

**Skagit County Planning Commission  
Public Hearing: 2017–2022 CFP and TIP  
September 20, 2016**

**Commissioners:** Josh Axthelm, Chair  
Annie Lohman, Vice Chair  
Kathy Mitchell  
Martha Rose  
Tammy Candler  
Tim Raschko  
Kathy Jett (absent)  
Amy Hughes (absent)  
Hollie Del Vecchio (absent)

**Staff:** Dale Pernula, Planning Director  
Forrest Jones, Public Works Transportation Programs Section  
Manager

**Public Remarks  
Commenters:**

Ellen Bynum, Friends of Skagit County  
Carol Ehlers  
Liz McNett Crawl

**Public Hearing  
Commenters:**

Carol Ehlers (CFP and TIP)  
Ellen Bynum, Friends of Skagit County (CFP and TIP)

**Chair Josh Axthelm:** It's Tuesday, September the 20<sup>th</sup>. Welcome to your Planning Commission and we call this meeting to order (gavel). Are there any changes to the agenda from the Commissioners?

**Several Commissioners:** No.

**Chair Axthelm:** So with that we'll go ahead and go on to the first item on the agenda, the Public Remarks.

**Ellen Bynum:** Good evening, Commissioners. Ellen Bynum, Friends of Skagit County, Mount Vernon. I just wanted to bring a couple of things to your attention. One is that although this will probably not come before you as a matter of the way that we deal with appeals, there is a need to go back and look at the amount of lot coverage that you're going to allow on the resource lands. I know that we did this in the context of the Shoreline Master Plan and you guys came up with a percentage of coverage that would be acceptable and then a way to appeal that. In the – there's no – there appears to be no limitation on the amount of building coverage on Ag-NRL and Forest, both Secondary and Industrial, and we feel that that needs to be addressed in some way in the Comprehensive Plan and in the code. So Friends has always in the past preferred to have the people that are the owners of the land and the users of the land give recommendation to the County about the use of that land. So if you have some ideas about that or opinions about

that, or you attend resource management groups, or you represent resource managers in some way, I think the County would appreciate hearing that because that's something that we'd like to bring up as a second Comprehensive Plan amendment for the next round.

The second thing is is that I've had the – I had to change my hat and become a tour guide for a few weeks, and in the process of going to Vashon Island and to San Juan Islands on a ferry as opposed to in a sailboat, which I usually do, I was struck by the fact that an inordinate amount of time is spent with people coming and going from that place, and I had no idea that Vashon now has a population of 10,000. I also took a look at their plans because I was thinking we really ought to plan differently for islands. They are different in the way that they operate. Their economies are different. The way people use the land is different. And to a large degree both of those places have done a different kind of planning. But they've also taken wholesale a lot of things from urban areas and put it right down onto the islands and said that's okay. I'm saying this because I really think we have to look at Fidalgo Island and Guemes Island, and to a lesser degree the other islands that are less populated that are in Skagit County. And we might want to be thinking about having the citizens on the island give input much like they did for the subarea plan. And then we want to go back and look and see if that's the best way for us to manage transportation and the other things that we have a responsibility to coordinate with the island economies. So I don't know that we've ever done that in the county. I went back and looked. I don't think we had a – we've always had the Guemes Subarea Plan – well, for 20 years, right? But in the instance of the other pieces – like technically Fidalgo is attached. It's not really an island. But when you think of it, the ecosystem functions just like it does on Vashon or other places. So I just thought I'd bring that to you as something that might come up in the future and an approach that you might want to take for, you know, the next Comp Plan update. Thanks.

Chair Axthelm: Thank you.

Carol Ehlers: Carol Ehlers, Fidalgo Island. Thank you, Ellen! We did have such a plan produced by Skagit County in 1975. I have a copy. It actually looks at islands as places that are surrounded with saltwater and that saltwater shorelines and saltwater issues and the complete lack of a river in it make a difference in how you operate and what's there or what isn't there. So I didn't know you were going to bring this up but I'm so glad you did.

What I came to talk about is something very positive that I have discovered this last week going through two documents. The Capital Facilities Plan, which is not just a Skagit County big government capital facilities plan but all the junior taxing districts' capital plan. And I've gone through this, the updated publication by the Assessor's office on property tax measures. And anyone who wants to understand how this government is organized in this county should, when they pay their taxes, get a receipt that identifies exactly what taxing districts they are paying into, and then look at the capital facility – look in this document and find out what levy code it is – they'll see it elsewhere – and then the capital facilities, and you'll understand why when this state unraveled economically with the SST failure in 1973 why the state didn't completely collapse the way a lot of other states are doing so now. If you look at articles like "The Great Unravelling" that the *Wall Street Journal's* putting out on Fridays and what the *New York Times* is producing, as well as the others, there are many things which are needed for a society to survive that we take care of through junior taxing districts. If there's a need for a levee, it created a dike district. You organize it. You have three commissioners that you elect. You have a tax base that the government will collect for you and you use it for that specific purpose. Other states don't seem to have this. And what a difference it makes when the big company collapses, as the SST did – Boeing – in 1971, '72. And I don't think most of us appreciate what you can learn about the government because it's very – if you've got 71 taxing districts in a place this

size, then you can talk about the services and what services you have that government provides and what you don't. So I'd like to share that discovery with you because it has changed my entire appreciation of how this state is organized.

