



## **Memorandum**

**DATE:** March 18, 2009

**TO:** Shoreline Planning Commission

**FROM:** Steven Cohn, Senior Planner

**RE:** King County Growth Targets Process

### **Introduction**

The Growth Management Planning Council is considering updates to county and city Growth Targets. Updated targets provide a framework for local GMA Comprehensive Plan updates due in 2011, while accommodating new state population projections. During summer 2009, local governments will review draft targets for both housing and jobs. Final targets are scheduled to be adopted by GMPC in fall 2009 with ratification by the county and cities.

Staff will brief the Planning Commission on the “targets process” at this meeting. In the summer, staff will bring forward the draft housing and job targets for discussion.

### **Background**

#### **Planning for Growth under the Growth Management Act**

Under Washington State’s GMA, King County and its cities must adopt comprehensive plans that accommodate 20 years of anticipated population and employment growth. Plans must provide for land uses and densities, capital facilities and transportation infrastructure that are sufficient to meet future needs. Local governments have discretion as to how they will accommodate the growth within their borders. Local jurisdictions must update their Comprehensive Plans at least every 7 years. Cities in King County last completed their plan updates in 2004. The deadline for the next plan update is December 2011.

Every five years, the state Office of Financial Management (OFM) issues population projections for each county in the state as a basis for GMA planning.

## Agenda Item 7.b

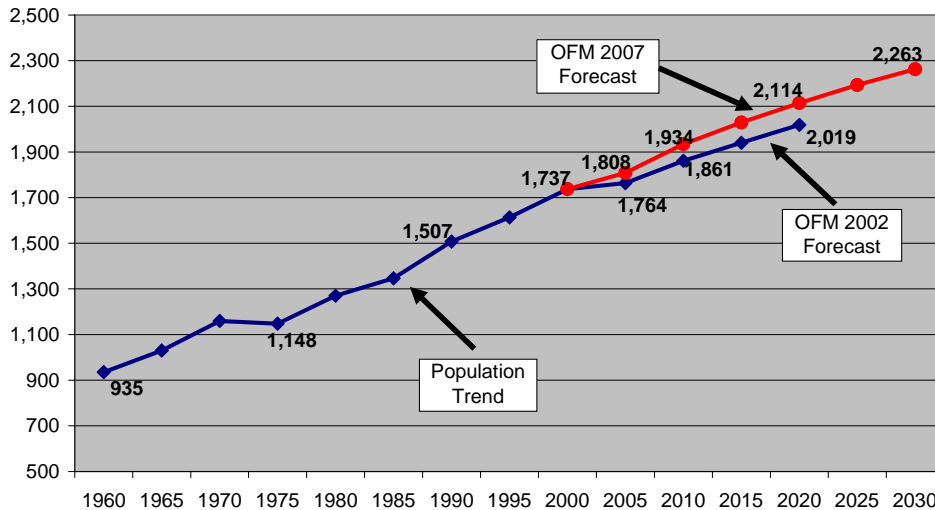
Based on these projections, counties and cities collaborate in determining local allocations of that growth. The act requires that local growth numbers be updated at least every ten years.

### New Population and Employment Projections for King County

In King County, growth targets are policy statements indicating the minimum number of households and jobs each jurisdiction plans to accommodate during the current Growth Management period. The targets are based on the OFM population projections along with employment forecasts produced by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC). The county is an attractive region which, over the long term, is expected to see robust amounts of growth.

- OFM released new projections in 2007, which show King County growing at a faster rate than previously forecasted. The result: nearly 100,000 more people countywide in 2022 than currently planned for. Overall, the county is expected to grow by about 450,000 people between 2006 and 2031 to a total population of 2.3 million. The graph on the next page shows the new projection as an extension of historical trends and compared with the 2002 OFM projection.
- The latest employment forecasts released by PSRC in 2006 show growth in the county, over this same period, of nearly 450,000 jobs to a total of 1.7 million jobs.

**OFM Population Trends/Forecasts for King County**  
Numbers in thousands



**Adoption of Growth Targets by the Growth Management Planning Council**

The GMPC is a formal body consisting of elected officials from King County, Seattle, Bellevue, other cities and towns, special purpose districts, and the Port of Seattle. The GMPC responds to the GMA requirement that counties and cities collaborate to develop and adopt Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs). Household and job growth targets are contained in the CPPs.

