

09/18/2024

Sponsored By: Executive Committee

**GMPC MOTION 24-2**

A MOTION to amend the Planning Expectations for Countywide Centers in the King County Countywide Planning Policies.

WHEREAS, in 2018 the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) adopted a Regional Centers Framework for the central Puget Sound region, which includes King County, and said framework expanded the growth management centers framework to include a new countywide center designation; and

WHEREAS, in 2020 the PSRC adopted VISION 2050, a regional growth plan for the central Puget Sound region; and

WHEREAS, VISION 2050 includes the central Puget Sound region's Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs), per Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 36.70A.210(8), and these policies call for the designation of countywide centers; and

WHEREAS, PSRC serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the central Puget Sound Region, per 23 Code of the Federal Register, Section 450.310, and the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO), per RCW 47.80; and

WHEREAS, as the MPO and RTPO for the central Puget Sound region, PSRC manages the distribution of federal transportation funding and in this capacity has adopted a Policy Framework for PSRC's Federal Funds and said framework calls for the distribution of federal funding to support transportation investments in countywide centers; and

WHEREAS, in 2019 the King County Growth Management Council (GMPC) established a process for the identification and designation of Candidate Countywide Centers in order to allow jurisdictions in King County to compete for the aforementioned federal transportation funding managed by PSRC; and

25 WHEREAS, in 2021 the GMPC adopted GMPC Motion 21-3 which approved a list of Candidate  
26 Countywide Centers in jurisdictions in King County; and

27 WHEREAS, GMPC Motion 21-3 states that the Candidate Countywide Centers would have  
28 status until such time as Comprehensive Plans are updated in 2024, per RCW 36.70A.130; and that  
29 following adoption of Comprehensive Plans, jurisdictions could then apply for designation by the GMPC  
30 in 2025 to 2026; and

31 WHEREAS, in 2021 the King County Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) were updated to be  
32 consistent with the MPPs, and CPP Appendix 6: King County Centers Designation Framework  
33 established criteria for countywide centers; and

34 WHEREAS, in 2024 the GMPC adopted its 2024 Work Program which included a review of the  
35 criteria and planning expectations in the CPPs related to countywide centers; and

36 WHEREAS, in March 2024, June 2024, and July 2024 the GMPC's Interjurisdictional Team  
37 (IJT) reviewed the CPPs and recommended to GMPC amendments to the planning expectations for  
38 countywide centers in the CPPs; and

39 WHEREAS, in June 2024 and July 2024 the GMPC discussed these recommended amendments;

40 NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the King County GMPC hereby approves  
41 amendments to the CPPs related to the planning expectations for countywide centers, as shown in  
42 Attachment A.

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44 \_\_\_\_\_  
45 Dow Constantine, Chair, Growth Management Planning Council

46  
47 Attachment

- 48 A. Amendments to the Planning Expectations in the King County Countywide Planning Policies for  
49 Countywide Centers



**Attachment A: Amendments to the Planning Expectations in the King County Countywide Planning Policies for Countywide Centers**

All King County Countywide Planning Policy amendments are shown in ~~((~~strike~~through))~~ and underlined text.

*In the Development Patterns Chapter, on page 30, amend the text as follows:*

The King County Centers Designation Framework in Appendix 6 provides designation processes and timelines, minimum existing and planned density thresholds, and ~~((subarea))~~ planning expectations for regional and countywide centers. Regionally designated centers are shown on the Generalized Land Use Categories Map in Appendix 1.

*In the Development Patterns Chapter, on page 30, amend countywide planning policy as follows:*

**DP-33** Establish subarea plans for designated regional ~~((and countywide))~~ centers that meet the criteria in the King County centers Designation Framework, as adopted in Appendix 6.

*In Appendix 6: King County Centers Designation Framework, starting on page 106, amend countywide planning policy appendix as follows:*

