

Comprehensive Plan Public Meeting – Climate Change, Environment, and Transportation (September 14, 2023)

The following document details the Breakout Group Discussion Questions (in bold) and provides a brief summarization of answers and discussion points from the attendees.

Email us at compplan@kitsap.gov with comments, questions, and feedback.

Climate Change

What climate change impacts are you most concerned about?

- Sea level rise – December 2022 flooding may be misleading as an example of sea level rise impacts
- Extreme heat, heat waves,
- Extreme weather patterns
- Lack of shade trees
 - o Pay for trees cut, to help fund trees elsewhere
 - o Property rights issue with tree cutting fees
- Ability to grow food, agriculture.
- Climate migration from other areas
- Fires, lots of timber
- Tree retention.
- EV vehicles./ Bike lanes and safety.
- Flooding & sea level rise– shoreline master plan
- Greenhouse Gas Reduction

What solutions would help improve resiliency of communities?

- Take climate change impacts into account when discussing zoning
- Should not grant building permits in areas most likely to be flooded or face impacts of climate change
- Insurance companies may address this
- When there's damage due to CC impacts, rebuilding in the same area should not be allowed. This will minimize future repeat impacts.
- Extreme heat – how houses and development are built; need to take into consideration building materials
- Encourage tree retention
- A tree replacement policy rather than a tree retention policy
- Big forests and trees moderate temperature of soil. Clear cutting for development will result in more heat in surrounding areas. Trees are very valuable, people and animals. Cutting trees is a big mistake.
- How can we reduce clear cutting in the short term? Short term solutions like funding protection of trees/forests through purchase of timber rights.
- Forest fires – need to look at how to clean and manage forests to reduce fire risks. Selective clearing.
- Forest Practices – County approves thinning practices; unless there's conversion. Typically, with logging, the monocrop of Douglas Fir, there's a model by County Parks to think monocrops, understory are planted with Western Hemlock or Red Cedar. These trees provide more forest intake, uptake of water to regulate hydrology and provide environmental improvements.

- Can do a lot by installing/requiring solar panels on parking areas. Shade cars and provide solar energy.
- County should start considering, with all development needed, to install solar panels.
 - o Both public and private buildings.
- Sometimes HOA prohibit solar panels on roof. Can county have a requirement to eliminate this HOA restriction?
- Often the glare of the solar panels that is the primary reason why HOA don't like them. Should find panels without glare.
- Can County provide tax incentives to promote solar panel use.
- Estuaries and creeks – impacted in two ways, SLR. Estuaries have important and threatened species. Creeks are impacted by hard surfaces, stormwater runoff. Salmon cannot survive in stream. Double impact going on. How can we be sensitive to areas that have problems.
- Should use pervious surface.
- Double stack parking instead of spread out.
- New CAO will help with stream shading. County should augment stream flows with well water during low flow periods. Could use recycled water.
- Forest practices in Canada – look into how indigenous knowledge controlled fires with fire breaks.
- Forest practice challenges – Doug Firs are vulnerable to heat, currently seeing chunks of forests dying. Select trees that are more resilient.
- County should focus resource and energy on farmland preservation.
- Timber companies have a right to log. If resource lands is managed for timber it isn't converted to residential uses.
- Focused preservation of every kind of working landscape...farmland, open space, timber, serves as a carbon sink and has significant ecosystem services.
- Better and more realistic education about the risks of climate change
- Air quality impacts on certain populations – alerts.
- Can we incentivize keeping trees – property tax incentives. Make a win-win.
- Convert tree farms to diverse forest. Incentivize preservation of private lands.
- Tree retention can be better than replacement. We need green belts, wildlife corridors.
- Island Lake clear cutting.
- Tree retention can be a taking of property rights. Kitsap should purchase timber rights, but not take.

Which element may need the most attention in regards to climate change?

- Transportation, need actual infrastructure for biking off road (no shoulders)
- Energy
- Reliable public transport is a win-win

Environment

What are the pressing environmental concerns over the next 20 years in Kitsap that we should focus on in the Comprehensive Plan?

