Welcome to the Planner’s Update.

Please feel free to send us any comments or ideas for how to make this newsletter more useful.

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RESOURCES ON-LINE

1. Dept. of Commerce/Growth Management
2. Commerce Regional Planner’s Forums
3. Commerce Short Course on Local Planning Schedule
4. American Planning Association Washington Chapter
5. PAW – Planning Association of Washington
6. AWC Videos: GMA Comp Plan Conversation Starters
7. Municipal Research Service Center (MRSC)
8. Smart Growth Online
1. ADVANCED PLANNING GRANT FOR AEROSPACE AND OTHER KEY ECONOMIC SECTORS

In 2013, the Legislature approved a short term grant program for Commerce's Local Government and Infrastructure Division to provide "grants to local governments to assist a city or county in paying for the cost of preparing an environmental analysis that advances environmental permitting activities in and around current and future large manufacturing sites for aerospace and other key economic growth centers." Growth Management Services took this grant program over for state fiscal year (SFY) 2015. The Public Works Board administered two grants under this program in SFY 2014. GMS is currently administering a $350,000 Advanced Planning Grant with Grant County. The grant will help fund an environmental impact statement for use in the development of a Planned Action for aerospace manufacturing at the Grant County International Employment Center. GMS has offered two additional Advanced Planning Grants. A $650,000 grant has been offered to Snohomish County to address permit streamlining and transportation issues near the Paine Field Aerospace Business Park. An application for a $212,500 grant for Skagit County is being executed. When approved it will help fund the Northern State Adaptive Reuse Study and environmental strategy for use as a Bioenergy Technology Center research and development campus.

2. COMMERCE RULEMAKING ACTIVITIES

Housekeeping Amendments
On January 27, 2015, Commerce adopted “housekeeping” amendments, which become effective on February 28, 2015. The new rules match recent statutory changes - modifying and streamlining deadlines for periodic updates, and clarifying the definition of “critical areas.” The adopted amendments can be found on the Growth Management Division’s rulemaking web page.

Voluntary Stewardship Program
The Legislature also directed Commerce to write new rules as part of the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP), an alternative means for counties to protect critical areas on lands used for agricultural activities. The rules will define Commerce’s role in certifying county approaches to protect critical areas on agricultural lands in certain circumstances. Commerce has been working with Washington Conservation Commission and a legislatively created Statewide Advisory Committee to develop the VSP rule. Interested parties can review the preliminary draft rule and provide written comments. A formal draft rule will be issued for comment in mid-March, 2015. The VSP rule must be completed by July 2015.

To stay informed and involved, subscribe to the WAC Update ListServ for updates on the status of rule development and opportunities for public comment. Please e-mail comments or questions to WACUPDATE@commerce.wa.gov or call Dave Andersen at 509.434.4491.

3. APA ANNUAL CONFERENCE – SAVE THE DATE

The Inland Empire Section of the APA Annual Conference is Thursday, June 4 and Friday, June 5, 2015 at Elkin’s Resort in Priest Lake, Idaho.

This year’s conference theme is: Keeping up with the Future.
The economy of the 21st century is more dynamic than ever. Communities everywhere are challenged to keep up with a rapidly changing world. Your community’s plan and your community’s planning program are critical to balancing the need to respond to a dynamic world, with the need to stay true to enduring values and maintain persistent effort toward long-term goals. The 2015 conference will be a place for you to learn how to:

- Critically evaluate your plan
- Anticipate and forecast changing conditions
- Set measurable objectives and track progress toward long-term goals of enduring value

Sessions will qualify for AICP CM Credits.

The conference will be held at Elkin’s Resort on beautiful Priest Lake. The registration includes all meals and lodging, making this conference an outstanding value.

Registration:

- $198 for American Planning Association members
- $265 for non-members.
- Lodging Wednesday (June 3) night is also available for an extra $75

Registration questions or to pre-reserve your registration

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Program Questions

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4. CONSERVING AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST LAND IN PUGET SOUND THROUGH REGIONAL TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

Regional transfer of development rights (TDR) focuses on transfers from county farmland, forestland and open space to cities planning for vibrant compact communities. It is a unique strategy to steer development growth into urban centers while simultaneously protecting important regional rural and resource lands – a central goal of the Washington State Growth Management Act. Counties and cities have been working together on regional TDR since 2001.
Currently 145,000 acres of farmland, forestland, and open space are under conservation easement in central Puget Sound. More than 300 credits have been transferred into cities and unincorporated urban growth areas.

All four central Puget Sound counties (King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Kitsap) have adopted TDR policies and regulations, and nine cities (Arlington, Mountlake Terrace, Snohomish, Bellevue, Seattle, Normandy Park, Sammamish, Issaquah, and Tacoma) have adopted TDR programs to accept development rights from the counties. Skagit County is working with two cities on regional TDR to conserve natural resource lands.

To learn more, click here to read the National APA blog post about Regional TDR in Puget Sound, and a unique partnership between King County and the City of Seattle to conserve farm land through TDR and local infrastructure funding.

5. TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENT COMMUNITIES FEATURED PRACTICES

Wouldn’t it be great to have access to a current collection of innovative planning examples from around the state? The Departments of Transportation, Commerce, Ecology, and Health are collecting good examples of transportation efficient planning practices and we need your help!

Please take a moment right now to participate in a short survey to identify innovative cities and counties who are leaders in specific planning strategies. This survey should only take a few minutes to complete and then we’ll do the rest—collecting and organizing detailed examples of policies and regulations from around the state so you have a good place to start the next time you’re looking for good planning ideas. Please follow the link https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/TMXQXS9 to access the survey. If you would like more information about this survey or have any questions, please contact Kyle Miller, at (360) 705-7946.

6. NEWLY RELEASED FEMA DOCUMENT

FEMA just released a new document, the Effective Coordination of Recovery Resources for State, Tribal, Territorial and Local Incidents. This document has been developed in coordination with a number of internal and external stakeholders including state, tribal, and local recovery coordinators, Federal interagency partners, departments across FEMA, intergovernmental
affairs organizations and congressional stakeholders. It offers comprehensive yet easy to understand guidance on both pre-disaster and post-disaster planning. Especially useful are brief examples of how programs have been structured and implemented in other communities across the country. We encourage the broad distribution of this document, so please feel free to share with your colleagues and disaster recovery partners.

Access to this as well as other FEMA disaster recovery documents can also be found at https://www.fema.gov/resources-national-disaster-recovery-framework.

For more information on this or other FEMA related disaster recovery documents please feel free to contact Tom Donnelly at (425) 505-0127.

7. **U.S. TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY LAUNCHES THE “MAYOR’S CHALLENGE FOR SAFER PEOPLE AND SAFER STREETS”**

This challenge invites Mayor’s and local elected officials to take significant action over the next year to improve pedestrian and bicycle transportation safety. The Mayor’s Challenge will showcase effective local actions to improve safety, empower local leaders to take action, and promote partnerships to advance pedestrian and bicycle safety. The seven Challenge activities are drawn from the recommended actions stated in the [2010 USDOT Policy Statement on Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodation Regulations and Recommendations](http://www.dot.gov/mayors-challenge). For example, recommended actions in the policy statement include gathering and tracking data on biking and walking and ensuring street designs are appropriate for pedestrian and bicycle safety. The Challenge kicks off March 12, 2015, but communities can join at any time. To date very few Washington State communities are participating. [http://www.dot.gov/mayors-challenge](http://www.dot.gov/mayors-challenge).