

Kimley-Horn produced the first draft of the Subarea Plan as part of the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. **The draft will go through several more rounds of revisions before anticipated adoption in June 2026.**

# Easton Sub-Area Plan

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Overview

The Easton Subarea Plan (Plan) serves as an actionable document that outlines steps Easton community can accomplish over the next 20-years to achieve community goals around housing, economic development, services, resiliency, and safety. The Plan is rooted in land use-based solutions that Kittitas County has jurisdiction over and coordination with other local, state, and federal agencies which will assist the Easton community in reaching its long-term goals.

The Plan is supplemental to the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan. The comprehensive plan provides a broad, long-term vision for growth, development, and conservation across the entire county. The Easton Subarea Plan is a more detailed plan for a specific geographic area within the county. It includes the Easton Limited Area of More Intensive Rural Development (LAMIRD) and surrounding areas as shown in Figure 1. It must be consistent with the overall goals and policies of the county comprehensive plan but allows for tailored strategies, unique land use strategies, and implementation measures that reflect the needs and character of that specific area.

#### Growth Management Act (GMA)

The Easton Subarea Plan must adhere to allowances and limitations provided under the Growth Management Act (GMA) which is located under the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) chapter [36.70A](#) and is referenced throughout this document.

Kittitas County is also subject to the requirements outlined under the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) Chapter [365-196](#) referenced throughout this document.

#### Limited Area of More Intense Rural Development (LAMIRD)

A LAMIRD is a designation within the Rural Element of a comprehensive plan as authorized by RCW 36.70A.070(5). LAMIRDS recognize existing areas of more intense rural development and minimize and contain these areas to prevent low density sprawl. The Easton area is concentrated around Limited Areas of More Intense Rural Development (LAMIRD) which are designated pockets within the rural areas where some higher-intensity development is

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allowed with limitations. LAMIRDs enable rural counties to contain, manage, and regulate growth in existing developed areas while preventing sprawl. LAMIRDs are subject to state law under the GMA and WAC.

The Easton Area has two types of LAMIRDs as recognized under the GMA and additional rural lands within the planning area boundary. The southern LAMIRD shown in Figure 1, is a Type 1 LAMIRD which are "Isolated areas of existing more intense development. Within these areas, rural development consists of infill, development, or redevelopment of existing areas. These areas may include a variety of uses including commercial, industrial, residential, or mixed-use areas. These may be also characterized as shoreline development, villages, hamlets, rural activity centers, or crossroads developments."

The northern portion of the Easton area identified in Figure 1. is a Type 3 LAMIRD which is defined as "small-scale businesses and cottage industries that are not principally designed to serve the existing and projected rural population and nonresidential uses, but do provide job opportunities for rural residents, through the intensification of development on existing lots or on undeveloped sites."

## 1.2 The Planning Area

The planning area has been identified as recreation, residential and commercial uses within the vicinity of Easton Lake and Easton School along Railroad St. The planning area spans approximately 4 by 3 miles and is approximately 5,021 acres.

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**Figure 1. The Planning Area**

The boundary identified in dark blue on the map is the official boundary (planning area) and the dark blue polygons in the center of the map are the parcels that are designated LAMIRDs under the County's Comprehensive Plan and follow the applicable conditions in State law. LAMIRDs must follow allowances and limitations under the Growth Management Act but have greater allowances for development or redevelopment than rural areas in the County.

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The Easton subarea is in western Kittitas County, Washington, along the Yakima River and adjacent to Interstate 90, which serves as a key east-west transportation corridor. The land pattern is defined by a flat, low-lying valley floor that follows the Yakima River and its floodplain, surrounded by forested hills and steep slopes to the south and west as the terrain rises into the Cascade foothills. Vegetation in the area includes riparian plants near the river, mixed conifer forests on the surrounding slopes, and patches of open meadow and disturbed land near developed areas. Elevation ranges from approximately 2,000 to 4,100 feet, with the valley floor sitting around 2,400 feet.

### 1.3 Community History

From Trading Routes to Today's Freeway, Easton has always been the central location where native trade routes, trains, wagons and automobiles have traveled through the Cascade Mountains over Snoqualmie Pass. Prior to 1854 Native American from the Yakama, Klickitat, Snoqualmie and later Muckleshoot nations established trails over Snoqualmie Pass to hunt, fish and trade and gather in the lakes and forests surrounding Easton.

#### Railroad Construction Gang 1887 [insert photo]

In 1854, the Government began scouting for routes over the Cascade Mountains, which resulted in a crude road being built in 1865 on the west side of Snoqualmie Pass. The east side of Snoqualmie Pass remained a trail until 1867 when the Snoqualmie Pass Wagon Road was completed, connecting Easton and North Bend and allowing the first wagons to cross Snoqualmie Pass. This played a pivotal role in the early settlement of Easton.

#### Northern Pacific on Stampede Pass 1888 [insert photo]

Railroad Routes placed Easton on the map when land was granted to the Northern Pacific Railroad to establish a route over Snoqualmie Pass. In 1886, the Northern Pacific Railway established Easton as a railroad station near the east end of the Stampede-Cascade tunnel. The town served as a junction point for both the Northern Pacific (now the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad) and the former Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific railroads. As rail service expanded, with the Milwaukee Railroad establishing their route in 1909 over the Cascade Mountains through Snoqualmie Pass, both railroads' companies increased their workforce to maintain rail lines and operate out of their respective depots.

The expansion of railroads resulted in a growing community of workers and families living and working in Easton. Maintenance of rail and train engines, which ran on wood and coal, required a significant number of workers. Additional helper engines were needed to navigate the grade of Stampede Pass, and these engines required a turntable to enable them to return over the pass.

Rail and engine maintenance stayed important, even after diesel engines replaced wood and



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coal-powered ones. The change to diesel engines reduced Easton's workforce and population because they required less maintenance.

#### **Northern Pacific Railroad Depot – Easton [insert photo]**

#### **Johnson's Brothers local mercantile and postal mail for Easton [insert photos]**

Permanent Settlers and Fires created growth and eventually decline in businesses. The first post office opened on June 23, 1890, and in 1902, the Johnson Brothers platted the town. By 1904, about 150 people lived in Easton. On Thanksgiving Day, 1906, a fire destroyed part of south Easton, including 11 saloons which were quickly rebuilt. Another fire hit south Easton in 1913, destroying the rebuilt saloons. The third major fire occurred in the business district in 1934. In 1941, the Easton Volunteer Fire Department was established and still provides valuable services to the community today.

Public education has been significant in the community since 1896 when one of the first public schools in Kittitas County was established. Due to increased enrollment, a second school was opened in 1907. The Easton School Board requested and was granted high school accreditation in 1928. Larger schools were constructed over the years, including a new facility in 1962, which was remodeled in 1990 to accommodate more students and expand academic offerings. Currently, Easton School District provides public education from PreK to 12th grade.

#### **Early School later became Easton Church [insert photo]**

#### **Early Wagon trail over Snoqualmie Pass [insert photo]**

Wagon and Automobile Transportation over Snoqualmie Pass brought significant growth beginning in 1905 with the improvement of roads. The first recorded automobile crossing of the pass occurred that year. This development facilitated increased migration to Kittitas County via wagon and automobiles from both the east and west. Highway improvements had a substantial impact on the community of Easton, particularly with the opening of the new two-lane road, named the Sunset Highway, in 1915. This road was further reconstructed in 1926 to enhance travel conditions over Snoqualmie Pass. In 1937, the road was designated as US10, and it was later renamed I-90 in 1957. Presently, over 30,000 vehicles per day, of those, 7800 are trucks that cross over Snoqualmie Pass daily on I-90.

#### **Road Planking 1900 [insert photo]**

#### **Easton 1G00's [insert photos]**

Easton's lakes became a priority as agricultural demands increased.

In the early 1900s, the Bureau of Reclamation built dams on Lake Kachees (1910-12), Lake Keechelus (1913-17), and Lake Easton (1925) to build a canal system in support of farming in the Kittitas and Yakima Valleys. Water first flowed through this system in 1930, reaching the

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lower Kittitas Valley. The Kittitas Irrigation project was completed in 1932 and has been updated several times to sustain irrigation for this growing industry.

#### **Keechelus Dam construction [insert photo]**

Construction of Power Lines by Bonneville Power in 1934 led to further changes in Easton, with major power lines extending over the Cascade Mountains and Snoqualmie Pass on both sides of the community. During the construction period, Easton saw an increase in population and employment.

