

**Skagit County Planning Commission
Presentation: 2025 Comp Plan Update
Presentation: 2025 – 2030 TIP Update
September 24, 2024**

Planning

Commissioners: Kathy Mitchell, District 1
Vince Henley, District 1
Angela Day, District 1
Amy Hughes, District 2
Tim Raschko, Chair, District 2
Joe Woodmansee, District 2 (absent)
Tammy Candler, Vice Chair, District 3
Jen Hutchison, District 3 (absent)
Kiera Wright, District 3

PDS Staff: Robby Eckroth, Senior Planner
Tara Satushek, Senior Planner

Public Works Staff: Forrest Jones, Transportation Programs Section Manager
Tom Weller, County Assistant Engineer

Consultants: Chris Comeau, Transpo Group
Erin O’Kelly, Kimley-Horn

Chair Tim Raschko: (gavel) Good evening, everybody. The September 24th, 2024, meeting of the Skagit County Planning Commission is now in session. I request a motion to approve the minutes of September 10th, please.

Commissioner Vince Henley: I so move.

Commissioner Kathy Mitchell: Second.

Chair Raschko: It’s moved and seconded to approve the minutes. Any discussion? Corrections? Yeah?

Commissioner Angela Day: I have a question.

Chair Raschko: Commissioner?

Commissioner Day: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I had a question. I’m sorry. I’ve not had access to my email today, so I sent a message to Robby regarding the discussion about holding a public hearing and deliberations on the same evening. At the prior meeting we discussed that and I was thinking that we would leave it open to trying a public hearing and deliberations in the same meeting, assuming that we have the appropriate public notice and if it was an appropriate topic for that. And I didn’t see that reflected in the minutes and so I’m just wondering if that should be or if I didn’t understand that correctly.

Tara Satushek: Yes, thank you. I did send you an email with the corrected minutes.

Commissioner Day: I'm so sorry.

Ms. Satushek: And I just wanted to make sure that they were okay. But the Commissioners right now have the corrected minutes –

Commissioner Day: Okay.

Ms. Satushek: – which add in the following. At the last part of it with the Commissioners' Comments it adds on about: It would be beneficial to have a public hearing and deliberations at the following meeting for additional time for public comment, and combining a public comment and deliberations on the same meeting was common practice in other jurisdictions. Depending on the scale and scope of the proposal, the Planning Commission could conduct a public hearing and deliberations at the same meeting, given appropriate public notice and public comment.

Commissioner Day: Thank you, Tara.

Ms. Satushek: You're welcome.

Commissioner Day: I just wanted to make sure the other Commissioners _____.

Chair Raschko: Is there any more discussion of that or anything else in the minutes?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: Okay, so we are voting to approve the corrected minutes, okay? So all those in favor, say "aye."

Multiple Commissioners: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Opposed?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: So thank you. We have time tonight for Public Remarks. This is an opportunity for anybody to speak to the Planning Commission about any topic except items scheduled on the agenda for a public hearing the same day or items that have had a public hearing and are still under Planning Commission deliberation. Public Remarks is not part of the formal public participation process for any development regulation or Comprehensive Plan amendment project. It's limited to three minutes and up to 15 minutes total. So is there anybody who wishes to speak to the Planning Commission?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: Nobody. Is there anybody online, Tara?

Ms. Satushek: If there's anybody online that would like to address the Planning Commission, please unmute yourself or raise your hand.

(silence)

Ms. Satushek: It doesn't appear to be anybody online who would like to provide a comment.

Chair Raschko: Okay, thank you. Well, that concludes Public Remarks. Tonight I'm very happy to introduce a new member of the Planning Commission, Kiera Wright. And would you like to take a few moments and just say a few things about yourself?

Commissioner Kiera Wright: Sure. Thank you. Welcome. I'm Kiera Wright. I'm a District 3 representative, I guess is my official term. I'm in the City of Burlington. I work here in Mount Vernon. I've been here for about 10 years now and I'm really excited to engage in this process and learn and be able to help with communication and forward movement of our beautiful county. Thank you for having me.

Chair Raschko: Well, thank you and welcome.

Commissioner Wright: Thank you.

Chair Raschko: We'll now turn to our remaining items, the 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update and Preliminary Draft Policy Amendments for the Transportation, Capital Facilities, and Utilities Elements. Tonight we have Mr. Chris Comeau – I hope I said that right –

Chris Comeau: Yes, close enough.

Chair Raschko: – from the Transpo Group, and who have we at the podium?

Erin O'Kelly: Hi, sorry. Erin O'Kelly, with Kimley-Horn.

Chair Raschko: Please go ahead. Thank you.

Ms. O'Kelly: Thank you very much. Typically at these meetings we have Clay White, the project manager from Kimley-Horn, here to present and introduce the project. You'll forgive us, but Clay White couldn't make it at the meeting tonight so I hope you're okay. I'm going to just briefly run through the introduction of the project before we turn it over to discuss the preliminary draft of the transportation policies. We will also briefly be discussing the preliminary draft of the capital facilities policies very quickly.

Just for anyone that is on the meeting online or hasn't been here tonight, we just wanted to briefly discuss the project schedule community engagement up until this point just for anyone that hasn't been at these meetings previously. We are currently in the process of drafting policies for the Comprehensive Plan. At the previous Planning Commission meetings in July and August, we discussed land use policies and housing policies. So we will continue to be drafting policies and present them in October as well, and then work with the County staff to refine the policies after taking preliminary comments from the public and from the Planning Commission at these meetings.

So you can see our general schedule on here. We incorporate comments into the winter. We do have an estimated time to release a full draft in the winter, early 2025. And this is just a more detailed explanation of the preliminary policy drafting process for the month of September. We're talking about transportation policy changes and capital facility and utility policy changes. For each of these months that we're presenting these policies, we do have a public comment period that starts the day that we discuss the policies with the Planning Commission, and then it is open for

30 days for the public. So we do have some details on here for the public to submit comments on the drafted preliminary draft policies that are discussed at these Planning Commission meetings.

The community engagement: We do have some updates on the community engagement that we've done so far for this project. We're very excited to say that we have released the updated Community Engagement Report that has the results from the June stakeholder interviews and from the June open house. So now up until this point we have the survey that was released that you guys got the results on that was released between April and May. We also did some pop-up events at the communities in the spring, and then in June we had the stakeholder interviews discussing agriculture, environment, housing, and economic development. And then at the end of June we had the open house that we had in Anacortes, Sedro-Woolley, and – I'm sorry; I cannot – Concrete. So we have the results produced in the updated Community Engagement Report for anyone. If you're listening online or in the room, you can download the Community Engagement Report online. It's in the exhibits for this meeting and then it's also available on the project website for the Comprehensive Plan.

There are quite a few – basically the Community Engagement Report is really meant to state all the information we gathered so far from the public. We do provide summaries in the Engagement Report, basically on the goals that we were trying to accomplish for each community engagement initiative. So the purpose of the stakeholder interviews we kind of explain the engagement strategy behind that and then we talk about all the information that we got collected in the report. And then we provide some additional summaries. Really the benefit of this report is to present to the Planning Commission so that you guys can compare the preliminary draft policies and review the community engagement data and just make sure that we are writing policies that is in the best interest and what the community has provided feedback on. So we have heavily reviewed it and we have incorporated changes into the policies as a result of the community engagement feedback, but we do just want people to go look through the feedback themselves (and) make sure that we are upholding the community voice in these preliminary draft policies.