Liz McNett Crowl: Good evening. Liz McNett Crowl. Tonight I wanted to share with you an opportunity to volunteer as part of a group that are documenting or demonstrating that there are bicyclists and pedestrians in our county. The 2016 bicycle and pedestrian counts will be held on September 27<sup>th</sup> through the 29<sup>th</sup>. The Council of Governments Non-Motorized Advisory Committee is recruiting volunteers to assist with counting the bicyclists and pedestrians at locations throughout the county. This is part of the Washington State Department of Transportation State Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project. It's the third year that we will have participated in Skagit County.

So the counts are done over the three-day period, 27<sup>th</sup> through the 29<sup>th</sup>, with counts conducted between 7 a.m. and 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Volunteers work at a location that they can select online and they enter the data on very easy-to-follow data sheets that are then turned in to the state. Each location is counted for one morning and one afternoon shift and volunteers can count as many shifts as they like. So there are count sites in Sedro-Woolley, Mount Vernon, Burlington, La Conner, Anacortes, and unincorporated Skagit County.

So to volunteer, a person can register online and that is at [www.wsdot.wa.gov/bike/count.htm](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/bike/count.htm). It's on the postcard that (I) provided to you this evening, and they can register now. If they have any questions they could contact Gabe Philips at the Skagit Council of Governments, and his phone number is 360-416-6678. So I'm hoping that you will come out on the 27<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>, and 29<sup>th</sup> and help us document bicyclists and pedestrians in Skagit County.

Chair Axthelm: Thank you. Any other comments?

(silence)

Chair Axthelm: So with that we'll move on to the public hearing for the 2017–2022 Capital Facilities Plan and Transportation Improvement Program. Dale?

Dale Pernula: Okay, what I have on the screen right before you is the Capital Facilities Plan for 2017 to 2022. It's with the track changes, and I hope you look at that when you're reviewing the document because that shows what is in our current Capital Facilities Plan and what the changes are. Now the Capital Facilities Plan includes by reference the Transportation Improvement Program, which is a large portion of it, and Forrest Jones in a few minutes will make a presentation on the TIP. But I'll just go over a little bit in the Capital Facilities Plan right now.

First of all, remember that the CFP will still be open for written public comment through Thursday at 4:30, and so we will not be able to deliberate tonight. We can deliberate a little bit later. Also because there are some other jurisdictions that have input into our Capital Facilities Plan, one of which – Burlington – will be holding a hearing on their CFP later this week. Mount Vernon just took action on it last week. We're going to be possibly including some minor amendments based on what they've adopted in the near future. Either those will come back to the Planning Commission for some additional hearing and comment, or those, if they're fairly minor, we can have those covered by the Board of County Commissioners. The Board of County Commissioners will hold a public hearing on the CFP, probably in – somewhere around the end of November. It's adopted as part of the budget.

So if you've taken a look at this, you can see that most of the changes are eliminations from the CFP. The reason why those eliminations are occurring is because in our recent update of the Comprehensive Plan these issues have been covered in the Comprehensive Plan and don't need to be covered in the annual Capital Facilities Plan.

There are some – actually quite a few, particularly on County facilities – some changes in the numbers. It's just better information. The County owns lots of buildings. They've had little additions here and there, plus we've done a better inventory, so a lot of that data's being updated.

And I would say that's the main part of the update at this time, and we can go over any questions that you may have on it.

(silence)

Mr. Pernula: Okay, now I'll turn it over to Forrest Jones.

Forrest Jones: All right. Thank you, Dale. Forrest Jones, Skagit County Public Works Transportation Programs Section Manager. I'd also like to give a warm welcome to Mr. Keith Elefson. He's new with Public Works. He's my new boss so I can't screw up tonight. Keith is the Engineering Division Manager.

So as Dale stated, I'm here to give a presentation on the Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program, so for 2017 through 2022. So I'll refer to it in my presentation as the TIP. So basically what is the Transportation Improvement Program, or the TIP? Basically it's looking into the future. We're trying to plan for future projects, trying to figure out what are the County's needs. This plan is linked and should be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan that we just updated. It includes roads, bridges, other transportation facilities, construction projects, non-motorized. RCW requires that we have a public hearing, at least one public hearing. We typically have two. We have one in front of the Planning Commission and we'll have another one in front of the Board of County Commissioners. And I also hold a public hearing – or an open house. I held it on September 15<sup>th</sup> and I apologize because the ad got kind of messed up. It was supposed to be advertised twice and it only got advertised the day of, so I apologize for that mess-up.

