Community Design/Sustainability/Infrastructure Study Group Proposal

Community Design

1. **Issues to be Addressed:**
   1. Create public/private partnerships that incorporate livable, walkable, mixed use development in the town center and along the waterfront
   2. Promote development that is based on community supported design standards that maintains desirable scale and defines overarching community character (not all the same but in the same vernacular)
   3. Identify a community place where people can gather, reside, lodge, play, dine, enjoy the arts, and shop (a hub for a series of these spaces that link/interconnect the community)
   4. Recognize the variety of environs that make Anacortes unique and special
2. **Possible Concepts to Address Issues:**
   Issue 1:
   1. The Port, City, MJB and *other major development interests* must create a public/private partnership that could be articulated in "development agreements"
   2. Mixed use may include high-density, small lot residential; commercial retail; light manufacturing; public open space/trails/promenade/parklets; and, commercial/recreational boating businesses.
   3. Address and create public parking spaces/structures , by providing development incentives and/or through public financing. Public Parking should be located toward the perimeter of dense pedestrian/walkability areas
   4. Cohesiveness and connectivity between CBD, old town, and the waterfront
      a. Streetcar or Trolley loop – R Ave and Commercial
      b. Pedestrian Bridge over R to waterfront
      c. Close 11th ave, pedestrian promenade
      d. Study options to reconnect Commercial to Q Ave at 12th St
      e. Improve Tommy Thompson trail to entice pedestrian and bicycle traffic to proceed to 11th St promenade
   5. Incorporate "honey I shrunk the lot" concepts for higher density residential development
   6. Retail commercial need not be "big box," it could be "small box". Identify existing businesses which have a "small town" program:
      a. Examples: Fedex/Kinkos, UPS, Target, etc.
   Issue 2:
   1. Design standards need to be developed to assure proper scale, community character, and uniformity/cohesiveness, and a "design review board," made up of local professionals (architects, landscape architects, builders, developers, real estate, engineers, planners, etc.) established to oversee the program
   2. Moving away from "conditional use permit" conditions will create a more predictable and business/developer friendly community image. Create developer friendly zoning and permitting process facilitating more predictable decision making, scheduling, and financial modeling
   3. Commercial Ave from the round-a-bout to 12 street must be re-designed as a "intimate" boulevard, with soft landscaping (canopy trees) and a center

medium, and incorporate Dan Burden walkable, livable design concepts to provide a sense of arrival to town and promote redevelopment with infrastructure in place
   a. See recommendations from Transportation subgroup issue #3
4. Address the March Point "strip" highway development (refinery, auto dealers, mini-storage units) by creating an community identity which is different than the west end (Skyline), the CBD, and the waterfront, activate the edges with park like settings in the ROW for community walk, jog and bike uses.

Issue3:
1. Need area(s) set aside for civic community gathering (like a Civic Plaza) and waterfront that spurs economic development, walkable-livable environment, civic spaces/buildings, and community open space with public art, parklets, etc., and study areas like "adopt an alley" in the CBD as future pedestrian connections with expressions espoused by surrounding businesses and residents
2. Work with Chamber of Commerce, business and local government to create a "motto," "marketing theme," or "tag," – an economic development elevator speech for focused recruitment of desired businesses with a variety of and representing multi-sector economic interests, better utilize multi-media and websites

Issue 4:
1. The historic downtown, working marine and recreational waterfront, the community forest, Skyline and Washington Park, March Point, medical campus are each unique and that in their collective ways enhances Anacortes image and makes community special
2. Promote strategically located and more descriptive signage for way finding (we do have a fair amount of ferry travelers/vacationers arriving in Anacortes each year for the first time…imagine a sign at Safeway facing the intersection of 12th and Commercial indicating the CBD businesses, restaurants) with the history explained for various key areas of interest as an education tool for locals and visitors alike.

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Sustainability

1. **Issues to be Addressed:**
   1. Recognize that Anacortes is an island community that is independent, has a built and natural carrying capacity with limitations that are imposed by its isolation and geography
   2. Protect critical community resources and the local economy from the impacts of climate change
      - Climate change will likely lead to increased winter rainfall, summer droughts, continued ocean acidification, steadily warming waters, sea-level rise, stressed forests or native vegetation, and new hosts of pests and diseases. All of which will have damaging effect on the global and local economy.
      - Fidalgo Island and its environs (shorelines, beaches, low-lying terrain, waterfront and marine facilities and services, and forest) will be vulnerable to climate change and its associated impacts
   3. Natural hazards – tsunamis, sea-level rise, earthquake, storm surge flooding, high winds
2. **Possible Concepts to Address Issues:**
   Issue 1:
   1. Select and incorporate recommendations from *Vision 2030: A Vibrant, Sustainable Community.*
   2. Promote a diversity of businesses that are not reliant on one sector of the economy
   3. Invest in and promote a Skagit/Fidalgo Agri-Marine-Tech green economic hub
   4. Support existing educational/research partnerships (WSU Ag extension, Rosario Beach and Shannon Point marine laboratories) and actively lobby for more support
   5. Educate and market "sustainability" as a preferred way of life
   6. Launch and market a "sustainable business incubator" to nurture new business
   7. Energy - reduce reliance on fossil fuels, encourage use of solar energy for new construction, require dark skies model for outside lightning to reduce energy and light pollution, educate community on energy waste reduction
   8. Transportation – provide non-motorized (run, walk, and bike) paths with connectors, promote public transit, support electronic vehicle use by providing charging stations around town, provide kiosks around town for bike/scooter rentals
   9. Promote - renewable energy and efficiency, information technology and communications, bio-medical and health care services, sustainable agricultural specialties and value-added products, eco-friendly tourism, LEED building and development standards, low impact development (LID), and the marina and waterfront area as a "green certificate" community
   10. Provide space for community gardens, encourage backyard gardens, "buy locally" grown produce and agricultural products
   11. Green Building codes, LEEDS certification, etc.
   12. Educational programs on gardening, permaculture, and food preservation and storage (canning).

