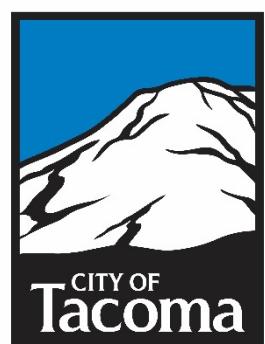
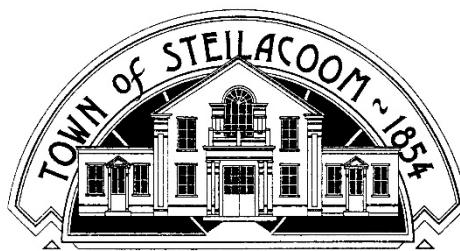


# Pierce County

## Countywide Planning Policies



As adopted on May 17, 2022,  
and ratified on November 14, 2022

## Acknowledgements Page

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City of Bonney Lake – Deputy Mayor Justin Evans  
City of Buckley – Mayor Pat Johnson  
Town of Carbonado – Mayor Wally Snover  
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Town of South Prairie  
Town of Steilacoom – Councilmember Roger Neal  
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Ex-Officio Members:  
Pierce County Library District  
Pierce Transit  
Puget Sound Regional Council  
Puyallup Tribe of Indians  
South Sound Military & Communities Partnership  
Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department  
Washington State Department of Transportation

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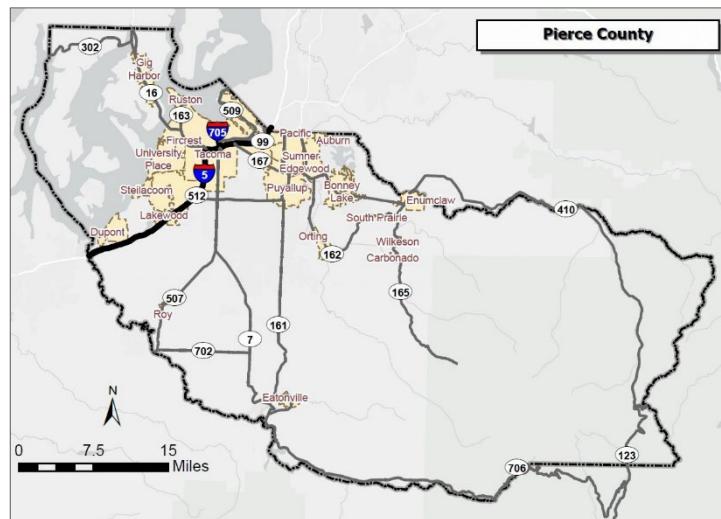
*This document was adopted on May 17, 2022.*

## Introduction

### Pierce County at a Glance

Pierce County is located in the south Puget Sound region of Washington State and spans an area of approximately 1,800 square miles, including portions of the Sound. It is bound by Kitsap and King Counties to the north, Mason and Thurston Counties to the west/southwest, Yakima County to the east, and Lewis County to the south. Formed out of Thurston County on December 22, 1852 by the legislature of Oregon Territory, Pierce County was named for U.S. President Franklin Pierce.

There are 23 cities and towns within Pierce County, in addition to the unincorporated urban, rural, and resource lands, tribal lands, and the military land associated with Joint Base Lewis-McChord and Camp Murray. It is the second most populous county in the State of Washington and is home to 12% of the total State population as of the 2020 Census. The 2020 Census reported a total population of 921,130 persons and a population density of 552 persons per square mile of land. The incorporated jurisdictions range from a large metropolitan city of over 200,000 in population, to mid-range cities of 20,000-70,000 in population, to smaller cities and towns with a few hundred or thousands in population. The majority of incorporated jurisdictions are under 13,000 in population as of 2020. [U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 and 2010 Census Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171) Summary File].



Pierce County's moderate climate, combined with a contrasting geography of water and mountains, encourages a wealth of year-round outdoor activities. There are miles of Puget Sound waterfront, Mount Rainier National Park, numerous fresh-water lakes, alpine and cross-country skiing, and nationally ranked year-round golf courses. Major industries include aerospace, healthcare, technology, agriculture, timber products, and military installations at Joint Base Lewis-McChord. The Port of Tacoma serves as a major contributor to the movement of goods with direct connection to the Interstate 5 corridor, industry operations, and maritime activity as well as general regional job creation within and outside the physical boundary of the Port.

### Pierce County Regional Council (PCRC)

PCRC is the county's body of elected leaders from the county and each city and town, for regional coordination of countywide policies. PCRC is responsible for coordinating planning efforts among jurisdictions, agencies, federally recognized tribes, ports and adjacent regions, where there are common border or related regional issues to facilitate a common vision. PCRC monitors implementation of VISION 2050 to evaluate the progress in achieving the Regional Growth Strategy, as well as the regional collaboration, environment, climate change, development patterns, housing, economy, transportation and public service provisions of the CPPs. PCRC is supported by two staff committees:

the Growth Management Coordination Committee (GMCC) and the Transportation Coordinating Committee (TCC).

### [Interlocal Agreement](#)

In the early 1990s, per RCW 36.70A.210, Pierce County and its cities and towns entered into an Interlocal Agreement that provided for a framework for the development, and adoption of Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs). This original agreement was initiated through Pierce County Council Resolution No. 91-172. The initial CPPs were developed and ratified in accordance with the provisions of the interlocal agreement as of June 30, 1992 as documented through Pierce County Ordinance No. 92-74. The CPPs provide additional guidance in the development of local comprehensive plans. Updates to the CPPs have since been implemented through ratification per the interlocal agreement.

### [Adoption and Ratification](#)

Per the interlocal agreement, the adoption of the initial CPPs and subsequent amendments are approved through ratification by Pierce County and its cities and towns. For a proposed amendment to be approved, 60 percent of the jurisdictions, representing a minimum of 75 percent of the population must support it. Evidence of a jurisdiction's ratification can be through 1) the execution of an interlocal agreement, or 2) through a jurisdiction taking no action indicating opposition within a 180-day timeframe.

### [Background and Statutory Framework – Growth Management Act](#)

Under the Growth Management Act (GMA), RCW Chapter 36.70A, the comprehensive plan of each county or city that is adopted pursuant to RCW 36.70A.040 shall be coordinated with, and consistent with, the comprehensive plans adopted pursuant to RCW 36.70A.040 of other counties or cities with which the county or city has, in part, common borders or related regional issues. Under RCW 36.70A.130, counties and cities are required to take action periodically to review and, if needed, revise their comprehensive plans and development regulations to ensure the plan and regulations comply with the requirements of the Growth Management Act (GMA.)

RCW 36.70A.210 establishes the requirement for Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs.) A "countywide planning policy" is a written policy statement or statements used solely for establishing a countywide framework from which county and city comprehensive plans are developed and adopted. CPPs ensure that city and county comprehensive plans are consistent as required in RCW 36.70A.100. CPPs do not alter the land-use powers of cities. RCW 36.70A.210 (3) lays out the minimum policies that must be included in CPPs.

While counties are not required to update their countywide planning policies (CPPs) in [RCW 36.70A.130](#), it is important for counties to regularly review existing CPPs to see if any changes are needed and, if so, to revise as necessary in collaboration with cities. For instance, such a review is needed when the multicounty planning policies are updated, when the GMA or other statutes affecting land use planning are adopted or amended. In addition, per [RCW 36.70A.215](#), amendments to CPPs must be considered if any new information or analysis that impacts the "Buildable Lands Program" is identified during such a review, per [RCW 36.70A.215\(2\)\(d\)](#).