What is the TIP? It's a mid-range planning tool for state- and federally-funded projects, as well as regionally significant projects. TIP's used by counties, the state, the cities, to coordinate upcoming future transportation projects. It also provides the state and federal agencies – if we have grant funding, it allows them to kind of dole out their grant funding so they know what we're going to be wanting and what year so they don't come up short in the bank. State law requires the TIP – the County complete the TIP by the end of December and it must be adopted before the County budget.

The proposed 2017–2022 TIP has a total of 42 proposed projects. Three of the projects are new projects being considered, 39 are projects that will remain or be carried over from last year's TIP, and four projects are being removed. The three projects being considered are the Bay View Edison Joe Leary Slough Bridge. That project will replace the deck on the bridge and we'll be going after federal bridge grant money. And that's one of the requirements on some of these projects – that they have to be on the TIP in order for you to qualify for grant funding.

The second one is the Guemes Ferry Trail. This is a trail from the ferry landing on Guemes Island and it would go to the Schoolhouse Park. I believe it's 1.5 miles in length. This is a community-driven trail. They're fund-raising, they're getting volunteers, and it will – there's enough – luckily there's enough right-of-way on probably 80% of the trail that it can be built within the county right-of-way. So there will probably be some right-of-way needed but, again, the community's working with property owners to figure that out.

The last one being added is the Lafayette Road. This is part of the Raspberry Ridge housing development just outside of Burlington. Basically what it would do, it would widen the road, add a center turn lane and sidewalks basically from, I believe, it's Gardiner Road to the corner – there's a sharp corner. I think it's Gardiner Road. I may be wrong. Keith's looking at me strange so.... Basically it's a housing apartment – I think some apartments are being built. The Housing Authority's involved, the City of Burlington's involved, and the County's involved with it. Basically adding sidewalks and improving the road – curving better.

Thirty-nine projects will remain or be carried over from last year's TIP. Basically some of the highlighted ones are the Burlington Northern Overpass Replacement Project. We're at 100% design on that project. We're looking for approval from the state to obligate our construction funds, so we're hoping to go out to bid late this year, within the next month or two. Now that being said, if we do obligate – that's kind of one of the craziest things about the TIP – if you do obligate for construction this year, this would actually fall off of the TIP. So for right now we haven't obligated so it's on the TIP. So basically obligation means we're going to go to construction, we're going to build it, so the TIP is a planning tool so it's no longer being planned. It's a reality.

Another one is the Bow Hill Road Construction. We're hoping to finish up design on that. We're about 80%. We have to do some wall design, plus we have to coordinate that with the Burlington Northern Overpass because the Bow Hill Road is going to be the detour route. So we can't start Bow Hill until we open up the Burlington Northern Overpass. Francis Road Section 1, that's from SR 9 to Debay Isle Road. Basically we'd be widening and improving the road. We're trying to coordinate with the state on their Francis Road intersection project so (we) make sure we kind of don't step on each other's toes.

Josh Wilson Road Phase 1. Josh Wilson Road, we have some issues with the road base on that. Some of the old-timers tell me it was built on a peat bog so we get a lot of movement there. If you've driven it recently you kind of feel like you're slanting to one side! So we want to rebuild that road. We're starting from Avon Allen to the base of the hill, and the reason we're starting there because that's the worst section. So basically we'll try to move that road over, widen it, put in wider shoulders on it. We've actually got funding for that. We have – we're starting the engineering. We started the design. We've hired a geotechnical engineer on that. We got construction funding through SCOG. I think we have 1.3 million dollars that's programmed for 2019, so hopefully we'll get going on that soon.

Some of the projects being removed: the Cook Road Signal Advance Warning, Dodge Valley Road Barrier Protection and the Hard Creek Bridge, Old 99 Illumination. Hard Creek Bridge was completed earlier this year. That's up Cascade River Road if you go up there. It was damaged by a slide so we got that fixed/replaced. We got money through the Federal Lands Access Program. Old Highway 99 North Illumination, that was Safety funds through the federal grant, as are Cook Road and Dodge Valley Road Barrier. Now some of you may be thinking why are – you know, the Cook Road and Dodge Valley, those projects haven't even been completed yet. They still need to be constructed. They will be constructed this year, and as I was talking about

earlier, we obligated the construction funds so because we've obligated construction it drops off of the TIP.

Here's a map of the projects. It's kind of hard to read. I've got a big map back there, so if you want to go back there and take a look at it after the meeting here you're welcome to. I also have handouts of the TIP and a comment sheet if anybody wants to make comments.

