

PROPOSED BY: Planning & Development Services  
INTRODUCTION DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**ORDINANCE NO.** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADOPTING AMENDMENTS TO THE  
WHATCOM COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
RELATING TO CAPITAL FACILITIES PLANNING**

**WHEREAS,** The Whatcom County Planning Commission held a public hearing and issued recommendations on the proposed amendments; and

**WHEREAS,** The County Council considered Planning Commission recommendations;

**WHEREAS,** The County Council held a public hearing; and

**WHEREAS,** The County Council hereby adopts the following findings of fact:

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

1. The proposal is to amend the Six-Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for Whatcom County Facilities 2021-2026 (Appendix F of the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan) as follows:
  - a. Add the Central Plaza Public Defender Tenant Improvement project.
2. Notice of the subject amendments was submitted to the Washington State Department of Commerce on August 6, 2021.
3. The SEPA Official determined on August 6, 2021 that the determination of non-significance (DNS) issued in 2020 for the Six-Year CIP update is sufficient for the subject amendments.
4. Notice of the Planning Commission hearing was posted on the County website on August 11, 2021.
5. Notice of the Planning Commission hearing for the subject amendments was published in the Bellingham Herald on August 26, 2021.
6. Notice of the Planning Commission hearing was sent to the County's e-mail list on August 26, 2021.

7. The Planning Commission held a public hearing on the subject amendments on September 9, 2021.
8. Pursuant to WCC 22.10.060(1), in order to approve the proposed comprehensive plan amendments the County must find all of the following:
  - a. The amendment conforms to the requirements of the Growth Management Act, is internally consistent with the county-wide planning policies and is consistent with any interlocal planning agreements.
  - b. Further studies made or accepted by the Department of Planning and Development Services indicate changed conditions that show need for the amendment.
  - c. The public interest will be served by approving the amendment. In determining whether the public interest will be served, factors including but not limited to the following shall be considered:
    - i. The anticipated effect upon the rate or distribution of population growth, employment growth, development, and conversion of land as envisioned in the comprehensive plan.
    - ii. The anticipated effect on the ability of the county and/or other service providers, such as cities, schools, water and/or sewer purveyors, fire districts, and others as applicable, to provide adequate services and public facilities including transportation facilities.
    - iii. Anticipated impact upon designated agricultural, forest and mineral resource lands.
  - d. The amendment does not include or facilitate spot zoning.
9. The Growth Management Act (GMA) establishes planning goals in RCW 36.70A.020 to guide adoption of comprehensive plan amendments.
10. GMA planning goal # 12 is to "Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards" (RCW 36.70A.020(12)).
11. The subject amendments consist of updating the Six-Year CIP for Whatcom County Facilities for the 2021-2026 planning period by adding a

tenant improvement project to accommodate staffing/meeting space needs of the Public Defender's Office. Updating the CIP is one step in the process of planning capital facilities, including general government buildings and sites, to serve the people of Whatcom County.

12. County-Wide Planning Policy K-1 indicates that, as part of the comprehensive planning process, the County must identify appropriate land for public facilities that meets the needs of the community including recreation, transportation and human service facilities.
13. The Six-Year CIP identifies such improvements as contemplated by the County Wide Planning Policies.
14. There are no known interlocal agreements relating to the subject amendments.
15. An updated Six-Year CIP was adopted for County owned or operated facilities in 2020. The subject proposal is a minor amendment to the CIP to address an identified need of the Public Defender's Office.
16. The goal of the Six-Year CIP for Whatcom County Facilities is to plan for County owned or operated facilities. Improving the Central Plaza building to meet the needs of the Public Defender's Office is in the public interest.
17. The subject proposal does not involve rezoning property.

## **CONCLUSION**

The subject Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan amendments are consistent with the approval criteria in WCC 22.10.060.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Whatcom County Council that:

Section 1. Amendments to the Six-Year Capital Improvement Program for Whatcom County Facilities 2021-2026 (Appendix F of the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan) are hereby adopted as shown on Exhibit A.

Section 2. Adjudication of invalidity of any of the sections, clauses, or provisions of this ordinance shall not affect or impair the validity of the ordinance as a whole or any part thereof other than the part so declared to be invalid.

ADOPTED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2021.

