

# A5 Existing Conditions

## COMMUNITY CONTEXT

### History

The first period of permanent settlement of Buckley began in the late 19th century when camps were established for the miners working in nearby coal mines. The settlement was given the name of Perkins Prairie. A railroad line was constructed for the transport of coal that ran from Tacoma to Wilkeson, connecting the area now known as Buckley to surrounding towns. A rush of settlement followed the construction of the rail line, as workers arrived to work in the emerging lumber industry in the area. Homesteaders arrived, followed by stores, a weekly newspaper, and other goods and service providers. Everyone sought to take advantage of what was becoming a booming industrial town. In 1887, the town was given the name Buckley, after J.M. Buckley, the district superintendent of the Northern Pacific Railway. The town was platted in 1888 by Alexander and Mary Wickersham, and in 1889 the first city government was formed, made up of five councilmen.

A series of fires leveled the town's business district three times during the late 1800s and early 1900s, prompting a series of investments by the town in fire brigades, a fire truck, fire stations, a water main, and a gravity water system. Electricity along the town's major streets was installed in 1907, and in 1952, a sewage plant was constructed. The Rainier School was opened in Buckley in 1939, and over the years grew substantially in size. The boundaries of the city were extended in 1946 to include the Rainier School and nearby farms.

As the lumber industry cleared the lands surrounding Buckley, the area became prime agricultural land. When the mines closed and logging in the area ceased, farming became the city's main industry. The large amount of farmland surrounding the city has served to create a separation between Buckley and other cities in the area, helping to stop encroachment into Buckley. This insulation effect has important implications for the future of Buckley. As the area grows, and farmland is sold off for development, the city will have to be discriminating in terms of future development. In order to maintain the city's character and to avoid sprawl, Buckley recently adopted a set of policies entitled "Guidelines for Redevelopment."

### Community Organizations

Buckley has a number of community organizations which include the Buckley Chamber of Commerce and the Buckley Promotional Association, both comprised of local business men and women. Other organizations include local chapters of the Kiwanis, Eagles and the Odd Fellows.

The Promotional Association publishes the Buckley Community News, (described below), and the Town Guide, a listing of local businesses. There are also twelve churches located in Buckley.

The major daily newspapers include the Seattle Times, the Seattle Post-Intelligencer., and the Tacoma News Tribune. The Enumclaw Courier Herald is published weekly and is distributed to the cities and towns in the area. Weekly circulation of the Herald within Buckley is approximately 1,800 – 2,000. The other local publication is the monthly Buckley Community News. It is widely read, as reported by Rick Hyres of the Buckley Promotional Association, with a print circulation of approximately 1,200 – 1,500 a month. It is also now available on the Chamber of Commerce web site. See attached copy as a sample.

### Financing

Buckley has a “Pay as you go” system:

- a.) Funds accumulate in capital accounts, which can be utilized by the city to finance development needs;
- b.) Dedicated capital funds from tax levies (The Arterial Road Account, Capital Improvement Account, Storm Drainage Construction Fund, Park Construction Fund, and Fire Station Construction Fund) are used for specific needs and projects;
- c.) General purpose revenue or surplus revenue can be transferred to one or more capital accounts as needed;
- d.) Debt financing, which is a mechanism that allows a jurisdiction to finance large-scale capital improvements by committing future revenues to the repayment of the debt. This mechanism can be effective in cases where the improvements are required in order to allow new development to occur. By financing the improvements, the new development proceeds, and in doing so, adds to the taxable base of the city, increasing the available revenues to pay the debt on the bonds.
- e.) State and Federal assistance, such as, grants-in-aid, and sales and property tax.

Within the City of Buckley, there are three financial entities: the city, the sewer and water utility, and the natural gas utility. Each entity has the ability to generate revenue to pay for operations and maintenance as well as necessary capital improvements. The following are the services for which they are responsible:

- 1.) The city is responsible for all municipal services (e.g. fire and police protection, transportation and parks and recreations facilities);
- 2.) The sewer and water utility is responsible for providing sewer and water services;
- 3.) The natural gas utility is responsible for providing gas utility services.

