

# Scoping Comment Summary

Belfair Planned Action EIS | November-December 2020 | Updated April 2021

## Introduction

The Belfair Urban Growth Area (UGA) is a long-standing urban unincorporated community in Mason County serving as a commercial hub for a broader community at the northern end of Hood Canal. SR 3 bisects the community and was recently widened, the County received a loan to further develop a sewer system, and a new state bypass route is pending.

With these infrastructure investments facilitating travel between Kitsap and Mason Counties, a small-town quality of life, and natural environment assets, Belfair may soon experience a rapid increase in growth.

The County seeks to develop a Planned Action Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and ordinance for the Belfair UGA. In association with the Planned Action, the County intends to update the Belfair UGA Plan, adopted in December 2004, and refresh the vision. With a planned action and subarea plan update, Mason County desires to facilitate growth that supports a community-based vision for Belfair.

An EIS is an informational document that provides the County, public, and other agencies with environmental information to be considered in the decision-making process. It also allows the public and government agencies to comment on proposals and alternatives.

Early comment opportunities including scoping. Scoping is an opportunity to provide comments on the scope of the EIS including alternatives, mitigation measures, probable significant adverse impacts, and licenses or other approvals that may be required.

The County accepted written comments from November 12 to December 3, 2020. In addition the County opened a survey for that same period and extended it through December 31, 2020. A community meeting was held on November 19, 2020. The community meeting and survey are summarized under separate cover. The remainder of this document provides a summary of the written comments submitted on the scope of the EIS.

## Scoping Comments Received

Name and Date	Summary of Comments
Ken VanBuskirk November 22, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Stream layer presented by consultant was in error.</li><li>Not enough discussion about elements in SEPA.</li><li>Want to share documented photographic concerns with storm water.</li></ul>
Ken VanBuskirk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Pleased County is addressing CARA, wellhead protection areas and steep slopes and erosion areas.</li></ul>

Name and Date	Summary of Comments
November 29, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Need a review and better quality maps, especially streams.</li> <li>■ Consider areas of concern in 2004 subarea plan including densities and areas of environmental concern, transportation concurrency, and water quality.</li> <li>■ The most logical alternative to consider would be one that modifies the UGA boundary to remove the original phase 2 of sewer and the mapped Union River Valley CARA.</li> <li>■ Consider pending development in cumulative effects.</li> <li>■ Any revisions to festival rezone should be concurrent with downsizing the R-10 zoning.</li> <li>■ Review residential density transitions; currently zoned as 4 units to acre.</li> <li>■ Bypass should be changed to freight corridor and Romance Hill connector should be better vetted in community.</li> </ul>
Ken VanBuskirk December 1, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Stormwater conditions and photos provided near Romance Hill near proposed connector, near NMFA</li> </ul>
Ken VanBuskirk December 3, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Existing stormwater conditions in Belfair UGA and CARA at the NMRFA vicinity on January 25,2020</li> </ul>
Ken VanBuskirk December 3, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Photo and imbedded link are documenting existing stormwater conditions in Belfair UGA and CARA at the NMRFA vicinity on January 25,2020</li> </ul>
Constance Ibsen December 3, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ As this process exempts new development from additional environmental/SEPA review for, perhaps, decades, it is important that Mason County develop a new process (ordinance) to review each new project for traffic and stormwater issues in the Belfair area.</li> <li>■ Require all new projects to connect to Belfair Wastewater Treatment Facility.</li> </ul>
Lisa Klein, AHBL, on behalf of Jack Johnson December 7, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Scoping items they would like included in the Planned Action EIS: earth, water, animals, environmental health, land and shoreline use, historic and cultural preservation, transportation, and utilities.</li> </ul>

## Responses

Responses to scoping comments are not required under SEPA. In summary form, the following considerations are made in the EIS topics:

- A meeting with the consultant team and Mr. Van Buskirk was held to review stream mapping and local condition information. Results comparing existing federal/state sources and local information will be shared.

