

GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

March 20, 2024

Anticipated start time is 9:30 a.m. following the SCOG Transportation Policy Board meeting

In Person: [Burlington City Council Chambers](#), 833 South Spruce Street, Burlington, WA 98233

Remote: [GoToMeeting](#)

Dial In: 1 (866) 899-4679

Access Code: 894-996-237

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call** – *Commissioner Peter Browning, Skagit County, Chair*
2. **Written Public Comments** – *Mark Hamilton, Skagit Council of Governments*
3. **Consent Agenda**
 - a. Approval of [December 20, 2023 Growth Management Act Steering Committee Meeting Minutes](#)
4. **Action Items**
 - a. Election of Vice-Chair – *Commissioner Peter Browning, Chair*
5. **Discussion Items**
 - a. Draft Countywide Planning Policies for Housing – *Kevin Murphy, Skagit Council of Governments*
 - [Revisions to Urban Growth Countywide Planning Policy](#)
 - [Revisions to Housing Countywide Planning Policy](#)
 - [Revisions to Growth Allocations Procedures](#)
6. **Next Meeting:** June 20, 2024, Time TBD, *Burlington City Council Chambers and Remote*
7. **Adjourned**

[Meeting Packet](#)

GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT STEERING COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Commissioner Peter Browning Chair

TBD Vice-Chair

GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND VOTES

Anacortes..... 1
Burlington 1
Concrete..... 1
Hamilton..... 1
La Conner 1

Lyman..... 1
Mount Vernon 1
Sedro-Woolley 1
Skagit County 3

QUORUM REQUIREMENT

A quorum consists of a majority (6) of the members (11).

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GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

December 20, 2023
Burlington City Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Matt Miller, City of Anacortes, Chair; Commissioner Peter Browning, Vice-Chair; Mayor Jill Boudreau, City of Mount Vernon; Mayor Ramon Hayes, Town of La Conner; Commissioner Lisa Janicki, Skagit County; Mayor Julia Johnson, City of Sedro-Woolley; Mayor Steve Sexton, City of Burlington; and Commissioner Ron Wesen, Skagit County.

STAFF PRESENT

Kevin Murphy, Executive Director; Debbie Carter, Executive Assistant and Clerk of the Board; Mark Hamilton, Senior Transportation Planner; and Grant Johnson, Associate Planner.

OTHERS PRESENT

The following members of the Growth Management Act Technical Advisory Committee (GMATAC) attended the meeting: John Coleman, City of Anacortes; and Shelley Kjos and George Kosovich, Skagit County. Four members of the public attended the meeting.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order and Roll Call: Mayor Miller called the meeting of the Growth Management Act Steering Committee (GMASC) to order at 9:30 a.m. Roll was taken with a quorum present.
2. Written Public Comments: Mr. Johnson stated that a public comment period for the meeting was held from December 13-19, with no public comments received.
3. Consent Agenda
 - a. Approval of September 20, 2023 Growth Management Act Steering Committee Meeting Minutes: Commissioner Janicki moved to approve the September 20, 2023 Growth Management Act Steering Committee Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Wesen seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.
4. Action Items
 - a. Growth Projections and Allocations: Michaela Jellicoe from Community Attributes Inc. provided a consultant presentation on this action item. The presentation included an overview of the growth projection and allocation process used in Skagit County during 2023. Ms. Jellicoe highlighted many of the data sources, methodological decisions and actions taken over the year by the Growth Management Act Technical Advisory Committee, SCOG staff and Community Attributes, Inc. staff. GMASC members asked clarifying questions during the presentation which Ms. Jellicoe answered.

Mr. Hamilton presented Resolution 2023-01 to Approve Initial 2045 Allocations for Population, Housing and Employment in Skagit County. He mentioned that the Growth Management Act Technical Advisory Committee recommended approval of the Initial 2045 Allocations of Population, Housing and employment in Skagit County at their meeting on December 5, 2023. Mr. Hamilton presented each table of the initial 2045 allocations for population, housing and employment.

Commissioner Janicki inquired about the accuracy of employment data for employers that have more than one worksite location. Mr. Hamilton answered that SCOG staff receive employment data from the Washington state Employment Security Department and go through an internal process to distribute employees to multiple worksites, when those worksites are known and when employment is only being reported out of one location. He said that additional jobs can be accounted for through the reconciliation process expected to begin regionally in late 2024, following completion of jurisdictional land capacity analyses.