Revenue Source	Expense Revenues	Expense Expenditures	Surplus/(deficit)
City Revenues -6 sources	\$1,409,494	\$1,353,991	\$55,603

## Community Services

### Schools

The City of Buckley is in the White River School District and currently has four elementary schools, one middle school, one high school, one alternative middle school and high school.

### Solid waste disposal and sewage treatment

**Water utility:** South Prairie Creek is the current water supply for the City of Buckley. Water is delivered from the Creek to the Rainer School Reservoir via a 29,200 foot transmission main. South Prairie Creek can supply over 3.5 million gallons per day (mgd), which is well above the combined water consumption of both the Rainier School complex and the City of Buckley. In addition the City has three operational wells which currently produce approximately 130, 280, and 260 gpm respectively. The City of Buckley currently maintains approximately 1245 water service connections, which consist of both residential and commercial hookups. Based on current city average use rates and projected population growth, an additional 200 gpm water supply source should be secured by the city by the year 2010. The effective storage capacity of the reservoirs is slightly less than 3 million gallons.

### Sewage collection and treatment

The sewage collection and treatment plant currently serves about 3,000 people. It consists of approximately 65,800 lineal feet (LF) gravity sewers which are more or less divided into two parts by SR-410. Rainy months result in significant increased inflows to the sewage treatment plant. This has caused the treatment plant to exceed its design capacity of 1.0 MGD and has occasionally resulted in overflows, which are discharged to the White River. An evaluation report presented in 1994 recommended elimination of these stormwater inflows due to their overburdening of the sewage treatment plant. The report cited that such measures would be the most cost effective method to increase hydraulic capacity which would allow them serve a population of 4,625. Shallow piping depths also severely limit the system's capability of extensions. One alternative is an area lift station in the southwesterly area of the GMA boundary.

### Storm water collection and treatment

The city currently uses oil/water separators, retention systems, catch basins, settling or sedimentation ponds, and open ditches which act as bioswales. The collector and drainage infrastructure predominately conveys water to the Puget Power Flume and the White River Basin. Since the city lies in a relatively flat area, drainage management is difficult. Areas now being proposed for development will need upgrades of any existing conveyance systems before any development can be completed.

### Youth services

Buckley has a before and after school club at the Wickersham Campus serving children in grades kindergarten through sixth grade and a youth activity center for teenagers.

**Community center**

Buckley’s community center is located on Main St. in downtown Buckley and is used for community meetings and other functions. In addition to the center, Buckley has one community hall that can be rented by residents for weddings, receptions, and family and community events.

**Fire and police protection**

The Fire Department has 1 full-time Fire Chief, 1 part-time firefighter and 35 volunteer firefighters. The Police Department has 1 Police Chief, 8 full-time officers and 5 reserve officers. In April 2003, the Public Safety Facilities Commission examined existing facilities and determined an immediate need to expand police and fire facilities. The city would like to build a new fire station in 2005 (dependent on voter approval). Of nine potential sites, the following two have been identified as the preferred sites by the Facilities Commission: (1) the City Shops Site and (2) the Railroad Right of Way property (between Ryan and Jefferson).

The police station would like to expand its operations into the existing adjacent fire station, contingent upon building a new fire station. Increasing jail space could provide additional city revenue.

**Hospitals and healthcare providers**

Health care facilities within Buckley include: one physiotherapy clinic, one chiropractic clinic, and one massage clinic. A new naturopath health clinic is due to open soon. There are currently four physicians, four dentists, and three veterinarians who practice medicine within the City of Buckley. Approximately ten hospitals exist in the surrounding larger cities.

