



# Skagit County Planning & Development Services

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## Supplemental Staff Report #3 (Sedro-Woolley UGA; Transportation Technical Appendix)

To: Planning Commission

From: Kirk Johnson, AICP, Senior Planner, Team Supervisor, Project Manager

Re: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update: Modified Recommendations on Sedro-Woolley UGA and Transportation Technical Appendix

Date: May 16, 2016

This memo provides modified Department recommendations on the Sedro-Woolley UGA and the Transportation Technical Appendix for the Planning Commission's deliberations on those two items scheduled for Tuesday, May 17<sup>th</sup>.

### Sedro-Woolley UGA

At the County's request, the City of Sedro-Woolley provided additional information regarding their proposed Urban Growth Area expansion (Exhibit 1). According to our previous analysis, the Department recommended that the UGA expansion request of 149.3 acres be reduced to 130 acres ([Supplemental Staff Report #1](#), RC-20, p. 23).

Having reviewed the new information, the Department now agrees with the City. Due to the amount of existing development in the expansion area, and because the power line precludes some of the area from residential development, the full 149.3 acre UGA should be approved as requested. The Department makes the following revised recommendation:

- RC-1. Recommend approval of the full 149.3-acre northern UGA expansion area, based on the further analysis provided by the City of Sedro-Woolley identifying what portion of the northern area is not available for future development.*

### Transportation Technical Appendix

During the May 10 deliberations, the Department explained that we were continuing to work with Public Works and Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) staff to ensure that the Transportation Element and Technical Appendix contains a 20-year finance plan that meets the GMA requirements in RCW 36.70A.070(6)(a)(iv)(B). This is important so that SCOG can certify the County's Transportation Element as being consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan and state law.

Through those discussions, we determined that not all projects identified in the Technical Appendix as being on the 6-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) will likely be funded in that time period. Some are more likely to be funded in the intermediate term (7 – 12 years) and others in the final portion of the 20-year planning period.

Identifying those projects in the Transportation Technical Appendix as all being funded in the first six years of the plan did not appear to SCOG to be a reasonable financial assumption. Within the context of GMA, near-term transportation projects require a higher level of funding certainty than is required in a 20-year transportation plan.

By contrast, identifying those projects as part of the County's 20-year transportation plan – which is more realistic – allows potential funding shortfalls to be addressed more generally, as they are in the discussion of prioritization and funding options toward the end of the finance section of the Technical Appendix.

The 6-year TIP must be consistent with the County's 20-year plan; however, there is no requirement that the 6-year TIP be included in the 20-year plan. Therefore, the simple solution is to identify the list of transportation projects contained in Exhibit 38 of the Transportation Technical Appendix as the County's 20-year project list, and to analyze the financing of those projects over 20 years.

*RC-2. The Department recommends removing references to the 6-year TIP and to the 2016-2021 vs. 2022 – 2036 time periods from the narrative, project list, and tables in the finance section (Sec. 8) of the Transportation Technical Appendix. Instead this section should reference the County's 20-year transportation plan and projects and the 20-year planning period 2016-2036.*

*RC-3. In coordination with Public Works, the Department also recommends moving four of the non-motorized projects that are more conceptual in nature from the Project category to the Study category; and replacing estimated project costs with estimated study costs. These projects are:*

- a. Bicycle Route 5 (Coast Millennium Trail), \$200,000 study
- b. Burlington to Edison Multi Model Pathway (Tiger Trail/Coast Millennium Trail), \$200,000 study
- c. US Bicycle Route 13 (~~Centennial Trail~~ ~~Cascade Trail~~), \$200,000 study
- d. US Bicycle Route 10 (Cascade Trail), \$200,000 study.

*RC-4. Additionally, project #38 in the Study list, currently labelled South Skagit Highway Realignment, should be renamed South Skagit Highway Mill Creek Savage Creek Habitat Restoration; and should be moved to the Project list, with a reduced price tag of \$10 million.*

The dollar totals in several of the tables in the Transportation Technical Appendix should be revised accordingly. Some corresponding changes would also need to be made to the transportation finance discussion in the Transportation Profile. However, none of the above requires changes to any policies in the transportation chapter of the Comprehensive Plan or the Transportation Technical Appendix.