Easton Airport was constructed in the 1930s by the Federal Government as an emergency field for DC-3 aircraft crossing the Cascades via Snoqualmie Pass. In 1958, the State of Washington acquired the airport, which has since been maintained with support from the Boeing Employees Flying Association. Easton Airport is frequently used by small plane aviators, campers, and hunters.

Recreation and outdoor activities have always been vital to Easton. In 1963, Lake Easton State Park's construction marked the first accessible community park. The Yakima River, beginning at Lake Easton Dam, is Washington State's only Blue Ribbon River and popular for fly fishing. Easton continues to attract outdoor enthusiasts year-round.

Economic changes have impacted Easton's business community. When construction, logging, and railroad services thrived, businesses flourished, including the Sportsman Diner, which started 24-7 service in 1950. However, the Milwaukee Railroad ceased operations in 1977, Burlington Northern in 1984, and logging halted in 1990 due to the Spotted Owl's endangered status. This led to a decline in population, business, and economic health. Despite Burlington Northern resuming operations in 1996, the economic downturn persists.

#### **Sportsman Diner – Easton [insert photo]**

Easton has its share of Notable individuals who have contributed both nationally and internationally.

Sherwood Egbert, born in 1920, and raised in Easton, he, became an engineer and a Major in the US Marine Corps. He later became the CEO of Studebaker and envisioned the production of a new European-style car, the Avanti. Due to production issues and his illness, the car did not achieve significant success.

Barry Prather, born in 1939, was a student at Easton, a mountain climber and later became a geologist and photographer for the National Geographic Society. He was the youngest member of the American Mount Everest Expedition, which was the first American team to summit Mount Everest in 1963.

Dick Scobee, born in 1939, in Cle Elum, lived his first year of life in Easton with his

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family. His success as a pilot, engineer and astronaut lead him to commanding the Space Shuttle Challenger, which suffered a catastrophic booster failure leading to the death of all on board.

Jim Richmond, born in 1953 in Alaska, was an innovative engineer, an Airframe and Power Plant mechanic. He grew up and attended school in Easton. His interest in flying led him to establish CubCrafters, a company that has become a global aircraft manufacturing business, producing new airplanes that are now used worldwide. He passed away in 2021, and his legacy will be acknowledged for many years to come.

Easton Today, 2025, is a growing residential community focused on uniting through a rural lifestyle, appreciating nature, and working to thrive economically. New cottage industries and home-based businesses are emerging. Easton offers year-round activities such as camping, fishing, skiing, snowmobiling, biking, hiking, horseback riding, and more. As popularity increases, business growth will continue.

## 1.4 Previous Planning Efforts

The Easton Community has embarked on several planning efforts going back to 1995. The Easton Sub-Area Plan drafted in 1995 was not officially adopted by the Board of County Commissioners but serves as a historical reference from which progress can be measured. The goals and policies envisioned in the draft covered land use, housing, capital facilities, utilities, urban growth areas, and economic development.

## 1.5 The Planning Process

As part of the Periodic Update for Kittitas County's Comprehensive Plan the County has dedicated time and resources and to an engagement campaign, mapping, and data analysis for the Easton to community to officially adopt a new subarea plan. In 2025 the Easton Community held multiple open houses and monthly or bi-monthly meetings to discuss the future of the community. The County attended the open houses, public meetings, the Memorial Day parade and after 6 months of engagement the County and Comprehensive Plan consultant prepared the first draft of the Subarea Plan between July and November 2025. The Easton Community collaborated with the County on revisions to the draft plan between November 2025 to June 2026 to ensure that the plan adequately captured the community's vision and outlined feasible next steps to move the Easton community toward a brighter future.

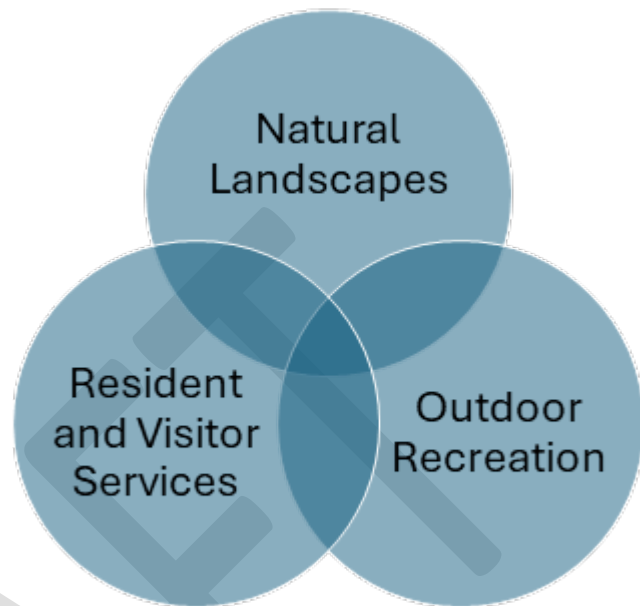
A full report of community events and community comments collected can be found in the appendix of this subarea plan and the appendix of the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan.

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## 1.6 Easton Vision

Expanding on the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan Vision, Easton envisions a future that honors its Indigenous and railroad heritage, preserves its natural landscapes, and supports a small-scale, close-knit community. Easton will seek to provide necessary services for residents and visitors, enhance year-round recreation, protect natural systems, and strengthen its identity as a small mountain community.

The Easton vision can be understood through three key themes: natural systems, outdoor recreation, and services for residents and visitors. The protection of natural systems reflects the community's commitment to safeguarding local ecosystems while also addressing hazard mitigation and long-term resilience. Outdoor recreation is recognized as both a defining characteristic of Easton's identity and a vital component of its economy and land use patterns. Together, these priorities support the need for essential services—such as public restrooms, gathering spaces, and small-scale retail—that enhance quality of life for residents and improve the experience for visitors.



## 2. Land Use

### 2.1 Overview

The Land Use section covers the underlying zoning regulations, and other land use related administration that may be needed to accommodate the growth in services and opportunities the Community would like to see.

### 2.2 Existing Conditions

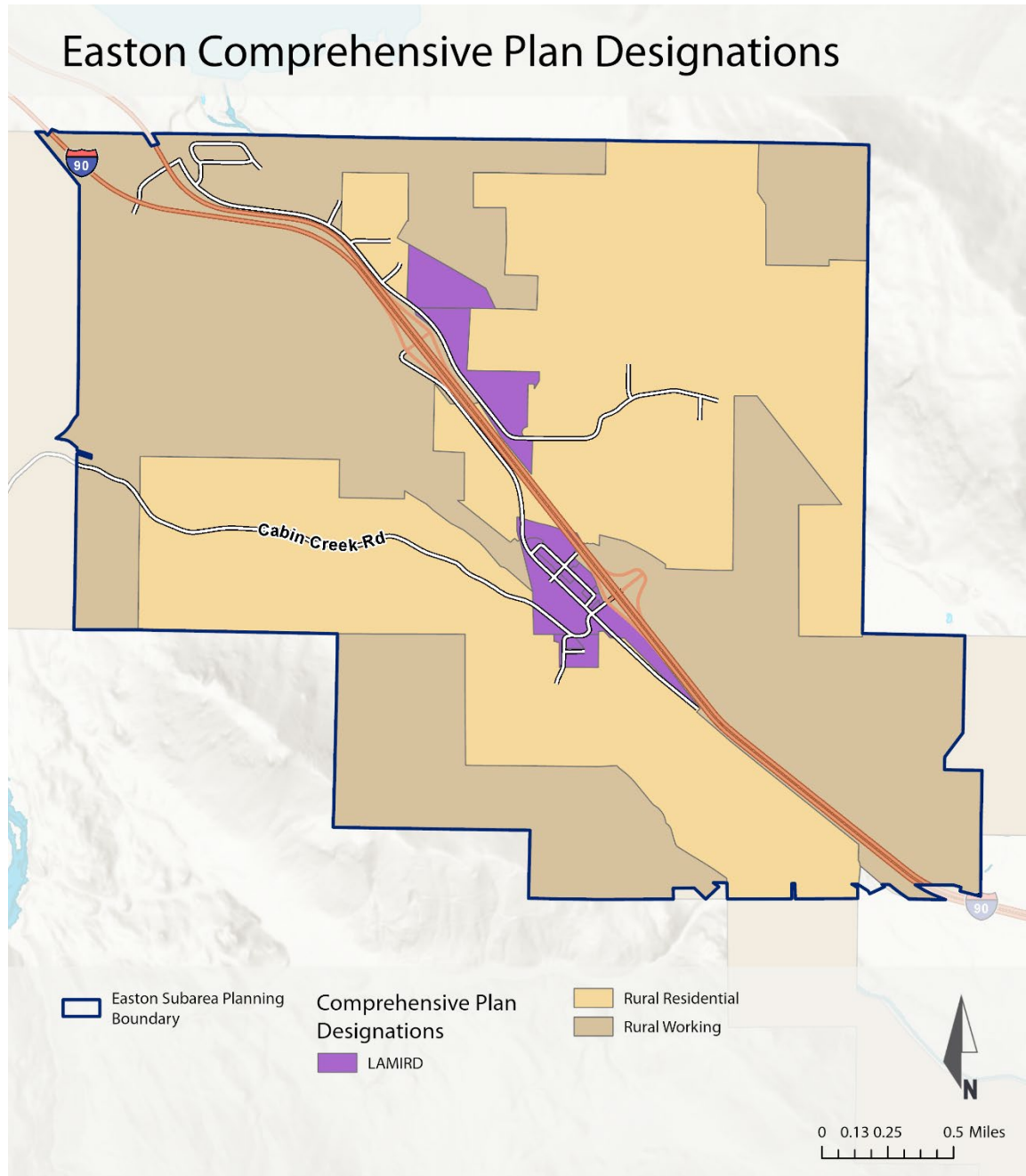
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## 2.2.1 Comprehensive Plan Designations

