

**Auburn Mayor's Task Force on Homelessness:**

**Transcript of FOCUS GROUP with Homeless Individuals in the City**

**Auburn Youth Resources, February 17, 2016**

Interviews conducted and transcribed by Erica Azcueta

Conversation with two youth, a male (M) and female (F)

**Why are you here?**

M: "I've been coming here for 4 years, and this place is one of the reasons why I got an apartment in the first place. They also put me up in a hotel room, voucher, and so when I became homeless again I came back here."

F: "For a while I came out here because I felt like no one liked me at my house. So I ended up feeling how everyone else feels. This is so hard and tough, so I know what it's like to be homeless."

**How long have you been homeless?**

M: "3 years."

**What are your plans next?**

M: "Get another apartment, but try again, and do better than the first one."

**So how are you getting ready for the next step?**

M: "Well, I have a case manager. So I've been working with him and I have two places that I got accepted to. One was La Batella, and another, transitional housing."

**What would you like the task force members to know or understand about your situation?**

M: "You have to want it."

**Want what?**

M: "You have to want to actually get somewhere. Because if you're out and messing around, and not actually going to all your appointments that you need to get done, it messes it up for long term. And, I've done that multiple times, and so I decided to change that. Now I'm actually staying at a house instead of an apartment, and doing a lot better, I guess. Better than what I was when I was homeless."

**Do you have anything you would like the task force members to know about your situation? That you think would be helpful for them to know? Is there anything about your situation, or what you've seen, that you think they should know?**

F: "I think people should know that when they feel like it, they should get to know where they come from, a little bit better, instead of just asking questions, and saying hi and greeting them. Try and make them talk about themselves, to understand, and see what they need, if they need stuff, or if they're having problems, to maybe meet once in a while, once a month or something.

**In moving on to escaping homelessness, or a next step, what do you see are the biggest barriers for actually achieving that?**

M: "When I was homeless I had a drug problem, but then I started going to the Alano Club, and The Garage, clean and sober club. And then that's when I got my first apartment, when I was clean and sober for a little over a year. And then, I lost my apartment, because our housing connection stopped paying, but it was because our agreement with them was over. And then it was hard for me to get a job, because I have a felony on my record. So trying to get a job, so when they stop paying I could pay for it, kind of became an obstacle."

**Is that something you would say is fairly common?**

M: "Yeah."

**Are you hoping to get employment? Is that one of your goals?**

M: "Yeah."

**Do you have anything? Any barriers that you see, as to what you think are keeping people from not getting housing or being homeless?**

F: "I have to say, drugs. That's all I see out here."

**You think people being on drugs is making them homeless? Or keeping them from getting out of it?**

F: "Yes. Some people don't want to. Some people do change, but then they go back to their same old ways and relapse. Or they don't want help.

**Is there a population of homeless individuals who is resistant to getting help?**

F: "Yes."

**Do you have any suggestions for our task force members, as they're moving forward and putting together their action plan to address homelessness? What do you think would be helpful for them to know? What terms of action do you think they should take into consideration?**

**When you think of services you have received, or that you see, are there ones that are really helpful, or ones you think there should be more of?**

M: "I think they should give you more resources to get a job while you're getting in the housing, so at least then you have a job when you're getting into your housing, or at least in the middle when they're helping you. Instead of towards the end, and you pretty much lose everything."



Mayors' Task Force on Homelessness: Draft Ballot Template -- to Develop Initial Rating on Action Items v.3.2.16

CATEGORY	Item #	Action Items Proposed By Task Force Members/Support Staff Team	TF Member Rating	Estimated Cost	Timeframe to Implement	Stakeholder Groups – Which should lead implementation? Who are necessary partners?							
			5 – I strongly support 4 – I support 3 – I neither support or oppose 2 – I oppose 1 – I strongly oppose	\$ = <\$25K \$\$ = \$25-50K \$\$\$ = \$50-100K \$\$\$\$ = \$100 – 500K \$\$\$\$\$ = > \$500K	Short Term = 1-2yrs. Near Term = 2-5 yrs. Long Term = > 5 yrs.	Lead = L Other partners needed = P							
			Task Force Members Complete This column: Rate <b>every</b> idea 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5. You can rate <b>everything</b> a “5” or a “1” or something in between.			City	Business Community	Residents	Faith Community	Nonprofit Service /Shelter Providers	Low Income	Other Cities, local gov't agencies, County,	Homeless Individuals
A. Improving public safety, sense of wellbeing	A.1												
	A.2												
	A.3												
B. Expand emergency shelter options	B.1												
	B.2												
	B.3												
C. Expand services	C.1												
	C.2												
	C.3												
D. Expand permanent housing (& service capacity)	D.1												
	D.2												
	D.3												

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E. Improve public understanding, ability to assist	E.1												
	E.2												
	E.3												
F. Advocacy	F.1												
	F.2												
	F.3												
G. Other	G.1												
	G.2												
	G.3												

Results will be tallied to show frequency distribution of TF member ratings of each idea, (& retain staff/stakeholder screen info), e.g.,

- % rating 4-5
- % rating 3
- % rating 1-2
- **Greater or equal to 80% voting 4-5 = consensus item 60-79% voting 4-5 = recommendation item**

**Auburn Mayor's Task Force on Homelessness:**

**Written Public Comments from February 4, 2016 Meeting**

- CPS in schools - Anonymous
- My name is Virginia Haugen I became interested in the issue as a council member in 2008. I lost my nephew to homelessness in July 2015. Good nutrition and birth control are way sot combat homelessness. – Virginia Haugen
- Problems after you acquire housing and get off the streets is you still have friends and a street family without housing which can cause you to lose your housing. - Anonymous



**CITY of Auburn Mayor’s Task Force on Homelessness**  
**DRAFT Meeting Summary for Meeting 4: Thursday, February 4, 2016**  
**5:00 – 7:30pm**  
**City Hall Council Chambers**

<b>MEETING ATTENDANCE</b>					
<b>Task Force Members &amp; Alternates:</b>					
Sylvia Fuerstenburg <i>For Sarah Christiansen</i>	✓	Alexis Schleiss	✓	Carla Hopkins	✓
Alexander Foster	✓	Leticia Figueroa	✓	Jeremy James	X
Virginia Gannon		Dennis Grad	✓	Julia Jordan	✓
Debbie Christian	✓	Jeff Escobar	X	Ron Roberts	✓
Laura Kniss	✓	Cara Brinkley	✓	Diane Cimino-Kelly	✓
Ted Leonard	✓	Denise Daniels	✓	Kathie Blaschke	X
<b>Staff Support Team:</b>					
Erica Azcueta		Tami Kapule	✓	Bill Pierson	✓
Karen Reed, Facilitator	✓	Jamie Kelly	✓	Kristin Winkel	✓
	✓	Eric Robertson	X	Dana Hinman	✓
<b>Guests:</b>					
		Kyle _____	✓	Hon. Nancy Backus	✓

The meeting convened at 5:00 p.m.

**Welcome, Introductions Review of Agenda.** Karen Reed, Task Force facilitator, welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda. She noted for those in the audience that the task force will take public comment at the end of the meeting and written comment forms are also available. Karen noted that several online comments were received since the last meeting—they are included in the packets.

**Approval of summary notes from Meeting #3:** Co-chair Carla Hopkins noted a correction to last meeting’s minutes: Matt Wetter was not in attendance. As corrected, the minutes were approved.

**Response to Task Force Questions.** Karen noted that responses to the questions from Meeting 3 are in the packet.

**Task Force Discussion: Impressions from site Tours at The Auburn Food Bank (TAFB), Auburn Youth Resources (AYR), Multi-Service Center Transitional Housing (MSC) and Valley Cities Landing and Phoenix Rising (VC).**

- Alex Foster/TAFB: didn’t see the same faces at various locations, which seems people aren’t moving around to find resources.
- Ted Leonard/TAFB: individuals tend to migrate around 5pm; attendees aren’t always homeless – just looking for a meal; also noticed some groups engaging in “nefarious” acts outside the facility.
- Diane Cimino-Kelly/TAFB: noticed comradery, impressed with the attendees’ sense of community. These are stop gap measures from preventing homelessness
- Denise Daniels/AYR: 40-60 teens come for a meal. AYR allows night shelter and daytime hangout space. If it’s cold they’ll be referred to emergency shelters. AYR also offers job training & experience

- Carla Hopkins/MSC: Transitional housing on Military Road. Stays can be from 6-12 months, or even 3-4 years. It is old military housing that can host a variety of individuals. Accomplishments must be made to move up further on housing voucher lists. People learn how to live on their own. Dennis Grad noted many students from the Auburn School District have lived there
- Alexis Schleiss/VC: Lovely facility. Sense of pride in the staff and residents. Phoenix Rising is still in the development phase, but will soon open to focus on teens & young adults learning life skills while getting mental health and substance abuse help

#### **Presentation & Discussion: Auburn School District McKinney-Vento Act presentation:**

- Auburn School District (ASD) receives Title I funds; this Federal funding must comply with McKinney-Vento laws. The concept is to keep stability. M-V team at ASD helps identify, enroll & help kids in need. The law defines how a student is homeless: “Individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence”. Includes those awaiting foster care, etc.
- ASD had 147 students identified as homeless in 2014 and 163 in 2015. Families must fill out a housing questionnaire to qualify, but families are reluctant to do so – afraid they may lose custody of their children. Older youth are also concerned about being stigmatized as homeless.
- In addition to providing transportation to school from wherever the family lives, funds are set aside for other things: sports, lab, field trip fees, etc.

