



Special Planning and Economic Development Committee Agenda

June 18, 2018
5:00 PM
SeaTac City Hall
Riverton Room

1st Floor

Councilmembers:
Rick Forschler, Chair
Peter Kwon
Michael Siefkes, Mayor

A quorum of the Council may be present.

Staff Coordinators: Jeff Robinson, C.E.D. Director; Steve Pilcher, Planning Manager

| ITEM | TOPIC | PROCESS | WHO | TIME |
|------|--|--|--|------|
| 1 | Call to Order | | Chair | |
| 2 | Public Comment | Please raise your hand if you'd like to speak. Public comments are limited to 10 minutes total and three minutes per individual speaker. Time may be reduced for each speaker to stay within the 10-minute time limit. | Chair | 10 |
| 3 | PSRC Vision 2050 | Discussion & direction | CM Kwon | 30 |
| 4 | Potential Comp Plan amendments & rezones | Discussion & direction | Chair Forschler and Planning Manager Pilcher | 20 |
| 5 | Other Business | | | 10 |
| 6 | Adjourn | | | |



Regional Alignment Coalition

May 22, 2018

RE: PSRC Vision 2050 – Coalition of local governments and stakeholders

Dear colleagues and partners:

PSRC is currently in the scoping process for the update to Vision 2040. The policies and requirements within VISION 2050 will have a major impact on jurisdictions, stakeholders, taxpayers and families throughout the four-county region. Its policies will influence how cities and counties are required to plan for future growth going forward.

Many local governments and stakeholder groups have provided comments individually to PSRC regarding actions and issues that need to be addressed in the update. However, in areas where we share common concerns, we'd like to propose that we will be more effective if we come together and speak as one voice to PSRC staff and leadership. We will be most effective if we work together on a well-coordinated strategy, including active participation with a keen focus on actions, outcomes, and decisions that will benefit those we serve.

Attached is a letter that was jointly drafted by local governments and stakeholders who want to come together during this process. We ask that you join with us in voicing our concerns and expectations to PSRC related to what we want to see in VISION 2050.

We drafted the letter after reviewing scoping comment letters submitted to PSRC and have done our best to consolidate several big issues into one joint statement. We understand that some of these issues may be more important to your city/county or stakeholder group than others. However, we hope you will see that if we join together, our voice will be stronger.

This letter would be the first step in our coalition's active engagement with PSRC on the important issues we would like to see addressed. We plan to coordinate with you over the next two years to ensure we are working together, speaking up, and providing a consistent message throughout the process. We hope those on the Growth Management Policy Board and Executive Board will also carry our message to PSRC staff and leadership. Lastly, we understand that many local governments and stakeholder groups may not have a voice at PSRC. We hope that this will be a mechanism to ensure your voice is heard.

Next Steps

PSRC is concluding the scoping process therefore it is important that we move quickly. We ask that you consider this request to come together and sign the attached letter on behalf of your city, county, or organization. If you could send it to us by PDF and include your city, county or organization logo as well, we will consolidate everyone's signature into one letter. However, we need to send this no later than June 22, 2018. We do understand that it takes time to move these issues through a council or board but hopefully this will allow you to take the time.



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If you have any questions about why we are engaging in this process, how you can get involved, or have any concerns, just let us know. Patricia Akiyama, external relations manager at the Master Builders Association of King and Snohomish Counties, is coordinating our efforts moving forward. You can reach her at pakiyama@mbaks.com or 425.457.7067.

We hope that you will join our efforts to strengthen our collective voices at PSRC as this process moves forward. By proactively working together, we know we will obtain results that will benefit our communities.

Regards,





Regional Alignment Coalition

May X, 2018

Josh Brown, Executive Director
Puget Sound Regional Council
1011 Western Ave Suite 500
Seattle, WA 98104-1035

Dear Josh,

The VISION 2050 update will have a major impact on jurisdictions, stakeholders, taxpayers and families throughout the four-county region. It is therefore imperative that the scope of the Vision update is representative of the four-county region and that the scope of the project addresses critical issues that are important to our communities and businesses. We are very concerned that the current scope will not address critically important issues. A course correction is needed.

