

# **Background Information**

## **Seven-Year Capital Improvement Program**

### **Projects over \$5 Million**

1. New Corrections Facility (\$149.0 million) – Draft CIP, page F-18
2. Lummi Island Ferry Project (\$55.5 million) – Draft CIP, page F-21
3. Northwest Annex Debt Service (\$17 million) – Draft CIP, page F-13
4. Sheriff’s Office Relocation (\$8.6 million) – Draft CIP, page F-15
5. Courthouse Exterior Project (\$10.2 million) – Draft CIP, page F-13
6. North Lake Samish Rd. Bridge Replacement (\$12 million) – Draft CIP, page F-20 (see also TIP)
7. Swift Creek Sediment Management (44.5 million) Draft CIP, page F-23
8. 23 Hour Crisis Relief Center (22.4 million), page F-13
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Notes:

*CIP means “Capital Improvement Program”*

*TIP means “Transportation Improvement Program”*

*The information below was provided by various County Departments as part of their “Capital Improvement Request” forms and other correspondence.*

## 1. New Corrections Facility (\$149.0 million)

Capital Improvement Title: New Health & Safety Justice Facility

Department: Facilities Management

**Answer the following questions. Indicate the source of your data where applicable.**

1. Capital improvement description (include square feet, acres, miles of trails, jail beds, etc):

Construction of a new medium sized jail facility to replace the current Public Safety Building which has reached the end of its useful life.

2. What is the problem this Capital Improvement will address?

The Public Safety Building (Jail) was built in 1982 and has reached the end of its useful life. Consistent with many reports and studies, the most economical method to updating our current jail is to replace the facility with a new, modern facility with current design standards.

3. Location (address, Assessor's parcel number or map):

Labounty Road

4. How will this capital improvement benefit our citizens?

Replacement of the existing Jail, with modern amenities and space allocations for programmatic treatment options may ultimately reduce jail population.

5. Is this capital improvement required to comply with laws, regulations or Level of Service (LOS) standards? (Explain)

The building does not meet current life safety standards set forth in the International Building Code (IBC) or incarceration standards. Any proposed new facility would meet all building and incarceration standards.

6. Will this capital improvement increase efficiency in providing a public service? How?

The existing Public Safety building is operationally inefficient. A new jail facility would/should reduce inefficiencies and could most likely reduce labor force required to operate and manage the inmates and facility.

7. Will this capital improvement reduce annual operating costs? Please quantify

The existing facility is old and dilapidated and a new facility would reduce energy consumptions and increase operational efficiencies as explained above.

8. Will this capital improvement impact other county departments? How?

The Courts, Sheriff and Facilities would all benefit from a new facility

9. Will this capital improvement reduce future capital costs? How?

Yes, both in energy efficiency and operational costs (staffing).

## 2. Lummi Island Ferry Project (\$55.5 million)

Capital Improvement Title: Public Works Lummi Island Ferry Replacement and System Modernization Project

Department: Public Works – Ferry Division

**Answer the following questions. Indicate the source of your data where applicable.**

1. Capital improvement description (include square feet, acres, miles of trails, jail beds, etc):

This project will replace the 60-year-old ferry with an electric-battery hybrid ferry that provides service to and from the rural community of Lummi Island. The project also includes adjusting the terminal structures to accommodate the new ferry, installing electrical charging infrastructure and making operational and upland modifications to preserve and enhance the functionality of the ferry system.

2. What is the problem this Capital Improvement will address?

The primary problem being solved by this project is the increasingly untenable risk and cost associated with operating an old ferry that is already beyond its projected useful life span, is functionally obsolete, and that provides the only public access to a rural island community. Due to the existing vessel's age, service hours, lack of replacement parts/equipment, and operations in a corrosive saltwater environment, the vessel's life expectancy has already been exceeded. The project goals are:

- » Replace the Whatcom Chief to ensure reliable and cost-effective access to the mainland from Lummi Island
- » Provide access to medical and professional services
- » Ensure availability of emergency and public works services
- » Improve safety
- » Maintain the flow of goods and services to the island
- » Provide access to employment
- » Support tourism and recreational activities

3. Location (address, Assessor's parcel number or map):

Lummi Island (48.720142, -122.681717)

