

Tuesday, January 27, 2009

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I would like to take a few lines to share my vision of the Columbia Valley Urban Growth Area.

I have always enjoyed walking in the area around my house in Peaceful Valley, at the foot of Sumas Mountain. I believe that development in the CVUGA would only increase my ability to enjoy this area. If there were services (a grocery store, bank, shops, offices, etc.) built here in the UGA I would have a good reason not to get into my truck whenever I needed something. I could just grab my backpack and water bottle and go. When I had my children with me we could stop at a park and play for a while. If we had a library we could all use it. I look forward to having the resource center built, and have a place for a Boys and Girls club, that my kids could go to.

Right now none of these things are happening in here for me or my kids. If we need groceries we have to get in the truck. If we want to play at a park we have to get in the truck. If we want to go to the library we have to get in the truck. If we want to play with our friends we have to get in the truck.

Please retain our Urban Growth Area. The current Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan supports the UGA designation. The Foothills Subarea Plan Advisory Committee recommended retention of the UGA. The Planning & Development Services Staff Report recommended retaining the UGA. The SEIS has no environmental impacts identified in this area that cannot be mitigated.

Please increase the projected population to accommodate the 3,304 additional people identified in the work of Burke & Associates for the next 20 year planning period. I am concerned that capitol facilities will not be developed commensurate to the population growth if it is not properly projected and planned for right now.

Remember the results of the GMCC survey where it was found that a majority of respondents to the Whatcom 2031 survey (39.9%) indicated they would like to see **more growth** directed into the small cities and small urban areas to encourage local economic viability and reduce trips to Bellingham. An additional 19.3% indicate that they support the historical share methodology. Over 59% of all respondents indicate they prefer to retain or increase historical population allocations with a majority indicating that population should be directed into the small cities and small urban areas.

Thank you for the time you are taking to consider the right action for the Columbia Valley Urban Growth Area,

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