



## WHATCOM COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

5280 Northwest Drive  
Bellingham WA 98226

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### AGENDA Thursday July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024

The Whatcom County Planning Commission will hold a **hybrid** meeting at 6:30 p.m., with the option to attend remotely or in person at 5280 Northwest Drive, Bellingham.

- Call to Order
- Roll Call
- Flag Salute
- Department Update
- Open Session for Public Comment
- Commissioner Comments
- Approval of Minutes of: June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024
- Meeting Topic: *Continued Work Session on PLN2024-00007 Heavy Impact Industrial Uses in Urban Growth Areas*
- Unfinished Business
- Adjournment

**NOTE:** For information on how to watch and participate in the meeting in real time, please visit the following web page: [Participate in Virtual Planning Commission Meeting](#)

*Individuals who require special assistance to participate in the meetings are asked to contact "PDS\_Planning\_Commission@co.whatcom.wa.us" at least 96 hours in advance.*

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*There are nine members on the Whatcom County Planning Commission. If you will be giving written information to the Commissioners, please give a copy to the Coordinator for our office files.*

*For more information please contact Aileen Kogut-Aguon at (360)778-5935 or PDS\_Planning\_Commission@co.whatcom.wa.us  
5280 Northwest Drive, Bellingham WA 98226*



**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
WHATCOM COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

Regular Meeting and Work Session

1

1 **Call to Order**

2 The meeting was called to order by Whatcom County Planning Commission Chair,  
3 Kelvin Barton at 6:31p.m.

4 **Roll Call**

5 **Present:** Kelvin Barton, Atul Deshmane, Dominic Mocerri, Scott Van Dalen, Julie  
6 Jefferson

7 **Absent:** Jim Hansen, Stephen Jackson, Frank James

8 **Staff Present:** Steve Roberge, Aileen Kogut-Aguon and Cliff Strong

9 **Department Update**

10 There is no department update.

11 **Open Session Public Comment**

12 Dave Widner, Robert Koch, MaryLou Whiteford, Chris Secrist, Lisa Adam, Brian Sarni,  
13 Scott Jones, Nancy Bay, Jean-Luc Cornet, Scott Jones, Sarah Gardner, Sebastian  
14 Durbin and Julie Wilson-McNerney provided public comments.

15 **Commissioner Comments**

16 Commissioner Jefferson asked a clarifying question on when the notices went out.  
17 Steve Roberge, Assistant Planning Director PDS, responded that the notices to the  
18 business owners were sent out Friday June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

19 **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

20 **Timestamp: 7:03p**

21 **1 Commissioner Van Dalen moved** to approve the meeting minutes from May 9<sup>th</sup>  
22 2024.

23 **Commissioner Mocerri seconded.**

24 **Roll Call Vote: Ayes - Scott Van Dalen, Dominic Mocerri, Kelvin Barton**

25 **Abstain - Atul Deshmane, Julie Jefferson**

26 **(Ayes-3; Nays-0; Abstain-2). The motion carried.**

27 **2 Commissioner Van Dalen moved** to approve the meeting minutes from May 23<sup>rd</sup>,  
28 2024.

29 **Commissioner Mocerri seconded.**

30 **Roll Call Vote: Ayes - Scott Van Dalen, Dominic Mocerri, Kelvin Barton**

31 **Abstain - Atul Deshmane, Julie Jefferson (Ayes-3; Nays-0; Abstain-2). The**  
32 **motion carried.**

33 **Heavy Impact Industrial Work Session**

34 **Timestamp: 7:08p**

35 Cliff Strong, PDS Senior Planner, reviewed the Council's request to:



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Regular Meeting and Work Session

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1        *Amend Whatcom County Code Chapter 20.68 and other relevant sections of*  
2        *Title 20 to define appropriate industrial uses and conditions for industrial uses in*  
3        *Heavy Impact Industrial (HII) Districts within a city's designated urban growth*  
4        *area.*

5        In addition, Mr. Strong reiterated the potential solutions and concerns the  
6        Commissioners discussed at the prior meeting on May 23rd. These solutions  
7        included: prohibiting additional certain uses in the area via §20.68.203, prohibiting  
8        outdoor HII uses, allowing only light industrial uses in the heavy impact properties,  
9        applying the light industrial performance standards to the area and recommending  
10       Council impose a moratorium until the HII properties can be rezoned through the  
11       Comprehensive Plan update.