4. How will this capital improvement benefit our citizens?

- » Significantly reduce carbon emissions, promote environmental sustainability and reduce noise pollution
- » Improve passenger and crew safety
- » Satisfy current and future level of service need including access for essential services
- » Streamline loading operations for both passengers and vehicles including legal load vehicles
- » Incorporate innovative marine technologies with an electric-battery hybrid propulsion system
- » Ensure reliable ferry service for now and into the future

5. Is this capital improvement required to comply with laws, regulations or LOS standards? (Explain)

Yes. There are state and federal mandates requiring emission improvements that will require a costly retrofit. Additionally the boat does not address current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility standards.

6. Will this capital improvement increase efficiency in providing a public service? How?

Yes. The replacement ferry and system modernization project would provide more reliable service with fewer outages well into the future.

7. Will this capital improvement reduce annual operating costs? Please quantify

The forecasted Operations and Maintenance (O&M) costs for the new and markedly larger replacement ferry are comparable to the existing O&M costs. The reductions in vessel fuel and maintenance costs are essentially offset by the addition in electricity and terminal maintenance costs, thereby retaining O&M subsequent to project implementation similar to the existing costs.

### 3. Northwest Annex Debt Service (\$17.1 million)

Capital Improvement Title: Northwest Annex Campus Replacement

Department: Administrative Services (AS) Facilities Management

**Answer the following questions. Indicate the source of your data where applicable.**

1. Capital improvement description (include square feet, acres, miles of trails, jail beds, etc):

Demolish existing buildings on Northwest Annex campus. Construct a new approximately 37,700 square foot building immediately east of the existing Northwest Annex building (which will be demolished) to provide space for Planning and Development Services, Public Works Engineering Services and Administration, and the Washington State University (WSU) Whatcom County Extension office. Associated parking, landscaping and stormwater facilities will also be installed. Additional buildings may be constructed on the site in the future.

2. What is the problem this Capital Improvement will address

Northwest Annex is dilapidated and in dire need of replacing. A new energy efficient campus, with anticipated expansion space, is proposed to replace the existing facility. This request also anticipates improvements to the Northwest Avenue/Smith Road interstation.

3. Location (address, Assessor's parcel number or map):

5280 Northwest Avenue, Bellingham WA 98225

4. How will this capital improvement benefit our citizens?

The County spends a substantial amount of money on maintenance of the building and failing systems at Northwest Annex. Replacing the dilapidated structure with a new energy efficient campus would benefit the citizens of Whatcom County.

5. Is this capital improvement required to comply with laws, regulations or LOS standards? (Explain)

The new improvements will be compliant with the Energy code in place at the time of installation.

6. Will this capital improvement increase efficiency in providing a public service? How?

Yes. Replacement of the existing building with an energy efficient, Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified building would significantly reduce energy consumption. Additionally, the building is substantially underutilized in its current configuration.

7. Will this capital improvement reduce annual operating costs? Please quantify

The annual operating costs will be reduced substantially due to reduced maintenance costs and reductions in energy consumption.

8. Will this capital improvement impact other county departments? How?

This improvement will impact the Sheriff Department due to the need to relocate Search and Rescue, which is located on this parcel.

9. Will this capital improvement reduce future capital costs? How?

By implementing the improvements to Northwest Annex, the County is paying for items in current value dollars and not the increased cost of these improvements in the future due to escalation and inflation cost increases.

#### 4. Sheriff's Office Relocation (\$8.6 million)

Capital Improvement Title: Sheriff's Office

Department: Facilities Management

**Answer the following questions. Indicate the source of your data where applicable.**

1. Capital improvement description (include square feet, acres, miles of trails, jail beds, etc):

The Sheriff is in need of a new facility for his administration. It is estimated that 30,000 sf is anticipated for this use. Additionally, smaller 3000-6000 sf satellite office, near downtown is necessary.

2. What is the problem this Capital Improvement will address?

The existing Sheriff Office is located in the basement of the Public Safety Building. This area was not built for this use and should be relocated in a more modern usable location.