And so in all of the results we've collected so far, I just wanted to kind of briefly explain what we've gathered so far from the community engagement data and how you will see it so far incorporated into the preliminary draft policies. So based on the community engagement data, we obviously in Skagit County got a lot of feedback about preserving agricultural lands and industries, environmental preservation, and rural character. So as you will have seen at these meetings, all of our changes to the policies have been trying to maintain the standards around agricultural lands in the current Comprehensive Plan, as well as rural character and environmental preservation.

And then the policies have been kind of reviewed for improvement under the following categories of housing options, which we discussed at the meeting last month; and then transportation options, as we'll discuss tonight; facilities and services; and then we did get a lot of community feedback around the policies that you'll be discussing in the next month around community resilience, public safety, and risk from hazards. And that's kind of all focused around the climate and resiliency element that is now required by the state.

So those are the general trends, and the preliminary draft policies that are presented next month will focus on the community resilience public safety risk from hazards. Tonight we're really just talking about the transportation options and the facilities and services tonight.

And then I briefly just want to reiterate all of the consultants' approach to policy revisions. So, again, we want to make sure that we are creating goals and policies that reflect the community vision for Skagit County. We want to ensure that we are creating policies that are consistent with

the Growth Management Act – not only consistent with the GMA but also our regional partners – regional transportation and SCOG, and then consistent with the Countywide Planning Policies. So we do that first, initial look through and definitely our first review of the policies is making sure, Is it meeting state requirements and is it meeting our regional plans and Countywide Planning Policies? And then additionally beyond that review we always want to streamline the policies for efficiency. We want to make them feasible and implementable by the County. So you'll see common revisions to the policies will be trying to make it more actionable, trying to improve or create active verbs, make it more feasible to accomplish over the next 10 years.

And with that being said, I'm going to turn it over to Chris, who will discuss the transportation policies.

Mr. Comeau: Thank you, Erin, and good evening, everybody. My name is Chris Comeau. I'm with Transpo Group Consulting firm and I'm going to walk you through – do I just hit these arrows here to advance? Okay. There we go. So as Erin was mentioning, we're going to go through the Transportation Element policies. This is kind of a high level review. But we want to make sure that you understand that there are some pretty key changes that have happened. There's key requirements. There's key recommendations from all sorts of different angles. And it's pretty important to understand all that background as we go into the review of the policies.

There are some recommendations for change, but generally speaking Skagit County's in pretty good shape when it comes to goals and policies. You've got a lot in there. There's certainly a couple schools of thought as to whether, you know, less is more. You can certainly have a policy for everything under the sun, but sometimes it's good to be succinct and to the point and not have too many. You want to try to imagine who the audiences are, who's going to use the document. Is it just going to be elected officials and staff, or is it also for the public and trying to educate them in terms of what's going on?

So we're going to dive in and I'm just going to let you know that over the past two years there's been quite a few changes in the Growth Management Act, as well as several RCWs in state law. And on the left side of the screen here, under Transportation Policies, you start with the high level GMA stuff. And generally speaking, in the transportation sense over the last 20 years things have gone from very auto-oriented to what we call "multimodal," meaning all modes of transportation. And the four big modes are automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit. There's others in there and these days we use the term "rolling" to refer to things like wheelchairs and mobility devices, which are increasingly important as we plan for our senior populations and people with mobility challenges.

Speaking to which, there's also a new requirement in the Growth Management Act around the Americans with Disabilities Act: transition plans. That's a requirement of the Growth Management Act now, so Skagit County has one. Transpo helped produce that for Skagit County. We're integrating that into the Transportation Element. You're going to hear more about that in a little bit.

The Growth Management Act also now requires a new Climate Element through House Bill 1181 and that included a provision to create multimodal levels of service. You may have heard the term "levels of service" in the past with specifically pertaining or primarily pertaining to *vehicle* level of service. And that's still the case, but now they want you to broaden it – include the other modes of transportation and establish standards for those. And we'll talk about that later.

Related to that, we're talking about creating an active transportation network throughout the county. And Skagit County has a nonmotorized plan that's been part of the transportation element for some time. We're taking that to the next step in trying to make it a little bit more formal and then base some of these standards and some policies around that. And we'll talk about that a little bit more.

Importantly, at the national level and the state level you've probably heard the phrase or term "Complete Streets." And that's very important these days when it comes to planning for new infrastructure as well as obtaining grant funding through state and federal agencies. These days you almost can't get money if you're not approaching transportation from a Complete Streets or active transportation standpoint.

Another thing that's really important relating to Complete Streets and vulnerable users is about state highways, which Skagit County has plenty. There were some changes to the RCWs in 2022. Now for any state highway project that costs over \$500,000 the state is mandated to come at that from a Complete Streets standpoint. So even though it's a state highway, they need to look at providing the types of facilities people would use for walking and biking, especially if you're near an urban area or a population center. And we'll show you a graphic about that here in a little bit. In addition to that, in terms of safety you've probably heard the term "target zero" as it relates to the state's Strategic Highway Safety Plan. And there was an addendum made to the Target Zero highway plan. It was an assessment for vulnerable road users. And that adopted something called the "safe systems" approach to planning. And what that does is it instead of just looking where collisions have happened, it's looking at the circumstances around the collision – the locational criteria and things like that – and then looking for other places on a network where you're seeing the same kind of characteristics or risks, taking a more systemic approach and saying, Well, before something happens over here in this location where we see the same kind of thing happening, let's go address that. And so you can be a little more proactive instead of reactive with addressing safety issues.

That's a really big thing in transportation planning these days and a lot of money is in the safety realm these days. Importantly from a land use standpoint – and this is baked into the Growth Management Act – it's the integration of land use and transportation. And the very first sentence of the requirements for the Transportation Element are (sic) that the Transportation Element is supposed to implement the Land Use Element. And so it's critical that we understand what's going on from a land use standpoint where the development's happening, where people live, where they're trying to get to so we can design a transportation system that will help people get to those places they're trying to get to. Keep them safe and comfortable and that helps improve their quality of life.

We want to – we're going to be talking about a couple new things related to the climate element that I mentioned. House Bill 1181 now requires a new climate element. For certain places and population thresholds there's some differences, but for the County the County needs to look at reducing vehicle miles travelled. That's a measurement or a metric that is looked at through the modeling and usually when you're looking at a 20-year timeframe like we are in the Transportation Element, you're usually talking about generally an increase in vehicle miles travelled. Well, the state and best practices want us to look at, How can we potentially reduce that? Maybe you're still going to get an increase but not *as much* of an increase. It depends on the land use alternatives you look at and where the growth and population distribution is happening.

Land use and land use patterns and development are the most effective way to reduce vehicle miles travelled, and that can happen through using mixed use development; locating where

people live close to where they work, shop, play, et cetera; shorter trips; less time in a car. That's going to get at reduced miles travelled. And related to that are the emissions that come out of those vehicles and that's the greenhouse gas emissions requirement to try to reduce those over time consistent with state goals and, obviously, the climate impacts.

On the right side of the screen, you've got a number of legislative changes that happened. I've already kind of referenced a few of those. I'm not going to read those, but that's just for your reference.