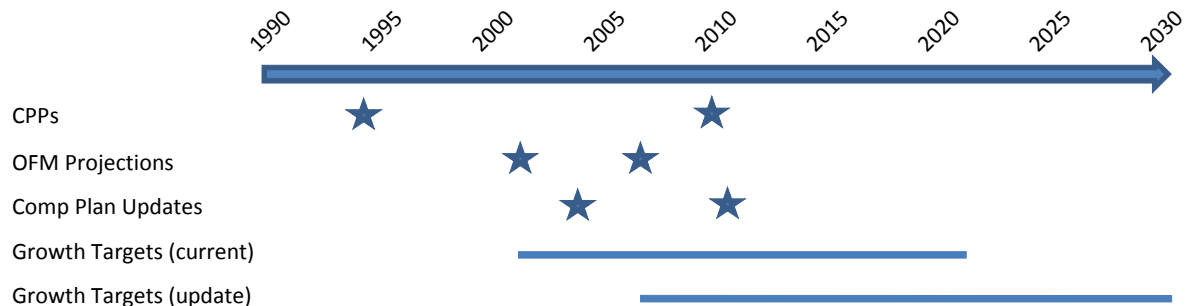
The CPPs were originally adopted by the GMPC in 1994. Growth targets were updated in 2002, for a planning period extending to 2022. The county and cities incorporated those targets into their 2004 plan updates. The GMPC will be considering new updates to the targets based on the new population projections from OFM, thus providing substantive guidance to cities as they update their 20-year comprehensive plans once again. New growth targets would extend the countywide planning period out another 9 years, with a horizon of 2031, 20 years beyond the 2011 comprehensive plan update requirement.

The CPPs establish the policy framework for allocating growth targets. Those policies include:

- 1) Limiting growth in Rural and Resource areas;
- 2) Focusing growth within the existing Urban Growth Area, within cities, and within designated Urban Centers and Manufacturing/Industrial Centers;
- 3) Improving jobs-housing balance within four planning subareas; and
- 4) Fostering a pattern of growth that ensures efficient use of infrastructure and can be served by public transportation.

Development of the targets, which are formally adopted by the GMPC and ratified by the county and cities, involves extensive coordination among staff from throughout the county. Through this process, every jurisdiction is expected to take its fair share of growth. The rationale for the staff recommended target allocation is based on best available demographic, economic, and land use data, and also incorporates unique factors and local policies.

The timeline below gives an overview of the schedule for GMA planning actions for King County.



### New Policy Guidance from *Vision 2040*

The Puget Sound Regional Council recently adopted *Vision 2040*, a growth management, transportation, and economic development strategy for the 4-county region. With *Vision 2040*, the PSRC has amended its Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs) to address coordinated action around a range of policy areas, including land use and development patterns. The GMPC will be updating its countywide policies in 2010 to bring them into consistency with the MPPs.

*Vision 2040* also contains a Regional Growth Strategy that provides substantive guidance for planning for the roughly 1.7 million additional people and 1.2 million additional jobs expected in the region between 2000 and 2040. The Strategy retains much of the discretion that counties and cities have in setting local targets, while calling for broad shifts in where growth locates within the region. In comparison to current targets and plans, the Strategy calls for:

- **Increasing** the amount of growth targeted to cities that contain regionally designated urban centers (to include both metropolitan centers and many suburban cities)
- **Increasing** the amount of growth targeted to other large cities (with combined population and employment of at least 22,500)
- **Decreasing** the amount of growth targeted to Urban designated unincorporated areas, Rural designated unincorporated areas, and to smaller cities
- Achieving a greater **jobs-housing balance** within the region

New growth targets for King County are expected to move toward achieving the desired pattern of growth laid out in *Vision 2040*, while recognizing the long-term nature of the regional land use goals and the many challenges involved in “bending the trend” away from past growth patterns.

### Next Steps

Staff work toward updated growth targets for King County is underway now. Staffs from cities throughout the County have been reviewing and providing input on a range of potential scenarios that allocate housing and job growth throughout the County. Based on this process, recommended draft targets may go to the Growth Management Planning Council as early as July 2009, with a vote for adoption possible at the council’s September 2009 meeting. Once adopted, growth targets must be ratified by the county council and a majority of cities before they go into effect.

When the draft targets on a city-by-city basis are available, staff will bring them to the Commission for discussion.