- Comments regarding an individual development proposal (e.g. fire station) are noted; however, that proposal was evaluated under County permit review procedures.
- Comments regarding alternatives are noted. Please see the community meeting presentation regarding the options being early concepts, that can be mixed and matched. UGA changes may require future subsequent review. The focus of the Planned Action is on the present UGA including areas to the east of SR 3.
- Comments regarding the need to review each new project for stormwater, sewer availability, and traffic are noted. The Planned Action Ordinance will identify procedures for review of each project including compliance with EIS mitigation measures as well as County code requirements (e.g. stormwater manual, sewer availability, transportation concurrency).
- Comments regarding desired EIS topics are noted by the AHBL representative. All listed topics are included except environmental health. Future development would need to conduct any site specific reviews of environmental health based on County and State rules.

**From:** Ken VanBuskirk <kenvanb@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Sunday, November 22, 2020 10:22 AM

**To:** Lisa Grueter <Lisa@berkconsulting.com>; Kell Rowen <KRowen@co.mason.wa.us>

**Cc:** ibsen@hcc.net; Kevin Shutty <KShutty@co.mason.wa.us>; Sharon Trask <STrask@co.mason.wa.us>; Tim Whitehead <TimW@co.mason.wa.us>; Loretta Swanson <lorettas@co.mason.wa.us>

**Subject:** Re: EIS meeting update

Kell thank you for explaining and clarifying; I apologize if the scoping notice and intent was mentioned at the beginning of the meeting as I joined late. When was this posted to the County website, was it after the meeting? I have now read the "scoping" notice but at the time of the meeting my wife and I were given the impression and more focused on the rest of the agenda. I think it would be beneficial for the Public to hear that comments due on December 3 are limited to the elements identified in the SEPA "scoping" process.

It was confusing. Peggy and I felt the December comment deadline was for comments about the whole presentation. During the meeting, as an example, I pointed out that the stream layer presented by consultant was in error. It is hard for someone to comment to the scoping process if the materials presented are incomplete or in error.

During the presentation it was confusing and it seemed like many of the recommendations, like removing portions of UGA or rezoning properties like the fire department, or even housing types were the main topics of discussion and that is what the public should comment on. The consultant was asking about the 2004 subarea plan and recall there was dissent amongst participants about the Romance Hill bypass connector, downtown development and infill, and housing types. I felt there was little discussion about elements in the SEPA checklist.

On that subject I am willing to meet, socially distant of course; with County Staff, team consultants for the County; and fire department staff and consultants to share my documented photographic concerns with storm water issues around the Irene Preserve property and pending development. I am also willing again to share and groundproof my concerns with the GIS stream layer in the UGA with the entire group. Loretta Swanson can verify that I presented the stream material over three years ago.

Again thank you for clarifying, I won't be as stressed out about the deadline.

Best Ken  
360-801-0550

----- Original Message -----

**From:** [Kell Rowen](#)

**To:** [Ken VanBuskirk](#) ; [Lisa Grueter](#)

**Cc:** [Tim Whitehead](#) ; [Sharon Trask](#) ; [Kevin Shutty](#) ; [ibsen@hcc.net](#)

**Sent:** Friday, November 20, 2020 4:06 PM

**Subject:** RE: EIS meeting update

Hi Ken,

Thanks for participating last night. With your attendance, there were 18 total not including staff/consultants/commissioners/journal/Dedrick.

The formal Scoping Notice and Scoping Document can be found here:

<https://www.co.mason.wa.us/community-services/belfair-eis/project-library.php>.

Please note the 30 day scoping notice is to identify elements (as outlined in a SEPA checklist) that need to be studied. It is not a comment period. There will be a comment period after completion of a Draft EIS prior to the final. If you have questions after reading the Notice and Document, please let me know.

Kell

November 29, 2020

Kell Rowen, Planning Manager

Mason County Community Services

615 W Alder Street

Shelton WA 98584

Scoping comments for Belfair EIS, planned action and 2004 subarea plan update:

To begin with I applaud the County for determining that this proposal will likely have a significant impact on the environment. I feel our community has already had significant adverse impacts and this process is long overdue!

