Sponsored By:

1	GMPC MOTION 23-4
2	A MOTION recommending amendments to the Urban Growth Area
3	Policies and Four-to-One Program in the King County Countywide
4	Planning Policies, King County Comprehensive Plan, and King County
5	Code to the King County Council.
6	
7	WHEREAS, Ordinance 19384 directed a review of the Four-to-One program and stated that
8	while there have been previous efforts to update the Four-to-One program as part of the 2020 King
9	County Comprehensive Plan update and 2021 Countywide Planning Policies update, there is a need to
10	comprehensively review the Countywide Planning Policies, King County Comprehensive Plan, and King
11	County Code to ensure the three documents are consistent and reflect countywide growth management
12	goals, based on collaboration with cities affected by the program; and
13	WHEREAS, Ordinance 19384 directed that the County Executive develop and recommend to the
14	County Council changes to the Countywide Planning Policies, Comprehensive Plan, and King County
15	Code, in consultation with the Interjurisdictional Team of the Growth Management Planning Council, and
16	based on Growth Management Planning Council review; and
17	WHEREAS, Ordinance 19384 directed that the County Executive review the Four-to-One
18	program to analyze all projects approved under the program, evaluate the performance of those projects
19	against the program's goals, and consider potential amendments related to a suite of specified
20	programmatic and policy issues; and
21	WHEREAS, Ordinance 19384 directed that Executive staff regularly update and consult with the
22	offices of the councilmembers representing the county on the Growth Management Planning Council, the
23	chair and vice-chair of the local services committee, or its successor, and the chair and vice-chair of the
24	mobility and environment committee, or its successor, throughout the process, and such consultation has
25	occurred; and

WHEREAS, Ordinance 19384 directed that County Executive recommended Countywide
Planning Policies, Comprehensive Plan, and King County Code changes, and a Growth Management
Planning Council motion that makes recommendations on the Four-to-One program be completed no later
than January 1, 2023 and be included in the public review draft and State Environmental Policy Act
environmental impact statement for the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update, and be transmitted to the
council as part of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan update; and
WHEREAS, in its 2021 session, the Washington State Legislature adopted House Bill 1241
which extended the timeline for the 2024 Comprehensive Plan update by six months, and at its July 2022
meeting the Growth Management Planning Council agreed to move the date for the motion from January
2023 to June 2023, consistent with the new statutory deadlines; and
WHEREAS, the Growth Management Planning Council discussed the Four-to-One program at
multiple meetings in 2022 and 2023, and the Interjurisdictional Team did the same. And, at these
meetings, the Growth Management Planning Council considered oral and written public comments, and
the Interjurisdictional Team considered written public comments, including from cities affected by the
program; and
WHEREAS, at its meeting in May 2023, the Growth Management Planning Council approved
GMPC Motion 23-3 releasing a suite of proposed amendments to the Urban Growth Area Policies and
Four-to-One Program for public review and comment; and
WHEREAS, at its meeting in September 2023, the Growth Management Planning Council
considered public comments and additional amendments from its members;

46	NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED that the Growth Management Planning Council
47	recommends amendments to the Urban Growth Area Policies and Four-to-One Program in the King
48	County Countywide Planning Policies, King County Comprehensive Plan, and King County Code for
49	transmittal to the King County Council.
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52	Dow Constantine, Chair, Growth Management Planning Council
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54	Attachments
55	A: GMPC Recommended Amendments to the Countywide Planning Policies related to Urban Growth
56	Area Amendments through the Four-to-One Program
57	B: GMPC Recommended Amendments to the King County Comprehensive Plan Policies related to
58	Urban Growth Area Amendments through the Four-to-One Program
59	C: GMPC Recommended Amendments to the King County Code related to Urban Growth Area
60	Amendments through the Four-to-One Program

Attachment A to GMPC Motion 23-4: GMPC Recommended Amendments to the Countywide Planning Policies related to Urban Growth Area Amendments through the Four-to-One Program

King County Countywide Planning Policies, as adopted (Ordinance 19553) on 12/6/2022, and ratified by 03/31/2023