#### **Local Service providers**

- **Valley Cities** - *Alexander Foster, Program Therapist*  
Valley Cities engages individuals in wrap-around services. Standard supportive housing. Typically a 2-year process. Helps those with severe mental health issues. Starting therapy early to get them stabilized & into housing is key. Client emphasis: therapy remains constant. Clients need to be willing to work toward success. Lack of affordable, sustainable housing at the end of the 2-year process is a huge barrier to long term success. Past criminal records often add to the problem of qualifying for sustainable housing.
- **The Auburn Food Bank** - *Debbie Christian, Executive Director*  
Goal: to make it comfortable to come (“it’s already bad enough”). Open Monday-Tuesday-Thursday-Friday. Allowed 2 visits a month; 1 regular and 1 emergency. Sponsors 2 hot meal programs, called Community Dinners. There are 5 in Auburn. No one is turned away. Also provide holiday baskets, weekend backpack programs and limited home deliveries. 4,000+/- registered in their system; 125+/- consistently come for meals. TAFB also offers job training/assistance; can write letters of recommendation. Has limited funding to provide financial assistance once a month. DV assistance for victims with emergent needs. Severe/cold weather shelter run by volunteers with 35 cots when temps drop below freezing. Partnership with APD & D.A.W.N. for interim DV housing. Gap: money and housing.
- **Sound Mental Health/PATH program** - *Cara Brinkley, Mental Health Case Manager*  
A community mental health agency. Over 80 programs for adults, children, chemical dependency, housing & homelessness. Substance Abuse & Mental Health (SAMH) Federal money. Case workers help to make a plan to address needs of each individual. Provide long-term supportive services to those NOT already engaged with another federal program. Outreach worker strengths: can meet them where they are. Challenges: in Auburn – no access to hygiene or laundry facilities; lack of enough public transportation to & from Auburn to connect people to other resources. Gas vouchers

and a safe parking program would be valuable to have. Most emergent need: need more Housing First facilities.

- **Auburn Youth Resources** - *Sylvia Fuerstenberg, Executive Director*  
Provides health, chemical dependency and homelessness prevention programs. Serves individuals 6 months (early childhood education) to 25 years of age. 8 sites: 5 in Auburn, 3 in Enumclaw and help in 28 schools across the region. Scattered transitional housing sites. Hope to expand intervention & prevention programs. Provide clinical staff & counseling. ACAP: head start program. Continuum of services – clients rarely need just one thing. Case managers provide life skills development and job training. King County Emergency grant allowed AYR to add 11 additional day center open hours on weekends. Challenges: pressures for low-income families, public transportation, lack of services and infrastructure relative to where kids are – they don't always have cell phones, cars, etc. Inadequate funding
- **HealthPoint:** - *Alexis Schleiss, Behavioral Health Care Coordinator*  
Provides medical, dental, behavioral health, acupuncture services. Connect patients with insurance, transportation, medical vans. Challenges: non-compliance with their medications, frequent ER visits. Need to determine the best care for those that over-utilize the system. For homeless, they lose their phones and/or belongings (often stolen) so they can't easily access things like 2-1-1; limited shelter references. Patients don't always feel safe in shelters so they can be reluctant to go. They see a growing number of people living in cars; particularly difficult for those with special needs.
- **MultiCare** - *Diane Cimino-Kelly, Director*  
Provides both inpatient & outpatient services; social workers, physical & occupational therapists. Auburn doesn't have all necessary services. Many of the same issues as expressed by HealthPoint. Medication is lost or stolen. Staff burnout when patients don't follow through. Limited inpatient chemical dependency spots. Typically see 125 patients a day in Auburn, 75 in Covington. Hospitals are "very expensive hotels." Multicare also provides clothing, transportation, medicines.
- **Christ Community Free Clinic** - *Virginia Gannon, Executive Director*  
Provides quality urgent care. Open Tuesday evenings and 1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month; first-come, first-served. Assist with sign-ups for Affordable Care Act. In 2015 they had 8 people identify as homeless and 69 as couch-surfing on intake CCFC forms. Challenges: 2-1-1 is not always up to date.

### **Review and Discussion: Draft Problem Statement, What does success look like, Recommendations Criteria & Recommendations Framework**

Karen reviewed the draft document and asked for input from Task Force member and the staff support team.

- **Draft Problem Statement:**
  - Pull comments from TalkAuburn online blog.
  - definition of loitering
  - long waiting lists for subsidized housing
  - more supporting evidence, facts & numbers.
  - Rising costs of rental units.
  - Lack of mental health care \$ spending.
  - Should make clear what requires immediate attention.
  - Housing First: think outside the box. City-sponsored facility?

- Numbers to reflect changes in benefits at DSHS; many are losing cash assistance and food stamps: *How many are losing benefits because of changes in HEN?*
- Help for ABWOD: Able-bodied without dependents.
- Community concerns re: perception.
- Outreach services to help them get on the right path.
- Lack of resources, shelter for unaccompanied youth in SKC

In response to a questions about whether there could be tax breaks for keeping property rents low, Mayor Backus, who was observing the meeting, offered that there are several bills in Olympia allowing for tax incentives for new construction with set asides for affordable housing.

- **What does Success look like?**

- Everyone who wants a home gets a home.
- A system that works & understands the process from beginning to end.
- Increased partnerships within schools.
- An ongoing process that's always reviewed & refined during course of SAMH treatment.
- Increase in resources.
- Educational & awareness campaigns for the community as a whole.
- Realizing success requires a phased approach.
- Not one size fits all.
- A clear definition of homelessness.
- Engaging property owners to build more partnerships.
- One-stop shop to help people.
- Better connections/transportations to services.
- Measurable metrics & focus on goals that are actually attainable.
- A positive community impact, seeing homeless as part of us and not viewed as "those people".
- Advocacy: start small & locally, then move our further (a phased rollout).

- **Criteria for recommendations**

- Don't limit to just short or near term solutions. Also look at long term
- Focus on sustainable ideas.

- **Draft framework for Recommendations:** workable as presented.

**Homework for Task Force and Support Team.** Karen asks folks to be prepared at the next meeting to offer up potential task force recommendations, using the draft framework.

**Public Comment**

- Frank Bannister: identify the scope of the problem, see the impact: calls to PD, ER visits, trash clean up. Integrate services as there seems to be lots of overlap.
- Virginia Haugen: tried to start a health clinic near schools 25 years ago. Birth control is key. Make housing a priority, but no more apartments. Possibly buildings with shared facilities.
- Brocc Snyder: we have the solutions, not the actions. Look at their needs. You want to do things your way, not theirs. Try to step into their shoes. Tent cities, encampments so people can start to succeed with a sense of family/community. Focus groups.
- Petrina Yuenger: 2<sup>nd</sup> generation homeless. Grew up in foster care. ONC numbers are low; single adults make up the highest number but have the least amount of resources to utilize. A day center

with arts & crafts, a community thrift store with proceeds going back into the community. Waived fee for vendor permits to sell at Auburn events.

- Madrienne Salgado: Albuquerque, NM gives a wage to homeless that are out working. Could something like that work here?

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 P.M.

## Auburn Mayor's Task Force on Homelessness

### DRAFT Problem Statement v.2.22.16

Auburn residents, business owners, nonprofit service organizations, the faith community, and those in City Hall have all observed an increase in the number of homeless individuals in the City over the past few years. Their presence is seen and felt in downtown Auburn, the Library, City parks and open spaces, in other commercial areas of town and in neighborhoods.

The January 2016 One Night County of the homeless counted 110 homeless individuals in Auburn. This was a decline compared to the 132 people counted in 2015, but service providers attribute this to heavy rains flooding out traditional encampment sites along the Green River. Overall, the count showed a 53% increase in the number of homeless individuals in South King County (includes Federal Way, Kent Renton, Auburn and select areas of Burien, Des Moines, Sea Tac, Tukwila and White Center) as compared to 2015. Countywide, there was a 19% increase in the number of homeless individuals reported in the One Night Count.

The City's public works department reports a constant stream of homeless encampments in City green spaces. "Unwanted person" calls have become the second highest call category for the City Police Department, second only to traffic issues. The Valley Regional Fire Authority reports a growing increase in the number of visible homeless in the City, particularly young adults. And, the homelessness in our city are more than adults: the Auburn School District had 210 students identified as homeless in the 2013-2014 school year – a 17% increase from the prior year.

Comment [O1]: Do we have data from 2014-2015?

A growing number of families in Auburn are at risk of homelessness. Indicators of this trend are found in data about poverty levels, comparing income to rent and looking at the growing use of the Auburn Food Bank and the number of families seeking subsidized housing:

- Over 10% of families in Auburn were below the federal poverty line in the 2010 census.
- Over 41% of Auburn households pay more than 30% of their income for housing.
- 4,495 families are registered with the Auburn Food Bank this year – some 118,000 people were served last year, up to 145 people a night. And, absent a change in federal policy, an estimated 45,000 families in King and Pierce County will lose eligibility for food stamps in March.
- Rental costs in South King County have increased 27% since 2010. A person earning minimum wage, or on TANF (welfare), or receiving social security disability income cannot afford an average one bedroom apartment in South King County.
- In Auburn last year, 871 families applied for public housing assistance – seeking to get on the King County Housing Authority Section 8 Voucher waiting list. Only 98 of those applicants were fortunate enough to get a slot on the waiting list—and they can expect to wait as 5 years for space in public housing to open up.

