

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2016 UPDATE  
COMMENTS/TESTIMONY RECEIVED JUNE 9 through JUNE 23, 2016**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Topic(s)</b>	<b>Method</b>
Adams, Brian & Semrau, John	Skagit County Parks & Rec	Trails, Public Health, Open Space	Letter (6/23/16)
Anderson, Rev. Robert		Guemes	Email (6/23/16)
Andrak, MJ; LeMieux, LU; & Steele, Lorrie	Guemes Ferry Trail Committee	Guemes	Email (6/22/16)
Baumert, David W.		Guemes	Email (6/23/16)
Benjamin, Max		Guemes	Testimony + email (6/21/16)
Blacken, Lars		Guemes	Email (6/21/16)
Bravinder, Phyllis		Guemes	Email (6/22/16)
Brown, Michael C.	GIPAC	Guemes	Email (6/22/16)
Burdock, Joseph		Guemes	Email (6/23/16)
Bush, Allen		Guemes	Testimony
Bynum, Ellen	FOSC	Concurrency, GMA Trailing Issues, Process, Maps, Appendices, Multiple Policy & Code Issues	Testimony + letter (6/23/16)
Clark, Michael & Hendrickson, Kristy J.		Guemes	Email (6/19/16)
Crowl, Liz McNett		Non-Motorized Transportation, Open Space, Process	Testimony + email (6/23/16)
Cunningham, Brenda		Non-Motorized Transportation, Open Space	Email (6/23/16)
Darvill, Ginny		Open Space, Non-Motorized Transportation	Testimony
Davis, Donna		Guemes	Email (6/22/16)
Davis, Gary	GIPAC	Guemes	Email (6/22/16)
Dolph, Ivar & Phyllis		Open Space	Email (6/17/16)
Doran, Molly	Skagit Land Trust	Non-Motorized Transportation, Open Space	Testimony + email
Dunlap, William W.		Non-Motorized Transportation, Open Space	Testimony + email (6/20/16)
Ehlers, Carol		Process, MRO	Testimony
Erbstoeszner, Marie & John MD		Public Health, Non-Motorized Transportation, Open Space	Testimony + email (6/22/16)
Estes, Brian		Non-Motorized Transportation	Email (6/20/16)
Everett, Bill & Karen		Guemes	Email (6/21/16)

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Everett, Karen		Guemes	Testimony
Ferrel, Sequoia		Guemes	Email (6/22/16)
Fouts, Juby		Guemes	Email (6/22/16)
Fox, Nancy	GIPAC	Guemes	Testimony + emails (6/21 & 6/23/16)
Frank, Edwin		Guemes	Email (6/20/16)
Freitas, Christopher		Non-Motorized Transportation, Trails	Testimony
Fritsch, Ken		Junk Vehicles	Testimony
Garrett, Gary & Kari; Wise, Elsa		Guemes	Email (6/19/16)
Gastellum, Carolyn		Open Space, Non- Motorized Transportation, Trails	Email (6/22/16)
Good, Randy & Aileen		Non-Motorized Transportation, Trails, Freight Rail	Testimony + letter (6/23/16)
Good, Randy	FOSC	Non-Motorized Transportation, Trails	Letter (6/20/16)
Good, Shannon		Non-Motorized Transportation, Railroad Noise	Email (6/21/16)
Gray, JoAnne & Michael		Guemes	Testimony + letters (6/20/16)
Hagland, Gary		Open Space, Trails, Private Property Rights, Non- Motorized Transportation	Testimony + email (6/23/16)
Hallberg, Jeroldine		Non-Motorized Transportation, Open Space, Trails	Email (6/23/16)
Hammerly, Ramona		Open Space, Non- Motorized Transportation, Trails	Email (6/23/16)
Hanson, Jana		Non-Motorized Transportation, Open Space	Email (6/22/16)
Harma, Kit		Guemes	Testimony + email (6/22/16)
Havens, Dyvon Marie		Guemes	Email (6/22/16)
Hawes, Steve & Janise		Guemes	Email (6/23/16)
Hayes, Ramon	Mayor, La Conner	Non-Motorized Transportation	Testimony
Hinton, Jim		Overregulation	Email (6/23/16)

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Hintze, Craig		Guemes	Email (6/21/16)
Johnson, Cassie Walker; Beaumont, Jessica Walker; Brinnon, Colby; Simons, Jennifer		Guemes	Email (6/20/16)
Kirchner, Larry & Mary		Guemes	Email (6/23/16)
Kooiman, Marianne & Businger, Joost		Guemes	Email (6/23/16)
LaFollette, Jere & Sanderson, Wende		Non-Motorized Transportation, Open Space, Trails	Email (6/23/16)
Lagerlund, Nels	Agricultural Advisory Board	Setbacks	Letter (6/23/16)
Landefeld, Stewart M.		Guemes	Email (6/22/16)
Larsen, Leslie I. & Nancy A.		Guemes	Email (6/21/16)
Lee, Harold & Hella		Non-Motorized Transportation, Open Space, Trails	Email (6/19/16)
Levine, Dr. Rick		Non-Motorized Transportation, Open Space, Trails	Email (6/19/16)
Lindsay, Kathryn M.		Non-Motorized Transportation, Open Space, Trails	Email (6/22/16)
Lipscomb, Brian		Requirements for Ag-NRL Landowners/Buyers, Process	Testimony
Madden, Mark		Guemes	Testimony + letter (6/20/16) + email (6/22/16)
Malmquist, David		Guemes	Email (6/21/16)
Manns, Tim	Skagit Audubon Society	Non-Motorized Transportation, Open Space, Trails	Testimony + letter (6/23/16)
Mardesich, Jayne		Process, Guemes	FAX (6/23/16)
Matchett, Holiday		Guemes	Email (6/21/16)
McCarthy, William		Guemes	Email (6/20/16)
Melcher, Joan		Open Space, Non- Motorized Transportation, Trails	Testimony
Moe, Allen		Guemes	Email (6/23/16)
Moulton, Carolyn		Non-Motorized Transportation	Email (6/23/16)
Mullen, Valerie J.		Junk, Open Space	Emails (6/23/16)
Munsell, Bob		Guemes	Letter (6/20/16)
Murray, Diane		Guemes	Email (6/23/16)
Myers, Richard		Guemes	Email (6/22/16)

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Neilson, Dianne Elizabeth & Douglas Walter		Guemes	Testimony + email (6/20/16)
Nielson, Dianne		Guemes	Email (6/23/16)
Nelson, Forrest		Guemes	Email (6/19/16)
Nicolls, Richard T. MD & Gail Moore		Guemes	Email (6/22/16)
Nicolls, Gail		Guemes	Email (6/22/16)
Odden, Kari		Non-Motorized Transportation, Open Space, Trails	Email (6/21/16)
O'Donnell, Susan		Guemes	Email (6/23/16)
Orsini, Ginger		Guemes	Testimony
Orsini, Stephen D.		Guemes	Email (6/23/16)
Osborne, Leo E. & Lane, Jane		Guemes	Email (6/22/16)
Oullette MD, Tracy		Non-Motorized Transportation, Open Space, Trails	Email (6/17/16)
Palmer, Joan H.		Guemes	Email (6/22/16)
Passarelli, Donald & Anne		Guemes	Email (6/22/16)
Pellett, Howard	GIPOA	Guemes	Email (6/22/16)
Phillips, Wendell		Guemes	Email (6/23/16)
Pope, John		Non-Motorized Transportation	Email (6/23/16)
Rawson, Kit		Non-Motorized Transportation, Open Space, Trails	Email (6/20/16)
Ricks, Rodger		Guemes	Email (6/21/16)
Rodgers, Mike & Marcia		Guemes	Emails (6/20/16)
Rooks, Hal	GIPAC	Guemes	Testimony + email (6/22/16)
Rose, Valerie		Non-Motorized Transportation, Open Space, Trails	Email (6/19/16)
Rotton, Belinda		Non-Motorized Transportation, Open Space	Email (6/23/16)
Saver, Wendy		Guemes	Email (6/23/16)
Schmokel, Tonia R.		Guemes	Email (6/23/16)
Simons, Mark		Guemes	Email (6/20/16)
Simons, Matt & Kara		Guemes	Email (6/21/16)
Simons, Mike		Guemes	Email (6/22/16)
Snell, Constance		Guemes	Email (6/23/16)
Souders, Jim & Alice		Guemes	Email (6/20/16)
Stauffer, Ed		GMA, Process, Trails, Rural Community	Testimony + email (6/23/16)
Stewart, Joe & Margaret		Open Space, Junk Vehicles	Letter (6/22/16)

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Stinson, Rebecca (Becky) Sue		Guemes	Email (6/23/16)
Talman, Linda		Non-Motorized Transportation	Testimony
Trask, Barbara & van den Engh, Ger		Open Space, Non- Motorized Transportation	Email (6/23/16)
Ullman, Bud		Guemes	Email (6/22/16)
VanValkenburg, John & Kristen		Open Space, Junk	Email (6/23/16)
Walden, Edith		Guemes	Testimony + email (6/22/16)
Walker, Robert P. & Family		Guemes	Email (6/19/16)
Waller, Patricia		Guemes	Email (6/23/16)
Ware, Kevin; Omdal, Steven; Shuler, William	Port of Skagit	Open Space, Trails	Letter (6/17/16)
Ware, Michael	Skagit County Cattlemen's Association	Open Space, Non- Motorized Transportation, Trails, Private Property Rights, Junk Storage	Letter (6/22/16)
Wicklund, Bert		Guemes	Email (6/20/16)
Winkes, Anne		Non-Motorized Transportation, Open Space, Public Health, Property Values	Testimony + email (6/23/16)
Winkes, Ken		Non-Motorized Transportation, Trails, Open Space	Email (6/23/16)
Woolworth, Phyllis		Guemes	Email (6/23/16)
Young, Melody		Guemes	Email (6/23/16)
Zimmerman, Chris		Non-Motorized Transportation, Open Space	Email (6/23/16)

**The comments below were improperly submitted.**

Bouffiou, Cleo	Email (6/22/16)
Champeaux-Wolner, Tina	Email (6/23/16)
Clark, Edith G.	Email (6/21/16)
Cummings, Robert & Naomi	Email (6/23/16)
Downes, Dorothy	Emails (6/20/16)
Fernandez, Stephanie	Emails (6/23/16)
Gladish, Andy	Email (6/23/16)
Klinger, Nikki	Email (6/20/16)

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Lindsey, Thomas	Email (6/23/16)
Lippert, Jim	Email (6/23/16)
Macri, Martha J. & Alexander, Judy	Email (6/22/16)
Munsey, Connie	Email (6/23/16)
Ohms, Barbara & Mark	Email (6/23/16)
Orsini, Virginia	Email (6/22/16)
Pearson, Duane	Emails (6/20 & 6/23/16)
Rombeek, Susan	Email (6/22/16)
Sargent, Colleen	Email (6/23/16)
Schnabel, Barbara M.	Email (6/22/16)
Spahr, Mark & Cecilia	Email (6/22/16)
Steffy, Carol M.	Email (6/22/16)
Waller, Patsi	Email (6/18/16)



## Comprehensive Plan Comments

RECEIVED

JUN 23 2016

SKAGIT COUNTY  
PDS

June 22, 2016

Trails continue to be the most important recreational amenity we can provide the public. Trails support numerous healthy pastimes, including hiking, biking, horse riding, wildlife watching, as well as other vibrant recreational activities. From a Parks and Recreation perspective, we know how important it is to prioritize trails in our planning processes, as they are relatively inexpensive to maintain in measure to the value they provide.

With a growing amount of press coverage about illnesses attributed to expanding waistlines, physical inactivity is now widely recognized as an American health epidemic. Studies show that over a third of Americans are obese and more than half are overweight. People that are overweight or obese are at greater risk of an onset of chronic health issues, including coronary heart disease, type-2 diabetes, and cancer. Putting the epidemic into a perspective of longevity, a recent study indicates that children being born in 2015 aren't projected to live as long as those born in prior years.

The best way in which to reverse the growing obesity epidemic and increase the health of our citizens is for parks and recreation representatives to respond to surveys, use patterns, public input, and comprehensive plans by ensuring trails are prevalently provided in our community. As park and recreational providers, we must listen to the demands of the public in our jurisdictional communities. As a board, we have been involved in numerous local surveys and community forums in our community and can say with absolute conviction that trails and waterfront access continue to rank one and two respectively on the recreational needs list for the people of Skagit County. In looking at the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, we see the same survey trends i.e., (1) people want trails and, (2) the closer the trails are to the doorstep, the more likely they are to be utilized.

Open Space Lands support a network of trails in Skagit County and we believe we need to continue to expand our recreational spaces as our

1730 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

(360)416-1350 phone

<http://skagitcounty.net/offices/parks/index.htm>



population continues to increase. Open Space Lands provide recreational activities, allow for the uninhibited movement of wildlife, support habitat for the biotic community, and allow all citizens, regardless of personal resources, access to public spaces.

Skagit County Parks and Recreation strongly encourage the promotion of trails and open spaces in creating a better community for our citizens.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that appears to read "B. Adams".

Brian Adams

John Semrau

1730 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

(360)416-1350 phone

<http://skagitcounty.net/offices/parks/index.htm>

**From:** [RobertHAnderson](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update Minor correction  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 8:54:56 PM

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This was sent by deadline, but I remembered the acronym incorrectly - too many organizations on Guemes starting with GI...Should have been GIPAC, not GIPOA. Sorry. Bob Anderson

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** RobertHAnderson <[earthspiritcircle@earthlink.net](mailto:earthspiritcircle@earthlink.net)>  
**Date:** June 23, 2016 11:05:33 AM PDT  
**To:** [pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us)  
**Bcc:** Nancy Fox <[nancy@nancyfox.com](mailto:nancy@nancyfox.com)>  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update

From: Rev. Robert Anderson, 6966 Holiday Blvd. Anacortes (Guemes Island)  
360-293-3770

The sub-area plan from the duly-elected members of GIPOA has been in the pipeline for years and was developed with open meetings with all Islanders over a long period and fully transparent for any Islander who was willing to look at it. Last minute and totally-false assertions by a few Guemians trying to scuttle hard and honest work by some of the most professional, fair and informed people on Island, should not be considered credible by the Commissioners. It has been a devious and reprehensible tactic by a tiny minority on Guemes over many years to choose to avoid participating in a public discussion and decision-making and then raise unfounded and long-disproved accusations to derail the open democratic process supported by the huge majority of Islanders. Do NOT let this tactic sway you to the detriment of protecting our vulnerable Island within the Plan Update process. It is long past time for you to include the work of GIPOA in your recommendations.

Sincerely, Rev. Robert Anderson

**From:** [Mary Jo Andrak](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Cc:** [lorriesteele@yahoo.com](mailto:lorriesteele@yahoo.com); [2lemew@gmail.com](mailto:2lemew@gmail.com); [Maryam Schutz](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 4:39:59 PM

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This email is in support of the proposed Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee and implementation of Guemes Island Subarea Plan.

The Guemes Ferry Trail Committee is in full support of GIPAC and implementation of the adopted Guemes Island Subarea plan. The focus of the SAP is to protect the rural character of the island, keep a modest scale of development, and not impact the Island's sole source aquifer.

The Guemes Island Sub Area Plan is the result of 20 year planning process and involved hundreds of property owners. Implementation is a must!

Guemes Ferry Trail Committee  
MJ Andrak  
7033 Holiday Blvd  
Guemes Island, WA 98221

LU LeMieux  
7365 West Shore Drive  
GUemes Island , WA 98221

Lorrie Steele  
5521 No Name Rd  
GUemes Island , WA 98221

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [David Baumert](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** David W. Baumert, 4615 230th TER SE, Sammamish, WA 98075, 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 4:27:51 PM

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Comments on proposed 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update, Planning and Development Services,  
1800 Continental Place, Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Hi,

I would like to inform the planners that I fully support the Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee (GIPAC) and implementation of the adopted Guemes Island Subarea Plan (SAP). I urge the BoC to enact the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay as proposed.

I own a vacation cabin on Guemes island and highly value the rural character and absence of commercial development. I am also concerned that limited water resources on the island cannot support an expansion in development.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

David W. Baumert  
4615 230th TER SE  
Sammamish, WA 98075  
Phone: 425-785-7007

**From:** [Holiday Matchett](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Comprehensive Plan 2016 Update  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 21, 2016 10:05:05 PM

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Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for the meeting of Tuesday evening on June 21, 2016. I spoke about my family's life on Guemes. I feel that I did not close in an appropriate manner . I will do so in this letter. I **do** support the work of the County Staff, the Guemes Island Sub-area group and their joint accomplishment. Please accept their work and make it part of the county code.

Thank you again.

Sincerely, Max Benjamin, 6232 East Lux Sit Lane, Guemes Island, Anacortes  
Washington, 98221

**From:** [Lars Blacken](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 21, 2016 8:13:56 PM

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Hello,

My name is Lars E. Blacken, of 19712 33<sup>rd</sup> Dr. SE, Bothell, WA. 98012. I am hereby submitting my comment **opposing additional building code regulation(s) on Guemes Island.**

My family and I share a cabin at 6346 West Shore Dr. Guemes Island, WA 98221, which was built over 40 year ago and passed down to us from my grandparents. We currently do our best to use and maintain the property, and continue to enjoy the island the way it has been from those very early days.

The changes proposed are not in our best interest as they would unnecessarily dictate building criteria, limiting our options and property value. Indeed it seems that no actual benefit would or could be realized, as no homes or buildable properties are located 'behind' the impacted buildings in our area. IE the ocean view is not currently (or ever likely) obstructed.

As mentioned, we enjoy our West Beach cabin the way it has always been, and believe the building code regulations should remain unchanged accordingly.

**Lars  
Blacken**

Senior Technical Designer

+1 206 496 1936 / T  
+1 425 404 0120 / M

**TEAGUE**

**From:** [Phyllis Bravinder](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 4:11:17 PM

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Please ignore my previous email as it contained unedited aspects of my comments

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Phyllis Bravinder** <[gobravinder@gmail.com](mailto:gobravinder@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**To:** "[pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us)" <[pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us)>

1. As a landowner on Guemes Island for more than 50 years, I fully support the Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee (GIPAC). In addition, I urge the BoC to move forward with the implementation of the adopted Guemes Island Subarea Plan (SAP). For the well-being of all Guemes residents, present and future, I implore the BoC to enact the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay as proposed.

During various periods of time over those five decades of property ownership here, my (now late) husband and I were involved with Peace Corps in Africa. As often as possible we, along with our children, visited my parents who lived on Guemes Island. We all understood the importance of the community working together and the inclusion of all in the decision making process. This has taken place with GIPAC. Those who claim exclusion have chosen that for themselves. It takes effort and a serious ongoing commitment to be involved with community decisions that require an understanding of the issues at hand.

Long a landowner, I had a house built here beginning in 2007 and have been a year round resident since 2009. Living here is a joy. The peaceful nature of this island and the picturesque rural settings are incredibly special. We have seen what happens to many other areas when a lack of planning is the norm.

2. The focus of the SAP is to protect the rural character of the island, just as a major goal of County's Comprehensive Plan is to protect the rural character of Skagit County. Most houses on the island are one-and-a-half stories high. In developing the SAP, it became clear that most islanders want to keep the modest scale of development.

3. Our sole source aquifer is a critical aspect addressed through the SAP. In places where it has been necessary to install Desalination equipment, the cost can become exclusionary for many people. Guemes has residents of all income levels. With our aquifer already in a compromised state, we need to support efforts to build accordingly.

4. Many beach lots were platted for vacation camping sites or small fishing cottages and are considerably smaller than the 2.5 acre minimum required under current zoning. GIPAC has recognized this and has worked with the county to allow flexibility for homeowners wanting to build on those sites.

5. The reality to be addressed is that the Guemes Island Subarea Plan is not new. It was the result of a 20-year planning process that involved hundreds of island residents and property owners. It was adopted by the Board of Commissioners 5 years ago after an extensive public process. It is long overdue for the County to move forward with the adoption of code that implements the plan. Now is the time to put that code in place.

Respectfully,

Phyllis D Bravinder

5787 Section Ave

Anacortes, WA 98221

360-588-6556

**From:** [Michael](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 1:28:06 PM

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Dear board of Commissioners,

My name is Michael C. Brown and live at 4366 Clark pt Rd on Guemes Island. I have lived on Guemes since 2002, full time since 2006, and am writing to you about the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update now being undertaken by the county.

I have been a board member of the Guemes Island Planning Advisory Committee ( GIPAC ) for 2 years now and have been working with my fellow board members to help codify the Guemes Island Sub Area Plan, which the county approved in 2011. I joined the board because preserving the rural character on Guemes was something that I shared with the large majority of my fellow Guemians. As you probably know, we have a sea water intrusion problem here and being a sole source aquifer means that we have to be very careful as we move forward to preserve this precious resource.

When the island was platted more than 100 years ago, most of the beach front lots were small 50 foot wide lots designed for camping or small cabins. ( Keep in mind the last potlatch held here by the Samish Indians was in 1911! ). Most of the island today has 1 to 1 1/2 story houses, which helps to define its rural character. While we understand that people would like to build or remodel on their lots, keeping the building envelope in scale with their neighbors on 50 foot wide substandard lots will help to preserve that character.

The Guemes Sub Area Plan was 20 years in the making, involving hundreds of Guemes residents, who had input all along the way. it is time now for the County to move forward with the adoption of code to implement it.

Sincerely,

Michael C. Brown

**From:** [Joseph Burdock](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 3:26:07 PM

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Hello,

These comments have to do with the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update. As a resident of Guemes Island for 25 years, having raised two daughters here, and my wife is buried here, I would like your support for keeping Guemes Island rural. I urge you to adopt all proposals by GIPAC. And also adopt and pass the Guemes Island subarea plan.

Thank you,

Joseph Burdock  
5117 So. Shore Drive  
Anacortes, WA 98221.

*Friends of Skagit County*

PO Box 2632

Mount Vernon WA 98273-2632

• Common Good • Common Goals • Common Ground •

RECEIVED

JUN 23 2016

SKAGIT COUNTY  
PDS

June 21, 2016

Skagit County Commissioners  
1800 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

RE: Comments on the proposed 2016 Comprehensive Plan update and related documents.

Dear Commissioners Dahlstedt, Janicki and Wesen:

Friends of Skagit County submits the following information to you for review and consideration in your deliberations and decisions on the 2016 Comprehensive Plan (CP) update. We ask that you review our comments submitted to the Skagit County Planning Commission as well as the following concerns in making your decisions.

The comments are on the 2016 Skagit County Comprehensive Plan 2016-2036 (Public Comment Second Draft 06-09-2016 tracked version) unless otherwise referenced. The lack of comments on certain sections should not be construed as acceptance. We may submit additional informal comments if needed.

Summary of Issues

1. There appears to be no concurrency review of any proposed changes proposed for the 2016 update. Updates to the Concurrency Management System do not appear to be included.
2. It is unclear whether all of the 24 trailing issues listed in Ordinance # O20070009 that adopted the 2007 Comprehensive Plan were brought to the Planning Commission for review or addressed in the 2016 update process.
3. Editing, deleting, moving sections or adding to the proposed CP update should comply with the applicable RCWs, WACs and WWGMHB rulings.
4. Since the Shoreline Master Program (SMP) update has not yet been completed, we assume Chapter 6 – Shorelines is the currently adopted SMP. Definitions in the SMP update should be the same as those used in the CP.
5. Map changes, corrections and/or designations are incomplete.
6. Update of appendices is needed. The County should retain appendices C & D and plan to update in future CP updates.
7. Please remove the proposed 37 projects under the Economic Development Element of the plan. Most of these projects have had no public notice and review, nor has each project been analyzed for how it may contribute to and/or affect related transportation projects, both motorized and non-motorized.

[www.friendsofskogitcounty.org](http://www.friendsofskogitcounty.org)  
360-419-0988 phone

[friends@fidalgo.net](mailto:friends@fidalgo.net)  
Donate at: [www.networkforgood.org](http://www.networkforgood.org)

8. Please edit language about agriculture to reflect a wider understanding of farming practices and use USDA and other farm related data with GIS, Census and other available data. The language in the plan leaves the impression that agriculture is not a major economic driver in Skagit County.

9. Please review the attached comments (12 pages total, by page number) that Friends submitted to the Planning Commission for inclusion in the 2016 CP update.

EXAMPLE(S) FOR EACH COMMENT ABOVE:

*1. There appears to be no concurrency review of any proposed changes proposed for the 2016 update. Updates to the Concurrency Management System do not appear to be included.*

EXAMPLE(S):

The 2007 CP contained a Concurrency System under the Capital Facilities Profile (page 5 of 11). Under this the County maintained a concurrency implementation and monitoring system that included an annual report on Facility Capacities and LOS; reviewed permit applications in the UGAs; kept records of cumulative impacts of all development permits approved each fiscal year; showed changes to planned capacities; did a review of concurrency implementation policies and strategies to determine effectiveness among other factors. This does not appear to be included in the 2016 CP update.

*2. It is unclear whether all of the 24 trailing issues listed in Ordinance # O20070009 that adopted the 2007 Comprehensive Plan were brought to the Planning Commission for review or addressed in the 2016 update process.*

EXAMPLE(S):

Trailing issue #11 Review MRO (mineral resource overlay) layer, has not been addressed in the update. Clarification of conflicts between MRO and underlying zonings is not included. Also, deed corrections after MRO land is restored and not longer mined has not been addressed.

*3. Editing, deleting, moving sections or adding to the proposed CP update should comply with the applicable RCWs, WACs and WWGMHB rulings.*

EXAMPLE(S):

Staff suggested moving the Essential Public Facilities (EPF) section from the Capital Facilities Element to the Land Use Element. RCW 36.70a.070 (5) Rural Element states: "The following provisions shall apply to the rural element.... (b) Rural development....The rural element shall provide for a variety of rural densities, uses, **essential public facilities** and rural governmental services needed.....".

"A rural element must provide for a variety of rural density uses, **EPFs** and rural government services...." *Butler v. Lewis County* 99-2-0027c(FDO 6-30-00), a WWGMHB ruling. We suggest moving the EPF section to the Rural Element as required by GMA.

Subarea plans are adopted through the land use element. See *Berschauer v. Tumwater* 94-2-0002 (FDO, 7-27-94), WWGMHB ruling. The proposed 2016 update only lists Bay View Ridge in the land use element. We

suggest listing all subarea plans in the land use element and referencing Chapter 12 Implementation or moving the community plan section to the land use element.

4. *Since the Shoreline Master Program (SMP) update has not yet been completed, we assume Chapter 6 – Shorelines is the currently adopted SMP.*

EXAMPLE(S):

Changes to the SMP that modify, change or are in conflict with the Shoreline Element will need to be addressed in a future CP update.

Definitions in the SMP update should be the same as those used in the CP.

5. *Map changes, corrections and/or designations are incomplete.*

EXAMPLE(S):

Federal designation of parts of the Skagit and other rivers in Skagit County (scenic or wild and scenic) are not included in the CP zoning maps.

6. *Update of appendices is needed.*

EXAMPLE(S):

Appendix A - Definitions

We appreciate the re-writing of many of the definitions to clarify information for the reader. We request that the references to the RCWs, dates of adoption and/or other information that would enable a reader to more easily find the original laws be left in the definitions.

Appendix B – Milestones in the Comprehensive Planning Process Timeline

We suggest updating the milestones from May, 1997 to present.

Citizen Advisory Committees in the Development of the 1997 Plan

We appreciate leaving this historical information in the plan and urge an update for the 2007

Appendix C – Descriptions of Related Plans, Studies and Regulations

We strongly suggest retaining this section and appointing a CAC or staff to update for the next CP update. Staff give no reason for deletion of the information. This section provides historical information, references and information that facilitates the public's use and understanding of the CP. While not required, it provides information that enhances public participation and serves as a reference for the Planning Commission and other County staff.

Appendix D – Adopting and Amending Ordinances

Again, we strong suggest retaining this section of the proposed CP update and updating the appendix in future. Like Appendix C above, while not required, Appendix D provides information that enhances public participation and serves as a reference for the Planning Commission and other County staff.

7. *Please remove the proposed 37 projects under the Economic Development Element of the plan. Most of these projects have had no public notice and review, nor has each project been analyzed for how it may contribute to and/or affect related transportation projects, both motorized and non-motorized.*

These projects have different status as to who introduced them, how they were vetted, how they will be funded and what effect or contribution they might have to an overall transportation plan. Public Works must do a better job of creating a comprehensive plan and a process that is transparent to use in adding projects to their work list. Planning and Development Services cannot arbitrarily add projects into the Comprehensive Plan without public process.

8. *Please edit language about agriculture to reflect a wider understanding of farming practices and use USDA and other farm related data with GIS, Census and other available data. The language in the plan leaves the impression that agriculture is not a major economic driver in Skagit County.*

EXAMPLE: Page 112 Agricultural Natural Resource Lands

“Skagit County has designated an estimated 88,564 acres of land as Agricultural lands, although significantly fewer acres are in full agricultural production in any given year.”

Commented A54 – Uses GIS information to justify this statement. What happened to the zoning designation totals from parcel information? Or USDA reported acreage? Or WSU Extension annual survey information about acreage? It is inappropriate to use only one source for the total unless it is ground trothed.

We suggest saying “... fewer acres are in full agricultural production due to the rotation pattern of planting to manage pests and soil health.”

Policy 4A 1.1 Agriculture Resource Lands Designation Criteria (b) as written will prohibit the additional designation of Ag-NRL. Please add a reference to WAC 365-190-050 (6) which allows cities and counties to “classify additional agricultural lands of local importance” and describes the process for this designation. If the County wants to “mitigate” for the continuous conversion of Ag-NRL to other uses there must be a reference to the process for designating additional farmland to replace the land lost to farming.

EXAMPLE: page 316 Economic Development – Agriculture – needs re-writing.

We question the limited data chosen to produce the statements in this section. If Skagit County’s agriculture is still the largest economic driver the statement: “...While the region is well known for agriculture, as of 2013, it is no longer the county’s largest sector”. The statement “More recently, the number of small farms has increased and demand for organic, locally grown food has diversified the mix of products”. Where is the data on this? At the Population Health Data meeting the EWU consultant stated that he did not have the data on organic farms. Are these “smaller” farms being run on Ag-NRL lands or on rural lands?

The statement on page 317 “Skagit County has designated almost 90,000 acres as ag lands, though less than that is in full production in any given year.” is misleading. It would be more accurate to say “Due to rotation of the more than 80 crops grown in the valley, land may be in production for different lengths of time during any given year.”

9. *Please review the attached comments (12 pages total, by page number) that Friends submitted to the Planning Commission for inclusion in the 2016 CP update.*

We submitted detailed comments on the following issues. The Planning Commission recommendations addressed some, but not all of these concerns. The following is a partial list of items for your attention and review:

- 1) Work to identify open space lands rather than implementing the UGA Open Space Concept Plan.
- 2) Maintain C-31 until more equitable language can be created and public notice and hearing can be held.
- 3) Include references to existing plans and update appendices to ensure correct public information is in the update.
- 4) Reject additions which are not legally required or which did not fall within your scope of work, especially where additional work, public notice and review, or consultation between County Departments or cities is needed.
- 5) Clarify the process for creating the 20 Year TIP list as well as the process for the 6 Year TIP. Publish a draft process and complete public notice and review before adopting. If this includes NOT creating the Transportation Systems Plan, please say how the activities in that planning process are completed. Explain the Transportation Technical Appendix function and process.

Lastly, we ask that you consider accepting applications from citizens who wish to serve on a standing Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee whose duties include public education and information as well as creating a plan for the upcoming CP updates. With fewer staff it will be essential to involve the public more fully in planning as well as other government functions.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Should you have questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Ms. Ellen Bynum  
Executive Director

EB/

cc: FOSC Board; Skagit County Planning Commission.

*Attachments - FOSC April 14, 2016 Comments to Planning Commission  
2005 GMA Update list of "Trailing Issues"  
Ordinance # 020070009.*

*Friends of Skagit County*

PO Box 2632

Mount Vernon WA 98273-2632

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JUN 23 2016

SKAGIT COUNTY  
FDS

April 14, 2016

Skagit County Planning Commission  
Skagit County Planning & Development Services  
1800 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

COPY

RE: Comments on the proposed 2016 Comprehensive Plan update and related documents.

Dear Planning Commissioners:

Friends of Skagit County submits the following information to you for review and consideration in your deliberations and recommendations on the 2016 Comprehensive Plan (CP) update to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). The BOCC appointed the Planning Commission (PC) as the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) for the CP update. We assume you are serving as both the representatives of the citizens as well as evaluators of your own advice to the BOCC. This process is unlike when an outside CAC is appointed and you, as the PC, review their work. We therefore urge you to add information, where appropriate, to make clear in your recommendations to the BOCC when a proposed change is from the public, staff or is your own recommendation.

**General Comments**

We are submitting our own comments and some from members of the public who brought some of these parts of the CP to our attention. Should you need more or different information, please contact us.

The comments are with regard to the 2016 Skagit County Comprehensive Plan 2016-2036 (Public Comment Draft 03-04-2016 tracked version) unless otherwise referenced. The lack of comments on certain sections should not be construed as acceptance. We reserve the right to submit additional informal comments to complete this review.

The 2016 CP update process should update and clarify sections (when needed) to produce an updated plan that clearly defines allowed land uses, creates certainty for investment, protects the environment and conserves the natural resources based economy. The aim is to keep Skagit a rural county into the future while managing growth appropriately.

The timeframe for review of the CP and related documents was compromised by the Shoreline update. The County's schedule for the 2016 update should have followed the timeframe used by Anacortes for their comprehensive plan update and started the CP update in 2013. We recommend appointment of a CAC as well as citizen sub-committees for any future CP update.

Staff identification of sections (goals, headings, etc.) needing additional information, clarification of definitions and the addition of references all appear to help readers in understanding the plan. Some of the sections cited as not having goals, may be because many of the goals are written as methods to achieve a goal.

[www.friendsofskogitcounty.org](http://www.friendsofskogitcounty.org)  
360-419-0988 phone

[friends@fidalgo.net](mailto:friends@fidalgo.net)  
Donate at: [www.networkforgood.org](http://www.networkforgood.org)

Proposed Development Regulations changes were not given separate public notice or a public work session for open public discussion of the changes. While this may not be required, the concern is that the public has not had the opportunity to fully review and comment on these changes.

Goals in any Comprehensive Plan should be measurable. Citizens, staff and elected leaders have no way to determine whether the proposals included in the 2016 CP update will succeed in meeting these goals. Nor is there a way to determine if the past goals carried forward were met. Most of the goals in the 2016 CP update are from the original CP. We recommend the County consider a yearlong citizen led review of the goals to re-write them with metrics that can be replicated in future updates.

The proposed CP update is sometimes missing references to related plans and documents that are often contain essential information relating to the CP goals and policies. For example the County's Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan and the County Stormwater Plan is mentioned but without an active link in the web version. We suggest an additional appendix with links and an explanation as to how to obtain print copies of these important plans be added.

We note that a thorough and complete review of the 2016 CP update and supporting memos, transcripts of PC and BOCC meetings, referenced documents, RCWs, WACs, Federal laws and regulations and other documents was not possible in the 60 day review period. We suggest the PC consider extending the public comment period for 30 days and during that time hold work sessions that are open to the public to clarify questions.

### **Comments on Sections of the Plan**

Page 37: Please change "More and better incentives" to "Other options and incentives". Please add economic incentives to this list. Please remove the word "toolbox" and "tools" use the word "method".

Page 41 – The proposed changes to the Countywide Planning Policies (CPP) should make decisions concerning sizes and uses in urban growth areas and coordination with the cities more efficient. Note: There has been no work session or public discussion session on the CPPs.

Page 43 - [The policy further defines the process for consideration of sites for specific major industrial developments outside of urban growth areas.] (CPP 2.9). Comment – Is this a footnote to CPP 2.9? Does location of major industrial developments outside of UGAS comply with GMA?

Page 44 – How will the long-range cumulative effects of proposed uses on the environment, both on and off-site be measured?

Page 47 – Please note "(same as city/town limits) beside towns where UGAs are the same as municipal boundaries. Add also page 67.

We assume the requirements in Policy 2A-1.6 have not been met.

Page 53 – Open Space. Please see additional discussion of the SC UGA OSP further in these comments. Goal 2B Goal B Open Space - Please correct "Recognize the important functions served by private and public open space, designate and map public open space of regional importance, and designate open space corridors within and between urban growth areas." to reflect the language in the settlement. "...conserve open space areas, greenbelts and corridors within and between UGAs..." (not around).

We suggest clarification of this goal to reflect the mapping of open space proposed in Policy 2B-1.1.

According to the introduction to Open Space only public open space areas (including those of regional or statewide significance) are included on the CP/Zoning Map. The settlement agreement does not specify whether only public open spaces should be mapped. We appreciated that by not mapping open spaces such as private resource lands, the public is not misled into thinking private lands are available for public access. However by not mapping private open spaces, the County and the public does not have a full picture of the current UGA open spaces and the OS corridors between UGAs. We suggest adding language to the plan and/or code that require consulting a map and list of both public and private OS lands when parks, critical areas, trails, habitat or other OS identified projects are proposed to avoid unnecessary purchase or acquisition of OS lands by the County.

The Department of Commerce (DOC) checklist states: “**Identification of open space corridors within and between urban growth areas**, including *lands useful for recreation*, wildlife habitat, trails, and connection of critical areas.” *Emphasis added*. We assume that “recreational lands” could be open space; however this is not completely clear in the definitions.

13b. of the DOC checklist lists “... open spaces, parks and recreation, and playgrounds; and schools and school grounds. WAC 365-196-820(1).” when discussing codes for proposed subdivisions.

The Capital facilities plan identifies parks and recreational facilities that we take to mean built structures or changes to the lands created for recreational purposes. The CP should be changed to address this.

Page 54 – Ika Island is a privately owned island managed for forestry. Since the mapping for OS did not include private open space we suggest the removal of this property. Please double check the ownership of these properties.

(a) Neighborhood and community parks. These should be linked by open space networks whenever possible. Comment: There is no definition of OS networks. What does this mean? Actual physical connections, adjacent OS?

(d) Areas that take advantage of natural processes, wetlands, tidal actions and unusual landscape features such as cliffs and bluffs. Please clarify the safety, ecological and geological hazards of public access to cliffs and bluffs, public or private.

Page 55 – Implementation of the SC UGA OS plan should not occur without further editing to separate existing from the conceptual areas and further clarification to ensure private OS is considered in the future planning for acquiring OS land within and between UGAs. The plan also lacks a way to measure the effectiveness and the cumulative impacts of open space lands on the landscape as well as economic impacts.

Page 59-60 – Please qualify that the remaining farmland must have a conservation easement or other deed restriction.

Page 60 – We agree that Planned Unit Developments should only be located inside UGAs.

Page 62 – Essential Public Facilities. Please consider adding some assessment of the economic and cumulative impact of such facilities be done before their development begins.

Page 73 – Is the County Waste and Recycle facility an essential public facility, and/or water or waste treatment facilities?

Page 76 – We do not favor locating new rural commercial or industrial facilities in existing Rural Villages and Rural Centers without more criteria to be certain their location does not compromise the rural character. Residents must be involved in any proposed development and have final approval or rejection of these projects. The same additional criteria and policies for siting are needed for major industrial developments outside UGAs.

Page 80 – The language explaining the “missing” goal can be re-written to be the goal. Also page 82.

Page 82 – Extension of public water services should be vetted to consider the impacts that public water will have on septic systems, especially in geo-hazardous areas, steep slopes, shorelines and critical areas. Further, an analysis of any proposed ULID should include economic effects on land values, taxation and promotion of sprawl.

Page 91 – Rural Village. Please add language that allows the residents of the proposed new village to determine the development of their community.

Page 95 – The timeline provision for permit completion was added to prevent speculative purchases of land and to promote orderly development. Does the removal of a performance timeline promote speculation?

Page 103 – Please put the explanation for the removal into the document so there is acknowledgement that agricultural and industrial processing is being addressed, rather than removing the concept entirely.

Page 112 – 113 – Does this language reduce the current level of protection of resource lands?

Page 125- 126. Please add the suggestions of the PC to include legally permitted rainwater catchment systems from above in the document.

Page 130 – Good addition to help keep farmland in farming in rural resource lands.

Page 132-133 – Please add a policy on non-conversion of Ag-NRL until an economic analysis of the effects of cumulative loss of land for long-term food security is completed and a program for future food production is established.

Page 137 – Please add an economic analysis of the effects of the loss of farmland to the criteria considered. Add any legal requirements for de-designation so that the public understands this is a rare (if ever) event in Skagit County.

Page 146 – Wildfire planning should be coordinated with other requirements of the CP. Example: The Firewise program often removes understory plants from land, which would be detrimental to areas concerned with geo-hazards, shorelines and/or stormwater management.

Page 153 – Heading suggestion: Conservation of Rural Resource Lands.

Page 159 – Please add topography and geology as criteria for designation. Also there is no language concerning de-designation of MRO in streams, for example, or the process for de-designation.

Page 174 – Was the NR Clearinghouse a requirement of legal action? What is the rationale for changing the “shall” to “should”?

Page 177 – Ag NRL – Should include a discussion of conversion of farmland to others uses compromising the long-term food production security.

Page 180 – Was the addition of the area east of the Fire Mountain Boy Scout Camp added by request and was it reviewed as part of an annual update to the CP?

Page 198. We disagree that the older plans should be removed and request that they be referenced in an appended list of historical and current plans with links for web access and information on how to obtain paper copies. BAS does change over time; however, new science is almost always built on older science and these plans can often reduce costs and duplication of research, staff work and provide continuity for policies and programs.

Page 220 – (k) Please add phrase allowing legal rainwater catchment systems as a criteria for development consistent with Rural section.

Page 208 – Fish and Wildlife Conservation Areas. Please add (x) Public tidelands outside of dikes should be considered for restoration using appropriate scale dikes or other structures that would create long-term habitat and reduce the loss of productive farmland being converted for fish and wildlife habitat. Include consideration of the long-term economic consequences of food production loss to the county, region and state in evaluating tidelands for habitat.

Page 214 – Is there a timeline for the “comparative review” of shoreline policies and regulations to GMA?

Page 221 – The County should plan a public process to review and revise, if needed, the CPPs before the next CP update.

Page 228 – Manufactured Housing. Add “and other applicable local laws”.

Page 229 onward. Suggest the chapter follow the same format as other chapters and the data and information that has been added to the plan be placed in an Appendix on Housing, rather than in the plan.

Page 261 - Transportation Element Comments

We request the removal of the eleven proposed projects (listed without numbers) that were added to the Transportation Technical Appendix (TTA). The TTA was not noticed in the BOCC docketing. These projects have not received public notice, review or comments.

Page 264 – Consider adding a CPP recognizing the need for design and construction of roads to safely accommodate farm and other heavy equipment.

Page 274 - "policy 8A-7.3 Encourage the enhancement and expansion of freight rail service to and from economic activity centers." Please add: "Encourage the return of the Sedro Woolley to Concrete rail corridor to active rail use to revitalize east county's economic recovery."

Page 282 – Public Involvement. Work with the WSDOT to provide public review and comment on transportation projects proposed by the state for Skagit County. Currently there is no local citizen review and comment of these projects, nor any appeal process.

Page 284 – Transportation Profile. Suggest keeping format like other chapters and creating an appendix for detailed information.

Page 312 – Criteria for extension of public water supplies is not included. Add legally permitted rainwater catchment systems as a way to permit development.

Page 314 – (ii) Add reference to rainwater catchment systems or footnote.

Page 315 – Limitation on uses and densities. Add, "...where connectivity can be scientifically proven."

