

# Meeting Summary WHATCOM COUNTY GROWTH MANAGEMENT COORDINATING COUNCIL

**January 21, 2009**

Whatcom Educational Credit Union (WECU)  
5659 Barrett Road  
Ferndale, WA  
3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

## Welcome and Introductions

Jack Louws, Chair, welcomed participants. The following Growth Management Coordinating Council (GMCC) members were present:

### *Whatcom County*

Pete Kremen, County Executive  
Sam Crawford, County Council  
Seth Fleetwood, County Council

### *City of Bellingham*

David Webster, Chief Administrative Officer  
Barbara Ryan, City Council

### *City of Blaine*

Bonnie Onyon, Mayor

### *City of Everson*

Andy Rowison, City Council

### *City of Ferndale*

Gary Jensen, Mayor

### *City of Lynden*

Jack Louws, Mayor

### *City of Nooksack*

Marshall Judy, City Council

### *City of Sumas*

Bob Bromley, Mayor

## Agenda Modification

The GMCC agreed to revise the agenda to consider the “review schedule” topic at the end of the meeting.

## Minutes

The minutes of December 3, 2008 were approved without changes.

## Growth Alternatives

Lisa Grueter, ICF Jones & Stokes highlighted the January 13, 2009 memo on alternatives and described a sample “bubble map” from Shelton, Washington. Key concepts included “bookending” the analysis to set a range, varying land use strategies, and level of detail on the proposed maps.

The GMCC expressed concern over the alternatives development process. GMCC comments addressed:

- Need for additional time to fully vet and receive input on alternatives;
- Concern over identifying specific urban growth area expansion or retractions on a map;
- Differing thoughts on the countywide population target, including identification of the number and whether the EIS should consider a range of numbers. Comments included that the GMCC preliminary population allocation should be the focus, and that if there are differences in population studied to make the differences meaningful; and
- Differing approaches to whether/how infill and expansion of urban growth areas should be considered and how population should be allocated throughout the county.

The GMCC asked County and City staff to come up with ideas and recommendations for GMCC review on February 4, 2009.

### **Growth Allocation**

Brett Sheckler and Kapena Pflum, Berk & Associates, reviewed the January 13, 2009 memo on Phase 1 Allocations of 2031 Growth to Planning Areas.

GMCC members discussed the preliminary allocations. Comments included that the rural trend was influenced by a lot of permits issued in Sudden Valley. Questions included what share of growth Sudden Valley represented of the rural area. Kapena Pflum indicated 32%. It was noted that the employment allocations did not differ much and that perhaps an average could be considered.

### **Land Capacity Methodology**

David Stalheim presented six issues with the land capacity methodology, recently discussed by the Technical Advisory Group. The six issues included: underutilized parcels for commercial/industrial uses, vacant commercial or industrial lots, underutilized single family residential property, floodplain areas, small pieces affected by critical areas, and floor area for future commercial and industrial employment. No action was requested at this time, as additional issues may arise as the results are developed further.

### **Review Schedule**

With the assumption that the alternative development concerns would be addressed, Lisa Grueter reviewed the process flow chart, and upcoming meetings regarding alternatives and future GMCC topics such as monitoring methods and countywide planning policies.

### **Other Business**

No other business was conducted during this meeting.