At the same time, the City hears growing frustration from businesses and homeowners. They ask what is being done to address the number of homeless individuals panhandling, or sleeping in doorways, or loitering in commercial areas. There is a high degree of community concern about homelessness, as evidenced by the number of comments on the City's web-blog on homelessness which has received more comments from residents and others than any other City blog. Most, but not all, of the input from the community expresses support for helping the homeless in our community find the services and

shelter they need. Over half of the comments received online stated there is significant need for more supportive services including emergency shelters, mental health and substance abuse services and policy or system changes.

And, while the fear and frustration registered through public comments is growing, we are also clear that the City cannot arrest its way out of homelessness. Being homeless is not a crime. And, cycling individuals through short jail stays on trespassing or public nuisance charges only to have them released back in to the community doesn't address the underlying causes of homelessness or solve the problem.

What we are seeing in Auburn is not unique. Across King County, Washington state, and nationally, we are seeing the suburbanization of poverty, as the poor are priced out of housing in urban centers. In Washington state, decades of underinvestment in mental health care, developmental disabilities services, and substance abuse treatment are translating into increasing homelessness. In King County we combine those systemic failures with an alarming increase in the cost of housing and the problem is further exacerbated.

**The Task Force understands that the following conditions are being experienced and observed in the City, by residents and business owners:**

- Problem behaviors of homeless individuals, including loitering, trespassing in private buildings to use restrooms, get clean and sleep
- Property damage including breaking of locks on buildings to gain access to private buildings, or dumpsters
- Increasing number of visible homeless individuals throughout our City, particularly of younger individuals
- Customers and employees of local businesses being frightened of or confronted by homeless individuals
- Residents wanting the City to "fix" the problem of homelessness.
- Residents afraid to use the library due to groups of homeless adults loitering in the entryways and in the Library
- Residents afraid to visit public parks, trails and open space due to groups of apparently homeless individuals living or loitering in these areas
- Trash, debris, belongings, drug paraphernalia left behind by the homeless
- Increasing numbers of homeless encampments in open space within the City
- Mental illness and substance abuse issues suffered by the homeless
- Significant increases in the cost of housing
- Growth in poverty

**As a result of these issues and conditions, community concerns include:**

- Auburn becoming less safe and less attractive for residents, workers, and visitors
- Negative community views about the homeless, a lack of public understanding and tolerance for the homeless
- Concern for the safety of the homeless in the City and concern about their human suffering
- A lack of services and housing available for the homeless – either in Auburn or in nearby cities

**Constraints and obstacles to addressing these concerns and issues include:**

- **Lack of Places for Homeless Individuals to Be**
  - No shelter for youth under 18 anywhere in South King County.
  - One shelter for young adults (ages 18-24) in all of South County, here in Auburn (Auburn Youth Resources).
  - Other than a limited winter shelter in severe weather conditions, there are no emergency shelter beds to house homeless adults in Auburn.
  - Very few transitional shelter beds in the City.
  - Lack of approved places for the homeless to stay anywhere in the City (e.g. parking lots or “tent cities”)
  - Lack of day centers where homeless individuals can be during the day, other than limited hours of service in a facility for youth provided by Auburn Youth Resources.
  - No hygiene center anywhere in the City where homeless individuals can get clean, or take care of basic bodily functions
  - Rents increasing far faster than incomes, and already beyond the reach of those at the bottom of the income scale.
  - Insufficient public housing and shelter capacity to meet the needs of the population (housed and unhoused)
  - Lack of housing with supportive services to meet the needs of the homeless
  - Lack of sites where new homeless facilities can locate, and it is unclear whether there is public support for siting.
  
- **Difficult for the Homeless to Help Themselves**
  - Limited family and social networks.
  - Lack of transportation to get to services and jobs.
  - Lack of knowledge on the part of both the homeless and the public about resources available to assist the homeless.
  - Lack of service capacity, including medical care, mental health care, substance abuse treatment, job training.
  - Lack of enough outreach services to connect homeless to services they need.
  - Lack of places for the homeless to securely store their belongings.
  
- **Hard for Supportive Agencies to Help Homeless Families and Individuals**
  - Lack of public understanding of the complexity of homelessness.
  - Some homeless opt out of staying in shelters or using services available to them.
  - Growing poverty in the region, increasingly generational poverty.
  - Growing housing costs place more at risk of homelessness, and make it more expensive to find new housing for the homeless.
  - Lack of adequate resources to address the challenges.

## What does success look like?

The challenge of homelessness in Auburn is growing. The Task Force believes there is an urgent need for action. But what does success look like? Here are some of the ways we think our community should define success in addressing homelessness:

- For the homeless:
  - More shelter beds in our community.
  - A place in our city where the homeless can care for their personal needs—get clean, do laundry.
  - Greater access to “Housing First” resources—safe housing with wrap-around services, that people can live in without abandoning their pets, or without the expectation that they will be addiction-free overnight.
  - Greater access to health services and better health outcomes
  - Greater access to transportation
  - Ultimately, everyone who wants a home or shelter can have one.
- For our community:
  - Greater perceived and actual feeling of safety.
  - A cleaner city, with less debris left behind by the homeless, and no unauthorized encampments
  - Expanded engagement of the business community and of the entire community in constructively addressing homelessness
  - Greater understanding of the complexity of homelessness and how we can each help to meet this challenge
  - Boarder awareness that homelessness and crime are not synonymous.
  - An acknowledgement that the homeless are part of our community.
  - More landlords open to renting to individuals and families with Section 8 housing certificates.
- For our public and nonprofit service providers:
  - Stronger connections between service providers across South King County
  - A seamless system that works to help the homeless and those at risk of homelessness—understanding the barriers to homeless and efficiently and quickly connecting people with resources.
  - A reduction in emergency room visits by the homeless
  - Increased resources
  - Homelessness is less of a drain on police, fire/emergency medical and public works resources
  - Collaborative engagement in securing grants

We will not end homelessness. But there is much we can and should do to address this challenge in our City. One size does not fit all, in terms of solutions. While there are some actions we can take that will result in immediate improvement, others will take much longer. We need to think strategically, and be committed to sustaining our efforts over the long haul.

## Criteria for Task Force Recommendations

Recommendations would be included for consideration by the Task Force if they meet all these criteria:

- **Actionable** – Recommendation is feasible to implement as a community. Stakeholders needed are part of Auburn/South King County community and have means to take action necessary to accomplish the change sought. Financial feasibility should be included as a consideration (without setting a specific dollar threshold for what is feasible).
- **Positive Community Impact** – It is reasonable to expect that implementation of the recommendation will result in overall positive community impact, and respond to the community's concerns.
- **Consistent with federal law** – (But recommendations could include advocating for changes in state law and funding)
- **Sustainable**—phased roll-outs of solutions may be needed, but sustained action is required.

## Draft Framework for Recommendations

<b>Population:</b>	<b>Families with children</b>	<b>Single adults</b>	<b>Youth (18-24), 12-18</b>
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<b>STAKEHOLDERS: Lead? Necessary Partners?</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Business Community</b>	<b>Residents</b>	<b>Faith Comm- unity</b>	<b>Nonprofit Service providers</b>	<b>Low Income Housing Providers</b>	<b>Other Local/Reg'l Gov't Agency</b>	<b>Homeless Individuals</b>
<b>CATEGORY OF ACTION ITEM:</b>								
<b>Improving public safety, sense of wellbeing; reducing negative impacts</b>								
<b>Expand/Mitigate Emergency shelter options</b>								
<b>Expanding/Mitigate service capacity</b>								
<b>Expand/Mitigate Permanent Housing (&amp; service capacity)</b>								
<b>Improve public understanding and ability to assist</b>								
<b>Advocacy</b>								
<b>Other</b>								



## **GMA: A Primer for REALTORS® Involved In Residential "New Construction"**

February 2, 2016 - Issaquah, WA

### **Sam Pace, JD, MBA, GRI, GC-REP**

REALTOR® with Executive Real Estate, Inc. &  
Housing Specialist - SEATTLE King County REALTORS®

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#### **1. Washington's Growth Management Act (GMA)**

- **Initiative 547** in 1990 would have required comprehensive land use planning by all counties and would have created two regional management councils to develop rules and grant approval for local land use plans. Voters said "No" 75.09 % to 24.91 %. Would have limited urban growth because the legislature failed to protect the environment (according to the *Spokesman Review* and the *Moscow-Pullman Daily News*.
- So, Legislature just passed the ***Growth Management Act*** on its own:
  - Adopted in 1990 - RCW 36.70A
  - Why?  
**1<sup>st</sup> Sentence of the Legislative findings:** "The legislature finds that uncoordinated and unplanned growth, together with a **lack of common goals** expressing the **public's interest in the conservation and the wise use of our lands, pose a threat to the environment**, sustainable economic development, and the health, safety, and high quality of life enjoyed by residents of this state." RCW 36.70A.010
- Who is covered:
  - All Fast Growing Counties & Cities, and
  - Slower Growing Cities choosing to do so (State offered financial incentives for slower growing jurisdictions to say "Yes")