So at my public open house I held on the 15<sup>th</sup>, we did have some general comments by the group. It was – a lot of it was to improve communications with WSDOT on their projects and a lot of people are finding it difficult to submit comments to the state so they're looking for a better avenue than – that's available, I guess. Another issue brought up was the trails – trail safety. People want to see some sort of system. People are out on the Cascade River Road, or the Cascade Trail and they get hurt or whatever, they want a way for the first responders to respond to a trail location.

Also I had a comment about improving planning for Fidalgo Island as traffic and growth occur along SR 20. I know there's a few projects going on. On Sharpe's Corner intersection, I believe, a roundabout. I think they're talking about one on Gibraltar, there at Gibraltar and 20 also. There's some concerns that traffic may start taking alternate routes and so we want to make sure we get with the state and plan for those improvements if they're needed – or *when* they're needed.

I got a comment about the railroad bridge over Prairie Road and Old Highway 99 – the Burlington Northern Overpass Project. So they feel that's a long-standing concern. They'd like to see Highway 9 improvements due to the increased commercial traffic, and just improving weak points in general to the system.

So how do we determine what projects are included on the TIP? So here's – I've listed four right here. I'll go over these four and there's a few others also. So basically every year County Code requires we do road segment and intersection concurrency. So the Comp Plan calls out – we have to meet a level of service of C for all segments of road that are covered in Skagit County jurisdiction and a level of service of C for intersections, and D on some intersections if the LOS is greater than 7000 or carries freights or goods.

Basically, how do we do this? My group, the Transportation Program's group, we have an annual count program so we count the majority of our roads every year. The local roads we count every two years. We have modeling software. We plug that into the modeling software and make sure it meets concurrency. So it'll give us the Level of Service.

Another thing we look at is the Priority Array. Priority Array, by law we have to have a Priority Array that we do every two years. Basically what this does, it takes all that count data, it takes crash data, looks at roadway conditions, the geometrics – is it a road of local significance or importance? Basically we run that through a program. It spits out a number and says, Okay, the high number means let's start looking at it. So we look at that. So, like, there's a couple roads – there's some projects on the TIP that we pulled out of here. Some of those are Cook Road-Old Highway 99 intersection. That's on the TIP. Bow Hill Road, Francis Road – those are all on the TIP.

We also look at the Annual Bridge Report. I just happen to be the lead bridge inspector so I also go out and inspect all the bridges. We put together an Annual Bridge Report every year. We present that to the Board usually in February after we get everything put into it. So basically the

report documents those findings and also it helps us determine what bridges are in need. So the Bay View Edison Joe Leary Slough Bridge, basically we inspected it and found the deck to be deteriorating, so we added that to the TIP because we need to replace that deck.

Another thing we look at, we get with Rachel, our ferry manager. She puts together every year a 14-Year Capital Improvement Plan so we work with her to see what needs to be upgraded on the ferry or the landings.

Other sources: We work with Parks. We've talked to Parks about their non-motorized projects, trails, what they feel needs to be on the TIP, if they have any new projects. We receive input from data – or input from citizens. Basically we have 800 miles of roadway so it's hard for us to be out everywhere in one place so we rely heavily on citizens and get input from them. We look at crashes, safety, grants. A lot of grants are – they put a grant out for a specific things, like for bridges off maybe for non-motorized or for safety. So we look at those grants: Do they meet a need for the county? So we just don't want to go applying for a grant just to apply for a grant. So if there's a need then we'll look at it and we'll apply for it.

So here's a picture of the – an example of the state TIP sheet that we fill out. So basically this is online. I have to go online and fill these all out. This can be difficult to read. And, again, back there I did provide kind of a key, kind of let people know what certain things mean. You can see, like, right there on top, their Functional Class – that's basically the type of road: Is it urban arterial? Is it a major collector? A minor arterial? That number depicts what type of road it is. In the middle there you've got funding status. Basically, S means Secured or P means Planned. If it's S that means we have the funding secured. If it's P, it's planned funding. We're looking for funding or proposed funding. So we're applying for grants – stuff like that.

There at the bottom you see Expenditure Schedule. You've got PE, RW, CN. Those are just short – PE, Plans and Engineering; RW's Right-of-Way, CN's Construction. Expenditure Schedule – that's just the year we're planning on spending that money. There on the far right, Funding by Agency – that just tells you where the funds are coming from or where we're looking for the funding. So you got state funds, County funds, federal funds. And the state funding code? That's just where the pot of money's coming from. There's just too many. I can't list them all. So if you see one and you don't know what it is, feel free to give me a call and I'll let you know.

And I also provided you guys with a summary – a little easier to read. It's a little spreadsheet. It knocked the TIP down from 50-something pages to four pages.

