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November 5, 2012

Honorable Marty Loesch
Office of the Governor
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

RE: Gateway Pacific Terminal Project Environmental Impact Statement (Whatcom County)

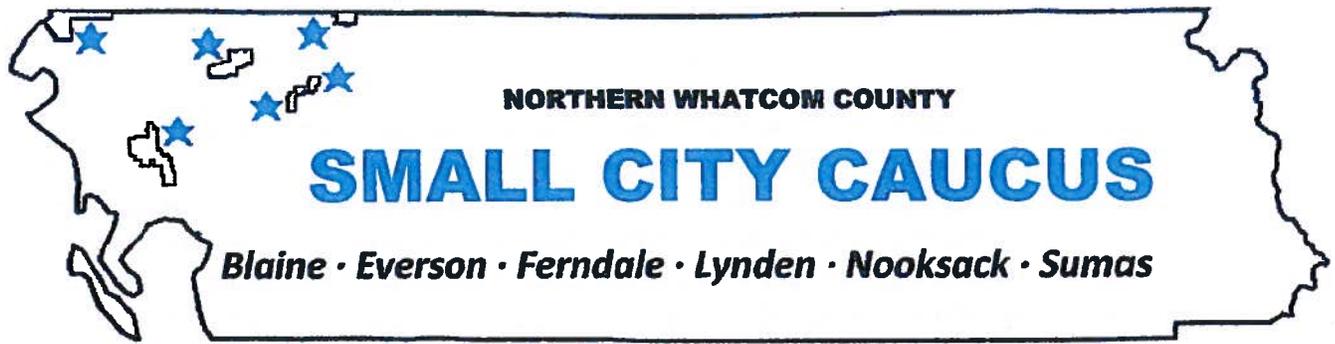
Dear Chief of Staff Loesch:

We respectfully bring to your attention this important letter from Whatcom County Mayors, which was submitted to the co-lead agencies in connection with the EIS scoping process for the Gateway Pacific Terminal. We are told that inquiries about this communication may be directed to Lynden Mayor Scott Korthuis at (360) 354-1170.

Sincerely,

Chris Johnson, Northwest Jobs Alliance Co-Chair and Business Manager of the Northwest Washington Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO

Ken Oplinger, Northwest Jobs Alliance Co-Chair, Blaine City Council Member, and President/CEO of the Bellingham/Whatcom Chamber of Commerce and Industry



November 29, 2012

To: The Army Corps of Engineers
Washington State Department of Ecology
Whatcom County

RE: Gateway Pacific Terminal (GPT)/Custer Spur Project EIS Review

Greetings:

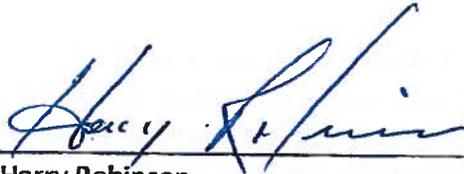
The undersigned are the Mayors of the six incorporated areas of Whatcom County outside of Bellingham. Our cities, and their surrounding areas, represent a substantial proportion of the region's population, as well as significant social and economic diversity. We join together in our individual capacities as elected officials to urge your consideration of the following matters in examining this project:

- 1) The project should be subjected to the customary, project-specific environmental review, under law, facts and science, to allow it to come to fruition in a manner that is timely and compatible with good environmental practice.
- 2) Whatcom County has a rate of poverty (15%) that exceeds state and national averages and wage rates and per capita income that also lag the state and nation. Over the years, higher wage industrial employment has been replaced with lower paying service sector jobs. Yet our cost of living is well above the national average and just slightly lower than in Seattle. (Please see the attached information presented to the Washington State Senate Environment Committee on October 1, 2012 by Dr. Hart Hodges of the Center for Economic and Business Research at Western WA University.)
- 3) The existing Cherry Point industries have been increasingly good neighbors and corporate citizens over time, but their future viability cannot be assumed or taken for granted. The permitting agencies should recognize the importance of new and diversified job growth within the Cherry Point heavy industrial area as essential to a healthy and sustainable regional economy.
- 4) The Cherry Point heavy industrial area has long been recognized in public policy as the appropriate site for additional shoreline-dependent industrial activity, including a fourth shipping pier. These policies are the result of decades of study and deliberate environmental, land use, shoreline, and economic planning.
- 5) The project would generate badly needed high wage jobs, as well as tax revenues to support essential governmental services.

