By RACOUL MUNCY
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Inspections have been done on plumbing, electrical, mechanical, safety and structural requirements, according to Jack Moore of Skagit County Planning and Development Services.

“We are close to approving the building construction,” Moore said in an email.

The Amazon facility, which is on Bay Ridge Drive east of Skagit Regional Airport, has been in the works since late 2020. It had an estimated completion date of spring 2022.

Abortion vote in Kansas sparks new hope for Dems in midterms

NEW YORK (AP) — Democrats displayed a newfound sense of optimism about the election-year political climate Wednesday after voters in traditionally conservative Kansas overwhelmingly backed a measure protecting abortion rights.

At the White House, President Joe Biden hailed the vote in Kansas as a marker that voters want to continue following the Supreme Court’s decision in June to remove a woman’s constitutional right to obtain an abortion.

Republicans and the high court “don’t have a clue about the power of American women,” Biden said “Last night in Kansas, they found out.”

On Capitol Hill, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., boasted of the political winds “Blowing at Democrats.”

U.S.-China ties on a precipice after Pelosi visit to Taiwan

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S.-China relations are weathering on a precipice after House Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s visit to Taiwan.

Pelosi received a rapturous welcome in Taipei and was applauded by strong bipartisan support in Washington, despite the Biden administration’s expressions. But her trip has enraged Beijing and Chinese nationalists and will complicate already strained ties even after her departure.

Already, China is preparing now shows of force in the Taiwan Strait to make clear that its claims are non-negotiable on the island it regards as a renegade province. And, as the U.S. presses ahead with demonstrations of support for Taiwan, arms sales and diplomatic lobbying, the escalating tensions have raised the risks of military confrontation, intentional or not.

And the trip could further muddle Washington-Beijing ties already complicated relationship with Beijing as the two sides work with differences over trade, the war in Ukraine, human rights and more.

While the reaction from China, the Biden administration has dismissed but did not prevent Pelosi from visiting Taiwan. It has taken pains to stress that the House speaker is not a member of the executive branch and her visit represents no change in the U.S.-‘one-China’ policy.

That was little comfort for Pelosi, who is second in line to the U.S. presidency, was greeted almost like a head of state. Taiwan’s skyline lit up with a message of welcome, and she met with the biggest names on the island, including the president, senior legislators and prominent rights activists.

People walk past a billboard welcoming Speaker Nancy Pelosi on Wednesday in Taipei, Taiwan.

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