



Growth Targets; Proposed Mine

by Peter Rimpos, GMVUAC Corresponding Secretary

On Monday, April 7, 2025, the Area Council held its Regular Monthly Meeting at the Maple Valley Fire Station and via Zoom. Major topics discussed were: (1) Reserve Silica; (2) Critical Areas Update; (3) King County Growth Targets; and (4) Segale Mine Proposal.

King County Growth Targets

The King County Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC) consists of elected officials from King County, Seattle, Bellevue, other cities and towns, special purpose districts, and the Port of Seattle. It applies the State Growth Management Act (GMA) in setting county and city Growth Targets (for both housing and employment growth) to be used in each jurisdiction's comprehensive plan that look out for the next 20 years. These are developed through a collaborative process that involves trade-offs and difficult choices about the appropriate level, location, and type of growth to be encouraged, public spending, governance decisions, environmental protection, and the quality of life in King County.

In the past year the GMPC has established a Growth Target *reconciliation process* to align adopted targets with the growth assumptions in comprehensive plans and to ensure realistic achievements can be made. In some cases jurisdictions have asked for changes to their agreed-to Growth Targets (up and down) for various reasons, e.g., lack of water supply, lack of adequate road infrastructure, signed master-planned development contracts, etc.

In July 2024 the Joint Rural Team (JRT)—organizations spread throughout King County's Rural Area coordinated by the Area Council—provided [Comments on the Reconciliation Process](http://gmvuac.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Joint-Team-Letter-to-GMPC-GT-Reconciliation-Process.pdf) (http://gmvuac.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Joint-Team-Letter-to-GMPC-GT-Reconciliation-Process.pdf) to the GMPC as it was developing its process and on the City of Black Diamond's (a King County-designated "*City in the Rural Area*") request to greatly increase its Growth Targets.

On March 19 the JRT submitted a [Comments on Carnation's Growth Target Reconciliation](http://gmvuac.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/JRT-Comment-Ltr-Carnation-Gr-Target-Reconciliation.pdf) (http://gmvuac.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/JRT-Comment-Ltr-Carnation-Gr-Target-Reconciliation.pdf) letter to the GMPC. In the letter the JRT supported the City of Carnation's request for a *reduced* future Growth Target, as the JRT has done for all outlying "*Cities in the Rural Area*."

Segale Mine Proposal

A gravel mine and asphalt plant is proposed by Segale Properties on a ~1,000-ac forested site along the Green River Gorge near Cumberland. On April 3 the Joint Rural Team submitted [Comments](http://gmvuac.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/JRT-Comment-Ltr-Tacoma-Water-Segale-) (http://gmvuac.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/JRT-Comment-Ltr-Tacoma-Water-Segale-

Mine.pdf) to the Tacoma Water District asking it to *not* provide water to this project, which it needs to move forward and is a major hurdle in seeking to secure its project permits.

There are many issues associated with the proposed mine. The site is the most important part of a unique uplands-connected habitat corridor and is an important migration corridor, as well recognized by the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe. It is the last wild place with access and the last Chinook habitat on the Green River, as down river has been channelized. A massive mine complex would highly degrade the habitat corridor of the Middle Green River, change the river's hydrology, and forever change the last wild place in Rural King County. It would negatively impact one of the state's most prestigious campground and fishing area, place commuting residents in danger with large trucks carrying water to the site 24/7, severely damage our already delicate Rural Area road infrastructure and bridges, and do irreparable harm to the biodiversity and ecosystem that is the Green River.

Water, which would be used to wash rock and equipment and used in the asphalt plant, must be treated carefully to minimize surface water and ground water pollution. In fact, the chemicals and pollutants in the water from the asphalt plant alone make it hazardous and difficult to treat properly on site. Further, the soils on site are very permeable and the whole site is an important area to recharge the groundwater for all the springs along the Green River Gorge, which the fish as well as the city of Black Diamond use as a critical resource. Finally, King County Comprehensive Plan Policy R-338 prohibits new industrial uses on land zoned Rural Area (RA) or Forest (F) that produce substantial wastewater or require substantial investments in infrastructure (e.g., water). In fact, serving a forest zone with public water is *not* consistent with the State's Growth Management Act.

Reserve Silica

Regarding the Reserve Silica site south of Ravensdale, on March 17 the Area Council submitted a [Letter to KC DLS-P–Reserve Silica](http://gmvuac.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Cvr-Ltr-Summary-of-DiscReqs-Reserve-Silica-1.pdf) (<http://gmvuac.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Cvr-Ltr-Summary-of-DiscReqs-Reserve-Silica-1.pdf>) and [Ongoing Discussion with KC DLS-P–Summary Table–Reserve Silica](http://gmvuac.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Ongoing-Discussion-Reserve-Silica-TABLE-UPDATED-3-17-25.pdf) (<http://gmvuac.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Ongoing-Discussion-Reserve-Silica-TABLE-UPDATED-3-17-25.pdf>) in response to King County (KC) Department of Local Services' (DLS's) March 7 response to the Area Council's October 18, 2024, letter as a followup to the October 7, 2024 Area Council Monthly Meeting with KC DLS Director, Leon Richardson, and Commercial Product Line Manager, Ty Peterson.

