

Report to the
Growth Management Planning Council:
CPP PF-19A School/City/County Coordination Meetings

Prepared by the King County Department of Local Services and the
Interjurisdictional Staff Team (IJT)

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Purpose

The purpose of this report is to bring to the Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC) the results of the school/city/county coordination meetings called for in Countywide Planning Policy (CPP) PF-19A. Specifically, Policy PF-19A calls for the agencies to work together to assess school capacity needs, identify future school sites within the UGA and, as necessary, prepare joint strategies for resolving school siting needs consistent with adopted comprehensive plan policies.

Background

In 2010 and 2011, the GMPC undertook the first comprehensive evaluation of the CPPs since their initial adoption to bring them into compliance with the multicounty planning policies (VISION 2040) adopted by the Puget Sound Regional Council in 2008.

In September 2011, the GMPC completed its review and voted to recommend an updated set of CPPs to the King County Council. However, members could not reach consensus on policies governing the siting of public facilities and services. At issue was whether public schools serving primarily urban populations should be sited in rural areas and whether such facilities should be served by sewers.

In order to address this longstanding policy issue, the GMPC agreed to set aside the policies related to siting public facilities and postpone its consideration until a task force comprised of school districts, cities, King County, rural residents and other experts could study the issue and report back to the King County Executive. The GMPC established guidance for formation of the School Siting Task Force in their Motion 11-2 on September 21, 2011.

The Task Force completed its work on March 31, 2012, issuing a report and final recommendations to the King County Executive.

To implement a portion of the Task Force's recommendations, the GMPC adopted two new policies in the CPPs as follows:

PF-18 Locate new schools, institutions, and other community facilities and services that primarily serve urban populations within the Urban Growth Area, where they are accessible to the communities they serve, except as provided in the March 31, 2012 School Siting Task Force Report. Locate these facilities in places that are well served by transit and pedestrian and bicycle networks.

PF-19 Locate new schools and institutions primarily serving rural residents in neighboring cities and rural towns, except as provided in the March 31, 2012 School Siting Task Force Report and locate new community facilities and services that primarily serve rural residents in neighboring cities and rural towns, with the limited exceptions when their use is dependent upon rural location and their size and scale support rural character.

Additionally, in 2013 the GMPC adopted a work program to implement the remainder of the Task Force recommendations. Specifically, the Task Force recommended the following:

“The Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC) should identify policies and adopt a work program that commits jurisdictions to working together to identify future school sites within the UGA. These policies shall direct jurisdictions to use zoning and other land use tools to ensure a sufficient supply of land for siting schools”.

To implement the above Task Force recommendation, a **new policy PF-19A** was proposed and adopted by the GMPC on July 23, 2015 to identify a process that commits local jurisdictions to working with school districts on collaborative planning:

Introduction

Public school facilities to meet the needs of growing communities are an essential part of the public infrastructure. Coordination between each jurisdiction’s land use plan and regulations and their respective school district[s] facility needs are essential for public school capacity needs to be met. The following policy applies countywide and requires engagement between each school district and each city that is served by the school district. The policy also applies to King County as a jurisdiction for areas of unincorporated King County that are within a school district’s service boundary. The policy initiates a periodic procedure to identify if there are individual school district siting issues and if so, a process for the school district and jurisdiction to cooperatively prepare strategies for resolving the issue.

PF-19A *Plan, through a cooperative process between jurisdictions and school districts, that public school facilities are available, to meet the needs of existing and projected residential development consistent with adopted comprehensive plan policies and growth forecasts.*

Cooperatively work with each school district located within the jurisdiction’s boundaries to evaluate the school district’s ability to site school facilities necessary to meet the school district’s identified student capacity needs. Use school district capacity and enrollment data and the growth forecasts and development data of each jurisdiction located within the school district’s service boundaries. By January 2016 and every two years thereafter, determine if there is development capacity and the supporting infrastructure to site the needed school facilities. If not, cooperatively prepare a strategy to address the capacity shortfall. Potential strategies may include:

- Shared public facilities such as play fields, parking areas and access drives*
- School acquisition or lease of appropriate public lands*
- Regulatory changes such as allowing schools to locate in additional zones or revised development standards*
- School design standards that reduce land requirements (such as multi-story structures or reduced footprint) while still meeting programmatic needs*

In 2017, and every two years thereafter, King County shall report to the GMPC on whether the goals of this policy are being met. The GMPC shall identify corrective actions as necessary to implement this policy.