3. Location (address, Assessor's parcel number or map):

TBD

4. How will this capital improvement benefit our citizens?

The existing Sheriff's Office is not efficiently laid out, or in an energy efficient building. As it is anticipated that a new jail is proposed, so too should a new Sheriff's Office be considered. Newer buildings will be designed with energy efficiency and maintenance will be decreased.

5. Is this capital improvement required to comply with laws, regulations or LOS standards? (Explain)

The new improvements must comply with the Energy code.

6. Will this capital improvement increase efficiency in providing a public service? How?

A better design should increase efficiency among staff

7. Will this capital improvement reduce annual operating costs? Please quantify

Yes. There should be reduced maintenance costs with replacement of these components.

8. Will this capital improvement impact other county departments? How?

It is not anticipated that this improvement will impact other County departments.

9. Will this capital improvement reduce future capital costs? How?

Large scale maintenance costs, some Capital, will be reduced with a new, efficient building.



## 5. Courthouse Exterior Project (\$10.2 million)

Capital Improvement Title: Improvements to the Courthouse Envelope

Department: AS – Facilities Management

**Answer the following questions. Indicate the source of your data where applicable.**

1. Capital improvement description (include square feet, acres, miles of trails, jail beds, etc):

Continuation of HKP Courthouse Exterior Project as Defined in HKP Report Dated November 2015. Continued efforts include replacing remaining roofs, and roof top mechanical equipment. The scope of work also includes replacing glazing on the 1993 (East) addition, where glazing has failed. Efforts are shown for cost/year. Each year has a design phase, typically for the following year construction. Also shown is the contract administration effort by the design team for each project while under construction.

2. What is the problem this Capital Improvement will address?

Repairs to the Courthouse exterior envelope to seal the building from water intrusion. Additional efforts will replace roofing and bringing the roof area into compliance with the Energy Code.

3. Location (address, Assessor's parcel number or map):

Courthouse, 311 Grand Avenue, Bellingham WA 98225

4. How will this capital improvement benefit our citizens?

The improvements will seal the building, and replace roofing that has reached end of life. The improvements, including energy code improvements, will reduce the overall maintenance and energy costs of the Courthouse.

5. Is this capital improvement required to comply with laws, regulations or LOS standards? (Explain)

No

6. Will this capital improvement increase efficiency in providing a public service? How?

Once complete, if the project does in fact reduce overall maintenance of the building, there will be less disruption to the tenants of the building.

