

**WHATCOM COUNTY
PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT
SERVICES**
5280 Northwest Drive
Bellingham, WA 98226

J.E. "SAM" RYAN, CBO
Interim Director

**FOOTHILLS SUBAREA PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
RECORD OF DECISIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR THE 6/7/07 MEETING**

Memo Date: June 8, 2007

To: Foothills Subarea Plan Advisory Committee

From: Matt W. Aamot, Whatcom County Planning & Development

At the June 7, 2007 meeting, the Foothills Subarea Plan Advisory Committee made the following decisions and recommendations:

1. **Periodic Review of Project List** - The Committee recommended, by consensus, the following policy:

Review and, if needed, update the Foothills Subarea Plan project prioritization list at least every two years.

2. **Economic Development Policy** – The Committee recommended, by consensus, the following policy:

Community Economic Development Policy

- 1) The County shall make it a high priority to support, and encourage the support of, existing local businesses.
- 2) The County shall make it a high priority to encourage and support the creation of new local businesses that fill unfulfilled local economic niches.
- 3) The County shall recruit or assist in the recruitment of non-local businesses in cases in which those businesses align with the community's vision.

3. **Open Space Policy** - The Committee recommended, by consensus, the following introductory text and associated policy:

Introductory Text

There are many public benefits of conservation of open space. To paraphrase the Nature Conservancy, the American Farmland Trust, and the Whatcom Land Trust, public benefits of open space include the following:

- Protect water quality and air quality, by conserving forests and watersheds
- conserve watersheds and aquifers, helping ensure a clean supply of water for all of us
- preserve wildlife habitat
- preserve open space
- preserve and conserve farmland, ranchland, timberland, forests and rivers
- maintain rural character of our communities, neighborhoods and forests and mountains
- maintain traditional, historic uses of property, that add to the rural character
- buffer public lands from residential and commercial development
- maintain landscapes and views for tourism
- preserve historical and cultural sites
- preserve scenic beauty
- preserve rural quality of life
- competitive attractiveness of open space as factors attracting retirees, tourists, labor supplies and businesses.

Perhaps most interesting is the following benefit:

- Require less in public services than other uses of the property.

Policy

Open space preservation shall be deemed a very important component of preserving the rural character of the Foothills Subarea, and shall be encouraged wherever possible. The Foothills Subarea Plan shall encourage the preservation of open space for the reasons listed above. To accomplish this, the policy shall provide for representatives of nonprofit conservation groups and local, county and state entities to hold a public forum and/or conference once a year at a location in the Foothills, rotating from Glacier to the Columbia Valley UGA to Deming. Education and assistance should be provided by the Whatcom County as to the different vehicles available by which to preserve open space, including but not limited to donations of land or conservation easements, purchases of land or conservation easements, reserve tracts or conservation easements on open space in cluster developments and planned unit developments, purchases of development rights, and other methods as may be developed from time to time.

CC: Linda Peterson, Planning Division Manager
Royce Buckingham, Senior Civil Deputy
Pam Brown, Planning Division Clerk/Web Site Posting
Bill Grimes, Studio Cascade
Kate Koch, Studio Cascade
Tim Hostetler, WSDOT

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