

March 12, 2012

School Siting Task Force  
c/o Lauren Smith  
KC Executive's Office

We request the School Siting Task Force carefully consider each of the 18 school sites in the Rural Area proposed by the various School Districts. We write in strong opposition to allowing these urban-related schools sites in the Rural Area to be developed under policies that allow sewer hookups.

The only exception we would abide by would be one where a site adjoins an existing school site already served by sewers. However, even here we draw the line--no High Schools and their large footprint and outsized impacts on our already fragile and underfunded Rural Area transportation infrastructure.

Several proposed sites are inside or near to our service areas and, if developed according to School District plans, would have detrimental effects on the infrastructure and character of the Rural Area. Three of the sites located in the Rural Area outside the City of Black Diamond are especially troubling. An abundance of undeveloped land within the Urban Growth Area (UGA) of the City is readily available. Thus, we see no reason whatsoever for siting these urban-related schools outside the UGA.

We're empathetic to the School Districts' situation, but these sites, if developed with schools and maintenance facilities, would be devastating to the local rural character, rural-related infrastructure, and community plans.

The Area Council has repeatedly gone on record opposing policies that look on the Rural Area as a "land bank" for urban-related uses. Please site urban-related schools in those urban communities to which they serve. We call for the Task Force to reflect in its recommendations our long-time motto: "Keep the Rural Area rural."

Thank you in advance for taking our comments under your strongest consideration.

Steve Heister  
Chair, Greater Maple Valley Unincorporated Area Council