7. Will this capital improvement reduce annual operating costs? Please quantify

No

8. Will this capital improvement impact other county departments? How?

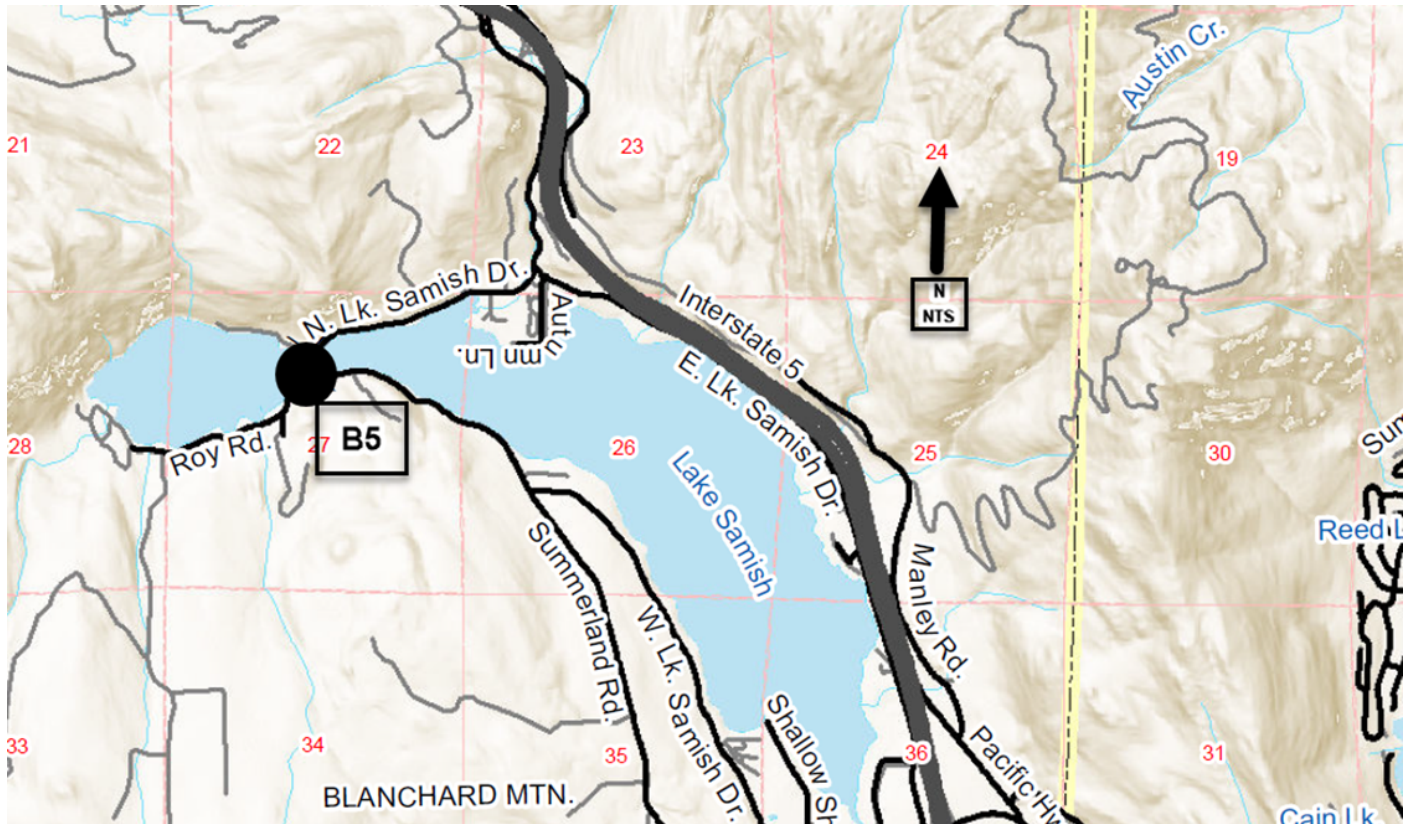
All occupants of the Courthouse could be affected

9. Will this capital improvement reduce future capital costs? How?

Yes. These improvements should reduce the water intrusion issue that exists in the Courthouse. Creating a proper envelope should protect the interior components of the building.

## 6. North Lake Samish Rd. Bridge Replacement (\$12.0 million)

This project is located on Lake Samish in Section 27, T37N, R3E. This project will replace the existing 250-foot timber bridge which is structurally deficient with a prestressed concrete girder bridge. This project is listed #B5 on the 2023-2028 Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program.



## 7. Swift Creek Sediment Management (44.5 million)

Department: Stormwater Facilities

**Answer the following questions. Indicate the source of your data where applicable.**

1. Capital improvement description (include square feet, acres, miles of trails, jail beds, etc):

Flood protection and landslide and sediment management engineered features (>50 acres).

2. What is the problem this Capital Improvement will address?

Construction of the engineered features will address accumulation of hazardous landslide sediment, including provide a place to take the hazardous sediment per regulations.

3. Location (address, Assessor's parcel number or map):

7431 Goodwin Road

4. How will this capital improvement benefit our citizens?

This CIP will help mitigate the sediment, landslide and flood risk for properties and public road system.

5. Is this capital improvement required to comply with laws, regulations or LOS standards? (Explain)

Whatcom County and the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District entered into a consent decree (CD) with the WA Department of Ecology. The CD was approved by Whatcom County Superior Court on December 6, 2019. The CD requires Whatcom County to administer the State funded Sediment Management Action Plan.

6. Will this capital improvement increase efficiency in providing a public service? How?

Yes, this will help keep the road system open, reduce road/bridge maintenance, and help reduce costly flood impacts. The impact from 2021 floods reflect how important this work is for the community, specifically for the area impacted by swift creek sediment.

7. Will this capital improvement reduce annual operating costs? Please quantify

This work will be accomplished with state funds. After completion this will require increased annual operating costs.

8. Will this capital improvement impact other county departments? How?

Yes, public works (roads, bridges) as well as the health department (sediment contains naturally occurring asbestos). The asbestos and heavy metals found in the landslide sediment and flooding events are known to be detrimental to health. This CIP is a collaboration between these departments and the Department of Ecology, and affects partners in British Columbia.