Analysis

The requirement to accommodate student capacity primarily in the urban area is challenging and has become even more so as King County continues to grow and as Washington state implements new policies impacting school capacity (for example, full-day Kindergarten and reduced class size initiatives). Land for schools is scarce within the UGA and the state and local regulatory structures can pose barriers to building quality schools with sufficient capacity. While this situation is most apparent in the school districts and cities that include both urban and rural areas, the need for increased school capacity is also apparent in many districts that are comprised only of urban territory.

There are 19 school districts with all or part of their districts in King County. Of these, 14 districts held “PF-19A meetings” or have otherwise communicated with the local jurisdictions in which the districts are located. Other districts reported regular ongoing communication with their local jurisdictions. The meetings offered opportunities for information sharing and collaborative thinking between the districts and the jurisdictions.

In those cases where a clear solution, despite best efforts, is not readily foreseeable to address needed school capacity, the school district and the affected jurisdictions must collaboratively prepare a joint strategy aimed at resolving the capacity shortfall.

The following is a summary of the information submitted by local jurisdictions and school districts:

	School District	Jurisdiction	Meeting Date	Meeting Outcome Summary
1.	Lake Washington: Brian Buck Denise Stiffarm, Counsel	City of Redmond: Carol Helland City of Kirkland: Adam Weinstein Jeremy McMahon City of Sammamish: David Pyle Kellye Hilde Lindsey Ozbolt King County: Jae Hill Karen Wolf	October 21, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The District is one of the fastest growing school districts in the State of Washington (now at #2). Growth-related capacity needs include both new schools and expanded capacity at existing schools.• The cities expressed interest in working with LWSD to develop a model ordinance for school site development• The Parties agreed that there is no need at this time to consider a joint strategy to address siting issues.• The Parties agreed to meet regularly with the District asking for a placeholder to meet in 2021 to review updated enrollment

				<p>and development data, and to discuss 2022 bond/levy planning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District is interested in siting schools in new urban center developments (Totem Lake, Marymoor, etc.)
2.	<p>Issaquah: Jacob Kuper Tom Mullins Denise Stiffarm, Counsel</p>	<p>City of Issaquah: Keith Niven City of Newcastle: Steve Osguthorpe City of Bellevue: Toni Pratt City of Renton: Angie Mathias City of Sammamish: David Pyle Kellye Hilde Lindsey Ozbolt King County: Jae Hill Karen Wolf</p>	October 19, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The District acquired site for four new schools (two via eminent domain, 1 in lieu of eminent domain) to implement the 2016 Bond. Two schools are under construction and HS4/ES17 are in permit review. • The Parties agreed that there is no need at this time to consider a joint strategy to address siting issues but reserved a revision to this finding based upon the pending HS4/ES17 permit process. • The Parties agreed to meet regularly pursuant to the PF-19A schedule. • District asked for a placeholder for 2021 meeting to address updated enrollment and development data post-COVID and also revisit joint strategy discussion (as needed)
3.	<p>Northshore: Dri Ralph Sandra Calissendorff Denise Stiffarm, Counsel</p>	<p>City of Bothell: Michael Katterman City of Kenmore: Debbie Bent City of Woodinville: Robert Grumbach King County: Jae Hill Karen Wolf</p>	October 8, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The District is continuing to grow at a steady pace and searching for new school sites. The District is considering creative alternatives for expanding capacity at existing sites as well as innovative siting (adaptive re-use of commercial facility for new choice high school). • The Parties agreed that there is no need at this time to consider a joint strategy to address siting issues. • The Parties agreed to meet yearly. • District asked for a placeholder for 2021 meeting to address updated enrollment and development data, NSD Facilities Master Plan, and 2022 bond/levy planning.