And as I mentioned, in the Growth Management Act the first requirement of the Transportation Element is to implement the Land Use Element, and then underneath that in red text you can see a number of other really key requirements. I've already mentioned multimodal levels of service and active transportation facilities, multimodal standards for highways. There's also some language about concurrency. Concurrency is the notion that land use and transportation should be balanced essentially. You want your transportation system to be able to transport people to where they want to go and not be overburdened. So you don't want so much growth happening that people can't get where they want to go, but you don't want to overbuild your system and waste a lot of money in the process. So it's trying to balance that equation of land use and transportation.

And of course the big deal with transportation is *how* the system is being used, how efficiently, how effectively. And there's many ways to look at that. This graphic is just kind of implying that, well, we could talk about our transportation system as a system for moving vehicles or moving *people*. If you think about it as moving vehicles, on the far right you can see that the road quickly fills up with cars. Unfortunately, there's usually only about one to one-and-a-half people in those cars, so from a people-moving standpoint it's not very efficient. If you look at it from a people-moving standpoint, there's lots of ways to move more people with less vehicles. And again, we're trying to balance the equation. Somewhere in between is probably the right option, and of course every place is different. We are always interested in the context of a place that we're working because no transportation system is exactly like another. They're all unique in their own rights.

Getting into some of the policies, we mentioned the multimodal levels of service, and the way that we're approaching that, especially in a large geographic area like a county, we are trying to develop what we call an active transportation system. And that's basically creating a basic network for walking and biking, and that can include a number of roads. And we just want to ask the question: Number one, where are people trying to get to? How could they potentially do that safely and comfortably? What kinds of facilities might be needed to do that? And then in order for us to establish these level of service standards, which, in the legal language are designed to do nothing more than – they're a gauge to judge the performance of the system. It's nothing more than that. It's a way for a community to kind of establish a baseline and then on a regular basis go measure that and find out where you're at, what kind of progress you're making, and what can you do to change that? What kind of strategic changes can you make to improve that or maintain what you're doing?

And so what we're doing is saying, Okay, here's the network. We're going to look at what parts of it are complete? What parts of it are substandard? And what parts of it are missing? And you've got – the key here is green, orange, and red. Just like a traffic signal. So if it's complete, it's green; if it's substandard or missing something partially, it's an orange or a yellow; and then red indicates there's a gap or some kind of missing piece of the network there. And so every year the idea is as Forrest and his crew put together the annual concurrency report, that report, which has primarily been about vehicle travel, will be enhanced to include active transportation and transit –

again, just reporting the status, the progress of building out the network and what shape that's in. It's a simple spreadsheet and GIS exercise. It doesn't take a lot of time. It's not going to be a thick volume. It's going to be a few pages. But it will go towards what you're going to hear about later tonight: As the County starts to prepare the Six-Year TIP annually, this kind of information will go into helping the County understand what kind of transportation investments it should be making to help build out the active transportation network, as well as maybe some transit-supportive things or safety-related things, and that can go into the decisions that are made in the annual Six-Year TIP process.

So related to transit, I mentioned the Americans with Disability Act requirement in the Growth Management Act. The County is required to do that. And the County doesn't provide transit but the GMA says the County needs to work with the transit agency to establish level of service standards in order for mutual benefit to be provided. What the County does control is the public right-of-way that transit operates within and so if the County focuses on using transit as a way to prioritize *where* it's making ADA investments on the transportation network, then both agencies benefit. The County can, you know, go make ADA upgrades at all the Skagit Transit bus stops on the active transportation network or other places. The transit agency benefits because transit is made safer, more comfortable, more accessible for people who need those things, and the County is getting its ADA transition plan completed. So that's kind of a mutual benefit. That's how we're approaching the transit level of service – working *with* Skagit Transit to try to make that happen.

So, again, this is just giving you kind of a high level idea of what you'll find in the policies in terms of recommendations for change. We're talking about the active transportation network. It's really about creating a network and then looking at, How do we go about completing this? Over the course of 20 years maybe you can complete the entire network, maybe you can't. Obviously there's a balancing of well, how big is the network? How much is it going to cost? That's another really important thing with these transportation elements. In the end you have to balance, Well, what can we afford versus what do we say we want? And the equation has to balance. If you don't have enough money you've got to go back and peel the layers back until you can get within what you can afford. You can always have more identified, but you would say, We're not going to commit to that in this 20-year planning horizon. We're going to do as much as we can and then beyond that if a magic pot of money fell out of the sky, excellent, we'll go do that stuff. But this is what we're going to commit to.

So that's where we're coming from with the active transportation network piece. This third bullet down is talking about how traffic congestion is not going to be the primary consideration in terms of looking at transportation investment. It's also about safety and completing the active transportation network. We've already mentioned the annual concurrency report – how that would work. It's going to continue to look at road segments, intersections, and other things that it always has, but in addition to that it's going to look at active transportation and transit and hopefully help the County make more informed investments.

Now this concept, I feel like it really needs a graphic to really kind of get the message across in terms of how it works, what we're talking about. I've got Anacortes shown here. We're also updating the City of Anacortes's transportation element and we're doing the same thing there, and I just wanted you to see. So this is how that plays out. Everything that's in green is complete. It has sidewalks and bikeways in place. The segments of orange are pieces where part of that is missing. Maybe there's a gap in the sidewalk or maybe there's not a bike lane on that particular street. And in the red, it's just missing. There's not anything there. And what you'll notice is you'll see there's a lot of section of state highway there. It's not the City's or the County's responsibility

to put those kinds of facilities on the state highways, but you could certainly work with the state to try to make that happen. And as we have already talked about, the state has these mandates to go do these things on state highways. Those are their own mandates, and we'll talk about that here in just a second. But this is the idea. This is how we're trying to illustrate it and show people how it would work. So every year in the annual concurrency report you'd see a map that looks like this. It's showing the status, where there's pieces missing, where maybe you want to go make an investment if there's money available or put something in the six-year TIP that might be a good grant-funding candidate, because maybe there's money available at the state or federal level and you can go and get outside money to do that. So that's the purpose this serves.

So related to the state highways, these are the RCW and DOT mandates that I've been talking about. This literally requires the state to go out and make sure that there is pedestrian and bicycle facilities on the state highways, especially near the urban areas. And DOT has its own active transportation plan that was passed in 2020 that goes even further and says that these need to be robust pedestrian/bicycle facilities or trail networks alongside the highway. And this is – particularly pertains in census-designated places or population centers. And for Skagit Valley/Skagit County, this is what that looks like. In the pink or red color is the urban incorporated areas and then outside of that are population centers shown in yellow. Those aren't incorporated areas, but in Skagit County this is where the state – if there's a state highway going through any of these places – is mandated to look at the state highways and that Complete Streets are active transportation fashion.

So when it comes to Complete Streets and vulnerable roadway users, this is what we're talking about. Obviously people walking or rolling in a wheelchair on a street are more vulnerable than people in a car. There's no protection for people walking or biking like there is in a car. They're not wrapped in a metal shell so they're exposed and they're vulnerable. And from a safety standpoint, this is where everything is pointed these days from a grant-funding standpoint. If you want to be successful with grants, you've got to address safety and active transportation. And what this is suggesting is if we make the system safe for people who are the most vulnerable, it'll be safe for everybody.

So related to that, Skagit County does not currently have a Complete Streets ordinance but that can certainly happen, and if you do that it will make you eligible automatically to apply for TIV Complete Streets grants up to a million dollars per year. And so that's an opportunity that the County has before it, so there's a recommendation for a policy to do just that. There's no timeline. It just says that's something that the County should do.