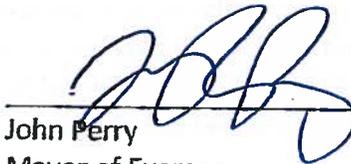
- 6) The project's potential to expand U.S. export capacity through a domestic port, capturing the consequent economic and trade benefits, should be examined.
- 7) All parts of Washington must have beneficial access to the transportation infrastructure of ports and waterways, rail systems, roads, highways and airports in order to facilitate job production and commerce. It would be inequitable for major population centers to utilize transportation infrastructure capacity for their own needs, while seeking to deny it to other communities.
- 8) We are a nation of laws. Permitting agencies are objective administrators and should not interfere with the lawful conduct of commerce based upon extra-legal political considerations or biases, such as the popularity of specific commodities in the opinion of certain citizens or interest groups.

We respectfully encourage your consideration of the above.

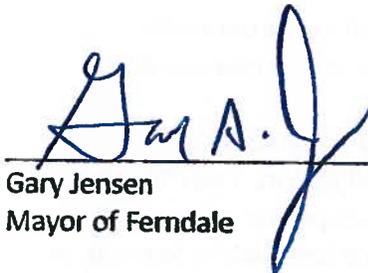
Sincerely,



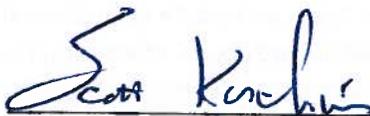
Harry Robinson
Mayor of Blaine



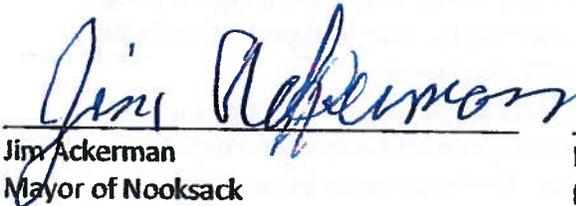
John Perry
Mayor of Everson



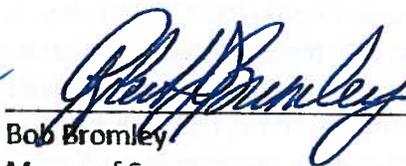
Gary Jensen
Mayor of Ferndale



Scott Korthuis
Mayor of Lynden

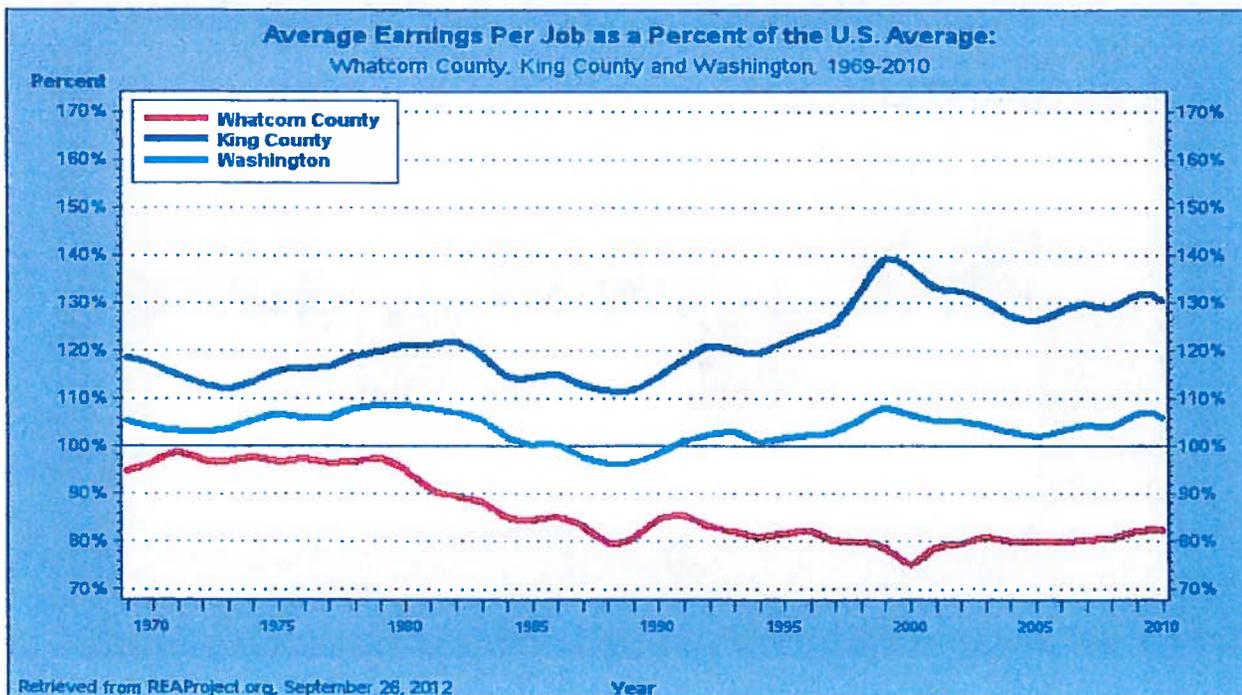
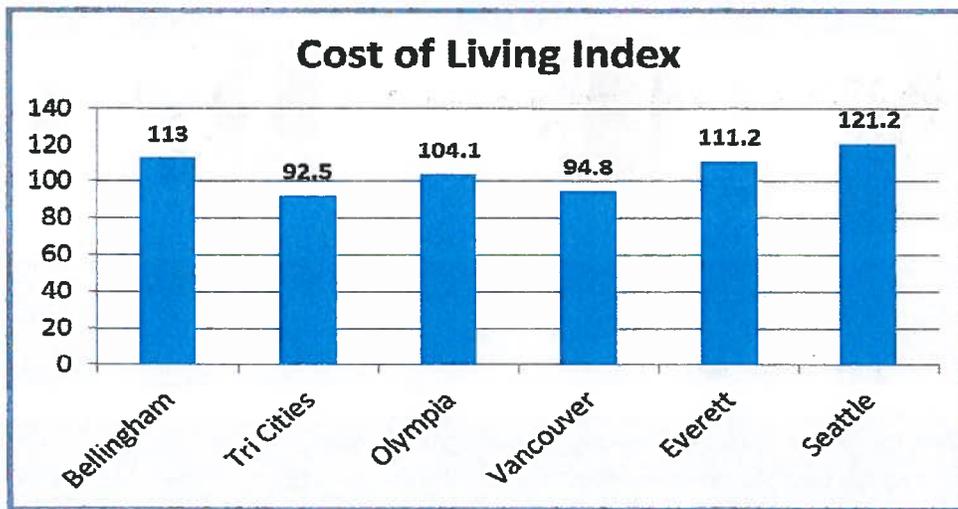