## VISION 2050 – A Plan for the Central Puget Sound Region

VISION 2050 is the long range growth management, environmental, economic and transportation strategy for the central Puget Sound region, adopted in October 2020 by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) General Assembly.

The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) is a body representing local jurisdictions, governments and agencies from Pierce, Kitsap, Snohomish and King Counties. Representatives from these governments and agencies convene to make decisions on transportation, growth management and economic development.

The PSRC, together with the Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs) adopted in VISION 2050, fulfill the Washington State Growth Management requirement of developing MPPs, and serve to implement guidelines and principles required by RCW 47.80 – “Regional Transportation Planning Organizations”.

VISION 2050 begins by stating:

*“Puget Sound is the largest marine estuary by volume in the United States. It connects the region to the Pacific Ocean and joins Washington and British Columbia together as part of the greater Salish Sea. The Snohomish, Puyallup, Green, Duwamish, Cedar, and many other rivers and streams flow through the central Puget Sound region and define distinct river basins that encompass cities, farms, forests, and mountains. It is this unique and remarkable natural environment that has drawn people to Puget Sound and sustained them for thousands of years”*

*“Puget Sound is a part of a larger area that has been the traditional aboriginal territory of the Coast Salish peoples, who live around the Salish Sea in what is now Washington State and the Canadian province of British Columbia. The Coast Salish Tribes have lived here since time immemorial and while each tribe is unique, all share in having a deep historical connection and legacy of respect for the land and natural resources. These sovereign tribal nations enrich the region through environmental stewardship, cultural heritage, and economic development, and collaborate with local governments to shape the region’s future”*

*“From vibrant urban neighborhoods to charming small towns, the region is rich with a diversity of distinct communities that are now home to more than 4 million people. From timber to shipbuilding, aviation to tech, the region’s economy continues to innovate, transform, and attract people from across the U.S. and world.”*

An overarching vision for 2050 is identified as:

*“The central Puget Sound region provides an exceptional quality of life and opportunity for all, connected communities, a spectacular natural environment, and an innovative, thriving economy”*

To this end, the Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs) contained within VISION 2050 support and implement the Regional Growth Strategy, the Regional Transportation Strategy and the Regional Economic Strategy.

In order to achieve the stated Vision and implement the Regional Strategies, the MPPs provide background context, data analysis and policy direction related to 14 specific areas:

- Climate
- Community
- Diversity
- Economy
- Environment
- Equity
- Health
- Housing
- Innovation
- Mobility and Connectivity
- Natural resources
- Public Facilities and services
- Resilience
- Rural Areas

The Pierce County CPPs are intended to be consistent with the MPPs and are one of the primary mechanisms for VISION 2050 to be implemented at the local level.

Each of chapters below discuss the MPPs in more detail, how VISION 2050 is applicable to the CPPs, and provides a framework and policy guidance for the jurisdictions of Pierce County.

Jurisdictions are required by VISION 2050 to individually update their local Comprehensive Plans and other long range planning documents for consistency with VISION 2050.

## Users Guide and Rules of Interpretation

### Applicability

The Countywide Planning Policies are intended to be the consistent "theme" of growth management planning among Pierce County jurisdictions. The policies also establish processes and mechanisms designed to foster open communication and feedback among the jurisdictions.

CPPs apply only to jurisdictions located within Pierce County. The vast majority of the CPPs apply to both the county and the cities and towns within the county. However, some policies apply only to the County, such as the rural lands chapter, and some policies apply only to cities and towns.

Some of the CPPs direct and encourage jurisdictions to cooperate and participate with other agencies and entities that are not bound to the CPPs. The CPPs are not intended to remove the local authority of the jurisdictions to rely on their own local input and unique circumstances as the guiding principles when cooperating and participating with other agencies. If desired by the local jurisdiction, the CPPs may be used as a framework for jurisdictions to draw from in these efforts.

### Expectations of Jurisdictions

The local comprehensive plans of the county and the cities and towns are expected, and required by GMA, to be consistent with the CPPs. How a jurisdiction chooses to comply with the policies of the CPPs is left to the local control of the jurisdictions. It is the expectation that jurisdictions will review their local comprehensive plans and update them for consistency with the CPPs during each GMA mandated "periodic update", at a minimum.

In order for the CPPs to be implemented, all jurisdictions must take certain actions to further the goals and policies. However, not every CPP requires every jurisdiction to undertake every action listed below. When not explicit in the policies, it is up to the local control of the jurisdictions to determine which local action are necessary and appropriate, based on the applicability of the policy and the local resources and circumstances of the jurisdiction.

These actions may take a number of forms including but not limited to: adoption and/or amendments of long range plans and regulations, studying of issues, mapping of areas, creation and/or implementation of programs, participation/coordination by elected officials and staff in various arenas, expenditure of funds, public participation, education and outreach, and other appropriate and legal governmental actions.

### Definitions and Use of Terms

Words and terms used in the Countywide Planning Policies shall be defined as set forth in the Policies and in the Growth Management Act to the extent defined therein. To the extent not defined therein, words and terms shall be given their plain and ordinary meanings.

The use of the terms "jurisdictions" and "municipalities" are synonymous with "county" and "cities and towns".

The term "shall" is intended to be mandatory; the terms "may" and "should" are advisory only. While the terms "shall" and "will" are mandatory, it shall be understood and implied that the policy statement in which they are used is applicable to a municipality and/or the County only when, through objective determination, the circumstances on which the Policy is premised are relevant.

When a policy does not use the term “shall” or have specific applicability direction, it is intended that said policy will be implemented to the best of the ability of each jurisdiction, based on applicability of the circumstances in which the policy is premised, and the resources and ability of the jurisdiction to address the issue.

The term “Consider” is used throughout the CPPs and uses the plain and ordinary meaning, “to think about something carefully, typically before making a decision”.

The term “Coordinate” is meant to encourage, and require where appropriate, a jurisdiction to participate in conversations and other forums at an inter-jurisdictional level. Coordination may be necessary, to achieve the intent of a policy or to address a regional issue. “Coordination” in itself, does not require the adoption or creation of policies or regulations. A jurisdiction may, or not, find it in their best interest, and choose to adopt policies or regulations as a result of their coordination efforts.

Terms such as “Assist”, “In conjunction with”, “Cooperatively”, and the like, are similar in nature to the concept of “Coordinate” in that they are usually associated with an issue that requires participation at an inter-jurisdictional level. These terms, however imply a more active role in the conversation by providing local perspective, data and analysis, and staff time to achieve the intent of the policy.

Terms such as “Plan for”, “Adopt”, “Designate”, and the like, imply that an action may be necessary to assure the policy is implemented and are usually associated with requirements of the Growth Management Act or VISION 2050. It is up to the local control of the jurisdiction to determine the scope and content of the plan, adopted material, or designated item.

Terms such as “Support”, “Encourage”, “Promote”, “Advance”, and the like, are usually associated with an issue or scenario that requires an inter-jurisdictional approach to achieve the intent of the policy. Jurisdictions are expected to, as local circumstances and applicability allow, give credence to the issue or scenario and assist where possible, to further the intent of the policy.

## Affordable Housing

### Introduction

Housing determines health. Whether one has accessible, affordable, safe, healthy, and stable housing affects one's ability to attain full health potential. Those with fair and equitable access to attainable and stable housing experience less stress and better mental well-being. Conversely, individuals and families experiencing homelessness are constantly exposed to high health and safety risks.

Housing location has a direct link to access to opportunities. Co-locating affordable and attainable housing with living wage jobs, schools, parks, and other amenities can reduce cost burdens for every household, improve our economy, enrich social life, support health, and improve quality of life. Healthy and adequate housing meets basic human needs and minimizes threats to health and safety, such as allergens and other hazards. Resilient housing located away from potential hazards can lessen the stresses of the changing climate, increase household and community resiliency, and prevent negative health impacts.