Then there's a bunch of other things in here that relate to what we've been talking about in terms of the state highways and Complete Streets. Talking about vehicular standards not being the overriding factor in relation to the Six-Year TIP in how transportation investments are made. And then all of the other policies will be given equal consideration to vehicle LOS. Vehicle LOS for a very long time has been the main reason that investments are made in the transportation system. In big geographic areas like counties it makes all the sense in the world that a lot of your network's going to have needs around the vehicle, but there's also needs for the other modes.

And the last thing you see here again is just getting back to "active transportation" replacing the term "nonmotorized" in all of the County documents pertaining to transportation.

And I think – whoop, there's a few more there. Just some recommendations. Right-of-way just not for vehicular needs but active transportation. We've already talked about improvement strategies and investments, especially in urban growth areas, whether they're incorporated or not.

That's where the most people live, that's where the most facilities are going to be needed for walking and biking and things like that.

And then as it relates to development, in addition to vehicular needs for impact fees, there was also some legislative changes that now allow pedestrian and bicycle facilities to be added to impact fee project lists. The County does not currently charge transportation impact fees but uses them as mitigation in other places.

And that's it for transportation. I'd be happy to answer any kind of questions you might have at this point.

Vice Chair Tammy Candler: I have a question. Would you be willing to go back to the inverted pyramid slide?

Mr. Comeau: Sure.

Vice Chair Candler: So I understood what you were saying is pedestrians, as from a safety standpoint, are more vulnerable – bicycles are more vulnerable than people who have metal protection. But how is a commercial or freight vehicle situated different – higher, I guess, in the pyramid than a single-occupancy vehicle? I feel like that would be – are those known to be fragile or – what are we talking about?

Mr. Comeau: And that's not necessarily about vulnerability. It's talking about relative priorities in terms of your transportation system from an economic development standpoint might have more value in terms of moving freight and goods than somebody – a single person, single occupant in a vehicle.

Vice Chair Candler: Okay, so that's *not* a safety issue. That's a value judgment on – based on –

Mr. Comeau: It's talking about who you're prioritizing the system for. And so people who are making choices to get in their car by themselves and go places would be the lowest priority essentially, is what this is implying.

Vice Chair Candler: Regardless of whether they might live, you know, an hour away.

Mr. Comeau: Well, there may be very good reasons for that but that's not why you would choose to make an investment by itself is what it's getting at. Whereas in the past, vehicles – single occupants or not – has been the main reason to make transportation investments. And essentially it's, in the industry, flipped upside down.

Vice Chair Candler: No, I see that. I'm just wondering – because I thought you were tying this graph to safety and I didn't understand that.

Mr. Comeau: Well, it is in a way. And again, vulnerability and safety is at the top layer. That's where all the money is these days.

Vice Chair Candler: Okay. And can you go to I think it was the last slide. Right there. There we go. The Right-of-Way Dedication. This I didn't understand quite. "The County shall require dedication of right-of-way for multimodal transportation improvements."

Mr. Comeau: If you read what it used to say, it said “for needed roads.” It’s like, okay, but it’s not just about roads for vehicles. It’s about right-of-way being used for transportation for all modes.

Vice Chair Candler: But roads versus paths or –

Mr. Comeau: It could be a road but it would need to have bike lanes and sidewalks, or it could be a multiuse path, all within the public right-of-way, but not just dedicated space for vehicles.

Vice Chair Candler: Okay, so it sounds like it’s not suggesting that the lane of travel that we think of as a vehicle travelling down the road is something that –

Mr. Comeau: The change that’s recommended –

Vice Chair Candler: – is expected to be shared.

Mr. Comeau: It’s just trying to broaden what in the past has been kind of focused on roads, which is typically meant for vehicle travel. It’s just trying to get people used to the idea that the public right-of-way can be used for whatever the County deems the most important, which is travel for people using any mode of transportation that’s available.

Vice Chair Candler: Okay, but I’m assuming for safety reasons you’re not talking about a walking lane, a bike lane, and a vehicle lane all being conjoined.

Mr. Comeau: It certainly could be.

Vice Chair Candler: Okay.

Mr. Comeau: There’s no reason why you couldn’t have a curb, a sidewalk, and a dedicated bike lane on the edge of the vehicle lane.

Vice Chair Candler: A dedicated bike lane is not what I was talking about. I was talking about one lane. For safety reasons we wouldn’t be –

Mr. Comeau: It’s not suggesting to change the configuration of the vehicle lanes. It’s saying that the public right-of-way should be used for more than just vehicle travel. The term “roads” is just kind of a historic implication of “this is for vehicle space.”

Vice Chair Candler: Okay, because I was thinking a road could be used for a bike lane. That would still be a road.

Mr. Comeau: Sure.

Vice Chair Candler: I would _____ Bellingham but _____.

Mr. Comeau: Even so, you would want to add something. If you wanted to leave it as “roads,” it would have to have some language added so that it’s very clear it’s not just a road for cars or trucks.

Vice Chair Candler: Because some people have historically considered that just for vehicles.

Mr. Comeau: That’s just the reality of what it’s historically been referred to.

Vice Chair Candler: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Comeau: Mm-hmm. Okay, Capital Facilities. Oh, I'm sorry.

Commissioner Henley: That's okay. One thing that I haven't heard, as we've gone through this presentation, is a definition of "demand." It seems to me that the most successful systems are those for which there *is* a high demand, but I didn't see any discussion of that or a priority of different kinds of demands, say, for a single-occupancy vehicle over, say, a multi-occupancy vehicle or a bike lane or something like that. I didn't see any definition of that. So we could make all these wonderful systems and spend a lot of money on it but if no one's going to use them or don't want them then it's kind of wasted. So is there a process by which you are able to define the demand so you can prioritize how the dollars get spent?

Mr. Comeau: It's a really excellent point and question, and we go through a modelling process so we've done that. We've looked at the growth allocations for Skagit County and where the growth is supposed to be distributed, which is the first aspect of demand: Where do the people live and where are they trying to go? So the model distributes trips across the transportation network and then it also reports person trips versus vehicle trips so we can get a handle on, Well, what does that look like? Existing conditions versus the future forecast, which is the year 2045 – 20 years from now. And it's a very –

Commissioner Henley: It's kind of hard to predict things that are 20 years in the future.

Mr. Comeau: It's hard to predict what's going to happen next week!

Commissioner Henley: I've done a lot of mathematical modelling in my career so I can assure you that, you know, getting to, you know, 20 years ahead is getting thinner and thinner in terms of probability.

Mr. Comeau: You're absolutely right and I couldn't agree with you more, and I will say that as humans we love to believe that we can predict the future, and we're not that great at it. But this is the exercise that we go through and this is what the state law says, and so that's the exercise that we do. And we're setting the County up – trying to set the County up for success, and the way we do that is to make sure that whatever transportation system the County wants to provide meets all the state law requirements, which includes all of those things for active transportation and multimodal standards. It doesn't mean everybody has to like it. That's what the state law says. And so we're going to try to help you guys design a system for that.

Now in terms of measuring demand for, say, walking and biking, we have to look at a whole bunch of different things. Really it has to do with: Where are people living? Where are the clusters of population? Where are people trying to go? Where are the employment centers? That gives us a lot of information as to where people are trying to get to. But when you also think more broadly than just transportation and think about all the other things that the Growth Management Act requires – land use, housing, climate, all these things together – you also have to think about, All right, well, what is the effect of only providing a transportation system that moves cars?