Page 325 – Add incentives for residential and commercial solar installation offered by PSE and/or others (HUD).

Page 360 – Add policy to allow tourists to contribute to programs to conserve the rural character of Skagit County like the Farmland Legacy Program through tax-deductible contributions.

Page 364 – Ports 11F-3.2. Revise to reflect the legal role of the port – to provide infrastructure for economic development – and clarify that economic development is the role of EDASC and the two must be coordinated.

Page 376 – Agriculture. Please revise the statement about "largest sector" to explain what this means. As we understand it the sector is still the largest economic driver in Skagit County. To our knowledge it has not been the largest employer at all times.

Please leave in the sentence about "other significant crops".

Add page 376 – Asian vegetable seed % of world's seed.

The increase in small farms and demand for organic food is not the cause of diversified crops in Skagit County. Please revise. Skagit County has always been diversified with over 80 different crops grown in up to 3 season rotations.

Page 380 – Utilities. Please add the other systems that supply water to rural Skagit including the City of Anacortes and the numerous small water systems.

Page 382 – County Weaknesses – Consider adding a sentence on in-commuters who are supplying the workforce, presumably because the local population does not fill those jobs.

Page 403 – Community Plans. The missing goals can be written from the sentences below the goals.

Page 411- Subarea Plans – Should also state that the subarea plans are available upon request to PD&S, not just on the website. We suggest making at least one copy of the CP update, including referenced plans be available at public libraries.

### **Appendices – Comments**

Technical Appendices under separate cover are not all addressed in the 2016 CP update. For example, Skagit County Coordinated Water system Plan – Regional Supplement, 2000 and any additional updates is not included.

Page 441 - Appendix B – Milestones in the CP process should be updated and remain in the CP appendices.

Page 451 - Citizen Advisory Committees in the 1997 Plan – please add the members of the CAC for the subsequent updates, including the members of the PC appointed for this update as the CAC.

### **Page 412 - Acronyms**

We understand the need to update agency names and acronyms for current accuracy; however, we request that in cases where the titles have changed, please include the former name and acronym for reference. Example: Department of Commerce is now DOC but someone looking for CTED – Community, Trade and Economic Development may not know the new name.

Please use the complete name of the agency at least once in the document. Example: Skagit County Public Utility District #1.

### **Page 415 - Definitions**

The addition of GMA language helps clarify these. Has staff verified that the language in the definitions supports and/or clarifies any federal, state or other local laws as written? Definitions used in the Skagit County Code (SCC) should be referenced in the CP when the definition is necessary to understanding the CP and/or the SCC. Example: “vesting”. C-1 Vesting of Applications. Vesting is not included in Title 14 of the SCC. The public has no way the public can know how vesting applies to the CP or the SCC without reading the changes in the RCW.

Please leave the references to the legal descriptions in the definitions. Example: Act – the Growth Management Act. Reinstate – “...as enacted in chapter 17, Laws of 1990, 1st Ex. Session, and chapter 32, Laws of 1991, 1st Special Session, State of Washington....” or other language allowing the public to know where to find the documents and law that is referenced.

Page 436 – please add “...persons with chronic illnesses like multiple sclerosis who receive qualified disability services and support.” to this list. Also, physically disabled, like those using walkers, wheelchairs and the like.

Page 427 – Land Conservation – please add “for the future” or some other temporal language that shows the conservation is considered over a period of time or for future use.

Page 423 – Ecological function is not solely land, but the inter-relationships between biological species, man and environment. Definition needs revision to be more accurate.

Page 418 – Capital Cost – change is more accurate.

Page 416. Agriculture and Agricultural land – leave in the RCW reference in parentheses.

Page 417 – BMP definition should agree with state or federal definition. Example: DOE Storm and Surface Water BMP says: “Best Management Practices (BMPs) are a method by which the adverse impacts of development and redevelopment are controlled through their application. BMPs are defined in the state's storm water Manual as ‘schedules of activities, prohibitions of practices, maintenance procedures, and structural and/or managerial practices, that when used singly or in combination, prevent or reduce the release of pollutants to waters of Washington State.’ The types of BMPs identified by the state are source control, runoff treatment, and flow control.

The primary purpose of using BMPs is to protect beneficial uses of water resources through the reduction of pollutant loads and concentrations, and through reduction of discharges (volumetric flow rates) causing stream channel erosion.”

### **Appendices Removed Should be Re-instated**

Appendix C – Descriptions of related plans, studies and regulations

While the staff may think that this section is not important, Appendix C gives an uninformed reader part of the history and background needed to understand the current and past CPs. Even though some of this information is integrated into the 2016 CP update, we suggest that staff update this Appendix to include in the 2016 CP update to provide better access for the public to public information.

Appendix D – Adopting and Amending Ordinances

Staff cannot overlook the value of updating these to not only provide history and perspectives on Skagit County Comprehensive Planning, but also to provide a chronological reference for public access to past County planning. Not providing this appendix requires a citizen to have access to and a working knowledge of Skagit County’s early planning activities and documents and Skagit County ordinances and resolutions that apply to land use decisions. Citizens should have access to these decisions without requiring extensive searching, and staff have the ability to update this document with very little work.

Technical Appendices that were under separate cover are not all addressed in the 2016 CP update. For example, Skagit County Coordinated Water system Plan – Regional Supplement, 2000 and any additional updates is not included. We suggest at the minimum a list of these publications with URL links and/or information as to how the public can obtain a paper copy.

### **Staff Proposed Changes to the Development Code**

C-7 Cleanup: Watershed management. The term should be defined and remain in the CP because of state agencies use of the term in regulatory and planning activities such as WRIAs.

C-9 CaRD Density Shifting – We support clarification to prevent historical mis-use continuing to future CaRDs.

C-10 removal of the term “unclassified uses”. Is the term in the GMA and/or other state laws and should it be retained in the CP, rather than removed?

C-12, C-13 and C-14 were developed to protect NRLs from litigation about activities on these lands. We would not want changes of these requirements to diminish the protection and conservation of NRLs.

C-12 and C-13 NRL Disclosure Mailing and Title Notice. The County should explore other ways to provide notice to owners of and those near NRL including posting a map to the website that lists parcel numbers that are zoned Ag-NRL, referencing the map URL on tax statements, developing an email notification system and sending emails for notification, advertising the URL and information on Skagit 21, distributing press releases to media annually concerning the website, etc.

Currently, most realtors provide the disclosure statement with the purchase and sale agreement. Both buyers and sellers sign the statement. The seller is required to record a statement with the auditor on the title of the property. We suggest that the county require that the statement attaches to the deed so that the statement will show at each subsequent transfer of the property. This would eliminate the time and cost of filing this document at each closing. If the County wishes to have a statement that the buyer acknowledges the attachment to the deed, the statements signed at the purchase agreement should suffice. Legal review by the County to determine if this is possible would be needed.

C-14 Notification of Development adjacent to NRL. An additional intent of notice to NRL and adjacent lands owners is to allow them to contest the proposed development in a timely manner. This is an added purpose to C-12 and C-13. Currently, in Ag-NRL the applicant must secure the signature of the neighbor(s) and when this is not possible, staff are authorized to sign off on this requirement. does not provide uniform application of the requirement.

We urge the Department to work toward electronic notification and/or a web-based notification system to identify all parcels within the 500 ft. (or other requirement) and mail a letter or e-mail to those owners containing the permit or development application. One option would be an electronic map showing development and permit applications and adjacent parcel numbers with links to e-mail notification and/or letter generation for mailing.

C-18 SEPA Admin Appeals. From the CP update staff report: “State law allows only one administrative appeal for SEPA threshold determinations. “ We understand there can be one open record and one closed record appeal under SEPA. Please add language that clarifies that a Hearing Examiner’s decision is appealable to the GMHB, Shorelines and other appeal boards and into the court system.

From the proposed Development Regulations – “Consistent with **SCC 16.12.210**, Appeals, the decision of the Hearing Examiner on a SEPA threshold determination is final and no appeal to the Board is allowed.” The SCC citation is in error. We assume it is 14.12.210. We do not support adding this language. Skagit County land use decisions by the Hearing Examiner are appealable to the BOCC. We suggest, for consistency and equity, that SEPA, as part of land use decisions should be appealed to the BOCC as well, even though appeal is not required by SEPA. (**emphasis added**).

C-19 Administrative Reduction in Setback. Change language to read, “It also limits administrative reductions in setbacks to 50% of the required setback;...” Please add “**up to**” before “50%” to clarify.

C-29 AEO Maximum Building Size. Removes maximum building sizes. Does the proposed removal of building size and the open space and setback requirements comply with the Federal aviation environs standards?

C-31 Storage of Junk and C-32 Recreational Vehicles. We are concerned that the definition of “junk” and the requirement of more than 500 sq. ft. on a parcel to be fenced may be read to include artists’ sculptures or student projects. Requiring a legally established business for compliance may put some of these citizens in violation of this regulation. The requirement in New Section 14.15.945 (3) (a) “No person may use a recreational vehicle as a dwelling unit” appears to prohibit use of an RV as a temporary dwelling on a building site. Section (3) (b) “No person may occupy a recreational vehicle for more than 180 days in any 12-month period” appears to preclude the use of an RV in state park RV sites. More clarification is needed to determine how these proposed regulations would apply to Homeowners Associations, RV park businesses, summer camps and other recreational gathering places. Section (3) (c) and (d) specify “.... more than one...” and “...more than two...” respectively as the limits of recreational vehicles on any lot without a special use permit for that purpose. Please clarify this language so that persons restoring, repairing or needing proximity to their RV for various purposes would not be required to apply for and receive a special use permit. As currently written making violations of this regulation a Class 1 Civil Infraction with a possible penalty of \$250 reads more like a revenue scheme rather than an attempt to clean up junk.

C-34 Rural Business. Limiting expansion of rural businesses should encourage rural businesses that need additional space to relocate to larger existing facilities or urban areas. The regulation does not limit the number of expansions possible, but relies on a maximum size allowance based on existing use as of 1990.

NC-1 Maximum Lot Coverage in Rural Reserve. The sliding scale amounts of coverage are an improvement over the 35% lot coverage blanket approach. We assume the maximum lot coverage was determined from other rural codes and that the requirement does not apply to existing development in this zone. Given that some number of acres of Rural Reserve is used for agricultural purposes that may require temporary or permanent structures such as greenhouses or processing sheds, we suggest that an exception for agricultural uses be added. We assume the county no longer sites marijuana production facilities in Rural Reserve.

#### **Comments on Public Process**

Public notice did not include amendments to the Shoreline element of the CP. R20140374 Attachment 2 did list the SMP under the proposed amendments to the Skagit County Code (SCC). We assume the Shoreline Master Program (SMP) will be docketed, in whole or in part, or incorporated by reference into the Shoreline element of the CP at a future date.

The County has never completed the South Fidalgo Sub-area plan required by a number of GMHB appeal final decisions and orders. We suggest the county secure grant funding and/or put this plan in the next budget cycle so that it can be completed.

#### **Proposed Map Amendments Comments**

City of Burlington UGA (CP-2). The Raspberry Ridge development was located in the County due to the donation of the property by farmers who recognized the need for farmworker housing. The City of Burlington approved the expansion and annexation of the development. The city argued that Raspberry Ridge needed sewer hook-up to solve a public health issue; however, the County failed to regard its own policies prohibiting or limiting floodplain development by locating residential development in the floodplain. At a minimum, if the Planning Commission approves this expansion the PC should require (as a condition of permission) Burlington remove an equivalent amount of acres from its UGA in order to keep its UGAs sized to its projected future development need.

**Comments about other plans**

A series of planning documents related to watershed, drainage or stormwater management, which must be used in planning, are either omitted or not referenced in the 2016 CP update. These include: Samish Watershed Action Plan, 1995; Nookachamps Watershed Non-Point Action Plan, April, 1995; Big Lake Drainage Management Plan (and other drainage management plans); Padilla Bay – Bay View Watershed Non-point Action Plan, 1995; South Fidalgo Island Stormwater Management Plan, 2010. We suggest an appendix for these documents.

The public notice stated the 2016 CP update was to: Incorporate by reference existing subarea plans, the County's Parks and Recreation plan, and the Capital Facilities Plan, and consolidate appropriate components into the Capital Facilities Element.

The staff report stated the BOCC resolution directed: Integrate existing subarea plans, the Skagit County Parks and Recreation plan, and the Capital Facilities Plan with the Comprehensive Plan...

Page 70 – Open Space Areas. The Skagit County Urban Growth Area (UGA) Open Space Concept Plan (UGA OSCP) (2009) was adopted by Resolution by the BOCC, although the PC recommended against adoption. We request that the full and correct title of this plan be used in referencing the plan in the CP. Please add a sentence in the introductory paragraph for this section stating that not all open space is open for public use.

To date the plan has not been included in any Comprehensive Plan update process except its addition at this time. The SC UGA OSC plan been not been implemented, nor should it be in its entirety and not without further review and editing to clarify which parcels and areas identified are existing open space and which are proposed ideas that were included in the plan. The SC UGA OSC is not included in R20140374 scoping list by the BOCC.

Implementation of this plan as written is problematic given the lack of definition, clarity and policies to ensure protection of Skagit's natural resource lands.

We understand the SC UGA OSC was developed as a requirement to settle Growth Management Hearings Board cases that involved a ruling to include identification and mapping of existing open space among other requirements. The GMHB said:

Counties are required to identify "green belt and open space areas" within UGAs and to "identify open space corridors within and between" UGAs. Official maps, which do not show these areas fail to comply with the GMA. *Evergreen Islands, et. al. v. Skagit County 00-2-0046c* (Final Decision and Order, 2-6-01).

The compliance order stated: (9) Within 180 days, **adopt maps** or some other clear mechanism **to identify** greenbelts and open space areas within UGAs and open space corridors within and between UGAs. *Evergreen Islands, et. al. v. Skagit County No. 00-2-0046c*, Compliance Order – General Issues. **(Emphasis added.)**

RCW 36.70A.110(2) requires counties to include "greenbelt and open space areas" in its UGAs.  
RCW 36.70A.160 requires counties to "identify open space corridors within and between urban growth areas."

Open space corridors is not defined in the CP. The public may interpret this to mean a path or trail for human use when the original intent may have been for wildlife. or critical areas.

We recommend that if the plan is included in the 2016 PC update, some qualifications be attached to the inclusion. Portions of the plan fulfill the requirements and other parts of the plan were not required by the agreement and over-reach both the order and its intent. We ask that the PC recommend further qualify the inclusion of the plan by requiring an update process for the SC UGA OSC Plan in the next two years.

**Other Comments**

Maps of Samish basin do not include the designated floodway.

Please remove the word “toolbox” and “tools” when describing land use methods and use the word “method”, “planning methods”, “choices” or other suitable describing word. Despite the use of this term in planning circles, we think the public prefers plain words when these suffice.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Should you have questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Ms. Ellen Bynum  
Executive Director

EB/  
cc: FOOSC Board

**2005 GMA Update  
List of "Trailing Issues"**

**Appendix A**

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JUN 23 2016

Following is the list of "trailing issues" identified by the Department or the Planning Commission during the 2005 GMA Update process. Trailing issues are simply those that the Department and/or the Planning Commission have determined are important but that are outside the scope of the Update or require more time and analysis than was available during the timeframe of the Update. The trailing issues can generally be grouped into the following 4 categories:

1. Studies / Inventories
2. Review / Update Existing Policies / Codes
3. Develop New Policies / Codes
4. Mapping (i.e. Identification / Designation and/or Specific Property / Area Reviews)

By agreement of the Planning Commission and the Department, adoption of specific policies/codes/maps related to these trailing issues is not recommended as part of the Update, but instead additional follow-up work is recommended. The Planning Commission has identified the trailing issues of highest importance to them (listed in Section 1 in prioritized order) and also those issues deserving further consideration at a later date (listed in Section 2 in a non-prioritized order). Additional work on any of these items is subject to resource availability and identification as part of the Planning and Development Services' work program, as approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

**SECTION 1: PRIORITY ISSUES**

#	Rank <sup>1</sup>	Issue <sup>2</sup>	Page <sup>3</sup>	Possible Action
1	5	Lack of a Rural Lands Inventory.	p. 14 Issue 4	Perform study of rural lots to develop an accurate inventory.
2	4	Effectiveness of existing CaRD regulations.  (Finding 93)	p. 12-13 Issue 1	Initiate CaRD development review in 2007 and explore potential additional modifications to CaRD policies and regulations.
3	4	Study RFS properties and other I-5 corridor properties for visual effects on "gateways" to Skagit County. Develop design standards for RFS zoned parcels.  (Finding 154, 166, 167, 168)	See discussion w/ CPA05-48. Also see discussion following CPA05-87	Develop I-5 corridor plan. Amend Comp Plan as necessary and adopt implementing code amendments.
4	4	Evaluate the I-5/Cook Rd. area (including the Cook Rd./Hwy 99 and Green Rd./Cook Rd. intersections and surrounding area) for possible application of a commercial transition zone to RRv properties. (Finding 154)	See discussion w/ CPA05-44. Also see discussion w/ CPA05-52	Consider application of a new land use designation that allows the transition of Rural Reserve properties to commercial use while permanently protecting against any future conversion of Ag-NRL land to non-resource designation.

<sup>1</sup> Planning Commission members each selected 5 items from this list as their 'top priorities'. The 'rank' of each item reflects how many PC members selected that item as a top priority. A total of 45 votes were cast.

<sup>2</sup> Finding/Recommendation # refers to June 21, 2007, Planning Commission Recorded Motion.

<sup>3</sup> Page and issue # refer to August 1, 2006, memorandum responding to major comment themes.

#	Rank	Issue	Page	Possible Action
	3	Desire to increase flood/Ag land protection.  (Finding 67, 68, Recommendation R6)	p. 3-4 Issue 5 p. 10-11 Issue 1,2	Further evaluate REM Goal A6 and REM policies 5A-6.1 and 5A-6.2 and work to develop possible policy and code revisions for 2007 or 2008 amendment cycle.
6	3	Apparent inconsistencies in Secondary Forest Lands designation criteria and regulations including use as 'buffer' to IF, inconsistency in application, densities and availability of public services. (Finding 57, Recommendation R1)	p. 4-5 Issue 1, and Aug. 22, 2006 deliberations	Consider convening working group for re-examination and development of comprehensive solution.
7	3	Feasibility of Secondary Forest density bonus program.  (Finding 57, Recommendation R3)	p. 6 Issue 4, and Nov. 4, 2007 deliberations	Convene working group to examine issues and study program feasibility.
8	3	Lack of identified Extreme High and High Fire Hazard areas and regulations to reduce wildland/ urban interface fires.  (Finding 58)	p. 16-17 Issue 9	Designate areas and consider adopting governing regulations including consideration of a 'Firewise program' consistent with NRL Element Policy 4B-2.11.
9	3	Current prohibition of creating substandard lots in exchange for permanent conservation easements.	N/A	Consider implementation of new provision in 14.16 "Conservation Preservation."
10	3	Review for designation inconsistencies in IF-, SF- and RRc-NRL.  (Recommendation R1)	Jan. 30, 2007 deliberations	Include any preferred amendments in next CPA cycle, including any of the map amendments proposed by the Forest Advisory Board, but not acted on as part of the GMA Update.
11	3	Review MRO layer – specifically the requirement that an underlying NRL zone is required and situations where only a portion of any given parcel is designated MRO, which may result in permitting difficulties for an MRO land owner. (Finding 61, 135, 136, Rec. R4, R5)	See discussion w/ CPA05-29	Consider amendments to the MRO layer or regulations if warranted.
12	2	Need for new regulations to address Habitat Enhancement/ Restoration projects in Ag-NRL zone. (Finding 104, Recommendation R10)	p. 1-3 Issue 1	Convene working group of stakeholders to amend current proposal or develop alternative within 6 months of 2005 GMA Update adoption.
13	2	Current lack of design guidelines for rural areas.	N/A	Consider developing a Rural Guidebook. Including design standards and drainage (quantity and quality) on commercial parcels. (See Snohomish County example)
14	1	Lack of protection provisions for preexisting farms lying outside of Ag-NRL designated lands. (Recommendation R13)	See August 15, 2006 transcript p. 46-47.	Consider protections for farms in rural zones pre-dating current CP and UDC adoptions in future CP amendment cycle.

#	Rank	Issue	Page	Possible Action
5	1	Review appropriateness of lot coverage allowances in RI (and RRv within Fidalgo Subarea Plan). (Recommendation R12)	See Oct. 24, 2006 PC Deliberations	Consider revisions to development regulations in future amendment cycle if changes are deemed necessary.
16	1	Review pre-existing, small lot developments in Ag-NRL near BFF Trucking property and in other areas. (Finding 184)	See SC05-23	Consider possibility of developing 'active Ag' overlay to show farmed land vs. Ag soils (developed lands).
<b>SECTION 2: ISSUES FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION</b>				
17		Feasibility of Compensatory Incentive Program (CIP) (Recommendation R2)	p. 6, Issue 4, and Aug. 24, 2007 deliberations	Convene working group to examine issues and study program feasibility.
18		Appropriateness of permitting levels for minor utility uses in rural and resource zoning designations.	p. 15-16 Issue 7	Explore possible code amendments revising permit levels for minor utility projects.
19		14.16.500, Permitted uses, in OSRSI may be overly restrictive. 'Typical' park uses should be allowed.	p. 23 Issue 5	Explore issue with State and County parks departments and consider possible reforms as part of next available code update cycle, likely in 2007.
20		Airport policies needed in Comprehensive Plan to match those in Bayview Ridge Subarea Plan.	Transportation section	Check with Gary and/or Jeroldine
21		Review Fidalgo Subarea Plan Citizen Advisory Committee recommendations of revised SPU list for RI. (Recommendation R11)	See Nov. 2, 2006 PC Deliberations	Consider revisions to development regulations in future amendment cycle if changes are desired.
22		Limited scope Lake Cavanaugh Rural Village study to review potential locations for community general store w/in RV or on P116133 as proposed in CPA05-65. (Finding 163)	See Nov. 9, 2006 Rural Map Memo – PC Delibs 12/5	Perform study, including contact with large lot property owners within the village. Potential Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) if P116133 identified as desirable store site.
23		Review Wooding property on Fidalgo Island for possible redesignation.	N/A	Review property for consistency with RRc-NRL designation criteria and process changes in future amendment cycle if appropriate.
24		Deferred Map Amendments on attached list.	N/A	See attached list for process/cycle.

SKAGIT COUNTY  
Ordinance # O20070009

Page 55 of 628

**From:** [Mike Clark](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Sunday, June 19, 2016 6:32:20 PM

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Dear Skagit County Board of County Commissioners,

This email provides our comments regarding the proposed changes to the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan, Land Use/Zoning Map, and Development Regulations as part of Skagit County's 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update.

The GIPAC (Guemes Island Planning Advisory Committee) has proposed building restrictions from the Guemes Island Subarea Plan limiting new buildings to 12 foot sidewalls above the ground at the setback line and limiting building heights to 12 feet plus one foot for every foot away from the setback line. We are strongly opposed to this proposal. Even if the sidewall height is measured from the floor elevation, as we understand Planning Department staff has recommended for homes in a flood zone, this building height limit is not necessary and will have significant negative impacts.

This change is a solution in search of a problem. We oppose these changes which restrict building and hurt property values for no useful purpose. Although it has been stated that this proposal has broad community support, we do not feel this is true as we are part of the community and don't support it. The GIPAC does not speak for us and does not speak for other property owners we know on Guemes Island. This is the same group which was strongly opposed to more ferry runs after 6:00 PM until 8:30 PM on weeknights and at that time claimed to also speak for Guemes Island. The Guemes Island property owners we know wanted extended ferry hours, are very happy with this change, and enjoy it very much.

These restrictions have the following negative impacts:

- reduce the frontage home surface area limiting view windows
- eliminate designs with side roof gables
- increase construction costs by forcing second story rooms toward the center of the first floor away from load bearing exterior walls
- restrict originality in design and make all new homes look alike
- increase scale differential next compared to existing larger homes
- reduce current property values.

Requiring an Administrative Variance for construction of a home built to currently existing standards is not a good solution. Approval would be dependent upon Planning Department staff with no fixed schedule or guarantee for obtaining one. It will add costs, add delays to building, and adversely impact property values as potential buyers would be reluctant to gamble on a variance being approved.

Again, we are opposed to the changes limiting new buildings to 12 foot sidewalls above the ground at the setback line. The current height restrictions are sufficient.

Sincerely,

Michael Clark and Kristy J. Hendrickson

Geumes Island Property owners

6356 West Shore Road

Anacortes, WA 98221

Mailing address

2531 NE 97th Street

Seattle, WA 98115

**From:** [Liz McNett Crowl](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed "2016 Comprehensive Plan Update"  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 3:39:21 PM

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June 23, 2016

Skagit County Board of Commissioners  
c/o of Skagit County Planning and Development Services  
1800 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Dear Commissioner's:

I am writing to offer comments concerning the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan 2016-2036.

I support implementation of the Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Concept Plan. Well-designed and maintained open space and corridors within and between urban growth areas can provide a buffer between our urban and rural areas, as well as provide a variety of environments that benefit human health, Agricultural lands, fish and wildlife habitat, connection between critical areas, and opportunities for recreation and active transportation. I support the language proposed by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) stating the intent of Skagit County to work with community partners – governments, organizations, residents and property owners – to identify, prioritize, and conserve open space corridors.

As I stated in my public comments made to the Board at the June 20 public hearing, I strongly support the Comprehensive Plan's inclusion of policies supporting non-motorized transportation. Inclusion of the non-motorized element and project list are essential components of a comprehensive transportation element that considers the needs of all users. The proposed plan includes a number of features that demonstrate that Skagit County is on track to support a multimodal transportation system that will provide for the needs of our residents and visitors for the next 20 years. I would emphasize that it is important to understand that while separated trails are highly supported and desired by our residents, most of our active transportation facilities and improvements are on shared County roads, where increased shoulder width, choice of road surface and process, and signage can create safer options for residents and visitors who choose active transportation modes. It is important for the BOCC to direct Public Works staff to consider all users in their role as transportation program managers; each time they plan a road, perform maintenance such as repaving or striping they should consider all users, and accommodation should become the norm rather than the exception. Having a plan with measurable, prioritized active transportation projects with annual progress goals would create a framework for a project-by-project network transformation.

I believe that Skagit County should work diligently to move the Cascade Trail and Centennial Trail projects forward as well as support studying the Coast to Cascade Corridor/United States Bike Route 10. Possibly exploring public-private partnerships and working with community partners, similar to what is proposed for open space. Regional trail corridors are important in providing safe active transportation routes for residents and visitors. I also believe that we should embrace the potential for growing and promoting access to our County's outdoor recreation attractions and the impact of economic benefits associated with them. The Economic Benefits of Outdoor Recreation in Washington is summarized in this five-page fact sheet:

<http://www.rco.wa.gov/documents/ORTF/OutdoorEconomicsFactSheet.pdf>

Recreation markets play an important role in connecting urban and rural communities. The recreation market is one of the largest markets in the state for moving income from urban to rural areas and building jobs in more rural areas.

I heard people comment during public comment periods both at the Planning Commission level and at the June 20, 2016 BOCC public hearing, that the 20 year list of projects must have public input. This is not true; it is not a requirement. County staff has clarified this on several occasions. Skagit County needs to have a 20-year transportation plan and financing component. This should include anticipated projects, even if it's just a long-term wish list. The 20-year plan should include a broader set of projects than the 6-year TIP, and should be the universe of projects from which the 6-year Tip may be selected when certain projects are needed and/or there is a specific

funding source to pay for them. Not including them would disproportionately affect non-motorized users and would limit regional mobility. We don't want a plan that limits us, we want a plan that shapes and envisions a better future!

Many concerns have been expressed regarding non-motorized transportation, especially in reference to open space, future trails, property rights and public access. Conducting effective public outreach is in the County's best interest in putting these concerns to rest, and key in addressing people's initial fears early and openly. Perhaps a public participation plan for Skagit County, not just one for transportation, would be beneficial.

I support the continued acquisition of property that enables our transportation network, especially regional active transportation corridors and routes, to be expanded and open spaces to be created. Creation of an implementation plan is critical and a missing part of what is proposed in this Non-motorized Plan. I would like to see an implementation plan that includes goals, prioritization criteria, benchmarks, and performance measures. Skagit County has an annual plan, budget, and schedule for roadwork and should have one for non-motorized transportation as well.

As a resident of the Skagit Valley for over 50 years, a health professional for over 40 years, an avid hiker, walker, and biker, I value the quality of life in Skagit County and am truly excited about the changes I see in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update. We are taking steps to make our county a healthy and vibrant place to live, work, and play.

Thank you,

Liz McNett Cowl  
13797 Trumpeter Lane  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

**From:** [Brenda Cunningham](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 9:58:07 AM

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Dear Honorable Skagit County Commissioners,

I am writing to express my support for the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update as recommended by the Planning Commission. Specifically, it is important to retain the non-motorized transportation project list in the update. Although there has been some concern expressed by the Planning Commission that some of these project were not vetted in public documents, I feel the county staff has done a commendable job of bringing projects forward from existing plans as well as making suggestions where they have seen safety needs based on their work in the community. Many citizens are not aware of the safety concerns that county employees see in the course of their jobs. I appreciate them bringing forward these projects, which can then have public review at a later date. Having them on the 20-year list does not make them “shovel-ready”, but rather brings them to the attention of concerned citizens who can then participate in public review if a project is further developed.

These non-motorized transportation projects will improve the quality of life for many of us in the county. We see other counties in western Washington with well-developed bike trails and lanes and see the increase in healthy outdoor activities. This benefits the residents of the county as well as drawing visitors to our valley.

I encourage you to direct staff to update and implement the Open Space Plan as well. It is unfortunate that the phrase “Open Space” is used to described many different concepts. I hope that someday we can come up with a less confusing term to distinguish land that is non-residential, non-commercial space, left as such for the agricultural, scenic and wildlife values, from the lands that are publicly accessible. The Open Space Plan refers to the former lands, those that are not necessarily open to the public, but rather are to be kept as agricultural lands and greenspaces to buffer our human-built environments, cleaning the air and water and providing a visual respite from the city developments. The longer we wait to implement the Open Space Plan the less likely these farms and forests will be available for protection from development.

Once again, I want to commend your staff for the clarifications they provided in the public meetings and the professional manner in which they conducted themselves. I was very impressed. I am also impressed by the breadth of subjects that you, as Commissioners, must master in order to address these issues. Thank you for your work and for the opportunity to comment on this important update.

Brenda Cunningham  
1220 South 11<sup>th</sup> Street  
Mount Vernon, WA 98274

**From:** [Donna Davis](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 5:20:47 PM

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Dear Skagit County Commissioners, and Planning and Development Services personnel,

I have been made aware of the sudden opposition to the Guemes Island Subarea Plan. I fully support our Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee (GIPAC), and the full implementation of the adopted Guemes Island Subarea plan. I strongly urge you to enact the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay exactly as it has been proposed by GIPAC.

We have owned property on Guemes Island since 1997, and have resided here full time since 1999. I believe that the Zoning Overlay proposed by GIPAC is critical to preserving the rural character of this island that we cherish.

I have been aware of the hard work of GIPAC during all of the years since we bought our property, and their perseverance during years of delays of trying to get the Guemes Island Subarea Plan on to the County's agenda to have it considered. GIPAC's activities and their plans to help preserve our island have always been well publicized. I was dismayed when I recently learned that the Guemes Island Subarea Plan - which took so many years to get that hearing, and was finally, sensibly adopted by the Board of Commissioners 5 years ago - had not already been fully implemented!

We live near the center of the island by choice, but it has been disconcerting to me to see the inappropriate homes that have occasionally been built along the shorefront, which have often inconsiderately blocked the views from more modest homes that predated them. I believe that restrictions regarding the height of new buildings is a sound idea.

The overriding reason that "development as usual" in the rest of Skagit County ***will not work*** on Guemes Island is our limited supply of water. There are already serious shortages of water along the shores of the island, and the homeowners in those areas are suffering. More homes and/or larger homes will soon render *everyone's* property without a water supply - and subsequently without value.

Please move forward immediately with the adoption of code that implements this crucial Subarea Plan in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update!

Thank you,

Donna Davis

5530 Homestead Lane

Anacortes, WA 98221



**From:** [Gary Davis](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 9:59:03 PM

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GIPAC has done an excellent job of representing Guemes Island residents honorably for a long time. I personally participated in their efforts by writing the mission statement in a poem that was adopted by the county some years ago. I am in support of The Guemes Island Zoning Overlay as written and proposed by GIPAC and I urge you to adopt it without change.

Thank you,

Gary Davis

5530 Homestead Lane

Anacortes, WA 98221

**From:** [Dolph Ivar](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Comments: Comp Plan  
**Date:** Friday, June 17, 2016 5:47:13 PM

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Skagit County Comprehensive Plan:

Dear Commissioners:

I support Skagit County's intent to identify and protect open space corridors. Greenbelt wildlife corridors, both rural and inter-urban, are more important than ever because the building industry is using them up by the thousands of acres yearly. Please protect and enlarge Open Space, the combination of both public and private lands, for wildlife habitat, parks, scenic beauty, and historical value. We need it for our physical and spiritual health, for clean air, for the support of habitat for wild creatures which are disappearing and threatened more and more with climate change.

It is important that NO motorized vehicles are allowed to go in these Open Space areas. They can be used for walking trails, and occasionally, for bicycles, though in a limited way.

Please enlarge wildlife corridors all over Skagit County.

I live in Anacortes, and I would like to see them enlarged there as well as all over the county.

thank you,

Phyllis Dolph

Ivar and Phyllis Dolph  
2320 26th St.  
Anacortes, WA  
98221

**From:** [Molly Doran](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Skagit Land Trust (Molly Doran), 1020 S 3rd Mt Vernon WA, 2016 Comp Plan Update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 4:08:02 PM

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## 2016 Comp Plan Update

Skagit Land Trust (SLT) submitted comments during the original comment period for the Comprehensive Plan Update, thus these comments only on changes to the original proposal.

1) Skagit Land Trust supports the inclusion of a 20-year list of non-motorized projects as part of the updated 2016 Comprehensive Plan. In every survey conducted in the past decade, 70 -80% of Skagit respondents consistently state there are not enough trails and bike paths in the county. They want more. Many more. For many citizens, non-motorized paths such as Phase I of the Centennial Trail cannot happen fast enough. I can say unequivocally that trails are strongly supported by our 1500 members. During our 2011 fundraising campaign to purchase 220 acres at Barney Lake and an adjacent railway corridor on that property (that would later become part of the Centennial Trail corridor) - many new donors from the community came forth. They loved the idea of a future Centennial Trail along this section of Barney Lake/hwy 9. When this project happens - and we hope it will - this near-urban path alongside a large conservation area will become one of Skagit County's main wildlife and scenic attractions.

2) Skagit Land Trust supports Skagit County's intent listed in 2B-1.3 to continue co-operating with local partners to identify and protect Open Space Corridors. Many people don't understand what open space entails. Open Space is defined as a combination of public and private lands - rural, urban and inter-urban - that form greenbelts of agricultural land, trails, wildlife habitat, parks, significant scenic or historic lands etc. Under this definition many groups, agencies, programs and landowners are currently working to conserve open space locally. From Farmland Legacy to the Skagit Watershed Council to private nonprofits like SLT and The Nature Conservancy to state and federal agencies, tribes, municipalities, the county and various utility companies, forest companies etc - we have done a lot. The issue is, there are many of us and we need to collaborate in order to plan well and use scarce resources wisely. We go much further together, with private and public funds, and private and public willing landowners - than ships sailing on our singular chartered course.

A key plan Skagit Land Trust uses to determine our open space priorities is Skagit County's 2009 Open Space Concept Plan. This plan is a great start, but it was meant to be a start - not the end - of planning for open space. We use this plan today, but we need a team approach to efficiently implement it. We need to what is already protected, agency/group's priorities, future land use conflicts we may be able to avoid, gaps in land types and uses, goals, and how our priorities connect and interlink. We need to discuss how can we leverage funding, how to bring private and public funds to the table for open space etc. We need leadership and organization beyond a loose collaboration of partners who connect on a project by project basis. In addition, Skagit County's 2009 Open Space Concept Plan is currently out of date for use in applying for State grants (to qualify for use plans must have been updated in the last six years) . This puts many of us in Skagit County, who rely on publically vetted plans when applying for grant funds, at a competitive disadvantage. We support the inclusion of the 2B-1.3 and hope that it leads to affirmative steps in Open Space

Planning and Implementation for all of us working on this in Skagit County.

Finally we would like to thank the County staff, the Board of Commissioners and the Planning Commission for their hard work to make sure all voices were heard during this 2016 Comprehensive Plan update. Planning is not a straight forward or easy process as it pulls from so many constituents, existing plans and affects many. We appreciate that all of these groups of people in charge sought clarity, transparency, and inclusion. It was refreshing to see various staff or Planning Commissioners say - "Let's take a look at this again- we may have acted too fast" "We want to get this right" . It was very educational for many of us tracking the process. We felt well informed and updated. We could ask a question at any time and quickly get a response. Thank you for your hard work.

Molly Doran  
Executive Director  
Skagit Land Trust  
1020 S 3rd  
Mount Vernon, WA  
98273

360.428.7878  
mollyd@skagitlandtrust.org  
[skagitlandtrust.org](http://skagitlandtrust.org)

*[Receive Skagit Land Trust news & events by email](#)*

**From:** [Bill Dunlap](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Monday, June 20, 2016 12:41:22 PM

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I am writing in regard to the “2016 Comprehensive Plan Update”.

I urge you to include in the plan all of the original eleven non-motorized transportation projects. As the county population grows non-motorized transportation planning becomes more important. While walking and bicycling on the edge of county roads may have been safe enough with the automobile traffic of fifty years ago, when I was growing up, it is not now and certainly won't get any safer in the future. Encouraging non-motorized transportation will keep us healthier, make our children more self-reliant, keep our air and water cleaner, and make it more fun to live and work here. We can look to Lynnwood and Marysville for examples of how things look when planning is only done around the needs of automobiles.

I also urge you to give a higher priority to preserving open space corridors, especially those within and near the urban growth areas. Delay would mean the open space would disappear forever. We should implement our existing open space plan and continue to update the plan as the facts on the ground change.

Sincerely,

William W. Dunlap

22461 Mount Vernon Big Lake Road

Mount Vernon, WA 98274

Tel: 306-428-8146

Email: [williamwdunlap@gmail.com](mailto:williamwdunlap@gmail.com)

June 20, 2016

**From:** [Erbstoesz](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 9:23:24 AM

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Comments regarding:

**Skagit County Comprehensive Plan 2016 Update as released June 10, 2016**

Comments provided by: Marie and John Erbstoesz.

Honorable Skagit County Commissioners: Thank you for re-opening the Public Comment Period for the Updated Draft of the 2016 County Comprehensive Plan.

We have lived at 217 E. Division Street in Mount Vernon, WA 98274 since 1975. We moved to Skagit County as young healthcare professionals desiring a place that would provide us with opportunities to use our training and skills, offer needed services to the residents of Skagit County and be a good setting to raise a family and enjoy the area. John worked as a family practice MD and I worked as a Consultant in Health Services Planning and Development. Skagit County not only met but exceeded our expectations and continues to be where we call home and continue to live after 40 plus years. Many of the attributes such as the natural environment, the small towns, the friendliness, the rural settings, the access to wonderful outdoor recreation that attracted us to Skagit County are still here today but none of these can be taken for granted. Therefore, we were very pleased and encouraged by the overall planning that Skagit County was engaged in as it updated its Comprehensive Plan for 2016 and we submitted initial comments on April 13, 2016. We now recognize that the original Draft Comprehensive Plan Update for 2016 has been revised and a new Draft was released on June 10, 2016. Therefore, we are submitting these additional comments which are in reference to the current June draft.

Our careers in health care and our personal interests have highlighted how important it is to have access to health, wellness and physical activities. Public Health and Medical publications repeatedly cite the benefits and importance of regular exercise as a means of improving and maintaining the health of the public. Access to walking and bicycling facilities are among the excellent ways of addressing significant population health issues such as, heart health, blood pressure, obesity, etc. Just recently on May 16, 2016, the National Institutes of Health released a report titled, "Increased Physical Activity Associated with Lower Risk of 13 Types of Cancer." The existing body of scientific knowledge clearly indicates that a healthy community and healthy County must have access to and encourage opportunities for outdoor exercise such as walking, bicycling, just plain playing, etc.

An important local effort right here in Skagit County has taken initial steps focusing on Community Health. In 2015 Skagit County Public Health and Community Services launched the Population Health Trust as a means for creating a plan to improve Community Health throughout all of Skagit County. Some sections of the Comprehensive Plan are very important for the role they will have in contributing to enhancing and sustaining healthy lifestyles.

Therefore, we ask that the Skagit County Commissioners adopt the revised draft Comprehensive Plan 2016 Update which was released on June 10, 2016.

In particular, we strongly support:

- The recommended inclusion of a 20-year list of non-motorized projects as part of the updated Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Element. The inclusion of the non-motorized projects is essential for enhancing and sustaining healthy lifestyles. Furthermore, having a Non-Motorized Plan with identified projects is important in the development of programs and funding for a variety of public facilities, including Federal funding support for sidewalks, access to transit activities, trails and road improvements projects. In addition, the inclusion of identified projects in the Non-Motorized Plan meets policy and legislation direction from the Washington Growth Management Act and is consistent with policies adopted by the Skagit Council of Governments and the Washington State Department of Transportation.
- Modifying proposed policy 2B-1.3 to indicate Skagit County's intent to continue cooperating with local partners to identify and protect open space corridors consistent with the GMA requirements. It is a given that Skagit County is growing and changing. However, if more open space areas are not protected, they could be lost and never recovered. The natural beauty and resources of Skagit County are key environmental attributes and must not be lost.

Skagit County is a vibrant and great place to live, work, and play. Plus, it is increasingly becoming a visitors' destination for recreation. We need to make sure it continues to have these attributes for many generations to come.

Again, may we commend each of you, Skagit County Commissioners, and the staff of the Planning and Development Services for all of the work done in preparing the 2016 Update to the Comprehensive Plan and for re-opening the Public Comment Period. You became aware of the increased Public interest and concerns about the sections of the initial draft plan which were being either eliminated or altered and you were responsive. In the Leadership Skagit Program of which Skagit County Government is a sponsor, one of the five Practices of Exemplary Leadership is "Model the Way." By reopening the Public Comment period, you have definitely "Modeled the Way" of open government and encouragement of public participation.

Thank you.

Marie Erbstoesz, MHA  
John Erbstoesz, MD

217 East Division Street  
Mount Vernon, WA 98274

June 22, 2016



**From:** [brian.estes](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Please include non-motorized amenities in new comprehensive plan  
**Date:** Monday, June 20, 2016 4:19:58 PM

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Please include hiking, walking, biking, and other non-motorized projects in your revision to the comprehensive plan under consideration. As population increases in the county, we need open and safe spaces to recreate.

Thanks.

All the Best

Brian Estes

**From:** [Karen Everett](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Comp Plan 2016 Update  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 21, 2016 1:50:48 PM

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William E. Everett, III  
Karen M. Everett  
5052 Guemes Island Rd (also P61720,P61719)  
Anacortes, WA 98221

RE: Comp Plan 2016 Update

Dear County Commissioners,

I've lived on Guemes Island for 22 years and my husband for 64 years (off and on), and on the North Beach of Guemes for over a decade. Our son is a 4<sup>th</sup> generation Guemes Islander. Also for the past 12 years, I've been a REALTOR specializing in Guemes Island properties.

I was the first speaker at last night's meeting—in opposition to some of the building height and setback requirements.

