

CAPITAL FACILITIES PROFILE

INTRODUCTION

This section is an overview of the “universe” of capital facilities and services that are necessary to support growth and development in Skagit County. The County’s primary responsibility is to ensure that adequate facilities and services are, or will be in place, to support forecasted growth. This includes county owned and operated facilities as well as those of other providers. Within the unincorporated area, the County is primarily responsible for facilities and services supporting community activities, law and justice, solid waste, surface water management, and transportation. Water supply, fire and emergency medical service, schools, sanitary sewer collection and treatment, diking and drainage, transit, and port services are the responsibility of other providers outside of the ownership and management of Skagit County. However, the GMA requires the County to coordinate with these other facility providers’ plans and to recognize them within the Comprehensive Plan.

Skagit County is not responsible for the provision of planning and land use regulation services within the municipal UGAs. However, the County must ensure that public facilities and services are available, adequate and concurrent with development within unincorporated UGAs and unincorporated municipal UGAs prior to annexation. The Framework Agreement between the County and the cities and towns requires that those jurisdictions plan and implement capital facilities improvements adequate to accommodate growth within their respective UGAs so that concurrency with adopted levels of service is maintained. This requirement provides for the transition of government from the County, to the cities, as intended by GMA.

CAPITAL FACILITIES PLANNING PROCESS

The GMA lays out the statutory requirements for planning capital facilities to ensure that they are, or can be, available when needed to accommodate forecasted growth. This includes the regular maintenance of the inventory of existing facilities; assessment of current and future needs based on adopted LOS standards; and plans (including financing) for meeting the needs. The specificity of the needs assessments

and plans varies with more specificity necessary for the immediate future and less for the later years of the 20-year GMA horizon.

LEVEL OF SERVICE

For the capital facilities under its authority, Skagit County plans in two ways. The *needs-driven* approach anticipates capital projects and related financing strategies. This is sometimes called a “wish list.” The *revenue-driven* approach starts by determining the County’s financial capacity, and then anticipates capital projects that do not exceed available revenues. This is called “financially constrained.” The needs-driven approach may exceed the County’s capacity to pay for the projects it needs to achieve adopted level-of-service standards, and to provide those facilities concurrent with development. On the other hand, the revenue-driven approach may limit the County to capital projects that provide a lower level of service than the community desires.

A hybrid approach that overcomes these problems is the *scenario-driven* approach. In this approach, two or more scenarios are developed using different assumptions about needs (levels of service) and revenues. The scenarios help to identify the best combination of level of service and financing.

Levels of service are measures of the amount of public facilities that are provided to the community. Levels of service may also measure the quality of public facilities. Typically, measures of levels of service are expressed as ratios of facility capacity to demand (i.e., actual or potential users). Table 1 lists examples of levels of service measures for some capital facilities. Each level of service standard uses the specific unit quantity that measures the current or proposed level of service. For example, the adopted *standard* for parks might be 5 acres per 1,000 population, but the *current* level of service may be 2.68 acres per 1,000, indicating a shortfall of facilities.

Table 1
Sample Level of Service Measurements

<u>Type of Capital Facility</u>	<u>Sample Level of Service Measure</u>
Corrections	Beds per 1,000 population
Fire and Rescue	Average response time Hospitals
	Beds per 1,000 population
Law Enforcement	Officers per 1,000 population, average response time
Library	Collection size per capita, Building square feet per capita

Parks	Acres per 1,000 population
Roads and Streets.....	Ratio of actual volume to design capacity
Schools.....	Students per Classroom
Sewer	Gallons per customer per day, Effluent quality
Solid Waste.....	Tons (or cubic yards) per capita or per customer
Surface Water & River Levees	Design storm (i.e., 50-year storm), Runoff water quality
Transit.....	Ridership
Water	Gallons per customer per day, Water quality

SETTING THE STANDARDS FOR LEVELS OF SERVICE (LOS)

Because the need for capital facilities is largely determined by the adopted LOS standards, the County has engaged in extensive research and analysis and community outreach to select the standards that are included in the Comprehensive Plan and the Capital Facilities Plan. Level of service standards are measures of the quality of life of the community. The standards should be based on the community's vision of its future and its values.