Commissioner Henley: I can see how this works in an urban environment. But in terms of Skagit County – which is not basically an urban environment. It's mostly rural, all right? – I see less and less demand. I mean, I was talking to Tim earlier. I spent five years living in the Neverlands, and if you know anything about the Netherlands it is very flat. And they probably have more bicycles per capita than any other group of people on the planet, *and* they also have about the densest

population in any of the European countries. I don't think there's one with more density. So that means that destinations are closer together and more feasible, and since the highest elevation of a hill in the Netherlands is probably about two feet it's not going to be a big strain in pedaling your bike to get there. But Skagit County isn't built that way. Skagit County has hills and mountains and all sorts of things that you don't have in the Netherlands. So I was just – you know, I wonder how we're going to shoehorn this sort of urban requirement or urban answer into a suburban or a rural place. I mean, because it just – it doesn't fit. It works in some environments but it isn't necessarily going to work in Skagit County.

Mr. Comeau: Well, it will need to work in the urban portions of Skagit County, including the unincorporated urban growth areas.

Commissioner Henley: But that's a small part of Skagit County.

Mr. Comeau: It is. You're absolutely right, and most of the rest of the county is connected by either long, straight county roads or state highways. And again, that's *not* the County's responsibility to go fix the state highways – just to be really clear on that. And there's probably not a high expectation that that's going to happen anytime soon in the future. But that's what the state *is* saying has to happen if something is going to be done on the state highway.

Commissioner Henley: I understand setting objectives and creating a plan. That I understand. But it still seems to me it's more suited to an urban environment than a rural one.

Mr. Comeau: And it's a great point and you're absolutely right, and that's where the land use and transportation and housing and the climate all comes together. And the Growth Management is very clear. And really, if you think about it, one of the great things about Skagit County or Whatcom County or any of these rural areas trying to preserve rural and agricultural lands, and that means putting more people in these urban centers. That's absolutely key to the county's sustainability.

Commissioner Henley: Well, thank you.

Mr. Comeau: Mm-hmm.

Chair Raschko: Commissioner Day?

Commissioner Day: Oh, I'm sorry. Mr. Comeau, are you available for one more question?

Mr. Comeau: (away from microphone) Oh, yeah. Sure.

Commissioner Day: Thank you. Thank you for your point. I also agree with that. So I guess, you know, you made a comment about people making choices to get in their car. So I guess I'm a bit of a concrete thinker. So I appreciate you explaining the policies and the goals. That was very helpful. And I also agree with Vince's point about this being seemingly more appropriate in urban areas. So as an example, if you had a person living in the west side of this county who wanted to come to this meeting tonight and there's no bus available presently. This person not in a wheelchair but might be visually impaired. And you want to come in in off-peak hours. Assuming there was a bike lane, it'd be pretty hard to ride a bike on a 20-minute drive, especially through farmland. I don't know what the right-of-way looks like there if it's dark and raining. So just asking for a friend, how would that person get here? How would these policies change how that person gets to this meeting and returns home?

Mr. Comeau: That person may not have as many options. And I hate to say that, but that's the reality of the situation you just described. There simply may not be the kind of options available for every individual in Skagit County.

Commissioner Day: So this is mainly targeted, as you said, for the cities and urban growth areas.

Mr. Comeau: I would say yes. Multimodal transportation is most appropriate in the places where the most people are living. And that's because there are more people trying to make more types of trips for different reasons to different destinations. If you live out in the rural areas, I think there's probably not a large expectation that you're doing anything but getting in a car to get to the urban areas for your shopping or work or whatever your purpose is.

Commissioner Day: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Comeau: Yeah.

Chair Raschko: Any other questions? Excuse me. If you can kindly – I'm sure there'll be more.

Mr. Comeau: I'm getting my exercise!

Unidentified Speaker: No, just a quick question. You mentioned grants a lot, and how many of these policies require grants? How when they're not fully funded?

Mr. Comeau: None of the policies require grants, but if the County wishes to get grants then you need to have the policy base to show the grant funding agency that you're serious about making these kinds of investments. You've got something to back it up. You can't even make an application for Complete Streets if you don't have an ordinance. That's literally the first requirement for the TIV grant program. If you want to submit for a state __ school grant or a pedestrian bicycle safety grant through DOT, they will literally ask you the question: Do you have a Complete Streets ordinance? Do you have a local road safety plan? If you want highway safety improvement program money, you have to go create a local road safety plan. And the County has done that *very* successfully for that grant funding program. There's all sorts of requirements you have to engage in to go get the money. It's not the policies that you have to have necessarily to *get* the money, but you definitely have to show that you're serious about making the kind of investment that they're willing to fund.

Same Unidentified Speaker: Thank you.

Mr. Comeau: Any other questions before I sit down again?

Chair Raschko: Anybody else?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: I'd just ask you: Someplace I remember reading that – what was it? – anything over a half-million dollars for a project –

Mr. Comeau: Mm-hmm, that's the state highway. That's the –

Chair Raschko: That's just the state highway?

Mr. Comeau: It is, but if you think about what is spent on state highways that's – like, you want to go put a traffic signal on a state highway, it's at least a half-million dollars.

Chair Raschko: Right.

Mr. Comeau: Or it could be a culvert replacement.

Chair Raschko: But am I understanding it correctly then that you'd have to have this Complete Street thing wherever that traffic light goes or safety improvement or culvert replacement?

Mr. Comeau: That's a DOT requirement. And so what it's saying is that if and when the DOT goes to make a culvert replacement or wishes to change an intersection on a state highway and the project costs over a half-million dollars, which almost all of their projects do, they are required to go look at the project through the lens of Complete Streets. DOT then has to expand the project to make sure it has pedestrian and bicycle facilities. What's really key about the whole thing is it's critical that a community, whether it's the County or a City, identify what they think is needed on that particular stretch of highway because that's what DOT would then have to go build.

Chair Raschko: Okay, so am I correct that this really doesn't affect us?

Mr. Comeau: It does not affect the County directly in terms of the County's responsibility. But obviously as you – if you're – like, say you're in the unincorporated urban growth area over by Bayview or somewhere else, the County does have some responsibility and would want to work with DOT to try to make sure the right things are in place to help the people who live out in that area.

Chair Raschko: Okay, thank you. Anything else?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: Okay, well, thank you very much.

Ms. O'Kelly: I have a lot less to discuss with you tonight regarding the preliminary draft policies for the Capital Facilities and Utilities Element. And there are a few reasons for that. If we're going back to the policy revision approach that I mentioned earlier tonight, we review the policies under any applicable state law revisions that have occurred since the last periodic update. And regarding capital facilities and utilities there have been very little, so for that part of the review we looked through it and we made a couple changes for consistency, but there are not very big bills or policies for capital facilities, like Chris mentioned, that apply to the Transportation Element, so I won't be walking you through any bills or anything like that tonight. And then we do review the policies against all the regional plans, as I mentioned before, in the Countywide Planning Policies, so you will see in some of those exhibits – in the exhibit – a couple of instances where we did revise for consistency with the Countywide Planning Policies.