**Appendix 6: King County Centers Designation Framework**

	<b>Metro Growth Centers</b>	<b>Urban Growth Centers</b>	<b>Countywide Growth Centers</b>	<b>Industrial Employment Centers</b>	<b>Industrial Growth Centers</b>	<b>Countywide Industrial Centers</b>
1. Purpose of Center	Regional Metro Growth Centers have a primary regional role. They have dense existing jobs and housing, high-quality transit service, and are planning for significant, equitable growth and opportunity. They serve as major transit hubs for the region and provide regional services and serve as major civic and cultural centers.	Regional Urban Growth Centers play an important regional role, with dense existing jobs and housing, high-quality transit service, and planning for significant, equitable growth and opportunity. These centers may represent areas where major investments – such as high-capacity transit –offer new opportunities for growth.	Countywide growth centers <sup>15</sup> serve important roles as places for equitably concentrating jobs, housing, shopping, and recreational opportunities. These are often smaller downtowns, high-capacity transit station areas, or neighborhood centers that are linked by transit, provide a mix of housing and services, and serve as focal points for local and county investment.	Regional Industrial Employment Centers are highly active industrial areas with significant existing jobs, core industrial activity, evidence of long-term demand, and regional role. They have a legacy of industrial employment and represent important long-term industrial areas, such as deep-water ports and major manufacturing and can be accessed by transit. Designation is to, at a minimum, preserve existing industrial jobs and land use and to continue to equitably grow industrial employment and opportunity in these centers where possible.	Regional Industrial Growth Centers are clusters of industrial lands that have significant value to the region and potential for future equitable job growth. These large areas of industrial land serve the region with international employers, industrial infrastructure, concentrations of industrial jobs, evidence of long-term potential, and can be accessed by transit. Designation will continue growth of industrial employment and preserve the region’s industrial land base for long-term growth and retention.	Countywide industrial centers serve as important local industrial areas. These areas support equitable access to living wage jobs and serve a key role in the county’s manufacturing/industrial economy.

<sup>15</sup> King County does not yet have designated countywide centers, although many jurisdictions have local centers that may be equivalent. Local centers are eligible for regional and countywide funding, and this funding is distributed based on criteria and formula.

	Metro Growth Centers	Urban Growth Centers	Countywide Growth Centers	Industrial Employment Centers	Industrial Growth Centers	Countywide Industrial Centers
2. Distribution of Centers	Centers are designated to achieve the countywide land use vision and are based on meeting the expectations of the framework. No arbitrary limit on the number of centers will be established.	Same	Same	Same	Same	Same
<b>PART 1. DESIGNATION PROCESS AND SCHEDULE</b>						
<b>A. Designation Process</b>						
1. jurisdiction ordinance, motion, or resolution authorizing submittal of application	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2. Fill out Form	Yes	Yes	KC to have an application form and process.	Yes	Yes	KC to have an application form and process.
3. Submit for eligibility review. Staff review and report	Yes	Yes	IJT staff to review and present to GMPC.	Yes	Yes	IJT staff to review and present to GMPC.
4. GMPC recommendation to PSRC	Yes	Yes	KC to have an application form and process.	Yes	Yes	KC to have an application form and process.
<b>B. Schedule</b>						
1. Applications limited to major updates. Call for new application approx. every 5 years.	Yes	Yes	Yes. KC to have a 5-year cycle or consider following PSRC major plan updates.	Yes	Yes	Yes. KC to have a 5 year cycle or consider following PSRC major plan updates.
<b>C. Redesignation</b>						
1. Follows PSRC re-designation process	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>PART 2: CENTER ELIGIBILITY</b>						
<b>A. Local and Countywide Commitment</b>						
1. center identified in Comprehensive Plan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2. demonstrate center is local priority for growth and investments	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes. And, commitment to protecting and preserving industrial uses, strategies, and incentives to encourage industrial uses in the center, and established partnerships with relevant parties to ensure success of manufacturing/industrial center.	Yes. And area has important county role and concentration of industrial land or jobs with evidence of long-term demand.

	Metro Growth Centers	Urban Growth Centers	Countywide Growth Centers	Industrial Employment Centers	Industrial Growth Centers	Countywide Industrial Centers
<b>B. Planning</b>						
1. completed center plan meeting Plan Review Manual specifications <sup>16</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>17</sup>	Yes	Yes. And, in consultation with public ports and other affected government entities.	Yes <sup>17</sup>
2. environmental review shows area appropriate for density	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
3. assessment of housing need and cultural assets, including displacement of residents and businesses	Yes	Yes	Yes( <del>(, as part of subarea plan or in dedicated Comprehensive Plan chapter))</del> )	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
4. documentation of tools to provide range of affordable and fair housing	Yes	Yes	Yes( <del>(, as part of subarea plan or in dedicated Comprehensive Plan chapter))</del> )	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
5. documentation of community engagement, including with priority populations <sup>18</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes( <del>(, as part of subarea plan or in dedicated Comprehensive Plan chapter))</del> )	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>C. Jurisdiction and Location</b>						
1. new Centers should be in cities	Yes	Yes	Cities or Unincorporated Urban <sup>19</sup>	Yes	Yes	Cities or Unincorporated Urban <sup>19</sup>
2. if unincorporated area: a. it has link light rail and is affiliated for annexation	Not allowed in unincorporated urban area	Not allowed in unincorporated urban area	Encouraged	Not allowed in unincorporated urban area	Not allowed in unincorporated urban area	Encouraged
b. joint planning is occurring	Not allowed in unincorporated urban area	Not allowed in unincorporated urban area	Encouraged	Not allowed in unincorporated urban area	Not allowed in unincorporated urban area	Encouraged
c. plans for annexation or incorporation are required	Not applicable (center type does not exist in unincorporated area).	Not applicable (center type does not exist in unincorporated area).	Encouraged	Not allowed in unincorporated urban area	Not allowed in unincorporated urban area	Encouraged
<b>D. Existing Conditions</b>						
1. infrastructure and utilities can support growth	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes. Must include presence of irreplaceable industrial infrastructure such as working maritime port facilities, air and rail freight facilities.	Yes. Access to relevant transportation infrastructure including freight.	Yes
2. center has mix of housing and employment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not applicable	The center has an economic impact.	Not applicable.
<b>E. Boundaries</b>						