Mayor Sexton asked that the initial 2045 population allocations also include the percentage of total growth by urban growth area, in addition to the percent of total growth.

Mayor Boudreau moved to approve Resolution 2023-01 to Approve Initial 2045 Allocations for Population, Housing and Employment in Skagit County with the addition of percentage of total growth by urban growth area for population and employment. Mayor Sexton seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

- b. Resolution 2023-02 to Adopt 2023 Growth Monitoring Report: Mr. Johnson provided the SCOG staff presentation on this action item. His presentation included an overview of the report along with highlights of changes made since the last report was prepared and adopted in 2022. He mentioned that the Growth Management Act Technical Advisory Committee recommended approval of the 2023 Growth Monitoring Report at their meeting on December 5, 2023.

Mayor Boudreau moved to approve Resolution 2023-02 to Adopt 2023 Growth Monitoring Report as presented, and Commissioner Browning seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Next Meeting: The next meeting is March 20, 2024, Time TBD, with the meeting start time to be determined, at the Burlington City Council Chambers and Remote.
6. Adjourned: The meeting adjourned at 10:32 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kevin Murphy, Executive Director
Skagit Council of Governments

Date: _____

Approved,

Commissioner Peter Browning, Skagit County
Growth Management Act Steering Committee Chair

Date: _____

DRAFT

1. Urban Growth

Encourage urban development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.

- 1.1 Urban growth shall be allowed only within cities and towns, their designated Urban Growth Areas (“UGAs”) and within any non-municipal urban growth areas already characterized by urban growth, identified in the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan with a Capital Facilities Plan meeting urban standards. Population and employment and housing allocations for each UGA shall be consistent with the allocations shown in Appendix A.
- 1.2 Cities and towns and their urban growth areas, and non-municipal urban growth areas designated pursuant to CPP 1.1, shall include areas and densities sufficient to accommodate as a target 80% of the county's 20-year population projection.
- 1.3 Urban growth areas shall provide for urban densities of mixed uses and shall direct development of neighborhoods which provide adequate and accessible urban governmental services concurrent with development. The Growth Management Act (“GMA”) defines urban governmental services as those governmental services historically and typically delivered by cities, including storm and sanitary sewer systems, domestic water systems, street cleaning services, fire and police protection services, public transit services, and other public utilities associated with urban areas and normally not associated with nonurban areas.
- 1.4 Urban growth areas shall include greenbelts and open space, and encourage the preservation of wildlife habitat areas.
- 1.5 Cities and towns shall encourage development, including greenbelt and open space areas, on existing vacant land and in-fill properties before expanding beyond their present corporate city limits towards urban growth boundaries.
- 1.6 Annexations beyond urban growth areas are prohibited.
- 1.7 The baseline for 20-year countywide population forecasts shall be the official Growth Management Act Population Projections from the State of Washington’s Office of Financial Management. The Growth Management Act Technical Advisory Committee (“Planners Committee”) shall recommend the process for allocating forecasted population, - employment, and housing which shall be cooperatively reviewed by the Growth

Management Act Steering Committee (“GMASC”), consistent with the 2002 Framework Agreement. Final growth allocations will be ratified by each government’s legislative body. The growth allocation process shall use the procedures in Appendix B, which calls for the following steps:

- a. Initial Growth Allocations;
- b. Reconciliation;
- c. Long Term Monitoring; and
- d. Allocation Adjustment.

- 1.8 Skagit County, the cities and towns shall use consistent land capacity and housing capacity methods as approved by the GMASC to determine the amount of undeveloped buildable urban land needed and housing produced in the different AMI categories provided by the Department of Commerce. The inventory of the undeveloped buildable urban land supply is to be maintained by Skagit County in a Regional Geographic Information Systems database.
- 1.9 Skagit County, the cities and towns will establish a common method to monitor urban development and housing development to evaluate the rate of growth and maintain an inventory of the amount of buildable land remaining and the amount of housing produced in the different AMI categories provided by the Department of Commerce . The Planners Committee shall develop a monitoring process, prepare annual monitoring reports and present the reports to the Growth Management Act Steering Committee annually.
- 1.10 All growth outside the urban growth boundary shall be rural in nature as defined in the Rural Element, not requiring urban governmental services, except in those limited circumstances shown to be necessary to the satisfaction of both Skagit County and the affected city/town to protect basic public health, safety and the environment, and when such services are financially supportable at rural densities and do not permit development.