Jim Ackerman
Mayor of Nooksack

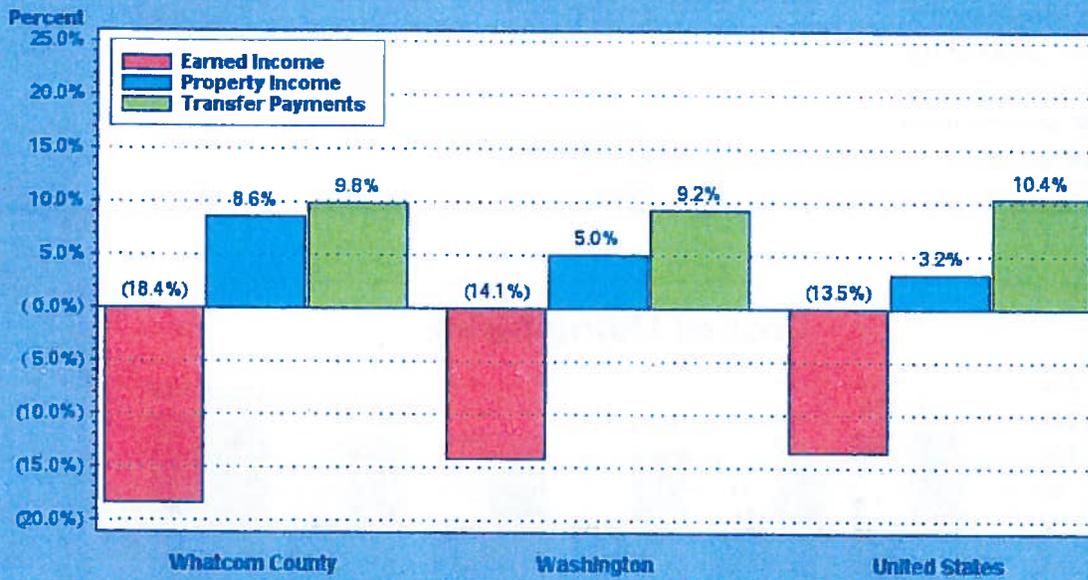


Bob Bromley
Mayor of Sumas

Item	Whatcom County	Washington State
Population (est. for 2011)	203,633	6.8 million
Home ownership rate	62.3%	64.8%
Median value of owner occupied home (2006-2010)	\$293,500	\$285,400
Per capita income	\$25,407	\$29,733
Persons below poverty level	15%	12.1%
Nonfarm employment	67,421 jobs	
Median age	36.9	37.5

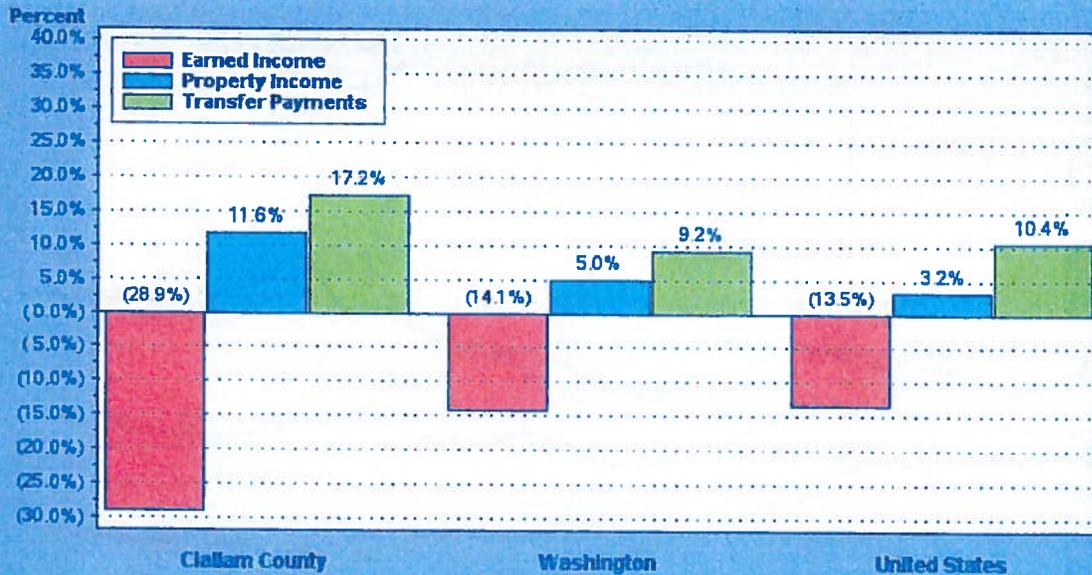


**Shifts in Share of Total Personal Income Among Major Income Components:
Whatcom County, Washington and the U.S. between 1969 and 2010**