Several local governments and stakeholders have come together to form a “working coalition” to ensure that issues and concerns we have in common are fully understood, addressed and reflected in VISION 2050. While the intent of PSRC is to represent the four-county region in an equitable way, many of the key policy decisions focus and converge around the most urbanized areas of King County – Seattle and surrounding cities. This does not represent a “regional” approach to planning. As jurisdictions and stakeholders, we believe that our equally-important issues, challenges and considerations are not being addressed.

We engage as much as possible in the work of PSRC’s 23 boards and committees, however, it is challenging to fully and consistently participate in the processes and to follow the complicated and lengthy decision-making process. While each of us works to address matters of concern to our respective jurisdiction and stakeholders, there are three foundational issue areas that we agree should receive dedicated attention, input and discussion in the PSRC Vision 2050 update or in parallel to that process.

1. The Regional Growth Strategy is misaligned and not effective

The process of distributing growth using Regional Geographies is not accounting accurately or reflecting market trends impacting how and where growth is actually occurring. The current system relies on a notion (or hopeful assumption) that growth patterns are driven only by policy, growth targets and zoned capacity. True in some respects, but hardly the whole story. This approach does not consider:

- Differences between communities and how that drives and impacts growth;
- Existing population capacity and preferences that impact or influence where growth will or can occur;
- The impact of increasing regulation on the goal of encouraging urban growth; or
- Significant market factors that drive development and redevelopment of land.

Since there is no requirement for accuracy in the growth target setting process, or goals and performance-based metrics, there is no accountability when targets miss the mark. This deficiency in what is the heart of a planning document is profound. It creates a growth target-setting process that is



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more aspirational than realistic and invites local governments to adopt targets that are not likely going to be achieved in reality. VISION also penalizes some jurisdictions who are actively planning for urban growth within their cities by trying to suppress that growth even when there is market demand. Vision was never designed to set maximum targets. This has created a domino effect as inaccurate growth targets adversely impact capital facility plans and undermine school districts and other service providers who rely on the accuracy of the planning work.

As VISION 2050 is scoped and drafted, we believe the following must be studied and discussed with the GMPB and Executive Committee for incorporation into the final document:

- *Eliminate the Regional Geographies growth allocation process.* It simply adds another unneeded layer of complexity and adds no value. Utilize existing processes outlined in the Growth Management Act (GMA) for growth allocations. This approach puts the onus on local governments with the local knowledge and insight to make smart decisions about where growth should be allocated within their respective counties. Further, while there is a desire for UGAs to be remain static over the long term, sub-regional data should drive these decisions, not an aspirational growth target setting process. Cities and counties, through the adopting of Countywide Planning Policies, are in the best position to do this and an additional layer of required policies regarding the growth allocation process are redundant.

OR

- *Make it clear that the Regional Geographies process of allocating growth provides guidance to local governments and are not required to be adopted.* If the Regional Geographies system remains within Vision, we ask that it be made clear that the targets identified are provided as guidance to local governments and are not prescriptive. Any policies regarding growth target setting must recognize local market realities and dynamics.
- *Create incentives through transportation budget investments.* Transportation investments should focus on those communities and Centers that adopt appropriate growth targets, implement measures to plan for and accommodate urban growth, protect the environment and show measurable progress towards reaching those targets.

There are many unincorporated urban areas within the UGA in our region that should be provided substantial transportation investments but fall “below the line” because they are not designated as Centers. Continuing this path will create a greater gap between areas that receive transportation funding and those that do not. While focusing growth in designated Centers may make sense much of the time, it doesn’t always make sense. This must be revisited so we invest smartly as our region grows and do not rest on policies that may not always make sense for our region.