And then we also revised the Capital Facilities Element in response to changes in growth or anything like that. But as Chris mentioned before and as we discussed already with the Planning Commission, we are obviously looking at a lot of growth during this periodic update to be targeted around the urban growth areas. And so regarding rural facilities or capital facility changes to accommodate growth, there's also very little changes that we contemplated in the element as well. So we did those – we reviewed the policies under those different reviews, And then some additional policy changes that we recommended for the Capital Facilities Element were really just

for efficiency and to make the policies more active, and we also reviewed the policies and kind of removed any outdated applicable – like projects that were from previous periodic updates that we needed to remove. And then we also revised the policies to have that more active voice and kind of remove the passive voice so that they're more – they're going to be accomplished over the next 10-year, 20-year period for implementing.

So that's the review that the policies have been up to until this point. And then we will continue to make sure that the capital facilities policies are integrated with the other policies so if there's any changes to other elements and policies we'll do some further adjustments to the capital facilities elements. But otherwise there's no large state requirements or anything that I plan to discuss with you guys tonight.

We also may continue to work with staff and improve feasibility and implementation of policies if we need to. Let's say we go back next month and discuss capital facilities and we realize we need to kind of up some implementation of some specific facilities, we might make some adjustments for that.

But otherwise that's all I have to present to you tonight about the Capital Facilities Element and the preliminary draft policies we've presented to the Planning Commission for this month. Did you guys have any questions or anything?

Commissioner Mitchell: It's either for you or for Chris. I'm not sure which. Because it was in his portion, but you probably know this too, where "nonmotorized" was changed to "active." Where did that come from? Was that from the state or where?

Ms. O'Kelly: I'll have Chris –

Mr. Comeau: That's industry best practice. It's just that's the common phraseology these days.

Commissioner Mitchell: And how long ago did that come into being?

Mr. Comeau: Five years ago?

Commissioner Mitchell: Okay.

Chair Raschko: Any other questions?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: Okay. Well, thank you very much.

Ms. O'Kelly: Thank you. And that is actually the end of our presentation tonight. How do I get out of this?

Robby Eckroth: I can go up and help you out. Thank you so much, Erin.

Ms. O'Kelly: Okay.

Mr. Eckroth: Thanks so much, Chris.

Chair Raschko: Thank you both. Now a report on the Transportation Improvement Program. Mr. Eckroth.

Mr. Eckroth: So we're actually going to have Forrest Jones with our Public Works staff presenting this. Let's see if we can get in presentation mode, which we were trying to do before.

Forrest Jones: All right. Good evening, Commission. Thanks for having me today. I just wanted to follow up on a thing when you guys were talking/discussing with Chris about state routes.

So SR20 between Burlington and Sedro-Woolley – as you know, we have a trail that runs through there but there's a gap between there. Well, the state is doing a safety project through that corridor. And we brought that up that, Hey, why don't you guys look at this for nonmotorized or active transportation? What a great opportunity to put that in there. Now they're supposed to be looking at that. So just stuff like that.

With that, I'm here to give you guys a presentation on the 2025-2030 Six-Year Transportation Improvement Plan. So the Revised Code of Washington, RCW 36.81.121 requires that all counties do a six-year TIP. This a perpetual advanced six-year plan to coordinate transportation expenditures and plan for roads, bridges, ferries, active transportation, projects seeking grant funding. This is a plan that is linked and consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Capital Facilities Plan by reference.

As a county, we look at certain strategies to put this plan together. We try to leverage available road funds through grant requests. This helps us address more issues and do more projects on our county network. We try to collaborate with regional funding partners and align with priorities and funding opportunities. We assign projects based on the project selection criteria. That criteria that we have is we try to address high risk and collision locations; address infrastructure needs. This allows a – the high risk collision, this allows the County to take a systematic approach in determining specific types of projects to improve overall safety. Chris talked about that – systematic things. It's like looking at accidents not just at one single location, but are we having high run-off-the-road? So we look at it as a whole. Where can we make improvements to fix it as a whole, not just at one spot location?

Address infrastructure needs: At Public Works we rate our roads and work with (the) Operations Division to maintain and improve our roads. We also inspect all of our 110 bridges, reviewing them for safety and repairs.

Level of Service: Chris talked about that a little bit too. So we run an annual concurrency report every year. That's based on volume and a few other thing, so mostly we try to match. If there's a level of service in the Comprehensive Plan and that addresses – if we fall below that level of service then we want to look at that – fix the road and bring that level of service up. And we also leverage grant funding. We look for grants that address a need by the County and apply those to the projects, allowing us to stretch our budget.

When we're determining projects, we do a – we look at these five reports that we do annually or semi-annually. So these reports are the Priority Array; the County Safety Assessment and a Concurrency Assessment – we talked about those a little bit; the Annual Bridge Report; the Fourteen-Year Ferry Plan.

So getting into those a little more in depth, priority programming – the Priority Array. The Public Works generates its report on a biannual schedule. The last one we done was in 2023. We'll be

doing another one in 2025 from our electronic database using data collected throughout the year to determine locations of possible need. This report takes into collisions, traffic volumes, roadway conditions, the geometrics. Is it a local importance? Some of these roads on the Priority Array have been included in the TIP. A lot of them are _____. Francis Road; Cook Road – the interchange there; Bow Hill Road, Francis Road. So...

And I've kind of talked about the County's safety plan. Public Works collects detailed crash information that allows us to review the data and determine crash __ throughout the county. This also allows us to compare crash types when particular crashes may occur on the network. Reduced crash types exceeding the average rate of occurrence targeting crash types and connecting factors allows Skagit to be efficient, cost-effective in identifying and implementing crash reduction strategies throughout the network.

Then the Concurrency. Again, we talked about that. So meeting level of service standards of (C) for all segments of the road and in some cases (D) if the volumes are greater than 7,000 or carry a "freights and goods" designation. Skagit County has an annual count program that provides us data in conjunction with the __ traffic modeling and using the highway capacity manual and modeling software. This kind of helps us plug in all these numbers and, Okay, where are we having the issues here?

So the Annual Bridge Report is another one – the written resume of the findings of the bridge inspection. Federal law requires that all bridges over 20 feet in length be inspected at a minimum every 24 months. If we have a bridge that has a problem, we could increase that to six months or weekly, whatever. It just depends on the bridge. So fortunately we don't have any of those right now.

The Annual Bridge Report is typically completed in late February or early March. Inspections have been completed and inspections reported and finished.

The Fourteen-Year Ferry Plan: RCWs requires that the Fourteen-Year Long Range Capital Improvement Plan, embracing all elements of the ferry system. Staff reviews this document and discusses upcoming projects with the Ferry Division Manager and what is planned.

So those are some of the reports. These reports can be found on our website on Public Works. So if you really want to get into the details, you can go on to the Public Works website and to Transportation Programs and all these reports are there.

Determining Other Sources: We also receive input from County Parks Department and their Capital Facilities Plan and discuss future nonmotorized projects with them. We meet and discuss road safety issues with the Sheriff's Department. And we review available grants. There's a lot of grants; like Chris was saying, Safe Streets. We haven't really pursued those because we don't have a Complete Streets. I will say that we are working with Skagit County governments so we're looking at adopting a countywide Complete Streets. So they're looking into that and all the entities – the local agencies – are discussing that.

So and of course we receive input from citizens and communities. We get calls all the time – Hey, can you guys look at this? There's an issue here – so we go out and look at that.

So the 2025-2030 Six-Year TIP: We're looking at six new projects that are being considered. We have four to six projects that will remain or are carried over, and we have six projects that are being removed.

So the new projects we're looking at are 2025 Asphalt Overlay. This is Farm To Market. It would be from SR20 to Ovenell Road. That gets quick a bit of truck traffic. It beats the Port. And then we have the Transfer Station there, so that's really starting to get a little beat up so we want to take care of that before it gets worse.

