DRAFT Memorandum

Land Capacity Analysis for Stevens County

Introduction

This memo summarizes the land capacity analysis prepared for Stevens County's 2027 Comprehensive Plan periodic update. The analysis evaluates whether the County can accommodate projected countywide housing needs at all income levels, consistent with Growth Management Act (GMA) requirements as updated by HB 1220.

Background

Recent changes to the GMA require that local governments "plan for and accommodate housing affordable to all economic segments of the population of the state." It also updated the requirements for comprehensive plan housing elements in RCW 36.70A.070(2). State law now requires Washington State Department of Commerce (Commerce) to project future housing needs including "units for moderate, low, very low and extremely low-income households and emergency housing, emergency shelters and permanent supportive housing." Guidance published by Commerce[1] details how counties, working with their constituent municipalities, can quantify these projected countywide housing needs and then allocate them to local jurisdictions within the county. These housing allocations, in turn, must be documented in the housing element of each jurisdiction's comprehensive plan.

GMA also requires that jurisdictions produce a land capacity analysis that shows they can accommodate their allocation of countywide housing needs at each income level. This analysis must show that zoning allows for the types of housing that are most appropriate for each income level. For instance, subsidized affordable housing can be developed most cost effectively in multifamily apartment buildings, while new single-family housing is typically only affordable to households with incomes well above the area median income (AMI). The AMI for Stevens County is $88,400.

Key Takeaways:

1. Stevens County has enough overall residential land capacity, but affordable housing is constrained by zoning density, sewer availability, water capacity, and available services.
2. Only Addy, Clayton, Loon Lake, and Valley have sewer service, totaling about 70 net buildable residential acres.
3. Loon Lake can meet its 65-unit moderate-income housing allocation if targeted R-1 parcels are rezoned to R-2.
4. Clayton has enough zoned capacity for its 92-unit moderate-income housing allocation, but Stevens PUD would need to address water system capacity before new units can be served.
5. In the Chewelah, Colville, and Kettle Falls UGAs, the County will coordinate with the cities to designate selected parcels as Urban Reserve to support future annexation.

Land Capacity Analysis Methodology

The land capacity analysis included the following steps:

1. **Classify parcels by development status.**
2. **Subtract areas constrained by critical areas, public lands, and other unbuildable lands**

[1] Washington State Department of Commerce, 2023. *Establishing Housing Targets for your Community*. https://deptofcommerce.app.box.com/s/chqj8wk1esnnranyb3ewzgd4w0e5ve3a

3. **Apply market factor and infrastructure adjustments**
4. **Evaluate available infrastructure and services.**
5. **Summarize available land capacity and evaluate barriers.**

The following assumptions were applied in the analysis:

Market factor: A 25% market factor was applied to account for parcels unlikely to be available for development during the planning period, consistent with market factor ranges applied in other Eastern Washington jurisdictions ranging from 15 – 33%.[2]

Infrastructure deduction: A 15% deduction was applied to account for roads, utility rights-of-way, and other non-buildable areas such as driveways and parking.

Vacant parcels: parcels with no improvement value; Quality control review reclassified parcels functioning as developed uses (e.g., storage yards or paved lots).

Underutilized parcels: large parcels that could be subdivided or redeveloped, including parcels where building value is less than 50 percent of total assessed value or parcels capable of supporting 8 or more additional units with existing improvements valued under $100,000.