- **"Bottom-up"** Process for Implementation of State Mandates:
  - **"Top-Down"** State Mandate **"To Plan"** to Accommodate Growth
  - State can impose the mandate because it is the *state government* that *authorizes/allows* creation of local governments and special purpose districts
  - local governments
  - "Bottom-Up" allows Local Officials To Determine **"How To Plan"**
  - **20-year Planning Horizon:** 20-year plans, updated periodically, or annually for small emergencies that can't wait
  
- Emphasis: Environmental Protection
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Things 1<sup>st</sup> in King County
    - Growth Boundaries (UGB) - Shrank the "urban" area 55 square miles
    - Protection of Critical Areas
  - Control Densities
    - Urban Densities: 4 Dwelling Units (DU) per acre minimum
    - Rural Densities: 1 Dwelling Unit (DU) per 5 acres maximum

**2. Conceptual Understanding of the Act (GMA)**

- Structure



- Goals
  - 13 Goals in GMA, plus: Shorelines (Shoreline Master Programs) in RCW 36.70A.480 and RCW 90.58.030
  - See Handout on “GMA Planning Goals”
  - 8 “Elements” are "Mandatory" in *Countywide Planning Policies and Comprehensive Plans*. The rest are permissive (optional). **RCW 36.70A.060**  
The Mandatory elements are:
    - Land Use, Housing, Capital Facilities, Utilities, Rural (for counties), Transportation (must implement and be consistent with the Land Use element), Economic Development, and a Parks and Recreation element
    - Shorelines is defacto "mandatory" because it's "top down" from the state – Department of Ecology, not the local government, approves the shorelines plan

Generally speaking, Shorelines include: all marine (salt) waters; streams and rivers that average flows of greater than 20 CFS, lakes 20 acres or larger, upland areas (called shorelands) that extend 200 feet landward from the edge of these waters; and, if they are associated with one of the foregoing, wetlands and river deltas; some or all of the 100-year floodplain including all wetlands within the 100-year floodplain and shorelines of statewide significance.

SEE: [http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/sma/st\\_guide/intro.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/sma/st_guide/intro.html)

- Goals must be balanced, without "priority" (and we mean it): Legislature attempted to correct both the history of the Act and rulings on GMA appeals giving priority to the environment above all else:

*"The following goals are not listed in order of priority and shall be used exclusively for the purpose of guiding the development of comprehensive plans and development regulations..."*

RCW 36.70A.020

- Goal #4 - Housing:
  - *"Encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock."* 36.70A.020 (4)

- Mandated Housing Element (Explanation of what must be included in Countywide Planning Policies and Comprehensive Plans to satisfy the requirements of the Housing Goal):

*"A housing element ensuring the vitality and character of established residential neighborhoods that: (a) Includes an inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs that identifies the number of housing units necessary to manage projected growth; (b) includes a statement of goals, policies, objectives, and mandatory provisions for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing, including single-family residences; (c) identifies sufficient land for housing, including, but not limited to, government-assisted housing, housing for low-income families, manufactured housing, multifamily housing, and group homes and foster care facilities; and (d) makes adequate provisions for existing and projected needs of all economic segments of the community. 36.70A.070 (2)*

3. **Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs):** In King County the Countywide Planning Policies were developed (and are now amended) by the **Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC)**

- **Structure of the Growth Management Planning Council:**
  - Contains "veto" equity for amendments: 30% of jurisdictions representing 70% of the population is required to amend the Countywide Planning Policies - so any one of the following three interests can veto proposed amendments:
    - King County
    - City of Seattle
    - Sound Cities (formerly Suburban Cities Association) + Bellevue
  - Process for Approving Amendments proposed by the GMPC: Silence is deemed approval
- **Housing Targets** for Each Jurisdiction in King County in the CPPs:
  - The Targets for the **Total Number of New Dwelling Units Needed** Are Developed & Allocated as Follows (an example, not the real numbers)

100,000	People Total Living in the County at the end of the 20-year planning period	<b>OFM's Projection (Forecast)</b> of the Total Number Of People Who Will Be Living in the County at the End of the 20-year planning period (current population, less deaths, plus births, plus net in/out migration)
÷ 2.4	People per home	<b>Divide by:</b> Estimated # of persons per household in each DU at the end of the 20-year planning period
41,666	Total # of Homes needed	<b>Equals:</b> The Number of Dwelling Units That Will Be Required to Accommodate the Population Over 20 Years
(30,000)	Homes we have	<b>Subtract:</b> Number of Existing Dwelling Units
11,666	Countywide Total Housing Target for New Construction	<b>Equals:</b> Number of New Dwelling Units Required To Accommodate The County's Projected Population (by the end of the 20-year Planning Period).
11,666	Divided-up to create Housing Targets for Each City	That number is then allocated among the 39 cities and the county by the GMPC to establish the Housing Target for Total New Housing Units in each city in the County.  <b>For the period 1992 - 2012, the actual number of homes the GMPC's analysis said were needed was 195,700 net new housing units. Although that Target was easily reached, it was far below the actual market demand.</b>

- o Affordable Housing Targets:

In order to ensure that housing is affordable to "all economic segments of the population," King County also has "Affordable Housing Targets,"

These "Affordable Housing Targets are tied to - and expressed as a percentage of - the Total Housing Units Targets for each city, as follows:

- Very Low Income: 12% of the Total Housing Target
- Low Income: 12% of the Total Housing Target
- Moderate Income: 16% of the Total Housing Target

The definitions of *Very Low*, *Low* and *Moderate* Income Households are tied to the County's Median Household Income.

The "Median" is the mid-point (with half of all household earning more, and half earning less). In King County, recent reported "Median" is approximately \$71,850.

Very Low Income	0-30 % of median	(\$ 0 - \$21,555)
Low Income	30-50 % of median	(\$21,555 - \$35,925)
Moderate Income	50-80 % of median	(\$35,925 - \$57,480)

#### 4. Enforcement Mechanisms in the Growth Management Act

- Growth Management Hearings Board:



- Plan on \$50,000± to Appeal - (Having a Hearings Board was supposed to be an efficient, less costly forum with skilled hearings officers.)
- Board decisions are appealed to the courts in most important precedent-setting cases.
- County Superior Courts are not very experienced with the subject matter, and generally don't like the cases. So, parties may prefer to seek direct review of a Hearings Board Decision by the Court of Appeals.
- Easiest cases:
  - Public Participation: City must allow early and continuous public participation where participation is required
  - Failure of a jurisdiction to "show your work" - opinions or elected officials are not sufficient without evidence in the record that supports their decision.

- Members are appointed by the Governor
  - Originally:
    - ❖ 3 Boards (Eastern WA, Western WA, Central Puget Sound), each with 3 members: lawyer, planner, former elected official
    - ❖ Most helped write rules of the kind being appealed
  - RCW 36.70A.250 was amended in 2010 to replace the three Hearings Boards with one combined Hearings Board of 7 members (including lawyers and former elected officials) with geographic and political diversity.
- Governor Can Impose Financial Sanctions for failure to comply with the Act: Can cut off State Funding to city/county for non-compliance with the Act
  - Never Used
  - Only threatened once (by Gov. Gary Locke)
- Not enough votes in the Legislature to put any real teeth in the Act when it was passed in 1990

## 5. Key Successes & Shortcomings of GMA over 25 years since 1990

- Success: Protection of Rural & Resource Lands
- Failure: Housing (Discussed in detail below in section 7)
- Failure: Transportation (Discussed in detail below in section 7)

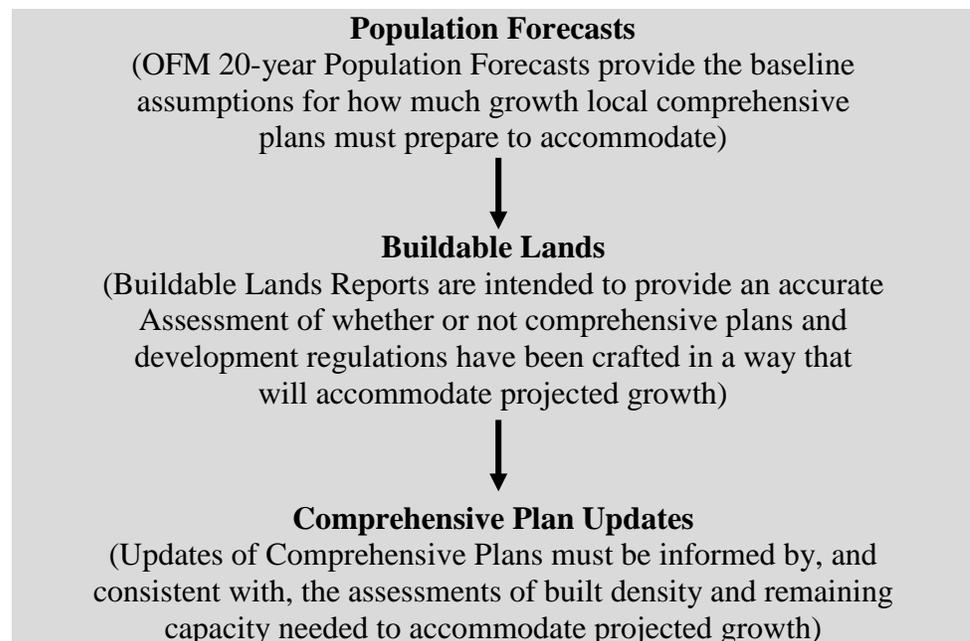
## 6. Notable Amendments to GMA:

- **Rural Lands:**  
Amended in 2002 to address need for flexibility for businesses in rural areas.  
RCW 36.70A.011
- **Economic Element Added to Comprehensive Plans:** Concern that regulatory excess, and environmental protection to the exclusion of other community-wide values was harming the economy

- **More Frequent Population Forecasts:** Some jurisdictions were achieving their growth targets within the first half of the planning period, or sooner
  
- **Addition of Buildable Lands Reports - RCW 36.70A.215:** The “Buildable Lands Program” amendments to GMA were passed in response to concerns that planned densities were not be achieved in urban areas (because development regulations were more restrictive than zoning codes), and that the legal capacity to build new housing contained in comprehensive plans and zoning codes was insufficient to allow housing targets to be achieved.