4. Housing

Plan for and accommodate~~Encourage the availability of~~ affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock.

4.1 Comprehensive Plans must include a housing element that plans for and accommodates housing affordable to all economic segments of the population. The housing element must include an inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs that identifies the number of housing units necessary to manage projected growth; including units for moderate, low, very low and extremely low-income households; and emergency housing, emergency shelters and permanent supportive housing (PSH). The housing element shall also identify sufficient land for the various housing types, identify zoning capacities for housing types described based on the housing allocation given by the department of Commerce methodology or an approved equivalent quantitative method for Skagit County. Allow for an adequate supply of land use options to provide housing for a wide range of incomes, housing types and densities.

(A) Housing allocations including PSH, low, very low and extremely low-income households are prioritized in areas with good access to transit and services.

(B) Lower income housing as accessory dwelling units in rural areas without access to transit and services are encouraged as a strategy to increase supply.

(C) Locations without access to transit or services may have some of their allocation of low, very low and extremely low-income households, emergency shelters and PSH given by the Department of Commerce methodology or an approved equivalent quantitative method, reallocated to urban areas or other locations with more services and transit available.

(D) The reconciliation process may be used to reallocate housing numbers if needed in coordination with land capacity analysis and population and employment allocation reconciliation processes.

(E) Avoid further concentrations of low-income, PSH and emergency shelter housing.

(F) Increase opportunities and capacity for housing that is affordable, close to employment, education, shopping, public services and public transit.

(G) Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) and emergency shelter locations should be in areas that are widespread around the County to ensure access for all.

4.14.2 Public/private partnerships shall be encouraged to build affordable housing and devise incentives for innovative and environmentally sensitive design to meet the housing needs of people with low and moderate incomes and special needs populations.

4.24.3 Comprehensive Plans should support innovative land use management techniques, including, but not limited to, density bonuses, cluster housing, planned unit developments and the transfer of development rights.

4.34.4 The existing affordable housing stock should be maintained and efforts to rehabilitate older and substandard housing, which are otherwise consistent with comprehensive plan policies, should be encouraged.

4.44.5 The construction of housing that promotes innovative, energy efficient and less expensive building technologies shall be encouraged.

4.54.6 Provisions in Comprehensive Plans for the location of residential development shall be made in a manner consistent with protecting natural resource lands, aquatic resources, and critical areas.

~~Manufactured home parks shall be allowed only within urban or urban growth areas.~~

4.7 The County and Cities, and public housing authorities should participate in multi-jurisdictional affordable housing programs with the goal to increase housing for low income, PSH and emergency shelters. These programs will be cooperative efforts that include public agencies, non-profits, and other providers of housing.

4.64.8 The County and Cities in cooperation with housing and human service provides should create an actionable county-wide strategy to coordinate the development of public supported housing projects which includes a funding strategy addressing capital and operating.

Appendix B. Growth Allocations Procedures

The process of setting and reviewing growth allocations shall be consistent with the 2002 Framework Agreement among Skagit County, the cities and towns as currently adopted or amended.

1. **Initial Growth Allocations:** The Planners Committee will develop initial population, ~~and~~ employment and housing allocations for review and adoption by the GMASC.
 - a. The initial population allocations will be based on the most recently published official 20-year population projections for Skagit County from the Office of Financial Management.
 - ~~a.b.~~ The initial housing allocations for review and adoption by the GMASC will be based on the Department of Commerce methodology or an approved equivalent quantitative methodology.

