

**WHATCOM COUNTY
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M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Growth Management Coordinating Council
FROM: David Stalheim, Director
DATE: May 28, 2009
RE: Future Growth Management Coordinating Council meetings

When Executive Pete Kremen invited cities, tribes and the county council to work together to address growth management issues, there were three issues that the elected officials agreed to work on:

- 1) Review and update of the vision for future growth and development in the region.
- 2) Review and update of the county-wide planning policies that form the framework for review and amendment of city and county comprehensive plans.
- 3) Review of county population forecasts and ways to implement urban growth areas.

An appeal of the county's Urban Growth Area review process and an order from the Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board (WWGMHB) required that the focus be shifted to the Urban Growth Area review and revision task. After nine months of work, the Growth Management Coordinating Council is concluding recommendations for part of the third task.

Whatcom County Administration has a commitment to support consensus recommendations of the Growth Management Coordinating Council. Whatcom County is concerned that some of the preliminary recommendations of the Growth Management Coordinating Council have not been supported when they go before the respective councils. The Growth Management Coordinating Council should address the commitment to support the recommendations so that everyone agrees that the time and effort is well spent.

City and county planners met to discuss whether to continue the work of the Growth Management Coordinating Council. Staff agreed that the work should continue with a shift towards review and update of the County-wide Planning Policies. These policies can help shape the vision for the region and work on ways to implement the urban growth areas.

Staff suggest that the Growth Management Coordinating Council reconvene in September to address the County-wide Planning Policies, with the goal to be completed by the end of 2009 with recommendations to our respective councils.