**Existing conditions:**

That is why I would like to first start with existing conditions in Belfair UGA. I am very pleased to see the CARA, wellhead protection areas and steep slopes and erosion areas now recognized on online maps. This is very significant and will help make for a better planning endeavor. Sadly one of the things I worked hard as the 2004 planning group was to include the CARA in the plan and it was only mentioned on the last page; as appendices of "Additional Environmental Features", nothing more. (See 2004 UGA plan below).

To this day Belfair has a "prohibited" use drycleaner in the CARA with the County's full knowledge.

**Please include Mason County 2013 CARA study group recommendations in the subarea plan update.**

I would suggest a review and better quality maps contained in the online November scoping document. Current maps are of poor quality and the general public would not be able to determine the amount of streams contained in UGA, in addition the RR line is not identified in key.

Three areas of concern in recommendations made by the 2004 subarea plan are:

1. Land use designations of R-10 surrounding the three "development" nodes. Upon review of currently available maps the downtown core R-10s and the Salmon center node R'10 are extremely constrained by environmental concerns and need to be addressed in any plan update. In addition the Salmon Center is no longer in the UGA and is located on long term agricultural rural lands outside the UGA.
2. Given GMA development "concurrency" requirements, the transportation recommendations are one of the main shortfalls of 2004 plan. The 2004 recommendations T-1, 3, 6, and 7 have not been completed. Connectors to the bypass, freight corridor were not even discussed in 2004. (Romance Hill) and should not be until the original recommendations are complete.
3. Water Quality recommendations need to be updated significantly. (See 2018 Belfair UGA Basin Plan in Alternatives below.)

This crossroads Belfair community also has significant ongoing **current** issues with stormwater, transportation gridlock, impervious surfaces, CARA and other cumulative impacts of uncoordinated rural and ongoing UGA infill development since the 2004 plan was adopted.

[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/59af58ce37c5817a20c87a02/t/59b4260be9bdf95033f32eb/1504978454855/belfair\\_uga\\_plan.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/59af58ce37c5817a20c87a02/t/59b4260be9bdf95033f32eb/1504978454855/belfair_uga_plan.pdf).

### **Alternatives:**

The planning team has indicated a “no action” and potentially two other alternatives that would vary land use, levels of growth, UGA boundaries and investments in infrastructure. The most logical alternative to consider would be one that modifies the UGA boundary to remove the original phase 2 of sewer and the mapped **Union River Valley CARA**. The removal would include all those UGA areas north of Irene creek and pond, Mindy creek, and Viola creek drainages, all which are fish bearing streams. It would include the well head protections areas north of Newkirk road. It would also include the proposed sites for both the North Mason Regional Fire Authority complex as well as the proposed 100 apartment complex on Roy Boad road which lie in the CARA. This alternative is supported by the 2018 Belfair UGA Basin plan, which analyzed, impervious surfaces, stormwater and water quality issues, fish passage issues in Old Belfair highway streams as well as wellhead protection areas in the above described area. At the same time it would be beneficial to add areas to the Belfair UGA that lie East of RR tracks on the plateau. This is the area where future land use and growth will have to be placed.

<https://www.co.mason.wa.us/forms/public-works/Belfair-UGA-2018-Basin-Plan.pdf>.

### **Impacts:**

Impact of alternative above will be far less significant than the probable adverse impacts including stormwater, traffic, and numerous impervious surfaces impacts to groundwater quality and CARA that currently afflict the downtown core and Old Belfair highway. Potential impacts would be compounded if more infill development is allowed in the downtown node and steep unstable slopes surrounding.

### **Other comments:**

The “How should Belfair Grow” postcard advertising the November 19 online meeting and survey depicts only 2 anticipated development activities. There are at least 5 other pending UGA projects and or sales in various stages of development that should be addressed as they all will have a cumulative impacts on environment,(CARA) and transportation.

