



February 18, 2009

To: Whatcom County Council and
Whatcom County Planning Commission
From: Bellingham Whatcom Economic Development Council
RE: Joint Hearing on Whatcom 2031 Environmental Impact Statement Scoping
Hearing – February 17, 2009

Dear Whatcom County Council and Commission Members:

Thank you for accepting input on the Whatcom 2031 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Scoping that will explore impacts of three alternatives of associated with the 10-year review of urban growth areas throughout the County.

The Bellingham Whatcom Economic Development Council (BWEDC) supports looking at a population range that considers impacts of both low and medium-to-high growth rates. We also recommend a range that allows the cities sufficient room to study the impacts various population levels would have on their respective communities.

Even more importantly, once this process is complete and a population projection is selected, we realize there will be challenging choices required to implement the identified goals. We suggest that one of the tools for implementation of these choices and goals be a “regional economic strategy.” Not only would this regional strategy identify opportunities for businesses to be successful and provide high wage jobs that fit our community’s values, it would allow opportunity to incentivize choices that coincide with the goals of our Comprehensive Plan and Countywide Planning Policies.

In addition, we recommend careful review of the Columbia Valley UGA and possible change to a LAMIRD. While we recognize the full range of reasons for changing to a LAMIRD that the Planning Commission has outlined in their “DRAFT Whatcom County Planning Commission Findings of Fact & Reasons for Action, Conclusions and Recommendations,” we also want to assure that, while keeping with social and environmental values, this area of relatively high poverty retains opportunities to remedy their economic challenges.

Thank you again for welcoming input in this process.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nancy Jordan".

Nancy Jordan
Executive Director

115 Unity St., P.O. Box 2803, Bellingham, WA 98227

p: 360-676-4255 800-810-4255 f: 360-647-9413 e: bwedc@bwedc.org
www.bwedc.org