What I didn't mention last night is that I've been very involved over the years with supporting the sustainability of Guemes and protecting our "rural lifestyle." In fact, I was the co-founding member of "Save Guemes Mountain" project, where the community raised over \$2 million dollars during the recession to buy out the sellers of that property. I truly appreciate all of the hard work of GIPAC, and like all of the committee members that I know personally. I am strongly in favor of doing everything to help **voluntarily** put properties into conservation easements, as well. Currently, there are hundreds of acres in conservation easements on Guemes. There are plenty of people who have willingly done this since this movement really gained islander's attention with the AIA (American Institute of Architects) Sustainability workshops over a decade ago.

What my husband and I are **not** in favor of are some of the severe restrictions placed upon us, specifically, again, the side & height restrictions. And while we've been aware they were working on a new sub-area plan, it wasn't until we started the process of attempting to build on one of our waterfront lots that it really became clear what was going to happen. As I said last night, until recently, I was only marginally aware of how restrictive they were!!

**It took talking to a building contractor to make sense of what those new restrictions would look like in a house.... That's when we really started paying attention.** Admittedly, this is at the tail end of Skagit County's Comp Plan process, but better late than never, right?

The Everett family has owned our properties since 1917 – nearly 100 years and four generations. In my husband’s childhood, there was a house where we would like to build, and we always thought there could be one there again. Those specific new restrictions would significantly impact our dream of downsizing and building a cottage there to live out the rest of our days.

Again, while we do appreciate the GIPAC and their zealous efforts to protect our gorgeous island and its environment, we feel **that** part of their proposal goes too far. We feel that those who’ve already built their dream homes without these restrictions would just like to freeze Guemes island in time; their projects are done already, at the expense of those of us who haven’t yet been able to or can’t afford to build yet.

It was said last night that these proposals have been in the works and highly publicized for years in our local newspaper, *The Guemes Tide*, and in the online presence called *Linetime*. That you’d have to be severely disconnected with the community to not be aware of the new plan. While it’s true that these media have covered the story, it’s human nature to only pay really close attention to something and truly understand it’s ramifications IN DETAIL when it is directly in front of you and affects you. Call us guilty of that, fine.

And keep this in mind, too: as a REALTOR who has talked to many, many buyers on Guemes Island over the years, I believe there are many hundreds of owners of vacant land (and also homes) on Guemes who aren’t even aware of the proposed changes, because they don’t live here and don’t read *The Guemes Tide* nor look at *Linetime*, nor are they able or serve on any committee and have their voice heard.

This decision not only affects those small waterfront lots such as ours and others on North Beach & West Beach, it will have a huge effect on the whole neighborhood of Holiday Hideaway on the southeast corner of the island.

Please reconsider and modify the severity of these restrictions for the final draft.

Thank you for your time.

Bill & Karen Everett

**Karen Everett, REALTOR, Broker**

Coldwell Banker Bain, Anacortes

[360.202.7373](tel:360.202.7373)

[kareneverett.cbbain.com](http://kareneverett.cbbain.com)

**International Diamond Society, Coldwell Banker / Previews International  
Properties Specialist / Certified Residential Specialist / Luxury Home Specialist  
/ Accredited Buyer's Specialist /  
2011-2015 Awards of Excellence, REALTOR Association / Board of Directors,  
REALTOR Association / Commercial Broker's Association**

**From:** [Sequoia Ferrel](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 comprehensive plan update  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 9:13:26 PM

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We have lived on Guemes Island for 30years and my husband, Lane Parks was an initiator of the first group of people working on the comp plan. There have been many many people who have put in a lot of hard work to represent the best interests of the Guemes residents. I am thankful and respectful of their hard work and am wholly in support the implementation of the subarea plan. I have a small farm on the island.

Thanks for your consideration.

Sequoia Ferrel

--

Gaia Rising Farm  
7389 Chestnut Lane  
Anacortes, Wa 98221  
360-293-2980  
[gaiarisingfarm.net](http://gaiarisingfarm.net)

**From:** [Juby Fouts](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 12:15:08 PM

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Dear Skagit County Board of Commissioners,

I am writing this email to urge you to adopt the **2016 Comprehensive Plan Update for Guemes Island**, including **the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay**.

I have been a part of many organizations on Guemes Island, including Guemes Dist. 17 Volunteer Fire Department.

In case no one has mentioned the difficulty of getting our Fire rigs and equipment down narrow roads/lots for waterfront fire protection, that is addressed in the Zoning overlay.

**The Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee (GIPAC)** is comprised of respected, intelligent Guemes Island residents. Ten years ago, the **American Institute of Architects** wrote a very comprehensive “Sustainable Design Assessment Team Report” for Guemes. Much of our GIPAC plan is not only scientifically supported, it is supported by the majority of Guemes Island residents—YOU WOULD DO WELL TO ADOPT IT!

Sincerely,

Juby Fouts

6443 Nootka Ln.

Guemes Island, WA

360-293-2704

**From:** [Nancy Fox](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 21, 2016 1:32:12 PM

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Date: June 20, 2016

Memo to: Skagit County Board of Commissioners

From: Nancy Fox, Chair, Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee; Address: 7207 Channel View Drive, Anacortes, WA 98221

Re: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update

I am writing on behalf of the Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee, which has been closely following the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update process. We previously submitted comments in support of the proposed Guemes Island Zoning Overlay and the proposed Seawater Intrusion Policy to be codified within the Critical Areas Ordinance; both of these are important measures aimed at implementing the adopted Guemes Island Subarea Plan.

At this time, we would like to add our comments on a couple of recent changes to the zoning overlay and bring to your attention two omissions we would like to see addressed.

### **1. Changes to the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay**

The Planning Department proposed, and the Planning Commission accepted, two changes to the proposed zoning overlay for Guemes Island: measuring building height from flood elevation rather than ground level, and allowing administrative variances from the height and setback standards of the overlay. These changes are intended to address a property owner's concern about the effect of the new standards on small beach lots, and we support these changes.

The administrative variance process will allow the County to grant some flexibility to property owners on very small lots where large houses have been built on adjacent lots. Unfortunately, this has occurred on a number of sites in the past 5 years in the interim between when the Guemes Plan was adopted and the County's finally taking up legislation to implement the plan. It is unfortunate that this has occurred, but we agree that it warrants flexibility for property owners caught in this situation.

Measuring building heights from flood elevation also makes sense to us, since houses built in flood areas are required to be elevated for flood mitigation.

### **2. Open space protection for CaRDs**

We are concerned that one of our recommendations relating to open space in a CaRD development was omitted from the department's proposed code and therefore did not receive proper consideration by the Planning Commission. Policy 4.21 in our Guemes Island Subarea Plan states: "The County should ensure that open space set aside by a CaRD subdivision is permanently protected."

Open space land designated through a CaRD on Guemes should not be reserved for future

urban development because Guemes is outside any urban growth area and is subject to serious water availability limitations. It is our understanding that our plan recommendation was omitted from the proposed code not due to a substantive disagreement with the provision but due to an oversight. The department has stated that it intends a substantial update of the CaRD ordinance at some point in the future, and indicates the Guemes proposal can be taken up at that time. It seems to us that the implementing language can and should be included in the Guemes overlay right now. Down the road, when the CaRD ordinance is reviewed in its entirety, the Guemes provision can be refined as needed to mesh with the broader program.

We believe this should be addressed now, rather than at some undefined point in the future, because -- as we have seen with the building heights/setbacks issues discussed immediately above -- the passage of time allows development to occur that would not have been allowed if the Subarea Plan restrictions had been implemented in a timely fashion when the Plan was approved in 2011. Instead, we are now trying to figure out how to put the proverbial development genie back in the bottle, and we do not want to face this problem with CaRD open spaces also.

**We ask that the following code language added to SCC 14.16.360 Guemes Island Overlay:**

*New Section 8. Any open space designated through a CaRD subdivision on Guemes Island must be permanently preserved through the filing of a protective easement or covenant prior to final subdivision approval.*

### **3. Gap in enforceability of the Seawater Intrusion Policy**

GIPAC has repeatedly expressed its support for codification of the Seawater Intrusion Policy, and we are glad to see this proposed by the Planning Department. We are very concerned, however, about a gap in enforceability of the code. In cases where a new well is drilled without any ties to a development permit, there is no mechanism to ensure county review prior to drilling, nor a way to apply the regulations relating to new wells. As currently written, an associated development permit is the only trigger for County review. A recent situation on Guemes Island, with a new well to be drilled without any advance review by the County, has heightened community awareness of this issue and increased our level of concern about the need for closing this gap in the code.

**We ask that the following code language be included in in SCC 14.24.380(2) Seawater Intrusion Areas, Application Requirements (as a substitute for the language currently proposed):**

*(a) For wells. Application for a new well must be submitted for review prior to drilling any new well. Such applications must include the following: ....*

Thank you for your consideration.

**From:** [Nancy Fox](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 4:26:57 PM

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I am writing on behalf of the Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee (GIPAC), with comments on the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update. These comments are in addition to comments our committee has previously submitted, and are aimed at responding to a question raised by several people testifying at the Board of Commissioners meeting on June 20. Specifically, I would like to make sure our committee has been clear in explaining the purpose of the proposed Guemes Island Zoning Overlay.

Some shoreline property owners challenging the building envelope standards in the proposed zoning overlay have implied that preserving shoreline views for upland property owners is the reason behind the new standards. In fact, the primary purpose of the proposed overlay is to accomplish the following goals in the adopted Guemes Island Subarea Plan.

- • Preserve the rural character of Guemes Island overall. This was a core purpose and value expressed by a large majority of participants in the development of the Guemes Island Subarea Plan.
- • Maintain the historical scale of development on the island, and avoid significant conflicts in scale between large new homes and smaller existing residences. This is a particular concern due to the large number of substandard lots on Guemes Island, many of which were originally platted as camping sites or for small beach cabins. Current zoning allows vastly larger structures than most existing island residences.
- • Mitigate the impact of increased water demand on the island's sole source aquifer that is associated with large new homes. Maintaining sustainable development and avoiding further degradation of the island's groundwater supply through saltwater intrusion is of paramount concern to Guemes Islanders. Seawater intrusion is a particular problem in some of the shoreline areas where vacant lots and small existing homes are being replaced with large new residences.
- 

<!--[if !supportLists]-->

GIPAC acknowledges the concern expressed by some who testified that the proposed zoning overlay will place limits on what they can build on their property. We would suggest, however, that the small size and narrow width of their lots represent the primary building constraints.

The proposed zoning overlay still allows for expansion of buildings on small lots. To provide additional flexibility, we support the recent changes made by the Planning Commission: to measure building height from flood elevation rather than grade, and to allow administrative variances where warranted from the height and setback provisions of the proposed overlay.

We are extremely grateful for the cooperation we have received from county staff to finally begin the process of implementing the Guemes Island Subarea Plan. We urge you to adopt the proposed changes to the 2016 Comprehensive Plan that have been approved by the Planning Commission and the Planning and Development Services Department.

Thank you for your consideration.

Nancy Fox, Chair, Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee

7202 Channel View Drive  
Anacortes, WA 98221

**From:** [Edwin Frank](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Fw: Comprehensive Plan Update Comments  
**Date:** Monday, June 20, 2016 2:23:28 PM

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**From:** [edwinfrank@comcast.net](mailto:edwinfrank@comcast.net)  
**Sent:** Monday, June 20, 2016 2:00 PM  
**To:** [pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us)  
**Subject:** Comprehensive Plan Update Commenets

I have reviewed the Guemes Island Overlay proposal and offer the following comments.

**PROPOSED REVISION**

C-26 Guemes Island Subarea Plan 14.04.020 Definitions The following definitions are added:  
Actual structure height: the height of a structure as measured from the average ground elevation to the top of the structure.

**COMMENT:** This definition may work for relatively flat parcels in areas outside of designated flood zones. In these areas it seems reasonable to measure the height of a structure from the base floor elevation for the flood zone. Not recognizing the flood elevation could reduce the interior ceiling height to less than the minimum required by the Building Code. For sites that have more grade change, where is the average grade established, the building site, footprint or one of the exterior wall lines?

**PROPOSED REVISION**

New Section 14.16.360 Guemes Island Overlay

- (1) Purpose. This Section describes additional development standards for Guemes Island.
- (2) Applicability. This Section applies to all development within all zones on Guemes Island, and is to be applied in conjunction with the underlying zoning regulations.
- (3) Permitted Uses. Reserved. (4) Administrative Special Uses. Reserved.
- (5) Hearing Examiner Special Uses. Reserved.
- (6) Prohibited Uses. (a) Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) where the water source contains chloride levels greater than 25 ppm.
- (7) Dimensional Standards.
  - (a) Setbacks.
    - (i) Front setback for fences: Fences that are less than 50% opaque and more than 3 feet tall must be setback at least ten feet.
    - (ii) Side: Each side setback must be at least 8 feet. The total of both side setbacks must be at least 30 feet, or 30% of the lot width at its widest point, whichever is less.
  - (b) Maximum Height.
    - (i) Structures: The actual structure height may not exceed 12 feet at the side setback. The actual structure height may increase by one foot for each foot inside the required side

setback, up to a maximum actual structure height of 30 feet.

**COMMENT:**

(7)a(i) This an interesting concept. Does this mean that fences more than 50% open must be set back from the front property line?

(7) b (i) This proposed restriction may not be an issue for larger parcels but is problematic for existing, smaller, platted parcels. If this proposal is for view protection, it is most likely in conflict with part **14.02.010 (14) *Protect and promote the public health, safety and general welfare, with respect for private property and private property rights.***

This part needs to be removed. The provision would encourage expansion of footprints of structures on the smaller parcels to the maximum width of the parcel and limit access to back yards and beaches. It would also encourage the removal of trees that are intended to be protected by other provisions of Skagit County Code. When sloping lots are developed, where is the average grade established? Which building line controls? One could be required to build substantially underground on some sites.

If fire protection is the issue, use of provisions of the Building Code could be effectively used without adversely impacting use of a property.

**SUMMARY**

This proposed rule change is poorly constructed and appears to provide no benefit to the general public. The provisions are unique to a land area that is very similar to other land areas in Skagit County by population density. This proposed language should not be adopted.

Edwin Frank, CBO Ret.

PO Box 1598

Anacortes, WA 98221-6598

360.293.5534

**From:** [gary garrett](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update - Guemes Island  
**Date:** Sunday, June 19, 2016 7:52:01 PM

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**From: Kari and Gary Garrett, Elsa Wise, owners of 5144 South Shore Drive, Anacortes, WA 98221; 360 293 2307; garrett@rgarrett.com**

**To: Skagit County Board of Commissioners**

**We are opposed to the GIPAC's proposed building restrictions as currently stated:**

- Public comment from property owners was not directly solicited, specifically those waterfront properties that would be most affected.
- The restrictions as written are far too “cookie cutter” and do not take into account the significant distinctions of an island such as Guemes as to lot size and geographic location (low bank, high bank, wetlands, small parcels, etc.)
- Architectural originality and structural innovation will be stifled, if not prohibited, absent lengthy and costly administrative review processes which will most likely be backburnered as against conforming project applications from an already overburdened County staff
- Lenders will not bankroll an “iffy proposition” and current bank lending covenants may be adversely affected triggering potential defaults.
- State and Federal regulations, either current or pending, do not seem to be adequately addressed
- Potential Skagit County property tax revenue will be reduced and said reduction may negatively impact Guemes Island funding as current and potential property owners will find development and remodeling restrictive
- Property values will inevitably decline which will deprive property owners of income they are entitled to relative to similar island properties in Skagit and Island Counties. Retirement portfolios, in particular those for seniors, will be crippled, in effect, depriving the most needy of their retirement expectations as property values fall.

**A fuller, inclusive and more professional assessment needs to be undertaken before the County proceeds with consideration of the Comprehensive Plan.**

Thank you for your consideration and we would appreciate direct communication from the County on this significant plan. We will be unable to attend the June 20 Public Hearing but appreciate the opportunity to provide the County Board of Commissioners with our thoughts.

Gary and Kari Garrett, Elsa Wise – family owners of Guemes Island property since 1935.

**From:** [Carolyn and Ed Gastellum](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 10:09:14 PM

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To: Skagit County Board of Commissioners

These comments are submitted to you regarding the 2016 Skagit County Comprehensive Plan update.

My family and I moved to Mount Vernon in 1989 when my husband was selected as the Assistant Superintendent for North Cascades National Park Complex. We moved here from the southwest and quickly put down our roots in Skagit County because we immediately valued our farmlands, Skagit river habitats, mountains, forests, lakes, shorelines, marine environments, and the individual character of each of the towns located in our county. Today, more than ever before because of increasing pressures for development, it is essential to include protection for open space corridors in the Comprehensive Plan. That is why I strongly support the proposed language for policy 2B-1.3 that says Skagit County will work with partners to identify and conserve open space corridors. No one that I know who loves Skagit wants our county to look like Lynnwood with its paved over farmlands, lack of forests, and grossly urbanized environments. That is why now is the time to assure that Skagit County has a strong open space plan that has broad community support, is transparent and easy to understand, and is actively used.

Our children grew up with a deep appreciation for the beauty found within Skagit County because we have shared many hiking trails and walking paths over the years. My husband often rode his bike from our Mount Vernon home to his office in Sedro Woolley and in the summers our daughter did the same thing to get to her summer job. Today I see more and more people commuting and doing errands by bicycle which makes the need for safer bicycle routes greater than ever before. Recreational bike riding, horseback riding, and walking for health and enjoyment are activities that are increasingly popular and essential to the well being of people of all ages. I support the non-motorized bicycle, pedestrian, and equestrian trail projects that are on the 20-year list in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan draft because they will provide greater safety for users and also can be counted among the quality of life benefits that draw people to Skagit County. Opportunities for recreation as well as practical uses of non-motorized transportation projects for commuting or doing errands brings economic benefit to our county.

I appreciate the public process over time that has allowed citizens to comment on the 2016 Comprehensive Plan. I appreciate the work done by Skagit County planning staff and you, our county commissioners. It is my hope and expectation that the 20-year list of non-motorized projects and the open space language in the draft plan will be adopted and put into action.

Thank you.

Carolyn Gastellum  
14451 Ashley Place  
Anacortes, WA 98221

RECEIVED  
JUN 23 2016  
SKAGIT COUNTY  
PDS

Skagit County Commissioners  
1800 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon Wa. 98273

June 18, 2016

Re: Skagit County 2016 Comprehensive Plan update.

Please consider adding the following language in **BOLD** into the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update in efforts to enhance economic recovery in east Skagit County.

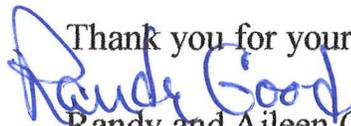
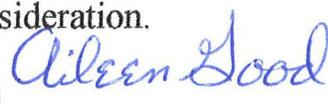
Skagit County Comp Plan page 257- Freight and Economic Development.

Add to Policy 8A-7.3

**The Sedro Woolley to Concrete rail corridor was railbanked in 1993. Under the intent of rail banking the rail corridor can be reactivated back to rail service at any time. Encourage return of rail use to promote economic recovery of east county.**

The return of rail service will play an important role in the economic recovery of east Skagit County's abundant natural resources.

Thank you for your consideration.

Randy and Aileen Good  
35482 SR 20  
Sedro Woolley Wa. 98284  
360-856-1199

Skagit County Commissioners  
1800 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon, Wa. 98284

RECEIVED

JUN 20 2016

SKAGIT COUNTY  
PDS

June 20, 2016

RE: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update, Transportation Technical Appendix

Regarding projects added to County Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) in Transportation Technical Appendix.

Pages 57 - 61 Exhibit 26 of March 2016 Comp Plan update draft. This project list was reviewed by the county planning commission and adopted by the County Commissioners December last year.

Somehow these 11 projects, without ID numbers, listed under non-motorized heading have mysteriously been added without going through the process of a public meeting, a public hearing with planning commission and a public hearing with the county commissioners. No vote by commissioners to include these 11 projects that cost 71 million dollars.

No public knowledge of these 11 projects. Two of these non-motorized trails, results in loss of 120 acres of farmland. Another shows a trail drawn through a dairy farmers farm.

All other projects have ID#, have gone through the county public process already in place to add projects onto the county TIP as described in this 2016 Comp Plan update.

May 20, 2016, now comes the Staff Report #4 which removes some projects, combines several, reshapes and renames several,

adds 2 new ones, now at 9 projects all without public notice or review.

Unethically, staff Walters and Johnson insert false information under their Staff Recommendations and Rational which the planning commission members believed to be true.

Examples of False information:

County Staff recommendations on 1. The Wiseman Creek Boardwalk, 2. The Bicycle Route 13 Centennial Trail, and 3. The Coast to Cascades (Cascade Trail as identified on the Staff Report #4 which planning commissions motion was based on. ) have statements that these 3 projects were adopted onto the SCOG Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). How can that be?

The BOCC has not even voted to include these 3 projects onto the county 6yr. TIP, so how can they be on the Regional Transportation Plan at SCOG.

Staff Report #4 also state's the Centennial and Cascade Trails are adopted onto the Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) which staff somehow claim makes them a legitimate project that has gone through a public process. CFP is only a budgeting planning tool on which the 2 trails are listed for maintenance funds only.

Staff's recommendation on the Centennial Trail states, it ties into several Sedro Woolley projects that are also on the RTIP. Woops, two of those SW projects have never been adopted onto the SW 6yr. TIP. Nor has the SW Council voted to move them forward to the RTIP. One of the SW projects even has Skagit County holding a clouded title as owner of the parcel. ( documentation attached shows how by Quit Claim Deed the county confiscated the

abandoned railroad corridor easements from Sedro Woolley out to the Snohomish County line without the easement landowners knowledge. Along with a county attorney memo telling the commissioners how to take the railroad easement lands without paying the landowners.) Others parcels remain today with clouded titles under the same county's Quit Claim Deed.

The County Planning Commission has donated many long hours to the betterment of Skagit County. Why would county Staff knowingly supply the planning commission with false information? Staff Walters and Johnson need to be held accountable. The Planning Commission members and county citizens deserve better.

**Encourage the Skagit County Commissioners to remove from this 2016 Comp Plan Update - Transportation Technical Appendix TIP the following three projects 1. Wiseman Creek boardwalk, 2. Bicycle Route 13 Centennial, and 3. The Coast to Cascade's, identified on Staff Report #4 as Cascade Trail from which Planning Commission's recorded motion was based on.**

Additional Comments on 2016 Comp Plan Update, Transportation Element Policy 2B-1.3 Open Space Concept Plan.  
(documentation attached)

**Encourage County Commissioners to support the County Planning Commission's recorded motion of May 31, 2016.**

Pages 322 - 326 Economic Development - Development Strategy, Another list of 37 projects mysteriously added to this Comp Plan Update, without public knowledge, without public notice or review.  
**Encourage the Skagit County Commissioners to remove this**

**list of 37 projects on pages 325 and 326 from this Comp Plan update. County has processes in place for addressing projects to get the required public participation required.**

Thank you for your consideration.



Friends of Skagit County  
Randy Good President  
35482 SR  
Sedro Woolley, Wa. 98284  
360-856-1199

Documentation attached:

1. Quit Claim Deed used by county to confiscate railroad easement lands.
2. Moffat memo telling commissioners how to take the land without owners knowledge.
3. Public survey identified as UGA Open Space and Trails Concept.
4. Presented to Sedro Woolley as UGA Open Space and Trails Concept.
5. 7/01/08 public comments by South Fidalgo resident on OSCP.
6. Western Washington Ag Association comments of April 14, 2016 to county planning commission on 11 projects.
7. April 11, 2016 comments by Jack Wallace to planning commission on projects.
8. Additional comments presented to county planning commission.

Sedro Woolley to Suckewish Line

93 11 22 2

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the said Grantor has caused this instrument to be signed by its Director, Title Services & Field Support, attested by its Assistant Secretary, and its corporate seal to be affixed on the 29<sup>th</sup> day of January, 1993.

9303050095 QUIT CLAIM DEED

Skagit Co. County  
901:56

BURLINGTON NORTHERN RAILROAD COMPANY

BY D.P. Schneider  
D. P. Schneider, Director  
Title Services & Field Support

HURLINGTON NORTHERN RAILROAD COMPANY (formerly named Burlington Northern Inc.), a Delaware corporation, Grantor, for Ten and no/100 Dollars (\$10.00) and other good and valuable consideration, conveys and quit claims, without any covenants of warranty whatsoever and without recourse to the Grantor, its successors and assigns, to SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON, a political subdivision of the State of Washington, of 315 South Third Street, Mount Vernon, Washington 98273-3822, Grantee, all its right, title and interest, if any, in real estate situated in Skagit County, State of Washington, together with all after acquired title of Grantor therein, described on Exhibit "A" attached hereto and made a part hereof.

SUBJECT, however, to all existing interests, including but not limited to all reservations, rights-of-way and easements of record or otherwise.

EXCEPTING AND RESERVING, however, unto said Grantor, its successors and assigns, all of the coal, oil, gas, casinghead gas and all ores and minerals of every kind and nature, including sand and gravel, underlying the surface of the premises herein conveyed, together with the full right, privilege and license at any and all times to explore, or drill for and to protect, conserve, mine, take, remove and market any and all such products in any manner which will not damage structures on the surface of the premises herein conveyed, together with the right of access at all times to exercise said rights.

If the premises are locally assessed, the Grantee, and for its successors and assigns, by acceptance of this deed, agrees to assume all locally assessed real estate taxes, outstanding and otherwise, and any and all past, present, pending and future assessments of every nature whatsoever, which have been or may be levied against the premises.

ALSO, the Grantee, and for its successors and assigns, by acceptance of this deed, hereby releases and forever discharges the Grantor, its successors and assigns, from any and all present or future obligations of the Grantor, its successors and assigns, including but not limited to the construction of or continued maintenance thereto of any railroad fences, snow fences, road crossings, cattle guards, gates, farm crossings, bridges, drainage or irrigation pipes, if any, located and situate on the premises herein conveyed.

By acceptance of this deed, Grantee acknowledges that a material consideration for this release, without which it would not be made, is the agreement by the Grantee and for itself and its successors and assigns that Grantor, its predecessors, successors, and assigns shall be in no manner responsible to the Grantee, any subsequent owner, purchaser, or any person interested therein for any and all claims, demands, damages, causes of action including loss of access, or suits regarding the quiet and peaceable possession of such premises, title thereto, or condition thereof.

#00734  
SKAGIT COUNTY WASHINGTON  
Real Estate Excise Tax  
PAID  
MAR - 5 1993  
Amount Paid to  
Skagit County Treasurer  
Dusany

ATTEST:

BY Victoria H. Vasquez  
Victoria H. Vasquez  
Assistant Secretary



STATE OF TEXAS )  
COUNTY OF TARRANT ) ss.

On this 29<sup>th</sup> day of January, 1993, before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for the State of Texas, duly commissioned and sworn, personally appeared D. P. Schneider and Victoria H. Vasquez, to me known to be the Director, Title Services & Field Support, and Assistant Secretary, respectively, of Burlington Northern Railroad Company, the corporation that executed the foregoing instrument, and acknowledged the said instrument to be the free and voluntary act and deed of said corporation, for the uses and purposes therein mentioned, and on oath stated that they are authorized to execute the said instrument and that the seal affixed is the corporate seal of said corporation.

Witness my hand and official seal hereto affixed the day and year first above written.

Carline Nichols  
Notary Public in and for the State of Texas  
Residing at: Fort Worth, Texas  
My appointment expires: December 20, 1996



BN 2036-22

9303050095

EX1160100550

9303050095

EX1160100549

JOHN MOFFAT  
CHIEF CIVIL DEPUTY

DAVE NEEDY  
CHIEF CRIMINAL DEPUTY

K. GARL LONG  
SENIOR DEPUTY

GORSH VOLLME  
THOMAS BEAUNE  
MORGAN WITT  
DIONNE CLASEN  
KIMBERLY WOODSON  
DEPUTIES

MICHAEL RICKERT  
SKAGIT COUNTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY  
COURTHOUSE ANNEX - 605 S. 3rd St.  
MOUNT VERNON, WASHINGTON 98273  
(206) 336-9460 SCAN 554-9460  
FAX 336-9347



County Attorney  
tells Commissioners  
how to steal RR  
easement lands

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of County Commissioners  
FROM: John R. Moffat *JRM*  
Chief Civil Deputy  
DATE: October 16, 1992  
RE: Acquisition of Burlington Northern Right-of-Way

Jon Aarstad has advised me that he intends to place on your agenda in the near future your consideration of the purchase from Burlington Northern of approximately 101 acres of abandoned railroad right-of-way for the Centennial Trail. The negotiated purchase price with Burlington Northern is \$113,254.00, approximately one-third of the appraised value of the acreage which is \$326,992.23.

We wish to be sure that you are aware of the fact that one of the reasons why Burlington Northern may be willing to sell at a reduced value is that it is likely that the railroad does not have clear title to the right-of-way which it is selling to the County. The case of King County v. Squire Investment Co., 59 Wash. App. 888 (1990) (copy attached) indicates that where a railroad abandons right-of-way for railroad purposes, the railroad no longer owns the right-of-way; rather, the adjoining property owners own it.

In the Squire Investment Co. case, the Court found that the deed from the property owners to the railroad back in the 1890's conveyed only an easement interest and that after the railroad abandoned the railroad line in 1985 the ownership of the right-of-way reverted to the adjoining property owners. As stated in the Squire Investment Co. case:

Burlington Northern formally abandoned the right of way on July 29, 1985. The easement was extinguished at that moment and its interest reverted to the Squires' (original grantor) heirs. Burlington Northern had no interest to convey to King County for use as a

railroad much less as a trail. Even if the right of way had not been formally abandoned, Lawson v. State, (107 Wn.2d 444 [1986]) defeats the County's argument. Responding to a similar argument, the court stated:

Applying common law principles, we hold that a change in use from "rails to trails" constitutes abandonment of an easement which was granted for railroad purposes only. At common law, therefore, the right of way would automatically revert to the reversionary interest holders.

Lawson at 452. . . .

In summary, the Squire deed conveyed an easement to the railroad which terminated when its successor, Burlington Northern, abandoned the line with the approval of the ICC. The reversionary interest passed to the successors of the grantors. The trial court's alternative holding that the Squire deed conveyed an easement and, consequently, King County acquired no interest in the right of way is affirmed.

59 Wash. App. at 894-95.

In our case, it is impossible to ascertain the exact nature of the ownership of the right-of-way without examining each and every deed through which Burlington Northern or its predecessor-in-interest acquired title to the railroad right-of-way.

It is instructive to note that the Squire Investment Co. case came about because King County elected to file an action to quiet title and to condemn the entire portion of the right-of-way that it intended to use as a trail before it declared the same as a trail. This is certainly the safer way to go and would avoid problems arising later regarding the ownership of the trail. However it would also be more likely to alert adjoining property owners of their potential interest in the trail property.

If the Board is concerned with adjoining property owners exerting a claim to the trail without the County having established formal ownership thereof, an appropriate course of action would be for the County to commence a quiet title action to the 101 acres, color of

**Board of County Commissioners**

**October 16, 1992**

**Page 3**

title to which it is acquiring through the purchase from Burlington Northern. Then, any adjoining owners who contest the County's quiet title action can be addressed separately either through private negotiation or a subsequent condemnation action. The County may be able to establish title by default judgment against a number of the adjoining property owners in the quiet title action, thus obviating the necessity of paying any compensation to them through a condemnation suit.

Alternatively, the County could post signs indicating the trail is County property and proceed to treat it as County property, subject to being challenged by adjoining landowners for a period of seven years pursuant to RCW 7.28.050. This procedure could result in the County paying less for the land to adjoining owners, but would also result in additional uncertainty of title for some time.

If you have any further questions regarding this, please let me know.

JRM:tad

cc: Jon Aarstad:  
Steve Colby  
Dave Fleming

**Jeroldine Hallberg, Senior Planner**  
**Skagit County Planning & Development Services**  
**1800 Continental Place**  
**Mount Vernon, Washington 98273**  
**360-336-9410 x 3175    jeroldineh@co.skagit.wa.us**

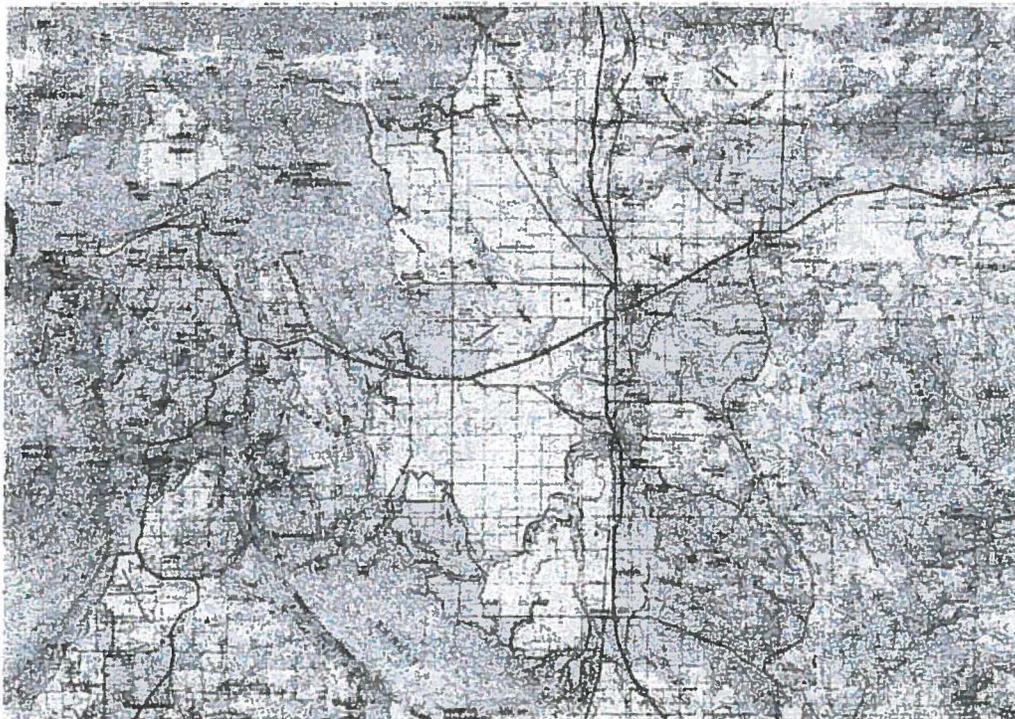
17

USA First-Class

2/17  
of 100

AILEEN GOOD  
25512 MINKLER RD  
SEDRO-WOOLLEY, WA 98284

0028437965 R006



***This is your chance to let us know your opinions and priorities.***  
***Please review the enclosed materials and complete the telephone survey to indicate your priorities about Skagit Countywide UGA open space and trail opportunities and finances. Help us create a long-range plan for Skagit County and the Urban Growth Areas (UGAs).***

## Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space & Trails Plan

### **Private conservation initiatives**

Numerous private organizations in Skagit County are actively involved in conserving open space assets including wildlife habitat, working farmlands, unique forestlands, scenic landscapes, and recreational activities including on and off-road trail systems.

In fact, Skagit County has more organizations involved in open space conservation than is common of any other area in Washington State or the surrounding Pacific Northwest region. A conservation focus has emerged over time in Skagit County due to: 1) the Skagit River's habitat value (the most productive river west of the Mississippi), 2) the Skagit Valley's agriculture potential (one of the largest remaining viable farming areas in the region), and 3) the county's overall scenic, cultural, and historical diversity, among others.

By and large, these groups have accomplished a great deal through their efforts to conserve important county open space assets through property owner use agreements, conservation easements, and outright land purchases. These groups have also been actively involved in the management, restoration, and enhancement of the natural features that once existed on these conserved lands and which provide their unique ecological, environmental, scenic, and cultural values.

In general, these organizations have been able to obtain the minimum funds necessary to implement their basic conservation missions - which are unique to each entity. These groups have been adept at raising monies through grants, donations, fund-raising drives, and other enterprises - primarily from residents of the county and surrounding region.

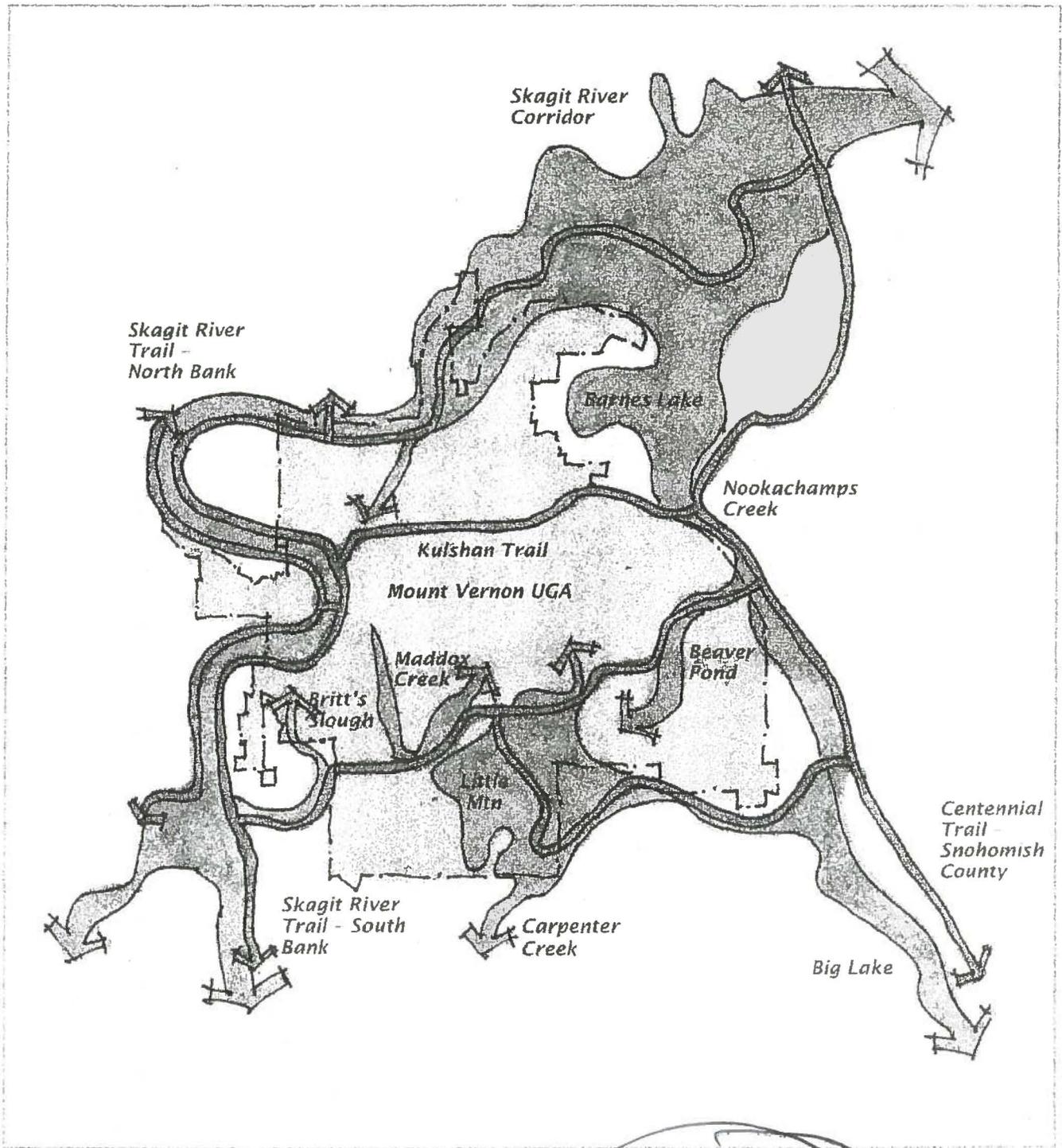
However, most of these organizations and their efforts have been focused in the more rural areas outside of the existing cities and proposed urban growth areas (UGAs). A rural focus has been followed for a variety of reasons including: 1) higher land costs within or next to the urban areas, 2) increased land management requirements, 3) greater coordination requirements with other public and private parties, and the 4) the potential for conflict with local city land use objectives and priorities.

As a consequence, some of the most threatened remaining open spaces are located within or adjacent to the designated urban growth areas (UGAs) of the county.

### **Growth Management Act (GMA) initiatives**

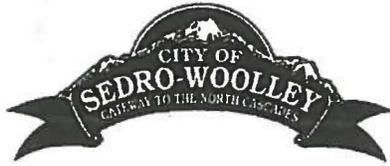
Critical Area Ordinances (CAOs) - the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) mandated counties and cities to conserve and protect sensitive environmental features including streams, wetlands, steep slopes subject to landslide hazard, and floodplains from urban developments that would increase risk to the landowner (or adjacent properties) and degrade the environment.

Skagit County and the cities have enacted critical area ordinances (CAOs) that protect these features and the buffered areas from urban development. By and large, CAOs have protected significant and critically sensitive areas in the county and within and adjacent the urban growth areas (UGAs) from inappropriate urban development. Most of these lands remain in private ownership subject to private land use activities that do not impose an environmental risk.



**Mount Vernon UGA Open Space & Trails Concept**

Preliminary Schematic - 5 June 2007



**Building, Planning and Engineering Dept.**  
Sedro-Woolley Municipal Building  
720 Murdock Street  
Sedro Woolley, WA 98284  
Phone (360) 855-0771  
Fax (360) 855-0733

---

**MEMO:**

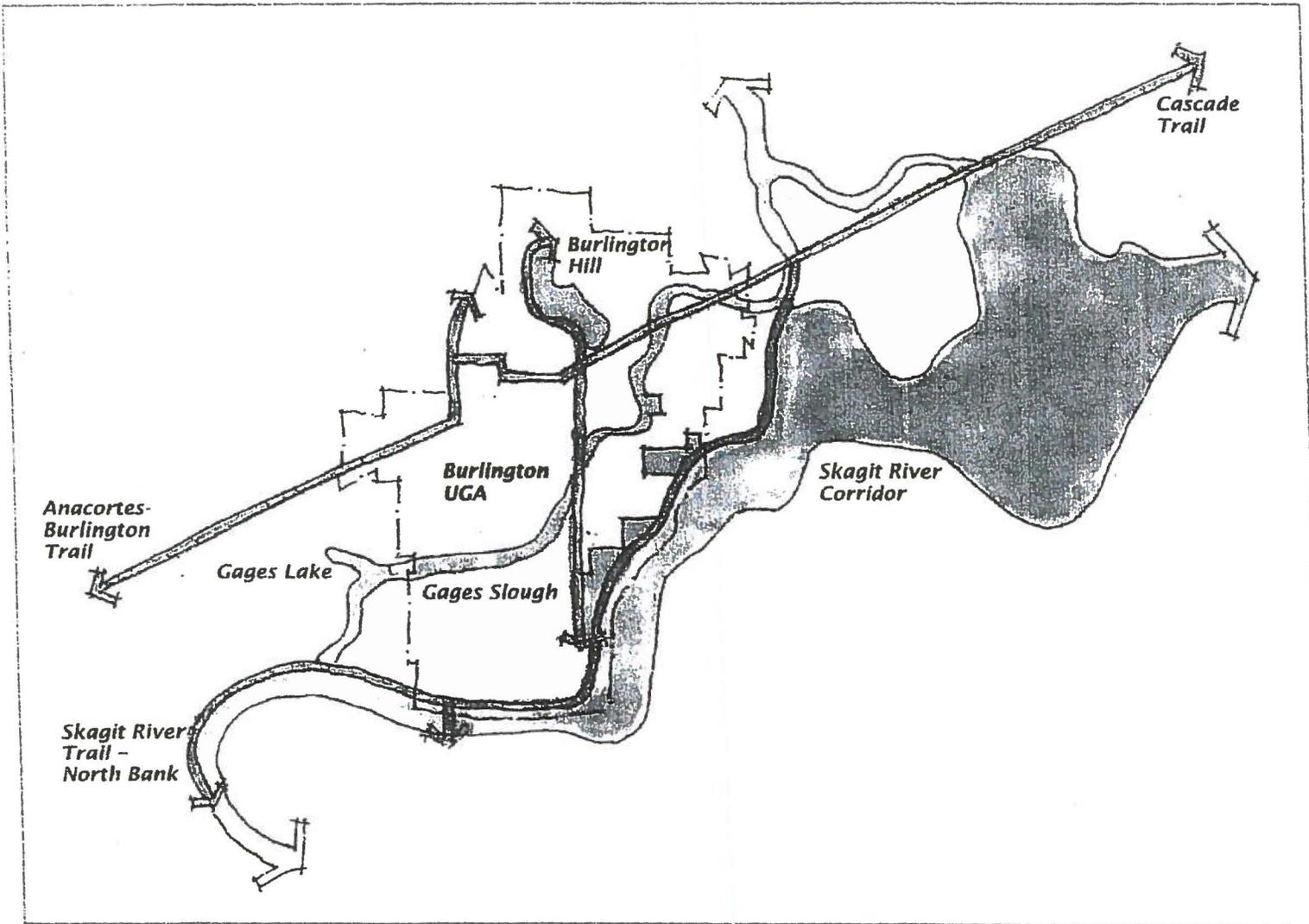
**To:** City Council  
**From:** Jack Moore,  
Planning Director & Building Official  
**Date:** August 7, 2007  
**Subject:** Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space and Trails Plan

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**PROJECT DESCRIPTION / HISTORY**

The Skagit County Council of Governments (SCOG) is working on an Open Space Separator Plan that will define the County's goals and plans to protect open space and trail corridors at the fringes of UGAs in the County. The two individuals that have spearheaded this effort, Jeroldine Hallberg and Tom Beckwith, will be making a small presentation to the Council at the August 7<sup>th</sup> Workshop. The presentation will be about 15 minutes, followed by a 15 minute question and answer period.

