

# WHATCOM COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS

P.O. Box 1599  
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COPY

## RESOLUTION Number 2010-01

### Defined Level of Service for Fire Protection within Whatcom County

**Whereas,** The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) requires counties within the state of Washington to plan for growth and development within their county; and,

**Whereas,** Whatcom County recently amended its Comprehensive Plan by updating the Urban Growth Areas (UGA) located within Whatcom County ; and,

**Whereas,** the Whatcom County Planning Commission has been requested to provide a recommendation to the Whatcom County Council as to the appropriate levels of service for fire protection throughout the County, including the UGA and rural areas; and,

**Whereas,** Whatcom County, consistent with the requirements of the GMA has adopted County Wide Planning Policies (CWPP) that the County shall assure appropriate levels of urban facilities and services exist within non-city Urban Growth areas, and that these plans should be developed by special purpose district, and implemented through inter-local agreements (See CWPP E.4).

**Whereas,** The Whatcom County Planning Commission has been provided a proposed levels of service standard for Whatcom County that lacks scientific and realistic application in terms of levels of service planning purposes but instead was designed to evaluate insurance risks and costs, that being a level of service for urban areas commensurate with an ISO rating of a Class 6 and/or a minimum emergency response time of ten (10) minutes, and that being for rural areas a level of service commensurate with an ISO rating of Class 8 and/or a minimum emergency response time of fourteen (14) minutes; and,

**Whereas,** the Whatcom County Association of Fire Chiefs over a year ago provided a recommendation to Whatcom County Planning and Development recommending that Whatcom County adopt National Fire protection Association NFPA 1720, (without the

staffing level component) as the minimum standard for the level of service for fire protection, NFPA 1720 being a national standard recognized by most fire protection services; and,

**Whereas,** Some fire districts within Whatcom County in consultation with and following direction from Whatcom County Planning and Development Services and/or the Whatcom County Council have already developed and adopted by its elected fire commissioners a capital facility plan based upon Commission approved levels of service for fire protection following extensive public workshops and public hearings held within their in their jurisdiction; and

**Whereas,** it should be the responsibility of the citizens of a fire district along with the elected commissions of the fire district to identify the levels of service for fire protection within the district based on a defined and accepted planning process to include public workshops and public hearings; and,

**Whereas,** fire districts have identified statutory authority to identify and implement levels of fire protection service for their jurisdiction.

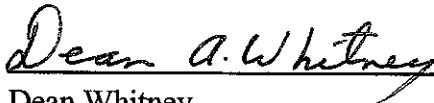
**Now, Therefore be it Resolved,** The Whatcom County Association of Fire Chiefs requests that the Whatcom County Planning Commission recommend to the Whatcom County Council for their consideration that when a level of service standard for areas served by a fire district is to be established that it is established by the fire district identifying a local level of service standard for fire protection for urban and rural areas within the district based on the capabilities of the district and the local values and interests of the citizens of that district as determined by the elected fire commission following a public process including public workshops and public hearings; and,

**Be it Further Resolved,** The Whatcom County Association of Fire Chiefs recommends that where a fire district within Whatcom County that has completed in concert with Whatcom County Planning and Development and, by and through its elected commissioners, has adopted a capital facility plan based upon and including a defined minimum level of service standard for fire protection and emergency services, where that plan also identifies land use designations within the jurisdiction of the fire district, capital facility needs and requirements and staffing components/needs together with a financing plan to meet the level of service standards established in the plan applicable to the land use designations following public forums, meetings and/or workshops, and formal public hearings conducted by the elected fire commissioners occurring within the fire district's jurisdiction, the minimum level of service standard identified in the fire district's capital facility plan shall apply within that fire district's jurisdiction provided that the adopted

minimum level of service standard is more conservative than any standard set by Whatcom County; and,

**Be it Further Resolved,** that should a fire district providing fire protection services adopt a minimum level of service standard that is more liberal than any standard adopted by Whatcom County and/or when a fire district chooses not to and/or fails to adopt a level of service standard for fire protection services, the levels of service adopted by Whatcom County shall then become the level of service for that jurisdiction.

Adopted and Signed this 22 day of July, 2010

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dean A. Whitney". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Dean Whitney

President

Whatcom County Association of Fire Chiefs.