**Day care and senior centers**

There are three daycare centers for children located in the city. The Buckley Senior Center, established in 1977, is located at 811 Main Street. It operates Mon-Fri from 7:30am – 4:30pm and offers daily hot lunches and scheduled activities such as health services, senior assistance, eye screening, aerobic exercise, charter bus trips, knitting and card games. The Senior Center acquired a Handicap Accessible Van in early 2004, which operates five days a week throughout the greater Buckley area.

**Neighborhood commercial services**

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<b>Restaurants:</b>	<b>12 + 1 bar</b>
<b>Building construction, services and supplies:</b>	
General contractors	13
Subcontractors and supplies	32
<b>Auto related services:</b>	9
<b>Beauty salons/barber shops:</b>	7/1
<b>Grocery stores:</b>	5
<b>Liquor stores:</b>	2
<b>Banks:</b>	2
<b>Home gardening / Landscaping services and supplies:</b>	11
<b>Furniture store:</b>	1

<b>Gift / Fabric stores:</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Real Estate services:</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Storage Services:</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Video/DVD rentals:</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Legal/financial services:</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Funeral services:</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Computer support:</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Health clubs:</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Insurance agents:</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Pharmacy:</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Lodging:</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Pet grooming/boarding:</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Equipment repair:</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Antique store:</b>	<b>2</b>

## LAND USE

### Environmental Considerations

Buckley has a draft Critical Areas regulation document, with a final draft dated the 12th of December 2003. This document closely follows the framework outlined by the Critical Areas regulations of the State of Washington and Pierce County. Although the Critical Areas document refers to maps contained within the document, the data provided by the city contain no such maps. Instead, the document refers to National Wetlands Inventory, Department of Fish and Wildlife Priority Habitat and Species Maps, Department of Natural Resources Official Water Type Reference Maps and Department of Natural Resources Shore zone maps. Currently no other GIS data layer overlays are available.

*Key points.* The White River is an impaired water body, with temperatures above maximum levels in the upper river area and a high pH and phosphate levels in the lower White River. The Department of Ecology is currently studying mitigation measures. In the Buckley jurisdiction, 165 acres are designated as Critical Areas. The total area of parks and open spaces comprises 25 acres.

### Housing

Sources U.S. Census 2000, 1995 Buckley Comprehensive Plan

*Key points* There are a total of 1472 housing units in Buckley, of which 78% of the units are single family housing. The majority of the units, 74%, are in fair, poor, or dilapidated condition. The median year housing structures were built is 1971.

In the 2000 Pierce County Buildable Lands Report, Buckley's capacity for new housing was analyzed, and it was found that based on current zoning and land use restrictions, Buckley can accommodate 501 new housing units. Pierce County's population growth target for Buckley in 2017 calls for 3,105 new residents in the city, which translates to 1269 housing units which must be constructed in order to accommodate this population growth. Thus, Buckley will have a deficit of 768 housing units. In order to meet the county's projections, substantial upzoning is required. In addition, the poor condition and relatively high age of Buckley's existing housing stock will likely require significant home improvements and replacement.

## TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

### Transportation to work

Out of 2,075 workers aged 16 years and older in Buckley, 0% used public transportation to get to work, 1,650 or 79.5% drove, 277 or 13.3% walked, and 43 or 2.1% worked at home. In comparison to the WA state averages of 4.9%, 86.3%, 3.2%, and 4.3% Buckley workers use public transportation less but walk much more than the state average.

### Street functional classification

A total of 28.5 miles of roadway exist within the City of Buckley. Neither interstates nor principal arterials are located in the City of Buckley. There is one minor arterial, a 2.4 mile section of State Route (SR)-410 (a Class 3 highway). Three miles of designated major collectors include: SR-165 (a Class 2 highway), Ryan Road, 112th Street and Old Buckley Highway. Local access roads comprise the remaining 21.22 miles of streets. SR-410 is also designated as a Scenic Highway

### Lane configuration and capacity

Existing circulation pattern is based around SR-410 to the north and west, Ryan Road to the east, and SR-165 to the south. The system is comprised of two-lane, two directional facilities with lane widths of approximately 12 feet.