Many stakeholders have recorded their disappointment that PSRC opted to update the Centers Framework prior to completing the Vision 2050 update. This cart-before-the-horse situation should not be allowed to avoid the difficult discussions and the ultimate policy outcomes that emerge from the Vision 2050 update. If necessary, retroactive changes may be needed to adjust the Centers Framework, and all stakeholders approach the process with this in mind. These decisions are far too important to the future of our region to deflect or ignore.



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It has also become apparent that PSRC may be limiting the scope of the Vision update based upon a need to complete the project by mid-2020. We understand that this is an important milestone given local governments must update their comprehensive plans in 2023 and 2024 respectively. While this is important, the self-imposed deadline cannot be used to ignore critically important issues as part of the Vision update. PSRC staff has been notified for several years that the Vision update would require some comprehensive analysis and changes. They were also encouraged, as early as 2015, to begin the Vision update sooner than planned in anticipation of substantial changes being needed. With the changes happening in our region, this is the time to fully vet these important issues.

2. Housing affordability is fundamental to job growth

We are faced with a housing affordability crisis in our region that VISION 2050 must squarely address. Affordable condominiums, townhouses, duplexes and other multifamily options are not being built in the region -- leaving people with no alternative but to move farther from job centers to find the type of housing they can afford. This is acutely true for most first-time homebuyers. If new solutions and approaches are not implemented, this trend will continue. The burden of already-clogged transportation corridors and ever-increasing travel times will undermine economic sustainability, social vitality and quality of life in our communities and region. We must have a realistic plan, which relies on sound data, so growth and jobs are focused near where people are moving. Our current strategy is not working. We cannot plan for or influence the future if we don't honestly recognize and acknowledge where we stand right now. Current policies will continue to force people to move farther and farther away from Centers until they find a home they can afford. With current market dynamics, it will be too expensive for many people to live near mass transit options – especially in places where infrastructure is years or decades away. They will not be able to find the type of housing they desire. We must address these difficult issues with realistic planning and new ideas for the long term.

3. Framework for VISION 2050: Big picture issues

We ask that the following be studied, discussed with the GMPB and Executive Committee, and considered for inclusion or discussed in parallel with the VISION 2050 update:

- Multi-County Planning Policies (MPPs) that require local government action but that do not include dedicated funding should not be included in Vision 2050.
- MPPs that do not add value to the region or add to the value/use of the document should be deleted. A shorter, more concise document is important to make it more useable, transparent, accessible and influential.
- Many of the MPPs are simply redundant to policies already provided for within Countywide Planning Policies and are not necessary at the regional level. This must be addressed. We cannot afford to have planning processes that are not streamlined.
- Vision is in conflict with the GMA in many areas and this must be synced up. This includes limiting the ability of Urban Growth Areas to encourage Urban Growth in some smaller cities and limiting their ability to grow as the GMA intended. Further, the certification process under Vision must fall in line with the GMA planning process.
- It is time to address the expanding scope of PSRC in relation to the Interlocal Agreement and By-Laws. The purpose and mandate of the organization seems to be 'creeping' far beyond what was originally intended and approved.



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- PSRC review of comprehensive plans should be limited, sharply focused and occur within the appeal period prescribed in the GMA. We also urge you to help stakeholders better understand why/how the Vision adds desired results, beyond those achieved by simply meeting the GMA requirements, when it does not appear to add measurable value to the planning initiatives of local jurisdictions. Given the enormous cost this additional planning adds to local governments, this issue is critically important.

We appreciate this opportunity to engage with you early in the update process. Our commitment is to work cooperatively and collaboratively with you on the complex planning issues we all share to produce outcomes that will positively impact our communities and region for years to come. As a coalition of local governments and stakeholders, we will stay actively engaged throughout this process. Please consider these comments as part of the documented record that PSRC is creating in order to shape this important update process.

If you have any questions or wish to meet to talk about these issues, please contact Patricia Akiyama, external relations manager at the Master Builders Association of King and Snohomish Counties, who will be coordinating our coalition efforts moving forward. You can reach Patricia at pakiyama@mbaks.com or 425.457.7067.

Sincerely,

Signers for the coalition