<sup>16</sup> The PSRC [Center Plan Checklist](#) defines key concepts and provisions jurisdictions should use in planning for the designated centers. This includes the following: establishing a vision, considering natural and built environment topics, establishing geographic boundaries and growth targets, planning for a mix of land uses, addressing design standards, planning for a variety of housing types including affordable housing in growth centers, addressing economic development, and providing for public services and facilities, including multimodal transportation, all as appropriate and tailored to the center type and function.

<sup>17</sup> For Countywide Centers the topics in the [Center Plan Checklist](#) should be addressed(~~(, except that growth targets are not required, and they can be met through inclusion of a dedicated chapter in the Comprehensive Plan that specifies how each required topic is addressed for each countywide center, rather than in stand-alone subarea plans)).~~

<sup>18</sup> King County's "Fair and Just" Ordinance 16948, as amended, identifies four demographic groups, including: low-income, limited English proficiency, people of color, and immigrant populations.

<sup>19</sup> For multi-jurisdiction centers, please describe the manner and structure (e.g. interlocal agreement, memorandum of understanding) with which the jurisdictions will plan together over the long-term.

	Metro Growth Centers	Urban Growth Centers	Countywide Growth Centers	Industrial Employment Centers	Industrial Growth Centers	Countywide Industrial Centers
1. justification for center boundaries	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2. boundary generally round or square	Yes	Yes	Compact, walkable size	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
<b>F. Transportation</b>						
1. center has bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and amenities	Yes	Yes	Yes. Supports multimodal transportation, including pedestrian infrastructure and amenities, and bicycle infrastructure and amenities.	Defined transportation demand management strategies in place.	Defined transportation demand management strategies in place.	Defined transportation demand management strategies in place
2. center has street pattern supporting walkability	Yes	Yes	Yes. Supports multimodal transportation, including street pattern that supports walkability.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
3. freight access	Yes	<del>((To be addressed in subarea plan))</del> <u>Yes</u>	<del>((To be addressed in subarea plan))</del> <u>Yes</u>	Access to relevant transportation infrastructure including freight.	<del>((Same))</del> <u>Yes</u>	<del>((To be addressed in subarea plan))</del> <u>Yes</u>
<b>PART 3: CENTER CRITERIA</b>						
<b>A. Purpose</b>						
1. Compatibility with VISION centers concept, Regional Growth Strategy and Multicounty Planning Policies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>B. Activity level/Zoning <sup>20</sup></b>						
1. existing activity <sup>21</sup>	60 activity unit density	30 activity unit density (AUs refer to combined jobs and population)	18 activity unit density	10,000 jobs	4,000 jobs	1,000 existing jobs and/or 500 acres of industrial land
2. planned activity	Above 120 activity unit density	60 activity unit density	30 activity unit density	20,000 jobs	10,000 jobs	4,000 jobs
3. sufficient zoned capacity	Yes. Should be higher than target and supports a compact, complete, and mature urban form.	Yes. Should be higher than target.	Should have capacity and be planning for <del>((additional growth.))</del> <u>at least the planned activity level</u>	Yes. Should be higher than target.	Yes. Should be higher than target.	Should have capacity and be planning for <del>((additional growth.))</del> <u>at least the planned activity level</u>
4. planning mix of housing types and employment types	Planning for at least 15% residential and 15% employment activity	Planning for at least 15% residential and 15% employment activity	Planning for at least 20% residential and 20% employment, unless unique circumstances make these percentages not possible to achieve.	At least 50% of the employment must be industrial employment. Strategies to retain industrial uses are in place.	At least 50% of the employment must be industrial employment. Strategies to retain industrial uses are in place.	At least 50% of the employment must be industrial employment. Strategies to retain industrial uses are in place.
<b>C. Geographic Size</b>						
1. minimum size	320 acres	200 acres	160	No set threshold; size based on justification for the boundary.	2000 acres	1,000 existing jobs and/or 500 acres of industrial land

<sup>20</sup> PSRC’s 2015 guidance on [Transit Supportive Densities and Land Uses](#) cites an optimal level of 56-116 activity units per acre to support light rail, dependent on transit costs per mile. The guidance indicates an optimal threshold of at least 17 activity units per acre to support bus rapid transit. Note: the existing threshold in the CPPs is roughly equivalent to 85 AUs existing activity for King County Urban Centers.