In the Development Patterns chapter, beginning on page 25, amend as follows:

1 2	DP-17 Allow expansion of the Urban Growth Area only if at least one of the following criteria is met:
3 4 5 6 7	 a) A countywide analysis determines that the current Urban Growth Area is insufficient in size and additional land is needed to accommodate the housing and employment growth targets, including institutional and other non-residential uses, and there are no other reasonable measures, such as increasing density or rezoning existing urban land, that would avoid the need to expand the Urban Growth Area; or
8 9 10	b) A proposed expansion of the Urban Growth Area is accompanied by dedication of permanent open space to the King County Open Space System, where the acreage of the proposed open space:
11	1) Is at least four times the acreage of the land added to the Urban Growth Area;
12 13 14 15 16	2) Is ((contiguous with)) adjacent to the original Urban Growth Area boundary adopted in the 1994 King County Comprehensive Plan, with at least ((a portion)) half of the site to be placed in dedicated open space ((surrounding)) and shall fully buffer the proposed Urban Growth Area expansion from surrounding Rural Area and Natural Resource Lands; and
17 18 19	 Preserves high quality habitat, critical areas, or unique features that contribute to the band of permanent open space along the edge of the Urban Growth Area; or
20 21 22	c) The area is currently a King County park being transferred to a city to be maintained as a park in perpetuity((or is park land that has been owned by a city since 1994 and is less than thirty acres in size)).
23	
24 25	DP-18 Add land to the Urban Growth Area only if expansion of the Urban Growth Area is warranted based on the criteria in DP-17(a) or DP-17(b), and it meets all of the following criteria:
26	a) For expansions based on DP-17(a) only:

27	1. Is adjacent to the existing Urban Growth Area((
28	b) For expansions based on DP-17(a) only, is));
29 30	2. Is no larger than necessary to promote compact development that accommodates anticipated growth needs;
31 32	((e))b) Can be efficiently provided with urban services and does not require supportive facilities or services to cross or be located in the Rural Area;
33 34 35	((d))c) Follows topographical features that form natural boundaries, such as rivers and ridge lines and does not extend beyond natural boundaries, such as watersheds, that impede the provision of urban services;
36	((e))d) Is not currently designated as Natural Resource Land;
37 38 39 40	((f))e) Is sufficiently free of environmental constraints to be able to support urban development without significant adverse environmental impacts, unless the area is designated as an Urban Separator by interlocal agreement between King County and the annexing city; ((and))
41 42	 f) Is not expanding the Urban Growth Area from a location that was previously expanded through the Four-to-One program;
43 44 45 46	g) Is subject to an agreement between King County and the city or town adjacent to the area that the area will be added to the city's Potential Annexation Area. Upon ratification of the amendment, the Countywide Planning Policies will reflect both the Urban Growth Area change and Potential Annexation Area change; and
47 48 49 50	h) For expansions of the Urban Growth Area based on the criteria in DP-17 (b) where the area is adjacent to an incorporated area, no development proposal or activity shall be allowed until the land added to the Urban Growth Area is annexed into a city or town.
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52 53 54	DP-19 Allow redesignation of Urban land currently within the Urban Growth Area to Rural land outside of the Urban Growth Area if the land is not needed to accommodate projected urban growth, is not served by public sewers, is ((contiguous with)) adjacent to the Rural Area, and:
55	a) Is not characterized by urban development;
56 57	 b) Is currently developed with a low-density lot pattern that cannot be realistically redeveloped at an urban density; or
58 59	 c) Is characterized by environmentally sensitive areas making it inappropriate for higher density development.

Attachment B to GMPC Motion 23-4: GMPC Recommended Amendments to the King County Comprehensive Plan Policies related to Urban Growth Area Amendments through the Four-to-One Program

King County Comprehensive Plan, as adopted (Ordinance 19555) on 12/06/2023

In Chapter 1: Regional Growth Management Planning, on page 1-15, amend as follows:

RP-106 ((Except for Four-to-One proposals,))King County shall not amend the Urban Growth Area prior to the Growth Management Planning Council taking action on the proposed amendment to the Urban Growth Area.