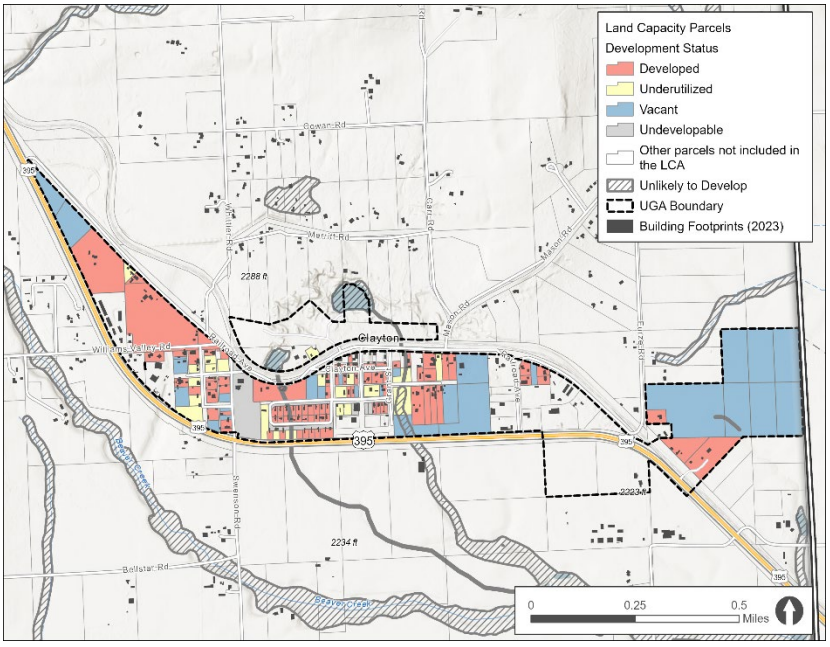
Developed parcels: Parcels that do not meet the criteria for vacant or underutilized land. Parking lots, storage yards, and other space associated with adjacent development were also included based on desktop review.

Undevelopable parcels: schools, parks, other publicly owned lands, churches, and other lands identified as not being available for development.

Non-buildable lands: easements, rights of way, slopes greater than 30 percent, wetlands, waterbodies, streams, and associated buffers consistent with local development regulations.

Utility service assumptions: Parcels within 100 feet of mapped sewer mains and 500 feet of water mains, or parcels with confirmed water and sewer availability according to local planning or public works staff. Water and sewer availability was reviewed and refined with County and Stevens Public Utility District (Stevens PUD).

Figure 1: Land Capacity Analysis Example, Clayton UGA



[2] 2025 Land Capacity Analysis for the City of Spokane (2025); Stevens County Comprehensive Plan Land Capacity Analysis Report (2021), Memorandum - City of Moses Lake Land Capacity Analysis – Methodology and Findings (2021).

Land Capacity Analysis Results

Parcels in residential zones for each jurisdiction were considered in the land capacity analysis. Table 1 summarizes overall vacant and underdeveloped acres, accounts for adjustments, and summarizes the net buildable acres for the County's unincorporated UGAs and LAMIRDs.

Table 1: Summary of Land Capacity in UGAs and LAMIRDs in Unincorporated Areas

Jurisdiction & Utility Status	Total Ac.	CA & Built Ac.	Buildable Acres	25% Market Factor Deduction	15% Infrastructure Deduction	Net Buildable Ac.
Addy UGA	**11**	**3**	**8**	**2**	**1**	**5**
Water & Sewer	11	3	8	2	1	5
Clayton UGA	**80**	**6**	**75**	**19**	**11**	**45**
Public Sewer	80	6	75	19	11	45
Lake Spokane UGA	**1,025**	**264**	**761**	**190**	**114**	**194**
Public Water	1,025	264	761	190	114	194
Valley UGA	**35**	**16**	**19**	**5**	**3**	**11**
No Public Utilities	7	6	2	0	0	1
Water & Sewer	27	10	17	4	3	10
Hunters UGA	**18**	**9**	**9**	**2**	**1**	**6**
No Public Utilities	18	9	9	2	1	6
Arden LAMIRD	**34**	**10**	**24**	**6**	**4**	**14**
No Public Utilities	31	8	22	6	3	13
Public Water	4	2	2	0	0	1
Loon Lake LAMIRD	**23**	**2**	**21**	**5**	**3**	**13**
Public Water	4	1	4	1	1	2
Water & Sewer	18	1	17	4	3	10
West Kettle Falls LAMIRD	**75**	**3**	**72**	**18**	**11**	**43**
No Public Utilities	17	1	16	4	2	10
Public Water	58	2	56	14	8	33

Notes:

1. The analysis only includes parcels in residential zones. Some areas within the UGAs are not currently zoned to support higher density development above 1 du. / acre.
2. Large extents of buildable acreage exist within the rural areas of the County, and most historic growth has occurred in these areas. However, these areas do not support the density or have the availability of services to provide housing that is affordable to income segments below 120% of Area Median Income.

