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Departments and culture (CRC, KCCP)

The item proposes modifications to the department structure in King County focused on the management of product and service quality.

It includes customer relationship, cross-functional activities, culture, intended outcomes & measures, and a learning system.

A similar proposal with emphasis on the rural focus was submitted to the Charter Review Commission.

Potential Annexation Aears (KCCP)

The item proposes modifications to the Potential Annexation Area section of the KCCP. These modifications address problems with poor timing for the establishment of the Interlocal Agreement between the county and the potential annexation municipality.

They also address issues that could be resolved by comprehensive subarea planning for these neighborhoods.

Finally, it points out problems with the current annexation approach being used by the county and offers proposals for improvement.

Subarea (CRC, KCCP)

This docket item proposes changes to the Subarea planning section of the Comprehensive Plan. As rapid urbanization of the county continues, areas, such as PAAs, are faced with unprecedented changes in historical land use. This often brings with it significant threats to the character, attractiveness, and livability of these communities and neighborhoods.

The county has been on a trend to reduce support to subarea planning at a time when unincorporated areas faced with significant transitions or with historical urban neglect could benefit most from this type of planning.

Subarea planning should prioritize PAAs and areas currently with UAC representation.

NOTES: The county is the local service provider for the unincorporated areas. Local services should include community and neighborhood planning and at a level similar to the services provided by a municipality of similar size.

Much of the current situation is “one size fits all”. Demonstrate that valuing the differences is not a cost disaster. Business figured out how to balance broad standards with local focus.

Much of the work done to prepare for an annexation vote is focused on the differences in taxes between the county and the municipality. If the number is about the same and yet the municipality also provides neighborhood planning services, then where is the similar level of effort on the part of the county?

HB-1727 (KCCP)

The item proposes modifications to the section of the KCCP that addresses management of the Urban Growth Boundary. These modifications echo the intent of GMA to assure urban areas are made highly attractive and supremely livable. They also are aimed at improving the quality of the process used to make changes to the UGB with special focus on the planning required when the boundary is changed. This includes a requirement for the county to cooperate with municipalities designated for potential annexation of unincorporated areas and for design standards sensitive to the character of the neighborhood be created before any development is done in the unincorporated area.

NOTE: HB 1727 calls for a more cooperative relationship between counties and municipalities when it comes to PAAs.

Council representation (CRC)

80% of the population live on 20% of the land (incorporated) in King County while 20% of the population lives on 80% of the land (unincorporated). This creates a situation where incorporated representatives will have control over what happens in 80% of the land.

The proposal, which was delivered only as an example to explain the situation, was to split the KC Council into two houses; one elected by current population apportioning, and one elected by dividing the county into five equal-sized land areas and then representatives are elected through popular vote with each land area.

To make the houses of equal size (five representatives in each house), the KC Council membership would be increased by one.

Another example of a possible change would be to direct that the chair of the Growth Management Committee come from the unincorporated area and the chair of the Transportation Committee to come from the incorporated area.

Development (KCCP)

The item proposes the creation of site design standards to assure development is sensitive and supportive of neighborhood character, vegetation, and hydrology. The item focuses on neighborhood character, density, with particular attention to those areas on the UGB fringe.

It also calls for an immediate suspension of all permit and work progress inspections until these items are in place.

Finally, it corrects a disconnect between actual as-built densities and those implied in the zoning codes.

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Finally, it corrects a disconnect between actual as-built densities and those implied in the zoning codes.

NOTES: Disincentivize development if not improving quality of life, shows respect unique character, focuses on areas on the fringe; creates sensitive site and building designs. GMA will be unsuccessful if the urban areas are not made highly attractive and supremely livable..

Flooding (Development Regulation)

Modify CAO and related ordinances to allow for maintenance of irrigation ditches or waterways that provide a key function in retention/detention areas. In addition, remove from wetland designation any lands that have been included due to lack of attention for drainage ditches, irrigation ditches, etc. The wetland designation and boundaries shall be set based on the retention/detention if functioning optimally.

Also modify any flooding ordinances to define and prioritize attention to basins and basin subareas that function as large-scale (more than a single parcel) flood control mechanisms. The May Creek Basin is a prime example of the hydrology and how not to manage this issue.

NOTES: Exception in areas where water is on private property and historically been for irrigation or drainage. Natural retention/detention basins are managed in a cooperative way with the neighborhood citizens. Adjust the flooding prioritization scheme to increase priority on recurring flooding and loss of rural land use opportunity. Remove wetland designations for areas that have been created due to lack of attention on drainage ditches, irrigation ditches, etc.

Measures (KCCP)

This item requires the county council to provide a measurement system based on clearly and explicitly defined intended outcomes for all aspects of growth management. Today the AGR and the Benchmark represent the main documents that provide statistical and demographic data about changes in the county. However, neither provides information linked to measures for explicitly defined intended outcomes. The focus of these measures shall bring back into balance the input from residents who are being affected by GMA.

The item recognizes that we are 3/4 of the way through the first 20-year GMA cycle and making adjustments today requires a much better understanding of all the intended outcomes.

NOTES: 15-years into GMA: a good time to take stock of where we are. Shift pendulum to the citizens. Clarify intended outcomes and align measures for accountability and learning.

Rural (Development Regulation)

Modify the R-A Zone land use to encourage rural economic use of properties and discourage uses that do not include rural economic use. This includes non-residential uses that tend to promote residential-only land use. This aligns with supporting rural character while discouraging sprawl.

Further, set the minimum lot size in the R-A Zone to 20 acres with encouragement to maintain 100 acre or more parcels. This is based on the understanding of the minimum lot sizes to make rural economic uses economical. Allow additional residential dwellings as a conditional use but with a streamlined and low-cost use process with minimum lot sizes of 10 acres and with the same incentives for rural economic use.

NOTES: Focus on appropriate use of dwindling rural lands capable of generating any revenue from the land. Minimum lot size 20 acres, encourage 100+ acres. Use an improved conditional use for adding separate housing but discourage subdivision. Encourage rural use and discourage "sprawl" commuter estates