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**COMMUNITY PLANNING &
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

Joshua Cummings, Director

Creating Solutions for Our Future

MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Shannon Shula, Associate Planner

DATE: August 26, 2019

SUBJECT: Rochester and Grand Mound Subarea Plan Update

Since the June 5, 2019 Planning Commission meeting, staff was directed to retain both subarea plans for the Rochester Subarea and the Grand Mound Urban Growth Area. The purpose for this action is to complete the Rochester Subarea Plan update in a timely manner while additional studies and research are completed for the Grand Mound Subarea Plan in the coming year. The September 4, 2019 Planning Commission meeting will focus on the Rochester Subarea Plan update and the community outreach efforts completed over the past two years.

Background

The original Rochester Subarea Plan was adopted in 1978 and covered an area of roughly 55,000 acres in southwest Thurston County. In 1996, an extensive update was completed by Earth Tech (formerly Barrett Consulting Group) that encompassed approximately 9,500 acres referred to as the Rochester Growth Study Area (GSA), which included Grand Mound. The primary purpose of this study was to reevaluate the GSA's land use designations and consistency with the County's Comprehensive Plan, the Grand Mound Urban Growth Area (UGA) and the Growth Management Act (GMA). The outcome and recommendation of the 1996 public participation process for the final land use plan was most consistent with a rural emphasis, with a town core centered in Rochester.

Current Subarea Plan

Over twenty years later, the importance of preservation of rural character, agriculture and open space still resonates with the residents of Rochester. The existing rural residential land use for Rochester is in alignment with the County's current Comprehensive Plan, therefore a majority of the 1996 plan is no longer relevant. The elements of the subarea plan relating to land use, critical areas, housing, transportation, and capital facilities are all included in the 2019 Comprehensive Plan update. The current 2019 Rochester Subarea Plan update includes updates to population

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forecasts, housing estimates, existing land use and densities, in addition to updates of all relevant maps for the area.

Main Street Rochester

The Main Street Rochester project was an effort to address the dual role US 12 serves as a regional highway and Rochester's Main Street. Thurston County, in collaboration with Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC) and Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), conducted outreach with residents and businesses in Rochester as part of a federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) grant to:

- Improve safety and multimodal mobility
- Increase infrastructure investments in the area
- Enhance Rochester's sense of place; and
- Encourage economic vitality

The deliverables from the Main Street Rochester project include a Current Conditions Report, Multimodal Transportation Action Plan, and a Final Report. The elements from this project include the current planning efforts, public participation, action plans, and next planning steps for the County. These resources are essential for grants and future planning efforts in Rochester.