The goals of the Open Space Separator Plan are largely driven by the results of a survey that SCOG sent out to a random sampling of Skagit County residents. Mrs. Hallberg and Mr. Beckwith will be discussing the results of the survey (attached) at Tuesday's Workshop.



**Burlington UGA Open Space & Trails Concept**  
Preliminary Schematic - 5 June 2007

## Comments on the Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Plan 20 June 2008

I came to this process late and was unable to participate fully or to voice my concerns earlier. Since meetings for this plan were labeled **UGA** Open Space Plan, I erroneously assumed the process was for **Urban Growth Area** residents and not for rural residents. I only attended the last UGA Open Space Plan workshop. However, I would like to submit the following comments on the final draft plan as presented at that workshop.

As a conceptual comprehensive plan for county-wide parks and trails, it may be a start. As an UGA Open Space Plan to curb creeping urban sprawl, it falls short of meeting its objective.

Problems with this Plan stem from a lack of common definitions involving the scope and Intent of the study:

1. UGA? All areas of the county? Or Urban Growth Area - a designated area for future growth agreed on by city, county and Growth Management Hearings Board?
2. Open Space? Parks and Trails for recreational use? Or protection of rural lands from urban sprawl?
3. Between? A link between or a separator? Or, as I like to refer to it, a moat or a bridge? The phrase "within and adjacent" to the UGA was gradually replaced in the workshop with the phrase "within and between". "Within and between" is a phrase used in the Skagit Comprehensive Plan, but a careful reading of the entire section on Open space clearly uses the word "between" as a separator.
4. Corridor? A term that can also mean connecting or separating, depending on one's viewpoint and bias.
5. Adjacent? Is this anywhere in this county? Or is this abutting or nearby? (In other county definitions, doesn't this term have a legal meaning of ¼ mile?)

In each case, the Plan maps and recommendations place heavy emphasis on the former choice of definitions and very little, if any, on the latter. When this point was raised at the workshop, the consultant said each jurisdiction could decide for itself how to interpret the words! This will only lead to confusion, arguments and litigation, not co-operation.

If I stop nit picking over words and look at the bigger picture, I ask what is the most likely intent of the GMA, and the GMHB rulings and the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan? The answer is to prevent urban sprawl into rural areas and to protect resource lands. The purpose of this Plan should be to provide buffers separating urban (current and planned) from rural lands. Then the meaning of the disputed terms becomes clear and more closely matches the intent described in the early pages of the Plan.

From Chapter 1: Introduction "This document outlines the choices that are available and the means for implementing preferred actions found to be of most interest and benefit to Skagit County residents concerning **open space separators around** the 10 county UGAs. (Emphasis added)

From Chapter 1: Introduction Section 1.2 Approach "Generally, the proposed strategies recommend Skagit County focus its resources to resolve UGA open space concept plans with the 8 UGAs and create gap financing to assist ... **efforts to preserve and enhance open space assets around and within the UGA areas.** (Emphasis added)

Chapter 2 Section 2.2 "UGA open space separator or greenway requirements" "In addition to **protecting critical areas** and providing incentives for **rural resource protections**, the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) also requires counties with urban growth areas (UGAs) to **designate and develop open space separator or greenway plans with which to distinguish cities and urban areas from each other - and to prevent urban sprawl into the rural landscape.**"

"GMA's intent is to **determine and protect significant and important open spaces and corridors that define the edges of an urban area** - and that can provide interpretive and recreational opportunities to be accessed by rural and urban area residents alike." (Emphasis added)

Appendix A Section A.11 Skagit Countywide Planning Policies - 9. Open space and recreation "9.1 (page A-6) Open space corridors **within and between urban growth areas** shall be identified." Goal B Open Space (page A-7) "designate open space **corridors within and around urban growth areas.**"

A.12.28.1.4.d (A-8) "**Lands that can provide for a separation between communities**, minimize or prevent sprawl, provide a buffer between urban and rural areas, or between natural resource lands and rural areas." (Emphasis added)

Therefore, in my opinion, UGA Open Spaces should be separators (moats) to restrain urbanizing areas and to preserve our farms, forests and other critical areas. UGA Open Spaces for recreational use should be within or adjacent to the UGAs and should not be extended into rural or resource lands, taking valuable farmland out of production or allowing more intrusion into ecological sensitive areas. In fact, placing parks and trails in rural areas may actually encourage the demand for residential development on land in close proximity to these "open spaces". When UGAs have no choice but to expand to accommodate growth, the existing Open Spaces remain as parks and green areas and new Open Space buffers should be established along the new perimeter.

Also, in my opinion, the proposed "UGA connector" trails should be a component of a non-motorized transportation plan, funded by transportation dollars and co-located within the right-of-way of existing roads, not through farmers' fields, rural neighborhoods, or ecologically sensitive (critical) areas.

My metaphoric example of a moat may illustrate my thoughts more clearly. A moat surrounds a castle; the castle contains urban amenities (government, trades, stores, etc.). Outside the moat (open space) is the farmland and forests. In the middle ages, the moat provided the castle with protection against the hostile intrusion of outsiders (*come to think of it, we rural folk still get a little hostile when riled*); in modern times, the moat (open space) should protect the rural from urban intrusion.

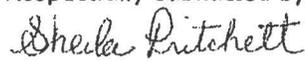
This Plan lost focus due to lack of a common understanding of the definitions of terms. While clear to me and others that the UGA Open Space required by GMA is meant to be a moat, some see a bridge linking urban areas together through little bits of "greenways". This latter view dominates the recommendations and maps. This Plan does not address the concerns of the GMHB, nor does it meet the objectives stated in the early sections of the plan document. It is not internally consistent!

The UGA Open Space Plan could (and should) be re-focused so that at least one criteria for projects would limit funding to those areas that are "within and adjacent" to existing Urban Growth Areas, with "adjacent" being defined as ¼ mile (as it is in other county documents). Specific criteria should be included in the Plan that delineates where and what type of projects (recreation, critical area protect, preservations of farmland, etc.) can be considered. Explicit definitions should be provided for terms used so that all parties understand the objectives. Without precise guidelines, how can the Plan or the UGA Open Space Advisory Committee be impartially evaluated as to whether or not it is meeting its goals? There must be accountability for the funding!

Some of this effort could also be salvaged as a framework for a separate countywide comprehensive Parks and Trails Plan. New public meetings should be held that (1) encourages attendance of rural residents for a comprehensive Parks and Trails Plan or (2) limits the scope of the UGA Open Space Plan to the UGAs not the entire unincorporated (rural) County.

Unless or until this Plan narrowly defines the commonly used terms or details definitive goals to separate urban from rural and resource lands, this is not an Open Space Plan, it is not a plan for anything other than a Tower of Babel where no one speaks the same language. As it is currently written, it should be completely and totally rejected as an UGA Open Space Plan.

Respectfully submitted by,

  
Sheila Pritchett  
South Fidalgo Island



*Western  
Washington  
Agricultural  
Association*

RECEIVED  
APR 14 2016  
MOUNT VERNON, WA

April 14, 2016

Mr. Dale Pernula, Director  
Skagit County Planning and Development Services  
1800 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

**RE:** Comprehensive Plan 2016 Update- Skagit County Transportation Element Technical Appendix

Dear Mr. Pernula:

Western Washington Agricultural Association appreciates the opportunity to comment on Skagit County's Notice of Availability Comment Period for Skagit County Comprehensive Plan 2016 Update.

Within Skagit County's 2016-36 Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Technical Appendix multiple types of projects proposals look to provide additional multimodal trails, paths, and corridors throughout the rural landscape. While many of these proposed projects are planned within existing Skagit County easements, some appear as though they would utilize private agricultural land, border farm and ranch land, and/or overlay existing drainage and irrigation district easements and infrastructure. Skagit County agricultural landowners and businesses are proud of their operations, techniques, and products, and appreciate the public interest and pleasure surrounding their industry. However, some of these projects are too close, and create a high likelihood for conflict between farmers and public, and may impact critical infrastructure and processes.

The "Tiger Trail Project" poses the highest risk of negative interaction and interference with agricultural operations. This project alone, with an estimated cost of \$8.9 million, will consume approximately 85 acres of agricultural land and infrastructure. While this property is not classified as "private" agricultural land, but rather as Puget Sound Energy ownership and/or easement, a case for adverse possession can be made through the lack of "interest" in this land by the listed owner. Additionally, utilizing this land to create a developed trail does not appear to fit the intended or listed purpose for this ownership, and further would disrupt current agricultural operations along its entire length.

2017 Continental Pl. #6 • Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
• (360) 424-PEAS (7327) • FAX (360) 424-9343  
E-mail: [info@westag.org](mailto:info@westag.org)

In addition to private agricultural operations, Skagit County Drainage and Irrigation District Nos. 14 and 16 actively and routinely maintain their easements along the reach of this proposed project. This vital infrastructure, which provides agricultural drainage and additional road runoff along Chuckanut Drive, cannot be altered, changed and/or abandoned without significant cost and detriment to adjacent and peripheral landowners. Additionally, without adequate modeling, it is impossible to identify and predict what additional effects altering this watercourse would do to up and downstream water movement if it were modified.

Many agricultural operations, procedures, and functions have a high likelihood of impact with construction of the "Tiger Trail Project" and other listed and proposed projects within the Transportation Technical Appendix. As Skagit County continues to provide connectivity and corridors for non-motorized traffic, particularly through agricultural and rural land, please consider more closely working with private landowners and businesses, and drainage and irrigation districts prior to, and during planning of these projects.

Farmland is a scenic and historic aspect of Skagit County's land base, that can and should be enjoyed by the viewing public. However, unintended conflict and negative reactions are likely outcomes when those not familiar with local agricultural practices and infrastructure come in close contact with farm operations and know not how to behave and/or understand what they see. As Skagit County attempts to provide both close access and corridors through farmland, analysis and coordination are necessary steps prior to plan finalization and project construction to identify and minimize unintended consequences with these interactions.

If you have any questions or need further information with regard to our comments, please contact me at your convenience, 360-424-7327, or [broozen@westag.org](mailto:broozen@westag.org).

Sincerely,



Brandon Roozen  
Executive Director

**From:** [Jack Wallace](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Comprehensive Plan 2016 Update - comments from Jack R. Wallace - 11163 Blue Heron Rd, Bow, WA 98232  
**Date:** Monday, April 11, 2016 3:00:05 PM

---

The following comments on the Comprehensive Plan 2016 Update are submitted by Jack R. Wallace, 11163 Blue Heron Rd, Bow, WA 98232

The Burlington Edison Multi Modal Pathway (Tiger Trail) should be removed from the comprehensive plan because it is incompatible with Agricultural activities, because it would create undue safety risks, and because the right of way that the County seeks to acquire no longer exists.

1. A multimodal trail or path along Chuckanut Drive would be incompatible with agriculture because farmers use chemicals and utilize heavy equipment in fields along the highway. Having pedestrians next to the fields would hamper farmers' ability to use their land for crop production. Much of the equipment used in fields is dangerous and has blind spots difficult for the operator to monitor. Some grain crops grow high enough to conceal children or even adults who might stray off of the path and into the field where they could be run over by equipment. Buffers and fences would have to be installed and maintained to protect users of the trail and even then complaints and heightened exposure to liability for farmers, the State and the County would be unavoidable. Taking a wide enough area to safeguard pedestrian users would be expensive and would consume vast amounts of prime farmland. The buffers would create areas that would be overgrown with weeds and other vegetation that would harbor pests and noxious weeds that would further exacerbate the impact on agriculture. Additional herbicides and pesticides would have to be used to control pests. Pedestrians might wander into fields and be injured by chemicals. Some equipment such as irrigation reels are automatic and are unattended. Such equipment would be dangerous to trail users who might cross into fields.
2. Farmers are subject to various food safety laws and regulations that prohibit trespassers and animals near or in fields used for the production of food. To invite the public with dogs and other animals into or near fields would create hazards that would have to be treated as such under HACCP plans imposed on farmers by retailers and other customers and by the federal government under FSMA. Growers of food products such as berries and potatoes are subject to annual audit and each field is inspected for signs of human or animal activity that might create risks. Adjacent land uses and activities are evaluated for their potential to create food safety risks. Litter, urine and animal and human feces are considered risks. Farmers are required to post no trespassing signs and maintain buffers between fields and incompatible adjacent land uses. Such a trail would make food production much more difficult and it would take additional land out of production due to food safety regulations and restrictions. Food safety rules require a restroom facility with handwashing station every ¼ mile or within a 5 min walk for employees (to prevent employees from urinating or defecating in the field and to allow washing). Such precautions would likely be required of pedestrians along the field and would necessitate 28 bathrooms along the 7 mile path to meet the same level for the public.
3. The right of way that PSE claims to have acquired (that originated from the interurban railroad) no longer exists. The right of way was cleared of brush by farmers shortly after the

railroad ceased operating in 1930. In most cases no rent has been paid by farmers occupying the land. Consequently, the land passed to the farmers along the path decades ago by virtue of the doctrine of adverse possession.

**From:** [Shannon Good](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on Comprehensive Plan Updates  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 21, 2016 7:37:36 AM

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Tuesday, June 21, 2016

Dear Commissioners and Planners of Skagit County;

As a lifelong resident of Skagit County, I would like to comment on some of the items in the upcoming Comprehensive Plan Updates.

### **Non-Motorized Transportation:**

Last year, I rode over 2000 miles on my bicycle, the majority of those miles being ridden on Skagit County roads. I have seen an increase in bicycle traffic each and every year. Last Sunday, on a 50 mile ride from Mount Vernon to Lake Samish, there were dozens of cyclists using the roads. Clearly, non-motorized transportation on COUNTY ROADS must be taken into consideration – not just trails and off road paths, but the roads themselves. As bicyclists, we need shoulders on those roads that are wide enough to keep us out of the lane of traffic. As well, the chip seal on our county roads is famous in the regional bicycling community for being large and painful. I realize that asphaltting is not economically feasible on the roads in the county, but a smaller aggregate in the chip seal would certainly be beneficial to all of us on two wheels.

I believe that bicycling and walking will increase in popularity as time passes, fuel resources diminish, global warming increases and public health awareness grows. I hope our county continues to support these activities, which are vital to a healthy population.

### **Railroads:**

I believe that as the rail lines increase in use, there will be many battles fought over what is being transported on those trains. I don't wish to bring that up in this letter. What I do wish to address is the disturbance from the Train Horns. In Mount Vernon, there are at least 6 railroad crossings. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) requires trains to sound the horn 15 – 20 seconds prior to and until the train arrives at the crossing. As I have laid awake at night, I have come to know that this means that every crossing is allotted 5 blasts from the horn, which means, in Mount Vernon alone – 30 horn soundings as the train passes through town. On the hill in Mount Vernon, I hear each and every one of those blasts. In the middle of the night.

**The FRA sanctions the establishment of “quiet zones” where the conventional train horn may be silenced at the grade crossings.** This statement is taken directly from a document that I am going to attach to this email and encourage you to read. There is a solution to be found within the document that

would alleviate this disturbance and still address public safety. *I believe that most of the crossings in Mount Vernon already have the required safety measures in place – we just need to establish the quiet zone with the FRA.* We can't continue to allow the railroads to ruin our quality of life by making it impossible to get a night's sleep. I recommend that "quiet zones" be established in all urban areas of Skagit County.

Thank you for your hard work in making our county a wonderful place to live.

Sincerely,

Shannon Good

Mount Vernon

<http://www.hanson-inc.com/images/Vision/pdfs/Is-Train-Horn-Noise-a-Problem7-09.pdf>

--

Shannon Good  
Good Design LLC  
403 South 11th Street  
Mount Vernon, Wa. 98274  
360.336.9700  
[sgoodllc@gmail.com](mailto:sgoodllc@gmail.com)

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JUN 20 2016

SKAGIT COUNTY  
PDS

**POSITION STATEMENT**

**REGARDING:** 2016 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE  
**SUBMITTED BY:** JoAnne and Michael Gray  
**ADDRESS:** 4898 N Indian Village LN  
Anacortes (Guemes Island), WA 98221

We, Michael and JoAnne Gray, are property owners and full time residents at 4898 North Indian Village Lane (West Beach, Guemes Island). Our family has owned this property since 1959. We removed the original cabin and built our new home on this site in 2011. We wish to go on record as opposing the changes promoted and proposed by GIPAC of new changes to Section 14.16.360. Our objections directly align with those items outlined by our friend and neighbor, Mark Madden, who has previously spoken at your meetings and has registered his concerns.

We are writing as we have only recently become aware of GIPAC's proposal. Thankfully, we became aware of GIPAC's burdensome and restrictive changes from our neighbor, Mark Madden. This unawareness indicates to us that GIPAC is not accurately representing the full spectrum of property owners on Guemes Island as property owners that both ourselves and Mark Madden have spoken with were not/are not informed of these proposed changes. The Madden family and our family have been friends for more than 60 years and we are most appreciative that Mark informed us of GIPAC's proposals. It appears to us that GIPAC has put forth their changes to the County without properly publicizing their intentions to Guemes Island property owners that would be adversely impacted by these changes. We suspect that if the impact of the GIPAC changes were well known on Guemes Island, that many other property owners and residents would have similar objections to the changes.

We do not feel it is fair or appropriate for other property owners, or future property owners, to not have the same opportunity as we have had to build a comfortable, efficient and environmentally responsible two story home for their family. Our position is accurately stated in the Recommendation Section of Mark Madden's thoughtfully prepared position statement document in his *Issue Paper – Comp Plan 2016 Update New Section 14.16.360 Guemes Island Overlay – Indian Village* and *Commissioners Paper June 2016*.

Respectively Submitted,



JoAnne and Michael Gray

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JUN 20 2016  
SKAGIT COUNTY  
PDS

June 20, 2016

Skagit County Planning and Development Dept  
1800 Continental Pl  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

RE: 2016 COMPREHENSIVE UPDATE  
Submitted by JoAnne and Michael Gray  
4898 N Indian Village LN  
Anacortes (Guemes Island), WA 98221

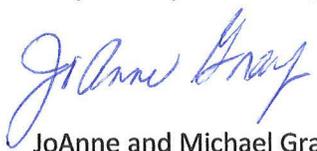
To Whom This May Concern,

We, Michael and JoAnne Gray, are property owners and full time residents at 4898 North Indian Village Lane (West Beach, Guemes Island). Our family has owned this property since 1959. We removed the original cabin and built our new home on this site in 2011. We wish to go on record as opposing the changes promoted and proposed by GIPAC of new changes to Section 14.16.360. Our objections directly align with those items outlined by our friend and neighbor, Mark Madden, who has previously spoken at your meetings and has registered his concerns.

We are writing as we have only recently became aware of GIPAC's proposal. Thankfully, we became aware of GIPAC's burdensome and restrictive changes from our neighbor, Mark Madden. This unawareness indicates to us that GIPAC is not accurately representing the full spectrum of property owners on Guemes Island as the property owners that both ourselves and Mark Madden have spoken with were not/are not informed of these proposed changes. The Madden family and our family have been friends for more than 60 years and we are most appreciative that Mark informed us of GIPAC's proposals. It appears to us that GIPAC has put forth their changes to the County without properly publicizing their intentions to Guemes Island property owners that would be adversely impacted by these changes. We suspect that if the impact of the GIPAC changes were well known on Guemes Island, that many other property owners and residents would have similar objections to the changes.

We do not feel it is fair or appropriate for other property owners, or future property owners, to not have the same opportunity as we have had to build a comfortable, efficient and environmentally responsible two story home for their family. Our position is accurately stated in the Recommendation Section of Mark Madden's thoughtfully prepared position statement document in his *Issue Paper – Comp Plan 2016 Update New Section 14.16.360 Guemes Island Overlay – Indian Village* and in his most recent submission, *Commissioners Paper June 2016* (enclosed).

Respectively Submitted,

   
JoAnne and Michael Gray

Mark Madden  
4910 N. Indian Village Ln.  
Anacortes, WA 98221

RE: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update

These are the three main points I have on 2016 Comp Plan Update related to the Guemes Island Overlay to the Subarea Plan:

**I support the Planning Commission Recommendation Number 23 to raise the measurement of height limits from the average ground line to the BFE (Base Flood Elevation) in flood plain areas.** This recommendation was originated by the County Planning staff recognizing that West Guemes Island beaches frequently have an existing BFE (Base Flood Elevation) requirement for floor elevations that average about 4 feet above the average ground line. The 12-foot sidewall restriction proposed in the Guemes Island overlay would not leave enough latitude for full height ceilings on the first floor at the setback, if the height requirement was measured from the average ground line. The minimum floor elevations are 4 feet higher at the BFE.

About 21 fully developed no-bank waterfront lots in Indian Village and about 53 fully developed no-bank waterfront lots in the West Beach Community have ground lines averaging 4 feet below the BFE. First floor elevations have to be at minimum BFE. Raising the sidewall height measurement to the BFE will allow minimum 8-foot ceiling heights at the setback line

**I support the Planning and Development proposal to allow Administrative Variances for setbacks and height limits in the Guemes Island Overlay.** The proposed Guemes Island Overlay setbacks and height limits have major restrictions on building options. Narrow lots are impacted the most. Eighteen of 21 lots in the no bank Indian Village Community are only 50 feet wide.

The restrictions have the following negative impacts:

- reduce the frontage home surface area limiting rooms with view windows
- eliminate designs with side roof gables
- limit the design of vaulted ceilings or lofts
- increase construction costs by forcing second story rooms toward the center of the first floor away from load bearing exterior walls
- restrict originality in design and make all new homes look alike
- increase scale differential next to existing larger homes

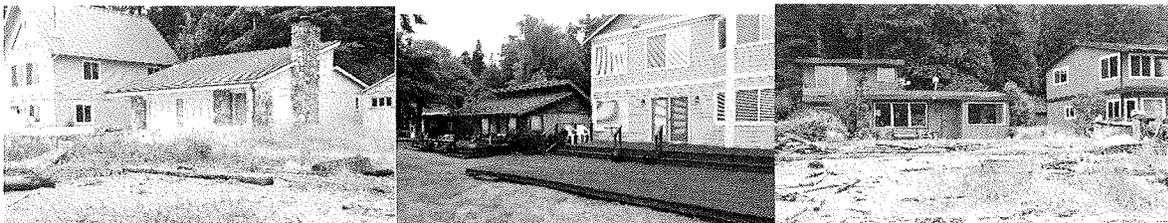
Administrative Variances could allow homes built to existing standards like the remainder of Skagit County and Guemes requirements up to today. A perfect storm with high tides, low atmospheric pressure, and a storm from the Straits could flood about half the homes (floors below the BFE) in the Indian Village and West Beach Communities. This would initiate many new building permits requests following flooded homes. They will need variances.

**I oppose the sidewall and height limitations proposed in the Guemes Island Overlay. They should be removed from the Guemes Island Overlay.** Administrative Variances could allow the construction of a normal sized home if approved but property values will be reduced with the proposed restrictions. Potential buyers cannot rely on the approval of variances to build a normal sized home. They will shop elsewhere.

GIPAC claims the restrictions are necessary to preserve views and prevent scale differential. Not true! Or at least rarely true. Not one of the 21 no bank fully developed building lots in the Indian Village Community and not one of the 53 building lots in the West Beach Community have homes behind them. Lots in Indian Village are almost 300 feet deep and rise about 80 feet in elevation to West Shore Road. Homes are sparsely visible from the public road. About half the homes on these two beach communities are large homes and over 80% of the existing homes in Indian Village currently exceed the proposed limitations. The proposed limitations will decrease the size of older homes that are generally smaller and below BFE. This will increase scale differential.

Several of the GIPAC members have property on North Beach where a few smaller beachfront homes could be replaced by large beach homes. The larger homes could reduce views from homes on the none beach side of Guemes Island Road. Otherwise any benefits of the proposed building restrictions are difficult to find. Indian Village and West Beach communities combined are the majority of no bank building lots on Guemes Island. Yet homeowners on the West side of Guemes Island have not been notified by GIPAC of these proposed GIPAC restrictions. Even though West side homeowners are impacted the most. Nor have the homeowners been asked for input to the GIPAC restrictions. The restrictions appear to target waterfront homes. Waterfront homeowners do not want our beautiful community changed to small cabin rentals.

Here are typical Indian Village small homes well below the BFE (base flood elevation) and next to larger homes. If they are rebuilt with a higher floor elevation and in conformance with the Guemes Island Overlay proposals, they would have to be smaller. They all exceed the proposed new sidewall height limit. The proposed Guemes Overlay sidewall and height limits will increase scale differential in Indian Village.



June 2016

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SKAGIT COUNTY  
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## Issue Paper – Comp Plan 2016 Update

### New Section 14.16.360 Guemes Island Overlay – Indian Village

**Executive Summary:** The Indian Village Community is a beautiful community with outstanding views and water access. It has about 21 lots in a flat beach area. About 18 of those lots are only 50 feet in width. About half the homes meet current codes requiring floor elevations 3 to 5 feet above the ground line. The remaining beach homes are vulnerable to flooding. Twelve foot sidewalls will not allow full height ceilings above the floor height if the lower homes are reconstructed to current standards.

The proposed new Section 14.16.360 will take away good design standards and make small homes smaller when they are reconstructed on their narrow lots. Side gables will be eliminated allowing sloping roofs with overhang in the front. Second level rooms will be limited to 14-foot outside dimensions centered in the home. Load bearing walls on the first level will eliminate open concepts with great rooms. Roof heights will be limited below the new proposed 30-foot limiting roof slopes in a high wind area.

The new proposal increases scale differential in the Indian Village Community and reduces rooms with views in new construction. Property values will dive as potential buyers must choose between owning a home with potential flooding or reconstructing a smaller home even more out of scale from neighboring homes. The changes constitute a Regulatory Taking unless property owners are compensated for their loss in property values. The changes have no benefit in the Indian Village Community and the GIPAC has not shown benefit anywhere on Guemes Island. The proposal downgrades one of the most beautiful communities on Guemes Island with fantastic views, active sea life, and adequate clear water.

**Issue 1:** The proposed New Section 14.16.360 Guemes Island Overlay to the Guemes Island Subarea Plan targets communities like Indian Village by requiring restrictions that downsize existing homes. The maximum building heights that limit the sidewalls of new structures to 12 feet above the average grade at the side setback do not allow full height ceilings when the floor elevations must average 4-feet above the ground level. About 21 building lots on Indian Village community and 53 building lots on the West Beach community further south have minimum floor elevation requirements that are 3 to 5 feet higher than the existing grade. This discrepancy from the existing grade does not allow adequate building height to build full height ceilings at the required side setbacks. These restrictions may constitute a Regulatory Taking by reducing building options and property values for no logical reason.

**Discussion:** About 18 of the 21 homes on the flat area of Indian Village West Beach are on lots with only 50 feet of beach frontage. The lots are flat at the beach front for about 100 feet and then they slop upward for about 200 feet to an elevation of between 60 and 80 feet higher at

West Shore Road. About half of the 21 homes are built with a floor elevation of 3 to 5 feet above their average ground grade to meet minimum flood requirements. The remaining beachfront homes are vulnerable to flooding from a combination of high tides, low atmospheric pressure, and storms. After being flooded the majority of these home owners will likely pursue reconstruction with higher floor elevations. The proposed building requirements will severely downsize reconstructed homes and increase the scale differential between the reconstructed homes and larger existing homes at higher elevations. A 4-foot floor elevation with 12-foot sidewalls will not allow full height interior ceilings

The West Beach to the south enclosing Edens Road and Lervick Road has similar issues with about 21 of 53 homes having floor elevations to current building code standards. The remaining homes with lower floor levels will have similar issues to Indian Village West Beach except that most of the lots have more beach frontage. The larger lot width will increase options but also increase side setbacks with the 30% of the lot width for required side setbacks.

**Issue 2:** The proposed building restrictions do not achieve their objectives in the Indian Village community or perhaps other communities. They achieve the opposite effect in Indian Village and destroy attractive building options. The restrictions are especially restrictive in the narrow lots in Indian Village. They limit many good design options such as side gables to enable a sloping roof to the front; and open concepts with great rooms; and frontage area for rooms with view windows; and adequate sloped roofs to prevent high winds from blowing rain up hill and into roof vents. Homeowners would be forced to build to maximum dimensions so all new homes would have the exact same shape being dwarfed by existing structures. All new homes would look alike instead of having unique character. The building restrictions would require all new home to be smaller than all existing homes and increase scale differential. Homes in Indian Village would be forced to be narrow in front and long on the sides making more rooms with windows facing their nearby neighbors instead of the natural beautiful views of Bellingham Channel.

**Discussion:** The proposed building envelope prohibits good design alternatives on narrow lots that make homes more attractive and livable. Most people reconstructing their homes in Indian Village want an attractive but unique design maximizing western views and outdoor recreational areas.

The proposed standard sidewall height prohibits side gables that allow roofs to slope toward the house front. Side gables with roofs sloping toward the house front allow roof overhang in the front to provide cover from sun and rain for outdoor seating. Many Indian Village homes enjoy outdoor benches and chairs in front for the beautiful views of islands over Bellingham Channel.

Limited wall height at the side setbacks and sloping heights require any rooms at the second level such as a master bedroom to be built in the center of the house and at a 14-foot

maximum width outside dimensions. Second level rooms require load bearing walls on the first level. The rooms are built most efficiently above house corners where they can use two exterior walls as load bearing walls. When second level rooms are built in the center of the house load bearing walls break up the potential for open spaces on the first level. Open spaces provide options like great rooms that include living rooms, dining rooms, and kitchens. Great rooms are currently popular and are very efficient for providing a spacious environment.

The proposed sloping height limit will not even allow the proposed 30-foot maximum building height on a 50-foot lot. A second story room could not have a roof with adequate slope to prevent high winds from blowing rainwater up hill and into roof vents. Water in roof vents dampens insulation, causes ceiling leaks, and water damage that destroys house values.

Restrictions such as no side gables, second level rooms in the house center, and building height tend to make all new houses look alike. This similarity could make neighborhoods look more like some kind of low income housing project than a diverse community with unique character. People that take pride in their homes often want to have unique features that set their home apart from all the others. Making all the homes in a neighborhood look alike does not enhance the beauty of Guemes Island. Homeowner need design options to build the home of their dreams.

The building envelope tends to restrict the size of new homes but does nothing to the limit size of existing homes that are generally newer and larger. Since all lots on Indian Village have existing homes, the larger new homes will remain large and the smaller older homes will be size restricted creating more scale differential.

Both Indian Village and West Beach communities have about half larger homes with floor elevations meeting current standards. These are newer homes that will not likely be reconstructed for a long time. The older homes at lower elevations are more likely to be impacted by more restrictive building codes. Limiting their size keeps them under scaled in comparison the larger homes.

**Recommendation:** Scrap the new Section 14.16.360 until the GIPAC inventories the damage they are causing and notifies property owners of proposed action. They developed these standards to help in some unknown situations in a community without regard of the hardship they are causing other communities such as Indian Village. They have received only one comment (me against the proposal) from the Indian Village community. They state their goals as protecting views and preventing out of scale buildings. However, their regulations would cause the opposite effect in Indian Village and possibly other communities as well. In a quick survey in the last week 11 home owners on West Beaches did not know of any proposed action. Zero knew of proposed action. If the GIPAC members intend to represent the people, they need to solicit input from all communities on Guemes Island.

**Typical Example - Madden Home:** About 9 of 21 lots in the flat portion of the Indian Village neighborhood have homes vulnerable to flooding by a combination of high tides, low atmospheric pressure, and high winds. An additional two lots do not currently have beachfront homes (homes setback). If flooded, the reconstruction of the beachfront homes requires a higher main floor height to meet current building codes and prevent future flooding. The proposed building standards severely restrict the possibility of building a replacement home anywhere near the scale of other homes in the neighborhood.

The Madden house built in 1952 and expanded in 1976. It is vulnerable to flooding during a perfect storm with a main floor about 6 inches above the ground elevation. This mild winter high tides carried driftwood within 10 feet of the house. The lot has 50 feet of beach frontage. The property is flat easterly from the beach for about 100 feet and then slopes upward for about 200 feet to an elevation about 75 feet higher at West Shore Road. The building is a single story home with a second story master bedroom in a back corner of the home. The two homes to the north and the two houses to the south are two story homes.

The proposed standards would not allow this home to be raised 4-feet. They require a home and master bedroom more narrow with small interior rooms instead of the existing great room. The roof would have no overhang in front for weather protection. Potential buyers would lose interest facing flooding or a smaller out of scale home. The changes would not increase island beauty, livability, scale, or views. They would increase scale differential.

**Pictures:** The following pictures illustrate the issues that exist in the Indian Village neighborhood

Five homes in the Indian Village neighborhood with the Madden home being the third. It is completely out of scale and if it were reconstructed it would be much smaller if within the proposed envelope



Current building codes require the main floor at a higher elevation than the ground line. This home shows the typical stairs required to get to the main floor elevation with currently building codes.



The existing Madden Home. Building codes require a new floor height about a foot higher than the bottom of the windows. The building envelope requires the home to be more narrow, no second story master bedroom, no side gable providing front roof overhang, and more out of scale to the neighboring homes.



**From:** [Gary Hagland](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 1:17:57 AM

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I submitted comments about the 2016 Comprehensive Plan in April, but would like to add the following regarding the Planning Commission's Finding of Fact and Reasons for Action.

Item #9 – I strongly support the Planning Commission's recommendation that the Open Space Concept Plan not be implemented. To satisfy the GMA, the plan, which was approved in 2009, only requires that it be used as a tool for mapping and identification of open space. To use it to develop and expand non-motorized trails will create conflicts with the agricultural community and rural property owners over safety and security.

In addition, trail projects, especially up to urban standards, are very expensive. The Guemes Trail in Anacortes costs in the neighborhood of \$1 million per mile. Irrespective of where the money comes from, it's still tax dollars. Also, federal and state grants often have matching fund requirements which force the county to spend its own money toward such projects when it could be spent on higher priorities.

Item #23 – I also agree with the Planning Commission's statement; "It is important to respect property that neighbors trails and other public access points with regard to trespass, trash, privacy and animal waste." This passage, by its very inclusion, indicates that lack of respect for the property of rural residents is a problem with the existing network of trails.

Too often those who lobby for more trails, the majority of whom appear to live in towns and cities, fail to realize or aren't concerned that the interests of rural residents may not align with theirs.

In my April comments, I objected to Eminent Domain being included as a method of acquiring land for non-motorized purposes (Transportation Element Technical Appendix, Para C,

p. 70). That item is still in the June 10<sup>th</sup> version. Non-motorized transportation is overwhelming recreational in nature. That someone's property can be confiscated for another's recreational enjoyment is reprehensible. Please delete "Eminent Domain" as a means of acquiring land for non-motorized transportation.

Gary Hagland  
2211 37<sup>th</sup> Court  
Anacortes, WA 98221

(360) 899-5656 (H)  
(360) 202-3750 (C)

**From:** [Jeroldine Hallberg](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 2:18:13 PM

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Thank you for the additional opportunity to comment on the update to the Comprehensive Plan.

I'm writing to support open space and non-motorized transportation projects.

I appreciate your statement of intent to continue cooperating with local partners to identify and protect open space corridors. As those who testified June 20 stated, open space is a community builder as well as a place where children and adults recreate and stay healthy.

As in my earlier comments, I want to stress a lesser-known value of open space and trails. Open space and trails make it possible to accommodate more people in our cities and to have more compact development that is welcoming, attractive, and a positive place to raise families.

I also believe that there is local support to fund open space. The Board of County Commissioners is a logical group to take the leadership role in making this happen.

Sincerely,

Jeroldine Hallberg

6335 State Route 9

Sedro Woolley, WA 98284

Comments on the Comprehensive Plan 2016 Update  
Planning and Development Services  
1800 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon WA 98273

RECEIVED  
JUN 23 2016  
SKAGIT COUNTY  
PDS

June 21, 2016

Dear County Commissioners and Planners,

Thank you for your work on this difficult and complex Land Use Legislation.

I support both the Open Space and the 20-year list of Non-motorized Pathways and Trails additions to Skagit Count's Comprehensive Plan 2016 Update, and urge you to include them in the final legislation.

I moved to Anacortes in 1989, in part, because of such nearby amities (Washington Park, Anacortes Community Forest Lands and Deception Pass State Park). Hiking, backpacking and observing nature were my favorite activities. Although no longer able to backpack, I continue to enjoy nature and hiking, including the trails on Little Mtn., Blanchard Mtn., and trails within the adjacent counties of Whatcom and Snohomish; especially through fall, winter and spring when the trails at higher elevations are difficult, or impossible, to use.

The medical community has been coming up with an ever increasing list of benefits from exercise, and recently, from being out in nature. More reason to provide additional trails, connections and open spaces near our population centers.

Would suggest prioritizing trails, or sections of trails near population centers and those which have some benefit, or desirability, in the eyes of nearby land owners. (I'm remembering the intimidation of users and the bad feelings associated with the rail-trail from Sedro Woolley to Concrete.) Three possibilities that have been on my mind:

1. Cooperating with Snohomish County to improve the section of the Centennial Trail from the Nakashima Heritage Barn Trailhead to State Route 9 near the community of McMurray to a standard suitable for bicycle use. I've walked this section, the portion in Snohomish County is a grassy path,

the portion in Skagit County has been brushed-out enough to walk. This improvement would give people in McMurray and those staying at what had been called Camp Brotherhood (sorry, I don't know its new name) access to the Centennial Trail without walking a narrow, curved and higher speed section of the highway.

2. Continue to support Skagit County Parks and Skagit Land Trust in their efforts to establish a section of the Centennial Trail along the east side of Skagit Land Trust's Barney Lake wildlife sanctuary, east of Mount Vernon.
3. Opening more dikes to public use, such as has been done with the one going north along the east side of the Skagit north of Conway, where there is a road on one side of the dike and flood-plain on the other. Because of the chemicals used in growing many crops, any dikes adjacent to such cropland would not be safe for public use. However, the dike on the west side of the Skagit, north of Conway to the site of Skagit City, or the public fishing access near there, seems to be a similarly appropriate section to open to the public.

Please remember the growing population of our county and move forward on the planning, long negotiations, fund raising and other work needed to establish more open spaces and interconnecting, non-motorized routes for future generations.

Thank you for your consideration,



Ramona Hammerly  
1710 – 7<sup>th</sup> Street  
Anacortes Washington 98221

**From:** [Jana Hanson](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comp Plan Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 2:42:59 PM

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June 23, 2016

Skagit County Board of Commissioners:  
Lisa Janicki, Ken Dahlstedt, Ron Wesen  
1800 Continental Way  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

RE: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Amendments

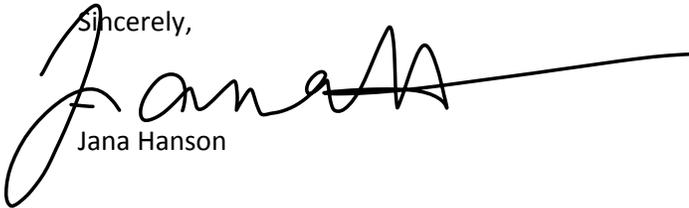
Dear Board of Commissioners:

I would like to request your support and approval of the 20-year list of non-motorized transportation projects that are presented as part of the proposed updated Transportation Element. These projects are necessary to plan for and provide the much needed connections that enable bicyclists and pedestrians to travel safely throughout the county.

Additionally, I strongly urge the Commission to support the staff proposed amendment to the Countywide Open Space Plan that will trigger the beginning of a process to work together with county partners (cities, ports, tribes, and non-profit organizations) to secure and protect open space corridors for the public to enjoy. This effort will have a lasting effect on present and future populations, promote healthy activity, support eco and recreational tourism and will protect the natural beauty of Skagit County.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jana Hanson", with a long horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the signature.

Jana Hanson

**From:** [Kit Harma](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 9:11:27 AM

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My name is Kit Harma. I live at 7393 Holiday Blvd. on Guemes Island.

A high school classmate of mine lives on Marco Island, Florida located in the southwest part of that state. Finding it interesting that there would be two of our small graduating class living on islands and that the two islands would be in the extreme opposite corners of the adjacent 48 states I went to visit him a few years ago. Upon arriving there it was obvious that the difference between my island and his went far beyond geography and climate. From the back door of my classmate's 3500 square foot home it was only a few steps past the pool to his boat and then a few minutes of motoring down the channel before we were out in the Gulf of Mexico with its renown sports-fishing opportunities.

Pretty comfortable.

Would I trade my little place on Guemes for his? No. There was no place to escape the man-made world on Marco Island filled with its monuments to egos.

As repeatedly stated in many different ways in the Guemes Island Sub- Area Plan Guemes, islanders have expressed the desire to maintain a balance between man's presence here and the island's natural resources. This is not the same as trying to stop the clock at a particular moment but rather to allow change to take place at pace where we can reflect on the impact of our presence here and avoid coming to a point where we have irreversibly destroyed the sense of place, frequently expressed as rural character, that attracted us to the island. Living more simply and at a scale small enough to allow us to maintain intimacy with our surroundings and a connection with our neighbors is what sets Guemes Island apart. Though I may not chose to spend my final years on Guemes it will give me great comfort to know that those who follow me will have the opportunity that has been mine to have my senses opened to the gifts of nature found here and to enjoy the quiet company others who have found this special place.

For that reason I ask that the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update include the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay and additional measures to protect our aquifer as included in the Guemes Island Sub-area Plan and promoted by the Guemes Island Planning Advisory Committee.

Kit Harma

**From:** [Dyvon Havens](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 12:03:14 PM

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This letter is in full support of implementation of the adopted Guemes Island Subarea Plan and also of the Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee. This committee contains talented, hard-working members of the Guemes community who have contributed tireless effort to work with Skagit County to implement the recommendations in the Guemes Island Subarea Plan.