North Mason fire authority complex, parcel #123291100030

4 plex parcel # 123294200020

Unknown project, parcel #123294100060

Unknown project/sale, parcel#123294400000

Unknown project/sale, parcel 12331000010

Regarding connectors to the freight corridor the only connection that makes ecological and economic sense is the Log Yard Road connection. Not the Romance Hill connection! Page 63 of 2018 Belfair Mobility Plan - <https://www.belfairmobility.org/mobility>.

Page 5 of the Scoping document.

#3 Rezone Festival retail to mixed use. Festival Retail was envisioned in the 2004 plan as a focal point of pedestrian activity and the plans vision was to site at least three R-10 parcels around the down town node. Any revisions to festival rezone should be concurrent with downsizing the R-10 zoning given the environmental constraints. Also the plans vision should reflect a change in the three development nodes concept.

#4 Review residential density transitions; currently zoned as 4 units to acre. This should be carefully reviewed as much is steep and unstable slopes.

#5 bypass should be changed to freight corridor and Romance Hill connector should be better vetted in community as I believe as many others that it is unnecessary.

Thank you,

Ken VanBuskirk



From: Ken VanBuskirk <kenvanb@gmail.com>  
Sent: Tuesday, December 1, 2020 12:27 PM  
To: planning@co.mason.wa.us  
Cc: Kell Rowen <krowen@co.mason.wa.us>; Lisa Grueter <Lisa@berkconsulting.com>  
Subject: Belfair scoping additional comments-documented existing stormwater conditions in CARA and Romance Hill

Please include these photos as documenting existing conditions in UGA.  
Image 1071- Is a storm water pond south of Romance Hill in vicinity of "proposed" connector.

Image 1016- Is a large seep hole located on parcel south of NMRFA existing building Image 1020- running water in same location, private residence to left, NMRFA directly to left of alder tree, 10-20 foot elevation above, 200 feet away..

Please acknowledge receipt.      thanks ken





From: Ken VanBuskirk <kenvanb@gmail.com>  
Sent: Thursday, December 3, 2020 2:02 PM  
To: planning@co.mason.wa.us  
Cc: Beau Bakken <BBakken@northmasonrfa.com>; Commissioner Shutty <kshutty@co.mason.wa.us>; Scott Ruedy <SRuedy@co.mason.wa.us>; Kell Rowen <krowen@co.mason.wa.us>; Lisa Grueter <Lisa@berkconsulting.com>; Erik Pedersen <Erik@greatpeninsula.org>  
Subject: Belfair EIS/sub area plan scoping additional comments -documented existing stormwater conditions in CARA, vicinity of NMRFA proposed complex

December3, 2020 200 PM

Please include this into the scoping record. The attached photo and imbedded link are documenting existing stormwater conditions in Belfair UGA and CARA at the NMRFA vicinity on January 25,2020.

The photo is a seasonal pond that develops every year on NMRFA property recently purchased and proposed to be part of an extensive emergency campus.

(The firefighters even have a name for it.) I have a video taken the same day downstream on the GPC's Irene creek,pond property of running water coming downslope from the direction of the Fire department into a large sink hole. .

here is a link to the video.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fpgoTAHCspcxc3M2c4Y71bL9iKnF1j65/view?usp=drivesdk>

I think it is important that these get entered into record! Please acknowledge receipt and if you are able to view..