Our adoption schedule: On August 15<sup>th</sup> I released preliminary release to SCOG for inclusion in the Regional TIP. They have to have theirs – our TIP's not – it's kind of weird because our TIP's not due till December, but their TIP is due in the end of August so we just give them a preliminary so they can include some of our stuff. Now if we have something that changes, I let Gabe know over at SCOG and he makes the changes in his TIP.

September 1<sup>st</sup> I submitted to the Planning Commission for their review and comments. I submitted it to Planning and hopefully they submitted it to you guys. September 15<sup>th</sup> we held a public meeting to take comments and questions from the public. That was last Thursday. And again we had a little screw-up in our ad that we ran. It was supposed to run Wednesday and Thursday and it only ran Thursday. And I know Carol wanted to be there so I gave Carol a call and apologized to her and let her speak her piece to me.

Ms. Ehlers: Yes, you did. Thank you.

Mr. Jones: And tonight, September 20<sup>th</sup>, we're having a public hearing in front of you guys, so then after this I'll do a – usually I'll do a work session with the Board. Just kind of go over the same things I'm going over with you guys. Then we'll schedule the final public hearing in front of the Board. Typically that happens – it has to happen before the budget's adopted so a lot of times it happens the same time as the Capital Facilities is approved and adopted, so we kind of try to run those two together, so typically in December.

Where can you find the TIP? There's a link or a web address right there. You can basically go on to Public Works and the Engineering Department and the Transportation Programs and there's a link there, or you can contact me. I'd be more than happy to send you a copy of it or have one ready for you to pick up. There's the website. See the top arrow's pointing to the draft TIP where it is right there – Transportation Programs. That's basically where you find it.

And I got a lot of questions at the public hearing about the state and comments, so I kind of did a – looked around and tried to help everybody out a little bit. So staying in touch with WSDOT. So you can actually – if you go online, I listed the website down there. You can sign up for e-mail updates from the state. They have over 200 different things you can sign up, from traffic alerts to projects to whatever. It's just mind-boggling how much stuff they have. So basically you give them your e-mail, you tell them what you – you go and click what you want, and then they'll send you e-mail. I got an e-mail today about the Sharpe's Corner public hearing they're having there on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, I believe.

If you don't like to get e-mails, you can go on to their website. This is the northwest region homepage. So the northwest region includes Skagit County. Basically they have news. You can see news there. Where the arrow's pointing, that's the Sharpe's Corner. You click on that and it'll tell you about the public meeting that's happening.

You can also go to Projects. If you go onto their – you see like right up along the top there? Basically hit that right there. You go onto the WSDOT homepage, hit Projects. It'll bring up the webpage. You can search by index. Hit Skagit County. You know, it'll give you a list of all the state projects going on. Right there it got a little arrow there at Sharpe's Corner Vicinity Interchange. You click on that and it brings up a page of the – it tells you all about the project, where it is. It has a place where you can click on to give comments. So and I did print this. I printed this up and I printed up the Francis Road SR 9 project. I've got them back here, if anybody wants to grab a sheet.

So that concludes my presentation, so does anybody have any questions?

Kathy Mitchell: Nice job!

Mr. Jones: All right. Thank you, guys.

Chair Axthelm: Thank you. Thank you for providing the – was that the summary? That was great, and having the key for the WSDOT documents.

Mr. Jones: You're welcome.

Chair Axthelm: That was excellent. Thank you.

Annie Lohman: And I really like the spreadsheet format. It's very easy to follow.

Ms. Mitchell: Would you go ahead – on your way out, do you mind passing up those Francis Road and the Sharpe's Corner thing, Forrest, please?

Mr. Jones: Sure.

Chair Axthelm: Any other comments from the Planning Department? Okay. Commissioners, do you have any general questions before we open up the hearing?

Ms. Mitchell: Thank you for these, too. We know we'll get questioned about that.

Chair Axthelm: Okay, so we have two different sign-up sheets, one for the Capital Facilities Plan and one for the Transportation Improvement Program. So we'll just cover each one in order – each one in that order. And on the Capital Facilities Plan Update we have Carol Ehlers and Ellen Bynum.

Ms. Ehlers: Carol Ehlers, West Fidalgo Island. The Capital Facilities Plan is a good document.

Ms. Lohman: Carol, can you –

Chair Axthelm: Carol, hold on a second. Timing – because we have so few people here, do we want to give them – typically we have three minutes –

Ms. Mitchell: Just let them go.

Ms. Lohman: Okay.

Chair Axthelm: Does five minutes sound good?

Ms. Ehlers: Have I lost one of my minutes?

Ms. Mitchell: No!

Chair Axthelm: No, no. No, we haven't started yet.

Ms. Mitchell: We're trying to get you some more.