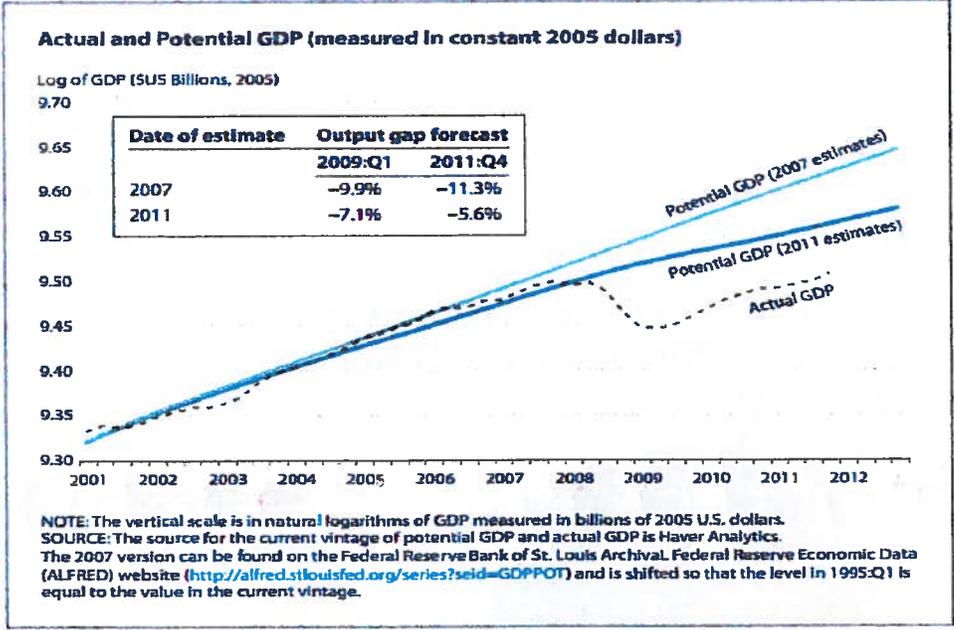


Retrieved from REAProject.org, September 26, 2012

**Shifts in Share of Total Personal Income Among Major Income Components:
Clallam County, Washington and the U.S. between 1969 and 2010**

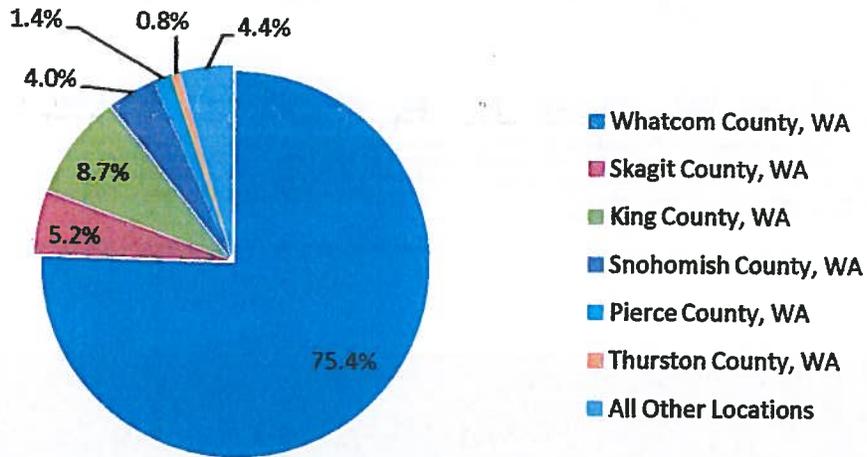


Retrieved from REAProject.org, September 26, 2012

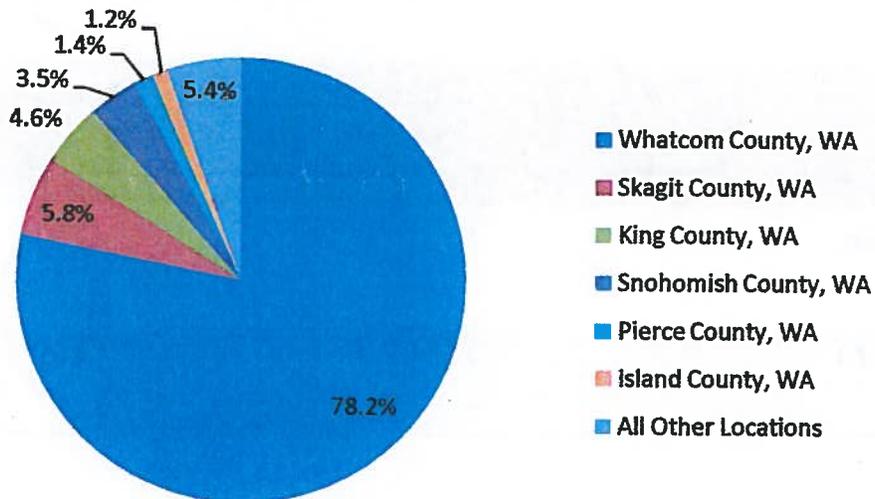


Area	% Change in Labor Force 2000-2007	% Change in Labor Force 2008-2012
WA State	12.3	5.8
Whatcom	21.3	5.4
	% Change in Population 2000-2007	% Change in Population 2008-2011
WA State	10.2	5.3
Whatcom	15.9	6.2

