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To: Comp Plan Update
Subject: Planning Commission - May 6 meeting (Utilities Element)

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Hello -

Here are my comments on the current draft of the Utilities Element. Will you kindly forward to the Planning Commission for their review before tomorrow's meeting, May 6? Thank you for this opportunity to weigh in on tomorrow's meeting. ~Sue Bauer, Olga

pg 1, line 30-33: (OPALCO is a corporation it is not "privately-owned" and is instead a cooperative corporation. So that not only are they governed explicitly by their membership instead of their Board of Directors like for a traditional corporation, they are the recipient of essential financial assistance provided by taxpayer dollars through the Rural Utilities Service of the US Dept of Agriculture.``)

pg 2, line 30-31: I believe "Puget Power" should be changed to read "Puget Sound Energy." Please verify with OPALCO.

pg 3, line 1: remove the parenthetical phrase "and anywhere else" because that term creates a false idea about the main origins of the global greenhouse gas problem but an important fact to get straight because it is often misunderstood. The global manufacturing sector (cement, steel, plastic) is the largest greenhouse gas producing sector in the US by a long shot followed by electricity generation, followed by growing plants and livestock, followed by transportation (planes, trucks cargo, ships, cars) followed by keeping warm or staying cool (heating, cooling, refrigeration). The reason I make this point is because SJC makes decisions to support building new things (new ferries instead of retrofitting them, new electric cars, new island homes/buildings etc) without seeming to consider these upstream emissions.

pg 3, lines 20-27: (replace entire paragraph with the following:) "While power in WA may be derived from more renewable energy sources than in other states because of our reliance on hydroelectric power, hydro-power is not without major environmental impacts especially due to the methane gas created and release in the heater reservoirs of such dams and the dams' contribution to the near extinction of wild salmon and steelhead from the Columbia River Basin. Orca whales rely on the wild Chinook salmon from the Columbia system while on their way to and from the Salish Sea." NOTE: although we believe the Salish Sea is the home of SRKWs, they are here only about 1/3 of each year. Our Salish Sea is merely their "Summer Core Habitat Area."

pg 3, line 29: First sentence unclear. Who or what factors are pushing our county to rely less on energy from the mainland? We should be clear about these factors. As the County knows our region is not currently served by a Regional Transmission Org when other sectors of the country rely on these. An RTO may be the opportunity our County needs to help move more renewable energy like wind from Montana or solar from Eastern WA to us. OPALCO belongs to an association called PNGC which is politically against an RTO in the Northwest. Many of us OPALCO member-owners have been voicing our disagreements with many of PNGC's politics.

pg 4, line 3-5: This is an often-repeated warning by OPALCO but the County should consider that it (future increase in outages or needing to create rolling blackouts) is a controversial topic and is often refuted. Please remove the 2nd and 3rd sentences in this paragraph.

pg 4, lines 12-13. Please strike the second to the last sentence (" This is particularly so for agricultural ...") of this paragraph because of redundancy and also because this sentence explicitly implies that agricultural land in the county will be the primary locations for new renewable energy installations.

pg 6, line 23: What is the meaning of "CLEAN" used here?

pg 6, line 24: Please include location in Plan where one can find the list of "exemptions" for utilities vis-a-vis critical area requirements. Thank you.

pg 9, line 1: did you mean to use "excluding" and not the word "including?"

pg 9, line 35: add the adjectives "high and substantial costs" or "compensatory with the damage caused" when describing what utility service providers are responsible to pay.

pg 10, line 8: Add bullet reading "Encourage the public to reduce their consumption of electric power and other fossil-fueled and renewable energy alike."

pg 10, line 24: Add bullet reading "Adopt regulations that facilitate creation of new walking paths or bicycle lanes under utility rights of ways and along island." I am thinking this can be adopted through use of "share-ows" stencils on wider roads and reducing speed limits on roads that can't be widened.

pg 11, line 1: in the first sentence, what entity will decide what's "necessary" in terms of existing and future facilities? I hope it is not solely OPALCO but instead should be the County in conjunction with OPALCO. Perhaps change this sentence to "Expedite staff investigations and planning decisions into future facilities if OPALCO indicates such equipment facilities are necessary."