### Background - Growth Management Act

The Washington State Growth Management Act mandates that counties and cities encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of the existing housing stock. [RCW 36.70A.020(4)]. The term "affordable housing" is defined in RCW 36.70A.030(2) as follows:

- (2) "Affordable housing" means, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, residential housing whose monthly costs, including utilities other than telephone, do not exceed thirty percent of the monthly income of a household whose income is:
  - (a) For rental housing, sixty percent of the median household income adjusted for household size, for the county where the household is located, as reported by the United States department of housing and urban development; or
  - (b) For owner-occupied housing, eighty percent of the median household income adjusted for household size, for the county where the household is located, as reported by the United States department of housing and urban development.

The Washington State Growth Management Act requires the adoption of countywide planning policies establish a consistent county-wide framework from which county and city comprehensive plans are developed and adopted. RCW 36.70A.210 requires each county to adopt policies for housing which, .3, at a minimum, "consider the need for affordable housing, such as housing for all economic segments of the population and parameters for its distribution" [RCW 36.70A.210(3)(e)].

A countywide housing planning policy shall at a minimum, address the following:

*"Policies that consider the need for affordable housing, such as housing for all economic segments of the population and parameters for its distribution;"*

The Washington State Growth Management Act also identifies mandatory and optional plan elements. [RCW 36.70A.070 and .080]. A Housing Element is a mandatory plan element that must at a minimum comply with 2021 E2SHB 1220.

Since the comprehensive plan of every city and county must be an internally consistent document [RCW 36.70A.070] and all plan elements must be consistent with the future land use map prepared as part of the required land use element [RCW 36.70A.070], these other plan elements will, to a great extent, dictate what will be in the housing element.

Thus, the land use element, relying upon estimates of future population, growth, average numbers of persons per household, and land use densities, and assumptions about what type of housing each economic segment will need will indicate how much (and where) land needs to be made available to accommodate the identified housing needs. The capital facilities, transportation and utilities elements then provide choices about when and how public facilities will be provided to accommodate the projected housing, by type, density and location and other factors such as equitable distribution of public investments.

### Background - VISION 2050

The Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs), named VISION 2050 and produced by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), include policies and actions as well as the Regional Growth Strategy, which promotes a focused regional growth pattern and serves as a guide for counties and cities as they set local growth targets through their countywide processes to implement the strategy. PSRC and local jurisdictions are expected to address these actions through their planning and work programs.

### Policies

AH-1 Explore and identify opportunities to reutilize and redevelop existing parcels where rehabilitation of the buildings is not cost-effective, provided the same is consistent with the countywide policy on historic, archaeological, and cultural preservation and with Policy AH-8 regarding displacement.

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AH-2 Plan to meet their affordable and moderate-income housing needs goal by utilizing a range of strategies that may include a Housing Action Plan and will result in the preservation of existing housing, and the production of new, affordable and moderate-income housing that is safe and healthy. Jurisdictions should consider the availability and proximity of public transportation, governmental and commercial services necessary to support residents' needs, and prioritize density and investment in these areas.

Washington State is consistently considering new legislation related to affordable housing and mandates on City's regulatory authority. Jurisdictions are expected to adhere to this legislation regardless of the CPPs. The CPPs should be updated if mandated by State legislation.

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2.1 Jurisdictions should consider adopting reasonable measures and innovative techniques (e.g., moderate density housing, clustering, accessory dwelling units, cottage housing, small lots, planned urban developments, and mixed use) to stimulate new higher-density affordable and moderate-income housing stock on residentially zoned vacant and underutilized parcels.

AH-3 Determine the extent of the need for housing affordable for all economic segments of the population, with special attention paid to the historically underserved, both existing and projected for its jurisdiction over the planning period, and shall encourage the availability of housing affordable to all economic segments of the population for each jurisdiction.

- 3.1 Affordable housing needs not typically met by the private housing market should be addressed through more coordinated countywide and regional approaches/strategies.
- 3.2 Each jurisdiction may adopt plans and policies for meeting its affordable and moderate income housing needs in a manner that reflects its unique demographic characteristics, comprehensive plan vision and policies, development and infrastructure capacity, location and proximity to job centers, local workforce, and access to transportation.
  - 3.2.1 Jurisdictions with designated regional centers should consider incorporating affordable housing allocations as part of their adopted allocations for these centers.
- 3.3 Each jurisdiction should plan to accommodate a sufficient supply of permanent supportive housing as defined in RCW 36.70A.030 (16), foster care housing, and those requiring special needs housing (i.e., the elderly, developmentally disabled, chronically mentally ill, physically disabled, homeless, persons participating in substance abuse programs, persons with AIDS, and victims of domestic violence) that is equitably and rationally distributed throughout the County.

AH-4 Establish a countywide housing affordability program by an organization capable of long-term consistent coordination of regional housing planning, design, development, funding, and housing management. All jurisdictions should cooperatively maximize available funding opportunities and leverage private resources in the development of affordable housing for households.

- 4.1 All jurisdictions should jointly explore opportunities to develop a countywide funding mechanism and the potential for both voter-approved measures (bond or levy), and nonvoter approved sources of revenue to support the development of housing affordable to all economic segments.
- 4.2 All jurisdictions should jointly pursue state legislative changes to give local jurisdictions the authority to provide tax relief to developers of affordable housing.
- 4.3 All jurisdictions should explore opportunities to dedicate revenues from sales of publicly owned properties, including tax title sales, to affordable housing projects.

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In the fall of 2018, local elected leaders began holding roundtable discussions to address housing affordability in Pierce County. In 2019, this 'Mayor's Roundtable' group began calling itself the **South Sound Housing Affordability Partners (SSHAP)**. In late 2021, 14 governments signed an interlocal agreement which established an Executive Board of the member governments, an Advisory Board of key housing stakeholders, a budget for SSHAP staff, and the potential for a capital fund. As a regional coalition of cities, the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, and Pierce County, SSHAP aims to support a vision of affordable, attainable, and accessible housing in Pierce County.

<https://www.piercecountywa.gov/SSHAP>

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- 4.4 All jurisdictions should explore the expansion of existing non-profit partnerships, increased coordination with local public housing authorities, a county-wide land trust, as well as future involvement of larger County employers, in the provision of housing assistance for their workers.
- 4.5 Jurisdictions should evaluate inclusionary or incentive zoning measures as a condition of major rezones and development.
- 4.6 New fully contained communities- in unincorporated Pierce County shall contain a mix of dwelling units to provide for the affordable and moderate-income housing needs that will be created as a result of the development.

AH-5 Explore and identify opportunities to reduce land costs for non-profit and for-profit developers to build affordable housing.

- 5.1 Jurisdictions should explore options to dedicate or make available below market-rate surplus land and also identify opportunities to assemble, reutilize, and redevelop existing parcels for affordable housing projects.
- 5.2 All jurisdictions should review and streamline development standards and regulations to advance their public benefit, provide flexibility, and minimize costs to housing.

AH-6 Jurisdictions, shall periodically monitor and assess their success in meeting the housing needs to accommodate their 20-year population allocation.

- 6.1 Jurisdictions should utilize the available data and analyses provided by federal, state, and local sources to monitor their progress in meeting housing demand as part of the required Growth Management Act comprehensive plan update process.
- 6.2 Countywide housing allocations shall be monitored with each Buildable Lands Report and evaluated to determine if countywide needs are being adequately met; the evaluation should identify all regulatory, programmatic, and financial measures taken to address the allocation need.
  - 6.2.1 Each jurisdiction should provide, if available, the quantity of affordable housing units created, preserved, or rehabilitated since the previous Buildable Lands Report.
  - 6.2.2 Jurisdictions should consider using a consistent reporting template for their evaluations to facilitate the countywide monitoring and assessment.
  - 6.2.3 In conjunction with the Buildable Lands Report, a report should be forwarded from GMCC to the Pierce County Regional Council (PCRC) addressing the progress in developing new affordable housing.