I have lived on Guemes for 13 years, was a Ferry Committee member for 5 years, and was involved with the project led by the American Institute of Architects to create a plan for a sustainable Guemes community. Visiting members of the AIA remarked on the quality of leadership we have on the island and the systems we have in place to live a quality of life that stands as a model for the rest of the country.

The Guemes Subarea Plan contains language that supports sustaining the rural character of the island. Without that type of protection being stated in County code, the likelihood of creeping growth, contamination of the sole-source aquifer, reduction in habitat for wildlife, and deterioration in the quality of life and sense and community is great.

Lastly, it is so common, but also so annoying, that individuals with only their personal interests at heart come in at the twelfth hour and try to dismantle years and years of thoughtful work by others to create a meaningful and well-reasoned document that is intended to serve the best long-term interests of the entire community.

I urge you to adopt all proposals put forth by the Guemes Island Planning Advisory Committee and implement the Guemes Island Subarea Plan as presented.

Dyvon Marie Havens  
4709 South Shore Drive  
Anacortes, WA 98221



Virus-free. [www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com)

**From:** [Steve Hawes](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update, Steve Hawes, 400 West Highland Drive, Seattle WA 98119 and 6544 Driftwood Drive, Anacortes, Wa 98122  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 2:55:09 PM

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County Commissioners,

We are the owners of a small cabin on the West Beach of Guemes Island built in 1972. We have owned the narrow property for 16 years. We do not live on Guemes Island full time. We were recently made aware of the downzoning on Guemes Island being pushed by the (self appointed) Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee. The proposed changes come as a total surprise to us and our neighbors on the West Beach. **We have not been notified of this building restriction proposal by GIPAC and do not support it.** The new side setbacks, side wall height and overall building height restrictions will severely limit our ability to make a much needed small addition a reality. Variance application is not the answer. The county's current zoning for side setbacks and 30' height restrictions continue to be effective in limiting the scale of houses built on Guemes. Claims by the Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee of needing the new proposals to preserve views and keep Guemes rural are unfounded for most of the island, including West Beach. We have no idea who this committee is, and how they wield such power over our ability to improve our aged property. It is our hunch that the committee members already have improved their properties, and just want to "pull up the drawbridge".

**We ask the commissioners to not approve the side setback, side wall height and building height restrictions proposed in the Guemes Island Overlay.**

Thank you for your time,  
Steve and Janise Hawes

**From:** [Jim Hinton](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update resubmission  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 2:03:46 PM

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A re submission of my comment on the above as requested by Vicky Gonzalez via email. today

**Subject: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update**

**Jim Hinton 23639 Gunderson Rd Mt Vernon June 20, 2016**

**I, Jim Hinton, am dead set against many of the proposals being made in Skagit County's 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update and development regulations.**

As I see it, the Planning Department has become a group of "holier than thou" that is attempting to be "Big Brother" making regulations that harm citizens of the county who are producing and increasing the wealth of the county. A few rules are needed but the more rules that are made the worse things get. They like many other government agencies invite the input of citizens but in the end their suggestions and input goes unheard and the Planning Department then do as they please. With the proposals the department is making, enforcement becomes an impossibility.

As I see it, if the proposals of this group are accepted; each and every one of the County Commissioners families' operations will be out of compliance. (pg. 67) You, the commissioners cannot allow a specific # of square feet of area be allotted to the storage of certain useable equipment although it may not be operating. How can you expect to allow the area to be the same for a person that owns hundreds or even thousands of acres of land as that of an owner of an acre or less of land? Generalization will not work.

The very same people that are attempting to impose these changes are the same bunch of "greenies" that believe in recycling. Those of us that do save equipment and use parts and pieces and do recycle on a daily basis are being punished by the proposals of this Plan.

As for open space Ag ground...the Department feels they have the right to allow trails for the public use to set foot on open space land. Although the taxes may be less because it is deemed open space; Who is paying the taxes on the ground and who is the owner? This amounts to giving a child a candy bar and in the end taking the candy and leaving the kid with the wrapper.

Listen to and include the thoughts and ideas of the Commission. They are hard working, non reimbursed, concerned citizens that are speaking for their fellow citizens.

Again I state, I am against it!

**From:** [CRAIG](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 21, 2016 7:24:01 AM

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From: Craig Hintze  
6060 West Shore Road, Guemes Island, Anacortes WA, 98221  
206 605-4496, hintzec@comcast.net

I am opposed to the GIPAC's currently proposed building restrictions for the Guemes Island subarea.

The proposed rules do not take into account the unique characteristics of the various locations on Guemes Island. For example, many West Shore properties do not have building lots inland of the Beach properties. If they do, the increase in elevation from Beach to Inland is significant. North Beach, on the other hand, does have building lots both on the Beach side and inland, generally at the same elevation.

The suggested use of Administrative Variances has the potential to lead to contentious and potentially expensive confrontations between property owners and the County.

The restrictions as they are now written are particularly burdensome on smaller lots.

The uncertainty as to how the restrictions would be applied in each case as applications are made for Administrative variances is likely to discourage new owners and potentially reduce the value of Guemes Island properties.

Sincerely,  
Craig Hintze

**From:** [Cassie Walker Johnson](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Cc:** [Jessica Walker Beaumont & Sidney Beaumont \(jesswbeaumont@gmail.com\)](#); [Colby Brinnon \(colbybrinnon@gmail.com\)](#); [Jennifer Simons](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Monday, June 20, 2016 2:32:03 PM

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From: **Co-owners of the property located 6182 West Shore Road, Guemes Island, Anacortes, WA 98221**

Cassie Walker Johnson (206) 999-9820, [cpjohnson@windermere.com](mailto:cpjohnson@windermere.com);

Jessica Walker Beaumont (917) 609-5788, [jesswbeaumont@gmail.com](mailto:jesswbeaumont@gmail.com)

Colby Brinnon (541) 490-6323 [colbybrinnon@gmail.com](mailto:colbybrinnon@gmail.com)

Jennifer Simons (425) 894-3475 [jennifer@bellytobabies.com](mailto:jennifer@bellytobabies.com)

To: **Skagit County Board of Commissioners**

Regarding: **June 20th public hearing regarding the 2016 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE and the GIPAC (Guemes Island Planning Advisory Committee) proposed building restrictions for the Guemes Subarea.**

Dear Commissioners,

As co-owners of the property located at 6182 West Short Road on Guemes Island, we are writing to you today to tell you that **we are adamantly opposed to the GIPAC's proposed building restrictions as currently stated** for several reasons including:

- Public comment was no solicited from the properties that will be directly affected by these new restrictions, specifically the waterfront properties along West Shore Drive.
- With the proposed setbacks suggested, we would be left with minimal room for growth/expansion/rebuild due to West Shore drive's location running in between our property
- Restricting ceiling heights to 12' was not taking into careful consideration that there is already a 4' requirement for starting foundation to prevent flooding, which means homes would be limited to 8' ceilings.
- With these restrictions, development will be very limited and therefore bring down values in real estate which results in less property tax income and funding to Skagit County.
- **None of the properties on West Shore Drive have separately owned lots behind them so these restrictions simply are not applicable to our side of the island.**

-  
**We strongly feel that this restrictions were an quiet attempt for a few residents to change the history of Guemes. This is not the opinion of most island owners and urge you to strongly consider the objections. A fuller, inclusive and more professional assessment**

**needs to be undertaken before the County proceed with consideration of the Comprehensive Plan.**

-

Thank you in advance for your careful consideration and we would appreciate direct communication from the County on this significant plan. We will be unable to attend the June 20 Public Hearing but appreciate the opportunity to provide the County Board of Commissioners with our thoughts.

**Co-owners of the property located 6182 West Shore Road, Guemes Island, Anacortes, WA 98221**

Cassie Walker Johnson (206) 999-9820, [cpjohnson@windermere.com](mailto:cpjohnson@windermere.com);

Jessica Walker Beaumont (917) 609-5788, [jesswbeaumont@gmail.com](mailto:jesswbeaumont@gmail.com)

Colby Brinnon (541) 490-6323 [colbybrinnon@gmail.com](mailto:colbybrinnon@gmail.com)

Jennifer Simons (425) 894-3475 [jennifer@bellytobabies.com](mailto:jennifer@bellytobabies.com)

**From:** [wsu2470](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Comp Plan 2016 Update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 8:53:36 AM

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Our family has owned property in the Holiday Hideaway development for many years. We own a vacation home there as well as a number of vacant lots.

I am writing to express concerns about the building height and setback restrictions contained in the Guemes Island Subarea Plan, specifically Section 14.16.360.

We believe these restrictions are particularly onerous and unnecessary. GIPAC, which is made up of only island residents, yet purports to speak for all islanders, does not represent the views of all property owners (ie, tax payers).

I refer you to the comments of both Mark Madden and Rodger Ricks regarding the unnecessary impacts of the proposed changes and request that you not adopt these setback requirements. They will have a definite impact on people who want to develop their property, will adversely impact property values, and add unnecessary administrative processes, yet provide little benefit except to a small group with special interests.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Larry and Mary Kirchner  
6737 Beach Drive SW  
Seattle, WA 98136  
206.932.0188

Sent from my Verizon Wireless 4G LTE smartphone

**From:** [Joost and Marianne](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update, Marianne Kooiman and Joost Businger, 6500 Square Harbor Lane, Anacortes, WA, 98221  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 11:34:23 AM

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2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
Comments by Marianne Kooiman and Joost Businger, June 23rd, 2016  
6500 Square Harbor Lane  
Anacortes, WA 98221

Statement by Marianne Kooiman:

We moved to Guemes Island full-time in 1989. After the Growth Management Act had been adopted in 1991, residents and property owners of Guemes elected the first Guemes Island Planning Advisory Committee (GIPAC) to formulate ideas for a sub-area plan for the island.

This effort was premature, but the interest remained alive to create a sub-area plan for Guemes that would allow a sustainable development while protecting those qualities of the rural environment that made the island such a wonderful place to live.

In 2002, at a public meeting, the community elected a new GIPAC that was recognized by the Skagit County Board of Commissioners (BOCC) in 2003. I served on both GIPACs and remained a member until the Guemes Island Sub-Area Plan was adopted by the BOCC in January, 2011.

All through this time the process was open to the public and there were many opportunities for public participation, including an extensive questionnaire, sub-committees, board-meetings, the Rapid Shoreline Inventory, and the workshop on Sustainable Development with the American Institute of Architects.

My own strong interests have been the rural environment and groundwater issues, including the USGS Groundwater Baseline Study, the Sole Source Aquifer designation by the EPA, and the problems of seawater intrusion into our very limited supply of potable groundwater. At various periods of time I worked with people of the Health Department on an update to the Seawater Intrusion Policy, and I support codification of the Seawater Intrusion Policy into the CAO.

A major focus of the sub-area plan is to preserve that precious rural character, while more people are moving in. GIPAC gave much thought to the formulation of the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay to accomplish this aim, and I urge you to enact this overlay as proposed.

Many years have passed since the BOCC adopted the Guemes Sub-Area Plan after an extended public process, and we have waited to see the policies implemented by adoption of the code.

The present GIPAC has done an admirable job in cooperating with the county on ways of introducing the the Guemes policies into the Skagit comprehensive plan. The fact that recently they were awarded a "Citizen of the Year" award from the Guemes Island Property Owners Association shows that many Islanders appreciate their work. BOCC

Statement by Joost Businger:

I have been a property owner on Guemes Island since 1976, and have seen the island go through many changes. In 2002, I was elected as member of GIPAC and from 2006 till January 2011 I served as chair of the committee. I believe that the policies written in the Guemes Sub-Area Plan are carefully thought out and the plan's implementation is very important for the future of the Guemes community.



From: [Jere LaFollette](#)  
To: [PDS comments](#)  
Subject: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
Date: Thursday, June 23, 2016 7:24:34 AM

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**Skagit County Commissioner Ron Wesen** 22 June 2016  
**Skagit County Commissioner Ken Dahlstedt**  
**Skagit County Commissioner Lisa Janicki**

**RE: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update:  
Support for Open Space, Trails, and Bicycles**

We are increasingly realizing the health and social benefits of an active and outdoor life style for citizens of all ages. Similarly, we are increasingly cognizant of the detrimental effects of a sedentary life style for young people, adults/families, and older adults.

**In order to achieve the health and social benefits of daily physical activity for our residents, Skagit County must develop and implement a strong and comprehensive plan for non-motorized transportation and the availability of outdoor spaces for our community. This should include a plan that sets goals and a vision for our future which describes open space, trails and byways, and safe bicycle opportunities!**

We frequently walk from our home to down town, we use trails in Skagit County for both biking and hiking, we appreciate County parks, and bike on Skagit County roads! For these activities to take place we must have abundant outdoor facilities and safe streets, sidewalks, and byways. We encourage the Skagit County Commissioners to prioritize efforts to strengthen and expand these facilities and open spaces through your Comprehensive Plan. They go a long way to increase the "livability" of our beautiful county.

People and businesses alike are drawn to communities that have available high quality parks, bike ways, trails, and outdoor spaces. Creating this type of community is a responsibility shared by all of us.

Thank you so much for your attention to this important matter!

Sincerely,

Jere LaFollette and Wende Sanderson  
203 South 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Mount Vernon, WA 98274



**SKAGIT COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD**  
**1800 Continental Place**  
**Mount Vernon, WA 98273**  
**Phone (360) 416-1338**

June 17, 2016

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Comments on proposed "Comprehensive Plan 2016 Update"  
Planning & Development Services  
1800 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

RE: Comprehensive Plan 2016 Update

Dear Planning & Development Services Staff,

The Skagit County Agricultural Advisory Board (AAB) is stating their position on 14.16.810 (7), setback requirements.

The AAB supports the recommendations of the Planning Commission regarding changes to 14.16.810 (7), specifically the 200 foot setback requirements on properties adjacent to Ag NRL and other NRL properties be waived only by consent of the related NRL property owner or by Hearing Examiner variance, absent an agreement.

Strong setback requirements from natural resource zones help avoid conflicts between neighboring property owners. These setbacks help to ensure the long term viability of natural resource industries in Skagit County.

The Agricultural Advisory Board encourages the greater protections for farming activities provided by the Hearing Examiner's role when nearby construction is challenged.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our comments.

Sincerely,

Nels Lagerlund, Chair  
Skagit Agriculture Advisory Board

**From:** [Landefeld, Stewart M. \(Perkins Coie\)](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Cc:** [Margaret Breen](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update (Comment in support of Subarea Plan)  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 6:40:09 AM

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**To:** Board of Commissioners, 1800 Continental Place, Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
**Re:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update, Planning and Development Services  
**From:** Stewart M. Landefeld, mailing address below

Dear Commissioners,

Our family has been property owners on a bluff on Guemes Island for over 16 years. We strongly fully support the implementation of the adopted Guemes Island Subarea Plan (SAP). We also strongly support the position of the Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee (GIPAC). We urge the Board to enact the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay as proposed.

We are on Guemes because of the relatively un-changing rural aspect of the Island. It is unique in Skagit County, and has a special aspect that if lost will mean that our region will have irrevocably lost both a special place and way of life.

In short, we believe that the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay is critical to preserving the rural character of this special island.

We have personally been impacted with lower water flow during periods of high use, and the usability of our property will become lessened if the SAP were not adopted and development and over-use were to increase. The Plan fits well with not just the rural character of the island, but also the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan. Island houses are one-and-a-half stories high, and most islanders want to keep the modest scale of development. Furthermore, islanders are concerned about impacts to our sole source aquifer, as large new homes replace smaller older homes

Please respect the 20 or so years of process that has been part of our time on Guemes. Please go forward with the adoption of code that implements the plan.

Sincerely,

**Stewart M. Landefeld**

Mailing Address:  
1201 Third Avenue, Suite 4900  
Seattle, WA 98101

Telephone: Direct: 206.359-8430  
E-mail: [slandefeld@perkinscoie.com](mailto:slandefeld@perkinscoie.com)

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**From:** [Nancy Larsen](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 21, 2016 9:33:28 PM

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From Leslie I. and Nancy A. Larsen  
4677 Guemes Island Rd.  
Anacortes, Washington 98221

We write in full support of the GIPAC submission to the 2016 Proposed Comprehensive Plan Update and of the document itself. We have been Guemes Island property owners for over forty years. Every year we have spent from four to six months on the island and have been actively involved in many community efforts such as the effort to save Guemes Mountain and to protect our aquifer from sea water intrusion. It has been important to us to do all we can to protect the resources and to support the special treasure we have here. The islanders have worked diligently and co-operatively to prevent things that would push us beyond our resources such as the once-proposed aluminum plant, salmon ranching, the building of mega mansions and the salinization of our single aquifer. The San Juan Islands are a national treasure that need to be protected.

Because we recognize the unique and beautiful qualities of this island, we participated in the early GIPAC efforts to formulate the Guemes Island Subarea Plan working in sub-committees and attending general meetings over the years.

It is rare to find such full, local, democratic efforts and a privilege to have participated in them. The inclusive and incisive caring for this island is inspiring--especially to two who live in South Carolina the rest of each year. We urge the council to adopt the Guemes Island Subarea Plan. It is a document we have shared with people in South Carolina and with friends in Pennsylvania who were involved in planning for their community. Certainly it has been and is a true and enlightened community planning effort for a geographically defined area--dare we call it Camelot!

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*"I dwell in Possibility..." E.D.*

**From:** [Hal & Hella Lee](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Sunday, June 19, 2016 1:02:20 PM

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The following comments are on the Transportation Element and Open Space Element of the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan 2016 update:

We support the inclusion of the 20 year list of non-motorized projects to be included in the updated comprehensive plan. Bicycle and pedestrian trails and non-motorized friendly roads are important parts of getting around, whether it be for recreation or part of commuting to and from work. Tourism is an important part of Skagit County's economic base, and being non-motorized friendly will enhance that. In addition we feel there should be benchmarks set to complete the projects listed, and a "Non-motorized Citizen Advisory Committee" should be formed similar to the Skagit County Parks Advisory Committee.

We also support Skagit County's intent to continue cooperating with local partners to identify and protect open space corridors including the following:  
Public and private lands, both rural and inter-urban, that form greenbelts of agriculture lands, trails, wildlife habitat, parks, significant scenic or historic lands etc.  
These lands should allow public access where appropriate.

We have written before how both walking trails and bike-friendly streets are very important to us both, as we use them a lot even though we are retired, but both are very limited at present, especially bike-safe corridors. During my working days I (Harold) commuted most days by bike from south Mount Vernon to the County Airport Industrial Park, and I continue to do most errands by bike when possible along with recreational rides and walks.

We feel that providing non-motorized transportation and open space promotes a healthy community that benefits everyone.

Thank You,

Harold & Hella Lee  
2500 S. 18<sup>th</sup>  
Mount Vernon, WA 98274

**From:** [Rick and Tracey](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** comments on the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan, 2016 Update  
**Date:** Sunday, June 19, 2016 2:53:35 PM

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**Dear Commissioners**

**I am writing in support of the recommended inclusion of a 20-year list of non-motorized projects** as part of the updated Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Element. **Also I strongly support Skagit County's intent to continue cooperating with local partners to identify and protect open space corridors. Non-motorized paths and Public access to open space facilities are vital to the future of Skagit County. As a pediatrician in this community for the past 20 years, I have seen the importance of making trails and pathways and open space available to our community members. These trails and "parks" are vitally important from a health perspective. As a pediatrician, I spend most of my day encourage families to get outside and move so as to stay healthy. We as a community need to make the spaces available for families to get outside and encourage activity by making it accessible and safe. As the current president of the Mount Vernon Parks Foundation, I have seen the overwhelming support from our community for safe and accessible trails and places to go to enjoy the beauty of the Skagit Valley.**

**I urge you to use your position to protect open space and make trails and non-motorized pathways safe and available for our community.**

**Sincerely,**

**Rick Levine MD**

**President**

**Mount Vernon Parks Foundation**

**From:** [Kathryn Lindsay](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Cc:** [Kathryn Lindsay](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 5:38:22 PM

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I attended the June 20th 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update hearing with the County Commissioners. I would like to join in with the people who testified then to support the plans for developing non-motorized paths as well as the plans for open spaces and trails. Looking at the projected population growth in our county, it seems like an excellent idea to move ahead with a proactive plan to make sure that people have an option for safe biking as a mode of commuting in the future as well as for healthy recreation.

To The County Commissioners and the Comprehensive Plan Update Board

My husband and I moved to Mount Vernon from San Juan Island 2 years ago. Biking on the island was a scary proposition which we did not participate in. We both are turning 70 years old this year and we have new bicycles! We are very much looking forward to using them this summer and for years ahead. here in Skagit County. We are "casual" bikers and we have an 8 year old grandson who visits us regularly. We all three appreciate the idea that we can go for bike rides without feeling afraid that we could be injured by vehicular traffic. We look forward to seeing bike paths expand and county roads widened wherever that is feasible to accommodate people who would benefit from being able to commute by bicycle.

As for open spaces, I am all in favor of having areas where wildlife habitat is preserved and supported and where residents can observe and appreciate the natural world. I would echo the desire expressed by several people on June 20th that we aim to retain a rural flavor in Skagit County.

Thank you for all the hard work that went into this Update and thank you for the opportunity to express my views. I am very glad we chose to move to Skagit County. It is beautiful here and there are so many opportunities for exploring the countryside and enjoying nature.

Sincerely,  
Kathryn M. Lindsay  
2006 Tundra Loop  
Mount Vernon WA 98273  
360-982-8226  
kateperegrine@yahoo.com

***KATHRYN LINDSAY***

Mark Madden  
4910 N. Indian Village Ln.  
Anacortes, WA 98221

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RE: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update

These are the three main points I have on 2016 Comp Plan Update related to the Guemes Island Overlay to the Subarea Plan:

**I support the Planning Commission Recommendation Number 23 to raise the measurement of height limits from the average ground line to the BFE (Base Flood Elevation) in flood plain areas.** This recommendation was originated by the County Planning staff recognizing that West Guemes Island beaches frequently have an existing BFE (Base Flood Elevation) requirement for floor elevations that average about 4 feet above the average ground line. The 12-foot sidewall restriction proposed in the Guemes Island overlay would not leave enough latitude for full height ceilings on the first floor at the setback, if the height requirement was measured from the average ground line. The minimum floor elevations are 4 feet higher at the BFE.

About 21 fully developed no-bank waterfront lots in Indian Village and about 53 fully developed no-bank waterfront lots in the West Beach Community have ground lines averaging 4 feet below the BFE. First floor elevations have to be at minimum BFE. Raising the sidewall height measurement to the BFE will allow minimum 8-foot ceiling heights at the setback line

**I support the Planning and Development proposal to allow Administrative Variances for setbacks and height limits in the Guemes Island Overlay.** The proposed Guemes Island Overlay setbacks and height limits have major restrictions on building options. Narrow lots are impacted the most. Eighteen of 21 lots in the no bank Indian Village Community are only 50 feet wide.

The restrictions have the following negative impacts:

- reduce the frontage home surface area limiting rooms with view windows
- eliminate designs with side roof gables
- limit the design of vaulted ceilings or lofts
- increase construction costs by forcing second story rooms toward the center of the first floor away from load bearing exterior walls
- restrict originality in design and make all new homes look alike
- increase scale differential next to existing larger homes

Administrative Variances could allow homes built to existing standards like the remainder of Skagit County and Guemes requirements up to today. A perfect storm with high tides, low atmospheric pressure, and a storm from the Straits could flood about half the homes (floors below the BFE) in the Indian Village and West Beach Communities. This would initiate many new building permits requests following flooded homes. They will need variances.

**I oppose the sidewall and height limitations proposed in the Guemes Island Overlay. They should be removed from the Guemes Island Overlay.** Administrative Variances could allow the construction of a normal sized home if approved but property values will be reduced with the proposed restrictions. Potential buyers cannot rely on the approval of variances to build a normal sized home. They will shop elsewhere.

GIPAC claims the restrictions are necessary to preserve views and prevent scale differential. Not true! Or at least rarely true. Not one of the 21 no bank fully developed building lots in the Indian Village Community and not one of the 53 building lots in the West Beach Community have homes behind them. Lots in Indian Village are almost 300 feet deep and rise about 80 feet in elevation to West Shore Road. Homes are sparsely visible from the public road. About half the homes on these two beach communities are large homes and over 80% of the existing homes in Indian Village currently exceed the proposed limitations. The proposed limitations will decrease the size of older homes that are generally smaller and below BFE. This will increase scale differential.

Several of the GIPAC members have property on North Beach where a few smaller beachfront homes could be replaced by large beach homes. The larger homes could reduce views from homes on the none beach side of Guemes Island Road. Otherwise any benefits of the proposed building restrictions are difficult to find. Indian Village and West Beach communities combined are the majority of no bank building lots on Guemes Island. Yet homeowners on the West side of Guemes Island have not been notified by GIPAC of these proposed GIPAC restrictions. Even though West side homeowners are impacted the most. Nor have the homeowners been asked for input to the GIPAC restrictions. The restrictions appear to target waterfront homes. Waterfront homeowners do not want our beautiful community changed to small cabin rentals.

Here are typical Indian Village small homes well below the BFE (base flood elevation) and next to larger homes. If they are rebuilt with a higher floor elevation and in conformance with the Guemes Island Overlay proposals, they would have to be smaller. They all exceed the proposed new sidewall height limit. The proposed Guemes Overlay sidewall and height limits will increase scale differential in Indian Village.



June 2016

From: [mtsmark@comcast.net](mailto:mtsmark@comcast.net)  
To: [PDS comments](#)  
Subject: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
Date: Wednesday, June 22, 2016 8:06:27 PM

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Mark Madden  
4910 N. Indian Village Ln.  
Anacortes, WA 98221

RE: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update

The Commissioner hearing June 20th was enlightening. I had always wondered what the motives were for GIPAC to pursue the building restrictions when there was no visible benefit to anyone. Nancy Fox spoke that it was a mission to complete the Guemes Island Subarea Plan that began over 20 years ago. She indicated that she did not invent the restrictions, but just tried to implement the restrictions from previous generations. Allen Bush, Jr. added some history after the meeting that explained where the building restrictions came from before there was a Guemes Island Subarea Plan.

If I think back over 20 years ago, things were quite different. There were no social networks, web pages, or newspapers. The Woolworth family spent part of their retail fortune on a huge home on the west end of North Beach. Clark Point was subdivided into \$800K lots and a Microsoft executive built a huge compound of buildings including a 5 car garage, swimming pool, tennis courts, helicopter pad and large living facilities. An urban type plat subdivided two rows of lots (about 20) on Totem Trail. Parcels were sold and large homes built. However, lots were not staggered so buildings on the west side of Totem Trail took water view away from homes on the east side. This plat was on east side of West Shore Road behind the low bank part of Indian Village (beach homes are much lower). North Beach already had small lots on both sides of Guemes Island Road. Homeowners were nervous about huge out of scale homes being built next to or in the midst of their small home neighborhoods. Totem trail people and North Beach people were against huge houses across the street blocking their water views within their own neighborhood. The building restrictions likely made more sense at that time.

Today things are different. Many larger homes have been built on all beaches changing the scale of community homes. Indian Village property owners purchased land behind them to prevent more Totem Trail type of plats and protect their water supply. Water limitations were recognized leading to changing much of the zoning on Guemes Island. Many of the homeowners on West Beach and Indian Village have changed a generation bringing new people and new dreams of their own property development.

Are the original building restrictions still valid today? The answer may be different from different people because they may still be valid in some areas but not others. Many homeowners fail to see how their dreams are impacting others. Others are fearful larger more modern homes by their neighbors will degrade existing homes by raising the standards. However, GIPAC is not raising that issue. They are just trying to complete the process started by others over 20 years ago. View issues are now a rare and scale issues are few with many larger homes in all communities. The issues have changed but perhaps there are other concerns that the communities can address. The proposed building restrictions no longer apply.

Discussion started after the June 20, 2016 hearing between GIPAC and Homeowners was constructive. Homeowners recognized they need to pay more attention to planning activities on the Island. It is now more apparent the proposed restrictions came from years past and not from self-serving or anti-progress individuals. GIPAC is recognizing property owners were only trying to fulfill dreams and they are not against the Island's rural character. Homeowners recognized GIPAC members as hard working volunteers that are still working on other Island issues. GIPAC recognized that homeowners can be supportive of future Island issues. Perhaps working together will bring good results because all goals are similar.

I recognize that Nancy Fox is emailing everyone she knows urging people to support GIPAC for this comment period. However, the comment period is not an election that favors those with the largest number of emails in their address book, it is a fact finding process. I have yet to see any comments with current reasons to support the proposed building restrictions. No one has

been able to identify a reasonable benefit for any individual or the Island as a whole. The existing codes and narrow lots are already restrictive enough to prevent character changes to the Island. And, the proposed changes have little impact on large lots.

Regards,  
Mark Madden  
4910 N. Indian Village Ln.  
Anacortes, WA 98221  
Phone - 206 660 1209

**From:** [DAVID A Malmquist](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Comprehensive Plan Update Comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 21, 2016 12:27:23 PM

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My name is David Malmquist, I live at 624 South 291<sup>st</sup> St. in Federal Way, Washington and am the owner of the home at 6406 West Shore Road on Guemes Island. I would like to offer the following two comments.

1. The GIPOA proposal is totally inappropriate to apply to the entire island. The height restriction would serve no purpose and seriously damage the value of most property owners.
2. I have contributed to that organization for years, I must be a member because I receive a ballot to nominate or vote for officers and board members. I want to emphasize to the Skagit County Commissioners that they DO NOT represent my view, that they never communicated information to me that they were proposing such restrictions, and I doubt they communicated to others who they now claim to represent.

Thank you for considering my comments.

David Malmquist

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

**From:** [Timothy Manns](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 1:32:07 PM

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Skagit Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 1101  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Dear Commissioners Janicki, Dahlstedt, and Wesen:

I am writing on behalf of the 225 member families of Skagit Audubon Society to offer comments on 2 areas of the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan Update, specifically the 20-year non-motorized transportation list and the UGA Open Space Plan.

**1. Please include the 20-year List of Non-Motorized Transportation Projects in the Comprehensive Plan Update**

We support inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan Update of the 20-year list of non-motorized transportation projects presented in the Supplemental Staff Report #4 by Planning & Development Services (May 20, 2016) as per the May 24 vote of the Planning Commission and your vote of June 7. Skagit Audubon has a very active, well-attended hiking program whose many participants go out every Wednesday year-round. This program uses trails throughout the county and is yet more evidence of the strong public support for trails which surveys have repeatedly shown.

We also strongly support an expanded and interconnected network of bike paths and roadside lanes which will both provide opportunities for healthy exercise and facilitate non-motorized commuting as well as non-motorized trips to stores, libraries, community events, etc.

By far, most Skagit Audubon members are property owners and tax payers. We are more than happy to see our tax revenues support expansion of trails and bike lanes in Skagit County, and we are not anxious about our property rights being somehow jeopardized by trails and paths adjacent to our property.

We would note that inclusion of the 20-year list of non-motorized transportation projects in the Comprehensive Plan supports access to grants to move these projects ahead. Other Washington counties have extensive networks of interconnected and long-distance trails and bike paths. Why not our county too?

**2. Please include in the Comprehensive Plan Update the wording about the UGA Open Space Plan proposed by Planning & Development Services**

We are also very interested in seeing the UGA Open Space Plan taken off the shelf and put into action. We support inclusion in the Comp Plan update of the language drafted by the Planning Staff (p. 3 of the department's June 3, 2016 memorandum on the Comprehensive Plan Update) which you voted in favor of on June 7<sup>th</sup> (proposed policy 2B-1.3). This simply calls for the county to continue working with partners to identify and conserve open space corridors. Open space refers to a range of types of lands with different uses, public or private ownership, and different degrees of public access, if any at all. It appears that some members

of the Planning Commission as well as the general public may be unfamiliar with what the term “open space” means in this context and choose to see it as a threat rather than a way to enhance our community, protect the things we value such as agriculture, the rural character of the landscape, wildlife corridors and habitat, etc. It is time to move ahead with this plan.

Skagit Audubon’s mission cites conservation and ecosystem protection and restoration for the sake of wildlife and of people. What is especially important to Skagit Audubon members is the way in which preserving a variety of open space can provide for birds and other wildlife. One example: our county supports more wintering Trumpeter Swans than any other place in the Lower 48 States. This magnificent bird, the largest of all waterfowl, does well here because of a combination of types of open space: farm fields, wetlands like Barney Lake, and the salt water bays. It is significant too that thousands of visitors came here each winter to see birds such as swans, snow geese, and bald eagles. They eat in local restaurants, stay in local motels, and in other ways support our economy.

The UGA Open Space Plan was approved 7 years ago. For the county and other entities to be eligible for RCO (WA Recreation and Conservation Office) grants to help protect open space, the plan needs to be updated every 6 years. Please direct that to happen so that our county does not miss out on these funding opportunities.

In closing I want to say on behalf of Skagit Audubon that we appreciate the good job which Planning & Development Services did to encourage public input on the Comprehensive Plan Update and to provide various means for the public to provide it. We appreciate their efforts and yours as well.

Sincerely,

Timothy Manns  
Conservation Chair  
Skagit Audubon Society  
conservation@skagitaudubon.org

6/23/16

RECEIVED  
JUN 23 2016  
SKAGIT COUNTY  
PDS

Dear County Commissioners:

Re: Comp Plan 2016 Update

I believe that many, if not most, of the property owners on Guemes Island are not aware of the proposed height and setback restrictions in the new Comprehensive Plan update. I was not aware and I live on the island.

Apparently, this information has been available on-line. I cannot find it in an easily accessible format. I have not had a mailing explaining the changes to my property. A mailing to my home would seem to be an appropriate method to communicate with me as a taxpayer and property owner, and would be certain to get to all of the affected property owners.

I would therefore request that this Comp Plan update be delayed so that all Property owners--therefore taxpayers--are notified by mail about these changes impacting their property.

Sincerely,



Jayne Mardesich  
5101 Guemes Island Rd  
Anacortes, Wa. 98221

**From:** [Holiday Matchett](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Comprehensive Plan 2016 Update  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 21, 2016 10:34:07 PM

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Dear Commissioners,

I attended the meeting the evening of June 21, 2016. Although I did not speak, I would like to express my opinion on the Guemes Proposals in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update., specifically the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay and Seawater Intrusion Policy. My history with Guemes Island goes back to the 1950's. Many members of my extensive family are property owners on the island, both inland and waterfront. We all recognize the importance of our natural environment and live accordingly. I served on the GIPAC Subarea Planning which has been finalized and presented to the County Commissioners for their approval. I recognize the efforts made by many individual islanders and county officials over a lengthy time period. I feel strongly that most Guemes residents had many opportunities to comment on the draft, to participate in meetings, and to read the final document before it arrived at the Commissioners' Hearing. I feel the island committee (who incidentally were from locations all over the island and from different backgrounds) strove to achieve the best goals for all. I greatly admire the late Roz Glasser for her incites and guidance with the initial studies.

Please include this Subarea Plan in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan.

Thank you,

Holiday Matchett, 6669 West Shore Drive, Guemes Island, Anacortes, Washington, 98221

**From:** [Legacy](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Cc:** [Dana McCarthy](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Monday, June 20, 2016 3:01:08 AM

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From: William McCarthy  
6094 West Shore Rd  
Guemes Island

Dear Skagit County Commissioners, I am very much opposed to the building restrictions proposed by the GIPAC. I do not feel it is at all in the best interest of the general public, and believe it is only being endorsed by a select few individuals. These proposed building codes are far too restrictive and unreasonable.

My wife Dana and I moved to West Shore Rd on Guemes three years ago. We recently finished the remodel on our house and got criticized by the proponents of GIPAC for building a large house way out of scale for the neighborhood on West Beach. Our house was in the center of the photo they took for the Guemes Tides about a month ago. The truth is that the original exterior walls and roof of the house are still there the same as before. We removed the garage from the street side of the house and built a two story addition in its place. The overall footprint is not much larger than the original, and it's still a two bedroom house. So I find their claim both unfair and inaccurate. Even the photo they took was at an angle to make our house look far larger than the one next door, which also has a second story near the road. All the lots in our neighborhood are approx. 1.6 acres and span both sides of West Shore Rd. The properties back up to wetlands and ponds and there will never be anything built behind any of them. There is no chance of ever blocking anyone's view, yet if the proposed GIPAC regulations had been in place we would not have been able to build the addition to our house.

The authors of GIPAC cite water conservation as a way to legitimize these building restrictions. I think a far better way to protect our watershed would be to give tax breaks to the family farms and ranches on Guemes that hold large parcels of land in pastures, fields and forests. If they have incentives to never sub-divide these natural lands it will help protect our water supply and also preserve the rural, peaceful quality of life that everyone on this Island loves.

Please take time to study the impact this proposal will truly have on the community, and get a more accurate idea of what the residents of Guemes want for their Island.

Regards,

Bill McCarthy

**From:** [xallenmoe@gmail.com](mailto:xallenmoe@gmail.com)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 comprehensive plan update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 12:15:23 PM

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I want to make it known that I fully support the GIPAC and the implementation of the Guemes Island subarea plan. I urge you to enact the guemes island zoning overlay as proposed. I have lived on the island for over 25 years and appreciate its rural character. Thank you

Allen Moe  
7450 Hideaway Place  
Guemes Island

**From:** [Carolyn Moulton](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed "2016 Comprehensive Plan Update"  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 3:46:50 PM

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To Dale Pernula and Skagit County Board of County Commissioners:

I am writing to express my strong support for **the recommended inclusion of a 20-year list of non-motorized projects as part of the updated Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Element.**

As an Anacortes resident and business owner, I believe that active transportation options are beneficial to our region's economy. Active citizens are engaged citizens and supporters of local businesses. When people travel via their own physical power, they transcend the pitfalls of a sedentary lifestyle and increase their own health and vitality while setting an example for others to do the same.

I travel by bicycle in Anacortes and across the County. I am grateful for the many opportunities I have to leave my car at home and ride safely to buy my groceries, visit my friends, go to the library, and pedal to Rasar or Bayview State Park to camp and recreate. My dependence on fossil fuels has diminished and I believe that many other local people and visitors are working in the same direction.

Skagit County is a wonderful destination for touring cyclists and outdoor enthusiasts who spend money to support our restaurants, grocery stores, hotels, and independent bricks-and-mortar stores. A healthy, vibrant community depends on local and visitor access to safe, non-motorized routes that connect our commercial hubs and recreation areas.

Please consider these users, and by extension, everyone in the County when you vote on our County Comprehensive Plan Update.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Moulton  
1514 14th St.  
Anacortes, WA 98221

**From:** [Val Mullen](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Valerie J. Mullen; 31248 Prevedell Rd. Sedro Woolley, WA; 2016 Comprehensive Comp Plan update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 10:43:05 AM

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Hello, I am a resident of eastern Skagit county. We have a small farm and like all farmers, we have to be self sufficient to survive. We repair our own vehicles, and create "fixes" for whatever comes up. To do so, we have to keep plumbing parts and fencing supplies, old vehicles and other materials on hand. Having to outsource all the work would be cost prohibitive.

Section 14.15.945 Development Regulations is proposing a limitation of 500 square feet for junk, which includes all the parts and supplies we need to keep the farm running. It also prohibits living in recreational vehicles on any land within the county for more than 180 days within a years time or to have more than one occupied or maintained on property without special use permits. This section unfairly targets the rural family, farmers and other members of the agricultural community. It also will have adverse effects on anyone in need of affordable housing.

Farming has always been supported by the Skagit county commissioners. To include this section in the County's Comp plan seems counter to our principles.

**I recommend that you delete the entire section 14.15.945.**

Thank you.

Valerie J. Mullen

31248 Prevedell Rd.

Sedro Woolley, WA 98284

360 708 6088

**From:** [Val Mullen](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Valerie J. Mullen; 31248 Prevedell Rd. Sedro Woolley, WA; 2016 Comprehensive Comp Plan update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 10:47:31 AM

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Re: UGS Open Space Concept Plan:

This is a trails plan that has no goal to save open space. It's a trails plan that promotes trails on farmers' buffers along all creeks in the county on private property and through our farmland. It's not a legal binding plan. We cannot afford to spend an average of 1 million dollars per mile for paved urban non-motorized trails throughout our rural agriculture county. The County Planning Commission voted to not implement this plan only use it as a mapping and identification of open space. **I recommend to the Commissioners to support and adopt the Planning Commissions recorded motion.**

Thank you.

Valerie Mullen

31248 Prevedell Rd.

Sedro Woolley, WA 98284

360 708 6088

Bob Munsell

4930 S. Indian Village Ln.

Anacortes, WA 98221

Re: 2016 Comp Plan Update

RECEIVED

JUN 20 2015

SKAGIT COUNTY  
PDS

Dear Sir,

I have 4 parcels on Guemes Island totaling over 20 acres. I live in a 50 foot wide parcel in Indian Village. I live alone in a large two story home that serves me well when grandkids, family, and friends visit for weekends. I recently heard a group called GIPAC is attempting to install laws to limit the size of future homes. I know most of my neighbors because my family purchase the beach property over 70 years ago and I have 10 neighbors whose families have owned in Indian Village for over sixty years. I am opposed to laws making smaller homes because I hate to see such a beautiful beach changed to small cabin rental while my neighbors build their dream homes elsewhere.

Sincerely,

Robert Munsell

**From:** [Diane Murray](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Skagit County Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 1:14:15 PM

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Dear Skagit Planning Department --

This note is to ask that you include in the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan Update the recommendations of Guemes Island Planning Advisory Committee (GIPAC).

Because it wields no vested power, GIPAC is not an elected body and it doesn't need to be. GIPAC is an all-volunteer group of dedicated citizens concerned about the impact of building and development on Guemes Island. This group, whose membership is open to ALL residents of Guemes Island, has worked tirelessly for many years to thoughtfully study the island and how best to strike a balance between property development and environmental concerns.

Guemes Island, with its sole-source aquifer and already-developed shoreline, needs to be protected from out-of-scale building on shoreline lots, excessive drilling of new wells, and reverse osmosis water systems.

I urge you to include the GIPAC recommendations with the wording "shall" in the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan Update. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Diane Murray  
6056 Section Avenue  
Guemes Island  
Anacortes, WA 98221  
(360) 488-6969

**From:** [Richard Myers](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** "Comprehensive Plan Update Comments"  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 7:52:26 AM

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Planning Commission,

I would like to share my comments specific to the GIPAC proposal to put building restrictions from the Guemes Island Subarea Plan into the building codes. As I understand, this would limit new buildings to 12 foot sidewalls above the ground at the setback line and limit building heights to 12 feet plus one foot for every foot away from the setback line. GIPAC claims these rules are necessary to protect views, prevent scale differential, and preserve the rural character of the Island. These rules are especially difficult on the west beaches where the minimum floor elevation is about 4 feet above the ground line to prevent future flooding

I believe the rule change as proposed is poorly constructed and appears to provide no benefit to the general public. The provisions are unique to a land area that is very similar to other land areas in Skagit County by population density. **This proposed language should not be adopted.**

The Guemes Island Planning Advisory Committee developed a Guemes Island Overlay to the Guemes Island Subarea plan to be implemented in Skagit County's 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update being in progress. The Overlay has proposed building restrictions limiting home sidewalls to 12 feet above the average ground line at the side setbacks (8 feet from the property line). They also limit the height of homes to 12 feet above the ground line at the side setback and increase one foot for every foot further from the setback line to a maximum of 30 feet.

The 12 foot sidewall restriction proposed would not leave enough latitude for full height ceilings on the first floor if the height requirement was measured from the average ground line and floor elevations had to be 4 feet higher.

The proposed setbacks and height limits have major impacts restricting building options.