Ability of UGAs and LAMIRDs to Support Affordable Housing

Only Addy UGA, Clayton UGA, Loon Lake LAMIRD, and Valley UGA have sanitary sewer service available, and residential densities above four dwelling units per acre generally require sewer service in Stevens County.[3] Together, the residentially zoned portions of these areas contain approximately 70 net buildable acres with sewer service. However, approximately 45 of those acres are in Clayton, where the public water system currently has no capacity for additional connections. Stevens PUD would need to upgrade the Clayton water system before additional housing units could be served in

[3] Stevens County Title 3: Unified Development Regulations,

that area. The net buildable acreage with access to sewer service in these areas is summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Housing Unit Capacity in Areas with Sewer Service

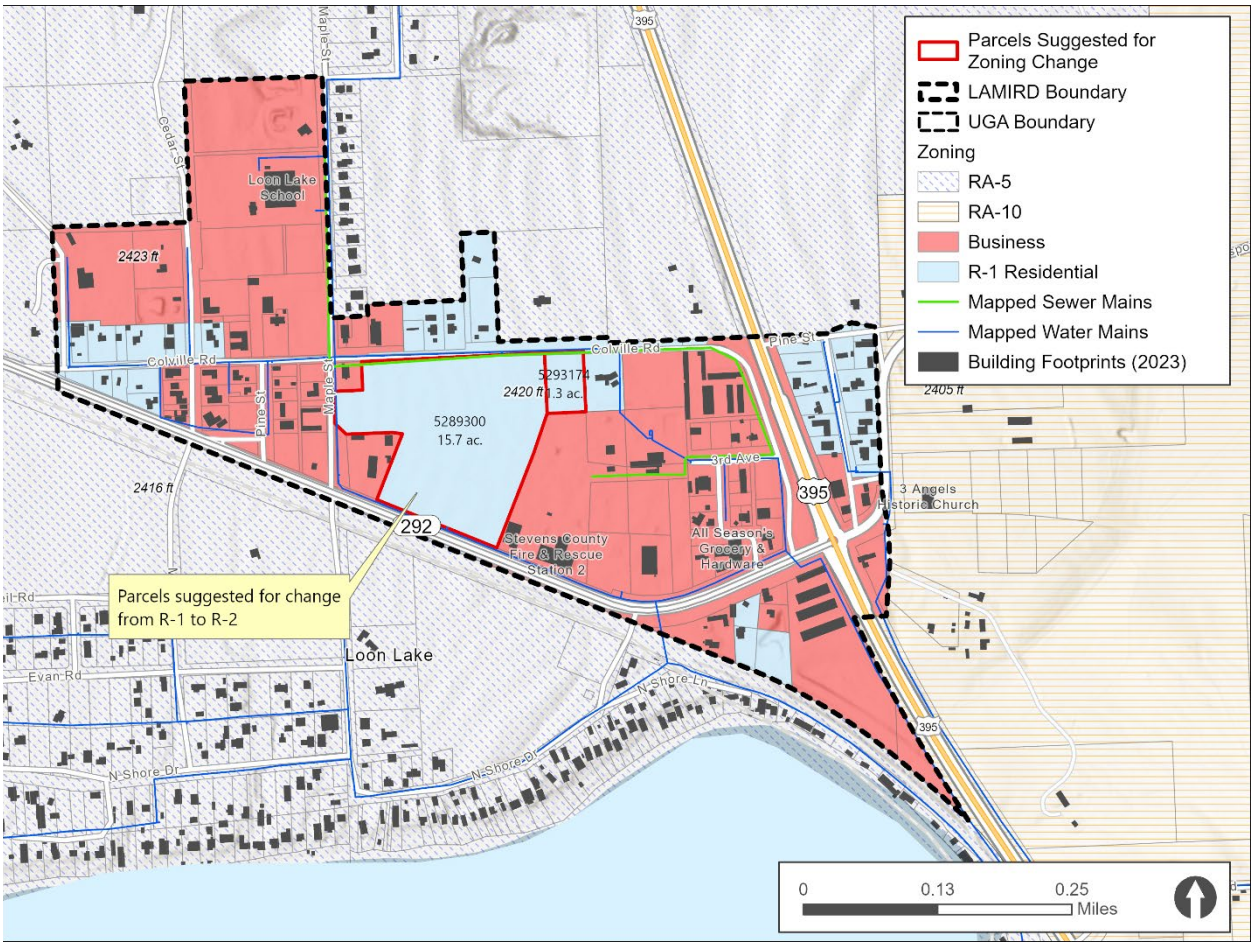
Jurisdiction	Zone	Net Buildable	Allowed Density	Total Unit Capacity	Notes
Addy UGA	R-1 Residential	4.8	4 du/ac	19	Limited available services
Valley UGA	R-1 Residential	10.2	4 du/ac	41	Limited available services
Loon Lake	R-1 Residential	10.4	4 du/ac	42	
Clayton	R-1 Residential	19.8	4 du/ac	79	Water system currently has no capacity for additional connections
	R-2 Residential	25	12 du/ac	300	