AH-7 Support and encourage homeownership opportunities for low-income, moderate-income, and middle-income families and individuals while recognizing historic inequities in access to homeownership opportunities for communities of color.

AH-8 Jurisdictions should identify potential physical, economic, and cultural displacement of low-income households and marginalized populations that may result from planning, public

investments, private redevelopment, and market pressure, and use a range of strategies to prevent and minimize, the cultural and physical displacement and mitigate its impacts to the extent feasible.

8.1 Metropolitan Cities, Core Cities, and High-Capacity Transit Communities will develop and implement strategies to address displacement in coordination with the populations identified of being at risk of displacement, including residents, local community groups, and neighborhood-based small business owners.

See VISION 2050 Background in “Growth Targets” Chapter and “Urban Growth Areas” Chapter for additional information on the Regional Growth Strategy and regional geographies.

## Agricultural Conservation and Lands

### Introduction

Agricultural lands serve an important purpose to Pierce County and the region at large. Accessible food and goods sources are necessary to support a growing population. There are ongoing pressures to develop agricultural lands, so preservation of these lands is crucial because once they are developed with improvements there is often not an opportunity to return the land for agricultural purposes in the future. While most remaining agricultural lands are within the unincorporated rural area, the preservation of agricultural lands impacts the well-being within all jurisdictions.

Pierce County's Comprehensive Plan outlines the requirements to be designated as Agricultural Resource Lands to meet the Growth Management Act (GMA) requirements; however, cities and towns may also adopt their own policies to preserve Agricultural Resource Lands within their respective jurisdictions. These natural resources are an important part of the regional economy, providing jobs, tax revenue, valuable products, and raw materials for local use and export. Agricultural lands also provide aesthetic, recreational, and environmental benefits to the public while contributing to the diverse character of Pierce County.

### Background - Growth Management Act

The Washington State Growth Management Act identifies the maintenance and enhancement of natural resource-based industries, including productive agricultural industries, and the conservation of productive agricultural lands as planning goals to guide the development and adoption of comprehensive plans and development regulations. [RCW 36.70A.020(8)]. While the expression of planning goals in the Growth Management Act is linked to "natural resource industries," including productive timber and fisheries, a separate policy for Agricultural Lands has been developed because of their unique importance in Pierce County and their relationship to urban growth area boundaries and policies.

The designation of agricultural lands per the Growth Management Act includes lands "that are not already characterized by urban growth and that have long-term significance for the commercial production of food or other agricultural products." [RCW 36.70A.170(1)(a)]. The Washington Administrative Code Section 365-196-480 includes guidelines for designating agricultural lands pursuant to RCW 36.70A.050. Although the Growth Management Act does not expressly require a countywide planning policy on agricultural lands, the requirement was added by the Interlocal Agreement: Framework Agreement for the Adoption of the Countywide Planning Policy (Pierce County Council Resolution No. R91-172, September 24, 1991).

### Background - VISION 2050

VISION 2050 recognizes agricultural resource lands under the Natural Resource Lands regional geography. Since the agricultural land in the central Puget Sound region is among the most productive in Washington State VISION 2050 also recognized that the loss of these lands, along with their productivity, has impacts on the environment, including air and water quality and quantity, our economy, and ultimately the health of the region's people. Under the Regional Growth Strategy, they are to be permanently protected from incompatible uses and fragmentation.

VISION 2050 identifies threats to the region's agricultural lands, including urban development, incompatible adjacent land uses, and the loss of supporting services. VISION 2050 seeks to permanently

protect these key agricultural resource lands. The Multicounty Planning Policies calls for conserving the region's natural resource lands, establishing best management practices that protect the long-term integrity and productivity of these lands, limiting the conversion of these lands, and ensuring that development does not adversely impact these lands.

## Policies

AG-1 Jurisdictions choosing to designate agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance, shall do so using the methodology and criteria stated in WAC 365-190-050. Cities are encouraged to coordinate their agricultural resource lands designations with the County and adjacent jurisdictions and are encouraged to adopt the same criteria.

- 1.1 Consistency with WAC 365-190-050 shall be based on the following factors:
  - 1.1.1 The land is not already characterized by urban growth;
  - 1.1.2 The land is used or capable of being used for agricultural production; and
  - 1.1.3 The land has long-term commercial significance for agriculture.
- 1.2 Consider food security issues, including providing food supplies for food banks, schools and institutions, vocational training opportunities, and preserving heritage or artisanal foods.
- 1.3 Consider the minimum amount of agricultural land county-wide necessary to maintain economic viability for the agricultural industry, and retain businesses supporting agriculture such as processors, suppliers, distributors, and equipment dealers.
- 1.4 Agricultural lands should be designated through consultation with the public and stakeholders such as, local conservation districts, and organizations promoting farming and local agricultural producers.

AG-2 Jurisdictions choosing to designate agricultural land, shall achieve agricultural preservation through:

- 2.1 Implementing agricultural area zoning that maintains large minimum lot sizes in agricultural areas, prohibition of conversion to non-farm uses and urban scale development, and flexible approaches such as clustering;
- 2.2 Buffering agricultural areas from urban development;
- 2.3 Avoiding location of major new roads or capacity expansions in agricultural areas unless management is controlled to inhibit intrusion of non-farming uses;
- 2.4 Purchase of development rights;
- 2.5 Transfer of development rights within the jurisdiction, including the designation of receiving zones for agricultural development rights and between jurisdictions, including the designation of receiving zones by local agreement;
- 2.6 Lease of development rights for a term of years;
- 2.7 "Anti-nuisance" laws to protect agricultural activities from being defined as a public nuisance;

- 2.8 Preferential tax treatment ("use value assessment");
- 2.9 Other innovative techniques including, but not limited to, purchase-leaseback through issuance of bonds, university purchase for research, and prevention of the formation of improvement districts or the creation of benefit assessments within designated agricultural preservation areas; or
- 2.10 Reduced fee structure for agricultural related permitting.

AG-3 Jurisdictions choosing to designate agricultural lands, shall address the effect of practices on non-point source pollution and groundwater impacts including the use of "best management practices" to reduce pesticides and fertilizers, and minimize risk to human health and the environment.

AG-4 Jurisdictions choosing to designate agricultural lands, shall work to:

- 4.1 Protect agricultural areas from encroachment by incompatible uses;
- 4.2 Encourage related development such as farmers markets and roadside stands;
- 4.3 Protect smaller-sized agricultural parcels which are not individually viable for agricultural Production but, which are within a large area of more viable parcels should be considered for designation; and
- 4.4 Provide agricultural surface water drainage and avoid draining of water from high-density residential areas to agricultural lands.

AG-5 Jurisdictions choosing to designate agricultural lands, shall address the conversion of agricultural land from agricultural to non-agricultural use by:

- 5.1 Establishing criteria for zoning changes and comprehensive plan amendments; and
- 5.2 Establishing legal and financial mechanisms so that property owners realize economic value that would have accrued from conversion, but land remains in agricultural use if within Urban Growth Areas.

AG-6 Jurisdictions choosing to designate agricultural lands, shall ensure that prime agricultural lands are preserved and protected by the enactment of appropriate land use controls; or by including the land in the urban growth area boundary of a municipality only if the municipality has delineated standards and criteria relating to preserving the agricultural lands, and transfer and purchase of development right programs.

