and policies to provide additional direction.

To provide more direction, we developed a draft Subarea Plan for Pt. Wells. It is specific enough to provide background to our thinking and general guidance for development of the area, but is not too specific because some things are still unknown.

We are attaching the proposed language of the Subarea Plan for your review. Staff will present more of our background thinking at your next meeting and respond to your questions about the draft document. A public hearing for the Subarea Plan is scheduled for April 16, 2009.

If you have questions or comments prior to the study session, please contact Steve Cohn at 206-801-2511 or [scohn@shorelinewa.gov](mailto:scohn@shorelinewa.gov).



## Point Wells Subarea Plan

Point Wells is an unincorporated island of approximately 100 acres in the southwesternmost corner of Snohomish County, bordered on the west by Puget Sound, on the east by the Town of Woodway (shown in yellow on Fig. 1), and on the south by the town of Woodway and the City of Shoreline (shown in blue on Fig. 1). The island is bisected roughly north-south by the Burlington Northern Railroad (B.N.R.R.) right-of-way.

The lowland portion of this island (shown in purple on Fig. 1) is approximately 61 acres in size. The only vehicular access to the lowland portion is to Richmond Beach Road and the regional road network via the City of Shoreline. There is a small segment of Richmond Beach Road within the corporate limits of the Town of Woodway, however, that segment does not connect to any other public road in Woodway.

The upland portion of the Point Wells Island (shown in white on Fig. 1) is approximately 40 acres in size. The upland does not have access to Richmond Beach Road due to very steep environmentally sensitive slopes that separate the upland portion from the lowland portion. However, the upland portion does have potential easterly access through the Town of Woodway via 238<sup>th</sup> St. SW.

All of the Point Wells Island was previously designated by the City of Shoreline as a "Potential Annexation Area" (PAA). The Town of Woodway, and Snohomish County, have previously identified all of the Point Wells unincorporated island as within the Woodway "Municipal Urban Growth Area" (MUGA). The Washington State Court of Appeals, in a 2004 decision, determined that the overlap of Shoreline's PAA and Woodway's MUGA does not violate the provisions of the Growth Management Act.

Upon a review of the topography and access options for Point Wells documented in the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement issued by Snohomish County in 2009, the City of Shoreline no longer wishes to include the upland portion of this unincorporated island within its designated urban growth area. Because of the upland portion's geographic proximity and potential for direct vehicular access to the Town of Woodway, the City of Shoreline concludes that the upland portion should be exclusively within the Town of Woodway's future urban growth area. Any people living in future developments in the upland portion of the Point Wells Island would feel a part of the Woodway community because they would share parks, schools, and other associations facilitated by a shared street grid.

Applying the same rationale to the lowland portion of the Point Wells Island, the City of Shoreline wishes to reiterate and clarify its policies. These lands all presently connect to the regional road network only via Richmond Beach Road in the City of Shoreline. Any enhanced governmental services to future redevelopment of this area could only be provided by the City of Shoreline and its public safety partners, the Shoreline Fire Department and Shoreline Police Department. Neither Snohomish County nor the Town of Woodway now provide vehicular access, police, fire, emergency medical services, parks, code compliance, or sewer service to the lowland areas, nor have they indicated their ability to provide such urban services or facilities in the future.

The City of Shoreline therefore opposes the designation by Snohomish County of Point Wells as an “Urban Center.” Consistent with this policy, the City will not issue street cut, right-of-way or any other permits to any general or special purpose local government to increase the capacity of sewer lines to unincorporated urban development north of the city limits. This fact, together with the statements by the Shoreline Police Department and Shoreline Fire Department that they will not provide urban governmental services to more intensive development outside the Shoreline city limits, constrains more intensive land use at Point Wells. Snohomish County has not identified other police, fire or emergency medical resources to meet the public safety demands of an “Urban Center.” Therefore, the designation of Point Wells as an Urban Center would not comply with Goal 1 of the Growth Management Act which states “Encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.”

The City no longer wishes to use the term “Potential Annexation Area” to describe its interests in lands north of the county line. Instead, the City now designates the Lowland Portion of the Point Wells Island shown on Figure 1 as the City of Shoreline’s proposed future service and annexation area. At such future time that the lowland portion of the Point Wells Island annexes to the City of Shoreline, the necessary public services and facilities would be provided, including police from the Shoreline police department and emergency medical services and fire protection from the Shoreline Fire Department. In addition, the City would be responsible for development permit processing, code enforcement, parks, recreation and cultural services, and public works roads maintenance. Future residents of the lowland portion of Point Wells would become a part of the Richmond Beach community by virtue of the shared parks, schools, libraries, shopping districts and road grid. As citizens of the City of Shoreline, they would be able to participate in the civic life of this “community of shared interests,” including the City’s Parks Board, Library Board, Planning Commission, or other advisory committees, and City Council.

The future geometry and operation of Richmond Beach Road to Point Wells is a major issue for the City. The City wishes to improve safety for local resident traffic as well as pedestrians and will identify appropriate measures to mitigate the traffic impacts of any future development at Point Wells, including but not limited to improvements to road segments and intersections. Any specific development projects will be subject to environmental review, a part of which will identify specific required developer-funded improvements to the City’s road network and other infrastructure.

