

**KING COUNTY GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLANNING COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM**

<b>AGENDA TITLE:</b> Countywide Center Designation – Planning Expectations
<b>PRESENTED BY:</b> Ivan Miller, GMPC Lead Staff

**Today’s Meeting**

The Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC) will be briefed on the planning-related expectations for Countywide Centers that are in the 2021 King County Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs). Action on CPP amendments could be considered in the summer to fall of 2024.

**Discussion**

The GMPC’s adopted 2024 work program includes developing a process to designate countywide centers (see the March 2024 Countywide Centers [staff report](#) for background information). One of the early components of this project has been to revisit the planning-related expectations for countywide centers that are adopted in the CPPs.

The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) adopted a Regional Centers Framework in 2018 and VISION 2050 in 2020. These documents include policies and criteria for both regional and countywide centers.

One of the PSRC expectations for regional centers is the development of a subarea plan. This expectation has been in place for many years and it has taken over decade for jurisdictions to begin to come into alignment by adopting subarea plans that meet regional criteria. PSRC’s subarea plan expectations do not apply to countywide centers.

Recognizing the importance of planning for centers, the CPPs include the expectation for a subarea plans for both regional and countywide centers. However, the Center Designation Appendix in the CPPs allows for either a subarea plan or a dedicated centers chapter in a jurisdiction’s comprehensive plan.

As jurisdictions have been working on their 2024 Comprehensive Plan updates, jurisdiction staff shared that that have not able to develop subarea plans for each countywide center, due in part to timing and budget. And, similarly, that while their Plans will include dedicated policies for countywide centers, they will often not include an entire dedicated chapter.

The Interjurisdictional Team (IJT) has been discussing this issue for a number of months. IJT has consistently shared that conducting planning for countywide centers is an important component of designation, however, that prescribing the form and location of where the provisions should be located may be too inflexible.

IJT staff conducted outreach to the jurisdictions in King County to assess what level of planning they were doing for their potential countywide centers, where applicable. The result of the outreach is that while a few jurisdictions have subarea plans for their countywide centers, most do not. And almost none will have dedicated chapters. At the same time, jurisdictions are planning these centers for higher-density zoning, identifying them on their land use maps, and including dedicated policies in their plans.

Based on the results of the outreach, IJT is considering CPP amendments to allow countywide center planning requirements to be met either within a subarea plan or within the jurisdiction's comprehensive plan. To enact this recommendation, CPP amendments will be needed in one policy and in several locations in the Centers Appendix.

### **Future Activity**

IJT will bring a recommendation to the GMPC on whether CPP amendments are appropriate and, if they find they are, will propose specific amendments.

In the countywide centers designation project as a whole, IJT will be developing application materials that will be brought to GMPC for review and approval in 2024 and for use in 2025 following the adoption of comprehensive plans.

### **For More Information**

If members and/or their staff are interested in additional detail, please contact Ivan Miller, GMPC lead staff, at [ivan.miller@kingcounty.gov](mailto:ivan.miller@kingcounty.gov) or 206-263-8297.