## REVISED STAFF REPORT

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| **Agenda Item:** |  | **Name:** | Andy Micklow |
| **Proposed No**.: | 2021-0255 | **Date:** |  |

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

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| ***Proposed Substitute Ordinance 2021-0255.2, which would adopt and ratify Growth Management Planning Council Motion 21-2, passed out of committee on November 30, 2021, with a “Do Pass” recommendation. The Ordinance was amended in committee with Amendment 1 to attach an updated version of the Urban Growth Capacity Report with updated data for the City of Bothell.*** |

**SUBJECT**

A proposed ordinance adopting and ratifying Growth Management Planning Council Motion 21-2.

**SUMMARY**

Proposed Ordinance 2021-0255 would approve the 2021 Urban Growth Capacity Report, as recommended by the Growth Management Planning Council, and ratify it on behalf of the population of unincorporated King County. The Report includes development and capacity information for each jurisdiction, an assessment of countywide and Regional Geography trends, and data on growth target planned density achievement. If approved, this ordinance would begin the ratification process by the cities.

**BACKGROUND**

The GMPC is a formal body composed of elected officials from King County, Seattle, Bellevue, other cities and towns in King County, and special purpose districts. The GMPC was created in 1992 by an interlocal agreement in response to a provision in the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) requiring cities and counties to work together to adopt Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs). Under the GMA, the CPPs serve as the framework for each local jurisdiction’s comprehensive plan, which ensures countywide consistency with respect to land use planning efforts.

As provided for in the interlocal agreement, the GMPC developed and recommended the original CPPs, which were adopted by the King County Council and ratified by the cities in 1992. Subsequent amendments to the CPPs follow the same adoption process, which is now outlined in CPP G-1 and includes: recommendation by the GMPC, adoption and ratification by the King County Council, and ratification by the cities. Amendments to the CPPs become effective when ratified by at least 30 percent of the city and county governments representing at least 70 percent of the population of King County. A city shall be deemed to have ratified an amendment to the CPPs unless the city disapproves it by legislative action within 90 days of adoption by King County.

The Urban Growth Capacity Report (Report) is a required component of the Growth Management Act.[[1]](#footnote-1) The Report is a mid-planning cycle assessment on how jurisdictions are achieving the planning goals of their 2035 comprehensive plans. The Report implements the County’s Review and Evaluation Program, previously referred to as “Buildable Lands."

The Urban Growth Capacity Report responds to three questions:

1. Is there adequate land capacity available for anticipated growth in jurisdictions and the UGA?
2. Are growth targets being achieved?
3. Are urban areas achieving their planned densities?

To answer these questions, cities and King County analyzed recent development data to understand the densities at which development is occurring, identified vacant and redevelopable land on which future development can occur, and combined this information to calculate the overall residential and non-residential capacity in the Urban Growth Area and for each jurisdiction.

The Report informs the growth target setting process in the 2021 Countywide Planning Policy Update and policy development in the next periodic update of local comprehensive plans. Amendments to the Growth Management Act in 2017 expanded the scope of the Report beyond measuring capacity for projected growth to also include an assessment of how jurisdictions are achieving targets and density goals. A finding that a jurisdiction has insufficient capacity for its target, or that a jurisdiction is not achieving its growth targets or urban densities could necessitate Reasonable Measures to be adopted in the next periodic update of comprehensive plans.

**ANALYSIS**

Proposed Ordinance 2021-0255 would adopt the 2021 Urban Growth Capacity Report. This will be King County’s fourth iteration of the Report - the three previous being adopted in 2002, 2007, and 2014.

The 2021 Urban Growth Capacity Report compares estimated housing and employment growth from 2006-2018 relative to 2006-2035 growth targets, and the achieved densities of 2012-2018 development to the densities allowed in zoning and development regulations. Consistent with the adopted Regional Growth Strategy, final capacity results and city profiles are grouped by the VISION 2050 Regional Geographies - Metropolitan Cities, Core Cities, High Capacity Transit Communities, Cities and Towns, and Urban Unincorporated.

The Report finds that 97% of population growth in King County since 2006 occurred in the Urban Area. This is consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy and adopted growth targets. Residential growth between 2012 and 2018 was driven by multifamily and higher density development. Sixty-eight percent of housing permitted during the study period was high density (at least 48 dwelling units per acre) and 17% was low density (below 10 dwelling units per acre). Development in middle-density levels was more limited.

**Achieving Planned Densities and Growth Targets.** The Report concludes that urban King County is growing at a rate that would achieve its adopted growth targets. This is determined by comparing the percent of the time in the current planning period (2006-2035) that has elapsed with the percent of housing and employment targets that have been achieved. Approximately 41% of the target period (2006-2035) has elapsed and urban King County has achieved 47% of its housing and employment targets, growing slightly faster than the prorated pace.

At a Regional Geography level, Metropolitan, Larger, and Small Cities grew faster than the pace needed to achieve growth targets.[[2]](#footnote-2) Job growth compared to targets was also strong in Metropolitan and Small Cities. Housing growth was less strong in Core Cities and the urban unincorporated area, but these geographies are still on track to achieve their residential growth targets. Employment growth in Core and Larger Cities was slower than targeted but meets the countywide definition of consistency with growth targets.[[3]](#footnote-3) The urban unincorporated area is slightly ahead of pace to achieve its employment growth target.

**Development Capacity.**The 2021 Urban Growth Capacity Report finds that urban King County has capacity for over 400,000 housing units and 600,000 jobs. This is sufficient capacity to accommodate the remainder of its 2035 housing and employment growth targets and projected future growth in the next planning period (2019-2044).

Approximately 50% of residential and 60% of employment capacity in King County is in Metropolitan Cities - Seattle and Bellevue - with another 32% of capacity located in the Core Cities. Twenty percent of housing capacity and less than 9% of all job capacity is located in the High Capacity Transit (HCT) Communities, Cities & Towns, or Urban Unincorporated categories. HCT Communities have a higher relative share of housing capacity with 12% of the countywide total, compared to only 3% of countywide job capacity.

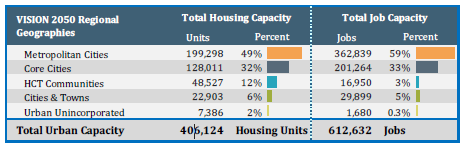


Figure 1. Capacity Summary by VISION 2050 Geographies

**GMPC Action.**On June 23, 2021, the GMPC approved Motion 21-2, which recommends approval of the 2021 Urban Growth Capacity Report. The GMPC action is a recommendation to the King County Council and is not binding.

Consistent with CPPs adoption requirements, Proposed Ordinance 2021-0255 forwards this GMPC recommendation to the King County Council for consideration and possible approval. The proposed ordinance would also ratify the change on behalf of the population of unincorporated King County and would begin the ratification process by the cities.

**AMENDMENT**

Amendment 1 would attach an updated version of the Urban Growth Capacity Report with updated data for the City of Bothell. The change would not impact the findings of the Report approved by the Growth Management Planning Council in June 2021.

1. RCW 36.70A.215 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The Report uses VISION 2040 Regional Geographies to analyze growth in the current planning period (2006 through 2035) and VISION 2050 Regional Geographies for final capacity results and city profiles. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Jurisdictions were evaluated as having achieved their 2006-2035 growth targets if their estimated housing and job growth from 2006-2018 is at least 50% of the amount of growth target that has elapsed during that period. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)