Where Workers are Employed who Live in Whatcom County (2008)

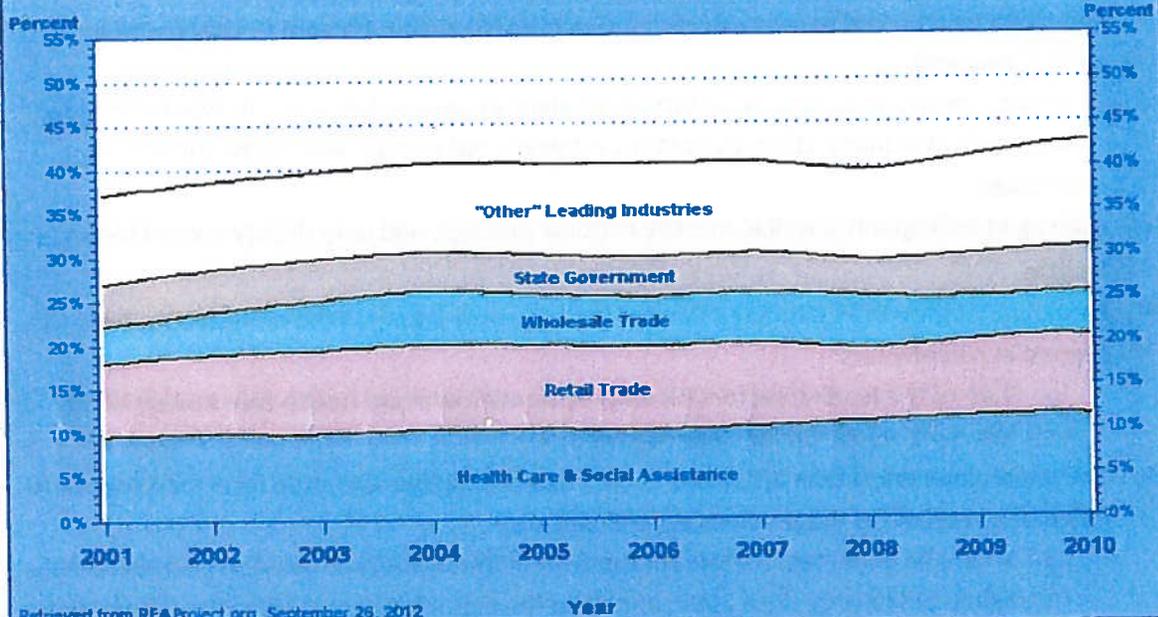


Where Workers Live who are Employed in Whatcom County (2008)