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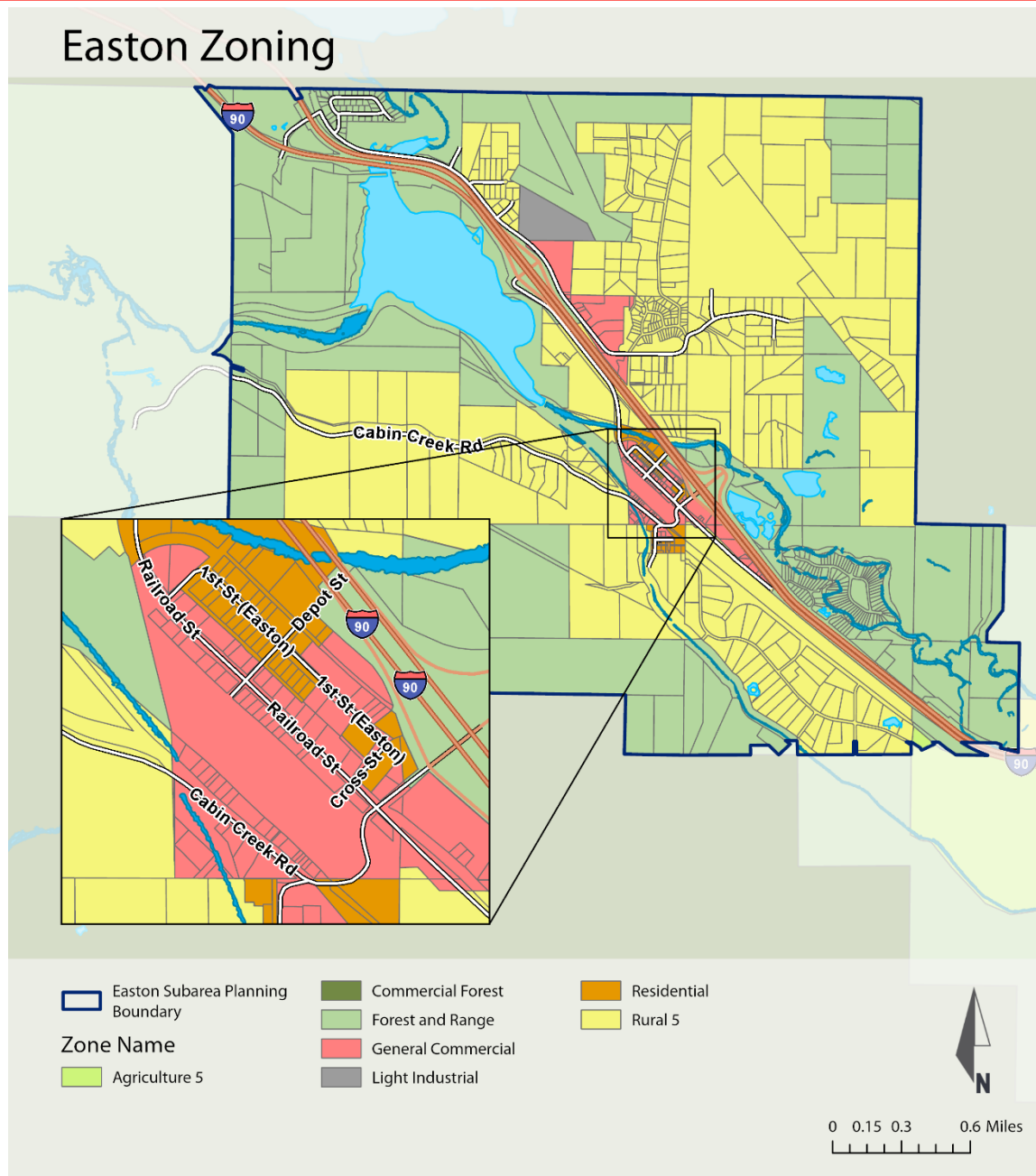
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## 2.2.2 Zoning

The Easton Limited Area of More Intense Rural Development (LAMIRD) zoning map outlines a mix of land use designations focused around Interstate 90 (I-90) and Cabin Creek Road. The area within the dark blue LAMIRD boundary is primarily designated as General Commercial (pink), supporting Easton's role as a rural service center. Light Industrial (gray) zoning is located in the northwest portion near I-90 and is outside of the LAMIRD boundary. Residential (orange) areas are concentrated toward the southern part of the LAMIRD. Surrounding the LAMIRD boundary are large areas of Forest and Range (light green) and Commercial Forest (dark green), with Rural 5 (light beige) designations in the Southern portion.

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County Code	Zones	Description	Allowed Uses (Summarized)
KCC 17.48	Light Industrial I-L	Large 20 acre lots for industrial and related uses that do not create serious problems of compatibility	Agricultural, forest processing, warehouse, mining

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		with other kinds of land uses.	
<b>KCC 17.40</b>	General Commercial	General commercial zone where a wide range of community retail shops and services are available.	Agricultural, retail, services, limited civic uses, forest processing, recreation, single-family, accessory dwelling unit
<b>KCC 17.16</b>	Residential R	Minimum of 7,200 square feet for a single-family home and intended for homesite development.	Very limited agriculture, civic uses allowed through conditional use permit, single-family and two-family dwellings, accessory dwelling units
<b>KCC 17.30A</b>	Rural 5 R-5 (not within LAMIRD)	Minimum 5 acre lots where residential development may occur on a low-density basis and adverse effects on natural resource lands are minimized.	Agricultural, limited civic uses, recreation, single-family, accessory dwelling unit, group homes, manufactured homes
<b>KCC 17.56</b>	Forest Range F-R	Large 20 acre lots where natural resource management is the highest priority.	Agricultural, civic uses, limited industrial and recreation, single-family and two-family dwellings, farm labor, manufactured homes, group homes,

Kittitas County Code, [Title 17 Zoning](#)

