



## BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

**AB 5807**  
**February 2, 2021**  
**Regular Business**

### AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

<b>TITLE:</b>	AB 5807: King County Planning Policies Growth Targets.	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only
<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</b>	Approve a motion providing direction to staff.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution

<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	Community Planning and Development
<b>STAFF:</b>	Jeff Thomas, Interim CPD Director
<b>COUNCIL LIAISON:</b>	n/a
<b>EXHIBITS:</b>	1. Vision 2050 Comment Letter 09-16-2019
<b>CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:</b>	n/a

<b>AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE</b>	\$ n/a
<b>AMOUNT BUDGETED</b>	\$ n/a
<b>APPROPRIATION REQUIRED</b>	\$ n/a

### SUMMARY

This is a follow-up to the January 19, 2021 City Council discussion related to the County-Wide Planning Policies Growth Target Update Process. Staff is seeking direction from the City Council as to the City's position on the ensuing update process.

#### BACKGROUND

The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) requires all counties and incorporated jurisdictions within those counties to maintain a valid Comprehensive Plan to guide community building and future jurisdiction growth for a 20-year period. The GMA also requires periodic updates to the Comprehensive Plan and recent legislative amendments now require an update every 9 years for a rolling 20-year period.

The last periodic update to the Mercer Island Comprehensive Plan was completed in 2015, planning to 2035. Mercer Island, like King County and other incorporated jurisdictions within, is commencing preparations for the next periodic update scheduled to be completed by June 30, 2024, planning to 2044.

Essential preparation components for King County (and incorporated jurisdictions within) to complete their next Comprehensive Plan periodic update include:

- The adoption of Vision 2050 by the Puget Sound Regional Council – completed in October 2020;

- Completion of the King County Urban Growth Capacity Study (UGCS) – scheduled for completion in 2021; and,
- Updates to the Countywide Planning Policies, which includes the Growth Target update process, also scheduled for completion in 2021.

At the January 5, 2021 City Council meeting, King County staff presented an overview of the work items planned for 2021, as detailed in [AB 5793](#). This presentation included information about the Countywide Planning Policies update process, how information from the UGCS is used to inform the update process, how Mercer Island fits into Vision 2050 in the High-Capacity Transit regional geography category, and how the Growth Target process generally works.

At the January 19, 2021 City Council meeting, City staff provided an overview of the County-Wide Planning Policies Growth Target Update Process (see [AB 5800](#)). City Council discussion generally focused on advocating for Mercer Island to be at or near the low end of the growth target ranges related to employment and housing. There was also discussion to advocate for a housing growth target no higher than the remainder of the current housing growth target from the 2015 Comprehensive Plan Periodic update.

### **COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICY GROWTH TARGET UPDATE PROCESS**

The Countywide Planning Policy Growth Target update process is scheduled to be completed by 2021. In addition to having updated Countywide Planning Policies, King County, and incorporated jurisdictions within, will each have updated growth targets for employment and housing. These updated growth targets will serve as a foundation for the next periodic Comprehensive Plan update, planning to 2044.

To complete the growth target updates, jurisdictions in King County were assigned to regional geography caucuses based on Vision 2050 and other geographic attributes. The City of Mercer Island is assigned to the High-Capacity Transit (HCT) regional geography caucus with 6 other cities – Des Moines, Kenmore, Lake Forest Park, Newcastle, Shoreline, and Woodinville, as well as 3 planned annexation areas – Federal Way, North Highline, and Renton.

The HCT caucus is responsible for providing a recommendation as to how the proportioned regional geographic share of housing and employment will be assigned amongst its members. A total of 29,950 housing units and 28,750 jobs must be proportioned among the HCT caucus members. King County noted at the City Council's January 5 meeting its preference is to have the recommendation reached by consensus, but has yet to outline any alternate methodologies (i.e. a weighted vote).

A follow up dialogue with King County staff after the January 19, 2021 meeting did confirm any regional geography caucus not reaching consensus on growth target allocations may have a majority decision / minority report delivered to the Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC) by June. The King County Council will consider the matter in summer 2021 and ratification of the growth target allocations will be sent to individual cities in fall 2021.

King County has applied numerous methodologies to determine possible proportions of housing units and jobs for HCT caucus members. For Mercer Island, these methodologies have thus far produced results ranging from 1,255 to 3,414 housing units and 1,257 to 3,278 jobs. King County continues to refine methodologies and issue updated results and this work is expected to continue through early 2021.

To date, the Mercer Island staff position with the HCT caucus has been to advocate for the lowest possible assignment of both employment and housing growth targets. This position is generally consistent with the City's comments dated September 16, 2019 on the draft VISION 2050 as detailed in Exhibit 1.

An unknown variable at the City Council January 19, 2021 meeting was how many housing units has the City of Mercer Island permitted as part of its current 2,320 housing target. City staff confirmed 1,116 net housing units are permitted through December 31, 2020 towards the current housing target. Therefore, there are 1,204 housing units remaining towards the current housing target.

A second unknown variable at the City Council January 19, 2021 meeting, and still unknown, is what are the determined capacities for employment and housing on Mercer Island. The results of the UGCS are due to be made available in March. There were mandated methodology changes since the last UGCS (Buildable Lands) in 2014, which may impact the capacities for employment and housing on Mercer Island.

Based on the January 19, 2021 discussion with City Council, as well as an understanding of known and unknown information – specifically the results of the UGCS – at this juncture, it is recommended City Council provide staff broad direction now and consider the matter further once the UGCS results are available.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Authorize the City Manager to direct staff to continue advocating with King County and the High-Capacity Transit regional geography caucus for the lowest possible growth targets related to employment and housing for the County-Wide Planning Policies Growth Target Update Process and to bring the matter back to the City Council for further consideration and direction once the results of the Urban Growth Capacity Study are available.