**GMPC Meeting Date: June 6, 2012** **Agenda Item: \_**

# GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLANNING COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM

**KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

**AGENDA TITLE:** Housing Chapter

**PRESENTED BY:** Interjurisdictional Staff Team

**BACKGROUND**

The Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC) approved the King County Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) on September 21, 2011. While the approved Housing Chapter included interim Affordable Housing Targets the GMPC also approved a work plan for reviewing the affordable housing target methodology. GMPC directed staff to continue to work on the issue and to bring a revised chapter back to the GMPC in 2012. Since November 2011, the Interjurisdictional Team (IJT), staff to the GMPC, has worked in collaboration with cities, planning directors, and other stakeholders to address this issue and draft revisions to the Housing Chapter.

**SUMMARY**

In April, the GMPC met and reviewed a preliminary draft of a revised Housing Chapter. The revised approach differs from what was approved in the 2011 CPPs in four distinct ways:

* Clearly establishes upfront a countywide need for affordable housing;
* Eliminates assigned affordable housing targets;
* Focuses on implementation strategies to meet the countywide need; and
* Establishes four steps to accomplish this approach:

1. Conduct an inventory and analysis of housing needs and conditions;
2. Implement policies and strategies to address unmet needs;
3. Measure results; and
4. Respond to measurement with reassessment and adjustment of strategies.

Categories of Countywide Need for Affordable Housing by percentage of Area Median Income (AMI) are:

50-80% of AMI (moderate) 16% of total housing supply

30-50% AMI (low) 12% of total housing supply

30% and below (very low) 12% of total housing supply

The need for households with less than 30% of AMI was identified as a necessary focus for all jurisdictions. The provision of housing affordable to very-low income households will only be fulfilled with interjurisdictional cooperation and public subsidies. All jurisdictions within the county will be expected to work to meet this obligation both at the jurisdictional level and cooperatively on a countywide or sub-county basis.

**IMPLEMENTATION**

As part of the next cycle of comprehensive plan updates, jurisdictions will need to do an inventory and needs assessment in accordance with GMA. Jurisdictions will then need to identify and implement strategies to proactively encourage the creation and preservation of affordable housing. As part of its comprehensive plan housing analysis, each jurisdiction will address affordability and the condition of existing housing supply as well as its responsibility to accommodate a significant share of the countywide need for affordable housing. All jurisdictions should promote housing development, preservation, and affordability in proximity to jobs and transit, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Jurisdictions will be expected to employ strategies tailored to their specific situations. For example, for jurisdictions that have an existing large supply of low or moderate income housing, an emphasis on housing preservation and on unmet needs of specific populations (e.g. seniors, persons with disabilities) may be appropriate, while other jurisdictions may need to take aggressive efforts to increase low and moderate income housing supply.

Jurisdictions will undertake measurement, in part, to gauge their success in implementing appropriate policies and strategies. Periodically, each jurisdiction will reassess its affordable housing needs. If, over time, the policies and strategies are not leading to the desired results, jurisdictions will need to reconsider and adjust their affordable housing policies and strategies.

**COMMENTS ON THE PRELIMINARY DRAFT**

At the April GMPC meeting, some councilmembers asked about consistency between the draft policy regarding the housing inventory and analysis (Policy H-3) and the policy regarding monitoring of housing conditions (Policy H-17). The IJT reviewed the two policies and suggests minor edits to improve consistency between the two related policies. GMPC also directed staff to engage stakeholders in reviewing the draft chapter.

Following the April GMPC review, the IJT hosted a meeting with stakeholders attended by representatives from the Housing Development Consortium, Futurewise, Seattle-King County Realtors, and The Master Builders Association. The City of SeaTac also provided a comment letter to GMPC with suggested edits. These comments are included as attachments to this Agenda Item.

IJT reviewed each of the edits suggested by the stakeholders and made revisions to the preliminary draft where it appeared that the suggested comments were consistent with the GMPC direction. A number of edits were helpful and add clarity to the intent of the chapter, including being clear about the four step process in the introduction to the chapter.

Futurewise suggested that the Housing chapter return to including affordable housing targets for individual cities. This approach is inconsistent with the agreement worked out among cities to replace the targets with the four step process, which puts greater emphasis on taking action rather than assigning numbers. Consequently, this comment was rejected. Similarly, the Housing Development Consortium suggested using the term “proportional share of the countywide need.” Because the word “proportional” would lead to a direct target-like calculation for individual jurisdictions the term “proportional share” was not added to the policies.

A number of Futurewise comments were about the need for the housing inventory and needs analysis to record very specific data. They made similar comments about the requirement for monitoring. Some of these comments are addressed by Appendix 4, which provides guidance to jurisdictions on how to complete the housing inventory and needs analysis and regularly monitoring.

A markup copy of the Housing Chapter, attached, shows the edits made to the April 2012 version last presented to the GMPC. A clean copy is attached to the draft Motion for GMPC action.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

The Interjurisdictional Staff Team recommends approval of the proposed Housing Chapter. Following adoption, this version will supersede the Housing Chapter approved in 2011.

**NEXT STEPS**

* GMPC action on Housing Chapter
* King County Council consideration of GMPC approved CPPs including the revised Housing Chapter
* Ratification process for individual cities following King County Council action