Planning and Development Services

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

Successes and Celebrations

Gary R. Christensen, Director
Skagit County Planning & Development Services

"Helping You Plan and Build Better Communities"

January 18, 2011

Objectives

- **Highlight and Reflect on a Number of 2010 Accomplishments/Achievements**
  - Not listed in any order of importance

- **Many Participants – Too Many to Individually Name**
  - County Commissioners
  - Planning Commission
  - Planning and Development Services
  - Other County Departments
  - Various Committees/Boards
  - Agencies with Jurisdiction
  - Interested Parties
  - The Public

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

- **Development Review**
    - Current planning
    - Natural resource
    - Building
    - Code enforcement/compliance
- **Projects**
    - Plans, Policies, & Codes
- **Administration**
    - Boards, Committees, Commissions
    - Standard operating procedures
    - Public assistance

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

Development Review

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

1. Current Planning Projects

   - 257 applications (plats, CaRDs, special use, variances, etc.,) reviewed and approved.

   - Notable projects: Skagit Transfer Station upgrade; Anacortes Water treatment plant; and progress toward Welts land division and landfill remediation.

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

2. Natural Resource

- 265 applications reviewed (critical areas, shorelines, forest practice, mining, etc.)

- Of those, 209 have been finalized.

- Notable projects: Fisher Slough restoration; Skagit Environmental Bank; and, repair of last failing septic system at Similk Beach to reopen Similk Bay for shellfish harvest.

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

3. Building

   ■ 415 applications (residential, commercial, industrial, remodels, mechanical, plumbing, etc.) reviewed and approved.

   ■ Notable projects: Marsulex, a refinery by-product, in which solid sulfur pellets are created for fertilizer; Fire District #2 – new station on Memorial Highway; Alf Christensen Seed company 12,000 sq. ft. office addition to the old Transform factory near the Port; and, Skagit County Public Works transfer station.

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

4. Code Enforcement/Compliance

   - 142 cases opened in 2010
   - Of those, 100 cases resolved
   - Remaining cases require more research or further legal review/action

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

Projects

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

5. Bayview Ridge Subarea Plan draft Planned Unit Development (PUD) code
   - PUD code drafted

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

6. Guemes Island Subarea Plan

   - Reviewed Guemes Island Planning Advisory Committee (GIPAC) draft Guemes Island Subarea Plan.

   - Subarea Plan addresses: rural character, groundwater protection, land capacity, transportation and ferry service, and a 222 acre rezone from RI to RRv.

   - Adoption in January, 2011.

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

7. Master Planned Resorts/Recreational Vehicle Park Code Standards

   - Drafted development code standards for master planned resorts (MPRs) & recreational vehicle (RVs) parks.

   - MPR standards address: setting of significant natural amenities, "short-term" visitor ratios, total unit size limits, land capability, and clearer project submittal requirements.

   - RV standards address: definitions for "developed" and "destination" campgrounds, and pre-existing campgrounds in Rural Reserve (RRv) zoning district.

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

8. Skagit County Capital Facilities Plans
   - Updated service provider plans for 2010-2015.
   - Updated service provider plans for 2011-2016, coincided with Skagit County 2011 budget.

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

9. Annual Skagit County Code Amendments
   - Initiated and drafted revisions, amendments, and new development regulations & standards for Skagit County Code. Substantial work completed.
   - Purpose – clarify intent and assure consistency with the comprehensive plan.
   - To be processed in 2011.

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

10. Update of County Zoning Use Matrix
    - Provides a "snapshot, at-a-glance" view of land uses, zoning districts, and land use permit/approval requirements.
    - Quick reference guide.

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

11. US Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Food Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) & Regulations
   - Initial review, community meetings, and public dissemination of floodplain / floodway maps on Skagit County website via iMap.

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

12. US Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) & National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Biological Opinion (BiOp)

   - Regulatory scheme required to protect certain Puget Sound species of salmon and Orca.
   - 1-year extension granted.

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

13. National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II Permit

   - Worked with Public Works to draft and adopt amendments to Skagit County Code that address stormwater systems and runoff from new development, redevelopment, and construction sites in census defined urban areas in unincorporated Skagit County.

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

14. US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Envision Skagit 2060

   - Formerly known as Alternative Futures, total grant (~ $1.5 million).

   - Development and evaluation of alternative development scenarios for 50 years - Skagit Valley 2060.

   - Work with Technical Advisory Committee, Citizen Committee, and county/city elected officials.

   - Public outreach – Lincoln Theater presentation on the "The Cascade Corridor – How Regional Growth Will Shape Skagit County and Northern Puget Sound."