Mr. Ruedy, I will be including with more comment in my SEPA comments due on December 16..

thanks ken  
360-801-0550



From: Ken VanBuskirk <[kenvanb@gmail.com](mailto:kenvanb@gmail.com)>  
Sent: Thursday, December 3, 2020 2:02 PM  
To: Planning <[planning@co.mason.wa.us](mailto:planning@co.mason.wa.us)>  
Cc: Beau Bakken <[BBakken@northmasonrfa.com](mailto:BBakken@northmasonrfa.com)>; Kevin Shutty  
<[KShutty@co.mason.wa.us](mailto:KShutty@co.mason.wa.us)>; Scott Ruedy <[SRuedy@co.mason.wa.us](mailto:SRuedy@co.mason.wa.us)>; Kell Rowen  
<[KRowen@co.mason.wa.us](mailto:KRowen@co.mason.wa.us)>; Lisa Grueter <[Lisa@berkconsulting.com](mailto:Lisa@berkconsulting.com)>; Erik  
Pedersen <[Erik@greatpeninsula.org](mailto:Erik@greatpeninsula.org)>  
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360-801-0550

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**From:** constance ibsen <constance.c.ibsen@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Thursday, December 3, 2020 4:26 PM

**To:** Kell Rowen <KRowen@co.mason.wa.us>

**Subject:** Scoping Comments on Belfair Planned Action

TO Kell Rowen, Planning Manager

FROM Constance Ibsen, resident, 6500 E State Route 106, Union 98592

DATE December 3, 2020

SUBJECT Scoping Comments for Belfair 2021 Planned Action EIS

Below are my comments for the scoping being conducted for the partial Belfair Urban Growth Area Planned Action.

As this process exempts new development from additional environmental/SEPA review for, perhaps, decades, it is important that Mason County develop a new process (ordinance) to review each new project for traffic and stormwater issues in the Belfair area.

Coordinating with Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT) would ensure that local jurisdictions, consultants and developers are using the same methodologies to determine traffic forecasts and analysis and ensure enough detail for each individual project to determine what impacts and mitigation would be necessary so that the regional road system is not overwhelmed. Also, this coordination and review with WSDOT would address essential stormwater management and treatment.

Any alteration to existing conditions will more than likely increase impervious surfaces with probable changes to groundwater hydrology and surface water. Each new project covered by this Planned Action needs to be thoroughly reviewed for these conditions and its impact to existing properties, infrastructure and environment.

Require all new projects to connect to Belfair Wastewater Treatment Facility.



**From:** Lisa Klein <LKlein@AHBL.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 7, 2020 3:48 PM  
**To:** Kell Rowen <KRowen@co.mason.wa.us>; Lisa Grueter <Lisa@berkconsulting.com>  
**Cc:** Jack Johnson <jjc@hcc.net>  
**Subject:** Belfair UGA Subarea Plan EIS Scoping

Kell and Lisa,

I wanted to get you scoping comments prior to the close of the deadline. Here are the scoping items we would like included in the Planned Action EIS:

Earth – Steep Slopes/Landslide Hazard Areas discussion to include how they may be altered by development with geotechnical engineer support.

Water – Discussion of all wetlands, streams known to date and provisions for buffer reductions with mitigation. With regards to Water runoff, the evaluation should assume the proposal will meet the latest Ecology Storm Manual.

Animals – Discussion of threatened or endangered species known to be in the area and local, state or federal codes for their protection.

Environmental Health – It would be great if you find that the modeling for the area (or Ecology data) indicates that future projects do not have to evaluate soils for contamination.

Land and Shoreline Use – I understand the densities are to be determined, but an evaluation that is based on the largest range of densities so as to provide the developers with flexibility would be preferred.

Historic and Cultural Preservation – It would be great if future projects did not have to do an upfront cultural resources study. It is understood that future projects would need to do monitoring during construction or follow the requirements of an inadvertent discovery plan.

Transportation – Planned road improvements, including a timeline for the Romance Hill connector if possible. Jack is very interested in the details of the road sections, but that is likely not an EIS topic. This is one of the most important topics of study for the EIS.

Utilities – This is also one of the most important topics for the EIS.

If you have any questions let me know. Your meeting a few weeks ago was very informative. I will be bringing Jack Johnson up to speed on all that was discussed. We look forward to continuing to be in touch as you proceed through the process.

Lisa

**Lisa Klein, AICP** | Associate Principal

**AHBL, Inc.** | **TACOMA** • SEATTLE • SPOKANE • TRI-CITIES

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