Specific questions dealt with: Operating Permit; Unpermitted Clearcut; Expansion of Dumping; "*Reclamation*" (ongoing for over 20 yr !); Permit Conditions; and Plan of Operations.

The Area Council, which has followed activities at the Reserve Silica site for decades, believes there are some facts on which it and KC can agree. The letter lists them as:

1. The Reserve Silica property is NOT a commercial landfill site — for either "*clean fill*" or inert waste, but a former mining site that legally must (as much as is still practical) be reclaimed to Forestry/Open Space, as required by KC Code Title 21A.22.081.C.2.a.
2. There already is MORE THAN ENOUGH fill on-site to "*reclaim*" any old mining areas, including the ONLY two approved fill pits (Upper and Lower), as well as any old coal mine areas on the property.

Critical Areas Ordinance Update

The last piece of the *2024 King County Comprehensive Plan (KCCP) Major Ten-Year Update* is the **Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) Update**. On December 5, 2024, the King County Executive submitted his revised [Best Available Science Review and Updates Report](http://gmvuac.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Best-Available-Science-Review-and-Updates-Report.pdf) (<http://gmvuac.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Best-Available-Science-Review-and-Updates-Report.pdf>)

content/uploads/2025/02/2024-0408-BAS-Review-and-Updates-Report.pdf) to the King County Council, accompanied by a [Frequently Asked Questions](http://gmvuac.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/CAO-FAQ-120524-1.pdf) (http://gmvuac.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/CAO-FAQ-120524-1.pdf) document.

On March 17 the Joint Rural Team (JRT) submitted [CAO/BAS Comments](http://gmvuac.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/KCCP-CAO-Upd-BAS-JRT-Comments.pdf) (http://gmvuac.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/KCCP-CAO-Upd-BAS-JRT-Comments.pdf) to KC Council's Local Services & Land-Use Committee. It will review the Update and Public Comments and submit its recommendation to the full King County Council, which has until the end of 2025 to approve a final Update.

The JRT found that in its CAO Update King County has tried to balance the need for Critical Area protections with the needs of private property owners, recognizing there is no approach that will eliminate all risk to Critical areas when a property is developed. King County's regulatory approach is to eliminate high risk, but recognize that moderate to low risk can be managed.

Next Area Council Meeting

The next Area Council monthly meeting will be held Monday, May 5, 2025 from 7 - 9:30 PM at the Maple Valley Fire Station at 22225 SE 231st St (across from the KC Sheriff's Precinct).

Meetings are held on the *first* Monday of the month (except for Holidays, when they are held on the *second* Monday). All meeting announcements, agendas, and Zoom information are posted on the Area Council's [Website](http://www.gmvuac.org) (www.gmvuac.org) and local *NextDoor* platforms. You can also find us on our [FaceBook page](https://www.facebook.com/GMVUAC/) (https://www.facebook.com/GMVUAC/). Each meeting begins with an open Public Comment period where anyone can voice concerns, comments, etc.

Area Council Membership

Your Area Council, founded in 1978, is one of the longest continuously active local councils. It serves as an all-volunteer, locally recognized advisory body to King County on behalf of all rural unincorporated area residents living in the Tahoma School District (TSD). The Area Council, in "*working to keep the Rural Area rural*," collaborates *regionally* with other King County Rural Area organizations through both the *Joint Rural Team* and its *Joint Transportation Initiative*.

The twelve-seat Area Council has four open seats. If you have an interest in joining, please send an e-mail to: [GMVUAC](mailto:info@gmvuac.org) (info@gmvuac.org) or attend (either in-person or virtually) a monthly meeting and express your interest. To be eligible to join the Area Council as a *Member* you need to live *within* the TSD.

Residents, even those not living *within* the TSD, are eligible to become *Associate Members* who can serve (including as Chair or Vice-Chair) on any Area Council Committee: *Environment, Growth Management, Transportation, Public Relations, or Train Show*. For information on each of these committees please see the Area Council's [Website](http://www.gmvuac.org) (www.gmvuac.org) and use the drop-down menu under *Committees*.

All Monthly Meeting Summary Articles can be found on our Home page in the *2025/2024 GMVUAC Monthly Meeting Articles* box or by using the drop-down menu under *Correspondence*.