

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

AGENDA TITLE: School Siting Task Force Recommendations

PRESENTED BY: Interjurisdictional Staff Team

BACKGROUND

The Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC) approved the Final Report and Recommendations of the School Siting Task Force in June, 2012 and subsequently revised the Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) to reflect the Task Force recommendations and to add the Report as an appendix to the CPPs. The 30-member Task Force represented a broad coalition of stakeholders from throughout the region and was chaired by former King County Councilmember, Louise Miller. The Task Force met regularly from December 2011 through March 2012. The Task Force concluded that future schools should be sited in the Urban Growth Area (UGA) or in rural towns. Further, the Task Force made recommendations as to the use or disposition of each of eighteen undeveloped school sites.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SCHOOL SITING TASK FORCE – STATUS REPORT

A. The Task Force focused the major part of its effort on reviewing eighteen undeveloped rural sites owned by school districts, seeking logical and sustainable solutions. The Task Force accepted the following criteria for decision making:

1. Does the school district have an identified need for a school site?
2. Does the site border the UGA or have an existing sewer connection?

The Task Force ultimately recommended that only four of the eighteen sites be allowed to be developed as schools. The Task Force provided further recommendations for the potential sites within the Enumclaw School District that may be conveyed to the District as part of a proposed development within the City of Black Diamond. The sites and their status to-date are:

1. **Snoqualmie Valley 1:** The Task Force recommended that the Snoqualmie Valley School District be able to build a school on this site and connect to an existing sewer line. No further work is required.
2. **Tahoma 1:** The Task Force recommended that the Tahoma School District search for an alternative site in the UGA, but to allow the District to connect to an existing sewer line if the site is used for a school. King County and the City of Maple Valley are collaborating with the District to identify an alternative site in the UGA for their new high school. Should it not be needed, King County is prepared to work with the District on the disposition of the original property for protection as a conservation site.
3. **Lake Washington 2:** The Task Force recommended that the Lake Washington School District find an alternative site in the UGA, but to allow the site to be incorporated into the UGA if it is needed for a school. King County has had preliminary discussions with District representatives about working with them to identify an alternative site within the UGA. If the site is not used for a school, King County is prepared to work with the District on the disposition of the original site so it can remain undeveloped and possibly be connected to an adjacent park.
4. **Lake Washington 4:** The Task Force recommended that the Lake Washington School District be able to build a school on this site and connect to sewer when the school is needed. No further action is required.
5. **Enumclaw A&D.** The Task Force recommended that the Enumclaw School District find alternative sites in the UGA, and to place all school buildings and impervious surfaces on the urban side of the property and to place ballfields/playfields on the rural side. King County and the District are engaged in discussions to follow through on the recommendations of the Task Force.

B. Additional Recommendations

1. GMPC should develop policies and adopt a work program that commits jurisdictions to working together to identify future school sites within the UGA. *This meeting is the beginning of that process.*
2. King County should work with school districts and others to address future redevelopment of existing schools on rural sites. *The King County Code was revised to allow redevelopment of existing schools on rural sites as needed by the districts, with the exception that no existing school in the rural area may be converted into a high school.*
3. GMPC should add a school district representative to its membership. *The King County Executive has reached out to the school districts to identify a representative.*
4. PSRC should collaborate with counties and cities in working with school districts to ensure coordination in regional growth management discussions (per VISION 2040 PS-Action-6.) *Preliminary discussions between King County and the PSRC have occurred but no further action has been taken.*
5. The Washington State Legislature and Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction should examine, together with the State Department of Commerce, how state laws, guidelines, policies, and administrative procedures can influence school siting decisions. *This work has not yet been initiated.*

NEXT STEPS – STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The GMPC should implement the Task Force Recommendations by adopting a work program that will facilitate the member jurisdictions to working together to identify future school sites within the UGA. This work program should include the development of new policies, land use planning tools, and other strategies.
2. The GMPC should continue discussions with the school districts, cities, the State Department of Commerce and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to identify any legislative or administrative changes necessary to carry out or otherwise support the Task Force recommendations.
3. The staff work should reside with the interjurisdictional staff team (IJT) with the addition of a representative from the school district.
4. The IJT should present a detailed work program at the next GMPC meeting scheduled for September 25th.