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In Chapter 2: Urban Communities, beginning on page 2-34, amend as follows:

- 5 While urban separators complement the regional open space system by helping to define urban
- 6 communities, the King County Four-to-One Program provides an opportunity to add land to the
- 7 regional open space system through the dedication of permanent open space. The Four-to-One
- 8 Program has been recognized as an innovative land use technique under the Growth
- 9 Management Act³ and for King County, the purpose of the program is to create a contiguous
- band of open space, running north and south along the ((main)) Urban Growth Area Boundary.
- 11 Since its inception in 1994, just over 1,300 acres have been added to the Urban Growth Area
- while nearly 4,500 acres of permanent open space have been conserved. Changes to the
- 13 Urban Growth Area through this program are processed as Land Use Amendments to the King
- 14 County Comprehensive Plan, subject to the provisions in King County Code chapter 20.18.

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U-185 Through the Four-to-One Program, King County shall actively pursue dedication of open space along the original Urban Growth Area line adopted in the 1994 King County Comprehensive Plan. Through this program, one acre of Rural Area zoned land may be added to the Urban Growth Area in exchange for a dedication to King County of four acres of permanent open space. ((Land added to the Urban Growth Area for drainage facilities that are designed as mitigation to have a natural looking visual appearance in support of its development, does not require dedication of permanent open space.))

U-186 25 King County shall evaluate Four-to-One proposals for both quality of open space and 26 feasibility of urban development and annexation. The highest-quality proposals shall 27 be recommended for adoption as amendments to the Urban Growth Area. Lands 28 preserved as open space shall retain their Rural Area designations; ((and)) should 29 generally be configured in such a way as to connect with open space on adjacent 30 properties; include half of the site being placed in dedicated open space; and should fully buffer the new urban area from surrounding rural and resource lands. 31 32 33 U-187 King County shall use the following criteria for evaluating open space in Four-to-One 34 proposals: 35 Quality of fish and wildlife habitat areas; a. b. 36 Connections to regional open space systems; Protection of wetlands, stream corridors, ground water and water bodies; 37 C. 38 d. Unique natural, biological, cultural, historical, or archeological features; 39 Size of proposed open space dedication and connection to other open space e. 40 dedications along the Urban Growth Area line; and 41 f. The land proposed as open space shall remain undeveloped, except for those 42 uses allowed in ((U-188)) King County Code 20.18.180.D. 43 44 U-188 King County shall preserve the open space acquired through the Four-to-One 45 Program primarily as natural areas, passive recreation sites or resource lands for 46 farming or forestry. King County may allow ((the following)) certain additional uses 47 only if located on a small portion of the open space, provided that these uses are 48 found to be compatible with the site's natural open space values and functions such 49 as those listed in the preceding policy((: 50 a. Trails: 51 Compensatory mitigation of wetland losses on the urban designated portion of 52 the project, consistent with the King County Comprehensive Plan and the 53 Critical Area Ordinance; and 54 Active recreation uses not to exceed five percent of the total open space area. 55 Support services and facilities for the active recreation uses may locate within 56 the active recreation area only, and shall not exceed five percent of the active 57 recreation area. An active recreation area shall not be used to satisfy the active 58 recreation requirements for the urban designated portion of the project as 59 required by King County Code Title 21A)).