<sup>21</sup> For existing centers, not meeting existing activity unit thresholds is not grounds for de-designation or re-designation by the Growth Management Planning Council.

	Metro Growth Centers	Urban Growth Centers	Countywide Growth Centers	Industrial Employment Centers	Industrial Growth Centers	Countywide Industrial Centers
2. maximum size	640 acres (larger if internal HCT)	640 acres (larger if internal HCT)	500 acres	No set threshold; size based on justification for the boundary.	No set threshold; size based on justification for the boundary.	No set threshold; size based on justification for the boundary.
<b>D. Transit</b>						
1. existing or planned transit service levels	Major transit hub, has high quality/high-capacity existing or planned service including existing or planned light rail, commuter rail, ferry, or other high-capacity transit with similar frequent service as light rail. (18 hours, 15-minute headways)	Fixed route bus, regional bus, Bus Rapid Transit or frequent all-day bus service (16 hours, 15 minute headways). High-capacity transit may substitute for fixed-route bus.	Yes, has frequent, all-day, fixed-route bus service (16 hours, 15-minute headways).	Must have existing or planned frequent, local, express, or flexible transit service.  Should have documented strategies to reduce commute impacts through transportation demand management that are consistent with the Regional TDM Action Plan.	Same.	Should have local fixed-route or flexible transit service.
2. transit-supportive infrastructure	Provides transit priority (bus lanes, queue jumps, signal priority, etc.) within the right-of-way to maintain speed and reliability of transit service. Provides infrastructure (i.e. pedestrian and bicycle) that improves rider access to transit service and increases amenities to make transit an inviting option.	Provides transit priority (bus lanes, queue jumps, signal priority, etc.) within the right-of-way to maintain speed and reliability of transit service. Provides infrastructure (i.e. pedestrian and bicycle) that improves rider access to transit service and increases amenities to make transit an inviting option.	Supports connection/transfers between routes and other modes. Provides infrastructure (i.e. pedestrian and bicycle) that improves rider access to transit service and increases amenities to make transit an inviting option.	Provides transit priority (bus lanes, queue jumps, signal priority, etc.) within the right-of-way to maintain speed and reliability of transit service. Provides infrastructure (i.e. pedestrian and bicycle) that improves rider access to transit service and increases amenities to make transit an inviting option.	Supports connection/transfers between routes and other modes, and increases amenities to make transit an inviting option.	Supports connection/transfers between routes and other modes, and increases amenities to make transit an inviting option.
<b>E. Market Potential</b>						
1. Evidence of future market potential to support target and planned densities	Yes, with Market Study required	Yes, with Market Study required	Market Study encouraged	Yes, with Market Study required	Yes, with Market Study required	Market Study encouraged
2. Market data will inform adoption of land use, housing, economic development, and investment strategies, including equitable development strategies. <sup>22</sup>	Required within Market Study	Required within Market Study	Encouraged within Market Study	Required within Market Study, tailored for industrial employment.	Required within Market Study, tailored for industrial employment.	Encouraged within Market Study, tailored for industrial employment.
<b>F. Role</b>						
1. Evidence of regional or countywide role by serving as important destination	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2. Planning for long-term, significant, and equitable growth	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

<sup>22</sup> For residential development, strategies and tools could include mandatory inclusionary housing, multifamily tax exemption, or others. For commercial and industrial development, strategies and tools could include priority hire policies, incentives for affordable commercial space, or others.

	Metro Growth Centers	Urban Growth Centers	Countywide Growth Centers	Industrial Employment Centers	Industrial Growth Centers	Countywide Industrial Centers
<b>G. Zoning</b>						
1. specific zones required	No	No	No	At least 75% land area zoned for core industrial uses. This includes manufacturing, transportation, warehousing and freight terminals.	Same	At least 75% of land area zoned for core industrial uses.
2. specific zones prohibited	No	No	No	Commercial uses within core industrial zones shall be strictly limited.	Same	Same