- reduce the frontage home surface area limiting view windows
- eliminate designs with side roof gables
- increase construction costs by forcing second story rooms toward the center of the first floor away from load bearing exterior walls
- restrict originality in design and make all new homes look alike
- increase scale differential next to existing larger homes

Administrative Variances could allow homes built to existing standards like the remainder of Skagit County and Guemes Island requirements today. A perfect storm with high tides, low atmospheric pressure, and a storm from the Straits could flood about half the homes (floors below the BFE) in the Indian Village and West Beach Communities and initiate a flood of new building permits requests. **This proposed language should not be adopted.**

**I oppose the sidewall and height limitations proposed in the Guemes Island Overlay. They should be removed.** Administrative Variances will allow the construction of a normal sized building if approved but property values will be reduced with the proposed restrictions.

**Potential buyers cannot rely on the approval of variances to build a normal sized home. They will shop elsewhere.**

GIPAC claims the restrictions are necessary to preserve views and prevent scale differential. Rarely true. None of the 21 no bank fully developed building lots in the Indian Village Community and 53 building lots in the West Beach Community have homes behind them. Lots in Indian Village are almost 300 feet deep and rise about 80 feet in elevation to West Shore Road. Homes are sparsely visible from the public road. About half the homes on these two beach communities are large homes and over 80% of the existing homes exceed the proposed limitations. The proposed limitations will increase scale differential.

Several of the GIPAC members have property on North Beach where large beach homes could block views from homes on the none beach side of Guemes Island Road. Otherwise any benefits of the proposed building restrictions are difficult to find. Homeowners on the West side of Guemes Island have not been notified of these proposed GIPAC restrictions that impact them the most. They have had no input to the GIPAC restrictions.

Thank you,

Richard Myers  
6338 West Shore Road  
Guemes Island, WA  
206-683-5403

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**From:** [Dianne Neilson](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Monday, June 20, 2016 9:00:39 AM

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Dianne Elizabeth & Douglas Walter Neilson  
6150 W Shore Rd,  
Anacortes, WA 98221

Dear County Commissioners,

My husband and I are very much opposed to the GIPAC proposed new building recommendations. We are hoping you will reconsider voting on these until our community members have an opportunity to become aware, educated, and involved in decisions that will be in the best interest of all on our unique island.

Although we appreciate the GIPAC and all their efforts to protect our beautiful island and its natural & peaceful environment, we find the current plan updates/recommendations alarming, restrictive, unsupported, and potentially damaging.

As recent new home owners, our cottage/home/primary residence is one of the small 70+ year old cottages on West Beach that needs to be modified/updated... structure raised to protect it and stay within current shoreline building codes. These additional proposed new rules will significantly limit our dream plans.

Also in concern is that in the recent weeks as we have been attempting to educate ourselves to understand the what and why of the GIPAC's recommendations....we have approached several long-term residents on 3 beaches about this proposal and have found that no one, other than Mr Madden, is aware of any of the recent work the GIPAC has put forward regarding this.... nor does anyone want or feel these recommendations are necessary or beneficial. Those we have spoke with believe them to be "overly restrictive", "unnecessary", and "violating". Additionally there is huge concern regarding affect on property values for all in the future and potential tax implications for the county.

We are unsure why no one is aware of something so impactful on this treasured island and feel our community needs more time to explore these recommendations before they are put to a Skagit Co Board of Commissioners vote.

Please reconsider voting these recommendations in this current year.

Dianne & Doug Neilson

**From:** [Dianne Neilson](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 3:49:47 PM

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Dear Planning Committee and County Commissioners,

Dianne Neilson, RN  
6150 W Shore Rd

I'm taking this last opportunity to pass along some key information from a building professional that I am not sure you have already received. This information really needs to seriously considered in your decision to accept the current proposed building recommendations requested by GIPAC.....

Regarding the setback issue...There is an increase of nearly 2x, based on a 100' lot, on the side setbacks. (16' to 30') That will produce some funny looking homes on angled lots.

In calculating actual wall heights in the flood plain there are several other items that need to be factored in.

1. All the electrical and mechanical must sit above the Base Flood Elevation. So even though FEMA allows a minimum finished floor height 1' above Base Flood Elevation one is rarely able to build that "low".
2. With floor joists typically being 12" in depth you now have to start raising the floor elevation in order to allow for all non-floodproof mechanical/utilities/etc that run under a house. In raising the floor it will essentially be lowering the ceiling.

Also in attempting to limit sidewall height, this will force second story walls to be stepped in from the perimeter walls. The upper story will now need to be carried, typically by posts and load bearing walls that transfer the weight to the crawl space. So in the crawl space you are adding additional beams that will, 9 times out of 10, get in the way of the mechanical. So plan on raising the house even further.

Good news: Ceiling will be easy to paint.

Other Key factors:

1. **Larger homes do not consume more water than smaller homes. Its occupancy load and water consumption habits.**
2. Beach lots being under sized in relation to todays zoning....when they were created they were and are legal lots. It should be noted that there are many, non water front, sub standard size lots.
3. The proposed overlay would drastically impact the development of small beach front lots.

Please, please realize the current proposal needs more input and exploration before being accepted. Expert opinions like these need to be factored into making such significant impactful changes that will affect the future of Guemes residents. Dianne



**From:** [J. Forrest Nelson](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Comprehensive Plan 2016 Update - Opposition Comments  
**Date:** Sunday, June 19, 2016 7:13:35 PM

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I am writing to express my opposition to Section 14.16.360 Guemes Island Overlay within the proposed Comprehensive Plan 2016 Update.

The proposed changes provide an undue hardship for landowners in low lying areas - particularly West Beach. Both the side setback and maximum height limit as now written, severely limit the ability for landowners on these narrow low lying lots from being able to build any reasonable usable residence. The proposal limits structure sidewalls to 12 feet above the ground line. However, due to rules regarding potential flood potential, current regulations exist requiring floor levels to be 3 to 5 feet above the ground line. This only leaves 7 to 9 feet for sidewalls, ceiling joists and roofs. This is not enough space for full height ceilings.

The proposals are especially difficult in the Indian Village area where 18 of 21 beach lots are only 50 feet wide. Second story rooms are limited to 14 feet outside dimensions centered on the home. Load bearing walls on the first level will eliminate any open plan concepts. No roof gables could be located on the side walls, eliminating roof overhangs to protect against weather. All reconstructed homes will be smaller and further out of scale to half of the newer homes - mostly built with two stories.

The GIPAC suggests variances but variances are not guaranteed. No potential buyer would gamble on a variance to reconstruct a home above the flood levels. The choice for lower homes is to accept flooding or rebuild smaller and further out of scale. Property values for home near the existing ground level will suffer.

I urge you to eliminate in its entirety Section 14.16.360 from the proposed Comprehensive Plan 2016 Update.

Thank you  
Forrest Nelson  
4884 North Indian Village Lane  
Guemes Island  
Anacortes WA 98221

**From:** [Richard Nicolls](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 12:13:05 PM

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22 June 2016

Skagit County Board of Commissioners  
1800 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Ref: Support of the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay

Dear Sirs,

This is to register our full support for the Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee (GIPAC) and implementation of the adopted Guemes Island Subarea Plan (SAP) and urge the Board of Commissioners to enact the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay as proposed.

My wife and I have been Guemes Island residents and property owners since retiring here in 1991. I was an early participant in GIPAC for a short time early on and as well as assisting Marianne Kooiman in her studies leading up to the establishment of our Sole Source Aquifer designation. Additionally we own an 11 ac. ranch on the island, zoned for one dwelling, on which my daughter resides. Both of our properties are dependant on the island's Sole Source Aquifer. Our decision to locate on Guemes and to add to our holdings was very much determined by the the rural character of the island and the commitment of Skagit County Comprehensive Plan to do likewise.

Thank you for considering our views in your decision making.

Sincerely,

Richard T. Nicolls, M.D.  
Gail Moore Nicolls

7802 West Shore Drive  
Anacortes, WA 98221-9584  
360-293-9540

**From:** [Gail](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 5:44:53 PM

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Dear Skagit County Board of Commissioners,

I fully and enthusiastically support the Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee (GIPAC) and implementation of the adopted Guemes Island Subarea Plan. I further urge the Board of Commissioners to enact the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay as proposed.

Upon our retirement in 1991 we chose to live on Guemes Island because of its rural character and close proximity to Anacortes and services available there. But after only a few months of living here we discovered that there is also a wonderful sense of community here, which together with its peace and beauty have made it the perfect place to live for the past 25 years.

Although the members of the first GIPAC had already been elected when we arrived, we have since that time been involved in many of the subsequent elections. In fact my husband was at one time elected to the committee. Over the years we continued to go regularly to well attended GIPAC meetings, which have always been advertised in *The Tide*, our monthly newspaper, on the ferry landing chalk board, and on Line Time. I particularly remember the standing-room-only meeting when the Sustainable Design Assessment Team from the American Institute of Architects gave its report and how well it was received.

It is hard to understand how all of these elections, meetings, and workshops; well advertised in the paper, online, and on the chalk board; escaped the notice of anybody with an interest in our island community.

I hope you agree that it's definitely time to recognize the 20 years of conscientious work by numerous islanders that have gone into Guemes Island's Subarea Plan by adopting it and enacting the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay as proposed.

Thank you for you attention to my comments,

Gail Nicolls

7802 West Shore Drive

Anacortes, WA 98221

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**From:** [Kari Odden](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on Skagit Co. Comprehensive Plan - Support for Active Transportation and Open Space within and between Cities and rural villages  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 21, 2016 7:05:46 AM

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June 20, 2016

Dear County Commissioners and County Planning and Parks Staff,

I am writing to express my strong support for both the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan and parks and open spaces located in the Skagit County cities and communities. I ask that you include the 20 year list of non-motorized projects in the Comprehensive Plan and that you continue to work towards expanding open space protection, particularly within and nearby Skagit County's cities and rural villages.

As kids, we played kick the can and hide and seek in neighbors' back yards – and no one thought of it as trespassing. Housing was less dense and there were more places for kids to play. We would walk or bike to a friend's house in summer and drivers watched out for us. Now think of how it is today.

Skagit County's population is growing quickly. This growth should occur primarily in the urban areas because we need our agricultural and forestlands to remain as they are – working lands. Not everyone can have two acres in Bay View or Bow, nor should they. As housing becomes more dense, we need open spaces and trails for city residents to get outside to experience nature, to commute, to get exercise, and to meet neighbors and friends. Personally, I would rather live in town, close to schools and amenities, but only if my town can provide open spaces and trails.

What do we need? We need neighborhoods that are physically connected, and where it is possible to move across and between our towns easily and enjoyably. A well-developed non-motorized trail system delivers substantial health benefits, entices residents outside, and is recognized as a key positive attribute of quality of life. **We need County-wide as well as City plans for trails and non-motorized transportation – a network! We also need parks and green spaces.**

**QUALITY OF LIFE** - - Places to Recreate, Enjoy Nature, Commute Safely, Find Community

Trails can measurably improve a community's quality of life by providing opportunities for social connection and safe places for recreation and commuting. Trails are a positive amenity that keeps existing residents and attracts new people; an asset that contributes to community identity. The trails that can bring the greatest benefits to residents are close to where people live and work, providing physical connections within a community.

My husband is lucky enough to be able to ride the Kulshan trail to his office. It's only 1/3 mile out of the way, which is doable. There is no trail / bike path that allows me to ride to work, nor our kids to bike to their schools. As a result, we drive. We need connections between communities, such as Mount Vernon and Burlington, and we need connecting trails/paths within the Cities.

### **HEALTH and SAFETY**- Exercise and Safe Corridors for Walking and Cycling

Trails are associated with increased physical activity. Trails encourage people to become more active. Increased physical activity associated with trails is greatest among people at greatest risk of inactivity, including people with low income, low education attainment, and the elderly.

I used to do health screenings at the elementary schools in Mount Vernon, which included recording kids' heights and weights. Believe me – kids need more physical activity!

There are lots of little groups of runners around town and you can see us both early and late. We run some on sidewalks, but also partly in the streets. Streets aren't very safe, but the sidewalks are often too narrow for more than one person, have lifted cement slabs that trip, mailboxes that jut out, and overgrown vegetation. In the street I have to watch carefully for cars even though I go at 5:30 am. Wide trails and paths would be well used and well loved by runners.

Trails also provide safer transportation routes for pedestrians and cyclists. Because they provide a safe environment, trails are the only place where many residents exercise.

I volunteered for several years with the Little Mountain Elementary Bike Club. Kids loved the after school club and learned bike safety. Some of our bike routes were delightful, including the Duck Pond Trail and the trails at Hillcrest Park. Other routes through town on city streets could be nerve-wracking. One such example was our bi-annual ride to Little Mountain Park, with the fast traffic, curved roadway and no bike path / walk. A path out to Little Mountain Park is needed!

More kids in our community would enjoy biking to school – or over to a friend's - if parents felt that there was a safe transportation corridor for them to do so. Even a wide sidewalk with room for both walkers and bikers can work.

### **ECONOMIC - - Property Values and Business Impacts**

Trails can be associated with higher property value, especially when a trail is designed to provide neighborhood access and maintain residents' privacy. Trails, like good schools, create an amenity that commands a higher price for nearby homes. Legal, well-marked access eliminates problems with trail users trespassing. When trails increase property value, local governments receive more property tax revenue.

We have taken trips to other counties in order to ride our bikes on their trails – including the

nearby Centennial Trail in Snohomish County, which we hope will be continued into Skagit County.

Our first house was directly on the Kulshan Trail. It was a small and non-descript house, but we bought it because it was on the trail and had a big yard. While we out-grew the house after three years, we loved the trail and used it almost every single day. My son learned how to ride a bike on that trail. We purchased our current house near both the trail and Baker View Park because open space is very important to our family's well-being.

Thank you for including non-motorized transportation in the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan and in other planning processes. I hope very much that our County and City governments and Parks Departments will work together to craft a comprehensive trail network plan and implement it. It is an opportunity for our communities to become even higher quality places to live – healthier, safer and with stronger community ties.

Sincerely,

Kari Odden  
3021 Cherokee Lane  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
[bobkari@frontier.com](mailto:bobkari@frontier.com)

**From:** [Susan O'Donnell](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** "2016 Comprehensive Plan Update"  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 1:37:30 PM

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Dear Commissioners,

Knowing there is a very wise push to protect the rural character of Skagit County, I applaud your efforts!

My big concern is Guemes Island, a wonderful place "discovered" by my Grandfather in 1924! He and my Grandmother were able to purchase one of the 50 foot wide lots on North Beach, a part of the "Alverson Camping Tracts". Camping is what they did back then before wells were dug, telephone lines, electricity and organized garbage pick-up. The ferry was iff- y and the roads just dusty tracks. But they loved it and over the years improvements were made so that our growing family could enjoy what is now shared by the 3rd and 4th generations of cousins. The house is modest; we try to conserve water; we are careful not to overwhelm the septic system; we try to follow the rules of the county and the sensible suggestions put forth by conservation groups such as the Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee (GIPAC).

GIPAC has been working for about 20 years on plans to protect the place we love so much. The commissioners have already adopted the Guemes Island Subarea Plan after extensive public process and I fully support the implementation. An important part of this is the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay. I implore you to enact the overlay to:

- prevent the building of over-sized dwellings
- preserve the aquifer which is so fragile
- protect our water supply from becoming saltier and saltier
- protect the fragile shoreline, the beaches, the wetlands, the feeder bluffs and the flora and fauna (just these past few weeks, I have seen several logging trucks piled high with freshly harvested trees - LEAVING THE ISLAND!!!!).

I'm wondering if there needs to be more oversight in permitting - logging, building, digging, height restrictions, clearing sensitive areas, drilling, harvesting of sea life, etc. AND some way to prevent clearing/logging/infill, etc. before any kind of permission or permitting is applied for. Perhaps fines, obvious posting of stop-work orders, required restoration post-damage, etc.

Thank you for working to get it right!

Sincerely,

Susan S. O'Donnell  
6112 So. Shore Rd.  
PO Box 1982  
Anacortes WA 98221

**From:** [Stephen Orsini](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 8:41:19 AM

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Re: Comment in support of the implementation of the Guemes Island Subarea Plan produced by the Guemes Island Planning Advisory Committee (GIPAC)

I grew up on the island attending the first three grades in its on-island school. I moved back to the island full time in 1989 occupying the property that my parents purchased in 1954.

As a member of the original GIPAC, we completed the Guemes Island Sub-Area Plan (SAP) by 1992. The original GIPAC members, as has been the practice since, were elected by vote of the Island residents. The SAP was adopted by the County by 2011. Many people served on GIPAC over the years and the SAP has been an intensely public effort widely supported on the island. To insinuate the SAP is a private document produced by individuals who do not represent the islanders is, at minimum, incorrect.

In a one quarter mile stretch of North Beach, I have seen beach front or near beach front property develop from one house in the 1960s to 32 houses today. This land was originally platted in small "camping lots" purposed for summer camp trailers or small beach cabins. The majority of these small structures were redone over time into large multilevel homes. 19 of these lots were set up to be serviced by one 27 foot deep well, which met the original purpose of the camping tracts. In recent years, servicing houses with multiple bathrooms and water intensive appliances, the well has not kept up. The lack of planning resulted in an on-going law suit of the current owners against sons of the original developer in an effort to solve the water shortage. The continued construction of large homes on small beach tracts puts enormous stress on the island's sole source aquifers, especially in the near-beach areas which have experienced severe seawater intrusion. This is a major reason that the SAP and its Overlay has requested limits on construction of the largest homes on the small beach front lots, a practice which produces urban densities in a once rural area. The current practice does not recognize the threatened further collapse of the fresh water aquifers along the island's beach fronts.

Please support the current GIPAC Sub Area Plan recommendations as they are carefully and fairly crafted with full public process on Guemes Island.

Thank you,

Stephen D. Orsini  
4971 Guemes Island Rd  
Anacortes, WA 98221  
Home phone: 360 293 5689

**From:** [Leo Osborne](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 9:11:28 AM

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Greetings,

As residents of 5166 South shore Drive, Guemes Island, Anacortes, Wa, I, Leo E. Osborne and my wife Jane Lane wish to address the issue of the "2016 Comprehensive Plan Update".

I began my life on Guemes in 1993, purchasing a home on the West Side of the island. That home was sold and I now with my wife Jane live on the South Side of the island at the address given.

I was attracted to the island for its beauty , its quietness, and for the rural landscape that this island offers with forest lands, a small mountain to climb on the recently created trails and the agricultural fields and cattle roaming those which all gives this island its character.

I do not want this to change!

I have seen too many ostentatious houses being built now by wealthy owners who have but one couple living in these rather oversized and overstated dwellings. I had to myself, put up a bamboo hedge to create a cover from a neighboring property who put up a huge shed building with an apartment in it whose metal roof shines in our faces every day of the year, when it is sunny! This new huge structure also took out 1/2 of the water view that we had when we purchased this property a decade and half ago.

I wish to say that we 100 percent support the Guemes Island Planning & Advisory Committee (GIPAC), who have been working diligently for 20 years to create what we as islanders feel to be in the interest of the entire island and its population.

We wish for implementation of the G.I. Subarea Plan, the G.I. Overlay as proposed!

After 20 years of study and much research, I find it horrible to think that a few parties have at this late date sent letters of opposition into the arena of this important issue for the island. This is so very dear to the hearts of folks who have lived here for many years, people who have felt the heart of this island place, this place of belonging to many, some for generations.

Please move straight ahead with the Guemes Island Subarea Plan and Overlay as proposed.

sincerely from the heart,  
Leo E. Osborne  
Jane Lane



**From:** [Tracy Ouellette](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Friday, June 17, 2016 2:13:10 PM

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**Subject: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update**

**I support the recommended inclusion of a 20-year list of non-motorized projects** as part of the updated Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Element.

These projects include pathways and trails, safe bicycle and pedestrian routes, as well as safety improvements to county roadways such as usable shoulders.

**I support Skagit County's intent to continue cooperating with local partners to identify and protect open space corridors.** Open Space is defined as a combination of public and private lands, both rural and inter-urban, that form greenbelts of agriculture lands, trails, wildlife habitat, parks, significant scenic or historic lands etc. Support public access where it is appropriate.

I am a frequent user of the beautiful outdoor spaces of Skagit County, as well as a new parent, and I want to be able to continue to access quiet, safe, peaceful spaces with my family. Thank you for keeping Skagit safe for nonmotorized outdoor recreation.

Tracy Ouellette, MD

14078 MacTaggart Ave

Edison, WA 98232

**From:** [Joan Palmer](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update - Guemes Island  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 9:57:43 PM

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Once again I am writing this urgent message to the Board of Commissioners to please enact the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay as proposed by the Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee (GIPAC). I fully support the adopted Guemes Island Subarea Plan (SAP), the focus of which is to protect the rural character of the island.

On April 6, 2016 I wrote you a letter similar to this one stating that "As an island resident for more than 40 years I continuously kept informed about the hard work of the GIPAC committee and others in developing the subarea plan." With that letter I enclosed an abbreviated report of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) 2006 design assessment following several days of meetings here with many island residents, county-wide officials and others. I was one of the islanders participating in these meetings and was thrilled by the enthusiastic participation of islanders, especially, in voicing opinions and creative ideas to ensure that this vulnerable, valuable island can be sustained without running out of water (the bottom line for all the GIPAC planning). Preserving rural character was and is another highly valued goal of islanders including me as demonstrated by the AIA report.

Further, I attended packed community meetings held to elect the island members, as vacancies arose, to the GIPAC committee where candidates stood up to discuss their experience and credentials, and islands then voted for the candidates of their choice. Over the 20-year planning process involving hundreds of island residents and property owners, the Subarea Plan was developed and adopted by the Board of Commissioners 5 years ago after an extensive public process as discussed above. This plan was faithfully written and rewritten by the elected GIPAC committee, and discussed with islanders during the numerous drafts.

The County must now move forward in finally adopting the code that implements the plan. We expect a successful conclusion.

Sincerely,

Joan H. Palmer, 6132 S Shore Road, Anacortes WA 98221 June 22, 2016

**From:** [Don Passarelli](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** comments on 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 9:19:03 AM

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My wife and I fully support implementation of the Guemes Island Subarea Plan as advocated by the Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee. We have lived on Guemes for 16 years and my wife helped in drawing up the original Subarea Plan. This plan was developed with broad community participation and its progress through county offices has been fully reported to islanders by GIPAC.

We value the island's rural character and the quality of its sole source aquifer and are especially concerned that parts of the Zoning Overlay are being challenged. We ask the Board of Commissioners to respect the wishes of Guemes Islanders and implement all recommendations of the Subarea plan.

Thank you.

Donald and Anne Passarelli  
6124 South Shore Road, Guemes Island  
Anacortes WA 98221

**From:** [Howard Pellett](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 10:53:02 AM

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These comments are submitted on behalf of:

The Guemes Island Property Owners Association

P. O Box 131, Anacortes, WA 98221

I'm the president of the Guemes Island Property Owners Association (GIPOA) and would like you to know that the membership of GIPOA fully supports the GIPAC implementation of the adopted Guemes Island Subarea Plan. We would like you to adopt the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay as presented. Furthermore, GIPAC has worked with the county to allow flexibility for owners that want to build on the small beachfront lots.

This last minute furor has been stirred up by an island realtor and the objections to the process contain numerous falsehoods which I refute through personal knowledge: 1, GIPAC from it's start is an elected body and does represent the interests of islanders; 2, GIPACs work has always been transparent and presented to the island concurrently as developed; 3, GIPAC is an island wide organization which has always been open and elected by islanders.

Carol and I have owned property on Guemes Island since 1979 and I have been involved in GIPAC's efforts to gain subarea plan recognition from its very inception. I declined to run for reelection to the GIPAC in deference to younger and very capable board nominees

**From:** [Wendell Phillips](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Skagit County Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 12:27:45 PM

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Hi:

I am writing today to oppose the new restrictions proposed by the Guemes Island Overlay subarea plan. There are already restrictions in sufficient number to control growth on Guemes. The authors of the subarea plan have taken a very narrow range of comments into consideration and have, I believe, personal objectives they are putting before the good of the community. Please do not restrict my rights any further.

Thank you.

Wendell Phillips  
7614 Cypress Way  
Anacortes (Guemes), WA 98221  
360-299-0068

**From:** [John Pope](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 4:28:34 PM

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I am a resident of Skagit County, in Commission District 1. I am very supportive of the updates proposed to the County's Comprehensive Plan, and want to let the Commissioners know I very much agree with the support of non-motorized (active) transportation measures represented in the update, and of the project list included in the update.

I have long supported efforts in Skagit County to make transportation of all types well-coordinated and useful to all residents. I have worked with the commission in the past to improve signage and route finding. This county was the first in the state to endorse a USBicycleRoute and continues to be supportive of efforts to identify the safest roadway or byway for those seeking to visit or tour our county by bicycle. We have aligned local routes with regional routes and now national routes in the spirit of the "farmhouse gang", showing great alignment between communities and governments, helping improve safe travel for all users and helping planners and professionals better understand which routes are most preferred by the local and visiting cycling public.

We in Skagit County have traditionally been a NW Washington crossroads. It has often been our role to host visitors and economically gain from their interaction with our businesses and communities. We continue to show this ability to share our infrastructure and gain business by allowing comfortable levels of tourism in our beautiful county. As NW Washington grows with increased economic strength due to innovation and diversity, so will our public continue to ask for more opportunities to engage in active transportation and access to parks, water ways and the many businesses that engage with them in their travels.

Thank you, commissioners, for your continued support of all aspects of transportation in our county. We in the western end of the county see the value of sharing on a daily basis, and know it is essential to our county's economic vitality. We hope the commission unanimously supports this update!

John Pope,  
4001 Peters Ln  
Anacortes, WA

USBRS Coordinator for WA State - WA Bikes/Cascade  
Long-time advisor to city and county transportation committees and boards

**From:** [Kit Rawson](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update From Kit Rawson, 3601 Carol Place, Mount Vernon  
**Date:** Monday, June 20, 2016 7:08:52 AM

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**Kit Rawson**

3601 Carol Place

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

[krawson50@gmail.com](mailto:krawson50@gmail.com)

360-424-0456

**Comment to Skagit County Commissioners regarding 9 June 2016 Public Comment Draft of the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan 2016 update**

I live in unincorporated Skagit County within the Mount Vernon urban growth area and have been a Skagit County resident for 28 years. I am a retired fisheries and conservation biologist, avid outdoor enthusiast and conservationist. I am proud that our county has been able to accommodate population growth and economic development while retaining natural environmental values. It is very important that we continue to protect those natural environmental values, both for our own quality of life as well as the sustainability of the natural resources that people throughout our region depend on. Since the recent birth of my granddaughter, I have a more personal interest in preserving environmental values for people long after I am gone. The Skagit County Comprehensive Plan can be a key part of that.

I would like to comment on two parts of the 9 June 2016 Public Comment draft of the Comprehensive Plan update: non-motorized projects and open space corridor protection. In both cases, I support the proposed language in the 9 June draft.

The 2016-2036 list of non-motorized projects is an essential component of the overall transportation plan. I support all the projects on this 20-year list. I personally use all available forms of transportation: car, bus, train, bicycling, and walking for shopping, going to meetings, travel to out-of-county destinations, and recreation. I particularly try to travel by bicycle whenever possible within Mount Vernon and between Mount Vernon and Anacortes, LaConner, Sedro-Woolley, and Burlington. Bicycle travel in Skagit County can be pleasant and safe, with the exception of a few places where cyclists are forced to share narrow roads with heavy, fast motor vehicle traffic. A

number of the projects on the proposed list will help mitigate these hazard areas and improve transportation for both cyclists and motorists.

I also strongly support the bicycle/pedestrian/ equestrian trail projects on the 20-year list. I frequently use the Centennial Trail in Snohomish County and lament the opportunity that Skagit County lost by opting out of the rail banking program a number of years ago. Anyone who uses this trail can see the recreational, transportation, and economic benefits that parts of rural Snohomish County are receiving from it. I have observed those same benefits from developed trails in other parts of the country, such as the Great Allegheny Passage in southwestern Pennsylvania and the Erie Canal trail in upstate New York. The proposed projects for the Skagit County portion of the Centennial Trail will help our county realize some of these benefits. I will personally use the portion of the trail from Clear Lake to Big Rock for both transportation and recreation as soon as it is constructed, reducing the danger I am now exposed to when I frequently cycle the same route using Highway 9.

I think that the public process for vetting and discussing non-motorized transportation projects has been more than adequate and certainly equivalent to the process for other transportation projects. While I appreciate the provision of the flow chart for non-motorized transportation projects, I was satisfied before this that I was able to find out what I needed to know about these proposals and able to voice my opinion when I felt that to be necessary. I do support the creation of a voluntary committee of people interested in and knowledgeable about non-motorized transportation to advise the county on these issues, and I would be willing to serve on that committee.

I also support the proposed language for policy 2B-1.3 that states Skagit County's intent to work with local partners (governments, organizations, residents and property owners) to identify and conserve important open space corridors. As a conservation biologist I know that unimpeded migration among a variety of habitats is necessary for the sustainability of many of the fish and wildlife populations that are among the environmental values we enjoy in Skagit County. Because land use planning and management is controlled by a number of different jurisdictions and owners with boundaries that mean nothing to wildlife, the jurisdictions and owners must cooperate in order to make sensible plans to protect that wildlife. Private organizations, such as the Skagit Land Trust, also can work most effectively if there is a coordinated plan for open space protection. Open space connections within and between urban growth areas also provide people with places to appreciate nature and enhances physical and mental health. For these reasons, I support the language on open space in the review draft.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the update to the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan. Staff, citizens, planning commissioners, and county commissioners have worked hard to get to this point, and I hope that the county commissioners will now adopt the 20-year list of non-motorized projects and the open space language in the 9 June review draft as part of the Comprehensive Plan update.

**From:** [Rodger Ricks](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 21, 2016 11:15:54 AM

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To Skagit County Commissioners,

My wife and I have entered in to a contract to purchase a waterfront parcel of land located on West Shore Road on Guemes Island, and my comments are focused on my perspective about the west side of Guemes Island only.

During the feasibility period of our purchase contract, I have learned much about how the land use code could change for this area as a result of efforts by the Guemes Island Planning Advisory Committee (“GIPAC”) seeking to impose new dimensional standards on residential properties. It is my understanding the GIPAC developed a Guemes Island Zoning Overlay associated with the Guemes Island Subarea plan, which zoning overlay has been vetted and negotiated by the Skagit County Planning commission for adoption into Skagit County’s 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update. As of this date, it is my understanding that this zoning overlay will impose new building restrictions among others which include:

- **14.16.360 Par. 7, subparagraph (a) (ii)** Setbacks for side yards must be at least 8 feet. The total of both side setbacks must be at least 30 feet, or 30% of the lot width at its widest point, whichever is less
- **14.16.360 Par. 7, subparagraph (b) (i)** Maximum Height for structures may not exceed 12 feet at the side setback. The actual structure height may increase by one foot for each foot inside the required side setback, up to a maximum actual structure height of 30 feet; It is understood that that the Planning Commission has recommended to the Board of County Commissioners that the height limit be measured from the Base Flood Elevation in recorded motion 5/31/16.

As one who wishes to become a Skagit County resident and build a home on Guemes Island, I find these building restrictions to be very troubling for the following reasons:

1. **Home design and home size is greatly restricted, which particularly affects small legal waterfront lots which are typically only 50’ to 100’ in width.** The proposed side setback restrictions would reduce the viewing window to the water for such homes, which when compared with a home of the same size, age and features, theoretically it would have a lesser value. The proposed building height restrictions essentially forces a property owner to slope his roof to the center beginning at the ceiling height of the first floor, ie. normal 1<sup>st</sup> floor and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor an A-Frame design or variation of a hip roof. This building height restriction will greatly reduce the amount of second floor space and eliminates designs with side roof gables. Further, such building height restrictions increases construction costs by forcing second story rooms

toward the center of the first floor away from load bearing exterior walls, and will undoubtedly stifle originality in design and make many new homes look very similar as they attempt to conform to such building envelope restrictions.

2. **Is there a valid reason for these restrictions to be imposed on the residential properties on the small waterfront lots?** GIPAC has cited reasons for seeking to impose development standards as “In order to protect the community character and to prevent further deterioration of shoreline wells and the depletion of the island’s sole-source aquifer, it is imperative to prevent out-of-scale buildings”. I don’t think anyone would object to the goal GIPAC states, but the interpretation of “out-of-scale buildings” seems to be the matter of opinion. It is a fact that many of the older waterfront properties have been redeveloped in recent years into larger homes than their former building footprint and envelope, but such redevelopment was driven by property owners whose scarce waterfront land became increasingly valuable and it made little sense to have land worth 5 to 6 times the value of the improvements. Such owners who redeveloped their properties generally sought to achieve the highest and best use of the property, which is “The reasonable, probable and legal use of vacant land or an improved property, which is physically possible, appropriately supported, financially feasible, and that results in the highest value”.

That said, I have looked at the west side of Guemes from a non-owner perspective, and consider “out-of-scale buildings” offensive, and I can say I think there are very few homes that meet that definition on the west side of Guemes Island. I would further suggest that the County’s current good zoning policies of 8’ side yard setback, the current 30’ height restrictions, the Shoreline setbacks, the road setbacks, along with occasional variances granted have been sufficient to prevent a property owner from building an “out-of-scale building”, or a McMansion.

3. **Is view preservation by non-waterfront property owners the motivation for this proposed restrictions?** It has been suggested that the motivation for building height and setbacks restriction were to ensure water views were maintained. It should be noted that there is no view blockage occurring on the west side of Guemes Island since all the homes in the West Beach area are sited on the west side of West Shore Road (water side), and that there are no homes permitted on the east side of said road. Further, all the homes in Indian Village have an uphill eastward sloping topography, that allows any residence to the east of the waterfront residences the ability to look over the waterfront residences rooftop.
4. **These building restrictions for all intents and purposes would be considered “downzoning”,** which is a zoning action by a jurisdiction that reduces the number of development rights (or development potential) on a parcel of property. By imposing new dimensional standards on residential

properties, development rights are clearly restricting. Uncompensated downzoning occurs when a property is downzoned and there is no monetary compensation provided relief to the property owner whose development rights were taken. In 2012, a citizen committee of Skagit County determined that it does not support uncompensated downzoning. Accordingly, if these building setback and height restrictions become part of the law, it could come with troublesome price tag .

5. **Have all the residents who own waterfront property on West Shore Road been properly served notice about these proposed regulations and had a voice in the process?** GIPAC has provided notice about their goals for zoning restrictions in the community newspaper and the online island news source, but have not notified the property owners directly. From evidence presented at a public hearing on 6/20/16, many of the residents on Guemes Island did not know, or did not understand the implications of the proposed building restrictions which I believe is a critical oversight on GIPAC's part. I would think that before a property owner has his property downzoned, wouldn't there be in place a process where the property owner receives certified mail, or a letter with his tax bill, inviting him/her to participate in the process and outcome regarding zoning changes affecting his/her property? It is my understanding that the voices of many of the approx. 75 waterfront lots located on the west shore of Guemes Island are not fully aware of these proposed building restrictions, and yet if this proposal becomes law, they will be adversely impacted by them. That is wrong.
6. **Building restrictions will diminish property values.** As property owners come to understand the restrictive nature of these proposed code changes affecting their building height and side yard setbacks, is it realistic that such property owner or potential buyer is required to go through an Administrative Variance process, and demonstrate "hardship" in order to develop their property to enjoy the same rights and privileges many of their neighboring properties enjoy? Such requirement for a variance to develop a parcel to be consistent with the newer waterfront homes built on the west side of the Island will undoubtedly: a) reduce demand for affected properties, b) diminish property values, and c) provide property owners a very valid argument for reduction in land assessed valuation and taxes. As many owners of affected property are senior citizens, is it fair for them to see these restrictions effectively "downzone" and devalue their property investment. I think not.

It is my conclusion that GIPAC accomplished many good things, and has the right intent to prevent "out-of-scale buildings", but unfortunately the execution (#5 above) and outcomes (#1, #4 & #6) suggest there is much more public process needed. Accordingly, it is my recommendation that provisions **14.16.360 Par. 7, subparagraph (a) (ii)** and **14.16.360 Par. 7, subparagraph (b) (i)** not be included in the Skagit County's 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update at this time, and a plan can be implement to properly notify all the affected property owners and invite them to attend a public forum where that can participate in the process of interpreting how to prevent "out-of-scale buildings"

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Rodger Ricks  
14114 180th Ave. N.E.  
Redmond, WA 98052  
425-445-1441

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**RODGER E. RICKS** | Principal | **Glacier Real Estate Finance**

2800 156<sup>th</sup> Ave. S.E., Suite 210 | Bellevue, WA 98007 | Direct Line: 425.274.0286

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**From:** [Mike and Marcia Rodgers](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** FW: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update - Guemes Island Building Restrictions  
**Date:** Monday, June 20, 2016 10:44:52 AM

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**From:** Mike Rodgers [mailto:mandmrogers@comcast.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 20, 2016 10:33 AM  
**To:** Home  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update – Guemes Island Building Restrictions

**From:** Mike Rodgers <[mandmrogers@comcast.net](mailto:mandmrogers@comcast.net)>  
**Date:** June 20, 2016 at 9:04:29 AM PDT  
**To:** [pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us)  
**Subject: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update – Guemes Island Building Restrictions**

Dear County Commissioners.

We are 16 year owners of Guemes Island waterfront property at 6224 W. Shore Road.

We strongly object to the proposed building restrictions proposed by GIPAC which are strangely supported by County staff who apparently believe that this small group speaks for the needs of Guemes Island property owners. Apparently GIPAC wants to preserve views for non-waterfront property owners on the north beach area of Guemes by proposing greater building setback and height regulations. These non-waterfront owners are attempting by regulation to create view easements for themselves.

Commissioners should be aware that the State of Washington law has never recognized a view easement. The assessed value of waterfront property far exceeds non-waterfront property values for for the very reason that access and views to the water are unobstructed.

Non-waterfront property owners did not pay for nor are they entitled to preservation of water views that they may have had because a small cabin previously occupied the waterfront. These types of "across the road" views were always going to disappear when good size homes were built on highly valued waterfront property.

Non-waterfront property owners have to date apparently lobbied County staff into a belief that GIPAC was speaking for the majority of property owners on Guemes Island which is not the case.

On the west side of the Island there are approximately 75 waterfront lots none of which have homesites behind them that could have views blocked. To my knowledge none of the owners on the west side of Guemes Island support these proposed restrictions. GIPAC has never informed any of us that they were proposing unneeded additional setback and height restrictions on waterfront

property.

Requiring an owner or potential buyer to go through an Administrative Variance process in order to seek relief from burdensome new setback and height restrictions would be expensive and time-consuming. Additionally it would put County staff in the position of judge and jury as to what can be built on our waterfront lots.

Waterfront property owners should not be put in a position of needing to demonstrate "hardship" as required by an Administrative Variance in order to develop their property. None of the newer waterfront homes built on the west side of the Island would have been permitted if they had been required to conform to the new setback and height restrictions.

Commissioners you need to recognize that the new restrictions on heights and setbacks are being urged by a few non-waterfront owners who are attempting to preserve water views that they neither paid for nor are recognized by Washington law. Requiring waterfront owners to go through an Administrative Variance process to develop the type of newer homes that currently exist is extremely burdensome, costly, time-consuming and should be recognized as unnecessary. Thank you for giving this matter further consideration.

Mike and Marcia Rodgers

**From:** [Mike Rodgers](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update – Guemes Island building restrictions  
**Date:** Monday, June 20, 2016 8:55:54 PM

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Dear County Commissioners.

We are Guemes Island waterfront property owners for the past 16 years at 6224 W. Shore Rd.

We listened to your entire public hearing this evening.

We heard GIPAC representatives state that the reason for modification of the building setback rules was to preserve water views.

There exist on the Island approximately 100 no-bank waterfront lots. Of these only about 15 on the North Beach have houses behind them that would have existing water views diminished by future development.

These few "across the road properties" have lobbied GIPAC for greater restrictions on setbacks for waterfront development in the hopes of preserving their water views.

Over half of the no-bank waterfront

lots are only 50 feet wide. Trying to conform to new setback regulations for future development on these narrower lots will be impossible.

Imposition of these greater setbacks will require that all of the waterfront owners and potential buyers will now have to go through an Administrative Variance process where they will have to demonstrate a "hardship" in order to overcome the new setback regulations.

Even when they are able to demonstrate a "hardship" these property owners will not be able to build to the same scale as their neighbors houses built in the past 20 years.

No one has argued that any of the houses built on these lots in the past 20 years are out of scale and thus there is no need for new restrictive setback regulations.

The County Staff in the Administrative Variance process will be put in a position of arbitor as to what is acceptable and what is not. This kind of design review creates tremendous uncertainty and subjectivity. Owners and buyers will not be able to build their desired homes because the setback regulations will mandate smaller second floors and eliminate certain design features such as gables.

All these new setback regulations for what? So that a handful of backland property owners can have water views preserved. Waterfront property owners have paid dearly for the property right to have unobstructed water access and views. Backland owners have not.

It appears to us that this is one of those situations where if you want something i.e. water views, even if you have no property right entitling you to such views, whine enough and maybe somebody (like GIPAC) will take up your cause.

We don't know any of the 100 no-bank waterfront property owners of who are in favor of the new setback regulations. These prime waterfront lots are a significant component of the Island's Assessed Value.

These new setback regulations are damaging to property values and to the owners who hope to develop houses in the future similar to their neighbors.

Why set up an entirely new process (Administrative Variance) when there is no demonstrated need and no public benefit other than attempting to preserve a water view right that does not exist in Washington common law for a few backland property owners.

Please eliminate the proposed restrictive building setback standards for Guemes Island when you adopt the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update.

Thank you.

Mike and Marcia Rodgers

**From:** [Hal Rooks](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 9:26:23 AM

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June  
22, 2016

My name is Hal Rooks and I am a member of the Guemes Island Planning Advisory Committee (GIPAC). My house on Guemes is at 5971 Upper Hollow Rd and was built by my parents 55 years ago.

I am writing to address a number of assertions made by opponents of the building envelop parameters that GIPAC has asked to be included in the County's 2016 Comp Plan.

Assertion: GIPAC isn't elected and doesn't represent the island.

In fact, GIPAC holds elections, open to the public, every year for its members. The election is advertised in the community newspaper, the island website (LineTime) and by notice on a board by the ferry dock. The County Board of Commissioners has recognized GIPAC as the community-based representative of the island in numerous resolutions over the years.

Assertion: GIPAC has "hidden" its proposals from island property owners.

In fact, GIPAC welcomes the public at its meetings and gives notice about them in all island media. GIPAC has posted issue papers and updates regrading public process on the home page of LineTime. The island newspaper, Guemes Tide, has provided extensive coverage of the Plan and GIPAC's work.

The building envelop parameters discussed this evening are found in Policy Recommendation 2.11, under Land Use in the Subarea Plan, which is a public document adopted by the County Commissioners in early 2011. Years of public process with hundreds of island participants went into development of the Plan. There is nothing "hidden" about the Plan or its proposals.

Assertion: GIPAC is a small group of self-interested property owners coming up with overly restrictive regulations to stop reasonable development.

In fact, GIPAC is not coming up with proposals to reflect any individual's self-interest. GIPAC is working to carry out its mission as stated in the adopted Guemes Island Subarea Plan: to work with the County on implementation of the Plan. GIPAC has not dreamed up any of these proposals – all are from the adopted Plan. None of this is new – the Plan was widely vetted in the community in the process of development and widely supported by the community.

Assertion: GIPAC wants the building envelop restrictions because several GIPAC members own property on North Beach across the road (landward) from waterfront lots and want to preserve their water views. GIPAC members have a conflict-of-interest in promoting the building envelop restrictions.