### Traffic volumes

SR-410 carried between 15,000 and 17,000 total vehicles per day within the City limits in 1995-96.

### LOS standards

Using an acceptable level of deficiency of 34, eight roadway segments were found to be deficient. A level B LOS is generally considered to represent the minimum acceptable operating LOS intersection standard for rural areas. The signal at SR-410 and Main Street operates within acceptable levels. The intersection of SR-410 and Park Avenue however is operating below acceptable levels and will meet the requirements to install a traffic signal. Thirteen roadway segments were identified likely to fall below the minimum threshold LOS within 20 years if there is no increase in maintenance due to deterioration of surface conditions.

### Traffic safety

A list of accidents, their locations, dates and times, and type was provided by the police department. The intersections with more than four accidents during a twelve month period were located on SR-410.

**Bicycle routes** The abandoned Burlington Northern-Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad line is the only exclusive bicycle/pedestrian facility in Buckley. In the early 1980's it was converted to a non-motorized pathway and named the Foothills Trail. When fully developed, the pathway will connect Buckley with neighboring municipalities of South Prairie, Wilkeson and Carbonado to the south and Orting and Puyallup to the west. Bicycles are also allowed on any paved surface within the

**City limits. A wider shoulder on 112th Street from Mundy Loss Road to SR-410 was to be constructed with grant funds.**

**Pedestrian facilities**

**Sidewalks within the city are 4-6 feet wide, and the majority of streets are deficient in meeting the design standard of sidewalks present on both sides of the roadway. Many roads have sidewalks on only one side or none at all.**

**Truck routes**

**Truck routes consist of SR-410 and SR-165.**

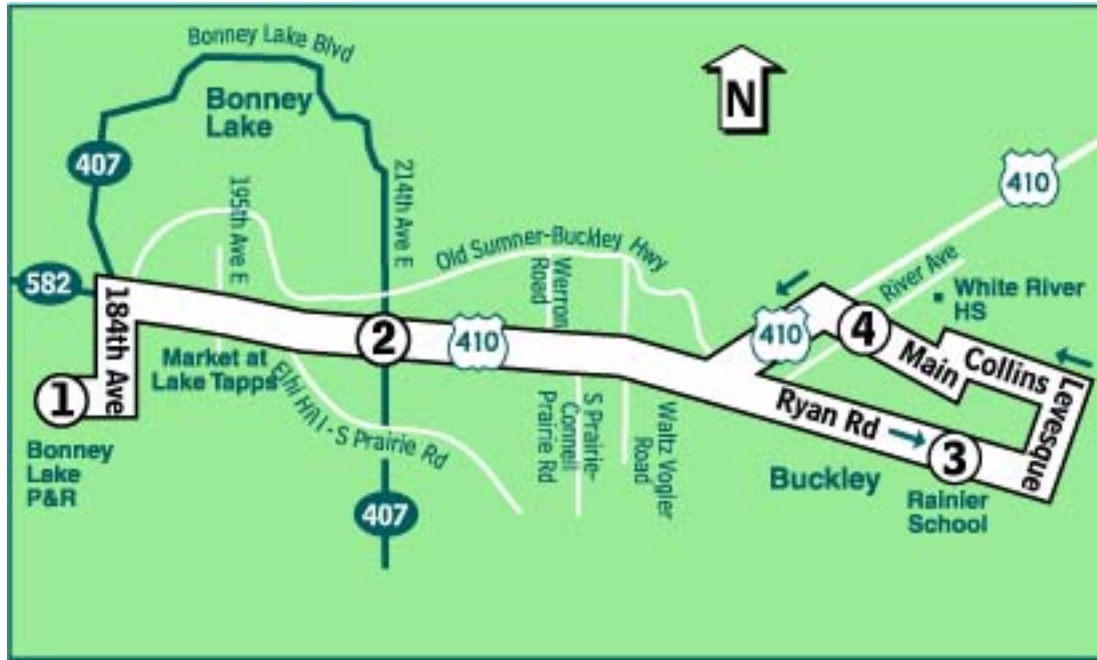
**Transit**

**Public transportation route is provided by Pierce Transit bus (route 406) which circulates through Buckley every two hours to the destination of Bonney Lake.**