Jurisdictions shall use these initial allocations for at least one of the plan alternatives they evaluate for their GMA plan updates and housing plan updates-

2. **Reconciliation for Population and Employment Allocations:** Once the GMA comprehensive plan updates of jurisdictions have identified a preferred growth plan with sufficient detail to determine if the population and employment allocation can be accommodated, the GMASC will review and, if necessary, recommend adjusting the population and employment growth allocations to be included in the CPPs.
 - a. Skagit County, ~~the~~ and cities and towns shall jointly review the preferred growth alternatives proposed in local comprehensive plans for discrepancies with the allocation associated with Skagit County's preferred plan alternative.
 - b. Based on the land supply, permitted densities, capital facilities, urban service capacities and other information associated with the preferred growth alternatives of proposed local comprehensive plans, the Planners Committee shall recommend to the GMASC a reconciled 20-year population and employment allocation.
 - c. The GMASC shall review and recommend to the Board of County Commissioners a reconciled 20-year population and employment allocation. Substantial consideration shall be given to the plan of each jurisdiction, and the recommendation shall be consistent with the GMA and the CPPs.
 - d. The Board of County Commissioners shall consider the recommendation of the GMASC and shall replace the allocations in the CPPs with a reconciled 20-year population and employment allocation.

3. **Reconciliation for Housing Allocations:** Once the GMA comprehensive plan updates of jurisdictions have identified a preferred growth plan including housing allocations, based on Department of Commerce guidelines and methodology, or a Commerce approved alternative quantitative method; the GMASC will review and, if necessary, recommend adjusting the housing allocations to be included in the CPPs.
 - a. Skagit County and the cities and towns shall jointly review the preferred housing allocations proposed in local comprehensive plans for discrepancies with the

allocations associated with Skagit County's preferred plan alternative and Department of Commerce requirements.

- b. This will be based on land capacity, permitted densities, transit availability, urban services provided, locations in good proximity to employment centers, alignment with the county-wide strategy for development of public supported housing projects and assurance that low income and emergency shelter housing options are dispersed countywide. And any other information provided with the preferred housing alternatives of local comprehensive plans. The Planners Committee shall recommend to the GMASC a reconciled 20-year housing allocation.
- c. The GMASC shall review and recommend to the Board of County Commissioners a reconciled 20-year housing allocation. Substantial consideration shall be given to the plan of each jurisdiction, and the recommendation shall be consistent with the adopted population and employment allocations, the GMA, Department of Commerce requirements and the CPPs.
- d. The Board of County Commissioners shall consider the recommendation of the GMASC and shall replace the allocations in the CPPs with a reconciled 20-year housing allocation parallel to the reconciliation process done for population and employment allocations.
- e. The reconciliation processes for population, employment, and housing are all done together as part of the overall reconciliation and will follow the process and procedures in the 2002 framework agreement.

3.4. Long Term Monitoring: Subsequent to reconciliation, the GMASC shall maintain a long-term monitoring process to review annually ~~the population, and employment~~ and housing growth allocations contained in the CPPs.

- a. Skagit County, the cities and towns shall jointly monitor the following:
 - i. Estimated population and employment growth;
 - ii. Annexations and incorporations; and
 - iii. Residential and non-residential development trends.
 - iv. Estimated housing constructed per area median income (AMI) categories determined by the Department of Commerce requirements for housing allocations.
- b. Results of the monitoring program shall be published in a growth monitoring report developed by the Planners Committee and recommended to the GMASC.
- c. The GMASC shall review and approve the annual report by resolution.

4.5. Allocation Adjustment: The GMASC may consider adjustments to the population and employment growth allocations and housing allocations contained in Appendix A of CPPs in the years between Washington state-required updates. The following steps shall be used:

- a. Based on the results of the long-term monitoring process, the Planners Committee may review and recommend to the GMASC an adjustment to ~~the~~ population and employment allocations and to housing allocations.
- ~~b.~~ The GMASC shall review the Planners Committee recommendation to adjust growth allocations and housing allocations and may recommend to the Board of County Commissioners an adjustment to the population and employment allocations or the housing allocations. Adjustments to the growth allocations and housing allocations shall be based on the results of the monitoring program and shall be consistent with the Department of Commerce requirements, GMA and the CPPs.
- ~~e-b.~~ The Board of County Commissioners shall consider the recommendation of the GMASC and may amend the CPPs with adjusted population and employment allocations and adjusted housing allocations for cities and towns, UGAs, and rural areas.

Any disputes regarding the roles and responsibilities of the Board of County Commissioners, the GMASC, and individual jurisdictions in reviewing and approving amendments to the Countywide Planning Policies shall be resolved in accordance with the procedures established by the 2002 Framework Agreement.