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL  
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Barry Buchanan, Chairperson

APPROVED as to form:

( ) Approved ( ) Denied

/s/ Royce Buckingham  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Civil Deputy Prosecutor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Satpal Sidhu, Executive

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 4 – General Government Buildings and Sites

### Existing Office Space

The 2020 inventory of County government office space is 331,141 square feet at nine locations. This inventory is shown below.

**Table 7. Existing County Government Office Space**

Site No.	Facility Name	Square feet
1	Civic Center Annex (322 North Commercial)	30,000
2	Central Plaza Building (215 N. Commercial)	10,307
3	County Courthouse (311 Grand Avenue)	200,000
4	Forest St. Annex (1000 North Forest St.)	14,000
5	509 Girard St.	13,189
6	3373 Mt. Baker Highway	2,110
7	1500 N. State St.	16,820
8	Northwest Annex (5280 Northwest Dr.)	20,265
9	Crisis Stabilization Center (2026 Division St.)	<u>24,450</u>
TOTAL		331,141

### Future Needs

The Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan does not contain a level of service standard for general government buildings. The County will budget for improvements to such facilities as needed.

### Proposed Improvement Projects

Improvement and maintenance projects on existing buildings and sites over the six-year planning period total approximately ~~\$52.9~~**\$52.5** million as shown below.

**Table 8. Proposed Government Building and Site Improvement Projects**

	Funding Source	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Totals
1	Courthouse Maintenance Projects (311 Grand Ave)	1, 2	311,837	1,020,514		500,000	500,000	2,332,351
2	Northwest Annex Campus	2, 3, 4	1,950,000	12,000,000	12,000,000			25,950,000
3	Courthouse Exterior Project - Phase 2 (311 Grand Ave)	1, 2	500,000	2,921,000	2,921,000			6,342,000
4	Improvements, including remodel and HVAC (1500 N. State St)	5, 6			750,000	8,717,000		9,467,000
5	Improvements, including roof, HVAC, and windows (509 Girard St)	2			80,000	1,380,000		1,460,000
6	Prosecuting Attorney - Office Update (311 Grand Ave)	1	60,514					60,514
7	Civic Center - Parking Lot (322 N. Commercial)	1, 4			75,000	400,000		475,000
8	Civic Center Building Renovation (322 N Commercial)	1, 4	3,000,000	1,600,000	400,000			5,000,000
9	Interior Painting, Carpets, Asphalt Repairs (various locations)	1	165,000	165,000	165,000	165,000	165,000	990,000
10	Central Plaza Debt Service (215 N. Commercial)	1	124,000	124,000	124,000			372,000
11	ADA Compliance (various locations)	1	40,000	40,000				80,000
12	Central Plaza - Public Defender Tenant Improvement (215 N. Commercial)	1	<u>182,302</u>	<u>182,302</u>				<u>364,604</u>
<b>Totals</b>			<u>6,333,653</u>	<u>18,052,816</u>	16,360,000	9,537,000	2,445,000	<u>52,893,469</u>
			<del>6,151,351</del>	<del>17,870,514</del>				<del>52,528,865</del>

**Funding Sources**

1. Real Estate Excise Tax (REET)
2. Economic Development Initiative (EDI)
3. Debt
4. Road Fund
5. State Street Project Based Budget
6. Grants

## Chapter 11 – Total Costs

Total Costs for the six-year planning period are shown below.

**Table 18. Total Costs for the Six-Year Planning Period**

	<b>Total Costs 2021-2026</b>	<b>Percent of Total Costs</b>
Parks, Trails, and Activity Centers	11,869,457	<del>4.77%</del> 4.78%
Maintenance and Operations	812,375	0.33%
General Government Buildings and Sites	<del>52,893,469</del> 52,528,865	<del>21.25%</del> 21.17%
Sheriff's Office	21,730,000	<del>8.73%</del> 8.76%
Emergency Management	405,842	0.16%
Adult Corrections	95,197,922	<del>38.24%</del> 38.36%
Juvenile Detention	0	0.00%
Transportation	53,797,000	<del>21.61%</del> 21.68%
Stormwater Facilities	12,213,000	<del>4.91%</del> 4.92%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<del><b>248,919,065</b></del> <b>248,554,461</b>	100.00%

The County plans to undertake capital improvement projects costing approximately ~~\$249~~\$248 million between 2021 and 2026, which will be financed with a combination of local, state, federal, and other funding sources.