9. Will this capital improvement reduce future capital costs? How?

Capital costs to construct engineered features of the Action Plan will increase over time. Constructing as state funds are available in this and future biennia terms is the best plan to reduce future capital costs. Capital maintenance costs will continue and increase.

## 8. 23 Hour Crisis Relief Center (22.4 million)

Capital Improvement Title: 23 Hour crisis Relief Center (23.2 million)

Department: Government Facilities

**Answer the following questions. Indicate the source of your data where applicable.**

1. Capital improvement description (include square feet, acres, miles of trails, jail beds, etc):

24,000 square foot medical facility and associated site improvements.

2. What is the problem this Capital Improvement will address?

Under the current continue of care, residents experiencing a behavioral health crisis have limited resources for stabilization: (1) While the Anne Deacon Center for Hope provides some stabilization support it is not designed to meet the immediate needs of individuals experiencing a crisis – currently wait lists are 14 or more hours and there is a capacity of 16 people at any time. (2) The local emergency department, while often able to take individuals immediately do not have the staff necessary to support individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis. (3) Law enforcement sometimes uses the jail, which is less trauma informed than the 23-hour facility will be, when the individual experiencing crisis is a danger to self or others and no other options are available.

3. Location (address, Assessor's parcel number or map):

2000 Division Street

Bellingham, WA 98225

4. How will this capital improvement benefit our citizens?

The proposed 23-Hour Crisis Stabilization Center will be an out-patient medical facility that can accommodate between 24 and 36 individuals at a time. Additional individuals may be accommodated as the facility occupancy threshold allows. This capital improvement will provide resources for individuals that currently have few care options when experiencing a crisis that needs immediate attention and treatment.

5. Is this capital improvement required to comply with laws, regulations or LOS standards? (Explain)

Not required to comply with laws, regulations or LOS standards.

6. Will this capital improvement increase efficiency in providing a public service? How?

The local emergency department, while often able to take individuals immediately do not have the staff necessary to support individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis. Law enforcement sometimes

uses the jail, which is less trauma informed than the 23-hour facility will be, when the individual experiencing crisis is a danger to self or others and no other options are available.

7. Will this capital improvement reduce annual operating costs? Please quantify

While this work is at its most preliminary states in predevelopment, a review of the literature suggests that the County can expect to see significant savings across multiple sectors including a reduction in the number of psychiatric hospitalization and emergency room referrals (c.f. Gillig, et al., 1989<sup>1</sup>; Francis et al., 2000<sup>2</sup>; Thinn et al., 2015<sup>3</sup>). Additionally, we anticipate a reduced cost to the court system, the jail, and other Department-run behavioral health programs.

8. Will this capital improvement impact other county departments? How?

We anticipate a reduced cost and burden to the court system, the jail, and other Department-run behavioral health programs. The facility will provide resources for individuals experiencing a crisis with a no refusal policy. Individuals will be assessed and provided guidance on further steps and resources available.

9. Will this capital improvement reduce future capital costs? How?

The global outcome of this work is the reduction of the number of individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis in Whatcom County that are hospitalized secondary to their crisis. This facility is intended to be an assessment and treatment resource that prevents further harm and escalated crisis scenarios.

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<sup>1</sup> Gilli, PM, Hilard JR, Bell J, et al. The psychiatric emergency service holding area: Effect on utilization of inpatient resources. *American Journal of Psychiatry*. 1989; 146: 369-372.

<sup>2</sup> Francis E, Marchand W, Hart M, et al. Utilization and outcome in an overnight psychiatric observation program at a Veterans Affairs Medical Center. *Psychiatric Services*. 2000; 51(1): 92-95.

