



Planning & Development Services

1800 Continental Place ▪ Mount Vernon, Washington 98273
office 360-416-1320 ▪ pds@co.skagit.wa.us ▪ www.skagitcounty.net/planning

Staff Report

From: Ryan Walters, Assistant, Director

Re: 2017-2022 Capital Facilities Plan and Transportation Improvement Program

Date: September 12, 2016

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Summary

The proposal updates the Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) and related documents, which the County typically updates every year. Older versions of the plan are available on the proposal website. The proposal incorporates by reference the County’s proposed Transportation Improvement Program, which is being proposed simultaneously as part of the same process, which helps fulfill the County’s GMA requirement for transportation planning.

Background

Goal 12 of the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) provides that the County must “[e]nsure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards.” That goal is implemented in Skagit County planning documents in a variety of ways, including Skagit County Code Chapter 14.28, Concurrency, and through this proposal, an update of the Capital Facilities Plan.

The introductory chapter of the proposal itself provides significant background information on precisely what GMA requires of the County for capital facilities planning and how it is implemented in our Comprehensive Plan. The CFP document has two main parts: (1) county-owned or operated capital facilities, and (2) special purpose district capital facilities.

County-owned or operated capital facilities. The County’s plan combines both an inventory of the County’s existing capital facilities and the required six-year financing plan for fulfilling unmet needs. The County’s transportation inventory is included in the County’s 2003 Transportation Systems Plan, which is incorporated into the CFP by reference and will be integrated into the Comprehensive Plan transportation element for the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update. The County’s transportation financing plan is a separate document called the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which is incorporated into the CFP by reference.

Special purpose district capital facilities. The second half of the proposal includes the aggregated information from the various special purpose districts throughout the County that provide services necessary for development (fire, water, sewer, etc.). The County does not have authority to manage or approve those inventories or plans, but GMA requires that the County in its role as a regional government, acquire, aggregate, and present that information for use by the various special purpose districts in coordinating their own planning.

Proposal

Plan Updates

The Department has provided a track-changes version of the new plan on the webpage for easy comparison to last year’s plan. The changes are largely ministerial updates to the projects and values contained in last year’s plan. **The bigger changes are deletions of much of the narrative, as that text does not regularly change from year to year and was moved from the annual CFP document into the main body of the Comprehensive Plan (in Chapter 10, Capital Facilities) during the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update.**

Analysis

The statute requires a jurisdiction’s Capital Facilities Plan to include (a) an inventory of existing capital facilities; (b) a forecast of future needs for those facilities [including] (c) the proposed locations and capacities of expanded or new capital facilities; (d) at least a six-year financing plan using projected funding capacities and clearly identified sources of public money; and (e) a requirement to reassess the land use element.¹ The introductory text of the plan itself, starting on page 5, explains the statutory requirements in significant depth and explains how the plan fulfills those requirements.

Consistency

The proposal amends the Comprehensive Plan to update both the required capital facilities inventory and the six-year financing plan. The capital facilities planning policies in Comprehensive Plan Chapter 10 remain the same. This year’s updated document helps continue the County’s compliance with the Growth Management Act for capital facilities planning.

¹ RCW 36.70A.070(3).

Recommendation

The Department recommends that the Planning Commission issue a recommendation to adopt this updated Capital Facilities Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program, and that the Board of County Commissioners adopt the plan and program.

Inclusion of a capital facilities project in the CFP (or the TIP) *does not* authorize the project to be constructed. The Planning Commission's review of the plan should attempt to determine if the County is effectively planning for growth by planning for provision of adequate capital facilities. It is not the Planning Commission's role to inquire into the virtues of particular projects.

Process

SEPA Threshold Determination

The Skagit County SEPA Responsible Official has issued a Determination of Non-Significance for this non-project legislative proposal.

Public Notices

Skagit County issued the following notices for this project:

- 60-day notice to the Department of Commerce (September 2, 2016)
- Notice of Availability via the PDS email mailing list (September 2, 2016)
- Published legal notice in the Skagit Valley Herald (September 1, 2016)
- SEPA notice distributed to all local agencies described in the plan (September 2, 2016)

Public Comment

The proposal will receive at least one public hearing and written comment period before the Planning Commission, consistent with the process for adoption of plans and land use regulations in SCC Chapter 14.08. The Board of County Commissioners must approve the final adoption. Information on how to comment is contained in the Notice of Availability document on the project website.

For More Information

Please visit the project website at www.skagitcounty.net/cfp.