



DATE: April 17, 2017

TO: Mayor Stokes and Councilmembers

FROM: Dan Stroh, Planning Director, 452-5255  
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*Department of Planning and Community Development*

SUBJECT: Ratification of proposed amendments to the King County Countywide Planning Policies

The purpose of this Management Brief is to summarize three technical map amendments and one substantive map amendment to the King County Countywide Planning Policies that were recommended for ratification by the Growth Management Planning Council. City Council traditionally considers these amendments and votes on whether or not to ratify within the required 90 day period, which ends June 4.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Growth Management Planning Council unanimously approved motion 16-1 (Attachment A) at their September 28, 2016 meeting recommending adjustments to the urban growth area boundary in four locations. Three of the amendments are technical adjustments bordering the potential annexation areas of Enumclaw and Covington. These amendments shift the urban growth area boundary to include or exclude road rights-of-way to avoid “checker board” maintenance responsibilities – i.e. alternating or street centerline jurisdictional boundaries. A fourth amendment reclassifies a portion of Issaquah’s East Cougar potential annexation area from urban to rural.

Staff recommends that the City Council ratify the proposed Countywide Planning Policy amendments. If City Council concurs, staff will prepare a resolution for action on the consent agenda for the May 1 City Council meeting.

The Growth Management Planning Council is responsible for reviewing and recommending policy and map amendments to the Countywide Planning Policies and related map amendments. The Growth Management Planning Council is composed of elected officials from the King County Council, Seattle, Sound Cities Association and Bellevue. Councilmember Robertson is Bellevue's representative.

The King County Council approved and ratified the amendment on behalf of unincorporated King County on February 13, 2017. For the amendments to be adopted they must be ratified by at least 30 percent of city and county governments representing 70 percent of the population of King County within 90 days of the March 6, 2017 approval by the King County Council.

Attachment A includes a set of maps depicting the amendments to the urban growth area boundaries. The three technical amendments affecting boundaries outside of Enumclaw and Covington will avoid issues with road maintenance responsibilities when these areas are annexed. Both cities support the amendments.

The more substantive amendment to the urban growth area boundary involves the city of Issaquah's East Cougar potential annexation area. Issaquah requested that 776 acres be removed from the city's potential annexation area due to environmental constraints, the difficulty of providing urban services and the fact the area is not needed to accommodate future growth. After analyzing existing conditions, including the level of current development, King County recommended that the eastern portion of the area that is vacant, mostly encumbered by steep slopes, and already zoned for 1 unit per 5 acres be reclassified from urban to rural. However, the western portion has existing single family development on large parcels that would experience a down-zone if reclassified as rural. The King County analysis also noted that reclassifying the western, developed portion would create a "potentially costly, permanent rural 'service island' that can only be served by driving through the City of Issaquah or the City of Bellevue." The city of Issaquah agreed to retain the western portion within their potential annexation area.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Under the provisions of the Countywide Planning Policies, cities in King County have 90 days to take formal action to either ratify or disapprove the amendment. No action is deemed to be the same as ratification. The 90 day deadline for action on these amendments is June 4. Cities are not allowed to modify the proposals as part of the ratification process.

If Council has no objections, staff will prepare a Resolution for ratification of the proposed amendments to the Countywide Planning Policies for Council action on the May 1 consent agenda.

### **ATTACHMENT**

- A. March 6 correspondence from King County regarding ratification, including King County Council and Growth Management Planning Council motions and staff reports.