

Enclosure 3C

**Chapter 8. Transportation
October 2015 Draft**

Public Works Staff Memo

(GMA Item #12021)

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M E M O R A N D U M

May 16, 2016

TO: Board of Island County Commissioners
Planning Commissioners

FROM: Connie Bowers – Assistant County Engineer

RE: Draft Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan

Background: The Island County Transportation Element was last updated in 2000. The current update is intended to replace the previous edition. The Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan is a Growth Management Act requirement.

The update was initiated in September, 2013. An initial set of public meetings were held in the Spring of 2014 to get input about interests and concerns. Meetings were held in Langley (Bayview Corner), Oak Harbor, and north Camano Island (near Terry's Corner).

Goals and Policies: New goals and policies were established through the feedback solicited at the public meetings conducted in 2014 and input from the Transportation Project Advisory Committee, the Board of Island County Commissioners, and the Island County Planning Commission. The draft goals were discussed with the Planning Commission in January 2015. The goals are:

1. Provide a **safe**, comfortable and reliable transportation system that provides adequate **mobility** for people, goods and services;
2. **Preserve** prior investments in the transportation system;
3. Support land use development and **economic vitality** by providing context-appropriate transportation infrastructure;
4. Minimize negative **environmental** impacts;
5. Build strong relationships between Island County and other local and regional agencies to **engage in cooperative planning** of common transportation improvements;
6. Promote **physical activity** by expanding options for active transportation modes.

Existing Conditions: This chapter identifies and describes the existing transportation network; roads, ports, marinas, airports, ferries, transit routes and non-motorized facilities. Level of Service (LOS) standards are discussed and LOS is determined for the county road network, and identified for the state highways and ferry system. Each system currently performs better than the LOS standard.

Future Conditions: A countywide model was used to predict future conditions on the county and state road network. Future conditions of the ferry system were based on a Washington State Ferry (WSF) report.

Before running the traffic model a study was conducted to predict population and employment growth and evaluate potential land use. **Forecast employment** is anticipated to grow **uniformly countywide (percentage-wise) at 9%**. The **population growth** is predicted to vary among the four primary areas;

- 16% in North Whidbey
- 7% in Central Whidbey
- 8% in South Whidbey
- 6% on Camano Island

Results from the traffic model indicate that the county and state road networks are anticipated to perform better than the LOS standard. WSF predications indicated that the state ferries are likely to meet the LOS standard.

Concurrency: Concurrency evaluation is proposed to change significantly, simplifying the process, reducing routine applications, and making the process more understandable.

Future Projects: The predicted traffic changes do not show areas of congestion that might indicate the need for a road project. It is anticipated that road work will focus on maintaining the infrastructure that we have and increasing safety.

Finance: Based on current revenue policies and current level of spending a deficit is expected in the future. Recommended methods to meet transportation needs are to prioritize capital projects and investigate additional revenue opportunities.

Status: All of the components of the draft Transportation Plan were discussed at Public Meetings in July of 2014. Meetings were held in Freeland, Oak Harbor, and Camano (near Terry's Corner)

The current draft of the Transportation Element has had legal review and an initial review by the Board of Island Commissioners. It was decided at that point to tie future review and public meetings in with the Full Comprehensive Plan efforts.