Whatcom County Leading Industries

Cumulative Share as a Percent of Real Total Industry Earnings: 2001-2010

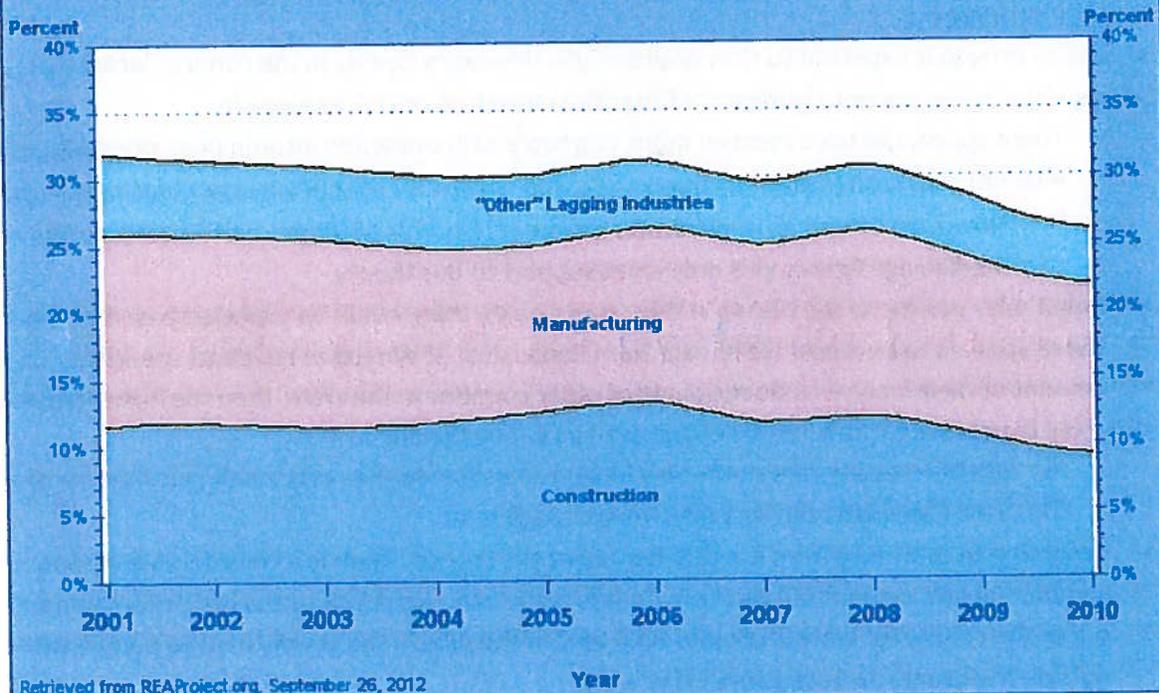


Retrieved from REAProject.org, September 26, 2012

Note: The "Other Leading Industries" category portrayed in this graph represents a combined total of those industries whose percent share are so small that their representation individually in this graph would not be discernable. Those industries that are combined include: Finance and Insurance, Accommodation & Food Services, Federal Civilian, and Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation

Whatcom County Lagging Industries

Cumulative Share as a Percent of Real Total Industry Earnings: 2001-2010



Retrieved from REAProject.org, September 26, 2012

Note: The "Other Lagging Industries" category portrayed in this graph represents a combined total of those industries whose percent share are so small that their representation individually in this graph would not be discernable. Those industries that are combined include: Information, Real Estate & Rental & Leasing, Management of Companies & Enterprises, and Unreported

Highlights (in no particular order):

- Per capita income and earnings per job are relatively low in Whatcom County (compared to the state or U.S. average)
 - Various income measures have increased slightly faster or fallen less in Whatcom County than in many other areas in recent years, but remain well below the U.S. average
- Cost of living in Bellingham is well above the national average, and only slightly lower than in Seattle
- Employment growth in Whatcom County was relatively strong in the early 2000's, but has slipped in recent years
 - Two of the leading sectors for employment growth are health care and retail, both of which have low average earnings per job
- The unemployment rate in Whatcom County has been below the state level for a decade (where it had been higher for the previous several decades)
 - It may be important to note that growth in the labor force has slowed considerably in Whatcom County since 2007. It may be the case that people leave the area if they lose their job
 - The changes in employment growth and labor force dynamics could suggest that the area is feeling the effects of the recession and/or structural changes in the economy more than other areas. (Note: it could be that more rural areas are having a harder time recovering from the recession as they lack the drivers for in-migration and growing industries.)
- Population growth is expected to slow noticeably in Whatcom County in the coming decades
- The county is aging, but not significantly faster than the state or U.S. as a whole
 - There appears to have been an influx of people with unearned income (e.g., property income), which gives the impression that we've had a lot of retirees move to the area. However, the increase in transfer payments (such as Medicare and Social Security) and median age figures give only weak support to this theory
- Retail sales per capita are higher in Whatcom County than would be expected based on income. There appears to be a positive impact from Canadians. (If Whatcom residents spend a similar amount of their income as do residents of other counties in the state, then the higher per capita retail figures suggest a boost from visitors – including Canadians.)
 - Border crossings are noticeably lower today than in the early 1990s and this retail boost from Canadians can change with exchange rates.
- According to estimates from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, there is a considerable amount of commuting into and out of Whatcom County, with more than 20% of the residents commuting out of the county for work and more than 20% of the jobs in the county held by people who live outside the county and commute in for work.