13. Makerspaces and Tool-share libraries

<u>Issue 2</u>:
1. Select and incorporate key recommendations from: *Swinomish Climate Change Initiative: Impact Assessment Technical Report (2009); Swinomish Climate Change Initiative: Climate Adaptation Action Plan (2010); and the Skagit County Climate Action Plan (2010)*
2. See Concepts from Issue #1 "Community Resilience"
3. Modify port & waterfront regulations to account for 1M sea level rise by 2100
4. Partner with Skagit County to protect and short up existing dikes along Padilla Bay, Skagit Bay, and the Swinomish Channel
   a. Protect Anacortes' road access to the mainland
   b. Protect the incalculable value of Skagit Valley farmland

<u>Issue 3</u>:
1. Select and incorporate key information from the *Skagit County 2008 Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan* (2008, currently being updated)
2. The area is susceptible to storm flooding surges, severe windstorms, harsh winter storms, wildfires, earthquakes, landslides, tsunamis, and to a much lesser extent – volcanic eruptions
3. Educate and disseminate information on emergency preparedness
   - Utilize multi-media, hold community meetings, and have CERT trained first responders
   - Anacortes Youtube channel – post educational videos, etc
4. Identify mitigation strategies to prevent, reduce or minimize impacts that natural hazards can pose to community
5. Limit development or require adaptive design standards in areas prone to natural hazard events
6. Adopt strategies and identify projects that will better position the community for post-disaster funding
7. Identify "critical" community facilities, infrastructure, and resources and prepare disaster recovery, and other resilience/mitigation plans:
   - Verify Anacortes' fresh water supply has protections or backup path in case of damage due to earthquake, flood, tsunami, sea level rise, or industrial accident
   - Power Grid and Internet connectivity – ensure redundant paths (Hwy 20, Rainbow bridge in LaConner, etc.), and ensure they are earthquake, flood, tsunami proof
   - Is there a feasible disaster (natural or manmade), which could take out both the Hwy 20 and LaConner bridges?
   - Backup plans for Washington State and Skagit County ferry terminals and Island residents' access to the mainland

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Infrastructure

1. **Issues to be Addressed:**
   1. Plan and provide for needed community infrastructure
   2. Develop 6-year capital facility plans with a 20-year horizon
   3. How to compete in a highly networked globalized system where Internet connectivity (and quality) is becoming as foundational as paved roads and a reliable power grid?
   4. Human Capital: how will we attract and keep creative and talented people from outside the community; and how will we continue to invest in and nurture the human capital we already have?

2. **Possible Concepts to Address Issues:**
   <u>Issue 1:</u>
   1. Identify key public/private infrastructure services and utilities, and civic governmental facilities

   <u>Issue 2:</u>
   1. Develop an <u>inventory</u> of existing capital facilities, showing their conditions, locations and capacities
   2. <u>Forecast future</u> needs for capital facilities
   3. Create <u>desired LOS</u>, level-of-service standards or benchmarks
   4. Develop <u>financing strategies and plans</u> that identify funding sources
   5. Assure that capital facilities/services/utilities are <u>in harmony</u> with the land use element
   6. A <u>capital facility planning process</u> must be utilized to assure that - community goals are matched with city decision-making; 6-year capital facility projects are linked to long range plans; and, a prescribed process provides a management tool so that capital projects are prioritized and matched with funding options
   7. Develop "<u>concurrency</u>' standards to assure that public facilities and services necessary to support development is available or planned for
   8. Consider utilizing "<u>development impact fees</u>" to lessen the financial costs to the taxpayer
   9. Address deficient, or at least not optimal, existing City road networks and their long-term maintenance, municipal (City) hall/governance building facility needs and location, and communication infrastructure (fiber optic, cellular, and digital) so that the community can be wired and connected within and beyond its corporate area

   <u>Issue 3:</u>
   1. Include language in the Comprehensive Plan which describes high speed Internet infrastructure as a critical public utility
   2. Author a Broadband Strategic Plan which describes in detail the technology and economic context and outlines the community's options and intended plan to address its broadband needs
   3. Build and operate a municipal fiber optic network serving city departments and key institutions (Schools, Port, Hospital), and provide wholesale access to private telecommunications firms serving businesses
      a. Partner with Mt. Vernon to extend their municipal fiber network

4. Build and operate a municipal fiber optic network for city, institutions, business, and residential users
5. Public/Private partnership with a local Internet Service Provider to build and operate a fiber optic network serving city, institutions, business, and residents

Issue 4:
1. Business and Entrepreneurship incubator
2. University Extension Campus
3. Makerspace, 3D printing / additive manufacturing facility
4. Collaborate with Mt. Vernon/Skagit County on unique advantages (lifestyle, resources, education, technology, cutting edge agricultural and marine stewardship)
5. Gigacortes – fiber optic network to attract tech/engineering firms
6. EV charging stations in the CBD, the Port, S. Commercial, and as part of the MJB development plan
    a. Make Anacortes an EV destination (Tesla Supercharger station)
7. Proof-of-Concept partnership with "Solar Roadways"