When community expectations and desires for facilities and services exceeds the County’s financial capacity to deliver, the level of service for some facilities may need to be adjusted periodically in order to fully fund existing and planned capital facilities. Ideally, the specific adopted level-of-service standards should be generated in the following process:

- (1) The current actual level of service are calculated.
- (2) National/regional standards or guidelines and examples of local LOS from other local governments are reviewed.
- (3) Local standards from County studies, master plans, ordinances and development regulations are examined.
- (4) Preliminary recommendations for standards are formulated.
- (5) Scenarios of needed capacity and cost implications of the recommendations are derived.

- (6) The Board of County Commissioners reviews the results.
- (7) Specific capital improvements projects to support the LOS are prepared.
- (8) A draft CFP is prepared using the current LOS as the basis of proposed capital projects, their costs, and a financing plan necessary to pay for the costs.
- (9) The draft CFP is reviewed by Board of County Commissioners, followed by public hearing(s) and deliberation of the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission then forwards its recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners.
- (10) The Board of County Commissioners adopts levels of service standards as part of the CFP.

The final standards for levels of service are specified in the Capital Facilities policies. These standards are the basis for determining the need for capital improvements and are the benchmark for testing the adequacy of public facilities for each proposed development pursuant to the "concurrency" requirement. The standards can be amended, if necessary, once each year as part of the annual update of the Capital Facilities Plan or amendment of the Comprehensive Plan.

FINANCING STRATEGIES

The process of identifying revenues for the capital facilities financing plan involves:

- 1) Calculating the total costs for each type of public facility.
- 2) Matching existing restricted revenue sources with the related facility types.
- 3) Subtracting existing restricted revenues from costs to identify the unfunded "deficit."
- 4) Applying additional restricted revenues to the related facility types.
- 5) Allocating unrestricted revenue to unfunded deficits.

Implementation of the Capital Facilities goals and policies is dependent upon the constant monitoring of needs, LOS, and concurrency as growth occurs. The County's annual budget includes appropriations for subsequent fiscal year projects, contained in the schedule of capital improvements. The Capital Facilities Plan is reviewed and

updated periodically in conjunction with the budget process, the release of official population estimates and projections by the State Office of Financial Management, any revisions to the County-wide Planning Policies and population allocations. The update is integrated with the Comprehensive Plan update process and includes:

- 1) Revision of population projections.
- 2) Updating the inventory of public facilities.
- 3) Updating the costs of public facilities.
- 4) Updating public facilities requirements and capacities analysis (actual levels of service compared to adopted standards).
- 5) Updating revenue forecasts.
- 6) Updating capital improvements project needs for the next six fiscal years.
- 7) Updating the analysis of financial capacity.
- 8) Amending the CFP, and Comprehensive Plan (if necessary) including level of service standards, capital projects, and/or the financing plan sources of revenue.

CONCURRENCY SYSTEM

The County maintains concurrency implementation and monitoring systems that include:

Annual Report on Facility Capacities and LOS. The report summarizes the actual capacity of public facilities compared to the adopted standards for levels of service and forecast the capacity of public facilities for the six succeeding fiscal years. The annual report provides the initial determination of the capacity and levels of service of public facilities for the purpose of issuing development permits during the next year. Each permit application is analyzed separately for concurrency.

Public Facility Capacity Review of Development Applications. The review of permit applications in the UGAs is conducted according to the terms of the Framework Agreement(s) between the County and the cities and towns. Records of

the cumulative impacts of all development permits approved during each fiscal year on the capacity of public facilities are maintained. The county development regulations provide that permit applications may be denied because of insufficient capacity of public facilities, but that the applications may be resubmitted when the capital facility shortfalls have been addressed.

Review of Changes to Planned Capacity of Public Facilities. The County may amend the Capital Facilities Element goals and policies and the Capital Facilities Plan if the concurrency monitoring process reveals unforeseen issues or circumstances.