AG-7 Jurisdictions choosing to designate agricultural lands, shall coordinate agricultural land preservation policies with other Countywide Planning Policies through:

- 7.1 Correlating agricultural land preservation policies with urban growth area policies and with public facility and service provision policies to avoid the extension of urban services to areas intended for continued agricultural use;
- 7.2 Ensuring that public facility and service extension, even if not directly serving the agricultural lands, do not stimulate the conversion of agricultural land or make its preservation and protection more difficult; and

7.3 Joint jurisdictional planning of agricultural land.

AG-8 Encourage the development and implementation of community plans and programs, such as community gardens and farmers' markets, to support agricultural farmland, and aquatic uses that facilitate the production and distribution of fresh and minimally processed healthy foods, and encourage equitable access to those resources.

## Amendments and Transitions

### Introduction

The Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies is a living document that fosters coordination between jurisdictions within Pierce County. It is anticipated that the Countywide Planning Policies will be amended periodically to address current topics and needs. The Amendments and Transition policies establish the framework to amend and ratify the Countywide Planning Policies.

### Policies

AT-1 Countywide Planning Policies adopted pursuant to the Growth Management Act may be amended by Pierce County and ratified by the municipalities in the county.

- 1.1 Ratification of amendments to the Countywide Planning Policies requires the affirmative vote of 60% of the affected governments in the county representing a minimum of 75% of the total Pierce County population as designated by the State Office of Financial Management at the time of the proposed ratification.
- 1.2 Demonstration of ratification shall be by execution of an interlocal agreement or the absence of a legislative action to disapprove a proposed amendment.
  - 1.2.1 A jurisdiction shall be deemed as casting an affirmative vote if it has not taken legislative action to disapprove a proposed amendment within 180 days from the date the Pierce County Council formally authorizes the Pierce County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement.
- 1.3 An amendment to the Countywide Planning Policies or to any individual policy (all hereinafter referred to as proposed amendments) may be initiated by the County or any municipality in the county or by the Pierce County Regional Council. The proposed amendment shall include the following:
  - 1.3.1 The exact language of the proposed amendment (shown in "strike out" for deletions and "highlight" for additions); and
  - 1.3.2 A brief explanation of the need for the proposed amendment, including the factors, data or analyses that have changed since the original adoption of the Countywide Planning Policies and/or the experiences with the existing Countywide Planning Policies that have prompted the proposed amendment.
- 1.4 A proposed amendment to the Countywide Planning Policies shall be initially referred to the Pierce County Regional Council (PCRC) for analysis and recommendation.

AT-2 The PCRC shall have the following responsibilities in addition to those already specified in the Interlocal Agreement: Framework Agreement for the Adoption of the Countywide Planning Policy (Pierce County Council Resolution No. R2006-8, dated March 21, 2006):

- 2.1 Development of model, uniform implementation methodologies for the County, and all cities in the County, to be used at their discretion;
- 2.2 Assistance in resolution of interjurisdictional disputes;

- 2.3 Input to joint planning issues in Urban Growth Areas;
- 2.4 Input with respect to Countywide facilities;
- 2.5 Advice and consultation on phased development, short plats, vested rights and related issues;
- 2.6 Coordination of these responsibilities with the Puget Sound Regional Council;
- 2.7 Making a recommendation on the respective location of municipal and the County Urban Growth Area boundaries consistent with these policies;
- 2.8 Making a recommendation with regard to dissolution of the Boundary Review Board;
- 2.9 Monitoring development in the County, including population and employment growth and its effect on the development capacity within urban growth areas; and
- 2.10 Advice and consultation on population, housing, and employment growth targets.

## Buildable Lands

### Introduction

While the County is the administrator of the Buildable Lands Program per the Growth Management Act, the cities and towns are necessary partners and major contributors to the monitoring and evaluation program and use the information in their local comprehensive planning. It is important to have consistent policies and coordination within the Countywide Planning Policies to implement the Program across all jurisdictions. Background – Growth Management Act

RCW 36.70A.215 requires seven counties, including Pierce County, to evaluate whether a county and its municipalities are achieving urban densities within urban growth areas and housing production rates consistent with adopted growth targets. To do this, the counties and municipalities are to compare growth and development assumptions, targets, and objectives contained in the Countywide Planning Policies and the County and city and town comprehensive plans with actual growth and development that has occurred. At a minimum, the evaluation is to determine if there is sufficient suitable land to accommodate the countywide population projection and determine the density of housing that has been constructed and amount of land developed for commercial and industrial uses within the urban growth area, and identify regulations that impact the achieved densities. Detailed procedures, standards, and definitions for implementing this policy and complying with RCW 36.70A.215 are found in the current report titled Pierce County Buildable Lands, Procedures for Collecting and Monitoring Data, hereinafter referred to as the Procedures Report.

### Policies

BL-1 Pierce County in cooperation with Pierce County cities and towns shall establish a Pierce County Buildable Lands Program to provide a Countywide monitoring and analysis mechanism to meet the requirements of 36.70.A.215 Buildable Lands.

- 1.1 The Program shall be coordinated through Pierce County Planning and Land Services.
- 1.2 The focus of the Buildable Lands Program shall be an analysis of annual development data as related to locally adopted comprehensive plan goals and policies and targets, the calculation of residential and employment land capacity as compared to the 20-year need, and identification of actions to rectify inconsistencies.
- 1.3 The primary product of the Buildable Lands Program shall be the publication of a Buildable Lands Report in the timeframe required by RCW 36.70.A.215, the first being by September 1, 2002.

BL-2 Each municipality within Pierce County shall provide information on land development activities to the County and assist in an inventory of buildable lands. The County and municipalities shall follow the guidelines specified in the Procedures Report for the collection, monitoring, and analysis of development activity and potential residential/employment capacity.

- 2.1 Municipalities are encouraged to submit the annual development data by June 1 of each year.
- 2.2 Pierce County shall summarize the submitted annual development data by zoning classification for each jurisdiction.

2.3 Prior to the publication of submitted annual development data, representatives from each municipality shall have an opportunity to review and suggest refinements to summarized development data.

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BL-3 Each municipality within Pierce County shall assist the County in conducting an inventory of buildable lands. The County and municipalities shall follow the guidelines specified in the Procedures Report for the collection, monitoring, and analysis of development activity and potential residential/employment capacity.

The **Buildable Lands Report** is created by the County, in coordination with the Cities and Towns. By reviewing past development trends and assumptions, together with vacant land and current development regulations, the Buildable Lands Report creates a point in time analysis of the capacity of Pierce County, and cities and towns, to accommodate future growth.  
<https://www.piercecountywa.gov/923/Buildable-Lands>

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3.1 Pierce County shall confer with each municipality to identify the appropriate criteria for each of its zoning classifications to identify buildable lands: vacant - subdividable, vacant - not subdividable, underdeveloped residential and re-developable lands.

3.2 Pierce County shall forward the preliminary results of the buildable lands inventory to representatives of each municipality for local review and modification.

BL-4 Pierce County, in consultation with its municipalities, shall conduct an analysis of inventoried buildable lands to evaluate the County's ability to accommodate its 20-year population and employment land needs.

BL-5 Pierce County, in cooperation with the municipalities, shall prepare a Buildable Lands Capacity Report in the timeframe required by RCW 36.70.A.215, with the first report completed by September 2002. The report will detail growth, development, and the ability to accommodate future population and employment land needs.

5.1 The Buildable Lands Report shall include a summary of housing production rates, development activity by zoning classification, and detailed assumptions incorporated in the residential and employment capacity analysis for each jurisdiction.