Another project we have is Christian Camp Road, a culvert replacement, if you know where Christian Camp Road is in south county – kind of southeast as you're going into Darrington. It's right before you cross over the county line. This road kind of shoots off and goes up into the hills a little bit. So that's a fish passage project so we're seeking grant funding to fix that culvert. One of the things about culverts, once it fails you have to upgrade that culvert to meet fish passage criteria. So we have quite a few of those. If you look in the TIP, you'll find we probably have 15 or so culvert projects. Why that is, we have a lot of failing culverts and we have to upgrade those.

Another project is Cook Road Overlay. So Cook Road Overlay, that'll be from the Sedro-Woolley city limits to south of Green Road, and basically we want to hook that into the Cook Road/I-5 Interchange Project. So when we get that project constructed, we want to kind of do that other one and so basically we'll have a whole new overlay going all the way from I-5 to Sedro-Woolley, plus the improvements we made at the interchange.

District Line Road – Railroad Crossing Safety Improvements. So this comes into the – what I talked about earlier, the SR20 Safety Corridor Project. The state's doing a corridor project there. They're putting in, I think, three roundabouts. Originally they wanted to close District Line Road going to the south. As a county we looked at that. We requested they leave that intersection open, the reason being we've got farmland over there. We've got farmers that go back and forth across and we have other cars that go across, and we didn't want to push everything down to Sterling Road, too. So we're applying for a grant to help pay for that to leave that open so the state can incorporate that into their project.

Then the Fonk Road Culvert Replacement and Road Improvements. And that is just outside of Clear Lake. If you don't know where that is – off of Beaver Lake Road, I believe. So as you're going east-southeast out of Clear Lake, there's a little road, Fonk Road. It's a dead-end road it services with – yeah – 17 homes. So the culvert in that failed. That was part of a FEMA – we had flood issues there that took it out, so we did some temporary fixes on that. So we're working with FEMA trying to get FEMA funding to replace that. It looks like we almost made it to the first step where we could start design on that.

And another FEMA project during the floods was North Fruitdale. Towards the north end of North Fruitdale, Hansen Creek kind of runs along the road. It's quite a high bank, so that eroded and we lost part of the bank, a little bit of the road. Basically we had enough right-of-way to move the road over a little bit but that's not going to be a permanent fix, so we're working with FEMA to get funding to stabilize that embankment and get the road back where it should be.

Some of the plans – notable plans, like I said – I think we had 46 projects that we're carrying over. Some of the notable ones – there's Cook Road/I-5 and the vicinity right there. We're trying to improve that intersection. As anybody that lives in Skagit County that's travelled through there (knows), especially in peak hour, traffic backs up in the morning. It backs up going to the highway, a train comes through: All bets are off! So we actually received about 10 million dollars in grant funding in that so we're working with the state. We want to install signals on the on-off ramps on both sides of the ramps, widen _____, widen that road, add a lane, kick it through past Green Road, and bring that back in to help move traffic more efficiently.

Marblemount Bridge Rehabilitation. So if you've been up to Marblemount, there's an older bridge there. We have some load restrictions on that. We actually received 18 million dollars in grant funding. No local match so we have nothing out of County pocket for that. So we're about 60% design –

Tom Weller: Ninety percent.

Mr. Jones: Yeah, 90% design on that so we're hoping to go to construction on that next year in '26. This is – by the way, this is Tom. He's our Assistant County Engineer, so that's why I'm looking for him for all the answers and stuff!

Another project is Thomas Creek Bridge on Old Highway 99. So just from the topside you can see the pavement starting to go on that. If you crawl underneath that, that's one of our few remaining wood structures. So that's built on timber piles, timber caps, and everything. We've actually had one of the piles – we've had to red-tag it, which basically means it's rotted out. So we went in and two years ago we put some temporary shoring under there to keep it open to legal truckloads, just because we have all the pits out there. So you don't want to affect their businesses. But we received six million dollars to replace that bridge. So we're on – I think we're about 30% design on that and we'll be going to construction on that in the next few years.

And North Osterman Creek: We lost a culvert there a few years back. To keep the road open, we actually purchased a temporary bridge, so we got that installed right now. So, again, that's a flood issue that we had. So again we're working with FEMA to get funding for that, so hopefully that will come through here pretty soon.

Peterson Road Urban Improvements. If you guys have been up at the Port lately you notice that there's quite a few things happening up there – a lot of construction. The Port's expanding. They're building stuff. Amazon's moved up there. We've got four or five other things going on out there. So we got some grant funding to look at that – put a design and buy some right-of-way. We don't have construction funding yet but once we get that design in place we'll go after TIB funding through the Transportation Improvement Board. So hopefully we'll get construction funding. Plus we're working with the developers up there. As they move in we're requiring them to do frontage improvements along the road too, which will include sidewalks and shoulders – a lot bigger shoulders and wider lanes.

Commissioner Henley: I have a question.

Mr. Jones: Sure.

Commissioner Henley: You've got a fair number of culvert failures there. Now are they failing because of age or just because of excess load?

Mr. Jones: On the projects themselves? A lot of things. Marblemount Bridge, just age. It's an old bridge and it's almost a hundred years old.

Commissioner Henley: I was specifically asking about the culverts, though.

Mr. Jones: Oh, yeah, the culverts. Yeah, I mean, they've been there a long time. They just –

Commissioner Henley: So it's mostly age that's causing them to fail?

Mr. Jones: Yeah. Yeah, most of them are steel. They rust out.

Commissioner Henley: Because they get scoured probably –

Mr. Jones: Yeah.

Commissioner Henley: – and then corroded.

Mr. Jones: Yeah, like on Fonk Road, it rusted out. When we pulled the old one out, I think it just fell apart basically.

Commissioner Henley: Okay. All right. Thank you.

Mr. Jones: Yeah. Then we have Francis Road and Josh Wilson Road. Francis Road Segment 1 is ready to go to construction. Segment 3 is really close. We have grant funding on those. We're a little short on funding. We're trying to figure that out but right now we're trying to work through the environmental stuff on that one. So hopefully Francis will go to construction next year and Francis 3 will go the following year.

Josh Wilson, you notice towards the bottom of the hill there we upgraded that a couple years ago. We're seeking funding for the rest of it.

So those are a few of the bigger projects on the TIP for that. Projects being removed: the 2024 Asphalt Overlay. That was on Old Highway 99, so if you've driven that lately you've got quite a smooth drive. And you'll notice when you go over Thomas Creek Bridge we didn't pave that. People may be asking, Well, why the hell didn't you do that? So the reason is because we're putting in a new bridge. So we didn't want to put money into the new pavement and then have to rip it all out when we put a new bridge in.

Bradshaw Road and Green Road. These have been on our TIP for quite a while. If you've ever driven these roads on portions of it it's old concrete slabs that move. Unfortunately, we don't have the band width right now to address those, nor do we have the funding. Not to say we're going to forget about them; they're just coming off the TIP because we don't anticipate working on those in that six-year span itself. We'll put those on another list and they'll eventually get back on to that list.

The Fish Barrier Improvement Projects. That was kind of a general, just a placeholder. Like I said, if you look on the TIP now we've got 14, 15 culvert projects as basically all those projects took the place of that one so that's why that one's getting dropped off.

