

Dear Commissioner Gelder:

We always appreciate your attendance at our monthly SCAC meetings, and we were all glad you were at the October meeting to answer some questions from the public, but also to provide some feedback on expectations we have with the Complete Streets planning effort in Kingston. There was a mis-impression that it would be 'streetscape' planning, and now realize it is actually 'within the right-of-way' idea generation. We also heard some concern from you on whether or not Suquamish could use leftover funds from the Kingston planning effort. Suquamish is unique in Kitsap County in being so complex jurisdictionally, with Kitsap County and the Suquamish Tribe each working to support their respective populations. The SCAC realizes that the Tribe's focus is on the tribal member population, with county responsibilities woven throughout due to checkerboarded ownership and public rights of way. Sometimes it must seem easier to just work on projects elsewhere to avoid confusion and possible confrontation ... but we see a stronger and richer community with both government entities working together. A place where this synergy will be most evident will be in downtown Suquamish, with Kitsap County road rights of ways weaving together mostly Tribe-owned properties. The Tribe timeline for redevelopment is at least ten years from now, according to Suquamish Tribe DCD. There is a strong feeling in the community that downtown Suquamish is languishing, and needs some planning attention - soon. The Complete Streets planning effort is thus more important than it might seem, because it could not only provide some ideas on immediate safety improvements, but also begin the planning dialogue with the Tribe as a participating partner, in a larger downtown vision. The timing for this sort of functional, place-driven collaboration is perfect for upcoming internal master planning efforts the Tribe is proposing. The SCAC concern is that we need a project to bring the Tribe and the County together. Downtown planning is ideal for this.

We hope you will agree with the SCAC that Suquamish is a richer, stronger community when the County and the Tribe working collaboratively. That will take leadership on both sides. Complete Streets may just be the project that could develop a shared vision for downtown Suquamish.

Respectfully,
Tom Curley