



## NEWS RELEASE

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The Snohomish County Council on Wednesday voted to eliminate fully contained communities (FCCs) and adopt policies to involve cities in the planning for urban centers. In completing action on the yearly amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, the Council also approved the proposal to change the use of an asphalt plant at Point Wells, opening the way for environmental cleanup and mixed use development.

The County Council voted 3-2 to ban FCCs. The vote overturns rules adopted in 2005 that would have allowed a new city with up to 15,000 residents to be built in rural Snohomish County. While no applications for FCCs have been received by the county, the rules were controversial because of the impact that so much growth would have on rural communities and the environment.

Councilmember Dave Somers voted for the ban. "It doesn't make sense to put so much growth in rural areas far away from existing cities. We have heard from many, many people that urban development in rural areas isn't the right way to grow in our county," he said.

In other action, the Council approved changing the land use designation of 61 acres of property located on Puget Sound at Point Wells. The Point Wells property will be designated as an urban center, which will allow for urban mixed use developments. Councilmember Mike Cooper said "I am pleased that the Council supported the Point Wells proposal. A heavy industrial asphalt plant is not the right use for shoreline property along the Puget Sound, and today's action begins the process of restoring this important environmental area."

The county's regulations governing the design and development of urban centers are not yet in place, so the Council delayed the effective date of the Point Wells proposal for six months. In a related action, the Council approved policies which would allow nearby cities to participate in the design of urban centers. "From my experience as a city mayor and working with cities on Snohomish County Tomorrow, I believe in working with cities in such a way as they have a voice in nearby urban development. I believe these amendments move the County closer this goal," said Councilmember Brian Sullivan.

The Council decided to postpone action on a proposal to reconfigure 239 acres of county-owned property at the former Cathcart solid waste landfill. "There are still too many unanswered issues to work out on this proposal," said Councilmember Dave Somers. "We need to consider carefully whether we want to open the way for development on this property, and current economic circumstances gives us the time to do this right."

The Council voted down a proposal to repeal the overlay map designating Forest Transition Areas or FTAs. “These policies have been on the books for a long time,” said Councilmember John Koster. “People felt like this proposal would have taken away their rights. I couldn’t support that.”

Once a year, the County Council also reviews citizens’ proposals to change the designation and uses for their property. This year, the Council approved all five of these docket proposals. “We took a careful look and determined that these proposals would benefit our citizens and our communities,” said Councilmember Dave Gossett.

The measures adopted by the Council now go to the County Executive for his signature.

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