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**COMMUNITY PLANNING &
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

Joshua Cummings, Director

Creating Solutions for Our Future

MEMORANDUM

TO: Thurston County Planning Commission

FROM: Kaitlynn Nelson, Associate Planner
Allison Osterberg, Senior Planner

DATE: April 3, 2019

SUBJECT: Comprehensive Plan Update: Chapter 6 – Capital Facilities

Background

The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires the County have a Capital Facilities Element as part of its Comprehensive Plan (RCW 36.70A.070). The Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) is a planning tool that evaluates population to prioritize projects that either provide or maintain county infrastructure and services. The CFP is not a budget, but it helps plan to use funding efficiently in order to maximize funding opportunities, demonstrate facility needs, integrate community desires, and qualify for federal and state grants and loans. The CFP also includes plans and priorities for a broad range of construction, repair, and upgrade projects necessary to support county operations and services to the public, and provides possible financing methods by which these desired projects could be accomplished, even though it does not guarantee that projects will be implemented.

Last year, staff completed a comprehensive review of Chapter 6 as part of the comprehensive plan update. Additionally, the last update extracted the six-year financial plan from the body of Chapter 6 and now references it as the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), or Appendix G. The Planning Commission reviewed those proposed changes on August 15, held a public hearing on September 19, and recommended approval to the Board of County Commissioners. The Board of County Commissioners approved and adopted the chapter on December 14, 2018

Staff now is recommending format changes to the CFP for consistency with the rest of the Comprehensive Plan Update and additions to improve readability of the information provided.

What public feedback has the Capital Facilities Chapter received?

No public feedback has yet been requested for this specific draft. Public input was received to create the information provided in the current Capital Facilities chapter, adopted last year.

What is changing in the Capital Facilities Chapter?

General information from the existing chapter has been moved into the current draft, even though some information has been moved around into new sections.

The goals and policies remain largely the same. Generally, the proposed changes to the goals and policies are intended to improve understandability.

Similar to other draft chapters of the Comprehensive Plan, staff have added sections describing planning context (including relevant County Wide Policies) and critical issues that may influence the county's ability to meet the goals and policies laid out in the chapter. The Critical Issues identified in the draft chapter are general statements, and staff encourages input from Planning Commissioners on this specific information.

Critical Issues

The Critical Issues regarding planning for the county's capital facilities include:

- Maintaining existing facilities;
- Prioritizing between maintenance projects and new infrastructure;
- Addressing existing deficiencies;
- Reliance on economic conditions to obtain funding through impact fees associated with building permits;
- Increases in regulatory requirements, especially for water and sewer; and
- Unexpected variances to growth projections.

Decision Points

Consider whether the draft changes to Chapter 6 are clear and sufficiently describe the county's approach to planning for Capital Facilities, within the scope of the periodic update.