5.2 The report must include an analysis of and assumptions for applicable environmental regulations (such as tree retention, stormwater, or critical area regulations) impacting development, other regulations that prevent assigned densities from being achieved, and infrastructure gaps (including but not limited to transportation, water, sewer, and stormwater).

5.3 Prior to the publication of a draft report, representatives from each municipality shall have an opportunity to review and suggest modifications to information associated with their jurisdiction.

BL-6 Pierce County, in cooperation with the municipalities, shall conduct a consistency evaluation between the Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies, comprehensive plan goals, adopted targets, housing and employment capacity, housing production rates, and actual densities of built-out projects within the observation period since the previous Buildable Lands Report for Pierce County and the municipalities within it.

- 6.1 The results of the consistency evaluation may be reported in a separate report.
- 6.2 The consistency evaluation should be completed within one year of the publication of the latest Buildable Lands Report if it is not included in the report.
- 6.3 Pierce County shall be the responsible agency for conducting the evaluation.
- 6.4 The consistency evaluation shall address if the observed density resulted in a jurisdiction achieving at least the average net density of 4 dwelling units per acre as stipulated in Urban Growth Areas, Promotion of Contiguous and Orderly Development and Provision of Urban Services to Such Development – policy 8.1 of these Countywide Planning Policies.
- 6.5 The consistency evaluation shall address if the observed density within a jurisdiction was consistent with the density assumption incorporated within the residential capacity analysis.
- 6.6 The consistency evaluation shall compare the housing needs associated with the allocated population with the housing unit capacity calculated through the residential capacity analysis.
- 6.7 The consistency evaluation shall compare the land needs associated with the employment targets with the employment capacity calculated through the employment capacity analysis.
- 6.8 The consistency evaluation shall compare the observed housing production rates to the adopted housing targets.
- 6.9 The consistency evaluation report shall be forwarded to the respective jurisdictions for review and comment.

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- BL-7 The results of the consistency evaluation shall be used to determine inconsistencies between observed and planned housing production rates and densities and ensure suitable land to accommodate future population and employment needs. In addressing the inconsistencies, the County and municipalities shall identify reasonable measures other than adjusting urban growth areas, that may be taken to comply with the requirements of RCW 36.70A.215. Each respective jurisdiction shall be responsible for taking action as necessary to rectify the inconsistency as determined by that jurisdiction.
- BL-8 Disputes between and among jurisdictions regarding inconsistencies in the collection and analysis of land development activities and residential and employment capacity analysis findings, shall be resolved by first attempting to reach an agreement through negotiation or through a designated mediation process agreeable to all parties. In case of an impasse, the matter shall be referred to the Pierce County Regional Council for review and resolution.
- BL-9 The County should establish an opportunity for stakeholders to be informed and provide feedback on the various aspects of the Buildable Lands Program.

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If the Buildable Lands Report identifies a lack of capacity, jurisdictions may be required to take “**reasonable measures**” necessary to assure a jurisdiction can accommodate allocated growth. Reasonable measures may include updating and/or clarifying development regulations, rezoning property, increasing density, and other actions aimed at assuring growth can be accommodated.

- 9.1 An ad hoc committee should be re-established every time the Buildable Lands Report is developed to review appropriate development information, assumptions, and methodology applied to calculate the residential and employment capacity analysis.
- BL-10 Pierce County and its cities and towns are not obligated to fulfill the countywide planning policies for the Buildable Lands Program if GMA is amended with provisions suspending the requirements of RCW 36.70A.215.

## Centers

### Introduction

The Puget Sound regional growth strategy identifies Centers as an integral feature for accommodating residential and employment growth. The strategy describes Regional Growth Centers and other Centers that may be designated. Regional Growth Centers, once regionally designated, are located either in Metropolitan Cities or in Core Cities. The strategy also identifies Regional Manufacturing/Industrial Centers, which consist primarily of manufacturing and industrial uses.

Centers are areas of concentrated employment and/or housing within Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) which serve as the hub of transit and transportation systems. Centers and connecting corridors are integral to creating compact, urban development that conserves resources and creates additional transportation, housing, and shopping choices. Centers are an important part of the regional strategy for urban growth and are required to be addressed in the Countywide Planning Policies. Centers are, or will become, focal points for growth within the county's UGA and are areas where public investment is directed.

C-1 The purpose of Regional Growth Centers and Countywide Centers is to:

- 1.1 Prioritize locations for accommodating growth;
- 1.2 Strengthen existing development patterns;
- 1.3 Promote housing opportunities close to employment;
- 1.4 Support development of an extensive multimodal transportation system which reduces dependency on automobiles;
- 1.5 Reduce congestion and improve air quality; and
- 1.6 Maximize the benefit of public investment in infrastructure and services.

C-2 The purpose of Manufacturing/Industrial Centers is to:

- 2.1 Recognize strategically located concentrations of industrial activity as essential resources for the local economy;
- 2.2 Protect and leverage critical and difficult-to-replace freight infrastructure;
- 2.3 Preserve the industrial land base in the long term;
- 2.4 Support family/living wage jobs;
- 2.5 Emphasize the importance of freight movement; and
- 2.6 Preserve the county's supply of industrial land.

C-3 Regional Growth Centers and Countywide Centers function as anchors within the region for a high-density mix of business, residential, public, cultural and recreational uses, and day and night activity that provide a sense of place and community. They are characterized by their role as the central business districts and regional centers of commerce. Centers may also serve national or international roles.

C-4 Manufacturing Industrial Centers (MICs) preserve lands for family-wage jobs in basic industries and trade and provide areas where that employment may grow in the future. MICs form a critical regional resource that provides economic diversity, supports national and international trade, generates substantial revenue for local governments, and offers higher than average wages.

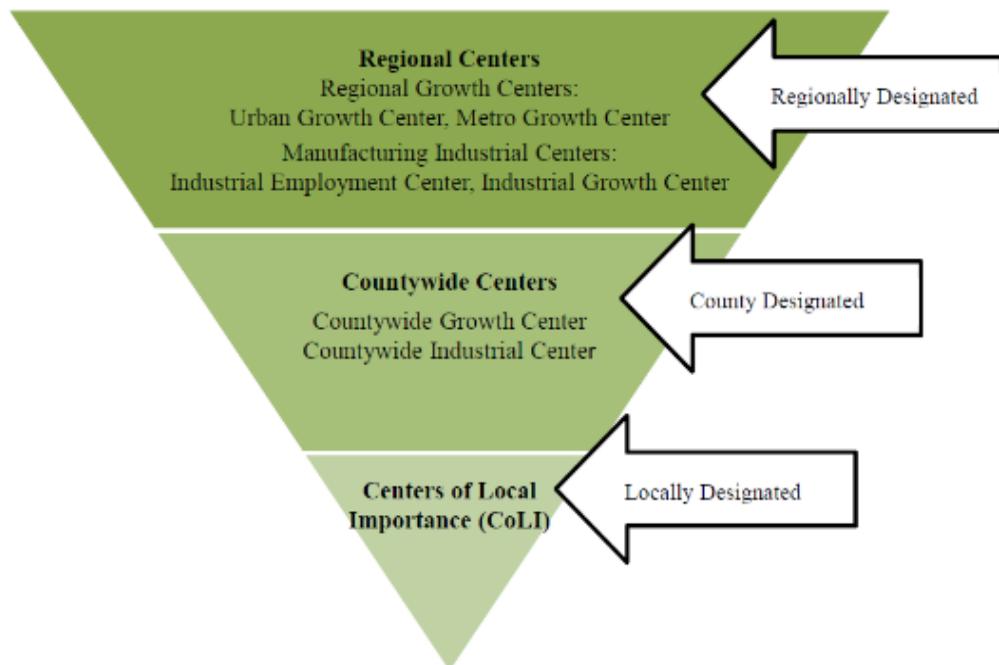
C-5 Transportation and economic development funds should be prioritized for transportation and infrastructure supporting Centers in Pierce County. Projects that support Regional Growth and/or Manufacturing Industrial Centers (and Candidates), support more than one center, and benefit a variety of user groups will be given higher consideration.