12       Concerns included: impacting existing business, some of which might do some of  
13       the things contemplated for exclusion; how creating stricter performance standards  
14       might affect existing uses; how creating nonconforming uses might affect existing  
15       uses; and notifying and hearing from the existing businesses in the area.

16       Mr. Strong pointed out the County attorney's response to the questions the  
17       Commission posed regarding legal issues, and corrected an error in staff's analysis  
18       of the differences between the LII and HII performance standards.

19       Lastly Mr. Strong reviewed staff's latest recommendation (#4 Combined Solution)  
20       from the June 13<sup>th</sup> memo.

21       The Commissioners resumed discussion from the last session regarding the uses in HII  
22       zone and how changes to the code might affect new and existing businesses.

23       Commissioner Mocerri suggested getting input from the City of Bellingham as these  
24       code amendments will affect them as well.

25       Commissioner Chair Barton requested a more elaborate packet from staff with codes  
26       for the HII for the Bellingham UGA to get a detailed picture of the zoning and the  
27       possible amendments being brought to the Commission. Mr. Strong stated that these  
28       have already been included in the memos provided.

29       The Commissioners would like more clear direction from County Council on this docket  
30       item and if a moratorium is an option before moving forward with a public hearing.

31       Commissioner Mocerri reiterated the idea of Council imposing a moratorium until the  
32       HII properties can be rezoned through the Comprehensive Plan update.

33       Commissioner Deshmane asked Council Member Mark Stremmer if he would like to  
34       speak on the discussion and provide some input.

35       Mark Stremmer, Whatcom County Council member, though speaking for himself and not  
36       the Council, stated that he would hate to be the one to tell existing businesses that  
37       they would have to change or be limited in the future.

38       PDS will present to Council the suggestions given and request a clearer direction for  
39       the Commission regarding the code amendments for the HII in the Bellingham UGA.



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1 **Adjournment**

2 **Timestamp: 7:53p**

3 The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

4 Minutes prepared by Aileen Kogut-Aguon.

5 WHATCOM COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION ATTEST:

6 \_\_\_\_\_  
7 Kelvin Barton, Chair

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Aileen Kogut-Aguon, Secretary

DRAFT

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Planning & Development Services  
5280 Northwest Drive  
Bellingham, WA 98226-9097  
360-778-5900, TTY 800-833-6384  
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**Mark Personius, AICP**  
Director

## Memorandum

DATE: July 1, 2024  
TO: Planning Commission  
FROM: Cliff Strong, Senior Planner  
THROUGH: Steve Roberge, Assistant Director  
RE: Review of uses allowed in the Heavy Impact Industrial District within Urban Growth Areas (PLN2024-00007)

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At our last meeting the Commission requested that staff ask Council for further clarification on their directive expressed in docket item PLN2024-00007. PDS prepared the attached memo<sup>1</sup> forwarding your questions, to the Council's Committee of the Whole for discussion on July 9<sup>th</sup>. As this is only two days prior to your July 11<sup>th</sup> meeting, we will have to provide their response orally that night.