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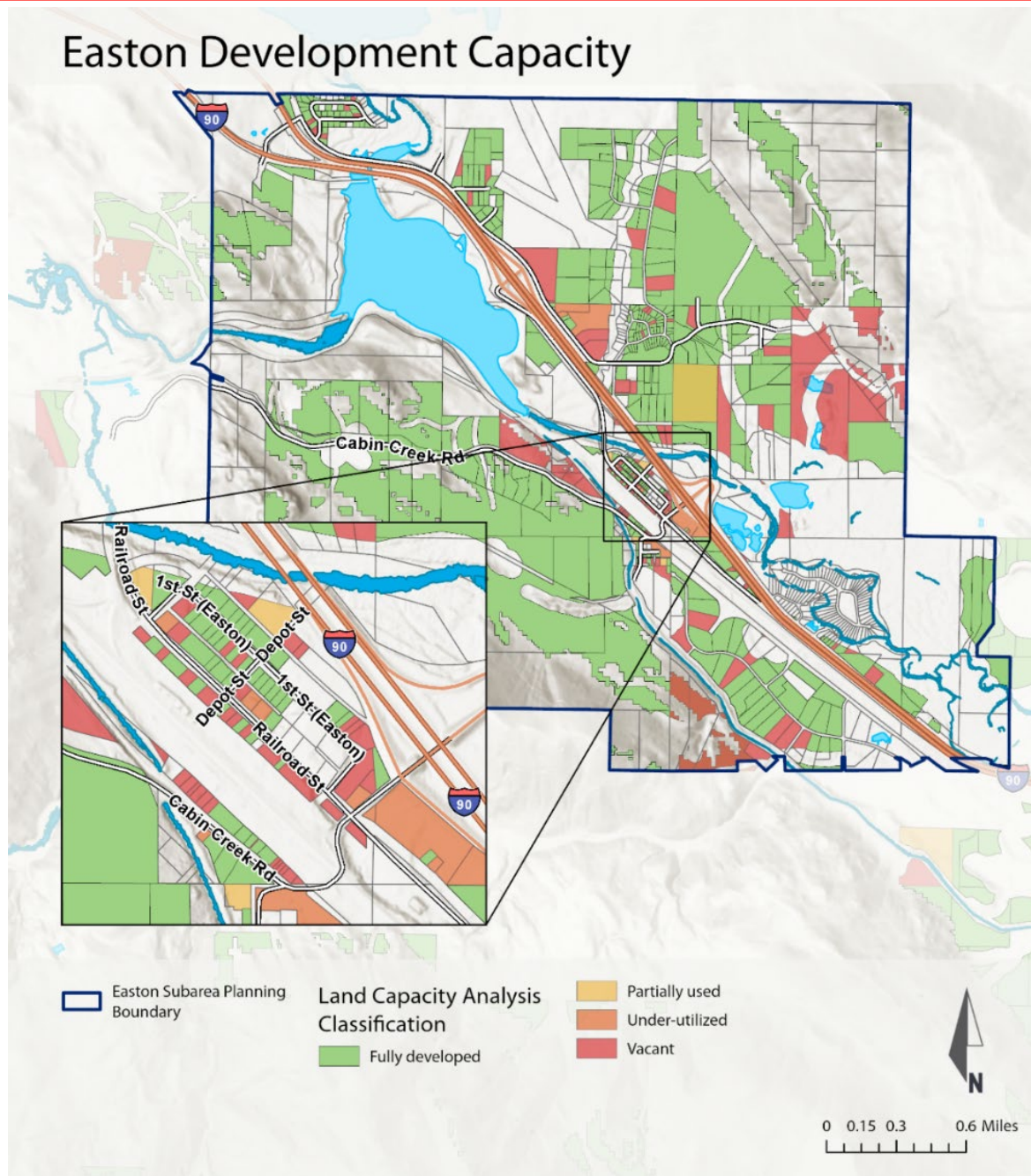
## 2.2.3 Development Capacity

As part of the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan periodic update the County performed a land capacity analysis to review the capacity for population, housing, and employment. [Table X](#). demonstrates the potential developable area and types of developable areas within the Easton planning boundary. The determination of fully developed, partially used, under-utilized, and vacant parcels is established in the Kittitas Countywide Planning Policies. Parcels that are deemed undevelopable due to critical areas or other constraints are not shown on the Easton Development Capacity [Exhibit X](#).

Land Capacity Analysis Category	Description	Acres
Fully-Developed	Parcels which are not Vacant, Partially used, Under-utilized, or Undevelopable categories. These parcels are deemed to have no capacity for additional development.	1572.67
Partially Used	Parcels occupied by an existing use but include enough land to be further subdivided for additional development without rezoning	32.89
Under-utilized	Parcels are likely to redevelop to a more intensive land use than that which currently occupies the property, either due to market forces or because applicable zoning allows a more intensive use than the current development.	23.62
Vacant	Parcels of land that contain no structures or have buildings with low assessed value	261.14
This calculations in this table subtract land occupied by critical areas defined in Kittitas County Code <a href="#">Title 17A</a>		



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## 2.2.4 Development Constraints

Land in the Easton Subarea Planning boundary that does not fall under the LAMIRD designation shown in the Comprehensive Plan Designation map, is limited by use, natural open space designation, and critical areas. These areas are likely to see low density rural development and uses consistent with rural character identified in the Kittitas County

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Comprehensive Plan.

Land that falls within the two LAMIRD designations, as shown in Figure 1, have the potential for development or redevelopment.

## 2.3 Summary of Community Input

Feedback from the Community<sup>1</sup>

Desire for managed growth that protects Easton's rural, quiet, and outdoor-oriented identity.

Broad support for maintaining R-5 zoning and opposition to large-scale development or denser zoning changes (e.g., R-3 or smaller).

Community landmarks like Easton State Park, Railroad Street, and Palouse to Cascades Trail are highly valued.

Desire for some services and commercial uses to reduce the need for travel outside of the Easton area.

## 2.4 Goals and Policies

**EG 1.0 Within areas designated as LAMIRDs, establish land use that supports the continued use or expansion of community services, public spaces, small-scale retail, and outdoor recreation.**

EP 1.1 Within the LAMIRDs, revise allowed uses to promote the Easton vision, particularly civic, cultural uses, and commercial uses and reduce barriers to permitting, such as requiring conditional use permits.

EP 1.2 Adopt sign standards along Railroad Street to preserve existing scale and character.

EP 1.3 Designate and protect key community landmarks through development regulations.

EP 1.4 Allow mixed use, at appropriate scales, in the Type 1 LAMIRD to promote economic development and affordable housing.

EG stands for Easton Goal

EP stands for Easton Policy

This helps differentiate from the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Engagement was collected between March 2025 to June 2026. See the Engagement Report in the Easton Subarea Plan Appendix.

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EP 1.5 Adopt additional development regulations standards, as needed, to maintain existing size, scale, and intensity of land use, consistent with the Growth Management Act.

### 2.4.1 Uses

[section in progress]

### 2.4.2 Community Design and Aesthetics

[section in progress]

### Recommended Actions

[Section in progress]

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### 3. Housing

#### 3.1 Overview

[section in progress]

#### 3.2 Existing Conditions

##### Demographics & Housing

Between 2010 and 2024, Easton experienced a decline in population, households, and families, in contrast to steady growth across Kittitas County. Easton’s population decreased by 15%, while the counties grew by 18%. Similarly, households and families in Easton declined by 8% and 6%, respectively, compared to 20% growth in the county. Average household size in Easton dropped from 2.34 to 2.17, and the median age increased from 47.1 to 51.2, suggesting an aging population. Despite overall population decline, owner-occupied housing units in Easton increased by 7%, while renter-occupied units fell sharply by 55%, indicating a shift toward more permanent residency. The current housing stock consists primarily of single-family homes, with a small number of manufactured homes and multi-unit dwellings. This demographic and housing profile highlights Easton's aging, more stable population and the need to plan for appropriate housing types and community services.

Category	Easton 2010	Kittitas County 2010	Easton 2024	Kittitas County 2024	Percent Change Easton	Percent Change Kittitas County
Population	478	40,915	408	48,264	-15%	18%
Households	204	16,595	188	19,973	-8%	20%
Families	129	9,225	121	11,077	-6%	20%
Average Household Size	2.34	2.32	2.17	2.30	-7%	-1%
Owner Occupied Housing Units	155	9,637	166	12,612	7%	31%
Renter Occupied Housing Units	49	6,958	22	7,361	-55%	6%
Median Age	47.1	31.9	51.2	36.3	9%	14%
<i>Esri, Business Analyst, Easton Census Designated Place, 2025</i>						

Category	Properties
Housing Units	
<i>Single-Family</i>	54
<i>2-4 Units</i>	1

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<i>Manufactured Housing</i>	3
Source: Kimley-Horn GIS Data Analysis for Land Capacity Analysis for Kittitas County, 2025.	

### 3.3 Summary of Community Input

Feedback from the Community<sup>2</sup>

- Strong interest in starter homes for young families.
- Community favors affordable single-family homes and supports ADUs on large lots.
- Concern for outside investment driving up housing prices or short-term rentals overtaking community housing.

### 3.4 Goals and Policies

**EG 2.0 Within areas designated as LAMIRDs, expand opportunities for property improvements, and affordable housing options.**

- EP 2.1 Reduce barriers for accessory dwelling units and other two-unit options in the Type 1 Easton LAMIRD.
- EP 2.2 Support community efforts for property improvement grants. These may support efforts to promote affordable housing or community resilience.
- EP 2.3 Identify areas suitable for affordable housing based on septic and infrastructure constraints.

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This helps differentiate from the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan.

### Recommended Actions

[section in progress]

<sup>2</sup> Engagement was collected between March 2025 to June 2026. See the Engagement Report in the Easton Subarea Plan Appendix.