<sup>3</sup> Thinn DS, Kuswanto CN, Sum MY, et al. The 23-hour observation unit admissions within the emergency service at a national tertiary psychiatric hospital: Clarifying clinical profiles, outcomes, and predictors of subsequent hospitalization. *The Primary Care Companion for CNS Disorders*. 2015; 17. Doi: 10.4088/PCC.15m01789

## 10. Birch Bay Beach Park Development (5.4 million)

Capital Improvement Title: Birch Bay Beach Park Development (5.4 million)

Department: Parks

**Answer the following questions. Indicate the source of your data where applicable.**

1. Capital improvement description (include square feet, acres, miles of trails, jail beds, etc):

This project will result in the development of a 4.2-acre community park, located in the heart of Birch Bay. The project scope includes construction of a new 124-unit off-street parking facility, public restrooms, picnic and flexible grass playfields, accessible walkways, information signage, and enhanced landscaping.

2. What is the problem this Capital Improvement will address?

This project will satisfy a long-established community goal of providing public parking and restrooms in Birch Bay to support heavy public visitation that the surrounding tidelands attract. Additional parking will improve shoreline access, while restrooms will satisfy a critical human health and comfort need while also reducing pollution loading of sensitive tideland areas.

3. Location (address, Assessor's parcel number or map):

7930 Birch Bay Drive, Blaine, WA 98230

4. How will this capital improvement benefit our citizens?

The project will more than double the available public parking in Birch Bay. The additional parking will facilitate year-round shoreline access, which is especially important during the busy summer months when Birch Bay experiences very high visitation. The parking proposed will be entirely off-street, significantly improving pedestrian safety and reducing potential vehicle/pedestrian conflict.

The project also includes an accessible route from the off-street parking to a public restroom, picnic areas, and a 1-mile-long bayside multi-use pathway. Access to the shoreline from the pathway although not ADA accessible is relatively easy because of the low-gradient back and foreshore.

5. Is this capital improvement required to comply with laws, regulations or LOS standards? (Explain)

No.

6. Will this capital improvement increase efficiency in providing a public service? How?

This project proposes closing existing service gaps and improving public access by developing a new off-street parking facility, restrooms, and a fully accessible route that connects these improvements to a signalized crosswalk that will provide access a 1-mile-long shoreline multi-use path. Other



improvements include picnic and day-use areas, site furnishings, informational and interpretive signage, and street frontage improvements.

7. Will this capital improvement reduce annual operating costs? Please quantify

No, development of this facility will increase annual operating costs.

8. Will this capital improvement impact other county departments? How?

Yes, Planning & Development Services will be involved in the project to ensure the project meets local regulations.

9. Will this capital improvement reduce future capital costs? How?

Yes, developing the facility as scheduled in the 6-year Capital Improvements Program locks in construction and development costs. Postponing the project beyond the proposed development timeline will necessarily increase costs due to inflation.

## 11. Plantation Rifle Range Lead Remediation Project (13.3 million)

Capital Improvement Title: Plantation Rifle Range Lead Remediation Project (14.1 million)

Department: Parks

**Answer the following questions. Indicate the source of your data where applicable.**

1. Capital improvement description (include square feet, acres, miles of trails, jail beds, etc):

In compliance with Agreed Order # DE 21650 between Whatcom County and Washington State Department of Ecology, this project provides for cleanup of hazardous substances at Plantation Rifle Range.

2. What is the problem this Capital Improvement will address?

Whatcom County has operated Plantation Range since the early 1970s without conducting lead reclamation. The accumulation of lead, and other contaminants related to shooting range operations, in the environment requires cleanup to protect environmental and human health. This project provides resources to conduct this work.

3. Location (address, Assessor's parcel number or map):

5102 Samish Way, Bellingham, WA.

4. How will this capital improvement benefit our citizens?

This capital improvement benefits our citizens through compliance with the Washington State Model Toxics Control Act and cleanup of hazardous waste.

5. Is this capital improvement required to comply with laws, regulations or LOS standards? (Explain)

This project is required for compliance with Washington State Model Toxics Control Act.

6. Will this capital improvement increase efficiency in providing a public service? How?

No.

7. Will this capital improvement reduce annual operating costs? Please quantify

No.

8. Will this capital improvement impact other county departments? How?

Planning and Development Services is responsible for issuing permits related to this project.

9. Will this capital improvement reduce future capital costs? How?

Yes. Cleanup of the site is required. Costs associated with the project are anticipated to increase with time. Implementing the project in a timely manner avoids experiencing future cost increases and reduces the potential for fiscal penalties related to non-compliance with Agreed Order # DE 21650.