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Mark Personius
Director

Memorandum

May 22, 2024

To: The Honorable Satpal Sidhu, Whatcom County Executive
The Honorable Whatcom County Council

From: Lucas Clark, Planner I

Through: Steve Roberge, Assistant Director

RE: Six-Year CIP Amendments (PLN2023-00008)

The Six-Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for Whatcom County Facilities addresses County parks, trails, activity centers, maintenance & operations, general government buildings and sites, Sheriff's Office, emergency management, adult corrections, juvenile detention, transportation, and stormwater facilities.

A discussion at Council's Public Works & Health Committee and introduction of an ordinance relating to these amendments is requested for June 4th. A public hearing and final Council action is anticipated on June 18th. Pursuant to RCW 36.70A.130(2) final action on the CIP must be concurrent with a budget amendment to occur outside the Comprehensive Plan update process. We understand associated budget amendments will also be coming to Council for final action on June 18th.

The Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan provides that the Six-Year CIP should be updated every two years. The last CIP update was approved by the County Council in 2023. The next comprehensive update, scheduled for late 2024, will be proposed to cover the period from 2025 to 2031. However, the County has identified park and government capital facility projects it wants to start and/or complete in 2024-2025. These projects must be in the Six-Year CIP to use real estate excise tax (REET) dollars.

A 60-day Notice of Intent to Adopt Amendment as required under RCW 36.70A.106 was sent to The Department of Commerce on 04/09/2024, the 60 day notice period ended on 06/08/2024, no comments were received to date. On April 25th The Whatcom County Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing. There were three comments made related to the bathrooms facility for Birch Bay Park, and one comment regarding the tax cost for all the projects being planned. The Planning Commission recommended approval of the proposed CIP amendments on April 25, 2024.

Changes are proposed in three chapters of the CIP:

- Chapter 2- Parks, Trails, and Activity Centers;
- Chapter 4- General Government Buildings and Sites; and
- Chapter 11- Total Costs.

Below is a summary of those changes and attached, as Exhibit A, is the full CIP in ~~strikeout~~/underline format.

Chapter 2 – Parks, Trails, and Activity Centers

In this update, Parks broke out funding more specifically than in previous updates. They also added eight new projects to their project inventory, removed two projects, and renamed six projects. They also updated the Trails and Parks inventory to reflect new additions.

Parks updated their inventory (Table 1) of existing parks by adding South Fork Park, located at 1530 Mosquito Lake Rd. South Fork Park added 642.5 acres to the County Parks inventory.

Parks added clarifying language to the Proposed Improvements Projects section of the CIP, including language for funding clean-up efforts associated with Lead contamination at Plantation Rifle Range and improved shower and restroom facilities at Silver Lake Park.

Parks amended Table 2, existing trails, to reflect the addition of 4.1 miles of trail to the Lake Whatcom Park trail. They also amended the Proposed Improvement Projects section to show the Governor’s Point and Bay to Bake Trail additions. Finally, Parks reorganized the Park, Trail, and Activity Centers Projects (Table 4) for clarity (Alphabetized it), added eight new projects (all listed below), removed two projects, and renamed six projects.

Added projects:

- 2) Alderson Road End Day-Use Improvements
- 8) EWRRC – Building and Site Improvements
- 10) Governor’s Point – Acquisition and Trailhead Development
- 23) Lighthouse Marine Park – Park Improvements
- 30) Multi-Modal Regional Trail Planning, Design, and Implementation
- 35) Property Acquisition (Acme/Bellingham to Baker Trail)
- 37) Samish Park – Pedestrian Trail Bridge Replacement
- 43) South Fork Park – Carrasco Property Structure Demolition, access control, and Caretaker’s residence restoration

Project Name Changes

- New name = 32) Park Headquarters – Administrative Offices and Campus Improvements / Old name = 14) Park Headquarters Parking & Pedestrian Improvements
- New name = 45) South Fork Park – Nessel Farm Improvements / Old name = 21) Nessel Farm Improvements
- New name = 20) Lake Whatcom Park – Hertz Trail Capital Maintenance / Old name = 23) Hertz Trail Capital Maintenance
- New name = 28) Maple Falls Community Park – Trailhead Improvements / Old name = 25) Maple Falls Park Trailhead
- New name = 14) Hovander Homestead Park – Maintenance Shop Facility Programming / Old name = 32) Hovander Rental Property Conversion to Maintenance Shop

- New name = 19) Lake Whatcom Watershed – Forest Management Plan and Implementation / Old name = 33) Forest Management Plan

Projects Removed

- 34) Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space Plan Update (Not REET eligible)
- 43) Parks Admin Office HVAC Replacement & Upgrade (Project combined with No. 32)

Chapter 4 – General Government Buildings and Sites

Office space inventory was updated with over 12,000 more square feet by adding the Unity Street Rental Office Property and 3720 Williamson Way.

Four new projects and two funding sources were added: construction of the 23-hour Crisis Relief Center (Division St), updating the Security and surveillance Equipment (Main Jail, Jail work Center & Juvenile Detention), a New Generator for WUECC (3888 Sound Way), and 5th Superior Court and IT Tenant Improvement. The two new funding sources are the American Rescue Plan Act and the Affordable Housing, Behavioral Health Facilities, and Related Services Program Fund.

Chapter 11 – Total Costs

Total Costs grew from \$403,434,092.00 to \$428,493,369.00 which reflects the increase in Parks, Trails, and Activity Centers and General Government Buildings and Sites total costs for the six-year planning period.

The subject proposal would amend the following chapters of the Six-Year CIP for Whatcom County Facilities 2023-2028 (Appendix F of the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan):

- Parks, Trails, and Activity Centers;
- General Government Buildings and Sites; and
- Total Costs.

The complete amended CIP is attached to the Draft Ordinance as Exhibit A in strikethrough/underline format.

Thank you for your review and consideration of this matter. We look forward to discussing it with you.