Chair Axthelm: I think if we started at five and then if they have additional after that, we could add it on. Okay. Go ahead, Carol.

Ms. Lohman: Sorry, Carol. Sorry about that.

Chair Axthelm: So five minutes.

Ms. Ehlers: Thank you. The document is so good that I don't really need that much time. Apparently it's the third year it's been done and the third year, I think, in many ways is the charm. But I didn't realize until I looked at this book that you've left the libraries off. There are four libraries that should be on this Capital Facilities Plan and maybe they are, but I didn't see them. Another four districts, you see, that deal with the problem. It's a wonderful document for understanding how this county functions and recognizing why it *does* function.

Now the text was taken out. That's fine. When it's online, please, Dale, do the kind of thing that Ryan has been doing with other documents. Have a direct link from the text in the Comp Plan that talks about capital facilities to the Capital Facilities so that it's easy to get from the one site to the other, and then have it so it's easy to get back. We're not all geniuses when it comes to the Net. As a matter of fact, I've discovered in talking to people this last couple of weeks that about half of us are Net people and the other half are paper people, so that leads me to a request. Please do what the solid waste management committee did a couple of weeks ago and put a paper document – in this case, this one which is finished – put it in the city libraries so that people can find it and they can compare one piece of paper, one hunk of information, with another. When we get to the 2050 and everybody will have grown up reading mostly on the Net and forgetting how to read books, then you can forget the paper people. We'll be dead. But please – it improves public relations. I think one of the main difficulties in this election is that, from what I read, people can't find out what they want to know and they can't find out how to do what they want or think needs doing. It takes a lot of reading. But when you get down to the unravelling of America, that's a lot of what the problem seems to be. So what we can do here to prevent that unravelling – because we've had it here. We had it with Boeing. Anacortes had it after the Second World War when all the factories disappeared. Sedro-Woolley's still in it now. The loss of Northern State, the loss of the timber with the spotted owl, the loss of McIntyre – boy, that's hit that city. And it takes a lot longer to recover from a depression than most of us – even most historians don't know and the rest of us are kind of sunk.

So that's my compliment on the plan. Isn't it nice to hear how good it is? But find the libraries. Thank you.

Chair Axthelm: Thank you.

Ms. Bynum: Ellen Bynum, Friends of Skagit County, Mount Vernon. I assume you want both the Capital Facilities Plan and the TIP at the same time, or you want one –

Chair Axthelm: Separately.

Ms. Bynum: Separately. Okay. On the Capital Facilities Plan I have a list of a few things that I think are not addressed and I'll put them in a letter because I don't have them in my head at the moment but I've been looking through there.

I like the idea of having – of eliminating the duplicate text and putting the text from the Capital Facilities Plan into the Comp Plan; however, I also want to go back to a request that we made on the Comp Plan, which is if there's any historical reference documents or lists or bibliographies of things that have to do with previous capital facilities plans, please don't eliminate them because we really, really need the history. We need to be able to understand how we approached the planning process for capital facilities earlier and we also need to address, which we haven't done at all, some way to do a future planning process for capital facilities. We don't do it essentially. We say, Oh, we have a need for a new whatever it is – community facility or a hospital or whatever – and the districts take care of their own planning. We have no coordinated visioning process for capital facilities in this county and we need to do that. We need all of the silos. We need the County to work with the various districts that have capital facilities and take a look at what we've got, because I would bet that we've only added those facilities in a process of need. We come up with the idea that we need it and then we add it, and we have no idea what it's costing us. I suspect if we did an analysis of what those things cost, we wouldn't be doing them the way we're doing it.

Ms. Ehlers: It's in here.

Ms. Bynum: Right, but it's not – people don't know about it so the Assessor's information is very useful, but I think also we need to be able to look at the old documents which, again, is a link that Ryan kindly left on the Comprehensive Plan. I would urge him to leave that on the Capital Facilities Plan to the old documents. And also possibly put in/scan in some of the Capital Facilities Plans that we have had in the past because I don't think there's – I think there's only the one on there with the track changes at the moment. It's a reference that not many people are going to look at, but if we start looking at dollars we're going to need to go back and look and see what we did with our dollars, and we don't know. There's no analysis of that, as far as I can tell.

Otherwise it's good to consolidate things. It's good to have staff that can translate into webspeak, and hopefully we can continue to do that. I just read a research paper that talks about talking to people as becoming redundant, and – because we're on our devices and we don't actually face-to-face – and I would urge the Planning Commission to continue to have workshops for – the workshop for the TIP was really good. We need – we probably could have done a capital facilities workshop to just – as a public education exercise for the citizens to know where their tax dollars are going.

So those are my comments. Thanks.

Chair Axthelm: Thank you. Okay. Anybody else?