In fact, this is an absurd accusation on numerous levels and there is not an iota of truth to it.

- First, the building restrictions have existed, unchanged, in the Subarea Plan for at least six years. Only one member of today's GIPAC was a member when these building envelope restrictions were agreed upon in 2010, and that person lives well inland from the shore on a cattle ranch that has been in the family for three generations.

- Second, only two members of GIPAC live in the North Beach area of the island. Both have their houses in shoreline parcels. One has no other property, and therefore would not benefit from the restrictions. The second GIPAC member owns a parcel across the road and behind his house that has an industrial-style storage building on it, and therefore would not benefit from building restrictions on his own house. Further, this GIPAC member joined GIPAC less than a year ago – in November 2015 – far too late to have had any say in developing the proposed building parameters.

Assertion: The Guemes Overlay would prevent reasonable development on small beach lots.

In fact, GIPAC worked with County staff to come up with some modifications to the proposal to address these concerns – measuring building height from flood elevation, not grade, and allowing administrative variances where site conditions warrant flexibility from the Guemes zoning standards. We support those changes and so did the Planning Commission.

A closing comment: it appears that a number of the people stating that they didn't know about GIPAC or the Subarea Plan primarily reside off-island, in the Seattle area. GIPAC makes a real effort to publicize its meetings and work through all available island media. In fact, many subscribers to the Guemes Tide do have their newspaper delivered to Seattle or other off-island addresses where they have their primary residences.

Thank you for your consideration.

Hal Rooks  
1219 10<sup>th</sup> St.  
Anacortes, WA. 98221



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**From:** [Valerie Rose](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Sunday, June 19, 2016 11:15:21 PM

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June 19, 2016

To the Board of County Commissioners:

My name is Valerie Rose, my address is 1434 S. 12th St., Mt. Vernon, WA 98274.

When my grandparents moved to Mt. Vernon in 1930, there was lots of places for their kids to ride bikes, fish, hike and play outside. Increased population and development has greatly reduced the open space and outdoor recreational opportunities available. I urge the County to continue cooperating with local partners to identify and protect greenbelts: ag lands, wildlife habitat, trails, parks, etc. Well-planned combinations of public and private properties benefit everybody. Where appropriate, public access will allow families to enjoy healthy exercise.

Physical activity is essential for my health, and an important part of treating my diabetes. I regularly walk and bicycle around Skagit County, and look forward to more opportunities for healthy recreation. Regular exercise is well-known to help prevent the development of diabetes and other widespread chronic health problems. For the benefit of all Skagit County residents, it is important to include a variety of opportunities for exercise, especially the list of 20 year non-motorized projects. Skagit County residents will benefit from the envisioned pathways and trails, safe bicycle and pedestrian routes. Improvements to county roadways, such as usable shoulders, will increase safety for children and adults alike.

I urge the Board of County Commissioners to include the list of non-motorized of non-motorized projects in the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan, 2016 Update.

Sincerely Yours, Valerie Rose

**From:** [Belinda Rotton](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 7:01:15 AM

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To the Skagit County Board of Commissioners and the Skagit County Planning Board:

Name: Belinda Rotton

Address: 7950 Farm to Market Road, Bow, WA 98232

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the inclusion of the 20 year non-motorized transportation list and open space in the Comprehensive Plan update. I am a fortunate resident of Skagit County for 11 years and I enjoy and appreciate the beauty of the outdoors. I spend much of my time as possible enjoying the natural beauty of Skagit County by a number of non-motorized conveyances such as a mountain bike, road bike, kayak and on foot. Each method of transportation allows me to see and appreciate these places in very different ways. I think it is important to consider transportation improvements that increase safety, allow for the projected increase in traffic but also protect or increase opportunities non-motorized transportation. Places to safely walk and ride are vital for long term public health, safety and connection to the community. Having been a volunteer for the Mount Vernon Trail Builders, I have seen first hand the increased use of Little Mountain Park with the development of additional trails.

I am also worker in the field of natural resource management. On a daily basis, I am reminded by the people that I work with and for how much they value open space for wildlife and wildlife related recreation. As you well know Skagit County has tremendous natural resources at it finger tips for the public to appreciate and a large number of people do come each year to this area to enjoy the pastoral beauty of the open space areas and to observe the wildlife, bike and hike. With the inclusion of the 20 year non-motorized transportation list and the agreement to continue to work with partners to protect open space, I believe that Skagit County has an opportunity to protect many of the aspects that make this County a wonderful place to live but also to support the projected population growth.

I support the inclusion of the 20 year non-motorized list and the agreement to continue to work with partners to identify and protect open space.

Sincerely,

Belinda Rotton

**From:** [Wendy and David](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Skagit County Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 1:34:20 PM

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I am writing you today in regards to the 2016 Skagit County comprehensive plan which includes property use and building codes on Guemes Island. I recently bought a house at 5235 South Shore Drive on Guemes. I had no idea about any of these issues that are being discussed about the proposed changes on Guemes Island. Bits and pieces of information were just recently put out there in the social media but other islanders. Is there a way that we can have a little more time before decisions are made. As a new homeowner, I am surprised that I have not received anything official about these discussions.

I truly hope that you will consider giving this a little more time and thought before any decisions are to be made.

Thank you for your time.  
Wendy Saver

**From:** [Tonia Schmokel](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** overlay as proposed (2016 Comprehensive Plan Update)  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 2:11:44 PM

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Tonia R Schmokel  
5683 Section Ave  
Anacortes, WA 98221

360-982-8496

To the Board of Commissioners,

As a landowner for more than 20 years, I fully support GIPAC in their efforts to implement the adoptive Guemes Island Subarea Plan (SAP). I urge you (BoC) to enact the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay as proposed.

My family began to vacation on Guemes in the early 60's; eventually purchasing a small house on Millett Rd (presently Tidewater Rd) in 1965. I well remember no roads to the Hideaway area and only cottages along the shore with a few places to purchase staples and gas. Having fond memories of my childhood here on the island; my husband (now deceased) and I built on Section Ave. I love the rural lifestyle, tranquility and my neighbors' concern for the environment.

2. The focus of the SAP is to protect the rural character of the island, just as a major goal of the County's Comprehensive Plan is to protect the rural character of Skagit County. Most houses on the island are one and a half stories high. In developing SAP, it became clear most islanders wish to keep the modest scale of development.
3. Our sole aquifer is a critical aspect addressed in the SAP. In places where it has been necessary to install Desalination equipment, the cost could be overwhelming for many residents. With our aquifer in mind, we need to support efforts to build accordingly.
4. Many beach lots were platted for vacation camp sites or small fishing cottages which are considerably smaller than the 2.5 acre minimum required under current zoning. GIPAC recognizes this and has worked with the county to allow flexibility for homeowners wanting to build on those sites.
5. Guemes Island Subarea Plan is the result of a 20 year planning process that involves hundreds of island residents and property owners. It was adopted 5 years ago by the BoC after an extensive public process. It is long overdo for the county to move forward and adopt the code that implements the plan.

Respectfully,

Tonia R. Schmokel

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

**From:** [Mark Simons](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Monday, June 20, 2016 8:35:18 AM

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Mark Simons  
6028 W Shore Rd  
GUEMES Island  
Anacortes, WA. 98221  
Msimons7575@gmail.com  
Cell: 206-498-0945

Re: 2016 Comprehensive Update and GIPAC proposed building restrictions for GUEMES Subarea

To: Skagit County Board of Commissioners

Dear Commissioners

I live on West Beach (since 1986) and I just found out about this meeting. These changes are NOT appropriate for the homes along this beach since there are no houses behind us that would be affected. These proposed changes seem self serving to the GIPAC members who live "across the street" on North Beach.

This whole plan should be delayed since some significant changes are in order. Please contact me directly if you have any questions.

Sincerely

Mark Simons

**From:** [Matt Simons](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Cc:** [Matt Simons](#)  
**Subject:** Matt and Kara Simons, 7760 West Shore Drive, Guemes Island, 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update, Comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 21, 2016 8:24:25 PM

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From: Matt and Kara Simons, 7760 West Shore Drive, Guemes Island (360) 770-2377

Re: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update

Dear County Commissioners,

I am writing to express my concern and disapproval of the Guemes Island Overlay plan as layed out in the Sub Area Plan. As a long term resident, builder, and former GIPAC member I have seen Guemes change over the years. This is to be expected and is part of living anywhere where people want to reside.

As a builder, who works solely on Guemes, I work with the Planning and Development office on a regular basis. I'm also very aware of the building codes, restrictions, and the process of obtaining a Building Permit. Over the years it has become increasingly difficult to obtain a building permit for various reasons. I deal with frustrations from homeowners, architects, and Planning and Development employees themselves as one navigates the waters of obtaining a Building Permit. The new restrictions proposed by GIPAC in the Overlay Plan are completely unjustified and overly restrictive. I have built over a dozen homes around the Island. Several of them on lots that would be extremely difficult, at best, to design and build an attractive, livable, home, should these new restrictions be adopted. There is already a long list of restrictions placed upon a land/homeowner looking to build or remodel. Adding more restrictions based on the "ideas" of a round table that is not schooled or trained in planning and development is a recipe for more red bureaucratic tape. Though GIPAC has made a number of good recommendations, they have missed the mark on this one. Please consider not adopting the Overlay Plan as currently detailed. It will not achieve its desired affect and will end up costing many people, county included, substantial money.

Thank you for your consideration,

Matt and Kara Simons

Apex Construction Management, Inc.  
7760 West Shore Drive  
Guemes Island, Wa 98221  
(360) 770-2377



**From:** [Mike Simons](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Comprehensive Plan 2016 Update  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 8:38:40 AM

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Dear Skagit County Board of Commissioners -

I have just recently been made aware that permanent and substantial decisions are being considered by others which could significantly and negatively affect me and my family for years and possibly generations to come. I also understand that there was a hearing on this issue last evening which I was not able to attend due to the short notice. I am writing, of course, about the GIPAC (Guemes Island Planning Advisory Committee) proposal to put ridiculous building restrictions from some Guemes Island Subarea Plan into the Skagit County building codes.

This "GIPAC" proposal (New Section 14.16.360) should be removed from the Subarea Plan in its entirety or, **at an absolute minimum, item #7 (Dimensional Standards) of New Section 14.16.360 (Guemes Island) needs to be removed from the Proposed Development Regulation Amendments.** To me, the thought that this proposal is even being considered is mind boggling. Property rights of hundreds of owners all across the island should not be in the hands of a few landowners above North Beach or a handful of residents who believe they decide what is best for all Guemes Island, such as forcing these building restrictions on their neighbors in order to impose view easements and increase the values and marketability of their specific properties.

As a second generation Guemes Island homeowner (various family members have lived and owned properties on the island for several decades), I have already planned to pass along our home to our teenage daughters in the future and look forward to seeing them with families of their own someday, enjoying the home and property in the decades to come. In the meantime, unfortunately, I need to raise our home by approximately 36 inches due to current periodic flooding and increasing sea levels. Even with an adjustment in the proposed language from "base level" to "flood level", I would not be able to raise the house under the proposed code change – even though I could do so under the already restrictive process, zoning, and building codes. Furthermore, no property owner should be restricted from either protecting their homes or be restricted by others from home improvements under these current – and already significantly restrictive – zoning and building code restrictions. I should also note that we are just one of many (hundreds?) of homes where increasing or decreasing house size or height would have zero effect on other property owners as our lot continues across the road behind us and there is no way we could ever build a structure that could even be seen by any property owners behind us anywhere on the island.

Consideration of this absurd proposal, let alone possible approval of this proposal, is a significant waste of Skagit County taxpayer dollars on several levels, from time and money lost for hundreds of Skagit County landowners and time wasted by public employees and elected officials, to potential loss of tax revenues from lower real estate valuations and tax appeals and litigation costs for all parties should such a proposal actually be approved. As such, this "GIPAC" proposal 14.16.360 – or at least removal of Section 7 of this portion – should be removed from the Proposed Development Regulation Amendments.

I thank you in advance for your serious consideration and common sense removal of this special-interest proposal portion from the plan. Please feel free to contact me at any time with any questions, suggestions, or if I can help to provide any additional information or input from others on Guemes Island.

Sincerely,

- Mike

Mike Simons  
6048 West Shore Road  
Guemes Island

Email: [msimons@outlook.com](mailto:msimons@outlook.com)  
Phone: (206) 650-0600  
Mailing:  
12001 SE 73rd Pl  
Newcastle, WA 98056

**From:** [Connie Snell](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** CONSTANCE SNELL, 5889 S SHORE RD, ANACORTES WA 98221-" 2016 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE"  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 12:14:23 PM

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These comments are submitted on behalf of the Guemes Island Environmental Trust Board:

We strongly urge you to adopt the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay as presented. The Guemes Environmental Trust views this adoption as protection for the majority of Guemes Island residents. The Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee (GIPAC) has represented Guemes for 20 years with transparency, skill, and knowledge. Several of the Environmental Trust Board's members have served on GIPAC over time. Therefore, we understand that GIPAC operates openly by gathering the best possible information from the most trusted sources, analyzing the data, and formulating recommendations. GIPAC has always represented the interests of what constitutes sound policy for the health of the commons, particularly, in regard to the land and water which we all share. Countless hours of diligent study, discussion, and always open public meetings have resulted in an intelligent, common sense zoning overlay that will help to protect our Island's ecological balance for generations to come.

Board Members: Gary Curtis, Juby Fouts, Marianne Kooiman, Carol Pellett, Howard Pellett, Constance Snell ( All Guemes Residents )

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Jim Souders](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Monday, June 20, 2016 11:52:11 AM

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Our names are James and Alice Souders and we own a home at 6398 Westshore Rd. on Guemes Island. This e-mail is to provide comments regarding the proposed Comprehensive Plan Update as they pertain to our property on Guemes Island.

It has been brought to our attention that the group Guemes Island Planning Advisory Committee (GIPAC) has put forth a building restriction proposal to the county that would restrict the height of sidewalls for any new construction on Guemes Island. Homeowners on the West side of Guemes Island have not been notified of these proposed GIPAC restrictions that impact them the most. They have had no input to the GIPAC restrictions

We take issue with the proposal for two important and distinct reasons .

The first is the implication that this committee represents and speaks on behalf of all of or the majority of the island homeowners. They have not solicited input or provided satisfactory notice to many of the other homeowners on the island. In fact of all the homeowners I spoke with about this, the only ones that were aware that this proposal had been made and was being considered were those that were made aware by other concerned homeowners who were originally unaware and once advised of it opposed to the plan. None of them had spoken with or been apprised formally or informally by GIPAC of the proposal.

The other reason is several aspects of the proposal itself, which among other things includes 12' sidewall height restriction, There is no unbiased basis for the recommendation for an island wide height restriction whatsoever. It is not driven by safety justification, ecological merit or in most cases homeowners best interest. In fact in areas such where our home is on West Beach this would result in significant imposition, degrading of the neighborhood and unquestionable financial harm due to the certain reduced property values without any justification

GIPAC claims the restrictions are necessary to preserve views and prevent scale differential. This is rarely true. None of the 53 building lots in the West Beach Community where our home is have homes behind them. About two thirds of homes in the beach community are large homes and over 80% of the existing homes exceed the proposed limitations. The proposed limitations will increase scale differential.

While Administrative Variances might allow the construction of a normal sized building if approved, property values will undoubtedly be reduced with the proposed restrictions because potential buyers cannot rely on the approval of variances to build a normal sized home. Because of the uncertainty they will shop elsewhere.

We also find it disingenuous at best and suspicious that several of the GIPAC members have property on North Beach where large beach homes could block views from homes on the non beach side of Guemes Island Road. Otherwise, any benefits of the proposed building restrictions are difficult to find. In this case a height restriction or protection of exiting views may warrant discussion and possibly code restrictions for certain areas, but should not apply island wide.

I hope you will take into account the potential harm this restriction would cause homeowners as well as the improper way in which it was put forth to the county.

Regards,

Jim and Alice Souders  
6398 Westshore Rd  
Guemes Island Wa

Jim K.R. Souders  
JKRS1234@AOL.com  
916 214 6260 (cell)

**From:** [Alger Watershed](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Ed Stauffer, Box 114 Bow, Wa 98232, 2016 Comprehensive Plan update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 2:37:23 PM

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Skagit County Board of County Commissioners

Dear Commissioners:

Once again we engage in the professional staff "tweaking" of our GMA compliant Comprehensive Plan and its underlying Countywide Planning Policies. No attempt has been made to hide the fact that the proposal content is inspired by sustainability and smartgrowth political and philosophical agendas and grants. Regardless, you are constrained as elected officials to ultimately regard such proposals for change first on their value and feasibility for **your** constituents. Your official Resolution authorizing and defining the project for staff was brief, to the point, succinct. The product before you explodes your instructions to the level of chaos. The result is unintelligible, mostly useless, and abusive of the statutory rights of your rural constituents.

Then Speaker of the House Joe King, in the interview I cited in my oral testimony, provides a context for understanding the inclusion of the Rural Element in the GMA legislation. The rural population IS a recognized and vital component of our County Plan. Implementation details are summarized by Dept Of Commerce long-time employee Heather Ballash in a text prepared by her in 1999 titled: [Keeping the Rural Vision, Protecting Rural Character and Planning for Rural Development](#), available on the Commerce website, as is the guideline document [Defining Rural Character and Planning for Rural Lands: A Rural Element Guide](#).

My point, the residents of rural Skagit County are, today, and since 1966, where they are and doing what they are doing because of what we, together, planned for the future. The mandate of GMA, inures to our hired help, elected officials, and citizens to support and enhance our commitment to values, rights, and goals expressed in our PRESENT comprehensive plan. I see this tenet reflected in your Resolution, not so much in professional staff effort on this "update".

I suggest that public awareness of the content of this proposal is virtually nil, a resounding failure to engage and inform. This failure is transparent in the history of this project and should be used as an experience where, knowing that we could not do much worse, we might seek better outcomes in the future.

Your Rural Community is fine. We want a robust economy and good jobs and relief from the drag of over-regulation. Accomplish this with a red pencil which I volunteer to donate. Problems solved for free. Thank You, Ed Stauffer

RECEIVED

JUN 22 2016

SKAGIT COUNTY  
PDS

Skagit County Planning & Development Services

1800 Continental Place

Mt. Vernon, WA 98273

To Whom It May Concern:

*Comments on 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update*

We are writing in reference to two items under discussion. First, the UGA Open Space Concept Plan, regarding promoting trails on farmers buffers along all creeks. We totally oppose this plan. Farmers were required to plant buffers along creeks on their property. This should by no means open it up to being public property where anyone can walk or bicycle on someone's private property. This is a total infringement on the rights of property owners. Most property owners do not want someone just being able to come onto their property whenever they want. Seems there are plenty of county trails that are open for public access. We hope that the county commissioners would not allow these trails on private property.

Secondly, on Section 14.15.945 Development Regulations-page 67 on the limitations of square footage for junk and also prohibits living in a recreational vehicle on any land for more than 180 days be deleted by the county commissioners. We believe this is an infringement on the rights of property owners and farmers in our rural areas. We know there are some people who need to live in a RV on a family member's property. Perhaps, it is an elderly parent, who can't afford other housing, or needs looked after by their adult children. What right does the County have to say a parent can't house an adult child on their property? A rural environment is not like living in a housing addition or living under an HMO, which you are well aware of when you buy into one. That is one of the reasons citizens choose to live in the rural areas of our county. Farmers, with their equipment, many use tires to cover their silage stacks, and all the things needed to run a farm operation, it seems ridiculous for

some bureaucrat to think they know how much space each farmer can use for his own farming needs. Another total infringement on someone's rights.

Sincerely,

*Margaret Stewart*

*Joe Stewart*

Joe & Margaret Stewart

14755 Baker Heights Rd

Mt. Vernon, WA 98273

(360) 424-7886

**From:** [Becky Stinson](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 2:39:18 PM

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Hello my County Commissioners~

Please, we respectfully implore you, to **adopt the special Guemes Island Zoning Overlay and the Seawater Intrusion Policy into the Skagit County's 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update.**

I totally support GIPAC and all the work they have done to create and implement the 2 issues above.

You will be voting on the final draft on June 30.

Long term residents of Guemes Island have put in 1000's of unpaid hours working on our SubArea plan.

Dozens of volunteers, who really care about the future of our relatively fragile (environmentally) island

here in North Puget Sound have literally worked on this for over 20 years!

When I first moved to Guemes, 14 years ago, I was caught up myself in the work towards our SubArea Plan.

Guemes Island, heck, Skagit County, are wonderful, beautiful, special places where we have all chosen to live.

We need to preserve the rural character of our area, not further develop it in ways that are not sustainable for the island itself.

GIPAC and other volunteer residents did their homework.

They created documents that will aid in the, hopefully, sustainable future of Guemes.

We care about the natural environment. We care about our friends and neighbors on Guemes Island.

Our beaches are fragile and naturally ever changing. We need to work with the natural processes, not fight against them.

I am trusting you will do the right thing.

Thank you for all you do for the future of Skagit County.

Rebecca (Becky) Sue Stinson  
7003 Guemes Island Road  
Guemes Island  
Anacortes, 98221

**From:** [Barb Trask](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** comment on Comp Plan Update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 2:16:15 PM

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Dear Skagit County Commissioners,

We wish to express our strong support for two aspects of Skagit County's 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update that will have a positive, long-lasting impact on the county's open space and benefit people and wildlife.

We strongly support Skagit County's intent to continue cooperating with local partners to **identify and protect open space corridors**. This effort will preserve the splendor of the valley and the rural quality of life, keeping it a special place that attracts, residents, businesses and tourists. We consider ourselves one of your partners in this effort. We own land in the Birdsvew area that we acquired with an eye toward preserving large farms and protecting wildlife habitat. One of our goals is to help establish connectivity between open-space areas. We are pleased that the comprehensive plan update emphasizes the protection of open-space corridors. By fulfilling this vision, you help preserve the landscapes that make Skagit Valley attractive to people and wildlife. That effort will in turn enhance the economic development of our communities.

We also strongly support the recommended **inclusion of a 20-year list of non-motorized projects**. It is very important to us that Skagit County's long-range vision and plans include improvements and extensions to the system of walking and biking trails in Skagit County. We are glad to see that the list includes new trails and routes, as well as improvements to county roadways to make shoulders safe for bicyclists and pedestrians. These projects improve the health of citizens by promoting physical activity in natural settings. These projects also enhance the county's image as a recreational destination. By providing bicyclists and pedestrians safe routes through the county from the coast to the Cascades, you give more people an opportunity to enjoy and appreciate the wonderful blend of farms, forests, and natural areas that make Skagit County such a special place. Access opens people's eyes to the beauty of Skagit Valley and will ultimately stimulate local economies and help safeguard working farms, forests, and wildlife habitat from development.

We applaud these sound and visionary aspects of the Comprehensive Plan Update and encourage the Board of Commissioners to approve adoption of the Update.

Sincerely,

Barbara Trask & Ger van den Engh  
41219 Elysian Lane  
Concrete WA 98237

**From:** [Bud Ullman](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 10:27:26 AM

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I fully support the Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee's request for implementation of the Guemes Island Subarea Plan. The Overlay should be enacted as proposed. The intent to preserve the rural character of the island parallels that of the Comprehensive Plan to protect the rural character of the County. Accommodation for development of small beachfront lots has been included in the overlay. This should be an area of modest development, not bigger and bigger structures.

Thanks very much for your time and consideration.

Bud Ullman

5162 West Shore Road, Guemes Island

**From:** [VanValkenburg, John \(NSSEA\)](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Cc:** [Kristen Hinton](#)  
**Subject:** Comprehensive Plan 2016 Update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 1:56:33 PM

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Please see our comments in the attached document.

thanks

John & Kristen VanValkenburg

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John & Kristen VanValkenburg

23579 Gunderson Rd

Mt Vernon, WA 98273

I would like to voice my concerns and comment on the proposed "Comprehensive Plan 2016 Update". I sat and listened to testimony Monday 6/20/16 During the commissioners meeting from many different parties.

I encourage/recommend that the Commissioners to adopt and support the Planning Commissions recorded motion to use the UGA Open Space Concept Plan as mapping and identification tool for open space. While I see the need to places for people to get out and enjoy our beautiful county and it's natural resources we should not infringe upon the rights of the land owners adjacent to these open space corridors and those of us who take care of the open spaces as part of our agricultural operations. We already have many areas and trails already in place that people can use. I highly doubt that by spending millions of dollars per mile the county and its taxpayers will reap great gains by the increased income from tourism as proposed by some. When I do get the chance to get out and enjoy the great outdoors the last thing I want to see is a developed path carved out of the landscape.

The other concern I have is Section 14.15.945 Development Regulations (pg 67) which limits the storage of "junk" to 500sqft. The majority of us that engage in agricultural and manufacturing operations rely on the ability to keep spare parts, machinery, and extra vehicles on hand to keep our operations running smoothly. Not everyone can afford to buy new equipment and take things back to the dealers for support. I rely very heavily on our spare parts machine and recycled material to keep our farming and ranching operation going. This proposed regulation would mean that all of the farms and business that have currently store this "junk" outside would have to build large warehouses to store them in? Who can afford to do this? What about the impervious surface and water runoff control?

**From:** [Edith Walden](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 10:17:53 PM  
**Attachments:** [home1](#)

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Edith Walden  
6203 S Shore Rd  
Anacortes, WA 98221  
June 22, 2016

To: Skagit County Board of Commissioners

I have lived on Guemes Island for 21 years. I have served on the Guemes Island South Shore Road Advisory Committee and the Guemes Island Internet/TV Advisory Committee and I am currently the Editor-in-Chief of the *Guemes Tide*, the island's monthly newspaper. I operate a commercial organic orchard on 25 acres of land that connects to the valley. I urge you to accept the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay and the Seawater Intrusion Policy in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update.

I was a close friend of the late Roz Glasser, a former vice-chair of the Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee (GIPAC). Roz was extremely instrumental in Guemes Island being awarded one of three national grants from the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 2006. The AIA sent a Sustainable Design Assessment Team multiple times to Guemes and then conducted a three-day workshop attended by approximately 200 islanders to plan, with professional help, future designs for sustainable growth and the preservation of the rural character and natural resources on Guemes Island. I attended that workshop. It was a pivotal moment in the history of Guemes and it provided momentum to finish the work of the Guemes Island Subarea Plan that was adopted by the Board of Commissioners in January 2011.

Roz—who had been a professional planner for King County—and many others, worked tirelessly for years to pull the Subarea Plan together—a difficult feat that involved hundreds of islanders in scores of public meetings, public surveys, and public committees. The *Evening Star*, the monthly newspaper that published from 1996 to 2009 covered every step of progress along the way to its 600+ subscribing households.

As people discover the beauty of our small rural island, they are attracted to live here on lots that were platted long before the Growth Management Act and the establishment of rural zoning—lots that were never planned for permanent residences. Though the Rural Intermediate Zone limits lot size to 2.5 acres (the smallest allowable lot size with current zoning), 344 of the 352 shoreline lots in the Rural Intermediate Zone on the island are substandard-sized lots. Many of them are only 50 feet wide.

The AIA determined that in 2006, 70 percent of shoreline property on Guemes was owned by citizens 65 and older. This means that in the next 25 years, there will be a huge transfer of property, with resulting pressure to remodel and rebuild—especially in a rural area that is so close and accessible to the urban growth areas of Anacortes and greater Seattle. In addition, under current zoning regulations, about 830 new homes could be built on island vacant lots.

For the past five years, GIPAC has worked arduously to negotiate with the county to finally *implement* portions of the Subarea Plan so that it has meaning and can be enforced. Unfortunately, some of the recent opposition from property owners on West Beach has resulted because *after* the Subarea Plan was adopted, a neighbor was allowed to build an out-of-scale home that violates the Subarea Plan's proposed building envelope. As could be expected, other neighbors now want to have homes the same size.

Over and over throughout the long process of developing the Subarea Plan, islanders expressed their preference for preserving the visual rural character of the island and the rural sense of community that comes with it, along with a preference for open spaces, wildlife habitat, and the preservation of shorelines and natural resources. They prefer

smaller roads, single-family houses set back from public streets, small-scale commercial land uses, scenic open spaces, and farmland with traditional structures.

In order to protect the community's character and to prevent further deterioration of existing shoreline wells and the depletion of the island's sole-source aquifer, it is imperative to prevent out-of-scale building, which is why the Guemes Zoning Overlay is being proposed and is supported by so much of the Guemes community.

In the past several days, there have been comments on two community Facebook pages suggesting that members of GIPAC, who have been working on the Guemes Island Subarea Plan for 25 years, are "not elected or appointed via a publicized electoral process" and claiming that GIPAC is working in secret and does not represent the broader community. Further slanderous claims have been made that GIPAC members are a small group that exists solely to protect their views from their inland property on North Beach. (The only two members of GIPAC who own North Beach property live on waterfront lots.)

I would like to remind you of the facts. A year after the Growth Management Act was established in Washington, the first GIPAC members were elected at a public meeting in 1991 to begin planning for subarea guidelines. Skagit County did not have a Comprehensive Plan ready. In 2002, a new GIPAC was elected at a public meeting to draft a Subarea Plan, which was adopted in 2011. The adopted plan specifically designates GIPAC to represent the island.

The draft of the Subarea Plan and the final adopted version were published on LineTime—the island's website, where each island organization has a web page and announce its meetings and publishes its minutes. The final version is still readily available there. The *Guemes Tide*, which distributes monthly to about 600 households (about half of them with off-island addresses of part-time property owners), ran a six-part series in 2011 through 2012 that thoroughly described and summarized all of the Subarea Plan recommendations.

GIPAC members are elected each year by the public, and GIPAC serves in accordance with RCW 36.70.060.070, which governs the actions of planning advisory committees. All GIPAC meetings are open to the public and are advertised monthly on LineTime and in the *Guemes Tide*. The minutes of every GIPAC meeting are posted on LineTime. In a show of community support, GIPAC was just named Citizen of the Year by the Guemes Island Property Owners Association.

The *Tide* regularly publishes articles about GIPAC meetings, discussions, and actions. This year the *Tide* ran a two-page story in March about the upcoming reviews of the Shoreline Master Program and the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update and a front-page story titled "Last Chance for Comments" in April. All GIPAC meetings are announced in our "Calendar." LineTime posted numerous releases about GIPAC and the upcoming comment periods for the SMP and the Comprehensive Plan, including a letter in opposition to the Guemes Zoning Overlay.

One would have to be very new to the island or extremely disconnected to the community to not know about the Guemes Island Subarea Plan, GIPAC's role in the community, and the widespread community support of regulations that preserve the rural character of the island and protect the island's limited water resources.

While it is understandable that owners of very small (50 feet wide) substandard lots in a rural area that now has a minimum lot size of 2.5 acres, might be disappointed to discover that out-of-scale homes are not in keeping with island standards, the protection of the island's rural nature is a widely shared goal. A moderately sized, well-designed two-story house is completely possible within the proposed building envelope of the Guemes Zoning Overlay.

In fact, GIPAC has been flexible in response to those who live in flood plains and is in favor of measuring the height envelope at flood-plain level rather than grade.

Community values that compromise individual property rights will always be contentious. That is why governments have Comprehensive Plans—to control growth within community-set standards. Huge homes on small lots not only defy the rural nature of a community but they also create out-of-scale demands for limited resources, such as potable water from a sole-source aquifer, where shoreline wells are already failing.

The Guemes Island Subarea Plan has been crafted with years and years of research, statistics, science, engineering, professional advice and planning, and public participation. Please adopt the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update that will allow our community to set development standards that are favored by the majority.

Respectfully,

Edith Walden

7/2006

## Guemes Island Reaches Far for AIA Sustainable Design

by Marj Charlier, freelancer writer, and Ann Livingston, Esq., Director, Center for Communities by Design



Guemes Island in far northwestern Washington State is the kind of place where people stop in the roadway to chat with a neighbor from the other side of the island they haven't seen for a week or so. Locals call it "parking in the roadway," and it's symptomatic of a rural area where time can stand still long enough for people to catch up on some gossip and where folks don't need to use turn signals because everyone already knows where they're going. But small doesn't ensure accord, and even small changes can be traumatic. "We have a lot of conflict here," says Al Bush, one of the handful of farmers on the eight-square-mile island.

Current trends indicate that conditions are likely to get worse.

- With about 70 percent of its shoreline properties in the hands of people 65 and older, and with second-home and retiree demand from the Seattle metro area moving its way, the island faces tremendous change and more conflict.
- Its freshwater aquifer has already started to show its limits with saltwater intrusion at the north end of the island.
- Islanders and the county are in dispute over increasing hours on the island's ferry, its only access to the mainland.
- Residents are shocked and worried at the \$7.5 million price tag on a new home for sale on the beach. "We're going to get priced off the island," an islander moaned in public recently, to nods of agreement from fellow residents.

### Involving the community

Leaders in the community of 800 fulltime residents wanted to get a handle on these changes and start planning a less contentious and uncertain future. But, as their Skagit County began work on a comprehensive land-use plan, Guemes Island and its concerns weren't high on the priority list. The island would have to wait some time for assistance with its sub-area plan, the leaders were told.

"We weren't really surprised at that," said Joost Businger, chair of the Guemes Island Planning Advisory Committee (GIPAC). "We just said, 'Well, we'll do the work ourselves.'"

### reference

Tell a Friend >

Tell the Editor >

To read the daily updates that were posted during the Guemes Island SDAT, [visit the Communities by Design Web site.](#)

### The SDAT Process

The SDAT process starts each year with a request for proposals from communities —among other criteria, the application must have the support of the local AIA component. An expert panel selects communities to receive SDAT assistance from among those who apply. An AIA Center for Communities by Design staff member and the SDAT team leader visit the community to size up the project and determine what kind of a team is needed to help.

The actual SDAT process starts with a community tour for the SDAT team, preliminary set of roundtable meetings with community stakeholders, and a public meeting to discuss the project and gather additional community input. Another full day of roundtable meetings with residents is followed by an intense work session by the team, who pull together their recommendations. A final public meeting is held to present the recommendations and solicit feedback. A report is prepared for distribution to the community, and then, over the following year, the SDAT team members and



GIPAC applied to the AIA Center for Communities by Design for a grant to help it jumpstart its plan with the Center's Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) program, and Guemes Island was chosen as one of eight communities to receive technical assistance under the 2006 SDAT program. During the third week of June, a team of architects, landscape architects, water specialists, energy engineers, and transportation experts from around the U.S. arrived to help the island create a plan. Through its charrette process, the SDAT team helped community residents and their planning committee create the blueprint that the island can use for its sub-area plan recommendations to the county's commissioners.

The SDAT team also reached out to the Samish tribe, the original Native American inhabitants of the island who recently celebrated the 10-year anniversary of the victorious resolution of a long battle with the U.S. Interior Department for recognition of their status. The Samish sent a representative to the public meetings, and several young tribe members paddled by canoe to the island to perform a summer solstice rite in connection with the community gathering. The tribe has a mission to reacquire some tribal lands, a goal that might provide one strategy for protecting open space on the island, observed Erica Gees, AIA, the AIA volunteer team leader for the Guemes project. Gees believes this new relationship can be part of a healing process between the current community and the former inhabitants.

#### It's about sustainability

To Gees, the key to bringing people together in planning is SDAT's focus on sustainability. "When you look at a problem through the sustainability lens, it can bring people with different views together. If you look 100-150 years out, you know no one in the room is going to be around that long. So, it makes it more objective, more visionary, more about community."



And, yet, the community also needs some shorter-term projects and milestones to keep the planning process grounded in reality. "You have to find a balance between short-term and long-term recommendations. If you only make 'visionary' recommendations that take 10-20 years to have an impact, people will lose interest," said Gees, an associate with Kuhn Riddle Architects, Amherst, Mass. "You have to have proposals that have a short-term impact to keep the momentum going."

The Guemes Island SDAT involved about 60 community stakeholders who discussed five areas of interest. Following the roundtable discussions, the AIA team members prepared findings and recommendations, including

AIA staff provide additional consultation as needed. After a year, select team members will revisit the community to provide more guidance. For more information on the Center for Communities by Design's Design Assistance programs, including the SDAT and R/UDAT programs, [visit the SDAT Web site.](#)

some short-term strategies and long-term policies in the five areas delineated by the island leaders:

1. Preserve the island's rural character
2. Conserve water and protect the quality of the island's sole source aquifer
3. Resolve transportation disagreements
4. Protect wildlife and shoreline habitats
5. Increase island energy independence.

"One of the things that really impressed me was how many different voices and people who often disagree were brought together in this process," said Edith Walden, an orchard owner on Guemes Island, a local businesswoman, and one of the roundtable participants. "Having all their input has made us all aware that we do have a community with a common vision. It's made us all energized and hopeful about our future."



Is it working?

The SDAT process received kudos from islanders at the end of the week—as much for its ability to bring people together as for its recommendations. In all, 188 people out of the 800 full-time residents showed up for the meetings. "I thought it was as inclusive a process as I've ever seen," said Bob Groeschell, a part-time resident who works at Seattle Community College during the week. "As someone who's only been on the island for three years, I felt my voice mattered as much as everyone else's. I found it energizing."

And Al Bush, the farmer, was also hopeful that the process taught the island new ways to work with its estranged county government. The SDAT team "tried to suggest ways of amending that conflict," he said. "I'm willing to put my shoulder to the wheel and make this work. It's wrong to fight with people we put into office. We must find a middle ground and put things back in balance and heal the wounds with our government. This is a process that we can build on."

For the county, too, the SDAT process seemed to break a logjam. Steve Cox, the county's director of the Guemes Island Ferry, had declined to meet with the SDAT team during their scoping visit in the spring because he was so weary of the conflict with the islanders. But for the SDAT charrette, county officials, including Cox, returned to the island, and were impressed enough to not only pledge to come back to the table to talk over the issues, but also to ask for SDAT help with other sub-area plans within the county.

"I'm proud that we have brought a process to the table that will allow the county and its residents to get back together and work out their conflicts," said Gees.

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From: [walker.rp@comcast.net](mailto:walker.rp@comcast.net)  
To: [PDS comments](#)  
Subject: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
Date: Sunday, June 19, 2016 3:30:36 PM

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From:  
Robert P Walker and family, 6182 West Shore Road, Guemes Island, Anacortes, WA 98221  
424-454-0161, [walker.rp@comcast.net](mailto:walker.rp@comcast.net)

To:  
Skagit County Board of Commissioners  
Regarding:  
June 20th public hearing regarding the 2016 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE and the GIPAC (Guemes Island Planning Advisory Committee) proposed building restrictions for the Guemes Subarea.

Dear Commissioners,

As a Guemes Island resident since 1991 I am shocked and very upset at the proposed changes to the Guemes Island shore land building requirements. GIPAC has done their best to hide this from residents who own shore land evidently to get this passed by the County Commissioners without our input.

I have found that several of the GIPAC members have a major **conflict of interest** in that they would benefit from the proposed regulation changes because they own land on North Beach across the road from the waterfront lots.

Apparently you Commissioners are under the belief that those of us that own property on Guemes Island do not care about what would happen if these requirements were changed as suggested. This is not the case.

The West Beach area on which our Strells Water Tracts, 17 lots, is located as well as all the homes north and south of us including Indian Village have a much different situation than the North Beach area. The homes and lots on the west side of the island do not have buildable lots behind them on West Beach and at Indian Village they have a big slope to any lots behind that would not have views blocked.

I know that GIPAC has submitted photos of homes in our West Beach area showing some bigger homes with small one story homes in-between. This is a result of new development on property that the county has raised the value of many fold over the last 25 years. Its a natural occurrence that new larger homes are built to keep up with the big jump in assessed values from the County. If these proposed restrictions were adopted by you the value of the waterfront lots on Guemes Island would drop considerably as well as the property taxes paid to the county.

Apparently little thought was given to the proposal to limit height to 12 feet above ground level which would give a ceiling height of 8 feet from the now required 4 foot

elevation change for new homes to get them above potential flood plain levels. Other setback requirements proposed also look like little thought was put into it.

I feel that in order to make a good and fair decision on the proposed requirements that the Commissioners should delay the Guemes Island area until next year so that this can all be presented and studied in a thorough and professional manner by all those affected and not just the GIPAC who represent a small portion of Guemes Island property owners.

I believe the Commissioners should take a field trip to Guemes to see for themselves what I am talking about.

Sincerely,  
Robert P. Walker

**From:** [Patsi](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 3:32:43 PM

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I am against any height restrictions being implemented at this time.  
98221

Patricia Waller 4930 West Shore Rd.

Sent from my iPhone



# Port of Skagit

RECEIVED

JUN 17 2016

SKAGIT COUNTY  
FDS

June 14, 2016

Dale Pernula, AICP, Director  
Skagit County Planning and Development Services  
1800 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Re: Skagit County 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update

Dear Mr. Pernula,

We are writing this letter to encourage the Board of County Commissioners support the proposed amendments to the comprehensive plan update that pertains to open space and trail connections.

The Port of Skagit has found significant value in its open space and trails that are used by port tenants, port facility users and port constituents. We want to encourage the continuation of these elements for the whole Skagit community. We have found it is good for business, good for the environment and good the public.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly,

Kevin E. Ware

Steven Omdahl

William Shuler



## Skagit County Cattlemen's Association

### President

*Michael Ware*

### Vice President

*Randy Good*

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*Gary L. Knaus Jr.*

*(Washington State 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Vice President)*

### District

### Representative

*Jim Hinton*

**Our Mission-** The Washington Cattlemen's Association is a statewide non-profit trade organization dedicated to promoting and preserving the beef industry through producer and consumer education, legislative participation, regulatory scrutiny, and legal intervention.

RECEIVED

JUN 22 2016

SKAGIT COUNTY  
PDS

June 20, 2016

Skagit County Commissioners  
1800 Continental Place  
Mount Vernon WA. 98273

RE: Comments on 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update,

Dear Commissioners:

Please accept our comments with respect to the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan 2016-2036 Second - Public Comment Draft June 9, 2016,

Let me thank the Skagit County Commissioners for all of the work that you and your staff perform and the opportunity to respond to the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update. I represent Skagit County Cattlemen's Association as the President and as a private citizen.

The following four comments are concerns as related to the forthcoming Comprehensive Plan Update, Development Regulations and the Implementation Policy.

**FIRST-** 2016 Comp Plan Update - Transportation Polices; Page 57 of 394 - Policy 2B-1.3 UGA Open Space Concept Plan, known as Open Space Trails Plan. UGA Open spaces function as separators to prevent urban areas from encroaching out into our farmlands, forests and critical areas. Placing interconnecting trails through rural areas encourages residential development into our rural areas. We must not allow this Open Space Trail Plan to be implemented.

**WE ARE NOT IN FAVOR OF NON-MOTORIZED VEHICLE TRAILS ON AGRICULTURAL LAND'S AND STRONGLY ENCOURAGE** the Skagit County Commissioners to adopt the county planning commission's recorded motion on this failure of a trail plan and **keep non-motorized trails out of our agriculture farmlands.** Use of the current ingress, egress points on public right of way are sufficient if the protected areas which is adequate in size and quality to interconnect. An interconnecting trail system is "not" warranted.

Its construction creations is yet another avenue for noxious weeds, canine off leash hazards, and an opportunity for nefarious activities in at residences or unattended staged farm equipment located along the trail.

