

From: [Joseph Vela](#)
To: [PDS Planning Commission](#)
Subject: Protect Jobs In Whatcom County. Support Cherry Point.
Date: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 12:58:12 PM

Dear Planning Commission County,

Dear Members of the Whatcom County Planning Commission:

I am writing today to express my concerns about the Whatcom County Council Cherry Point amendments. While you have made some thoughtful recommendations for improving these policy changes, there remain significant areas of concern that have gone unaddressed by the Commission that will severely limit or effectively prohibit upgrades, operational improvements at Cherry Point (including renewable fuels projects).

As you are aware, the County Council's Cherry Point amendments are the most significant land-use policy changes to be proposed in Whatcom County in decades. The Planning Commission and the County Council must show great caution and care when making such drastic changes but given the economic impact of COVID 19, you and members of the Council must be more diligent and cautious than ever.

Cherry Point is the foundation of Whatcom County's economy providing 10,000 living wage jobs. Cherry Point businesses in recent years have paid more than \$200 million annually in state and local taxes. Those taxes have resulted in \$10s of millions for local schools, public safety, and other vital county services.

Now the Bellingham Herald is telling us that 700 Intalco jobs will be lost due to their recent closure announcement and another 700 indirect jobs for a total loss of 1,400 Whatcom County jobs. The loss of Intalco and the resulting impact of the current economic realities will no doubt cause a significant reduction in jobs and tax revenue coming from Cherry Point companies.

We are all living with a great deal of uncertainty, much of it out of our control due to COVID 19.

Please, we need you to be more diligent than ever to create certainty for Whatcom's citizens and their livelihoods.

Sincerely,

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