The four basis tenants of the Buildable Lands Program are intended to address the following:

- Are Achieved Built Densities Consistent with Comprehensive Plan Capacity Assumptions and Zoning Code Designations?
  
- How Much Buildable Capacity Remains to Meet Growth Targets?
  
- Remedial Action Is Required to Correct Problems Identified By the Buildable Lands Analysis: Corrective Action Must Be "Reasonably Likely" to correct to problem. Hasn't worked.
  
- Ensure Planning Efforts are better-supported and informed by relevant data:



7. **GMA-Related Hot Topics To Put On Your Radar Screen**

**Housing Supply**

- What Do The Data Tell Us?
  - In just eleven months of 2015 (January - November) in the tri-county region (King, Pierce and Snohomish counties) – [See: Sanjay Bhatt articles in the Seattle Times, December 29, 2015]
    - There were 23,600 building permits issued
    - But more than 98,700 people from out-of-state got new drivers licenses

NOTE #1:

That’s 98,700 more people in 11 months...

*Before* adding population increases from new people who got drivers licenses in December, and

*Before* adding population increases from family members of those drivers who are too young to drive, and

*Before* adding population increases from babies born to local families that were already living here in 2014...

**So, logic says the population increase was even higher than 98,700**

NOTE #2:

I haven’t been able to locate official OFM population forecasts data for 2014 which would allow me to calculate OFM’s population forecasts for 2015.

But here’s what OFM projected in 2012 for population increases in 2016 in the tri-county area of King, Pierce and Snohomish County. These projections are expressed a “range” with high, medium and low\* projections.

**Even using the very high-end projection, the OFM Population Projection numbers on which comprehensive plans (which control/limit housing supply) are based are far-removed from the reality of what’s happening on the ground:**

<b>2016 Population Forecast Range</b>	<b>Pierce County</b>	<b>Snohomish County</b>	<b>King County</b>	<b>2016 TOTAL</b>
<b>High End</b>	2016 914,327 2015 (907,454) <b>6,873</b>	2016 849,237 2015 (836,250) <b>12,987</b>	2016 2,157,807 2015 (2,133,549) <b>24,258</b>	<b>High</b> <b>44,118</b>
<b>Medium*</b>	2015 840,654 2016 (831,944) <b>8,710</b>	2016 761,734 2015 (750,358) <b>11,376</b>	2015 2,031,620 2016 (2,012,782) <b>18,838</b>	<b>Medium</b> <b>38,924</b>
<b>Low End*</b>	2016 759,471 2015 (749,814) <b>9,657</b>	2016 686,890 2015 (675,033) <b>11,857</b>	2016 1,911,558 2015 (1,892,015) <b>19,543</b>	<b>Low</b> <b>41,054</b>

Source: <http://www.ofm.wa.gov/pop/gma/projections12/projections12.asp>  
 And link to “one year projections”

\* I do not have an explanation for why OFM’s “medium” range is lower than the “low” range

So, conservatively, we’re adding new workers 4 times as fast as we’re adding new housing. The problem is not new, it’s systemic: In the run-up to 2007 (before the recession) in King County we were adding just one new housing unit for every 3.1 new jobs.

- Not surprisingly, here are the countywide results of this imbalance between Housing Supply and Housing Demand in King County during 2015:

Month	Months of Inventory of Properties “On Market”			Median "SOLD" Price		
	Houses & Condos	Houses Only	Condos Only	Houses & Condos	Houses Only	Condos Only
Jan. 2015	2.09	2.0	2.46	\$390,000	\$441,500	\$238,500
Dec. 2015	0.84	0.86	0.78	\$450,000	\$508,000	\$275,975
<b>2015 Price Increases (vs. December 2014)</b>				<b>12.5%</b>	<b>15.45%</b>	<b>7.68%</b>

- Market Dynamics

- The average household in King County (with 2.4 persons) can afford a home or condo that costs \$311,500.
- But here in King County the median sales price for homes and condos combined is \$450,000 – a gap of \$138,500.

That gap won’t close until there’s a better balance between the supply of homes and condos on the market, and the number of buyers who are out looking for something they can afford.

- Real estate industry experts say 4 to 6 months of inventory is required for a balanced market.
  - For the past year in King County, there has been little more than one month’s supply of inventory.

In fact, at the end of the year the *countywide* inventory had dropped so low there was less than one month's supply of homes and condos on the market (0.84 months = 25 days, 8 hours, 48 minutes).

- Not surprisingly, *countywide* prices (house & condos combined) shot up 12.5% last year.
  - *In Seattle*, there was only 0.54 months (16 days, 4 hours) of supply at year-end; and prices for homes and condos combined (versus a year ago) were up 19.7%.
- What are the **Risks to Regional Economic Vitality and Economic Competitiveness** (beyond the obvious increased congestion, and environmental degradation from sprawl)?
- Remember, prices for houses and condos combined were up 12.5% countywide last year in King County.
  - Basic math dictates: If prices increase just 10% annually, those prices will double in seven years.
  - At 19.7% annual increases (like we experienced in Seattle last year) prices would double a whole lot sooner than every 7 years.
  - But let's stick with prices doubling every 7 years for a moment....
  - So, here in King County (with prices going up 10+ % annually) in seven years – if the national economy doesn't crash again – the current \$450,000 *countywide* mid-point-price for houses and condos combined will jump to \$900,000.
  - To afford that \$900,000 mid-point-price for homes and condos combined, (depending upon amount down, closing costs, etc.) a family will need to make approximately \$300,000 per year, which is \$150 per hour.
  - So, if we don't get real serious, real quick (about making sure the Supply of Housing is balanced with the Actual Market Demand for Housing), here is the **"Move-out-of-town Question"** employers like Boeing, Microsoft and Amazon will be asking themselves:

***"Can I compete in global markets against companies like Airbus and Alibaba if the company has to pay \$150 per hour (plus medical and***

*retirement benefits) in order to keep the trained workforce that I need for the company to survive?"*

- **There Are “Systemic” Barriers to Correction of the Imbalance Between the *Supply of Housing* and the *Actual Market Demand for Housing***

*Note:* (Economists characterize the actual market demand for housing as “*inelastic*” because the need for a family to have a roof over its head doesn't disappear just because prices go up more than what the family can afford.

As a result, prices won't come down just because they're going up, as long as the limited number of buyers who can afford current prices is larger than the number of homes on the market.

- **Office of Financial Management (OFM) Population Projections**

At least every 5 years Washington State's *Office of Financial Management* prepares 20-year Population Projections that counties and cities must use in planning to accommodate growth under GMA:

*“At least once every five years or upon the availability of decennial census data, whichever is later, the office of financial management shall prepare twenty-year growth management planning population projections required by RCW 36.70A.110 for each county that adopts a comprehensive plan under RCW 36.70A.040 and shall review these projections with such counties and the cities in those counties before final adoption”.*

RCW 43.62.035

But OFM has a hard time predicting employment-related in-migration more than 36 months in advance.

So, when companies expand their workforce, and employment ramps-up as new jobs are created, there is a significant disconnect between the amount of housing that counties and cities have planned to accommodate in their comprehensive plans (using the OFM projections), and the amount of housing that is actually needed for working families.

That imbalance leads to significant price increases, because (as noted above), the demand for housing is “inelastic.”

- **Buildable Lands: BLR Shortcomings**

The Buildable Lands Process (discussed in Section 6 above) begins by using the errant population projections from OFM as the foundational basis of the Buildable Lands Analysis.

The *Buildable Lands Report* that is assembled pursuant to the Buildable Lands Process (in RCW 36.70A.215) then assesses whether or not there is enough zoning in the comprehensive plans to accommodate the errant Population Growth projected by OFM. Beyond the problem of building the report on the faulty foundation of the OFM Population Projections, there are two more problems:

First, instead of disclosing the limitations on capacity resulting from a variety of factors that limit the ability to build housing, the first *Buildable Lands Report* prepared in King County disclaimed any analysis of the key limitations.