Concurrency Implementation Strategies. The County also reviews the concurrency implementation policies and strategies to determine if they are effective.

Impact Mitigation. The County may impose system impact fees or environmental impact mitigation fees on new development consistent with the proportionate impacts that the development may have on the LOS of any or all capital facilities.

LAW AND JUSTICE

SHERIFF ADMINISTRATION

The Sheriff Department provides a full range of law enforcement services, including jail services. The Department consists of 55 sworn Deputy Officers and 30 Sheriff/Jail employees. The Sheriff Administration has 12,000 square feet of office space and jail facilities equivalent to 158 beds. A new regional jail is planned to serve Skagit, Island, and Whatcom counties. Two proposed capital projects with an estimated cost of \$4,100,000 include expansion of office space into the current County GIS facility (\$100,000), and Skagit County's share (\$4,000,000) of the construction cost of a Regional Jail facility.

YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES

Youth & Family Services consists of the A.R.I.S. (At Risk Intervention Specialists) Administration Building (6,880 square feet) and the Juvenile Detention Center (14,000 square feet and 44 beds). There are no CFP projects proposed.

COURTS

The court system consists of four Superior Court courtrooms and three District Court courtrooms located at the County Courthouse in Mount Vernon. There are no current CFP projects but the County is considering the addition of another court which would require additional facilities.

PUBLIC WORKS

PUBLIC WORKS ADMINISTRATION

In addition to its administrative offices, the Public Works inventory includes 21,200 square feet of working area space used for various shops and storage areas for a total of 39,200 square feet. A proposal for construction of a 2,500 square feet salt and bunker shed at a cost of \$150,000 is included.

SOLID WASTE

The County provides solid waste collection and recycling services through three facilities. No solid waste capital facilities projects are included in the CFP.

SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT

Surface water management within unincorporated Skagit County includes a combination of regulations, physical structures, planning efforts, special assessment districts, and quantity and quality control facilities. The ownership, maintenance, and stewardship of drainage facilities take place through a variety of means including:

1. Administrative and regulatory measures such as regulations, drainage districts, the Skagit County Drainage Utility, and sub-flood control zones;
2. Flood Control measures that include dike districts and the Skagit River Feasibility Study for flood damage prevention;
3. Fish passage facilities; and
4. Water quality actions that include watershed planning and implementation of state and federal water quality standards.

The County's Surface Water Management Plan inventory identifies the type and condition of surface water facilities within the County, and describes the County's plan for capital improvements to the drainage system infrastructure of surface water management. The County's surface water management facility proposals include 11

capacity projects (\$2,844,000) which primarily represent drainage improvement projects, and 3 non-capacity projects (\$758,000), which represent rehabilitation or restoration projects for ponds, creeks, and sloughs.

COMMUNITY

Capital facilities for community uses include , County fairgrounds, senior services, and parks and recreation (trails and open space).

FAIRGROUNDS

The County Fairgrounds consists of a total of 14.0 acres, 2,400 square feet of administrative office space, and 53,092 square feet for other building/exhibition entries. The Plan includes one capital project for various facilities Improvements at an estimated cost of \$600,000.

SENIOR SERVICES

Senior Services consists of five senior centers located throughout the County, totaling just over 40,000 square feet of space. These centers have a total capacity of about 318,000 visits per year, which is utilized about one-third of the time. No additional facilities are planned.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Skagit County's park system consists of a total of 1,700 acres (developed and undeveloped) of regional and community parkland, playfields and playgrounds, trails, open space, and boat launches. The current inventory does not include any indoor facilities – one is proposed in the CFP. This proposal is for a 40,000 square feet indoor sport court facility. The total proposed parks and recreation facilities include 11 capital projects at a total estimated cost of \$5,538,000, including \$1,970,000 for two recreation facility capacity projects and \$3,568,000 for non -capacity development and improvements projects. Additional information from the *Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan*, adopted in 2004 is provided below.