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

15. WA State Department of Ecology (DOE) Skagit County Shoreline Master Program (SMP) Update

- Secured state grant (~ $740,000) and developed scope of work.

- County SMP must be consistent with state guidelines.

- Address new development and use along shorelines along rivers and larger streams, lakes over 20 acres, and marine waters.

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

16. US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Clean Samish Initiative
    - Work with a number of agencies, departments and organizations to address water quality issues in the Samish River Watershed.

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

17. WA State Department of Ecology (DOE) Samish River Watershed Direct Implementation Fund

   - Grant amount received ~ $33,000.
   - Coordinate public outreach, education and code enforcement/compliance efforts in the Samish River Watershed.

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

18. US Department of Transportation, Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Safety Administration Pipeline Safety Standards Grant

   - Secured grant (~ $50,000) to develop code language and regulations pertaining to transmission pipeline safety.

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

19. WA State Governor's 2010 Smart Communities Award:

    Skagit Countywide UGA Open Space Plan

    - Skagit County's Countywide UGA (urban growth areas) Open Space Plan identifies and prioritizes open space corridors and greenbelts within and between UGAs in Skagit County, including lands useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails, and critical areas connection.

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

Administration

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

20. Department Representation and Participation on Boards, Committees, and Commissions

- Forest Advisory Board
- Agriculture Advisory Board
- Conservation Futures Advisory Committee
- Clean Samish Initiative Committee
- Water Resource Advisory Committee
- Swinomish Climate Change Initiative Committee
- Skagit County Planning Commission

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

21. Standard Format For Department Administration Decisions

- Redesigned the form in which Administration Decisions are published.
- Created "official" document and provided more clarity.

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

22. Administrative Official Interpretation on the Construction of Residential Dwellings in the Ag-NRL Zone

- Provided guidance on the requirements and standards for constructing residential dwellings in the Ag-NRL zone.
- Dwelling must be "accessory" to agriculture.
- No farmland conversion.
- Siting requirements.
- 3-year farm income required.

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

23. FEMA / Community Rating System (CRS) 3-year Audit

- Skagit County is currently classified as a CRS #4 community, offering lower floodplain insurances rates.

- Skagit County's flood prevention program is rated among the top 6 flood communities nationwide.

- Provided documentation to FEMA to maintain CRS #4 rating - assisted by Geographic Information Services, Emergency Services, and Public Works.
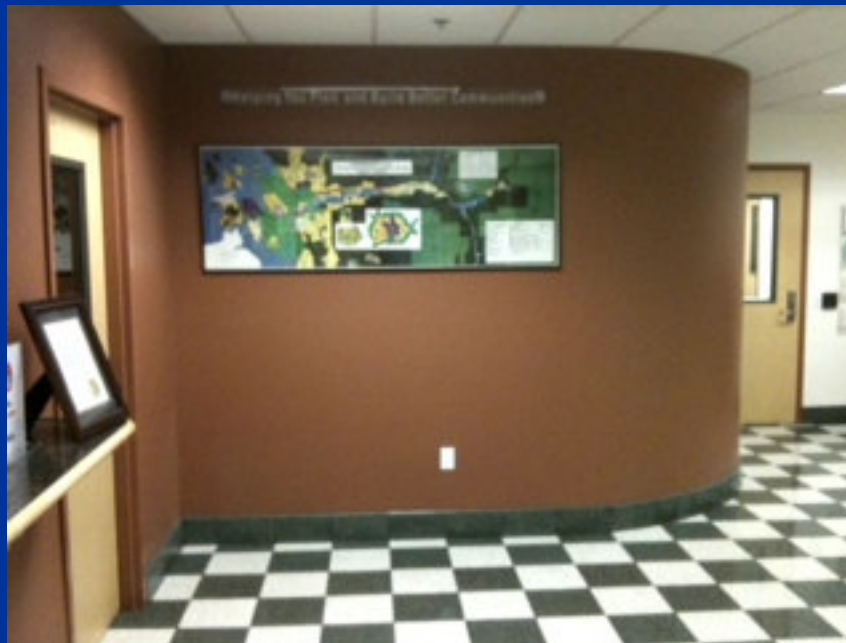
2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

24. Establish Public Disclosure Request (PDR) Protocols and Procedures

- Developed "standard operating procedures" for public requests for information / records.
- Identified project manager and coordinator.

2010 Accomplishments/Achievements

25. Department Front Lobby/Foyer
- Placement of 1966 and 2010 Skagit County Comprehensive Plan
- "Helping You Plan and Build Better Communities"

Planning and Development Services

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