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LONG RANGE
PLANNING DIVISION

TO: David Stalheim, Director
Whatcom County Planning and Development Services
5280 Northwest Drive
Bellingham WA 98226

RE: Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement – Foothills

I am including this as public comment concerning the DSEIS for the Foothills Subarea Plan. I attended the recent public hearing at the Kendall Elementary School and have participated in the process on a regular basis, attending the FSPAC meetings and Workshops for over two years.

I wish to go on record in support of the FSPAC and ALTERNATIVE No. 1 because I feel the work that was done during that process represents a community based effort and reflects a balance between community goals and values within the rigid constraints of statutory requirements, practicality and identified need. I DO NOT support the Mitigation Maps proposed in the DSEIS.

I would also like to note for the record my concern regarding the methodology being employed in this process. I have significant doubts regarding the introduction of additional studies in the Sub Area Planning Process AFTER the FSPAC have concluded their work and I find myself at a loss to understand why the County would deny these studies for consideration of the FSPAC for nearly two years and then immediately turn around and trigger an SEIS through SEPA and conduct them after the fact.

Clearly, these studies should have been made available to the FSPAC for review and consideration before their final recommendations were made. I have attended numerous public meetings held by the FSPAC and note that these studies were requested on more than one occasion and declined.

I cannot fathom how Whatcom County Planning and Development staff could allow the FSPAC to submit their recommendations without ensuring that all areas of concern had been appropriately reviewed and addressed and that the FSPAC had all the relevant data that would be required to make informed decisions regarding the potentially adverse environmental impacts associated with any proposed recommendations.

I was surprised and somewhat dismayed at the conditions allowed by the County at the public hearing on September 4th – I do not recall ever seeing such an obvious display of intimidation tactics and bias at any other public hearing or meeting associated with the Sub Area Plan. The FSPAC meetings, although often long and not without disagreement, were always conducted in an organized, civil and non-threatening way. When I combine this with the County's apparent disregard for the work of the community and the FSPAC - I find myself questioning the fairness and legitimacy of the entire process.

I hope that the County will consider my thoughts and concerns and take the appropriate steps to ensure that the majority recommendation does not continue to become buried beneath the rhetoric and bureaucracy of what **appears** to be a biased and minority driven process.

I am including my public testimony read into the record at the hearing on September 4th 2008 below.

Respectfully,

Rebecca Boonstra

Resident: Columbia Valley UGA
682 Sprague Valley Dr
Maple Falls, WA 98266

September 4th 2008 - Public Testimony

The Population projections used in the draft supplemental environmental impact statement are inconsistent.

Alternative No. 1 contemplates 5 years additional growth that is not considered in the projected impacts of Alternative(s) No. 2&3.

The population projections used in Alternative No. 1 are calculated until 2027 adding 1,062 additional residents that would contribute to traffic impacts during the five years between 2022 and 2027. Impacts between 2022 and 2027 do NOT appear to be contemplated in the other alternatives.

Under any scenario – all three alternatives have comparable impacts to traffic with intersections operating below LOS in 2022 being 8, 9, and 10 respectively.

With Alternative No. 1 being calculated until 2027 and the other alternatives being calculated until 2022 it seems that Alternative No.1 may actually have LESS impact on traffic than the other two alternatives since it contemplates five additional years of growth and only impacts 1 or 2 intersections adversely in comparison to the other two alternatives.

The mitigations required to address traffic impacts require funding.

Funding will come through impact fees and capital facilities budgeting.

Development will contribute significantly to these dollars in alternative no. 1 providing one of the only private funding sources available for public infrastructure–

Who will pay to mitigate comparable impacts anticipated under scenario No. 3?

How much more money will have to come from taxpayers to address these needs without the contribution of private dollars to help subsidize the cost of already existing needs?