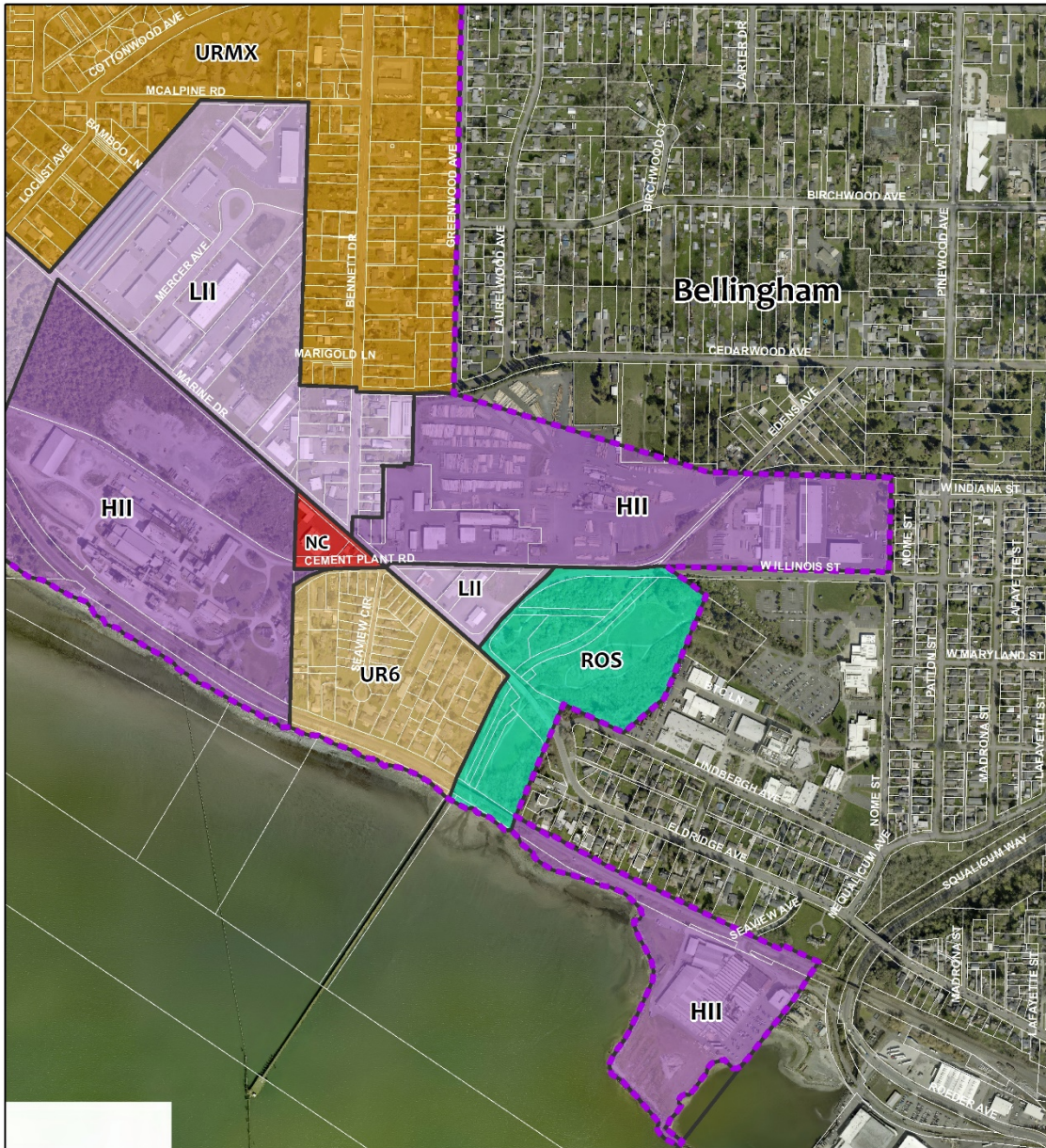
Also requested was a map at a larger scale, with street names labeled. Attached is that revised map. For additional background, please refer to the memos previously provided to the Commission (and also available on the Planning Commission agenda center

(<https://www.whatcomcounty.us/AgendaCenter/Planning-Commission-9>) under the June 13<sup>th</sup> and May 23<sup>rd</sup> meetings). If you have problems finding or accessing this material let us know.

We are looking forward to further discussion at our July 11<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that as attachments to that memo, staff provided the 3 memos we had provided to the P/C. However, we are not attaching them herein as you already have copies of them (or they can be retrieved at <https://www.whatcomcounty.us/AgendaCenter/Planning-Commission-9>).

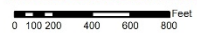


**Legend**

**Title 20 Zoning**

- UR6 Urban Res. 6/Ac.)
- URMX (Urban Res. Mixed)
- NC (Neighborhood Comm.)
- ROS (Rec./Open Space)
- HII (Heavy Impact Industrial)
- LII (Light Impact Industrial)
- Urban Growth Area

USE OF WHATCOM COUNTY'S GIS DATA IMPLIES THE USER'S AGREEMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:  
 Whatcom County disclaims any warranty of merchantability or warranty of fitness of this map for any particular purpose, either express or implied. No representation or warranty is made concerning the accuracy, currency, completeness or quality of data depicted on this map. Any user of this map assumes all responsibility for use thereof, and further agrees to hold Whatcom County harmless from and against any damage, loss, or liability arising from any use of this map.



June 2024