- Discharge of sewer plants into Puget Sound, need program to improve and implement local membrane for sewer plants; could use for irrigation rather than discharge
- Loss of natural areas and open space to uncontrolled development (e.g. development not focused within UGAs)

- When there's sprawl, it is difficult to get around, no sense of community, need to drive everywhere.
- Build in urban areas, don't expand urban areas
- County should take responsibility for streams, inspections, maintenance, monitoring, etc.
- Save more trees when developing properties, larger buffer requirements
- Less clear cutting of trees
- Less tree cutting along rights of way
- Help keep trees protected from wind blow downs
- Better buffers to protect streams and wetlands
- Green belt buffers between new development and existing neighborhoods
- Fresh drinking water
- We are the gateway to the Olympics, we have an opportunity to improve our environment
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What programs, technical assistance, and services are needed to promote natural resources protection and restoration?

- Fire education, during burn bans
- Fireworks enforcement, bans during fire bans
- Promote working forests
- Adequate forestry management – avoid wildfire.
- Our industries in Kitsap County (military, health care) are not necessarily the most environmentally protective.

As housing and development come to our urban areas, how can we best protect and restore the environment?

- Micro villages to reduce need for Transportation trips outside the neighborhood
- Island Lake type developments not appropriate
- Keep urban services in urban areas, (YMCA...)
- Support schools with facilities closer to them, for their health
- Avoid UGA expansion. -Protect farms, wildlife areas.
- Save existing blocks of forest, keep them healthy. Incentivize private owners.
- In urban areas – increase quality of life. Limit energy use in buildings. Walkable streets, green streets.
- Need basics – good transit, nice streets. Then more people would want to live there.
- Fire hazard – need to prohibit fireworks.

Transportation

As we increase density in our urban areas, how would you handle the additional travel demand?

- Need wider shoulders for non-motorized transportation, walkers
- Need complete streets, for pedestrian safety
- Need better funding alternatives for shoulder widening or paving existing shoulders
- Compact Dev. Mixed Use will encourage efficiency. Multimodal infrastructure and complete streets.
- Connected sidewalks.

- Would like to see criteria for how County decides where this infrastructure goes? Needs to be clear how we prioritize nonmotorized projects

What is Kitsap County's greatest transportation need right now? Over the next 20 years?

- Challenges of transit system is very focused on moving shipyard workers. Not focused on low income. Transit systems somewhat drives development. Low income, tend to live around transit areas. Not enough frequency of buses to allow living in Silverdale and work in Bremerton.
- Same issues with connecting other counties and communities.
- Kitsap should look at adjoining areas.
- Would be nice if we have things other than buses.
- Pedestrians crossing the street in Silverdale is a challenge. Not walkable. Very long crosswalks.
- Need cycle lanes. There are plenty gaps between cycle lanes between Kitsap and Poulsbo. Need to fill in cycle lane gaps in community.
- Safe Route to schools need to be promoted. Need to have increase of grant writers in PW staff to take advantage of state funding available.
- There is no regional money to connect bicycles or pedestrian access. It is not looked at through the TIP. All about cars and safety.
- Problems with development – only way County can require developer to install walkable facilities is through frontage and ROW guidelines.
- Community requests don't make it on the TIP
- County should have a separate TIP for pedestrian.
- Two TIPs with different funding mechanisms.
- Miller Bay Rd shoulders never made it on the list. Reason being higher stormwater treatment due to area being in census-urbanized areas. DOE requires new hardened surfaces in census urbanized areas to be treated before reaching the Puget Sound.
- How can we install pervious shoulders in Miller Bay Rd?
- One of the challenges to ensuring walkable and bikeable communities is the combination of state and county road. Money is the issue. New SW regulations are burdensome and expensive.
- Incentivize intraurban connectivity.
- Electrifying vehicles; charging stations; development of new homes should require charging stations in neighborhoods.
- Roads in rural area are dark and unsafe. No shelters for bus stops. Children don't have a space to stand while waiting to go to school.
- Rapidly developing air taxis. We need to have Kitsap Transit Park and Ride Facilities include appropriate infrastructure to support air taxi.
- Ferry system improvements, make it free such as highways are
- Car tabs, bring back MVET to help fund ferries
- Reduce property taxes and increase sales tax to offset revenue for transportation/ferries
- Better ferry connectivity between communities
- Gorst