In other words, key factors that limit capacity simply weren't addressed, including:

- Infrastructure Availability
- Infrastructure Capacity
- Housing Affordability
- Market Feasibility
- Market Availability of Land
- Actual Rate of Future Development
- Which properties will (or won't) develop
- The impacts of updates to Critical Areas Ordinances (Based on "best available science")
- The impact of updates to shoreline programs (in accordance with newly revised Shoreline Management Act guidelines)
- Implementation measures to protect fish species habitat under the Endangered Species Act (ESA)

Subsequent Buildable Lands Reports have carried forward too many of these fatal flaws for the Buildable Lands Report to provide a credible baseline for assessing the amount of remaining capacity to build homes in numbers sufficient to meet the market demand for housing.

In addition, mostly because the legislature did not fully fund the work necessary to prepare the Buildable Lands Report upon which 2015 major updates of local comprehensive plans are being based in King County (and partly because of the recession), the Department of Commerce approved of King County only doing a

minimal amount of analysis of remaining capacity to build housing – an approach some might call “BLR Light.”

#### Possible Approaches to State Legislation to "Step Around" OFM/BLR for Solutions

- Transit Oriented Development (around Transit Stations)
  - Vertical Mixed Use: retail & restaurants below office, with housing above
  - Density based on 50-year Planning Horizons
- Urban Centers and Unincorporated Urban Areas: 50-year horizon

Do more of what works: There are great examples of new, dense neighborhoods that are both exciting places to be and protect single family neighborhoods.

- South Lake Union
  - Downtown Bellevue
  - Downtown Kirkland
  - Watch downtown Redmond, Overlake Village and Issaquah
  - Even smaller cities like Covington have figured out that density is the key to an exciting and economically vibrant future.
- Median Incomes & Median Prices:

When households earning median incomes cannot afford the median price of houses and condos combined for 36 consecutive months, require cities to adopt significant up-zones in the city’s comprehensive plan and zoning code.
  - More efficient use of land in single family zoning (up-zones)
    - R-8+, instead of R4
    - Increase "Market Discount Factor in BLR" to decrease assumed capacity, and trigger requirements for rezoning
    - Stop the downzoning (e.g., Renton – To the extent it exacerbates price increases, it as the potential to affect Boeing in the near term)

- DO NOT Tell Your Builders:
  - ❖ Authorization to build at higher densities will come over time if you "buy now and hold"
  - ❖ You can build based on current zoning that will vest, because it won't change before you can submit a completed application
    - Renton example
    - Phase II NPDES permit (discussed below)

### Transportation

- Cities Down-zoning (e.g., Renton)
  - NIMBY pressure
  - Cut-through Traffic Rationalization to put GMA on the shelf
  - Resistance to MFR - seen as "affordable housing" in worse sense of the word
  
- Builders: Move the Urban Growth boundary (UGB) Line
  - Unlikely as long as the structure of the GMPC gives Seattle and King County Power to Veto any change to CPPs that involves expanding the UGB
  - Portland Experience: Lots of Heat. Very Small Expansion. Officials: "It's solved."
  - Seattle Dynamic: Feasible and workable solutions are not part of the discussion among folks driving the political discourse in the city. Opposition to sprawl is strong.
  
- Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) - which is a major gatekeeper on access to funding for transportation projects - is taking action to reduce the future supply of housing in small cities in the region.
  - Who's Affected:
    - **Counties:** King, Pierce, Snohomish and Kitsap Counties
    - **Cities in:** King, Pierce, Snohomish and Kitsap Counties
    - **Ports:** of Bremerton, Everett, Seattle, Tacoma

- **Associate Members:** Alderwood Water & Wastewater District, Port of Edmonds, Island County, Puget sound Partnership, Snoqualmie Tribe, Thurston Regional Planning council Tulalip Tribes, U of W, Washington Aerospace Partnership
  - **Transit Agencies:** Community Transit, Everett Transportation, Kitsap, Metro (King County), Sound Transit
- Structure of PSRC:
- Full PSRC - Elected Officials from member jurisdictions
  - Major Policy Committees that make recommendations to the Executive Committee and the full Council
    - Growth Management Policy Board*
    - Transportation Policy Board*
  - Internal Committees
    - Executive Committee*
    - Operations Committee*
    - Regional Policy Staff Committee-made up mostly of staff from larger member-cities*
  - Other Committees
    - Economic Development Committee*
- The PSRC is using its own process for PSRC's "Certification" of local comprehensive plans to restrict Small Cities from adding Housing Units in Excess of Total Unit Housing Targets
- "Certification" - Why it's a Huge Hammer for the PSRC
- Certification of Comprehensive Plans is a "Threshold Qualification" for local government in the four-county area to be considered for state and federal transportation funding. For each city, the "certification" process has three possible outcomes. The comprehensive plan is either:
    - "Certified"*
    - "Conditionally Certified," or*
    - Not Certified*

- Transportation Projects are so expensive and complex that it now requires a mixed bag of funding sources for cities to be able to do a project

*Federal, state & local tax revenues, impact fees, etc. (especially after voters approved an initiative to reduce car tab fees)*

*If jurisdictions have to choose between dollars for transportation or housing for folks who don't yet live in the city, it's a no-win situation...but they'll likely choose the money*

- The certification “review framework” adopted by the **PSRC’s Growth Management Policy Board** upon the recommendation of the **Regional Staff Committee** tried to build in a little flexibility (in the form of bones they could throw to the small cities) - my characterization, not theirs - to keep the cities from going ballistic, while still allowing PSRC to zero-in on the Total Unit Housing Targets as the standard at the core of the analysis.

In this regard, in focusing on the targets the Staff Committee was doing the job it was asked to do by the Policy Board, not necessarily free-wheeling on their own. That said, focusing on a single target number – instead of assessing the likelihood of achieving the housing “affordability” that is at the core of GMA’s Housing Goal in RCW 36.70A.020 [4]) - makes the analytical exercise much easier and simple for the staff to complete.

The flexibility – or limited wiggle room – included in the “review framework” basically follows the following outline:

- PSRC needs to ensure compliance with the 2040 Regional Vision. That said,
  - Different cities grow differently
  - Small cities grow differently
  - There are some legitimate reasons cities are growing differently
- So, the PSRC objective should be to try to “*bend the trend*” to move closer to compliance with the targets, not make the decision on an assessment of the target alone.”
- Nevertheless, the target is the baseline against which the “bending of the curve” is evaluated.
- The **Regional Staff Committee** explained that it meets with the small cities that appear to be planning to accommodate too much growth in order to have the city show the PSRC that the city is attempting to make “a reasonable accommodation” of the targets. Among the options to do so that were acknowledged with approval are:

- Down Zoning
- Phasing Growth
- Phasing Infrastructure

Against that context, prior to January 7<sup>th</sup> the ***Growth Management Policy Board*** had recommend the full PSRC certify the comp plans of 30 cities, and conditionally certify 3 others, for a total of 33.

On January 7<sup>th</sup> at the recommendation of the ***Regional Staff Committee*** the ***PSRC's Growth Management Policy Board*** recommended 7 additional cities for certification (Kent, Kirkland, Lake Stevens, Marysville, Medina, Mukilteo, Roy and Sammamish). Three other cities – Milton, Bonny Lake and Carnation – were recommended for conditional certification.

- PSRC's "Certification Process Is Focusing on Housing, But..."
  - Completely Failing to engage on the issue of "Affordability," which is essence of GMA Goal #4
  - Failed to consider "Affordable Housing Targets" as an indicator that more than "Total Unit" Targets need to be considered to address "Affordability in GMA Goal #4 (Housing affordable to all economic segments of the population)
  - Appeal to the Hearings Board appears likely unless PSRC relents

### **Covington Case Study: Watch What's Happening**

- Affordable Housing Projects
- School Impact Fees - Litigation (now settled) was filed by the Kent School District
- PSRC pushing City to downzone after 2009 comp plan amendments
- New Town Center Tied to April School Bond
- Regional Fire Authority: side yard set-backs, impact fees, etc.

## Stormwater Issues

- Federal Clean Water Act's **National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase 2 Permit** means new city *Low Impact Development (LID)* requirements to implement *Best Management Practices* to manage all stormwater "on-site" instead of collecting run-off on-site and transporting it off-site for treatment. The *LID* standards will vary among cities (lack of consistency).  
See: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/stormwater/commentdocs/AppendixG.pdf>
- Phase 2 Permit compliance could overriding GMA vested project approvals to build, and in the worst case could potentially result in the Department of Ecology over-ruling the local city and shutting down your new construction project just before you're ready to hand buyers the keys.
- Development approval processes of local government will be modified to minimize potential for Dept. of Ecology to take action to shut down fully vested projects
- LID means more "front-loaded" costs for builders (as cities require most analysis to be done up-front)

## Flood Plains

- Re-mapping Will Enlarge the Flood Plains
  - Will Enlarge the Flood Plains
  - Affect on existing mortgages
- National Flood Insurance Program Rate Increases
  - Katrina Cost Recovery
  - Congressional Action - Temporary Delay for Required Study of Affordability
  - Potential for Mortgage Defaults on existing mortgages
- Endangered Species Act (ESA) Overlay - Federal District Court Case in 2004
  - Affect new development
  - Impact of RAP Alternatives Standards under ESA
- Recent litigation to shut down the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) in 120 jurisdictions in NW Washington

## Homelessness

- **Declared Emergency: King County Executive Dow Constantine and Seattle Mayor Ed Murray**
- **King County:**
  - South King County: High prices forcing "suburbanization of poverty" and moving it south
  - County Executive Dow Constantine increasing (doubling) homeless beds in County facilities
  - Sharon Nelson: Wants \$300,000 million in the state's Housing Trust Fund
- **Seattle - Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA)**
  - Grand Bargain: 50,000 new units (30,000 market rate, 20,000 subsidized)
  - Subsidized Housing Providers Want Inclusionary Zoning
  - Multi-Family Tax Credits
  - Doubling Housing Levy
  - Mayor Murray
    - Taking Heat (for single family zoning proposals, car camps in parking lots,
    - Calling for de-escalation of political rhetoric,
    - Then criticizing unspecified tax policy support of home ownership
- **Assessor's Tax Credit Legislation to Keep Existing Rental Housing Affordable**

**Auburn Mayor's Task Force on Homelessness:**

**Mission:** Seek to better understand the scope and causes of homelessness in Auburn, and the systems in place to address homelessness.