Housing allocations below 80% AMI are not appropriate in these LAMIRD and unincorporated UGAs because the areas do not provide the zoning densities and supporting services necessary to support lower income levels, as demonstrated in the Available Community Services by Jurisdiction analysis (Exhibit 2 of the *Housing Allocations Memorandum*). The Addy and Valley UGAs are unlikely to support future growth as they have very limited services and low levels of historic growth. In Loon Lake and Clayton, moderate density zoning(4-12 units per acre) may be appropriate to serve moderate income levels if barriers in each jurisdiction are addressed. Exhibit 3 of the Stevens County Population and Housing Allocation Needs Memorandum ("Housing Allocations Memorandum") allocates future housing needs by jurisdiction and income band. The Housing Allocations Memorandum allocates **65 housing units to the Loon Lake LAMIRD** and **92 housing units to the Clayton UGA** For households earning between 80 and 120 percent of AMI.

Loon Lake LAMIRD

Loon Lake Sewer District #4 provides sanitary sewer service to some parcels within the Loon Lake LAMIRD and Stevens PUD provides public water service. There are approximately 10.4 net buildable acres on vacant parcels with access to both water and sewer service. These parcels are currently zoned Residential-1 (R-1), which allows a max density of up to 4 dwelling units per acre. At this density, the available land capacity at current density (10.4 net acres with water and sewer) would not support the 65-unit allocation. Through additional GIS analysis, two parcels totaling 17 acres were identified for suggested change to Residential-2 (R-2) zoning to allow additional density up to 12 units per acre. After market factor and infrastructure adjustments, these parcels are estimated to provide 9.4 buildable acres of land capacity and have access to both water and sewer service. The location of these parcels is shown in Figure 2, and the net impact on unit capacity that would result from rezoning them is shown in Table 3.

Figure 2: Suggested Zoning Change in Loon Lake LAMIRD



The additional density allowed under R-2 zoning on these parcels would accommodate the 65 units between 80 percent and 120 percent AMI allocated to the Loon Lake LAMIRD, as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Unit Capacity in Loon Lake LAMIRD for 80-120% AMI – Existing and Proposed Zoning