BUCKLEY		WA		US
TRANSPORTATION TO WORK				
	Number			
Workers 16 and over	2,075			
	Number	Pct	Pct	Pct
Public transportation	0	0	4.9	4.7
Car, truck, van or motorcycle	1,650	79.5	86.3	88
Walk	277	13.3	3.2	2.9
Work at home	43	2.1	4.3	3.3
COMMUTING TIME				
	Number		Number	Number
Average travel time to work (minutes)	27		26	26
Average travel time to work using public transportation	0		44	48
Average travel time to work using other transportation	27		25	24
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census; ePodunk				



Pierce Transit Route 406



## ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS

The information presented below attempts to give context to Buckley’s demographic trends and existing economic conditions through comparisons to the city’s geographic region and local market area. For the purposes of this analysis, Pierce County will be considered the region and the neighboring cities of Bonney Lake (Pierce County) and Enumclaw (King County) will serve as local peer cities. Although both are larger cities than Buckley, their shared geography coupled with relatively similar population size within the context of the region makes the three comparable as peers. Statewide data will be interjected where applicable.

### Population Trends

Buckley is a small city (pop. 4,064) whose population represents a small fraction of Pierce County’s total (700,620).<sup>1</sup> Its neighboring municipalities, Bonney Lake to the west and Enumclaw to the north, have 9,358 and 11,183 residents, respectively. Since 1990, both peer cities have been growing more rapidly than Buckley, but growth in Buckley has been similar in scale to that of Pierce County over that time frame:

City	1990	2000	Percent Change
Buckley	3,516	4,040	15%
Bonney Lake	7,494	10,028	37%
Enumclaw	7,227	11,116	53%
Pierce County	586,230	700,620	19.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Buckley exhibits attributes of both a suburban city and a rural town. While the vast majority of the population is clustered within urbanized areas, the U.S. Census Bureau currently deems 6.5% of the population rural. By comparison, neither Bonney Lake (0.1% rural) nor Enumclaw (0.1% rural) has a significant rural population.

### Economic Base

In terms of employment, the city of Buckley has high concentrations of educational and health services in addition to art, entertainment, recreation and food services. Its retail trade, manufacturing and financial services (FIRE) employ relatively fewer people than in peer cities and in the county as a whole. Table II details relative employment levels in selected occupations.

<sup>1</sup> As of the 2000 U.S. Census

City	Industry				
	Retail Trade	Manufacturing	FIRE	Educational and Health Services	Arts, Entertainment, Recreation & Food
Buckley	3.7 %	9.8 %	0.5 %	18.2 %	16.7 %
Bonney Lake	7.3 %	13.4 %	2.1 %	4.8 %	7.7 %
Enumclaw	7.6 %	13.7 %	1.7 %	4.1 %	10.0 %
Pierce County	12.5 %	12.6 %	5.8 %	20.8 %	12.4 %

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Several key trends exist in the Table II that may be worthy of further analysis:

- Data suggests that none of the three cities are regional centers for retail trade or manufacturing, but Buckley still lags behind its neighboring municipalities.
- For educational and health services, Buckley is similarly positioned to Pierce County as a whole, but is over-represented in this industry group in comparison to Bonney Lake and Enumclaw, thus, Buckley is likely a regional or local center for this industry group.
- Buckley has a higher percentage of employment in the arts, entertainment, food and recreation industry group than its neighbors and Pierce County. It is likely a local regional center within this subcategory.

Data collected from sales tax receipts relays similar information about the size of Buckley’s retail base relative to Bonney Lake and Enumclaw. Although the number of retail establishments approximately corresponds to the three cities’ respective population size, the taxable retail sales in Buckley trail those of Bonney Lake and Enumclaw on a per capita basis.