**Transcript of FOCUS GROUP with Homeless Individuals in the City**

**KCLS Auburn Library, Friday 1/29/16**

Interviews conducted and transcribed by Carla Hopkins, King County Library System

Conversation with two male patrons (**P1 and P2**) and a female patron who joined the conversation (**W**). Later, P1 introduced a female friend who wanted to share her story.

---

**May I record this conversation, to share with the Task Force in full (in transcript form and posted online – no name(s) attached)?**

**Do you have any questions before we begin?**

---

- **So, one of the things that the Task Force is interested in is where you're from and how you got here. Where are you from originally?**

P1) From here, right here in Auburn – born and raised here.

P2) Black Diamond originally, then Auburn.

P1) We met in high school.

P1) I graduated from Auburn High School.

P2) I didn't graduate.

P1) About 25+ years ago.

P2) Yup, about that long.

- **How long have you been without shelter?**

P2) This is my second time around, about 2 years. First time was about 5, here in Auburn.

P1) About 7 for me?

P2) Ya, about that...what, about 3 before that?

- **What do you plan to do next?**

P1) Try to figure out how to stay warm somehow. Find someplace to stay and shit, I'm getting tired of staying out here man, it sucks. Someplace to call my own....get up when we want to, eat when we want to, whenever we want to.

P2) I'm going to try to get back onto low income housing. I was there (on a waiting list), and it was definitely a long list. I waited for about 7 years, I was on it, and there was one more thing that I had to get

done, but I didn't get it done, and I was off (the list). (Tears flow from his eyes.) There's a minimum of a 5 year wait now.

P1) Some of the landlords take vouchers, but they don't really like to, because the government doesn't pay them.

- **What would you like the Task Force members to know or understand about your situation?**

P1) Come out here for a week, I dare ya! (laughs) Not knowing where everything's at, not knowing about the resources and where they're at. We had to figure all that out on our own. Have them (*Task Force*) come out here and figured it out. And they (*Task Force*) have to leave their credit cards and all their shit at home, and they can't go home for a week. And they have to survive with what they can grab, and find out about all the resources, like we had to figure out a place to sleep. Have them come out here and try to figure all that out. They (*Task Force*) wouldn't last a week, I can guarantee that.

P2) Being cold.

P1) They'd go home running and crying to their Mamma! (laughs)

- **What would you like the Task Force to try to accomplish?**

P1) Housing...someplace to sleep, or shower, or do laundry....that is ours.

P2) Where we can have a shower and do laundry, and a place to stay dry in the day...like the library (laughs).

P1) We have meals most of the time....at least once a day.

P2) At least it's a meal a day.

P1) A place to take a shower, and do laundry.

P2) I'd like to sit and stay dry, because I get cold. (laughs)

P1) Mainly it's a place to sit, and stay, and do laundry.

P2) To be left alone; not harassed. At least one person a day harassing me.

P1) Ya, I'd say that's my biggest problem. Having to keep moving.

- **What is the biggest barrier?**

P1) The cops.

P2) The cops.

P1) That's one of the big barriers. They keep pushing us. They want us out of town.

P2) Hmm, hmmm. I think its the mayor.

P1) She put out all the orders. All orders come from the boss.

P2) Exactly.

P1) A lot of them (*homeless*) have gotten trespassed. There's a few of us gotten lucky and haven't gotten trespassed...I don't know how, but...ha, ha! We haven't gotten trespassed, but will still get harassed.

Almost everybody here (*in the library cafe*) has been trespassed from at least one park. Been targeted by at least one person in town here.

[A homeless woman sitting close-by interjects] *You know that there's been about 17 murders. I counted them, 17 of them. That's 17 homicides. Count them. That's 17. That's not the accidental overdoses, allergic reactions, you know, anaphylactic shock. There's that, but there's murders, too. Us homeless are being targeted, we're being killed. I count 17 just for here, in Auburn, alone. Not counting the gang shooting, no. There's guys that have been shot, that's homeless that have been hurt.*

P1) There's just no place for us to go, to put our tents, without being harassed by the cops.

P2) Or get our stuff taken...

P1) or sliced...

P2) or burnt out.

- **Who's burning them down?**

P1) Either our camp mates or the cops.

- **Camp mates? Why would they do that?**

P2) I don't know, jealous.

P1) I guess. Because of our stuff. I'm still trying to figure that one out.

P2) I just had to deal with that. I don't have a clue in hell. I went off to chill, came back, and came back and my tent was gone. Kind of sucked.

- **Any other specific ideas, or things, that you think they should know in terms of what should be done, or shouldn't be done to help you?**

P2) Help get us off the street before more of us die.

P1) Right on. We're citizens. What is there, some sort of caste system, or what? We basically get it from all angles. There are very few people who ever try to talk with us and try to help us out.

P2) Very few!

P1) And, see, there isn't even enough resources down here at all. There isn't enough of anything, like the churches and stuff. If there's a church that wants to do something, they have to coincide with all the other churches and can't just go out and do something on their own to help. They have to plan it and shit. If they want to do something, they can't do it on their own, but they should be able to just do that.

P2) Hmm, hmm.

P1) With all the attitudes and that, they aren't able to do much to help.

- **The attitudes? Have things changed much over the years with the attitudes?**

P2) It's gotten worse!

W) It's Nancy Backus that's made it worse.

P1) No not really. Lewis, Mayor Lewis, is the one that started this.

W) No, things have gotten worse under Nancy Backus. Under Mayor Lewis, no one harassed us, they left us alone. Her campaign slogans and promises were all lies.

P1) No, except, there were no homeless in Auburn in the past like there are now. I know the Mayor, all right? I know her personally, I used to stay right across the street from her.

W) I know things have changed, all right? I went to the Auburn Food Bank and asked for an emergency food pack and was told they aren't doing that anymore, then I left and saw them give them to two other people. They're being selective about all kinds of people.

P1) The Dream Center was closed because it got broken into.

P2) They trashed it.

W) It was Grace Community Church (that closed it down), because they owned the building and the Dream Center was there. They evicted them. They wanted them out of there. They didn't want us homeless there.

P1) They didn't want us walking through. We were walking through their parking lot.

W) It was members of the congregation of Grace Community Church. Nancy Backus and several of the City Council are members of Grace Community Church.

P1) Oh, umm...not really that. But things took a turn for the worse around that time.

W) After she took office.

P1) Ya, things started going downhill.

W) February 2014, ya!

P1) But it's housing, somewhere where we can get a meal every day, shower...

P2) A day center!

P1) Somewhere where we can go out and find a job, so we can get a place of our own. Somewhere to sleep. And have somewhere where you can store stuff. And not have to pack it on our backs all the time.

P2) Yes, that's right.

P1) Some kind of locker or something. Some kind of storage.

P2) That's the final thing. I'm thinking of a place where I can have my kids.

• **I don't know how you guys do it.**

P1) One day at a time.

P2) What else are we going to do? We will survive.

P1) Just 'cuz we're not upstanding citizens...we are citizens of this community, and we have been for years. And I don't give a shit about what anybody thinks. I've been here way too long, and they can't tell me to leave.

W) I've been homeless and on the streets since 2012, I've lived in Auburn all my life. I am from Auburn, and I became homeless in Auburn.

- **What happened?**

P2) Auburn used to be one of the cheapest places to rent in King County. And now it's one of the most expensive places in King County to rent.

W) They want to believe it's like *Leave it to Beaver*, but there are people who work the swing shifts and grave yard shifts. Everything seems like it shuts down at 10 o'clock. And all the streets are dark, the streets are like ghosts. I mean there's no one out. I mean, everybody's gone, there is no one out. It's silent, it's creepy. There are 27 states that, I believe, have martial law now, too. I was reading it on the Internet, or heard it on the radio.

P1) I can almost guarantee, that between me and him (nods to P2) that we don't know more than half of who's on the police force nowadays. And we used to know a lot of the police.

W) They knew their first names; they were on a first name basis. I don't even know who they are. They know us, though.

P1) Ya, there sure are a lot of them who know our names.

W) And the old ones who were cool and talked with us, they listened to us, they took the time to listen and hear what you were saying, and to find out if you were all right or not. They aren't even here anymore.

P1) No, there's still a few of those ones around.

P2) Very few, most are gone.

W) They're gone. All of them are all new now.

P1) They're tired, they retired or transferred.

W) The new ones don't hear your side of the story and think that you're the one's automatically doing it. And you're automatically wrong.

P1) Well, um...