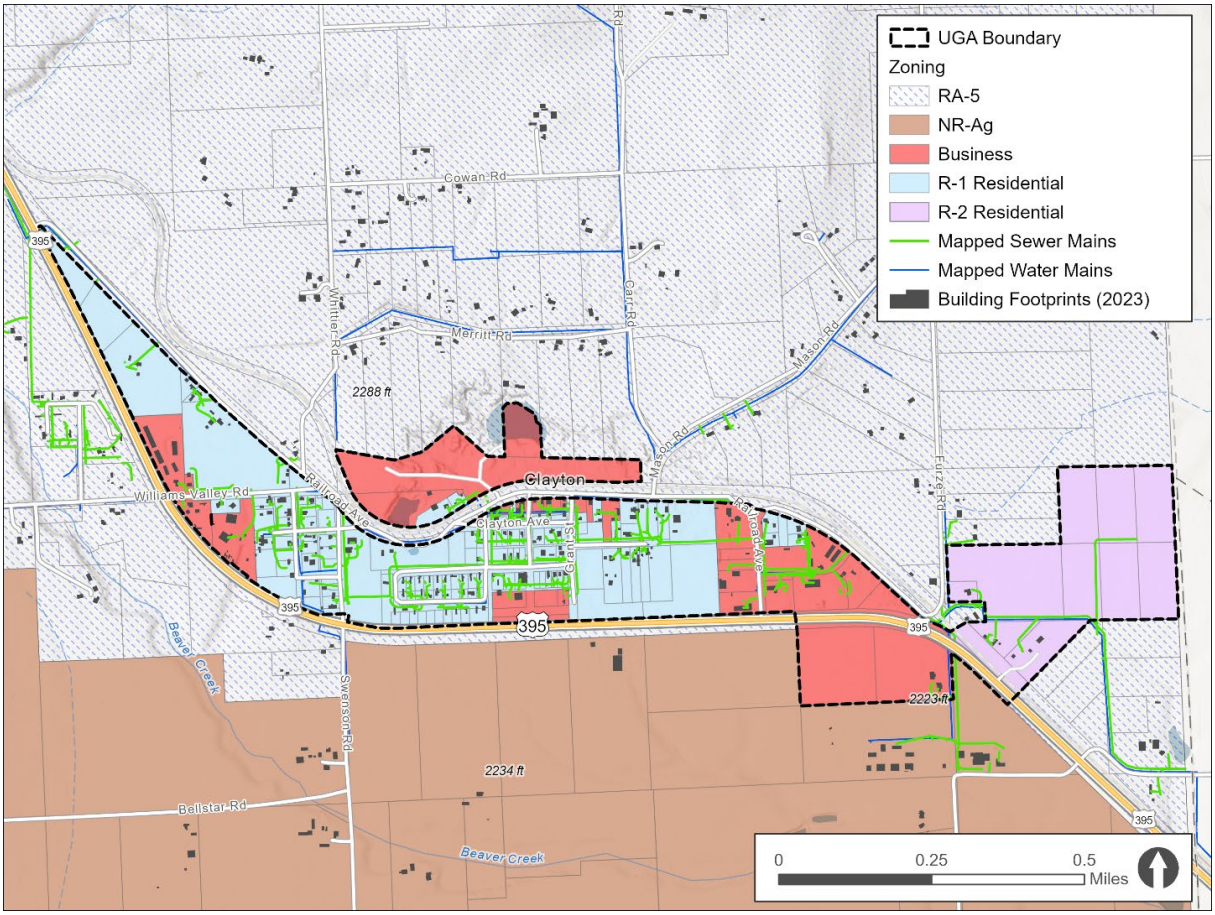
Scenario	Zone	Net Buildable Acres	Allowed Density	Total Unit Capacity	Allocated Housing Units	Capacity Surplus/Deficit (Units)
Existing	R-1	10.4	4 du/ac	42	65	-23
With Proposed Zoning Changes	R-1	1	4 du/ac	4		
	R-2	9.4	12 du/ac	113		
	Subtotal	10.4		117	65	+52

Clayton

The Clayton UGA has public water and sanitary sewer service provided by Stevens PUD. Residentially zoned parcels with sewer service include approximately 19.8 net buildable acres zoned R-1 and 25 net buildable acres zoned R-2, providing a theoretical capacity of approximately 379 housing units. This capacity is sufficient to accommodate the 92-unit allocation for households earning between 80

and 120 percent AMI. However, the existing public water system currently has no capacity for additional connections. Stevens PUD would need to plan for water system improvements before additional housing units could be served in Clayton. These planned improvements, including timing, funding assumptions, and implementation steps, should be documented as part of the 2027 Comprehensive Plan update.

Figure 3: Clayton UGA Zoning Map



Chewelah, Colville, and Kettle Falls UGAs

As indicated in the *Housing Allocations Memorandum*, allocations for cities and their associated unincorporated UGAs are combined, and the County will work with the cities to designate certain parcels as Urban Reserve to plan for future annexation. A focused LCA was completed in each of these jurisdictions to identify parcels that may be suitable to be zoned as Urban Reserve, as summarized in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Estimated Unit Capacity in Potential Urban Reserve Areas

Jurisdiction	Net Buildable Acres	Units/Ac.	Total Unit Capacity
Chewelah UGA	24.3	22	536
Colville UGA	34.2	22	753
Kettle Falls UGA	40.3	24	968

Note: Units/Acre is an assumed value that needs to be confirmed with the cities.