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## 4. Economic Development

### 4.1 Overview

[section in progress]

### 4.2 Existing Conditions

This land capacity map of the Easton LAMIRD shows clusters of vacant parcels (red), both north and south of the highway within the LAMIRD boundary. Under-utilized parcels (orange) are also clustered in this area. These areas represent key opportunities for infill or redevelopment, while the remaining land within the LAMIRD is classified as fully developed (green), partially used (yellow), or is a public use property like the school, fire station and railroad properties.

Category	Properties
Total Businesses	
<i>Transportation Services</i>	2
<i>Lodging</i>	1
<i>Storage / Industrial</i>	1
<i>Retail &amp; Restaurant</i>	3
Public Properties / Services	
<i>Fire Station</i>	1
<i>Post Office</i>	1
<i>School</i>	1
<i>Airport</i>	1
Vacant / Undeveloped	45

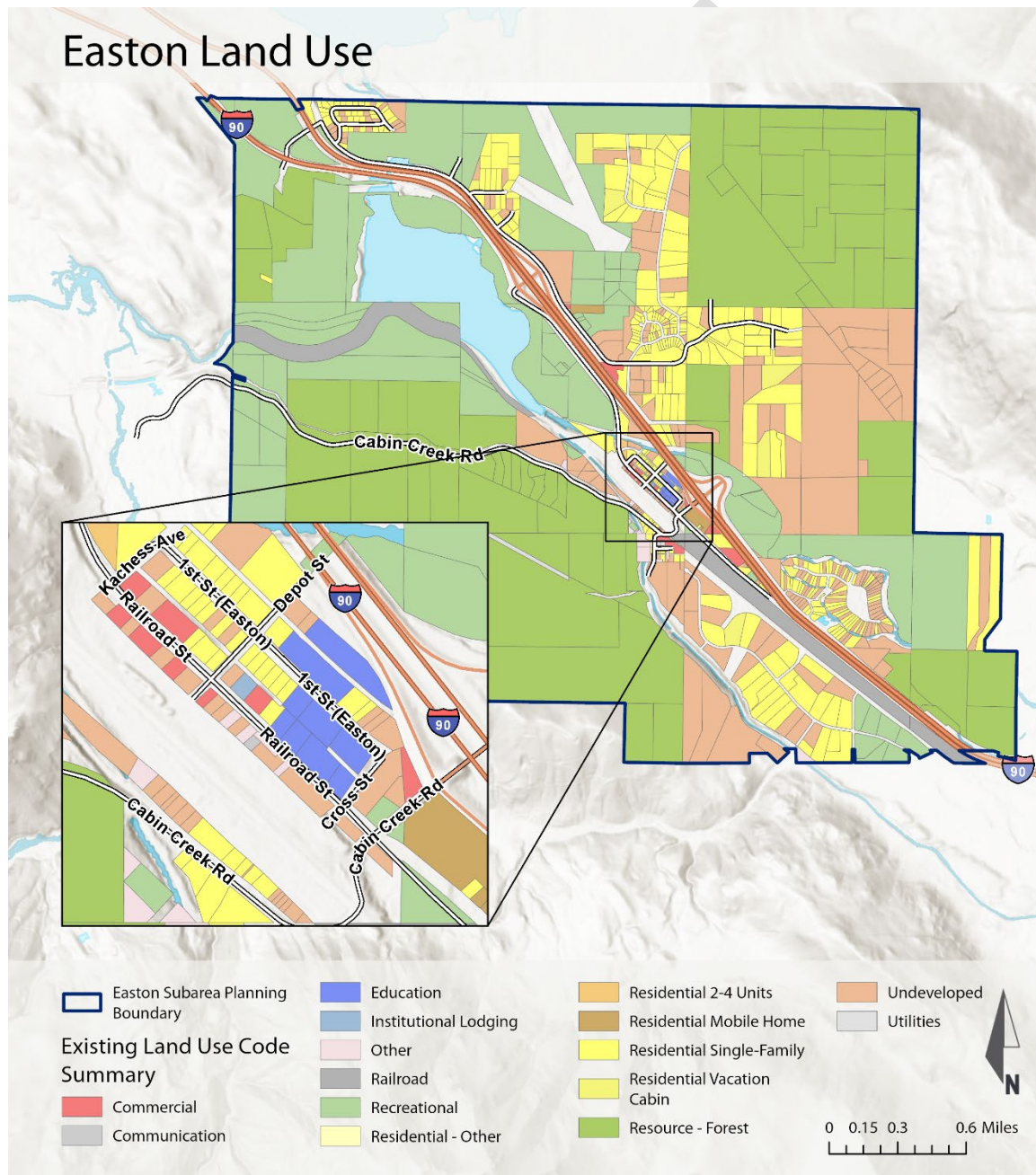
*Table 1 Source: Information from Tax Parcel layer.*

This existing land use of the Easton Limited Area of More Intense Rural Development (LAMIRD) is a mix of commercial and residential. The core of the LAMIRD, located along the I-90 corridor, is dominated by commercial and service uses, including general trade (pink), eating and drinking establishments (red-orange), and miscellaneous services (purple). Surrounding this commercial core are various residential uses, primarily single-family (light yellow-green), vacation and seasonal homes (orange), and some mobile home parks (light pink). The northern and southern edges of the LAMIRD also contains undeveloped land (gray) and designated resource lands (teal). This mix of land uses reflects Easton's role as a rural service hub, with commercial, residential, and service uses clustered near key transportation routes.

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### 4.3 Existing Land Use as Taxed

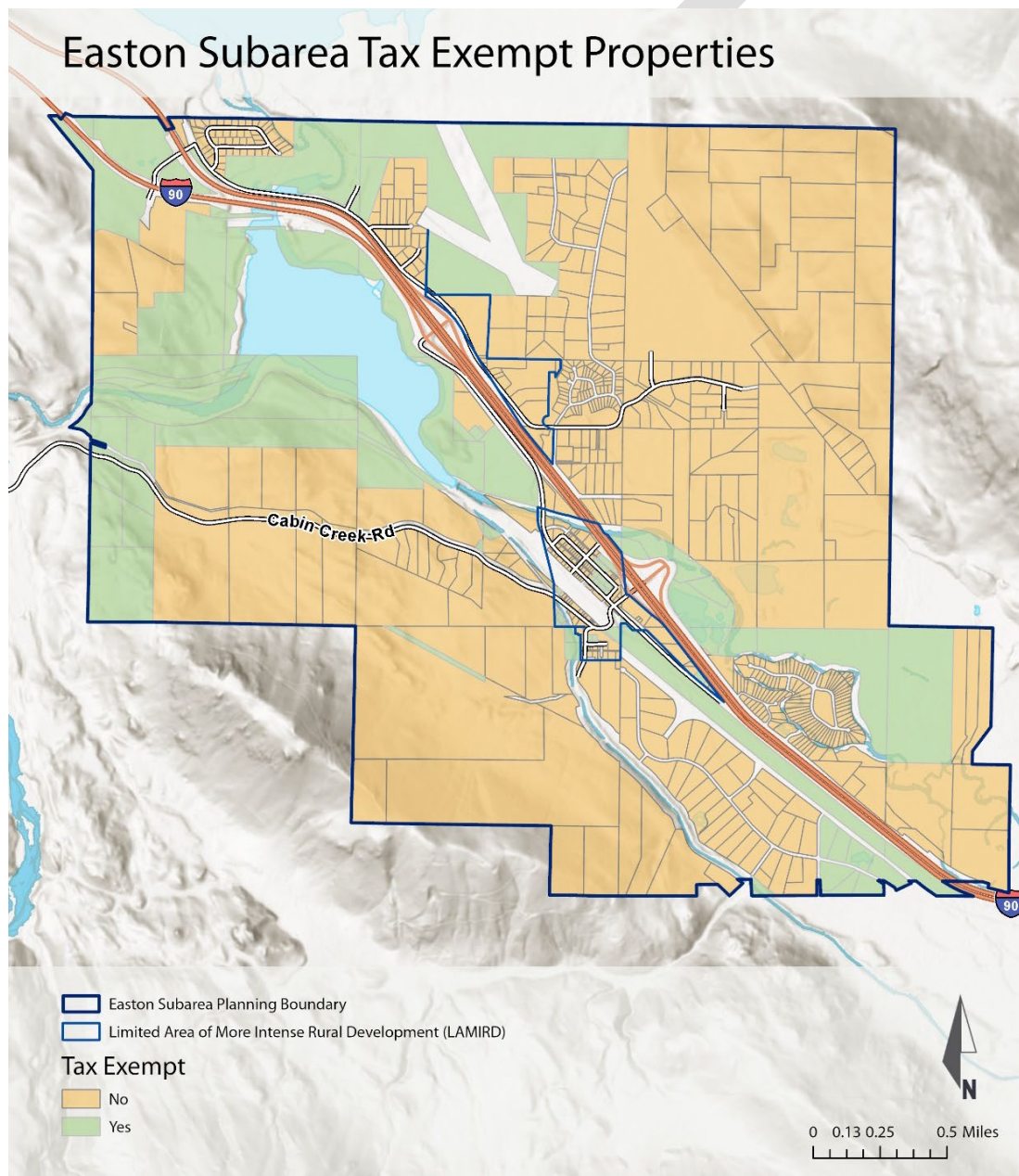
The existing land use is collected from the County's tax assessor data in the County's GIS parcel layer. The largest land use in the area is recreational and resource forest covering approximately 2989.74 acres. The second highest land use is residential single-family which accounts for 700 acres of land followed by undeveloped properties which account for 685 acres of land.