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61	U-189	Land added to the Urban Growth Area under the Four-to-One Program shall:
62 63		 a. not expand the Urban Growth Area from a location that was previously expanded through the Four-to-One program;
64 65		 b. be limited to residential development and have a minimum density of ((four)) eight dwellings per acre((and shall));
66 67 68		 be physically ((contiguous)) adjacent to the original Urban Growth Area line adopted in the 1994 Comprehensive Plan, unless there are limitations due to the presence of critical areas((, and shall));
69 70 71 72		d. be able to be served by sewers and other efficient urban services and facilities; provided that such sewer and other urban services and facilities shall be provided directly from the urban area and shall not cross the open space or Rural Area or Natural Resource Lands((-));
73 74 75		e. ((Drainage facilities to)) support the urban development ((shall be)) with drainage facilities that are located within the urban portion of the development((-)):
76 77		 f. ((In some cases, lands must)) meet the affordable housing requirements under this program; and
78 79 80 81		g. ((. The total area)) not result in more than a total of 4,000 acres being added to the Urban Growth Area as a result of this ((policy shall not exceed 4,000 acres)) program.
82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89	U-190	King County shall amend the Urban Growth Area to add Rural Area lands to the Urban Growth Area ((eonsistent with Policy U-185)) through the Four-to-One program during the annual, midpoint, or ten-year Comprehensive Plan amendment process. Open space dedication shall occur at final formal plat recording. If the applicant decides not to pursue urban development or fails to record the final plat prior to expiration of preliminary plat approval, the urban properties shall be restored to a Rural Area land use designation and associated zoning during the next annual review of the King County Comprehensive Plan.
91	<u>U-190a</u>	For Four-to-One proposals adjacent to an incorporated area, no development
92 93		proposal or activity shall be allowed until the land added to the Urban Growth Area is annexed into a city or town.

Attachment C to GMPC Motion 23-4: GMPC Recommended Amendments to the King County Code related to Urban Growth Area Amendments through the Four-to-One Program

King County Code, Title 20, as updated on 09/18/2023

In the King County Code, Title 20, amend as follows:

1 2 3 4	20.18.040 Site-specific land use map or shoreline master program map amendment classification (in effect everywhere except the shoreline jurisdiction, where it will take effect fourteen days after state Department of Ecology approval of Ordinance 18810, Sections 10 and 11).
5 6 7	A. Site-specific land use map or shoreline master program map amendments may be considered during the annual update, midpoint update or ((eight-year)) ten-year update, depending on the degree of change proposed.
8 9 10 11 12	B. ((The following categories of site)) <u>Site</u> -specific land use map or shoreline master program map amendments <u>that do not require substantive change to comprehensive plan policy language and that do not alter the urban growth area boundary, except to correct mapping <u>errors</u>, may be initiated by either the county or a property owner for consideration in the annual update:</u>
13 14 15	((1. Amendments that do not require substantive change to Comprehensive Plan policy language and that do not alter the urban growth area boundary, except to correct mapping errors; and
16	2. Four-to-one-proposals.))
17 18 19	C. The following categories of site-specific land use map and shoreline master program amendments may be initiated by either the county or a property owner for consideration in the ((eight-year)) ten-year update or midpoint update:
20	1. Amendments that could be considered in the annual update;
21 22	2. Amendments that require substantive change to Comprehensive Plan policy language and
23 24 25	3. Amendments to the urban growth area boundary. (Ord. 18810 § 10, 2018: Ord. 16985 § 6, 2010: Ord. 14047 § 2, 2001: Ord. 13147 § 20, 1998).

20.18.170	The four to o	one program –	process for	amending	the urban	growth a	area to
achieve o	pen space.						

- A. The purpose of the Four-to-One program is to create a contiguous band of open space, running north and south along the original Urban Growth Area line adopted in the 1994 King County Comprehensive Plan.
- <u>B.</u> The total area added to the urban growth area as a result of this program shall not exceed four thousand acres. The department shall keep a cumulative total for all parcels added under this section. ((The total shall be updated annually through the plan amendment process.))
- ((B))<u>C</u>. Proposals shall be <u>proposed via the comprehensive plan docket process or an adopted scope of work for a comprehensive plan update, processed as land use amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, and may be considered in the annual update, midpoint update or ((eight-year)) ten-year update.</u>
- <u>D.</u> Site suitability ((and development conditions)) for both the urban and rural portions of the proposal shall be established through the preliminary formal plat approval process.
- E. Development conditions for the proposal shall be established through a tri-party agreement between the County, the property owner, and the city or town affiliated for future annexation. The tri-party agreement shall:
- 1. be approved via ordinance by the legislative bodies of the city or town and the County;
- 2. be approved at the time of the King County Council adoption of the land use amendment, and
- 3. include an effective date that is concurrent with ratification of the countywide planning policy map amendment. If the amendment is not ratified, the tri-party agreement and Four-to-One proposal shall be void and not take effect, and the urban properties shall be restored to a rural area land use designation and associated zoning during the next annual review of the comprehensive plan.
- ((C))<u>F</u>. A term conservation easement shall be placed on the open space at the time the four to one proposal is approved by the council. Upon final plat approval, the open space shall be permanently dedicated ((in fee simple)) to King County. <u>Dedication shall take the form of onsite or offsite fee simple, an offsite transferable development rights conservation easement, or an onsite subdivision tract, to be determined in the tri-party agreement.</u>
- ((D. Proposals))G. Prior to legislative action, proposals adjacent to incorporated area or potential annexation areas shall be referred to the affected city or town, ((and)) special purpose districts (such as sewer, water, and school districts), state agencies, and tribes for review and recommendations.
- H. Proposals adjacent to an incorporated area or a potential annexation area may be approved subject to an agreement that the area will be added to the city or town's potential