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cities will continue discussions on collaborative code amendments to facilitate school siting.
4.	Snoqualmie Valley Ryan Stokes Denise Stiffarm, Counsel	City of Snoqualmie: Mark Hofman City of North Bend: David Miller King County: Jae Hill Karen Wolf	October 23, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District, City of North Bend, and King County agreed to develop a joint strategy for water availability for planning for Elementary School No. 7 (if sited in North Bend within Sallal Water Association's service area.)
5.	Bellevue Jack McLeod	City of Bellevue: Toni Pratt		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Bellevue has a dedicated team which handles school planning and permitting that meets regularly. • Shared facilities—fields, buildings, etc.—with City Parks.
5.	Skykomish Thomas Jay	King County: Jae Hill		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The District has steady school enrollment and doesn't have major capital plans, but does need assistance with modernizing their historic school facilities. The County will assist where possible with grants applications and data.
6.	Vashon Island Matt Sullivan	King County: Jae Hill		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will need a meeting in 2022-2023 to plan for third capital projects bond.

The following school districts indicated no current emergent school siting issues and/or that they were conducting regular meetings with their respective jurisdictions, and therefore no reason to meet at this time with local jurisdictions:

1. Enumclaw School District
2. Fife School District
3. Highline School District
4. Riverview School District
5. Tahoma School District
6. Tukwila School District

Other school districts in King County shared enrollment growth, capital projects, and land use issues during the County's school district capital facilities plan update process at a joint workshop on June 15, 2020 and, at that time, indicated no need for a PF-19A coordination meeting. These districts include:

1. Auburn School District
2. Federal Way School District
3. Kent School District
4. Renton School District

The following school districts were unable to provide specific information before publication of this report:

1. Mercer Island School District
2. Seattle School District
3. Shoreline School District

Conclusion and Next Steps

2020 was noted as a particularly challenging year for districts to meet, as the effects of the Coronavirus pandemic are consuming staff time and resources, so it's understandable that some districts and jurisdictions were unable to meet or respond to requests for information. Several districts are also seeing temporary enrollment anomalies due to the pandemic and will monitor closely post-pandemic enrollment figures for purposes of longer-term planning.

This was the third round of PF-19A discussions between the school districts and the jurisdictions: the first round was reported to the GMPC in a report dated June 1, 2016, and the second round in a report dated May 30, 2018. So far, none of the meetings have revealed any need for districts and jurisdictions to develop a joint strategy for addressing school capacity shortfalls, however, two potential site-specific, land-use-focused meetings were identified—in Issaquah and North Bend—during the 2020 meetings. These 2020 meetings also identified the need for collaboration on future school development standards in jurisdictions serving the Lake Washington and Issaquah School Districts.

Of the 19 school districts in King County, representatives from 16 of them either participated in meetings with representatives of local jurisdictions within the district boundaries or indicated no need to do so. Of the 40 jurisdictions within King County, representatives from 14 of them met with school district representatives or indicated they were already having ongoing meetings or conversations. Planning staff from the City of Seattle stated that they had collaborated with Seattle School District, but were unable to provide specific information on meeting dates or topics before the publication of this report; Mercer Island School District similarly reported meeting with the City of Mercer Island but also contributed no specific data for the purposes of this report.

The next report to the GMPC will be in 2022 to identify changes that have occurred and any need for school districts and local jurisdictions to raise school siting issues to develop collaborative planning and joint strategies for addressing the issues. At that time, there may also be additional information regarding subsequent and continuing meetings between school districts and jurisdictions.