

Jefferson County
Board of Commissioners
Agenda Request

To: Board of Commissioners
Mark McCauley, County Administrator

From: Monte Reinders, P.E., Public Works Director/County Engineer 

Agenda Date: February 13, 2023

Subject: Resolution Clarifying the Criteria for
Adoption of Roads as County Roads

Statement of Issue: Workshop to discuss county road establishment and clarification of how the County evaluates the “public necessity” as specified in the RCW, and the “general public benefit” as specified in Jefferson County Code.

Analysis/Strategic Goals/Pro’s & Con’s: The County is occasionally approached by private developers interested in establishing county roads, typically residential. It is in the County’s interest to clarify appropriate acceptance criteria in advance of future applications. When considering possible county road establishment, emphasis should be placed on County collector/arterial roads that serve a broad section of the traveling public, including public transit, rather than residential streets.

Fiscal Impact/Cost Benefit Analysis: Due to numerous fiscal constraints, as outlined in the attached Resolution, not only does the County not have adequate funding to maintain its collector/arterial roads, but our ability to maintain all of our county roads continues to decline. Adoption of additional residential streets will only exacerbate current funding constraints.

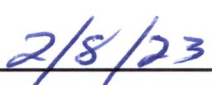
Recommendation: After discussion, the Board is requested to sign the Resolution where indicated and return a copy to Public Works.

Department Contact: Eric Kuzma, 385-9167

Reviewed By:



Mark McCauley, County Administrator



Date

**COUNTY OF JEFFERSON
STATE OF WASHINGTON**

In the Matter of }
Clarifying the Criteria }
for Adoption of Roads }
as County Roads }

RESOLUTION NO. _____

WHEREAS, Chapter 36.81 RCW and JCC 18.30.080 address County Road establishment; and

WHEREAS, it is in the County's interest to clarify how the County will evaluate the "public necessity" standard specified in RCW 36.81.010 and the "general public benefit" standard specified in JCC 18.30.080 (2)(b)(ii); and

WHEREAS, the Legislature adopted a 1% cap on property tax increases, plus new construction, which amounts to a 10-year annual road levy increase of just under 2%; and

WHEREAS, beginning in 2011 the County Road Fund lost approximately \$1 million per year from the Secure Rural Schools Program; and

WHEREAS, fuel tax revenue has only incrementally increased over the previous 10-years; and

WHEREAS, maintenance of residential county roads is not eligible for grant funding; and

WHEREAS, no new Road Fund revenue is generated based upon whether a newly constructed road is public or private; and

WHEREAS, inflation of the Construction Cost Index (CCI) is significantly outpacing revenue growth; and

WHEREAS, whether the County adopts a road, or not, does not impact the ability to develop property and create new dwelling units; and

WHEREAS, the County does not have adequate funding to maintain its existing road system, and due to the above stated criteria, the County's ability to maintain County Roads continues to decline; and

WHEREAS, accepting additional residential streets into the County road system will only exacerbate the funding shortfall and shifting of maintenance priorities; and

WHEREAS, private developers can form Home Owners Associations and adopt Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions which can require owner participation in the maintenance of roadways serving the development; and

WHEREAS, there are already many miles of privately maintained roadways in the County; and

WHEREAS, many surrounding Washington counties have found that residential streets do not satisfy the criteria of "public necessity" and therefore we do not recommend adoption of such streets as County Roads;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS,
that evaluation of the “public necessity” and “general public benefit” criteria should place emphasis on
County collector/arterial roads that serve a broad section of the traveling public, including public transit;
and that residential streets, particularly dead end/cul-de-sacs do not meet the criteria and should generally
not be accepted into the County Road system.

APPROVED this _____ day of _____, 2023.

**JEFFERSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Kate Dean, District 1

Heidi Eisenhour, District 2

ATTEST:

Greg Brotherton, District 3

Carolyn Gallaway, Clerk of the Board