annexation area in their comprehensive plan. Upon ratification of the amendment, the
countywide planning policies will reflect both the urban growth area change and potential
annexation area change, followed by city or town action to add the potential annexation area to
their comprehensive plan. For proposals adjacent to an incorporated area, the County
ordinance and tri-party agreement shall specify that no development proposal or activity shall be
allowed until the land added to the urban growth area is annexed into a city or town. (Ord. 18810
§ 16, 2018: Ord. 17485 § 9, 2012: Ord. 16263 § 5, 2008: Ord. 14047 § 9, 2001).

- 20.18.180 The four to one program criteria for amending the urban growth area to achieve open space. Rural area land may be added to the urban growth area in accordance with the following criteria:
- A. A proposal to add land to the urban growth area under this program shall meet the following criteria:
- 1. A permanent dedication to the King County open space system of four acres of open space is required for every one acre of land added to the urban growth area;
 - 2. The land shall not be ((zoned agriculture (A))) designated as natural resource land;
 - 3. The land added to the urban growth area shall:
- a. be physically ((contiguous)) adjacent to the original urban growth area line as adopted in the 1994 King County Comprehensive Plan, unless the director determines that the land directly adjacent to the urban growth area contains critical areas that would be substantially harmed by development directly adjacent to the urban growth area and that all other criteria can be met; ((and))
- b. not be in an area where a contiguous band of public open space, parks or watersheds already exists along the urban growth area boundary;
- c. not expand the urban growth area from a location that was previously expanded through the Four-to-One program;
- 4. The land added to the urban growth area shall be able to be served by sewers and other urban services;
- 5. A road serving the land added to the urban area shall not be counted as part of the required open space;
- 6. <u>Land added to the urban growth area for drainage facilities in support of its development shall not require dedication of permanent open space;</u>
- 7. All urban facilities shall be provided directly from the urban area and shall not cross the open space or rural area and be located in the urban area except as permitted in subsection ((E))D of this section;

98	((7))8. Open space areas shall retain a rural designation;
99 100 101 102 103 104 105	((8))9. At least half of the site shall be placed in dedicated open space and shall fully buffer the new urban area from surrounding rural area and natural resource lands. The minimum depth of the open space buffer shall ((be one half of the property width, unless the director determines that a smaller buffer of)) be no less than two hundred feet unless the director determines that a smaller buffer is warranted due to the topography and critical areas on the site, ((shall)) generally be parallel to the urban growth area boundary and ((shall)) be configured in such a way as to connect with open space on adjacent properties. The required open space
106 107 108	buffer shall contain Type 1 landscaping, per K.C.C. 21A.16.040, unless the director determines that different landscaping would better protect natural resources and functions, and land use compatibility, in the area;
109 110	$((9))\underline{10}$. The minimum size of the property to be considered is twenty acres. Smaller parcels may be combined to meet the twenty-acre minimum;
111 112	((10))11. Urban development under this section shall be limited to residential development and shall be at a minimum density of four)) eight dwelling units per acre; and
113 114	((11))12. The land to be retained in open space is not needed for any facilities or services necessary to support the urban development; and
115 116	B. ((A proposal that adds two hundred acres or more to the urban growth area shall also meet the following criteria:
117 118	1. The proposal shall include a mix of housing types including thirty percent below-market-rate units affordable to low, moderate and median income households;
119 120 121	2. In a proposal in which the thirty-percent requirement in subsection B.1 of this section is exceeded, the required open space dedication shall be reduced to three and one-half acres of open space for every one acre added to the urban growth area;
122 123 124 125 126	C. A proposal that adds less than two hundred acres to the urban growth area and that meets the affordable housing criteria in subsection B.1. of this section shall be subject to a reduced open space dedication requirement of three and one-half acres of open space for every one acre added to the urban growth area))Proposals shall comply with the affordable housing requirements in 20.18.XXX;
127 128	$((D))\underline{C}$. Requests for redesignation shall be evaluated to determine those that are the highest quality, including, but not limited to, consideration of the following:
129 130	1. Preservation of fish and wildlife habitat, including wildlife habitat networks, and habitat for endangered and threatened species;
131	2. Provision of regional open space connections;

