

# Lewis County Planned Growth Committee

## Public Meeting

In-Person & Virtual Meeting via Zoom

**January 18, 2023 - Meeting Notes**

**Planned Growth Committee Representative Present:** Sean Swope, County Commissioner; Marcia Manley, Mossyrock; Emil Pierson, Centralia; Joe Schey, Vader; Dan Mortensen, Morton; Bob Spahr, Chehalis; Devin Jackson, Consultant for Napavine

**Lewis County Staff Present:** Lee Napier, Community Development Director; Mindy Brooks, Senior Long Range Planner; Megan Sathre, Office Assistant Senior; Barbara Russell, Lewis County Prosecuting Attorney

**Others Present:** Katie Cote; Eli Mulkhausen, BHC Consultants; Hillary Hoke, Centralia; Linda Hannon, Mossyrock; Linda Wood; Catherine McCoy, Department of Commerce; Jill Anderson, Chehalis; Tammy Baraconi, Chehalis;

### **Materials Used:**

- Agenda
- 2023 PGC Scope of Work
- Approach to Selecting and Allocating Population Projections
- Countywide Planning Policies
- PGC Bylaws
- Department of Commerce Presentation

### **1. Call to Order**

The chair, Commissioner Swope, called the meeting to order. The clerk, Megan Sathre, dispensed the Zoom guidelines.

### **2. Introductions**

Lee Napier prompted each member in the room and participants on Zoom to introduce them.

### **3. Public Comment**

There were no members of the public who wished to provide public comment.

#### **4. Overview of Bylaws**

Mindy Brooks, Senior Long Range Planner for Community Development, shared the Planned Growth Committee (PGC) Bylaws. There was no discussion on this item. (Note – Later in the meeting Commissioner Swope asked if someone else could Chair if he was absent. Mindy confirmed that he could designate one of the other BOCC commissioners as his representative for that meeting.)

#### **5. Department of Commerce Presentation**

Catherine McCoy from the Department of Commerce gave a presentation on the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update (*see presentation for details*). The following questions/discussion occurred throughout the presentation.

Commissioner Swope suggested that House Bill 1220, discussing emergency and affordable housing, be reworded for clarity. Catherine said that HB1220 is already approved and cannot be reworded, but emergency housing means shelters.

Mindy asked whether the things that pass this legislative session will be required as part of the Comprehensive Update. Catherine responded yes. Mindy noted that the jurisdictions should be paying attention to the legislative session because there are many items about land use.

Commissioner Swope asked what happens if a jurisdiction does not complete their Comprehensive Plan Update. Catherine, as well as other PGC members responded that the jurisdiction would be non-compliant with the Growth Management Act (GMA) and be at risk to lose funding for public works, recreation, emergencies, etc.. The jurisdictions can also be at risk in terms of liability and run into legal problems.

Mindy asked Catherine when the housing tool will be available to counties to make population allocations. Catherine responded that the tool should be available now, but she will get back to Mindy about it. Mindy emphasized the importance of having that housing information in order to start the housing action planning. Emil asked if there is someone who will be able to tell him about how the numbers were decided, as well as whether the 2020 census numbers were used to come up with the population projections. Catherine responded that there are people available to provide technical support on the numbers and how they were derived. Mindy expressed concern about the timing of everything because the county just received the population projections and now needs to allocate the projections to each city before housing can be allocated. This information is necessary for jurisdictions to complete their housing actions plans, which are due in June. Mindy said she needs follow up from Catherine so the county can understand the timing with the cities and their requirements along with the periodic update. Catherine responded that she would get some information to Mindy.

The PGC raised questions about housing allocation for cities versus Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) versus unincorporated county limits. Mindy responded that there is a difference between the

existing population numbers and the future allocations. Existing population is based on the city limits; everything outside the city limits is unincorporated Lewis County. However, going forward, the allocations are for the city limits+UGA. This is because, in theory, the UGA should be large enough to accommodate 20-years of growth and the city should be annexing the UGA over that period of time.

Emil asked how to solve the issue of neighborhoods staying on septic systems instead of connecting to city sewer.

Mindy asked if the county and cities should be tracking reimbursement for the housing allocation piece. Catherine responded the reimbursement is for work on your comprehensive plan that begins July 1. The work that is being complete now is not reimbursable.

## **6. Overview of Population Forecasts**

Mindy Brooks provided an overview of the population allocations using the information provided in the memo sent to the PGC prior to the meeting (*also shared on the screen*).

Mindy directed the cities to complete the following assignment prior to the next meeting:

The homework is to think about if your city should use the simplified approach - statistical growth trend - to set your population allocation or if you would like to include other factors. If you want to consider other factors, what are they and what information do you need to effectively use those factors to set your population allocation?

Each city must show your work because OFM is not going to accept the answer of "because that's how much we think we are going to grow." You will need to prove it.

The population allocation is what you must use when doing your Comprehensive Plan periodic update and, for the next 5 years, it's the population you must use when considering changes to your UGA. It's important to get this as right as possible.

City of Centralia and Chehalis expressed concerns that the population allocations are coming before the housing allocations. Mindy explained that this is an iterative process. We need to set preliminary population allocations, then run the housing numbers, then adjust the populations.

## **7. Group Discussion on Coordination**

Lee Napier facilitated a group discussion on coordination.

PGC will have a 2-hour meeting once a month. That may be enough to allow coordination between the jurisdictions. However, we could provide other options. For example, we could set up an online platform, like Google Drive or Basecamp, where you can share how you are

approaching population allocations or where you can share drafts. That's just one idea. We'd like to hear from you about how you would like to coordinate.

City of Centralia and Chehalis expressed that they do not need additional collaboration. Mindy would like to hear from the smaller jurisdictions who do not have as much staff to dedicate to periodic update. Community Development staff will bring this topic back at the next meeting.

### **8. Next Steps**

The next meeting is on February 15 from 1:00 - 3:00pm at the Historic Courthouse. The main topic will be a discussion of OFM population forecast, Commerce housing forecast (if we have it) and the process to allocate populations and housing to each city.

At the March 15 meeting, the Department of Commerce will be back to talk about applying for the Department of Commerce periodic review grant, scoping the periodic update and hiring consulting services. And we will set the preliminary population/housing allocations based on your input, followed by a discussion between jurisdictions.

Commissioner Swope expressed concern that not all of the jurisdictions are presented. Mindy agreed because Lewis County will be setting population and housing allocations for all jurisdictions and it is important that they are at the table.

### **9. Adjourn**

Commissioner Swope adjourned the meeting at 2:50 p.m.