(silence)

Chair Axthelm: Okay, so move on to the –

Ms. Lohman: Were you going to close the public hearing for that?

Chair Axthelm: No. No, they're all the same hearing. I just had them on different lists.

Ms. Lohman: Oh.

Chair Axthelm: Yeah, so Transportation Improvement Program comments.

Ms. Ehlers: How do I get it all on? I've got it. Carol Ehlers. One of the crucial things of the Six-Year Transportation Plan is that if you want – if you have a problem and you don't have the solution to that problem you may put it on the Six-Year TIP. You don't have to have it spelled out through all the years of what the process might entail eventually, but you can put it on in the beginning. Many years ago I came to the Six-Year TIP hearing and said to the group, Look – you have an absolute, dangerous mess at the intersection of Farm to Market Road and State Route 20. You have a concrete bridge, you've got the railroad, you've got – it was nightmarish. Because the County didn't know what to do, they didn't put it on the Six-Year TIP. So I said, Put it on the Six-Year TIP just as a beginning. Well, they put it on the Six-Year TIP and in less time than it takes me to tell the story money came from here and there and there and there and someplace else because everyone had been waiting for the County to put it on the Six-Year TIP. And it's a nice intersection now. I'm sure you've all noticed.

So in this case, this is State Route 20 and Fidalgo Island starts here. This is the reservation. This is the so-called Sharpe's Corner. Traffic goes on into Anacortes and traffic goes on to San Juan Islands. It's a four-lane road. When it comes to the south, it's the same old two-lane road that it was pretty much when it was put together in 1935 when the Deception Pass Bridge was built. It has driveways on it. It has a motel on it. It has a grocery store on it. It has a fire hall on it down here. And the traffic is fast. It's not regulated very well. And they – WSDOT, however meetings I've gone to, cannot tell me how many cars there are on that stretch of road from here to here. It seems to me a pretty obvious number that should be known. All they can tell us is there's 30,000 cars up here. How many are going north and south, they can't tell me. There are people in the County who can but, you see, the difficulty of transportation on this island has been considered but it hasn't been analyzed. I've looked at it. The County's looked at it. Because there's a ridge here, the people who are on this side of that ridge *must* use 20. You can't tell there's a park here and there's canyons and such, but the people who are here *must* use that highway. Anyone who wants to go fishing at Campbell Lake or Lake Erie and lives in the south must turn left either here or here. Now this isn't so dangerous because it's a twisty road, 35 miles an hour, and people actually do go 35 miles an hour. Down here it's 50 legally and they go 60. Those of us who live over here – and that's a large percentage of the population – have a choice of crossing over a road that will no longer have a gap. Think of this point. There's a stop light down here. There's a stop light up here. When this stop light goes, there's no gap. Roundabouts are continuous flow. Thousands of cars, many of them tailgating, coming down that hill at 60. People have already stopped using that intersection because they're afraid of it. So that means that if we're afraid of this, we have to go into Anacortes, through Anacortes to get to State Route 20. That means that whatever the roads are that are on Fidalgo Island the County's going to have to pay for. The City's going to have to pay for. Somebody needs to analyze the problem, not just consider it. "Consider" used to be a good word. "Reconsider" still is kind of a good word. But "analyze" is what we need for the actual use of these roads out here and the traffic and the safety. For that I would like to ask the County to see if they could make an arrangement with WSDOT and SCOG, which wants to have nothing at all to do with anything out there. I was told that by the Mayor of Mount Vernon that it's none of their business what happens here; it *is* their business what happens there. I fail to see the difference.

But I'm asking that somehow or other an analysis be done using the nature of the road; the nature of the use of the road as far as *county* people are concerned – *county* residents; the potential for hazards and ways of dealing specifically with some of those hazards. How does this fire hall, which is the big one, get across the road for the many forest fires that are over here? Because there's a fire map, too, that was done as part of the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan. And I guess what I'm asking is that please put all of the information that's available together and then see what you find that might work to make it safe *here*, not just safe *there*. They're going to put a roundabout here at Miller-Gibraltar Road. Frankly I think that's probably a good idea. That one doesn't bother me. The traffic is not that huge. The people at Miller Road now, if they want to go to work over here, have to go all the way around this road. It's not practical and it certainly isn't long-term. So please consider putting something – use Forrest's language. He understood me well when we talked. He understood the people who came last Thursday when I didn't know about it. I was reading the paper at the time the meeting occurred. And consider the safety of the 3,500 of us that live out there. It's a planning issue.

And as for the rest of it, the Six-Year TIP has always been a very effective process when it's used. Thank you.

Chair Axthelm: Thank you, Carol.