Parks and Recreation Plan Summary

The *Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan* (CPRP) represents an extensive effort to redefine county policy and establish the vision for the recreational needs of the citizens. The CPRP fulfills a GMA requirement and meets grant funding eligibility criteria required by the State Interagency for Outdoor Recreation (IAC). The CPRP goals and objectives provide the County Parks and Recreation Department with direction for the implementation of strategies and actions for property acquisition,

park development, capital improvement planning, and programs for the next six years.

Skagit County Parks and Recreation (SCPR) owns or manages 1,700 acres of parkland, both developed and undeveloped. SCPR-operated parks come in an range of configurations and sizes and provide a variety of activities and functions. They range from small neighborhood parks to large areas of open space and offer many unique recreational opportunities available to the citizens of Skagit County.

County park land is classified according to size, service area and types of use. These categories are as follows:

Regional Parks are generally larger sites that offer a variety of unique features or recreational experiences that serve the entire county population and beyond. These may include one-of-a-kind natural, cultural, or historic features, water access, or a concentration of facilities that can accommodate large-scale events.

Community Parks are generally larger than neighborhood parks and smaller than regional parks. They contain a range of sport fields and facilities and accommodate a variety of features and activities such as open space, swimming, BBQs and picnic areas for larger gatherings.

Neighborhood Parks are generally small, pedestrian oriented and situated to serve residents of a neighborhood or walkable community. Recreational activities may include both passive and active uses such as basketball or tennis courts and play equipment. Passive uses include open play areas. Passive recreational facilities may include nature trails, picnicking facilities, shelters, park benches, environmental-, cultural-, or historic interpretive facilities, and parking.

Open Space Parks and Undeveloped Parks are identified as available for passive outdoor recreation, offering trails for viewing, parking and other limited improvements. Open space and undeveloped parks often allow for passive recreation opportunities in the form of sightseeing, picture taking, picnicking, beachcombing and other activities.

Special Use Park Lands are acquired to provide for activities that have specific needs that may or may not be compatible with other uses. Examples include golf courses, off-road vehicle facilities, or shooting ranges.

LEVEL OF SERVICE

Park Classification Needs

Park Classifications	Standard (acres/1000 people)
Regional Parks	10.45 /1000
Community Parks	.77 /1000
Neighborhood	.08 /1000
Open Space & Undeveloped	7.7 /1000
Special Use Park Land	N/A
Total	18.75 /1000

Park Inventories			
Existing Inventory	Year 2010 Demand*		Need 2010
Park Classifications	Acres	Acres	Acres
Regional	540	1295	755
Community	49	95	46
Neighborhood	1	9.9	8.9
Opens Space & Undeveloped	1085	954	0
Total	1675	2354	679

* Based on a 2010 population of 123,900

Demand and Need for Park Facilities

Regional Parks

Current Situation (acres/pop.)	5.14/1000
Aggregate LOS (acres/pop.)	10.45/1000
Aggregate acres/105,000	1097 acres
SCPR Existing Acreage/105,000	540 acres
Need/Difference in Acreage (2003)	557 acres
Projected SCPR Need (2010)	755 acres

Community Parks

Current Situation (acres/pop.)	.45/1000
Aggregate LOS (acres/pop.)	.60/1000
Aggregate acres/105,000	63 acres
SCPR Existing Acreage	49 acres
Need/Difference in Acreage (2003)	14 acres
Projected SCPR Need (2010)	25 acres

Neighborhood Parks

Current Situation (acres/pop.)	.01/1000
Aggregate LOS (acres/pop.)	.04/1000

Aggregate acres/105,000	4.2 acres
SCPR Existing Acreage	1 acres
Need/Difference in Acreage (2003)	3.2 acres
Projected SCPR Need (2010)	4.3 acres

Open Space

Current Situation (acres/pop.)	10.3/1000
Aggregate LOS (acres/pop.)	7.70/1000
Aggregate acres/105,000	808.5 acres
SCPR Existing Acreage	1085 acres
Need/Difference in Acreage (2003)	(276.5) acres
Projected SCPR Need (2010)	0 acres

38