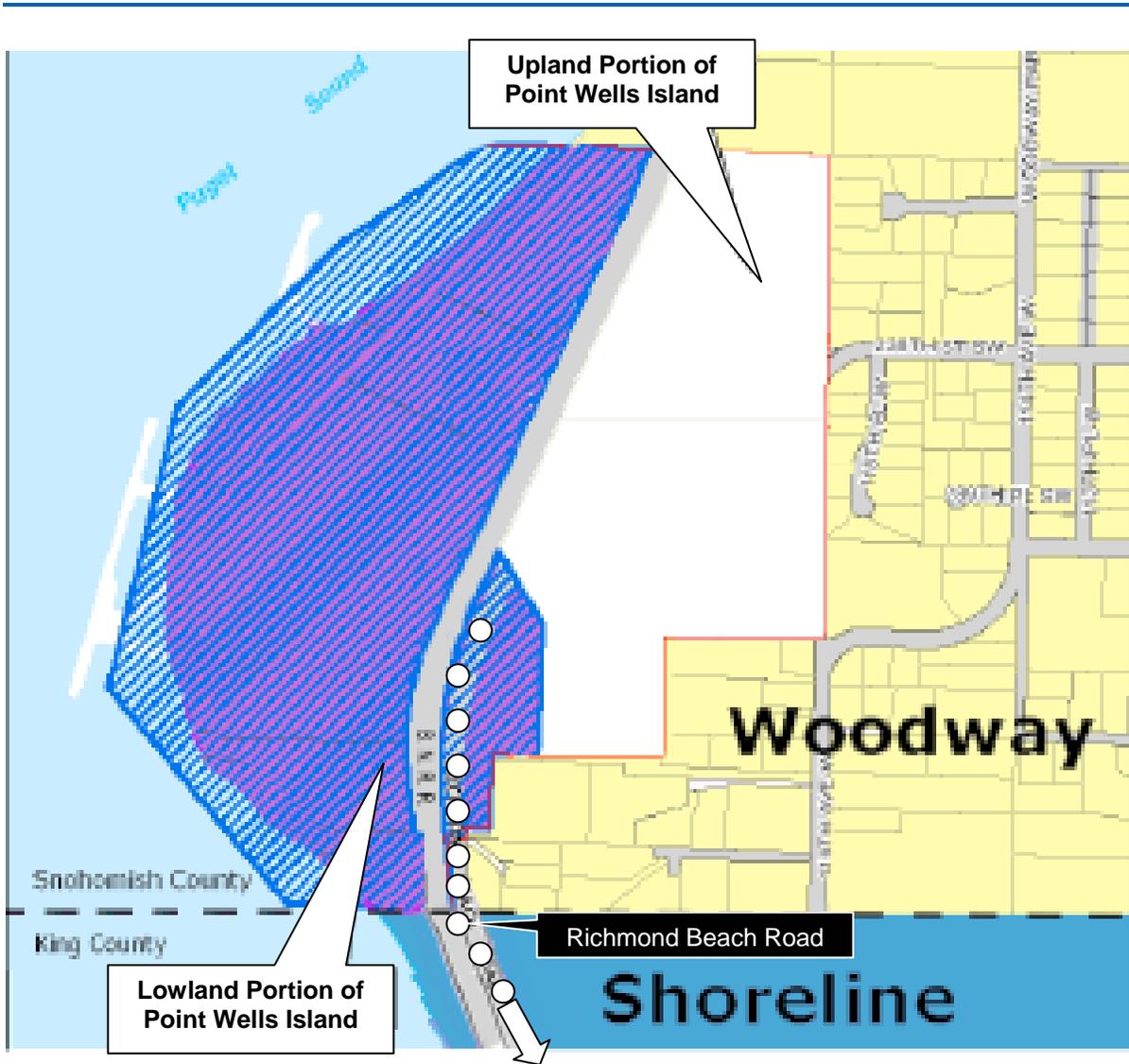
While an Urban Center of up to 3,500 dwelling units would be too large in magnitude for Point Wells, the City continues to support an urban designation with a broad mix of land uses. The maximum number of dwelling units, building heights, and allowable floor area should be determined by a pre-annexation zoning ordinance. As a matter of policy, the City supports residential, retail, restaurant, office, service and recreational uses.

The City strongly supports design review and design guidelines to promote sustainability, walkability, human scale, and a public realm along Puget Sound that takes advantage of the sweeping regional views. A public access trail should be provided and appropriate signage installed along the entire Puget Sound shoreline and secured with an appropriate public access easement document. Bicycle and pedestrian linkages should be made to both the Richmond Beach Neighborhood and the Town of Woodway.

The pre-annexation zoning ordinance for Point Wells should specify that building size, design, and placement will be evaluated and approved pursuant to an adopted Master Development Plan. The Shoreline Planning Commission should conduct public hearings on the proposed pre-annexation zoning document and provide a recommendation to the Shoreline City Council.

#### Interjurisdictional Coordination

The City should work with the Town of Woodway to identify ways in which potential future development in the lowland portion of Point Wells could be configured or mitigated to reduce potential impacts on Woodway. The Town should be invited to consult with the City on the preparation of the City's pre-annexation zoning document.



**Fig. 1 - Point Wells Unincorporated Island**