C-6 Centers must be identified in a Comprehensive Plan with information about the type of Center and the specific geographic boundaries. Capital improvements must be present and available, or be planned and financed, consistent with the expected rate of growth. Such improvements include, but are not limited to, roads, sewers and other utilities, schools, parks, and open space. In order to provide balance between higher intensity of use within Centers, public and/or private open space shall be provided.

### Types of Centers

Centers must meet minimum designation criteria, which includes the criteria of the lower category Center type. For example, a Regional Center must meet the designation criteria for a Regional Center as well as the criteria for a Countywide Center.

In March 2018, the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) adopted the Regional Centers Framework Update that established new eligibility and criteria for Regional Centers. Jurisdictions must adhere to the latest eligibility and designation criteria for new Regional Centers as adopted by PSRC.



### Center Designation Authority

Regional Centers must be approved by Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), in addition to Pierce County Regional Council (PCRC), by amending the Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs).

Countywide Centers and Centers of Local Importance (CoLI) are approved by the Pierce County Regional Council by amending the Countywide Planning Policies.

### Center Designation Process

Pierce County and any municipality in the County that is planning to include a county or regionally designated Center within its boundaries shall specifically define the area of such Center within its Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan shall include policies aimed at focusing growth within the Center and along corridors consistent with the applicable criteria contained within the Countywide Planning Policies. The County or municipality shall adopt regulations that reinforce the Center's designation.

Beginning in 2019, and once every two years thereafter, the Pierce County Regional Council (PCRC) shall invite jurisdictions to submit requests for designation of new Centers. Said request shall be processed in accordance with established procedures for amending the Countywide Planning Policies.

Each jurisdiction seeking to designate a new Countywide Center shall provide the PCRC with a report demonstrating that the proposed Center:

1. Meets the basic standards for designation;
2. Is characterized and defined in the local Comprehensive Plan;
3. Is consistent with the applicable Countywide Planning Policies; and
4. Is supported and served by adopted local development regulations.

The minimum criteria report and statement shall be reviewed by the Growth Management Coordinating Committee (GMCC) for consistency with Countywide Planning Policies, the Transportation Coordinating

Committee (TCC) for consistency with transportation improvements plans of WSDOT, and with Pierce Transit's Comprehensive Plan. The coordinating committees shall provide joint recommendation to the PCRC.

Once included in the Countywide Planning Policies, the jurisdiction where a Center is located may go on to seek regional designation of the Center from the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC). Jurisdictions must adhere to the latest eligibility, designation criteria, and process for new Regional Growth Centers as adopted by PSRC as they prepare applications for new Center designation. Countywide Centers should be reviewed for consistency and countywide concurrence prior to submitting for regional designation.

After the Center is designated as a Countywide Center within the Countywide Planning Policies, and until regional-level designation by the PSRC occurs, the Center shall be considered a "candidate" Regional Growth Center or Manufacturing/Industrial Center.

Each jurisdiction which designates a Regional Growth Center shall establish 20-year household and employment growth targets for that Center. The expected range of targets will reflect the diversity of the various Centers and allow communities to effectively plan for needed services. The target ranges not only set a policy for the level of growth envisioned for each Center, but also for the timing and funding of infrastructure improvements. Reaching the target ranges will require careful planning of public investment and providing incentives for private investments.

### [Amending an Existing Countywide Center](#)

Once a Center has been designated in the Countywide Planning Policies, the affiliated jurisdiction may request an amendment to the Center. The Center amendment process shall be limited to a vote of the PCRC through submission of a report explaining the requested amendment and affirming that the amended Center will be consistent with the Countywide Center basic standards and the Countywide Planning Policies.

### [Urban Growth Outside of Centers](#)

A variety of urban land uses and areas of growth will occur outside of designated Centers but within the Urban Growth Area (UGA). Local land use plans will guide the location, scale, timing, and design of development within UGAs. The UGA will be where the majority of future growth and development will be targeted. Development should be encouraged which complements the desired focus of growth into Centers and supports a multimodal transportation system. For example, policies which encourage infill and revitalization of communities would help to achieve the regional and statewide objectives of a compact and concentrated development pattern within urban areas. The Countywide Planning Policies provide guidance for development and the provision of urban services to support development within the UGA. Jurisdictions with Centers should plan connections with adjacent neighborhoods and other centers to encourage access to Centers and connectivity across the county.

### [Regional Growth Centers](#)

Regional Growth Centers are locations of more compact, pedestrian-oriented development with a mix of housing, jobs, retail, services, and other destinations. The region's plans identify Centers as areas that should receive a significant share of the region's population and employment growth compared with other parts of the urban area, while providing improved access and mobility, especially for walking, biking, and transit.

Regional Growth Centers are locations that include a dense mix of business, commercial, residential, and cultural activity within a compact area. Regional Growth Centers are targeted for employment and residential growth, and provide excellent transportation service, including fast, convenient, high-

capacity transit service, as well as investment in major public amenities. The following Pierce County Regional Growth Centers have been adopted into the PSRC Regional Growth Strategy:

- Tacoma Central Business District
- Tacoma Mall
- Lakewood
- Puyallup Downtown
- Puyallup South Hill
- University Place

C-7 Jurisdictions that designate a Center within its Comprehensive Plan shall encourage density and development to achieve targeted growth. Any of the following approaches could be used to implement Center development by:

- 7.1 Encouraging higher residential densities within Centers;
- 7.2 Avoiding creation of large blocks of single-use zones;
- 7.3 Allowing for greater intensity of use within Centers;
- 7.4 Increasing building heights, greater floor/area ratios within Centers;
- 7.5 Minimizing setbacks within Centers;
- 7.6 Allowing buildings to locate close to street to enhance pedestrian accessibility;
- 7.7 Encouraging placement of parking to rear of structures; or
- 7.8 Reducing parking requirements based on type of use, demographics, and other factors.

C-8 Designated Centers are expected to receive a significant share of projected growth in conjunction with periodic disaggregation of Countywide population allocations.

C-9 Centers shall provide necessary capital facilities needed to accommodate the projected growth in population and employment.

C-10 Streetscape amenities (landscaping, furniture, etc.) should be provided within Centers to create a walkable environment. Street cross-sections should incorporate planters, street trees, sidewalks, traffic-calming features, and other features to promote walking.

C-11 Agencies should coordinate efforts and cooperate in the development of Centers to ensure that services and infrastructure are designed to promote physical, mental, and social health in both the natural and built environments.

C-12 Jurisdictions should incorporate strategies into plans and regulations for Regional Growth Centers and Countywide Growth Centers that encourage affordable housing, especially near High-Capacity Transit areas.

C-13 To encourage transit use within Centers, jurisdictions should establish mechanisms to limit the use of single-occupancy vehicles. Such mechanisms could include:

- 13.1 Charging for parking;
- 13.2 Limiting the number of off-street parking spaces;

- 13.3 Establishing minimum and maximum parking requirements;
- 13.4 Implementing Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) measures and other transportation demand management measures;
- 13.5 Developing commuter programs for multiple employers not otherwise affected by the CTR law; or
- 13.6 Providing nonmotorized transportation facilities.

C-14 Centers receive a high priority for the location of high-capacity transit stations and/or transit centers.