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#### 4.4 Tax Exempt Properties

673 parcels within the planning area are not tax exempt and held in private ownership totaling approximately 3,444.81 acres. 78 parcels within the planning area are tax exempt and held under several public entities like the Washington Department of Natural Resources, Bureau of Reclamation, Washington Department of Transportation, Easton School District or entities for other utility or transportation purposes, like telecommunications and rail. Tax exempt parcels cover approximately 1,165 acres within the Planning Area.





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## 4.5 Summary of Community Input

### Feedback from the Community<sup>3</sup>

Support for small, local-serving businesses, especially those linked to recreation and tourism.

Residents want revitalization of Railroad Street and protection from unsuitable or short-lived businesses.

Outdoor access, trails, forested areas, and recreation are core to Easton's identity.

Residents support enhanced trail access, a recreational hub, and restroom infrastructure for visitors.

## 4.6 Goals and Policies

### EG 3.0 Designate Railroad Street for economic revitalization with infrastructure and streetscape improvements.

EP 3.1 Convene a group of property owners along Railroad St to explore new and best uses for under-utilized or vacant properties.

EP 3.2 Explore tax incentives or grants for small/local business development.

EP 3.3 Include zoning for cottage industries and recreation-related services (e.g., gear rentals, cafés).

EP 3.4 Coordinate with state/federal agencies on recreation management (e.g., Lake Kachess, State Park).

EP 3.5 Explore opportunities for a day-use park or recreation hub with public facilities.

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## Recommendation Actions

[section in progress]

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<sup>3</sup> Engagement was collected between March 2025 to June 2026. See the Engagement Report in the Easton Subarea Plan Appendix.

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## 5. Transportation, Utilities, Capital Facilities

### 5.1 Overview

[section in progress]

### 5.2 Existing Conditions

The Easton Subarea is served by exits 70 and 71 off Interstate 90 from the East and West. The highway connects the North and South LAMIRDs with an alternate connection via Sparks Rd. The functional classification as defined by WSDOT for roads in Easton are:

- I-90: Rural Interstate
- Cabin Creek Road: Rural Collector
- All other paved roads: Rural Local Access

There are no developed sewer or water systems in Easton. Private wells and septic tanks are responsible for the area's water and wastewater. Electricity is provided through the Kittitas PUD.

Easton is served by Fire District 3. Water is controlled by the Kittitas Reclamation District. The Subarea is located in the Easton School District and is home to the Easton K-12 School. Per the FCC's broadband map, Easton has coverage through the southern portion of the Subarea with gaps in the North Area. There are currently no public restrooms or public spaces in the LAMIRDs, and the nearby Lake Easton State Park provides the nearest public restroom and public outdoor spaces.

### 5.3 Summary of Community Input

#### Feedback from the Community

The lack of a septic/sewer system is the primary barrier to development and school expansion.

I-90 divides the area—there are safety concerns, emergency access issues, and traffic pressures.

Road connectivity, post office capacity, and trash services are lacking.



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## 5.4 Goals and Policies

**EG 5.0 Improve and expand facilities, when feasible, to increase safety and community resilience.**

EP 5.2 Coordinate with WSDOT for connectivity improvements across I-90 and explore pedestrian options.

EP 5.3 Plan for road maintenance, snow removal, and clarify jurisdictional responsibilities.

EP 5.4 Seek funding for new public services: restrooms, post office location, community center.

EP 5.5 Expand trail network (motorized and non-motorized), including signage and maintenance plans.

EG stands for Easton Goal

EP stands for Easton Policy

This helps differentiate from the Kittitas County Comprehensive Plan.

## Recommended Actions

[section in progress]

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## 6. Community Resilience

### 6.1 Overview


Including a community resilience component is essential to ensuring the long-term safety and sustainability of our small rural community, which faces significant threats from both wildfire and flooding hazards. By focusing on resilience, the plan aims to equip our community with the knowledge, infrastructure, and resources needed to effectively prepare for, respond to, and recover from these natural disasters. Ultimately, the goal is to build a community that can withstand and bounce back from adverse events, thereby safeguarding the well-being of our residents and the vitality of our local economy.

### 6.2 Existing Conditions

The Easton area faces two primary natural hazards: flooding and wildfire. The flood hazard is most prominent along the Yakima River's Easton Reach, where a wide floodplain encompasses much of the valley floor. According to the Easton Flood Hazard Assessment, this area contains both well-defined flood boundaries and zones of undefined or unstable channels, increasing the risk of overbank flooding during high flow events. FEMA-designated 100-year flood zones are mapped across Easton, and county flood hazard mitigation maps also identify downstream risks associated with a potential failure of the Easton Diversion Dam.

Wildfire hazard is concentrated in the forested slopes surrounding Easton, particularly to the south and west, where mixed conifer forests cover steep terrain. The Washington State Department of Natural Resources classifies these areas as having moderate to high wildfire risk, particularly where forest density, slope, and historic fire activity align. This risk is amplified by the wildland-urban interface conditions found near residential development and recreation areas.

Together, these hazards—flooding along the Yakima River floodplain and wildfire risk in adjacent forested hillsides—represent the most significant threats to long-term safety, infrastructure, and land use planning in the Easton subarea.

To understand areas likely to contribute wildfire ignition or vulnerable to wildfire impacts experts identify boundaries known as the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) shown in  Exhibit X Easton Wildland Urban Interface. The **Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)** refers to geographic areas where human development—such as homes, infrastructure, and businesses—meets or intermingles with wildland vegetation and fuels. These areas are particularly vulnerable to wildfires due to the proximity of flammable natural landscapes to built environments. There are three categories of wildland urban interface. The WUI is broken up into the following

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categories:

Long-Term Non-Buildable: Areas permanently restricted from development due to environmental hazards or legal protections, such as wetlands or steep slopes.

WUI Interface: Densely populated zones directly adjacent to wildland vegetation, where homes and infrastructure border fire-prone areas.