On North Fruitdale Road/Kalloch Road Arterial Improvements: So again it comes down we just don't have the funding for it. We don't foresee us working on that in the next six years so we're going to drop that off the Six-Year TIP for now and we'll put that on another plan.

And South Blanchard Culvert Replacement Project. That's just in the Blanchard area. We placed again a failing culvert to help improve fish passage there. So that project's been completed so therefore it drops off the TIP.

I know you can't read this, but that basically depicts where all the projects that are on the TIP are on there. You know, Corey, you'll see numbers that are in order. You can correlate that with the

actual TIP. We have the map I.D.s on that and on here you'll see in the green that has the I.D.s too, if you want to go find it on the map.

I talked about this earlier. This is draft. I actually finished this today so I haven't had a chance to get it on the website yet, but I will put that on the website. We're going to put it out there and ask for comments. We'll have a comment sheet where you can go on there and fill it out, if anybody or the public has comments. We'll do a news release and put it out on social media asking for comments. And I want your guys's comments too, so feel free to run through Robby or email me directly. My email address is on there. So you can call me. And the comment period's going to run probably from October 1st to October 31st.

That's just a shot of the website. That kind of shows you where all the reports are and where the draft will be on.

Cover page there, TIP schedule. Typically we start – it says here I start in July but I try to start it earlier than that. In August I have to have all our federal secured grant funding projects to SCOG, the Skagit Council of Governments. They put together the regional TIP. To get it on the state TIP, I have to have it on the regional TIP so there's just that process that goes through that.

September we've got the draft and typically I present it to you guys, so we're doing that tonight. In October I'll schedule a work session with the Board so we'll go over it. It'll be a similar presentation to them. Go over these projects and see if they have any comments. Maybe they want to add something or take something off. So we'll go through that process.

November, by law we have to hold a public hearing so we'll hold a public hearing to take more comments. So we'll do that in November.

Then in December we'll put it in front of the Board and recommend it for adoption. RCW requires that the Six-Year TIP be adopted prior to the County budget so typically we'll do the TIP. I think Robby does the Capital Facilities Plan, the Comp Plan, and then right after that they adopt the budget. So.

Does anybody have any questions?

Commissioner Day: Thank you for your presentation. Thank you for all your work in our county. It's really interesting to hear about all the work that you do to keep roads safe and the bridges. I appreciate that. _____.

Mr. Jones: Thank you.

Commissioner Day: Yeah. I have a question – just an observation, I guess, and then two questions. It looks like most of the projects are all in rural areas where the money and the effort in the County is being spent. Is that right? Would you say that?

Mr. Jones: Yeah, a good portion of them are. Peterson Road, that's – you know. So Cook Road's kind of quasi-urban. Yeah, I mean, we're a rural county so, yeah. So a lot of it is.

Commissioner Day: Yeah, that makes sense. So the County's responsible for roads and things in urban growth areas but not in cities. Is that correct?

Mr. Jones: That is correct.

Commissioner Day: Okay, so where does the majority of our funding come from that you use? You mentioned grants and then you mentioned spending County money. Where's the County money come from? Is that property taxes?

Mr. Jones: Yeah, road fund dollars come from property taxes. Actually the majority of – I'd say probably 70%, if not more, of the road fund dollars goes to the maintenance of all the roads.

Commissioner Day: Yeah.

Mr. Jones: So that's why we – for capital projects – that's why we rely quite often on grant funding. There's – it's a federal bridge program that's actually run through the state that usually have a call for projects usually every two years. We've actually been very successful – Torey there in the back. He helps write the grants, so thank Torey for all the money we get. And Joey, he also works for me. He does development stuff. So all the stuff going up at the Port, he's working with those people. But, yeah, it's a lot of grant funding. The bridge grant, the safety grant, it's called the Highway Safety Improvement Grant. So one of our projects we're doing is putting a roundabout at Marine Drive/Rosario Road. They've got that triangle so we got grant funding to put a roundabout in there so we're in design on that. We just started design on that so we're maybe 30% right now with that. So that's some of the funding we've gotten.

The Cook Road Interchange, that is National Freight Grant. That's a state grant that we went after and got funding for that, and through SCOG we got the Surface Transportation Block Grant. So that. Then we get CRAB, the County Road Administration Board. They have grants called the RAP – Rural Arterial Preservation – so we get grant funding from that. That's funded part of Francis 3 and Francis 1. It funded the Josh Wilson improvements that we did a few years ago. And we get CAP funding through CRAB too, which is a County Arterial Preservation, which basically is like just doing overlays. The Old Highway 99 overlay we did, but we got grant funding through that.

Commissioner Day: Yeah, great. Thank you very much.

Mr. Weller: So just for records only because I was working on the budget here earlier today, so for – at least for the Engineering Division, which is a part of –

Mr. Eckroth: Hey, Tom? Do you mind saying that on the microphone so it's on the record? Thank you so much.

Mr. Weller: Yes. Again, I'm Tom Weller, Assistant County Engineer and Engineering Division Manager. And so in support of what Forrest was saying as far as where our money is coming from for our capital projects: So for 2025, we're bringing in 19 million dollars in federal funding, 2 million in state funding, 2 million in FEMA funding, and the County's only needing to contribute about 4 million dollars of its own money. So pretty much it winds up for being for every dollar of County funds through the Road Fund – which comes principally from property taxes and the gas tax – we're getting \$5.40 from outside sources to repair all of our infrastructure.

(laughter)

Chair Raschko: Any other questions for Mr. Jones?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: Thank you very much.

Mr. Jones: All right. You're welcome.

Chair Raschko: I appreciate it. Okay, we'll turn to Planning Commissioner Comments and Announcements. Amy, have you anything?

Commissioner Amy Hughes: I have nothing.

Chair Raschko: Nothing. Kathy?

Commissioner Mitchell: Nothing. Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Tammy?

Vice Chair Candler: No, thank you.

Chair Raschko: Vince?

Commissioner Henley: I'm good.

Chair Raschko: Angela?

Commissioner Day: No comments other than, Welcome, Kiera!

Chair Raschko: Kiera, do you have anything to –

Commissioner Wright: I appreciate it. No comments.

Chair Raschko: Okay. And I'd say the same: Welcome. We appreciate having you on the Commission with us. Okay, thank everybody –

Mr. Eckroth: Chair Raschko? Do you mind if I make a quick announcement? I know that we didn't have a Director's Update but something happened between when we set up the agenda and now, so I was just hoping to make a quick announcement, if that's okay.

Chair Raschko: Okay. Before you do – I don't know how important it is but I forgot to note that – for the record – that we are missing Commissioner Woodmansee and Commissioner Hutchison. Okay, thank you. Please go ahead.

Mr. Eckroth: Yeah, thank you, Chair. So I just wanted to announce that yesterday the Board of County Commissioners passed an interim ordinance imposing a moratorium on the acceptance of permits for electrical generation and storage facilities in the Agricultural-Natural Resource Lands zone. So this moratorium lasts for six months but could be extended if the Board of County Commissioners chooses it's necessary. As you all know, the Planning Commission is currently reviewing a draft ordinance that we have before you that would be permanent and there will be a public hearing and possible deliberations to make a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners on October 8th. And the public hearing for the moratorium will be in this room at 1:30 on October 21st, 2024, and will also be available on Zoom.

Chair Raschko: Thank you. Any questions regarding the announcement?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: Okay, well, thank you, everybody. Thank you, all the staff, for your presentations. Thank you, Chris. And we stand adjourned (gavel).