3. Protection of wetlands, stream corridors, ground water and water bodies;

- 4. Preservation of unique natural, biological, cultural, historical or archeological resources;
 5. The size of open space dedication and connection to other open space dedications along the urban growth area boundary; and
 - 6. The ability to provide extensions of urban services to the redesignated urban areas; and
 - $((E))\underline{D}$. The open space acquired through this program shall be preserved primarily as natural areas, passive recreation sites or resource lands for farming and forestry. The following additional uses may be allowed only if located on a small portion of the open space and provided that these uses are found to be compatible with the site's natural open space values and functions:
 - 1. Trails;
 - 2. Compensatory mitigation of wetland losses on the urban designated portion of the ((project))proposal, consistent with the King County Comprehensive Plan and K.C.C. chapter 21A.24; and
 - 3. Active recreation uses not to exceed five percent of the total open space area. The support services and facilities for the active recreation uses may locate within the active recreation area only, and shall not exceed five percent of the total acreage of the active recreation area. The entire open space area, including any active recreation site, is a regional resource. It shall not be used to satisfy the on-site active recreation space requirements in K.C.C. 21A.14.180 for the urban portion of the four to one property. (Ord. 17485 § 10, 2012: Ord. 16263 § 6, 2008: Ord. 15606 § 1, 2006: Ord. 14047 § 10, 2001).

- NEW SECTION: 20.18.XXX A Four-to-One proposal that expands the urban growth area and adds ten or more residential dwelling units shall meet the following criteria:
- A. Thirty percent of the total number of units in the proposal shall be affordable housing units. Homeownership affordable housing units shall be affordable to residents earning up to eighty percent of the area median income. Rental affordable housing units shall be affordable to residents earning up to sixty percent of the area median income.
- B. For proposals that include exclusively home ownership units, the affordable units shall all be provided for home ownership. For proposals that include units exclusively rental units, the affordable units shall all be provided for rental. For proposals that include rental and homeownership units, the proportion of affordable rental units to affordable homeownership units shall be identical to the proportion for market rate units.
- C. The length of the term of the affordability requirement for homeownership affordable housing units shall be for fifty years from the date of the initial occupancy. The length of the term

169	of the affordability requirement for rental affordable housing units shall be for the life of the
170	project from the date of initial occupancy.
171	D. The following subsections in K.C.C. chapter 21A.48 shall be used to direct
172	appropriate implementation of these requirements:
173	1. 21A.48.010.C. regarding exceptions to affordable housing requirements:
174	2. 21A.48.040.A. regarding the calculation of affordable dwelling units;
175	3. 21A.48.050 regarding regulation of affordable dwelling units and dimensional
176	standards;
177	4. 21A.48.060 regarding approval of calculation of number of required affordable
178	dwelling units and allowed market rate dwelling units a condition of development permit
179	issuance - covenant or deed restriction required before certificate of occupancy issuance; and
180	5. 21A.48.080 regarding approval of request for alternative compliance - modification
181	or waiver of requirements for affordable dwelling units - requirements.
182	E. Implementation of these requirements shall be established in the County ordinance
183	and tri-party agreement approving the proposal.