Figures 4-6 show the parcels in the Chewelah, Colville, and Kettle UGAs that were identified as potential urban reserve areas.

Figure 4: Chewelah UGA Potential Urban Reserve Areas

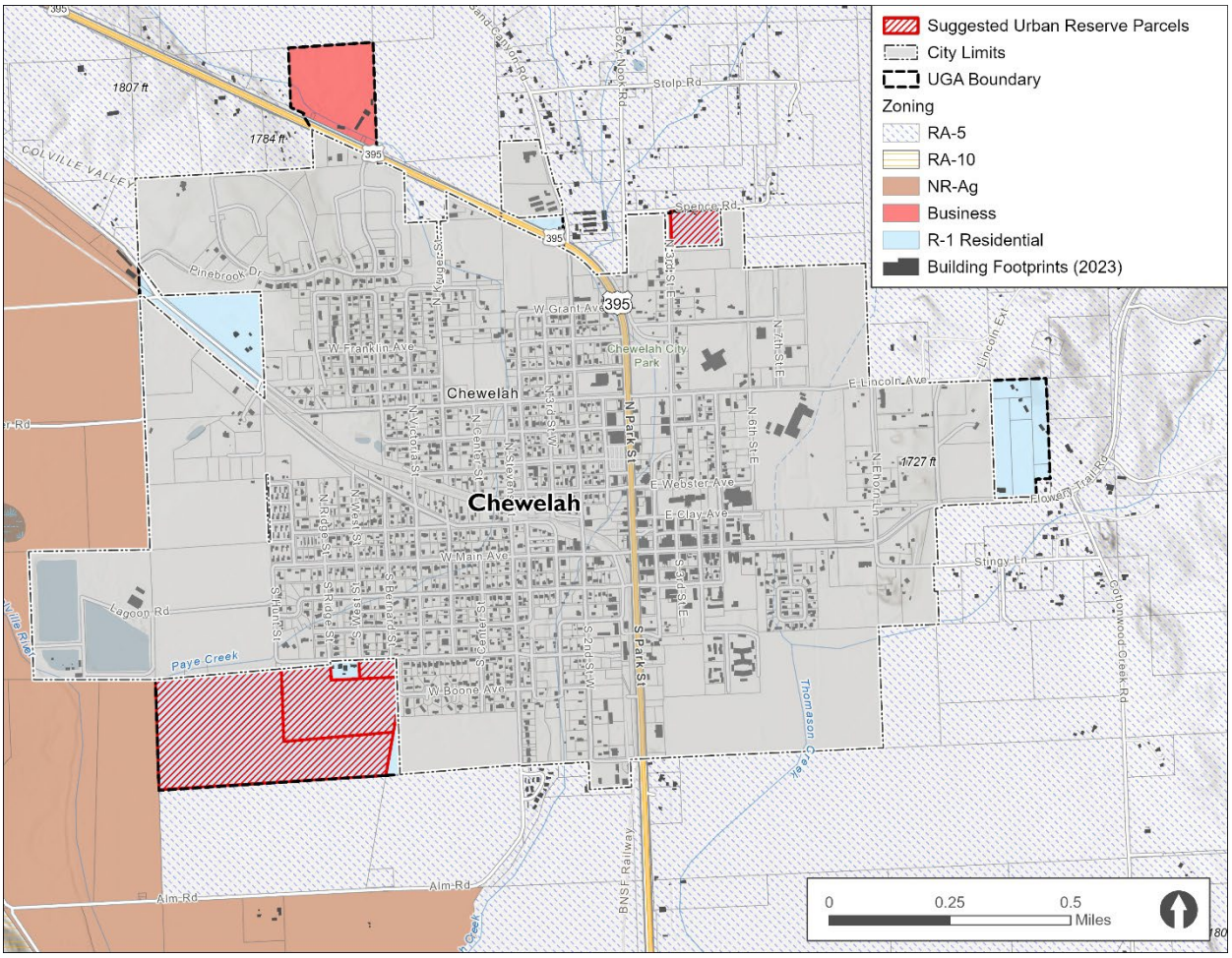


Figure 5: Colville UGA Potential Urban Reserve Areas

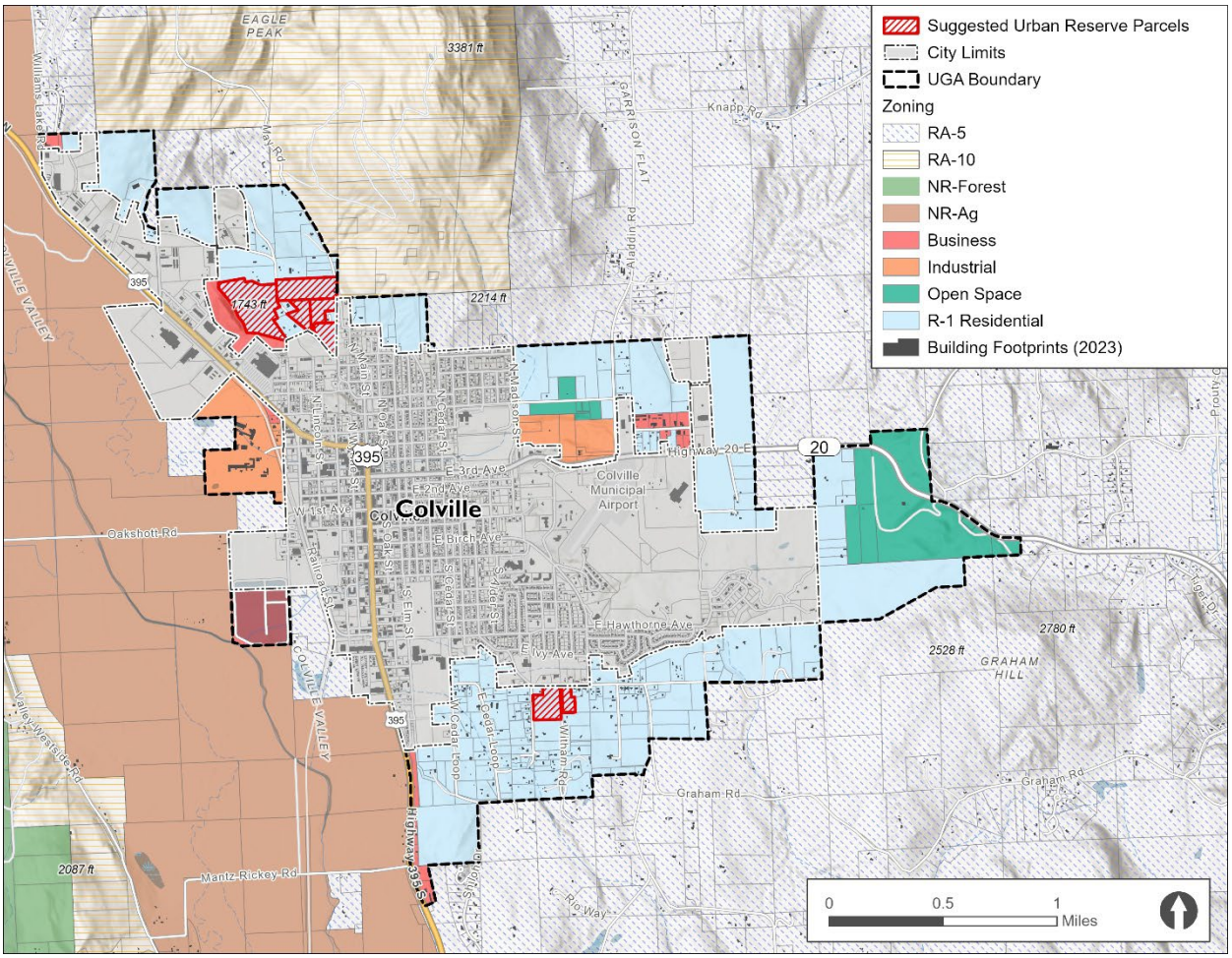


Figure 6: Kettle Falls Potential Urban Reserve Areas