**SECOND** and related to the above found within the Transportation Technical Appendix at Page 71  
**IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES (C) captioned as follows**

C. Public Process & Right-of-way Acquisition - “ .....whether the acquisition is through eminent domain.....”

This “Takings Clause” of the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution, for non-motorized trail projects this falls out of the intent of the taking clause as it is not used by all but a substituted set of users and is a stretch at best to prove the use is “for the health safety and welfares elements for the use of all”. The eminent domain act also cites “just compensation”. A look at the history of these takings prove that in most cases they create properties that no longer have the shape or size to used by current farm machinery. Makin the remaining agricultural lands functionally obsolete to current means and methods of farming and subordinate lands to a trail system dividing the agricultural land. The implementation of this policy exposes the public to large livestock encounters. Whether it is a cow with a new calf in a protection posture or a breeding bull, accidents do happen. Livestock are not fair animals Public risk does not need to be increased. In real life the cost in terms of property loss is more than described as a simple cost per in square foot of land to the subordinate remainder parcel.

**WE STRONGLY ENCOURAGE** the Commissioners to delete the “Eminent Domain” options where “stand alone “trail system are proposed or provide verbiage to restrict its use of eminent domain for independent trail systems that are involved in this portion of the Transportation Technical Appendix.

These spacious farm lands come from great sacrifice on the part of the land owner, those trail visitors have no vesting in the farm lands that seem so inviting and in some cases treat it as such with disrespect. Many have spoken sympathetically of the trails and the great recreational and its societal benefits. We do acknowledge this. If a group of our citizens wish to place a high priority on these elements, then the benefiting parties must allocate the resources for that purpose. Cities and County already have programs and trail systems in place to accommodate such activities. County residences are currently taxed accordingly that never visit the trail system.

Poorly educated public do not possess common sense skills to avoid risky situations where the outcome may be harmful to humans and animals. A trail system exposes people to the hazards of unintentional contact even without trespassers crossing boundary fences invading private property. Many people do not realize the outcomes of touching a seemingly harmless farm animal. Prey animals react by instinct: that is to fight or flight. Outcomes can be injury or loss of life human or animal.

**In closing on the trails in agricultural lands issue, adoption of these trail systems places a higher priority on trails for the few than agricultural preservation for the many. You cannot directly measure the benefits of a trail but you can calculate the cost of the lands in lost production for years to come.**

On my 4000 feet of exposure to the public from one side of a public road right-of-way I have personally observed and dealt with the following events. We can only imagine extrapolating these events twenty or fifty times more throughout a county wide trail system through Agricultural Farm Lands:

- School kids feeding peanut butter and jelly sandwiches to a herd bull over the fence while waiting for the bus
- Person removing a new born calf form under the fence line thinking to save the calf only to put cow and calf on the opposite sides of fence
- Neighbors giving cows garden refuse from a wheel barrow making the cows mob at the fence then breaking it down, letting the whole herd out on the public road. The cows were "tail in the air stupid". The instigators responses "Who Me"
- Hallucinogenic Mushroom hunters cutting fences and leaving gates open
- Breaking into the farm Tool and Lube Room and stealing generation's worth of accumulated tools including great grandpa's blacksmith handmade tools and other ancient hand tools that have only value to me. Leaving two empty beer bottles and a Frito bag and the Sheriff took the bottles for evidence, leaving us holding the bag
- Littering, sometimes we pick up a quarter of a tractor bucket of bottles, cans and plastic bags that can are picked up and chewed on by the livestock

These incidents made me change my operation. Now I pasture the cows on the better crop ground 660 feet from the road and cropping the poorer ground nest to the road-Unforeseen Costs of winter feed production to the operation.

**THIRD** -2016 Comprehensive Plan - Development Strategy, found at Page 322 - 326 Table 6 Skagit County CEDS Joint Sponsorship Implementation Projects 2013.

List of 37 local county projects slated for action on the above pages upon your approval as provided in the body of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update.

**WE STRONGLY ENCOURAGE** the County Commissioners to remove the list of 37 projects from this Comprehensive Plan Update, pages 325 & 326. These 37 projects need to go through the public notice and review process before being included in the Economic Development Element of this Comp Plan update. The list is out of date as some of the included projects are already under construction. We are jointly concerned about the Scope, the Public Process and the Funding of these projects.

**FOURTH** - Development Regulations Amendments, found at Page 66-7

New Section 14.15.945 Prohibited Uses-

(2) "Storage of junk.... 500 Sq.Ft."- If enacted a majority of farmers and rural landowners and homeowners will be cited for class 1 civil infractions and subject to other penalties in SCC 14.44. My hay equipment when staged and in off season would exceed this small parameter. This terminology is

ambiguous and capricious and in direct conflict with the underlying zoning for allowable lot coverage.

(3) Recreational vehicles - If enacted this would result in a hardship to agriculture and others that are unable to find affordable housing, leading to more homelessness in Skagit County. These proposed regulations will not solve the problem. Language for both needs to be clarified before adopting.

**WE STRONGLY ENCOURAGE** the County Commissioners to delete the whole Section 14.15.945 for the reasons stated above.

Thank you for your consideration of the above coming actions from your Agricultural Community.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael Ware". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Michael Ware

5988 North Fruitdale Rd.  
Sedro- Woolley, Washington 98284  
360-856-4140

Skagit County Cattlemen, President and Private Citizen

**From:** [Bert Wicklund](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update For Meeting on June 20th which is a public hearing  
**Date:** Monday, June 20, 2016 12:33:26 PM

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Dear Commissioners,

I have been a property owner for over 40 years at 6080 West shore road, Guemes Island, Washington. My wife and I just became aware of the new proposed changes two days ago. My phone is 360 293 7435 if you want to get ahold of me.

The new GIPAC restrictions would take away most of our alternatives for building in the future.

We are below the flood plane with houses to the north and south of us that are larger than ours.

This fact does not bother us.

I would like to maintain the ability to build a new house in the future without draconian restrictions. We already have enough to protect the island.

I personally drove around the island to view all of the GIPAC board members houses and locations to see where they are coming from.

Most had nice houses that were on the water, but were on medium to high bank.

There were two houses that weren't on the water.

One was in the woods with no view, and the other was a basic inexpensive house. I was also told that it was used as a rental.

None of these members would be affected with these rules. I can't believe a few unaffected people can suggest rules that are in conflict with Skagit County rules.

I am trying to figure out what their objective is, but can't. They might want the Island to look like it did in 1950 which they say maintains the character of the Island.

Again they don't represent anyone on West or South Beach.

I am sure they are concerned with the water and the single aquifer that we are on, however we have a water board and we are on top of it and are reporting to the State of Washington and following all of their rules.

This should not be bundled to these regulations.

To implement these rules all of our properties on West beach will be devalued meaning less dollars for the community.

Our houses do not affect anyone on the other side of the road on West beach since it is mostly wetlands and zoned so we cant subdivide and build additional houses there.

I know most of the people on West beach and have not found one person in favor of this proposal.

I cant believe Skagit County would listen to them.

Sincerely,

Bert Wicklund

**From:** [Anne Winkes](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** comment on 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 6:11:00 AM

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Dear Commissioners Dahlstedt, Janicki, and Wesen,

This email comment is an expansion of the oral comment I gave on 6/20/16 with added details and references, and is submitted for consideration in addition to my oral comment.

As I stated on 6/20/16, I fully support the reinclusion of the 20 year list of non-motorized transportation projects in the Transportation element of the updated Comprehensive Plan, and I fully support the specific expression of the County's intent to continue cooperating with local partners to identify and protect open space corridors in the updated Comprehensive Plan.

### **Health.**

As a pediatric nurse practitioner working in Skagit County for more than 30 years, I stressed to parents the importance of playing outdoors with their children. Such play confers many health benefits, both physical and mental, to children and to adults, reducing the risk of obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and other medical conditions, while at the same time improving mental health, diminishing symptoms of depression, stress and anxiety.

The AARP's livability index measures community livability, and is intended to be used by policymakers to effect changes in their communities that improve quality of life. Recognizing the impact of health on quality of life, AARP includes health as one of the seven major livability categories assessed in its livability index.

Two measurements in the livability index's health category that are particularly relevant to the updating of the Comprehensive Plan are prevalence of obesity and access to opportunities for exercise. Obesity rates are measured as high obesity rates can indicate that a community lacks access to exercise opportunities.

According to AARP's livability score, 28% of the population of both Mount Vernon and Burlington is obese, placing these communities in the middle third compared to neighborhoods across the US, while the access to opportunities for exercise score for both communities is 69% placing them at the lower third when compared with other U.S. neighborhoods. This AARP data is based on *The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, 2014*

Physical activity can help prevent chronic diseases and may reduce the incidence of some common types of cancers. See <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/effects/> for more information on the health effects of overweight and obesity.

Creating more walkable cities may have implications for improved cognitive health. See <http://www.universityherald.com/articles/12771/20141109/easy-to-walk-communities-can-blunt-cognitive-decline.htm> for research done by psychologist Amber Watts at the University of Kansas Alzheimer's Disease Center.

Opportunities for physical activity make for a more livable community as they help the fit stay in shape and the unfit get in shape.

The inclusion of non-motorized transportation projects in the updated Comprehensive Plan will ensure low cost exercise opportunities for all ages and all socioeconomic levels.

Open space and non-motorized trails have a proven beneficial affect on health. Access to natural landscapes contributes to improved mental health. Studies have shown that exercising outdoors can decrease anger, fatigue, and depression and increase people's ability to pay attention, including children with attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder. See <http://journalistsresource.org/studies/environment/cities/health-benefits-urban-green-space-research-roundup> for look at some of these studies.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4556255/> presents studies that explore the relationships between connections with the natural environment and increased feelings of well being, reduced depression, and diminished stress.

The Comprehensive Plan's expressed commitment to open space, both rural and interurban, and to the creation and improvement of a network of safe and accessible non-motorized pathways and trails will contribute to the health and well-being of all who live here.

### **Property value**

As a property owner in Skagit County I appreciate the economic benefits of living in a county whose Comprehensive Plan addresses the value of protecting greenbelts of agriculture lands, trails, wildlife habitat, and parks.

Zillow tracks the sale of housing units across the U. S. Housing with high walkability scores have greater value. Availability of nearby non-motorized paths and trails is one measure of walkability. More readily accessible paths and trails correlates with increased home values.

Proximity to open space can also increase house values. Studies have shown that people are willing to pay more for a house near permanently preserved open space than pastureland open to future development.

See <http://www.americantrails.org/resources/economics/Economic-Benefits-Trails-Open-Space-Walkable-Community.html> for a detailed discussion of the positive impact of open space on residential property values and home prices in urban and rural areas.

Planned walking- and bicycle-friendly communities and intentionally preserved open spaces will make Skagit County a more desirable place to live. Property values will increase and increased property values will provide monetary benefits to our local governments.

### **Bicycle tourism**

My husband and I have bicycled designated parkways and rail trails throughout the United States. As a bicycle tourist I have developed an appreciation of the contribution of bicycling to local economies as cyclists sleep in bed and breakfasts, motels and campgrounds; eat in restaurants; shop in groceries; and attend local events.

Per the January 2015 study, [Economic Analysis of Outdoor Recreation in Washington State](#), prepared by

[Earth Economics](#) and commissioned by the [Task Force on Parks and Outdoor Recreation](#), recreational bicyclists in Washington State spend \$3.1 billion per year statewide.

By improving the safety and comfort of Skagit County's roadways with wider shoulders and designated facilities, and focusing on the connectivity of established bicycle routes, the updated Comprehensive Plan will lead to increased recreational tourists spending more money locally.

### **North Fork Bridge safety project**

Conway serves as a starting point for many bicyclists as they head out across Fir Island crossing the North Fork Bridge on their way to the Skagit Flats. This is a route my husband and I have bicycled many times. Following the collapse of the I-5 bridge over the Skagit River this route was a recommended detour for vehicular traffic. Many commercial trucks and passenger cars continue to use this as a preferred route.

I particularly appreciate the inclusion of the North Fork bridge safety project in the Comprehensive Plan as there is simply not enough room for the safe passage of large commercial trucks, cars and cyclists over the North Fork Bridge at the same time. I once watched horrified as a large truck squeezed a bicyclist to very the edge of the bridge curb, missing him by no more than two inches, as the truck driver chose to pass him at the same time a car approached from the other direction.

### **The partnership between open space and non-motorized projects**

As a long time supporter of local conservation organizations and a current board member of Skagit Land Trust, I wholeheartedly support the updated Comprehensive Plan's inclusion of the County's intent to continue cooperating with local partners to identify and protect open space corridors.

Open space corridors are natural partners to the County's non-motorized projects, contributing to the health of the community, increased real estate values and the tourist economy of the County. The Centennial Trail project is a wonderful example of combining a non-motorized trail with open space.

As people need natural corridors, so do wildlife, flora and fauna. Open space corridors linking natural habitats allow animals and birds to travel safely from one suitable habitat to another and for plant species to disperse, providing environments beneficial to the health of plants and animals, and in turn to the health of nearby communities.

Because such corridors are the arteries of the natural world, healthy wild and human communities cannot be maintained without them. The Comprehensive Plan in its acknowledgement of their importance clearly recognizes the undeniable interconnectedness of the world in which we live.

Please continue to include the 20 year list of non-motorized transportation projects in the Transportation element of the updated Comprehensive Plan, and continue to specifically express the County's intent to continue cooperating with local partners to identify and protect open space corridors in the updated Comprehensive Plan.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Anne Winkes

PO Box 586

Conway, WA 98238

[annewinkes@gmail.com](mailto:annewinkes@gmail.com)

360-445-6914

**From:** [Ken Winkes](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 comprehensive plan update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 1:25:39 PM

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Dear Commissioners Dahlstedt, Janicki, and Wesen, and Mr. Dale Pernula,

Unlike too many areas of our state where the die is already cast and thoughtless development has already closed off the possibility of good planning, Skagit County is still in position to plan intelligently for the future.

As the Commissioners hear, and as they themselves have said time and again, we are truly blessed.

Right now we have the opportunity to pass some of those blessings along into the future.

That opportunity lies in acceptance of the recommended inclusion of a 20 year list of non-motorized projects, part of the updated Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Element.

In many parts of our state motorized transportation has overwhelmed and squeezed out alternatives like walking, bicycling and horseback riding, all more healthful for both those who use them and for the surrounding environment.

It is therefore crucial that Skagit County preserve those alternatives while we still can. Our water, our air, our citizens and our animals will all benefit.

It is also important to understand that non-motorized projects, particularly trails, can fit into the expanding presence of open space corridors that we must ensure for our county's future health. Such corridors, greenbelts of public and private land, provide wildlife habitat, protect farmland and preserve significant scenic and historic landscapes.

Non-motorized projects and open space corridors are natural partners.

For these reasons, I strongly support adoption of the updated Comprehensive Plan in its present form.

Sincerely,

Ken Winkes

18562 Main St.  
PO Box 586  
Conway, WA  
98238

winkes@cnw.com  
360-445-6914

**From:** [Phyllis woolworth](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** GIPAC-2016Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 6:53:19 AM

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I, Phyllis Woolworth, mailing address PO BOX 918, Anacortes, Wa 98221, am in support of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan update.

I support the GIPAC and its recommendation to implement the adopted SAP and urge the BoC to enact the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay as proposed. I have been a property owner since 1983 and pleased with the limited development which seems to be ever increasing with the growth of the resort and new homes being built. Set backs are to protect the shore line and the changing contours we endure each winter. The thought that 6 people sleeping in one cabin need to void less than people in a larger home with toilets seems absurd. The beauty of our area is reflected in the draw to the island as people decide the inconvenience of the ferry is also a silent discouragement to the general public to stay here as residence rather than visitors only.

**From:** [Melody Young](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Skagit County Comprehensive Plan Updates  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 10:29:52 AM

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Dear County Commissioners:

I have been a Guemes Island resident for over 30 years.

I just found out today about the proposed building restrictions and code changes.

My family owns a property on West Shore Road, where I lived for the last 10 years . I believe the proposed building code changes are not necessary and I do not agree with the them. Please do not approve these restrictions.

Thank you,  
Melody Young  
5170 West Shore Rd  
Anacortes, WA 98221

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**Melody Young**

**Customer Relations Director, My Biz Pro, LLC**

phone: 360-708-3095

address: 5170 West Shore Rd Anacortes, WA 98221

site: [www.mybizpro.biz](http://www.mybizpro.biz)

email: [melody@mybizpro.biz](mailto:melody@mybizpro.biz)



**From:** [clzhij@comcast.net](mailto:clzhij@comcast.net)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 3:59:52 PM

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I support the inclusion of the 20 year list of non-motorized projects as part of the updated Comprehensive Plan. I believe that it is very important to continue to have a vision and long-range plan that includes non-motorized pathways and facilities. Many people in this area don't walk or ride bikes because they believe it isn't safe to do so. We need to continue to add facilities to change those opinions over time to get past that biggest of barriers.

I also support Skagit County's intent to continue cooperating with local partners to identify and protect open space corridors. Living right next to the Anacortes Forest Lands I have gained a deeper appreciation for how important it is to continue to protect the natural areas that we are blessed to have.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Let me know if you have any comments or questions.

Chris Zimmerman  
2416 37<sup>th</sup> Street  
Anacortes, WA 98221

The following comments  
were improperly submitted.

**From:** [Charlie and Cleo Bouffiou](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Guemes Island Zoning Overlay as proposed.  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 11:38:08 AM

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I find it a deeply disturbing that a few miss informed voices could possibly derail 20 years of carefully thought out planning..

I have only lived on Guemes Island for five years but have a deep respect for those who have worked so hard to preserve a very special way of life. I can not say enough about this island and community.

I fully support the Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee. Please enact the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay as proposed.

Cleo Bouffiou

4704 S Shore Dr

Anacortes, WA 98221 (Guemes Island)

**From:** [Tina](#)  
**To:** [Lisa Janicki](#); [Ron Wesen](#); [KenDahlstedt](#)  
**Cc:** [Planning & Development Services](#)  
**Subject:** Section 14.15.945 Development Regulations -page 67  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 2:20:37 PM

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Dear Commissioners Janicki, Wesen, Dahlstedt, and  
Planning Department Staff Represented by Mr.  
Pernula:

Regarding Section 14.15.945 Development Regulations -page 67- added by county staff that has a limitation of 500 square ft. for junk including farm equipment, spare parts, fencing supplies, extra vehicles, etc. etc. etc.

14.15.945 also prohibits living in recreational vehicles on any land within the county for more than 180 days within a years time (more than one occupied or maintained on property without special use permits).

**We are recommending to the commissioners the complete deletion of Section 14.15.945 Prohibited Uses for the following reasons:**

Besides being another overreach of government and yet another permitting frenzy costing we, the rural property owners, yet more money for the county to spend on (?) (only God knows what will come next), this will have **negative effects on our agricultural community and everyone who is in need of affordable housing.**

We have a 17 1/2 acre property that has been family- owned since 1976. Currently, 100 feet is in the Samish River because there has been no dredging of the river resulting in a creation of the lake behind our property. We have the Oregon Spotted Frog, a so-called endangered species, so there goes another setback!

Now we are told how to manage our "junk" on 500 square feet of **our own property on which we pay taxes (including that property in the river which is totally unusable).**

Our "junk" is managed quite nicely and orderly on one side of our property because **property owners are the best stewards of their own property** when left alone by a bureaucratic government.

I have a friend who has been on her property for years. Tired of "fighting city hall" over living by a stream that has never seen a salmon, they are letting their property go into foreclosure. Her husband has bladder cancer and has started treatment. I asked her what they plan to do. She said they own a fifth wheel and plan to put it on some property. Wow! I can't wait to tell her the next great news in her life. Maybe the county can get "up close and personal" and give her the news themselves.

My understanding is that the county states that this is not a new section and not being enforced; however, once something is set in writing, the county, administrations, and employees can and will enforce anything with anyone at anytime. It is about power over rural dwellers and a convenient source of revenue. I highly doubt that the staff making up these regulations live on rural properties, and we know, for a fact, that some of them live an urban or suburban lifestyle. This is not a qualifying factor in making these decisions for **"We, The**

**Rural Folk".**

We are asking with due respect for the **Skagit County Rural Property Owners and Farmers**, to remove **Section 14.15.945** from the Proposed Development Regulations Amendment.

Sincerely

Tina Champeaux- Wolner

1641 SR 9

Sedro Woolley, WA 98284

**From:** [Edie Clark](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** In Support of the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay and the Seawater Intrusion Policy.  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 21, 2016 10:36:57 PM

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As a full-time resident of Guemes Island, I have helped to elect the members of the Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee and fully support the adoption of the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay and the Seawater Intrusion Policy into Skagit County's 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update.

We chose to live on the island because of the rural beauty of the surroundings. We have come to appreciate how delicate and precious this setting is, and how important it is to preserve our single-source aquifer.

A great deal of discussion, compromise, and careful thought has gone into the development of both the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay and the Seawater Intrusion Policy. Please adopt them as written.

Edith G. Clark  
5651 Section Avenue  
Anacortes, WA, 98221

**From:** [Omi Cummings](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Skagit County Board of Commissioners action on the Guemes Island Subarea Plan  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 4:05:34 PM

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We, Robert and Naomi Cummings live at 7596 Samish St. Anacortes WA, 98221 on Guemes Island and wish to address the 2016 Comprehensive Plan update.

We respectfully urge you to support the measures proposed to be implemented in the Guemes Island Subarea Plan.

We moved to Guemes Island about eight years ago and immediately became involved in many of the planning meeting of the GIPAC and became good friends with Roz Glazer who worked so hard for many years to get the subarea plan developed. We are very committed to having Guemes Island retain it's rural character with a modest scale of development. We were attendees five years when you adopted the code to implement the plan. Please continue the cooperative processto implement these proposals to a successful conclusion.

**From:** [Dorothy Downes](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Open Space / Bike Safety  
**Date:** Monday, June 20, 2016 8:56:16 AM

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As a resident of La Conner, a biker, hiker and RN  
I believe we all benefit from encouragement to exercise safely. The mental, physical and community-building benefits of safe and continued access are critical. I support improvements benefitting bikers, preserved outdoor space.

Thanks!

Dorothy Downes  
360 466 4152

**From:** [Dorothy Downes](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Open Space YES  
**Date:** Monday, June 20, 2016 9:01:29 AM

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Please improve, create or sustain open space, road improvement/safety for bikers, and create access for hikers and encouragement for out door enthusiasts! Health, community and mental well-being are all fostered by planning that considers the future and full access to nature.

Thanks,  
Dorothy Downes RN  
La Conner

Dorothy Downes  
360 466 4152

**From:** [Stephanie Fernandez](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Support protection of open spaces and non-motorized projects in Skagit County  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 3:13:08 PM

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Dear County Commissioners,

I hereby support the protection of open spaces. The concept of open space is not something I grew up with in Mexico City. Since my arrival in Skagit County in 2014, I have been a much happier & healthier person.

So much so, that I now call Anacortes home. My soul feels free here and it's thanks to all the open space Skagit County has. Please keep Skagit open and green! It is home to plants and animals too; please don't take that away from them.

I hereby support the recommended inclusion of the 20-year list of non-motorized projects. Since making Skagit my home in 2014, I now have the luxury of biking and roller-blading in the safety and silence (from traffic) of Centennial Trail. I would love to see Skagit County extend this trail through the county, just like Snohomish has. This way, I don't have to drive 45 min south to enjoy another quiet section of the trail. I have also enjoyed walking and hiking in many of Skagit's trails and pathways; please don't take that away from me.

Thank you for taking the time to read my comments.

Respectfully yours,  
Stephanie Fernandez

*Any given moment can change your life. You just have to be there.*

**From:** [stephanie fernandez](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Support protection of open spaces and non-motorized projects in Skagit County  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 3:32:27 PM

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Dear County Commissioners,

I hereby support protection of open spaces and non-motorized projects in Skagit County because they are both my livelihood.

As soon as I relocated to Anacortes in 2014, I began exploring all of Skagit's open spaces, from the coast to the North Cascades. I have fallen in love with Skagit and decided to stay here the rest of my life.

I also decided to start a nature & hiking tour company, Skagit Guided Adventures, to give outsiders the opportunity to experience all the amazing open green spaces, the wildlife and wildflowers that also call Skagit home.

Please keep Skagit wild so we can all "Re-Wild" Our Spirits!

*"Re-wild" your spirit!  
Connect with NW Washington's Wilderness, Wildlife and Wildflowers.*

*Stephanie Fernandez  
Skagit Guided Adventures  
<http://skagitguidedadventures.com/>  
(360) 47 47 47 9*

**From:** [Andy Gladish](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Guemes plan  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 1:53:11 PM

---

Many of us on the island have only just become aware of recent development due to kind people sharing on social media. Can we do a little more Outreach, so that residents in general know what is being proposed? I'd like to have a look at it before it becomes law.

Thanks

Andy Gladish  
Guemes Island

On Jun 23, 2016 11:27 AM, "Andy Gladish" <[anjgladish@gmail.com](mailto:anjgladish@gmail.com)> wrote:

Many of us on the island have only just become aware of recent development YouTube kind people sharing on social media. Can we do a little more Outreach, so that residents in general know what is being proposed?

Thanks

Andy Gladish  
Guemes Island

**From:** [Nikki Klinger](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Three top reasons why non-motorized options are vital to our well-being.  
**Date:** Monday, June 20, 2016 10:59:11 AM

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Dear Board of County Commissioners,

Outdoor activities such as walking, jogging, biking and hiking are a very important part of my life. Not only do I participate in these activities in order to maintain my health and fitness, they are crucial to my happiness and well-being. These are ways I spend time with my family and are a significant part of social interactions with my friends. These are also ways we get to places we need to go- necessary components of our family's transportation options. Being outdoors is my favorite way to enjoy our community and appreciate nature. I believe strongly that our community needs to continue to add opportunities for outdoor recreation and non-motorized transportation. The non-motorized projects in the comprehensive plan are absolutely essential.

My main priority when being outdoors is being safe. We need trails, safe bicycle and pedestrian routes, facilities, and wide road shoulders. I have had some very harrowing experiences on roads here in our county. I want our community to be a leader in this area, a place to be proud of, that surrounding communities will appreciate and admire. I want to live in a place that makes this a priority! We are surrounded by cities that support their citizens wholeheartedly in this way (Seattle, Bellingham), and we are falling behind. Please help us keep our community safe and beautiful, and provide public access for healthful recreational opportunities by procuring and protecting open space.

There are so many compelling reasons for making non-motorized projects priorities that positively affect our future. For example:

1. Impact on environment. It is well known that transportation powered by human energy has a positive impact on our environment. Reduce traffic congestion and harmful emissions by making it safe and convenient for people to use non-motorized transportation.
2. Support for our citizens. We live in a community that includes a high number of people experiencing poverty. Safe pedestrian and biking routes are imperative in situations where adults and children must walk or bike in neighborhoods and to work or school. (This includes rural areas near urban areas, small communities, connections between cities, towns and rural destinations, etc.)
3. Community development: Fill our community with people that engage in healthy behaviors. According to the CDC, "Highly educated people tend to have healthier behaviors." Attract highly educated people to our community by providing opportunities for healthful behaviors. Incidentally, research shows that higher education is linked to reduced violent crime rate!

These are just a few ways this plan can be beneficial. I would love to see more non-motorized projects added to our comprehensive plan. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Nikki Klinger  
2333 Crosby Drive  
Mount Vernon, WA 98274  
District 2



**From:** [Alexander Lindsey](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Comp Plan 2016 Update  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 5:20:36 PM

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Skagit County Commissioners:

I received an email from a friend on Guemes Island who is concerned about the GIPAC Comp plan and the building restrictions therein. As a former resident of Guemes Island (now Anacortes) and as a retired architect, I understand that communicating development standards to property owners who may eventually choose to build can be difficult.

I see that the Comprehensive plan had been published both in the Guemes Tide as well as on [linetime.org](#). Is this to assume that everyone should be aware of proposed changes? I can say this, as a resident for over 30 years I seldom, if ever, looked at either of those sources and would expect many others don't either. AND if they did happen to look through the plan, to ferret out and understand any particular standards that might apply to a parcel they may plan to develop can be daunting.

In short, there needs to be some better effort made to inform property owners of changing standards that would restrict development beyond what they now enjoy.

Regards,

Thomas Lindsey  
2014 I Avenue  
Anacortes, WA 98221  
206-849-8367

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Jim Lippert](#)  
To: [Planning & Development Services](#)  
Subject: Update of Skagit County Comprehensive Plan  
Date: Thursday, June 23, 2016 2:43:25 PM

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**PUBLIC COMMENT: Update of Skagit County Comprehensive Plan**

To: BOCC [pbscomments@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:pbscomments@co.skagit.wa.us)

From: Roger Pederson, property owner and  
citizen  
Date: June 23, 2016

Historically, a Comprehensive Plan is a basically a graphic zoning map, depicting land use zoning; i.e. *“conceptual” and general*.

The 2016 update appears unduly “detailed”, inclined to “over-reach, and involve more than a zoning map.

That said: Your high school Civics book taught you, that land use zoning authority is predicated on “police powers”; i.e. *public health, public safety, and general welfare*. In other words: Land use is predicated on collective “public will/interest”.

However, the Washington State Constitution indicates it considers individual rights superior to collective rights of the public. Accordingly, Article I, Section I reads:

“All political power is inherent in the people, and governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed and are established to protect and maintain individual rights.” (Underlining added).

Discussion: The proposed 2016 up-date of Skagit County’s Comprehensive Plan appears not to protect the individual rights of the citizens, *in all instances*. Further, it appears not necessarily the product of the citizenry; i.e. believed more “dictum” of state/staff, than representative of Skagit County, *per se*.

Intentionally, leave “details” to others; but want to remind you of “basics”.

Thank you.

*Thank you,*

*Jim Lippert*

*???A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was, the type of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove... but the world may be different because I was important in the life of a child.”*

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Cell: 360-333-1248

**From:** [Martha J Macri](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Guemes Subarea Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 3:59:41 PM

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Skagit County Commissioners:

We have lived on Guemes Island for about 2 and a half years. We very much appreciate the rural character of the island, and realize that the water resources on the island are limited. We fully support the Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee (GIPAC) and implementation of the adopted Guemes Island Subarea Plan (SAP), the result of over 20 years of planning, including the efforts of some of the wisest, best-educated, and most long-sighted members of the Guemes community. We urge you to enact the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay as proposed.

Again, we urge the implementation of the Guemes Island Subarea Plan.

Sincerely,

Martha J Macri and  
Judy Alexander

**From:** [Connie Munsey](#)  
**To:** [Lisa Janicki](#); [Ron Wesen](#); [KenDahlstedt](#)  
**Cc:** [Planning & Development Services](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comments on Development Regulations  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 3:12:18 PM

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June 23, 2016

Commissioners Dahlstedt, Janicki and Wesen,

I write this in opposition to new Development Regulations section 14.15.945 that reference storage of “junk” on rural properties as well as the use of recreational vehicles as residences in rural Skagit County.

In 2010, we had a legislative candidate, John Swapp, who called to the attention of anyone who would listen the economic distress of our county, particularly east Skagit, by the sudden explosion of what he referred to as “camp trailers” popping up on properties he saw as he commuted to his business in Sedro Woolley. He told me that in addition to the struggles of his own once thriving business, this explosion of obvious poverty is what prodded him to run for office.

Here we are, six years later, and Skagitonians are still experiencing economic distress. This is not the time to make things worse!

The “junk” description (along with this proposed restriction on RV’s) just screams of standards that apply in an urban setting. For over 4 years I have tried, again and again, to point out that your primary concern (as well as that of the County Planning Department) is for the welfare of the rural citizens who have no other representation than you. Again I would like to point out that the majority of the management of the Planning Department are urban residents and they have demonstrated a serious lack of understanding why and how rural residents live or any desire to gain such an understanding. One man’s “junk” is often another man’s treasure. If people don’t want to look at anything they consider “unsightly” as they drive through rural neighborhoods, I would suggest they drive somewhere else, or at the very least – don’t look.

Sincerely,

Connie Munsey (360) 873-8886

Anacortes, WA

Cc: Dale Pernula, Planning Dept, Skagit County



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**From:** [Barbara Ohms](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Support of Guemes Island Subarea Plan  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 8:57:52 AM

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To our Board of Commissioners:

My husband and I are full time residents of Guemes Island, having moved here 4 years ago. We value the rural character of the island and the close knit community that exists here. We were immediately impressed by the number of community organizations on Guemes that range from providing meals to shut ins to planning thoughtful future development on the island. Meetings of all these organizations are well advertised on both our island website, Linetime, and our newspaper, The Guemes Tide, and are open to all who are interested. Minutes of meetings are also posted. The officers of these organizations are elected by those present and, by my observation, are run following parliamentary procedure.

Unplanned growth can spoil a community. Guemes Island is not only a vacation destination but, more importantly, a full time home to many people. It is critical that future development be done with regard to surrounding neighbors, views and water usage in order to preserve the character of our island. Salt water intrusion is not a reversible problem and must be prevented. Water usage has to be one of our highest priorities and larger homes with higher water demand landscaping need to be limited or controlled.

I have great confidence in the recommendations of GIPAC and recognize the many hours of hard work these volunteers have given in our community. I urge you to implement the Subarea Plan and enact the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay as proposed.

Sincerely,

Barbara and Mark Ohms  
6420 Section Ave  
Guemes Island  
Anacortes, WA 98221  
360-298-1885

**From:** [Stephen & Virginia Orsini](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Cc:** [Ginger Orsini](#)  
**Subject:** Implementation of Guemes Island Subarea Plan, Zoning Overlay, and Seawater Intrusion Policy  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 3:12:32 PM

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Dear Commissioners, and planning officials,

My name is Virginia Orsini, and I have lived at 4971 Guemes Island Road, which is on the water side of what is called "North Beach", for 26 years. I have been coming to Guemes for just under 50 years. My husband grew up on the Island, and first came in the mid 1950's. We have seen many changes to the island in that period of time. I would like to comment in favor of adopting, and implementing the Guemes Island Subarea Plan, the zoning overlay, and the Seawater Intrusion Policy.

About 20 years ago we positively greeted the decision by Growth Management that precipitated the formation of the Guemes Island Planning Advisory Committee (GIPAC). The people who turned out for those first planning sessions were from all factions of Guemes Island, but their purposes were clear - to maintain the rural character of the island, and the sense of community that attracted people to live on the island. Elections were held to establish those who would go on and represent the islanders, and their concerns in the planning process. Those people who were elected represented a broad range of backgrounds, socio-economic groups, political leanings, and also a range of new and established residents. They also brought a broad range of skills to the planning process. It was an impressive group of individuals including engineers, community planners, farmers, biologists, business people, lawyers, and environmentalists.

We were particularly interested to see a Seawater Intrusion Policy established because we were dealing with increasing well failures on the narrow north end of the island as more and more lots were developed along the waterfront. There was no policy which would help mitigate the growing scarcity of potable water, although the state guaranteed our water quality.

In the interceding years, there have been various growth issues that have been addressed within, and outside this committee. The committee members have changed, but still the group attracts serious-minded, careful, and cooperative individuals to carry on the planning process. There have been grants attained to help study various components of future planning. One grant from the Architects Institute of America attracted a lot of attention among islanders, and they were reenergized to focus on the growth questions and solutions generated by the study.

The planning process for this Subarea Plan has been long and arduous. Those people elected to represent the islanders as a whole have listened, studied, cooperated, compromised, and argued for sensible planning guidelines. They have always held the original goal in mind.

It is understandable that some people choose not to be directly involved in the tedious process of creating this plan. But it is not alright for them to accuse the committee of not informing them of the proceedings. Regular meetings are held, advertised, and completely open to the public. It is the time when concerned individuals need to show up to the meeting and address their concerns. The committee is there to listen to them. This committee has also been open to any private correspondence from individuals with a concern. They have worked very hard to create positive options for frustrated plans. If someone is new to the island, it is their responsibility to acquaint themselves of any plans and processes that can affect them. The onus should also be on any real estate agents to acquaint themselves of the history and limitations of any property they sell, so new buyers can come into the area with their eyes wide open.

I applaud the work of all the people who have worked over the years to bring a plan to the stage of implementation, and hope that the Commissioners vote to adopt the Guemes Island Subarea Plan, zoning overlay, and Seawater Intrusion Policy.

Sincerely,

Virginia Orsini

**From:** [Duane](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Cc:** [Jim Souders](#); [DAVID A Malmquist](#)  
**Subject:** pds comments  
**Date:** Monday, June 20, 2016 9:07:41 PM

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As a property owner on West Beach I am opposed to the restrictions proposed by GIPAC and would echo the comments made by Mark Madden as to the lack of necessity for such restrictions and lack of any real benefits.

I am sure other members of our water association would express similar views!

Duane Pearson  
2406 West Shore Road

**From:** [Debra L. Nicholson](mailto:Debra.L.Nicholson)  
**To:** [Debra L. Nicholson](mailto:Debra.L.Nicholson)  
**Subject:** FW: PDS Comments  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 11:44:45 AM

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**From:** [website@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:website@co.skagit.wa.us) [<mailto:website@co.skagit.wa.us>]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 20, 2016 9:25 PM  
**To:** Planning & Development Services  
**Subject:** PDS Comments

Name : DUANE PEARSON  
Address : 9329 62ND PLACE WEST  
City : MUKILTEO  
State : WA  
Zip : 98275  
email : [dlpearson11@frontier.com](mailto:dlpearson11@frontier.com)  
Phone : 425-293-8539

PermitProposal : GIPAC Restrictions

Comments : I'd like to add to my earlier response that I also agree with the comments you received from Ed Frank, my neighbor.

Duane Pearson  
2406 West Shore Road

From Host Address: 50.46.185.35

Date and time received: 6/20/2016 9:21:22 PM

**From:** [Susan](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Implementation SAP  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 9:02:19 PM

---

My name is Susan Rombeek.

I live at 7378 Ocean Acres Lane on Guemes Island.

We have owned property in Ocean Acres since 1968 and retired in 1992 to live full time on Guemes Island.

I fully support the Implementation of the Subarea Plan (SAP).

I would like to have the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay and Seawater Extension Policy to be adopted.

For over 20 years many dedicated islanders have worked on this plan to preserve the look and peaceful character of our island.

I so dearly appreciate the rural distinctive quality of Guemes Island and would hate to see it disappear.

Sincerely,  
Susan Rombeek

**From:** [Debra L. Nicholson](mailto:Debra.L.Nicholson)  
**To:** [Debra L. Nicholson](mailto:Debra.L.Nicholson)  
**Subject:** FW: comments for Guemes Island Subarea Plan  
**Date:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 12:36:53 PM

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**From:** Colleen Sargent [<mailto:colleen@colleensargent.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 23, 2016 12:10 PM  
**To:** Planning & Development Services  
**Subject:** comments for Guemes Island Subarea Plan

Attached please find my letter of concern regarding some elements of the Guemes Island Subarea Plan. Please forward and submit to all involved in the decision process accepting comments from the public and property owners on Guemes Island.

Thank you,  
Colleen Sargent

--

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June 22, 2016

TO: Planning and Development Services

From: Colleen Sargent

RE: Guemes Island Subarea Plan changes

Dear County staff and Commissioners,

I am a property owner on Guemes island of a 5 acre parcel as well as a local Realtor.

I am writing because there are elements of the Guemes Island Subarea Plan that I think should not be considered as written and I will briefly identify my concerns.

**1. Dimensional Standards**

Overall zoning on Guemes Island is not 10 acre minimum, however we have many properties that are "grandfathered in". The range in properties can be from narrow 50 foot lots on no bank waterfront to rocky acreage parcels and most any combination in between.

**The county has in place some very good standards for development requirements, critical area reviews, and building standards.** It seems unnecessary to me and in fact detrimental in my opinion to enact the proposed changes for Setbacks and Height.

Neighborhoods and individual property owners have the option to impose additional building restriction by amending or creating covenants that go with the land. If the goal is view protection, than that should be done in this way, not imposing a set of rules for the few. The 12 foot height restriction with some adjustments for further setback are very imposing and will create less than attractive homes with minimal ceiling heights. As a point of reference, in Anacortes in Skyline the height restriction imposed by their local covenants for view protection is 14 feet from the highest point of the lot.

**Please do not endorse the changes to the dimensional Standards.** These rules seem like Spot Zoning requirements to me.

I do not support the idea that a variance is the answer to allowing a property owner, or potential property owner the ability to get a change from the proposed new dimensional standards. When involved with architectural design and site plans, it should not routinely be a moving target of what may and may not be allowed. Design is expensive and potential buyers (and there sellers) do not want to spend months on plans and waiting for a variance for a height restriction or setback of something that should fit within our current code requirements.

**2. Development Standards for Wells**

*I am hopeful some well drillers can provide more informed responses to this point however her are my concerns.*

*The way 3 (b) is written it infers that a reverse osmosis system may not be allowable on an existing well or without effluent discharge to the open sea. I suspect there are homes that could do a good job of using an RO system to improve their water quality, but may not have the easement for returning the effluent directly to the open sea. Might there be some alternative consideration?*

*Thank you, Colleen Sargent*

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Colleen Sargent". The signature is written in black ink and features a long, sweeping horizontal line that extends to the right, crossing over the end of the name.

**From:** [Barbara Schnabel](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Guemes Subarea Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 3:32:36 PM

---

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing in full support of the Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee (GIPAC) and the implementation of the adopted Guemes Island Subarea Plan. In addition, I urge you to enact the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay as proposed. As you are no doubt aware, many people have worked long hours on this for a very long time. Others of us have not worked on it, but have supported their efforts as I hope you will do as well.

As an island resident, I am very concerned about Guemes Island having a sole source aquifer. We need to make reasonable plans to protect it and I believe the plan does that.

Thank you.

Barbara M. Schnabel  
5270 South Shore Drive  
Anacortes, WA 98221

**From:** [Mark D. Spahr](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** KEEP Guemes Subarea Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 5:19:48 PM

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For 20 years the Guemes Island Subarea Plan has been worked on and recommended to preserve the natural resources of Guemes Island. The Plan was adopted by the Skagit County Board of Commissioners for the last 5 years. Potable water is essential to all who live on Guemes Island, so the recommendations of the Plan need to be maintained to protect all current and future residents.

Mark and Cecilia Spahr, residents since 1983

**From:** [Carol Steffy](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** Guemes Island Sub Area Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2016 8:23:43 AM

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June 22, 2016

I fully support the Guemes Island Planning and Advisory Committee (GIPAC) and implementation of the adopted Guemes Island Subarea Plan (SAP). Please enact the Guemes Island Zoning Overlay as proposed.

I have been both a recreational user of the island, then after retiring, a permanent resident of Guemes with 20 plus years on the island. The attributes of the island/island life that I value most are the combination of a rural setting and the marine environment. The island is just the right size to integrate both. The Guemes Island Zoning Overlay is critical to preserving the rural character of the island. We do not want to turn the island into a Seattle type suburb.

Our SAP focus is to protect the rural character of the island, just as a major goal of County's Comprehensive Plan is to protect the rural character of Skagit County. Most houses on the island are one-and-a-half stories high. In developing the SAP, it became clear that most islanders want to keep the modest scale of development. Islanders are concerned about the impact of more people or different zoning to our sole source aquifer, as large new homes replace smaller older homes, requiring larger withdrawals of water from the already compromised aquifer.

Please support the Guemes Sub Area Plan.

Sincerely,

Carol M Steffy

7027 Holiday Blvd.  
Anacortes, WA 98221  
206-661-1161

**From:** [patricia waller](#)  
**To:** [PDS comments](#)  
**Subject:** GIPAC concerns  
**Date:** Saturday, June 18, 2016 1:49:55 PM

---

As a family resident/owner of property on the west beach of Guemes Island since 1968, I am concerned that the GIPAC Board represents themselves as speaking for "us all". They don't. There are many details of their proposal and those of the county of which we have not been made aware. I am hopeful that you will listen to the input of ALL the citizens of Guemes Island before making any definite decisions. Thank you.

Sincerley,

Patsi Waller

Sent from my iPad