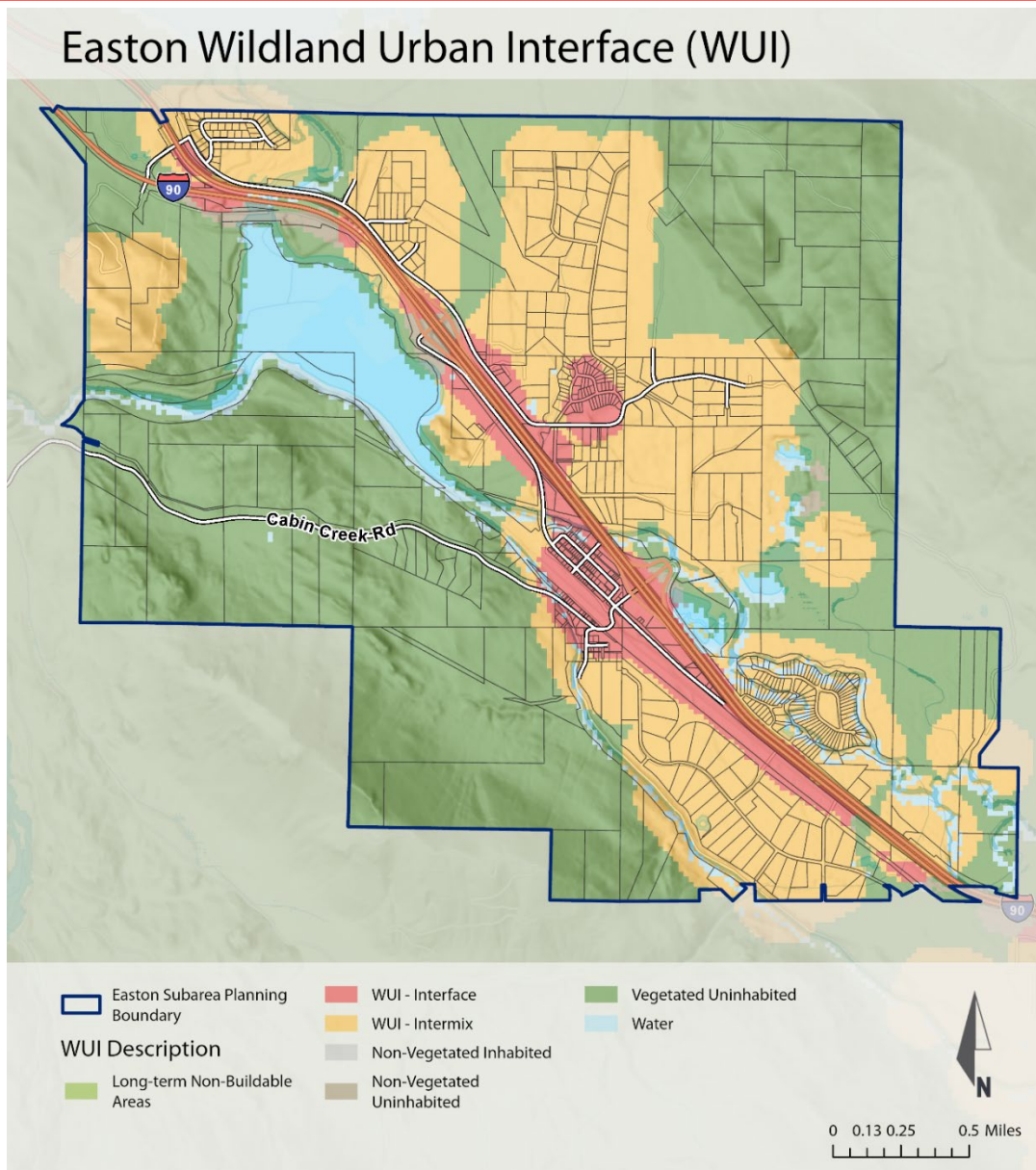
WUI Intermix: Sparsely populated regions where homes are scattered within wildland vegetation, creating complex fire management challenges.

Non-Vegetated Inhabited: Urban or industrial zones with little vegetation but permanent human presence, at risk from ember travel or smoke.

Non-Vegetated Uninhabited: Barren or undeveloped lands without vegetation or residents, typically low-risk but useful for fire response staging.

Vegetated Uninhabited: Wildland areas with dense vegetation and no permanent structures, often the origin points for wildfires.

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## 6.3 Summary of Community Input

### Feedback from the Community

Concerns about fire risk, hazardous materials, railroad and I-90 infrastructure, and emergency access gaps.

Easton is vulnerable during severe weather or traffic congestion due to limited access across I-90.

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## 6.4 Goals and Policies

**EG 4.0 Protect existing and future buildings and property from local hazards, environmental concerns, and roadway activities.**

EP 4.1 Create a Firewise Community Plan and explore expansion of fire/EMS services on both sides of I-90.

EP 4.2 Collaborate with WSDOT and railroad agencies to address hazardous materials and train idling issues.

EP 4.3 Seek funding to improve emergency evacuation planning and signage (e.g., powerline trail route).

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### Recommended Actions

[section in progress]



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## 7. Implementation

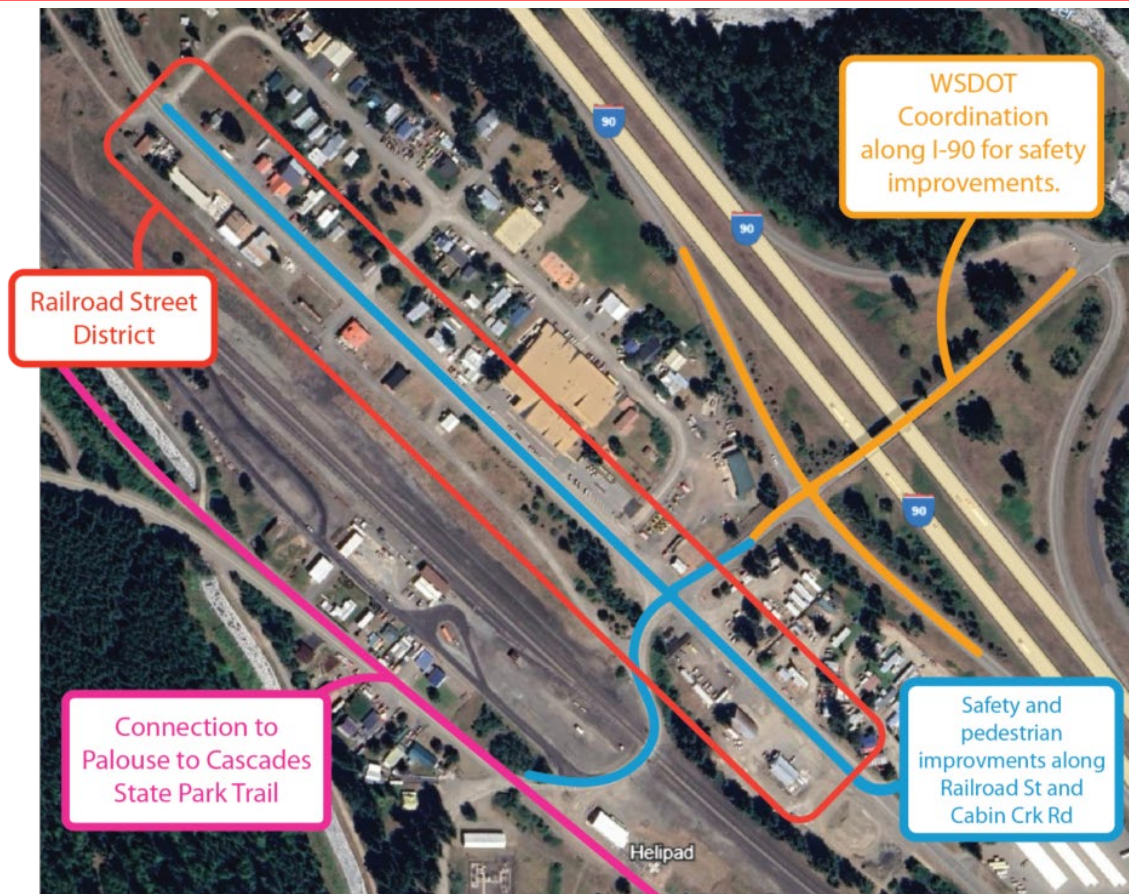
### 7.1 Overview

Completing the plan is the very first step in building the vision for the Easton community. Following the adoption of the subarea plan is the period of implementation where the community can take meaningful steps toward the shared vision documented. Too frequently are planning documents left on the shelf and never see any physical changes to help residents quality of life. This implementation chapter is meant to break down actions into steps, prioritize the most impactful, and properly plan for resources and funding. The implementation chapter will provide a better way of measuring success when the plan is updated.

### 7.2 Policy Vision

The wide range of topics discussed in this plan culminates into one cohesive vision for the community set in policies. Over the next 10 years, as policies are implemented, the core LAMIRD 1 area of Easton will see small improvements in road safety and pedestrian access, business expansion, expansion of services, and protection from future hazards and safety concerns. The map below demonstrates the on-the-ground impact of policies and where residents might see the most improvements.

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## 7.3 Key Milestones

[section in progress]

### *Potential Constraints and Barriers*

The community will need to consider the long time it may take to coordinate with the railroad and WSDOT. State and federal level stakeholders often require a lot of time and approval for joint projects. The railroad owns a lot of vacant or under-utilized parcels in the Railroad Street District that will need a lot of coordination.

Kittitas County has limited funding available for right-of-way improvements. The Community should prioritize external funding sources for small projects, like crosswalks.

## 7.4 Summary of Community Input

Feedback from the Community

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Desire for better coordination with Kittitas County, state and federal agencies, and a clear implementation plan.

Local meetings have created strong community ownership in the planning process.

## 7.5 Implementation Actions

Establish a clear implementation and accountability framework for the Subarea Plan.

Ensure consistent policy alignment with the County Comp Plan and the Snoqualmie Pass Subarea Plan.

Continue ongoing community engagement throughout plan adoption and updates, especially through community meetings.

## 7.6 Implementation Timeline

[section in progress]

## 7.7 Funding Opportunities

[section in progress]

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## 8. Appendix

### 8.1 Appendix A Engagement Results

Between 2025 and 2026 Kittitas County engaged Easton residents on several occasions to promote a community-based approach to subarea planning. The County held an early open house in Spring 2025 to collect high-level and aspirational changes residents would like to see in their community and the held an open house in Fall 2025 to collect feedback on the proposed draft and proposed policies of the subarea plan and possible methods for implementation.

