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MEMO:

To: GMA Steering Committee

From: John Coleman, AICP
Planning Director – City of Sedro-Woolley

Date: September 16, 2015

Subject: Employment projections for North Cascades Gateway Center at Sedro-Woolley UGA

ISSUE

In March of this year, GMA Steering Committee passed a resolution that recommends revisions to Countywide Planning Policy 1 ([Resolution 2015-1](#)). Policy 1 includes employment growth allocations for the County and each jurisdiction between 2016 and 2036. The allocation that the Steering Committee recommended includes an employment increase in Sedro-Woolley of 1,572 jobs between 2016 and 2036. Subsequent to the analysis that led to Sedro-Woolley's recommended employment allocation, the North Cascades Gateway Center (Northern State Campus) project emerged.

The number of jobs expected at North Cascades Gateway Center is being studied as part of the Planned Action Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) currently under development. At the completion of the environmental review process, the EIS will specify the number of anticipated jobs at the campus, as well as outline the anticipated mitigation necessary to avoid significant impacts of an employment center at North Cascades Gateway Center. The EIS reviews the anticipated impacts of a no-action alternative, a medium impact alternative (alternative 2) and a higher impact alternative (alternative 3). The number of projected employees is 1,950 employees for alternative 2 and 2,855 employees for alternative 3.

The North Cascades Gateway Center represents a major employment shift to the Sedro-Woolley urban growth area that was not anticipated at the time the Technical Advisory Committee analyzed the 20 year employment forecasts. It is now evident that the employment projection for Sedro-Woolley is significantly low and should be increased to reflect the positive change in the City's economic outlook.

The City of Sedro-Woolley requests that the GMA Steering Committee recommend an additional 2,855 employees be added to Sedro-Woolley's employment allocation in Countywide Planning Policy 1. If approved, the recommendation will increase the Sedro-Woolley UGA employment allocation from 1,572 new jobs between 2016 and 2036 to 4,427 in the same time period. The requested change will allow Sedro-Woolley to adequately plan for the anticipated impacts of the expected growth at the North Cascades Gateway Center.