W) And we're being targeted. We're being harassed. We're the ones they automatically want to put in handcuffs and take us away and put in jail. And that's not right. We're the victims and are being harassed.

P2) Like a group told us once when they wanted us to move, 'They're Auburn citizens, and they can do what they want and how they want.' That's exactly what they told us.

P1) They can do whatever they want, and when they want, because they're Auburn police.

P2) They can make up the rules as they go, if they want to.

P1) I hope it will change.

W) How do you deal with being attacked? Assaulted? Like people spitting at you? I was coming at them (police) with ice tea and milk, and they came at me with weapons and wanted to take me to jail when I was the victim of it. And it was the other person that was doing it to me and they didn't hear me and took her word, and they were wanting to take me to jail and to arrest me, and I was the one being attacked.

P1) That's because you didn't stop when they asked you to. You kept on going.

W) No, this was another time. You weren't even there, you don't know what the hell is going on, so knock it off.

P1) Well, watch your language.

P2) Pipe down, both of you.

P1) Ha, ha.

- **So, I've got: showers; laundry; a place to be/sit in the day where you don't have to leave; housing, a place to call your own; so you don't have to travel to get to resources that may or may not be available.**

P1) Shelter. A stable place to stay, stability. Somewhere to take showers, and a place to store our things so that no one goes through them and we don't have to carry them around on our back all day. They (other people) have basic security, they got a place to sleep, get clean, and store they're stuff. There's no reason why we shouldn't have the same luxuries...we don't have much. Some of the other states are actually doing something, like giving houses to the homeless so that they can get rid of homelessness. They have houses that they're giving to the homeless and the neat thing is that they have a place to go to and can call it their own.

P1) In San Francisco they have a bus that goes around where you can shower and do laundry, that'd be cool.

W) They were doing that during Katrina for the survivors.

P2) They just want to want to help the homeless. This was in the Auburn Reporter, "City is going to help the homeless" – where is it? I don't see no improvements for helping the homeless. Where's the money and what are they doing with it?

P1) I always read about support for schools.

P2) Transportation, it wasn't always this way. Not in the 50s.

P1) With an ORCA card, you need to put money on it, but homeless don't have any, so it's no good.

W) Trying going from place to place on foot, and in bad weather. It took me 4.5 hours one day, and then I had an allergic reaction because I was bit by something at the Women's shelter. And I couldn't get to the hospital and had to call an ambulance for myself. I was in Kent, and there is no hospital in Kent.

- **I don't know how you guys do it.**

P2) What else are going to do?

P1) I suppose we can go around screaming and pulling our hair out, but we don't. Ha, ha!

P2) Ha! I don't think it would do any good.

P1) No, it won't.

P1) It's tough.

P2) It's tough.

P1) Some days it's easy, and some days it's just a darn nightmare. Especially when we don't know when we're going to be harassed or trespassed by the cops for standing somewhere and talking, even when we're not doing nothing wrong.

(P1) Auburn used to be a fun town.

- **When?**

P2) 27 years ago.

P1) Somewhere back in the 80s, early 90s, somewhere around there. Well, the 90s is when it started to go down hill. In the 80s we were in school. Oh ya, we were causing trouble....in our minds. (Smiles and laughs)

P1) Now there's not anything to do, especially since they closed the Dream Center. That was a loss. Now there's nothing to do here anymore.

P2) There used to be the old Massey's, but now there's nothing to do anymore in town.

P1) Except get in trouble.

P1) If you really want to talk to a lot of people about homelessness, there's a dinner right here behind the church at 5pm, where everybody starts to show up about 3:30pm.

P1) About 80% of the people who are homeless will be there. Some have cars and RVs. I've got someone for you to talk with, if she comes in I'll introduce you to her.

**An hour later, P1 introduced me to a woman who shared her story:**

She, her 9 year old daughter (who attends an Auburn elementary school), and her friend had been living in their RV, but had to keep moving it because they had no permanent place to park. They had made an arrangement to park it behind a gas station, but were told by code enforcement that it couldn't remain there if they were living in it. It was eventually towed, and although she walked all day to get to the tow yard, she didn't have the money to retrieve it, and they could not accept her offer to clean their shop, office, and toilets in payment to retrieve their vehicle.

When she needs food for her daughter, she steals food from grocery stores – she was proud that she never stole food when she was hungry, but only to feed her child. She also stole warm clothes for her daughter from a thrift store.

Her daughter is doing well in school, and they read to her in her partner's car that they are all sleeping in at night. Her partner has a job. She drops off/picks up her daughter from school, and him from work, and it is also their shelter.

## AUBURN MAYOR'S TASK FORCE ON HOMELESSNESS

THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 2016

5:00 – 7:30 P.M.

AUBURN CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 25 WEST MAIN STREET, AUBURN 98001

### MEETING 5

#### Proposed Agenda

1. **Welcome, introductions, today's agenda** (5 min.)
  2. **Standing items:** (5 min.)
    - i. **Approval of Summary Notes of Meeting 4**
    - ii. **Co-Chair Remarks**
    - iii. **Public Comment received since Meeting 4**
    - iv. **Response to questions from Meeting 4**
  3. ***Task Force Discussion:* Impressions from Review of Focus Group Transcripts** (20 min.)
  4. **Review and Discussion: Revised Problem Statement, Criteria for Success & Recommendations** (30 min.)
- [break]
5. **Group Exercise & Discussion: Initial Recommendations** (45 min.)
  6. **Review of "ballot" format, process for moving forward** (20 min.)
  7. **Public Comment** (5 min.)

#### Next Agenda:

- **Review of Initial Recommendations assessment and "ballot,"**
- **Additional recommendations, review of "ballot"**

**Auburn Mayor's Task Force on Homelessness:**  
**Transcript of FOCUS GROUP with Homeless Individuals in the City**  
**Valley Cities Counseling and Consulting, February 26, 2016**

Interviews conducted and transcribed by Erica Azcueta

Conversation with two youth, one female (F)

**"Where you're from, and how did you get into your situation?"**

F: "I have a lot of abuse from childhood. And I have a mental illness, obviously. And I started counseling I'd say probably about...I was homeless, too."

**"Are you from Auburn?"**

F: "I am. I lived in Auburn for a few years, and I'm originally from Covington. But I've been here in Washington state for about 38 years."

**"How long were you homeless?"** F: "I was homeless about 4 months."

**"How long ago was that?"**

F: "That was exactly about 12 years ago."

**And you don't have to go into great detail, but what led to you becoming homeless for 4 months?"**

F: "My mental illness, I would say. And a divorce."

**"Did your mental illness make it hard for you to be independent, get a job, and get housing?"**

F: "Yes, absolutely. It's very hard for me to keep a job."

**"Are you currently employed?"**

F: "No."

**"Were you engaged in services at that point?"**

F: "When I was homeless? Yes."

**"Which ones were you engaged in?"**

F: Here. I was in Auburn. I was getting DSHS. And I was homeless so I couldn't pay my rent. I had a mental illness, so they evicted me.

**"So you're currently in permanent housing?"**

F: "Yes I am. I'm currently in Plymouth housing."

**“And how long have you been in permanent housing?”**

F: “I’ve been in Plymouth housing for a long time. Almost as long as I’ve been here.”

**“So when you were homeless there wasn’t a time when you were in transitional housing or shelters?”**

F: “I was all over the place.”

**“Can you expand a bit?”**

F: “I stayed at friend’s houses and then I stayed on the street. And then I was scared of that, because it’s very scary out there. If I was homeless now that would be horrible.”

**“Did you stay in your car, or in front of buildings? When you say on the street, what does that look like?”**

F: “I did stay in my car, yes. And I had a Chihuahua at the time, but she passed away.”

**“Is your intention to stay in Plymouth housing or move somewhere else?”**

F: “No, I’m planning on staying here.”

**“Based on your experience becoming successful, and what it was like being homeless, what do you think it would be important for our task force to know when they’re developing their plan moving forward? What do you think are some of the barriers existing that keep people homeless, and what do you think would be helpful?”**

F: “I think a lot of people have mental illnesses out there. I think most of them do. I think they’re not being able to work, and are not able to get solid help for them to be able to make their life better. I think there’s just too many people out there to be able to get help.”

**“I’m trying to get clarification: what I’m hearing, is that there’s too many people that need help, and not enough help out there.”**

F: “Yes, exactly.”

**Do you have any suggestions in terms of what resources and services that are available in Auburn, what do you think would be most helpful? What would you like to see more of?”**

F: “For one thing I would like to see people obviously get off the streets. That’s the main thing. And a safe place to be. I think we need more housing, or so help for these people, whom I believe a lot of them have mental illness and that’s why they’re out there.”

**“Now if there’s anything else you think would be helpful for them to know? If there’s anything else you think it would be important for them to know about your experience, or homelessness in general?”**

F: "Not really. I just wish that there was more housing. Families are out there. It's terrible and it's sad. Like I live in Kent, and they're out there, they're everywhere, and it's just really sad to see them. I feel very blessed that I ended up getting help. That's the big thing. I could be like them."

**"At a certain point you went and got help or someone reached out to you. What did that look like? Some people get connected through police, or there's a homeless outreach worker, or through their church. At what point was there access to help for you?"**

F: "DSHS started helping me. And then they diagnosed me and then they recommended me to go to counseling."