#### 8.1.1 Easton Open House March 20, 2025

##### Open House Goals

- Educate on the process and purpose of a subarea plan
- Educate on the connection to comprehensive plan update and the Growth Management Act (GMA)
- Gather input to better understand the community desires and vision for growth

##### Summary of Event

Attendees: 15

Comments received: 40

##### Format

The open house for the Easton subarea plan was designed to both inform the community and gather input on future growth and development. Attendees learned about planning requirements under the Growth Management Act, shared their priorities for land use and community character, and contributed ideas for how Easton should evolve over time. The event helped shape a shared vision by combining technical planning information with local

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values and aspirations. No formal presentation was provided attendees had the opportunity to review information boards and ask questions to staff.

## Insights

[insert summary]

## Demographics

Attendees were residents of the Easton area. No formal demographic information was collected.

### *Open House Comments*

**Poster Prompt: What are opportunities for growth within Easton? Are there community resources or infrastructure that are lacking? What would you like to see in Easton in the next 20 years?**

The comments below have been copied as they appeared on sticky notes and posters.

Need a large scale septic system to move Easton forward

Need a sound buffer between I-90 and Easton

Need a public restroom in Easton Downtown Area

Need to re-do Rustic Villa Trailer Park for low income families

Non-connected roads on either side of freeway. Dangerous when freeway is jammed up. EMS cant get access

No boxes currently available at the Post Office. Need a new location

Need affordable single family homes in Easton to connect young, first time buyers to the school and community.

Develop a revitalization plan for Easton. What businesses will survive? How can we attract new business that meet our vision? Identify economic drivers, Build for recreational use-restrooms/ day park

I think this process of meetings are a real plus for Easton. Thank you

LAMIRD classification that supports the Easton vision of Rural/Recreation

A map with more detail



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Missing Services – Seage disposal, police/fire/emergency services, water sources

Bike lane on Main street through Easton

Are there tax credits we can offer to attract businesses to Easton

Downtown- cottage industries, mom and pop shops, coffee shops, hair salon

A hub for recreational purposes. The “town” able to support and thrive from such

Next 20 years: Locals and long term residents. Less trash (literally @ recreation and on highways). No explosive tourism or 2nd/3rd home residents who don’t love and care for the community.

How do we confirm housing stock and census data w/HAPT

Identify water needs

Identify where we can build affordable housing

Lets get Railroad St up and running...businesses, flowers, paint, etc. Railroad

St could use a public restroom

Fire Station and Heli pad in North Easton

How much land is there for bringing in a manufacturing company to our area?

Expand fire and emergency services on north side of I-90

We lack fire services. How can we add that to the plan?

Growth in recreational businesses

Policy and regulations that support the Snoqualmie Pass sub area plan –

Housing, lodging, services

Commercial land use policy that ensures the infrastructure is available. i.e. water and water rights

Designated walkable pedestrian trails

Hair salon, coffee shops, mom and pop shops, grocery store, restaurants

Pedestrian overpass from State Park to businesses on the north side of I-90.

Provide safe crossing and access

Next 20 years: A local road from Easton to Cle Elum to bypass summer traffic for basic needs access or clear traffic through Easton effectively

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**Poster Prompt: What do you think are the most important things to protect which make Easton a great place to live? How do you want your community to feel as growth occurs? What are important community landmarks or assets?**

Protect affordability, water supply, ATV/dirtbike accessibility

Protect in Easton; Forest, water, rural culture, back country access, State Park, Railroad St (historic)

Important Landmarks – Easton State Park, Palouse to Cascade St. Park Trail

Landmarks – Historic Downtown Easton, Palouse to Cascade Trail

Preserve rural character with low-density housing, parks, recreational sport areas

Important landmarks are mostly gone

A quiet, quaint, modest, local-focused Main street. The historical buildings should not be neglected. Maintain them safely or demo. Find a safer-prettier way to remember the legacy

Development focused on Easton's outdoor resources- not just for Easton but also for the surrounding areas

R-5 Zoning

#### **Other comments collected from sticky notes**

Need a large scale septic system to move Easton forward

Need a sound buffer between I-90 and Easton

Need a public restroom in Easton Downtown Area

Need to re-do Rustic Villa Trailer Park for low income families

Non-connected roads on either side of freeway. Dangerous when freeway is jammed up. EMS cant get access

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Policy and regulations that support the Snoqualmie Pass sub area plan –

Housing, lodging, services

Commercial land use policy that ensures the infrastructure is available. i.e.

water and water rights

Designated walkable pedestrian trails

## Easton Community Meeting Comments 2025

The Easton Community held monthly meetings throughout 2025 discussing the topics and potential goals of the subarea plan. Kittitas County attended meetings regularly, when available, and collected community feedback.

The following comments below are notes from the meeting and have been copied exactly as they were provided without changing or paraphrasing.

*Easton Community Meeting April 17 Comments*

### Economic Development Comments

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Determine what the community can sustain – what businesses are preferable  
(Comment was around not bringing in business that are going to go out of business because of the area)

Store - reopen the grocery store in Easton, along with a restaurant/bar where community can have a local place

Keep school strong – strong education programs, track programs to increase wages

Some retail, bar, restaurants, entertainment

Stores fronts to support recreation, camping, rental of equipment, etc.

Keep community values

Lease railroad property / right away to build septic system and provide both paid public parking and restrooms for visitors and events.

No BIG manufacturing, keep to cottage industry

Center around recreation

Boutique Hotel

Small businesses that provide services to residents, and visitors, especially those at campgrounds and those who are here for various recreational opportunities and events, like the 100 mile race.

### **Recreation Comments**

Facility for recreation – moving off the pass

Trails / trail access, motorized and nonmotorized vehicles

Bring in business around tourism / recreation.

Management of Lk Kachess bed

More events at sites to create volunteer help and knowledge about area.

Improve Lake Kachess cross country ski trails, clear downed trees and foliage, signs are still up, but trails are not useable. This would also allow for mountain biking.

Ask the State Park and the U.S. Forest Service to put in signs about trash dumping on the Lake Kachess Dam Rd.



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### Facilities Comments

Restrooms

Public Park

Community Center with Police Outpost

Public health facility 1 day a month or more.

Emergency facility on east side of Easton to handle community growth and access to I-90 as well as community emergencies.

### Housing Comments

Simple family, affordable housing for 1st time buyers

Continue R-5 in areas where it exists – no R-3 or smaller (Big conversation around the county changing the zoning from Rural 5 (acres) to Rural 3 (acres) or smaller. If the zoning stays R-5 it takes care of a lot of the worry around larger developments coming in. We can suggest this on the planning but who knows what happens at the county level.)

Land to donate to Habitat for Home ownership

No big housing developments

Allow ADU's on R5. (Clarification on this, has the county adopted a code allowing ADU's and if so, what are the parameters)

### Infrastructure Comments

Public trash collection for travelers and visitors

Sewer System for Easton Development

More road maintenance

Better communication on roads, who owns and contracts

Expand sewer for school expansion

Septic System in Easton to help bring businesses back and school

Broadband coverage

### Hazard Mitigation Comments

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Sanitation for wildland use (Lake Kachess and areas around where camping is occurring)

Restrooms to deal with biohazard waste from travelers and visitors

Fire wise plan to address potential fire hazards in forests and communities surrounding Easton

Identify and address hazardous materials the Railroad stores, chemicals, etc. Also, those being stored at WSDOT and I-90 construction.

Dam – Easton, update Kachees

Follow LAMIRD's for population and business development / growth.

Keep emergency access open

Camping issues – change use to allow for camping and monitor use. Make them consistent with County regulations, USFS, etc. regulations.

Train horn and idling of train engines that sit on the spur track sometimes for days.

Access to east side of I-90 during bad weather. If apparatus is unable to cross to east side, it leaves that community vulnerable in case of emergency.

Add a barrier along W Sparks Rd to keep cars from driving off the freeway onto Sparks Road through the shoulder area.

Limit truck parking on the ON and OFF ramps with overnight parking, this could help mitigate the garbage being dumped in these areas. (Need funding for the WSP and Sheriff to manage)

Need to enforce speed on East Sparks Road. The speed is posted at 35mph, however 4 x 4's are hitting 50 mph and above. Help is needed from Kittitas County to enforce the speed. The locals have put in speed signs, but they have little impact.

Review the powerline trail has signs about an evacuation route on them. Is this accurate?