Ms. Bynum: Ellen Bynum, Friends of Skagit County, Mount Vernon. I wanted to go back and compliment Forrest and the Public Works Department on the workshop that they did, and I'd like to urge the Planning Department to do more workshops because I felt like the time that we spent discussing the proposed projects, the ones that were being removed, the need for funding – we didn't talk very much about the criteria, but we did get a pretty good understanding of if we want to have influence in the process of decision-making how to do that, including how to do the comments to WSDOT, which no one actually knew sort of how to do that. So thanks very much for putting that together. That's really helpful.

I think this speaks to also the issue of concurrency, which is a big one for Growth Management Act and the planning that we have to do on the local level. Our transportation pieces are different to urban transportation planning and we have as a model urban transportation planning. We don't have as a model rural. And so it's really important that we as rural citizens speak up and defend the things that work for us in a rural county, because by and large we don't differentiate between those two. People that are trained as planners – transportation planners – are often trained as urban transportation planners or interstate freeway designers or whatever. And the rural nature of transportation is a specialized area. We don't do much talking about it. We probably need to take a look at that. It would be great to do a workshop with somebody who is from another county who has done really good work on that kind of planning. Because unlike urban areas where you're going to put a public transportation node in an area that has the most population, in a rural area it might be more important to make sure that the roads are wide enough for the farmers to move their gear around. But we haven't done very – we haven't really made that distinction between the two. And then the interface between our Cities and our County, they're sort of like independent silos. SCOG doesn't do very much coordination on that except for funding and for if a project – one project overlaps another.

So I guess what I'm asking is, you know, we've done well. We could – we probably will need to do better in the future in terms of our coordination activities. So thanks very much.

Chair Axthelm: Okay. Are there any other comments from the public?

(silence)

Chair Axthelm: Okay. Commissioners, do you have any more comments?

Several Commissioners: No.

Chair Axthelm: So with that, we'll close the public hearing portion of the comments. Your comments are available through the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Is that right?

Mr. Pernula: Through Thursday, the 22<sup>nd</sup>, 4:30 p.m. If they want to take a look at the documents, the CF – the Capital Facilities Plan or the Transportation Improvement Plan, they're available at [www.skagitcounty.net/cfp](http://www.skagitcounty.net/cfp). And if they wish to provide those written comments by Thursday at 4:30, we would like to see as many as we can by e-mail. They're easiest to handle and distribute through e-mail. But if they do come in on e-mail, they need to be sent to [pdscomments@skagit](mailto:pdscomments@skagit) – excuse me – [pdscomments@co.skagit.w.us](mailto:pdscomments@co.skagit.w.us) (sic). We'll also take paper comments, but they must be printed on 8½ by 11 paper and mailed or delivered to – and it says “Comments on Proposed 2017–2022 Capital Facilities Plan and Transportation Improvement Program, Planning and Development Services, 1800 Continental Place, Mount Vernon, Washington 98273.” That's this building.

Chair Axthelm: Thank you. That was on the Notice of Availability on How to Comment, and that's a great – it was spelled out real nicely. Thank you. Okay. So with that, we'll close the public hearing now. Just (gavel) hit the gavel. How's that? Not to close the meeting yet. Okay, so a Department Update?

Mr. Pernula: The one thing that I've got to update is that you got an e-mail saying that we were going to take the Shoreline Master Program to the Board of County Commissioners on October 4<sup>th</sup>. That's been delayed because we want to get the Tesoro EIS project moving forward and there's still some work to be done on the SMP. So we wanted to delay the SMP, work on the Tesoro EIS, and so it's been delayed. We will let you know the scheduling of the SMP when it goes to the Board of County Commissioners.

Chair Axthelm: Okay.

Mr. Pernula: That's all I have.

Chair Axthelm: Okay. So our next meeting is scheduled for?

Mr. Pernula: Well, we don't have any items scheduled yet. We may be scheduling one to take action on the Capital Facilities Plan in the near future, but we haven't scheduled it yet. We'll see what comes in later this week.

Chair Axthelm: Okay. Thank you. All right, Planning Commissioner Comments and Announcements. Do we have any?

Martha Rose: I don't have any.

Ms. Lohman: I have a question. Dale, a while back you were soliciting dates from us to work – to meet with the County Commissioners. Are we going to do that at all?

Mr. Pernula: Well, when we were – when I was getting the dates it was in the summer and it didn't look very good. Let's get back to that and schedule a date. This might be a real good time to do it –

Ms. Mitchell: Yeah.

Mr. Pernula: – before budgeting and at a time when you don't have a lot of items on the agenda.

Ms. Mitchell: And the weather's good!

Mr. Pernula: And the weather's good for a while. We'll do that.

Chair Axthelm: Okay. Any other comments?

(silence)

Chair Axthelm: Do I have a motion?

Ms. Lohman: Move to adjourn.

Ms. Mitchell: Second.

Chair Axthelm: Okay, meeting's adjourned (gavel).