City	Retail Establishments	Taxable Retail Sales	Per Capita Sales
Buckley	1,091	\$10,488,984	\$2,596
Bonney Lake	1,437	\$40,329,666	\$4,021
Enumclaw	1,868	\$54,165,703	\$4,872
Pierce County	N/A	\$2,376,111,000	\$3,365
Washington State	1,868	\$22,560,000,000	\$3,827

Source: Washington State Department of Revenue

Despite a more “rural” population (6.5%, as compared to 0.1% for both Bonney Lake and Enumclaw), Buckley trails its peer cities in agricultural employment, suggesting that the rural population does not make its living from its agricultural assets. It is more likely a lifestyle choice for those who earn a living in a non-farm occupation.

Journey-to-work data reveals that almost half of all workers over the age of sixteen are employed outside the PMSA boundaries. An even larger majority of residents in Buckley and adjacent cities work outside the bounds of their respective city limits. This confirms the presumption that

Enumclaw, Bonney Lake and Buckley are “bedroom” communities for Tacoma and, more dominantly, Seattle.

#### Economic Development

The Buckley Chamber of Commerce currently has 53 members, which cover a wide range of businesses.

The following data describes employment trends by type of industry over the years 1980 to 1990:

Manufacturing, retail and service sectors are the largest employers and have experienced significant growth, however, the transportation and wholesale trade industries have experienced a greater rate of growth of 313 and 400 percent, respectively. According to citizen input, as the population continues to grow, there is a demand for more retail and consumer services in the city. It is important to note that employment in health services and public administration has decreased quite drastically by 44 and 51 percent respectively.

An analysis of the commercial building permits from Buckley’s Building Department shows the following information: from the period 1998 to 2000, there was a tremendous increase in the number of permits issued (approximately three to four times more than in previous years). For the years of 1998 and 1999, the amount of new square footage built in Buckley was 200% and 300%, respectively, greater than that in Bonney Lake. In the year 2000, however, this trend changed with the total new construction area in the city of Buckley only 10% of that in Bonney Lake.

#### Employment Needs and Supply

The Pierce County report estimates the need for 3,292 jobs within Buckley by the year 2017. However, the report estimates that employment growth will yield only 1,480 jobs by 2017, and when 476 jobs are also subtracted for displaced employees, this yields a shortfall of 1,956 needed jobs. When estimating the employment supply that can be yielded from different industries and land uses, the report concludes that there is an employment capacity of 4,573 for the year 2017. Thus, the possible supply of 4,573 is greater than the estimated need of 3,292 jobs. (Source: Pierce County Buildable Lands Report)

## REAL ESTATE DATA

A quick analysis of residential real estate values and median household income levels reveal similar patterns when viewing Buckley in comparison to a regional and local market area. Buckley has higher income levels and higher home prices than Pierce County as a whole and lower income levels and home values than neighboring Bonney Lake. Enumclaw, however, is similar to Buckley in terms of median income (\$49,000 and \$44,000, respectively) and median home asking price (\$160, 00 and 164,000, respectively).

In addition, nearly two-thirds of Buckley's owner-occupied housing stock is valued at \$150K or below. This data suggests that although its median asking price is above the county average, the city has considerably fewer high-end homes in comparison to its neighbors and the county at-large.

Both the region and municipalities under consideration have significantly lower home values and than those of King County to the north, in which the median home value was \$236,900 in 2000.

City	Value Categories, % of Owner-Occupied Housing Units			Median Asking Price
	Under \$250K	\$150-200K	\$200K+	
Buckley	62.5%	30.5%	7.0%	\$160,200
Bonney Lake	42.2%	29.9%	27.9%	\$222,500
Enumclaw	39.1%	42.9%	18.0%	\$164,100
Pierce County	50.4%	26.8%	22.8%	\$135,600