C-15 Higher residential densities and uses that support high-density residential should be located close to transit stops within Centers and seek opportunities to:

- 15.1 Create a core area to support transit and high occupancy vehicle use;
- 15.2 Allow/encourage all types of transit facilities (transit Centers, bus pullouts, etc.) within Centers; and
- 15.3 Establish incentives for developers to provide transit and transportation demand management supportive amenities.

C-16 Provisions for nonmotorized transportation shall be provided, such as:

- 16.1 Bicycle-friendly roadway design;
- 16.2 Wider outside lane or shared parking/bike lanes;
- 16.3 Bike-activated signals;
- 16.4 Covered, secure bicycle parking at all places of employment;
- 16.5 Bicycle racks; or
- 16.6 Pedestrian pathways.

C-17 Jurisdictions should consider incentives for development within Centers, such as:

- 17.1 Streamlined permitting;
- 17.2 Financial incentives;
- 17.3 Density bonuses or transfer of development rights;
- 17.4 Using SEPA provisions to streamline environmental review; and
- 17.5 Shared mitigation, such as stormwater detention and joint parking.

C-18 Regional Growth Centers should be planned to have fast and frequent high-capacity transit, as well as other modes of transportation options.

C-19 Jurisdictions should individually and collectively coordinate with transit agencies to improve transit service infrastructure and efficiency within and between Countywide and Regional Centers.

C-20 Roadways and nonmotorized networks should be designed to promote efficient transit services, including the provision for facilities such as bus stops.

C-21 Regional Growth Centers, Countywide Centers and employment centers should be connected to each other via multiple modes of transit in order to strengthen the region's economy and connect communities, housing and jobs.

C-22 Support the transition to zero-emission vehicles by encouraging private and public development of the infrastructure needed to support electrification of the transportation system within and between Centers.

C-23 Support transportation investments that provide alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle travel and increase travel options to and within Centers and along corridors connecting Centers.

C-24 Designation requirements for Regional Growth Centers (RGCs):

- 24.1 Consistency with specific criteria for Centers adopted in the Countywide Planning Policies.
- 24.2 Consistency with the Puget Sound Regional Council's current Regional Growth Center criteria.
- 24.3 The Center's location in the County and its potential for fostering a logical and desirable Countywide transportation system and distribution of Centers.
- 24.4 Consideration of the total number of Centers in the County that can be reasonably developed based on projected growth over the next twenty years.
- 24.5 Environmental analysis, which shall include demonstration that urban services, including an adequate supply of drinking water, are available to serve projected growth within the Center and that the jurisdiction is capable of ensuring concurrent urban services to new development.
- 24.6 If a jurisdiction designates a Center, it must also adopt the Center's designation and provisions in its Comprehensive Plan and development regulations to ensure that growth targeted to Centers is achieved and urban services will be provided.
- 24.7 Centers shall be characterized by all of the following:
  - 24.7.1 Clearly defined geographic boundaries;
  - 24.7.2 Intensity/density of land uses sufficient to support high-capacity transit;
  - 24.7.3 A diversity of land uses;
  - 24.7.4 Pedestrian-oriented land uses and amenities;
  - 24.7.5 Pedestrian connections shall be provided throughout;
  - 24.7.6 Urban design standards which reflect the local community;
  - 24.7.7 Provisions to reduce single-occupancy vehicle use, especially during peak hours and commute times;

- 24.7.8 Provisions for bicycle use;
- 24.7.9 Sufficient public open spaces and recreational opportunities, including placemaking and public gathering places;
- 24.7.10 Uses which provide both daytime and nighttime activities; and
- 24.7.11 Located in urban growth areas.

### Regional Manufacturing/Industrial Centers (MIC)

Regional Manufacturing/Industrial Centers are areas where employee- or land-intensive uses are located. These Centers differ from Regional Growth Centers in that they consist of an extensive land base and the exclusion of non-manufacturing or manufacturing-supportive uses is an essential feature of their character. These areas are characterized by a significant amount of manufacturing, industrial, and advanced technology employment uses. Large retail and non- related office uses are discouraged. Other than caretakers' residences, housing is prohibited within Manufacturing/Industrial Centers. However, these Centers should be linked to high- density housing areas by an efficient multimodal transportation system. The efficiency of rail and overland freight to markets is the critical element for manufacturers and industries located in these Centers.

The following Manufacturing/Industrial Centers have been adopted into the Regional Growth Strategy for Pierce County:

- Frederickson
- Port of Tacoma
- Sumner/Pacific
- South Tacoma – Candidate Manufacturing/Industrial Center (not adopted – targeting 2024 for regional designation by PSRC)

C-25 Focus a significant share of employment growth in designated regional manufacturing/industrial centers.

C-26 Provisions to achieve targeted employment growth should include:

- 26.1 Preservation and encouragement of the aggregation of vacant land parcels sized for manufacturing/industrial uses;
- 26.2 Prohibition of land uses which are not compatible with manufacturing/industrial, manufacturing/industrial supportive, and advanced technology uses;
- 26.3 Limiting the size and number of offices and retail uses as accessory use and only to serve the needs of employees within a Center; and
- 26.4 Reuse and/or intensification of the land use consistent with the mix of uses envisioned for the MIC.

C-27 The transportation network within Manufacturing/Industrial Centers should provide for the needs of freight movement and employees by ensuring a variety of transportation modes, such as roads, rail, and various trucking facilities. Nonmotorized facilities and transit services should be creatively provided when it makes sense and is safe, providing the MIC with alternative transportation to single- occupancy vehicles (SOVs) and transportation demand management strategies if transit is unavailable or is not feasible.

- C-28 Manufacturing/Industrial Centers should be connected to centers of concentrated employee housing, via a transportation network that prioritizes transit, facilities for carpooling, and other alternative modes of transportation.
- C-29 The transportation system, including, but not limited to, road, rail, dock, and port terminal, within Manufacturing/Industrial Centers shall be built, protected, and maintained to accommodate existing and future industrial uses.
- C-30 All jurisdictions should support transportation capital improvement projects which improve access and movement of goods to, in, and from Manufacturing/Industrial Centers.
- C-31 Encourage private and public development of the infrastructure needed to support the transition of freight carriers and delivery fleets to alternative fuels and technologies, such as electrification of vehicles and conversion to renewable fuels.
- C-32 To support the health and well-being of employees in employment centers, encourage the development of nearby rest and recreation opportunities for employees, such as on-site exercise facilities, outdoor recreation areas, and trail and sidewalk systems that promote walking/biking and community connections.
- C-33 Encourage the development of accessory uses in MICs that provide services for employees that are close to work sites, such as food services, health services, etc. to better serve the needs of large daytime population and to reduce vehicle miles traveled. Accessory uses should complement, not compete with industrial uses.
- C-34 To be designated as a Regional Manufacturing/Industrial Center (MICs), the following criteria shall be met:
  - 34.1 Consistency with specific criteria for Manufacturing/Industrial Centers adopted within the Countywide Planning Policies and the Multicounty Planning Policies.
  - 34.2 Consideration of the Center's location in the County and region, especially relative to existing and proposed transportation facilities.
  - 34.3 Consideration of the total number of Manufacturing/Industrial Centers in the County that are needed over the next twenty years based on projected need for manufacturing/industrial land to satisfy regional projections of demand for manufacturing/industrial land uses.
  - 34.4 Environmental analysis, which shall include demonstration that the jurisdiction is capable of concurrent service to new development.
  - 34.5 Adoption within the jurisdiction's Comprehensive Plan of the Center's designation and provisions to ensure that job growth targeted to the Manufacturing/Industrial Center is achieved.
  - 34.6 Manufacturing/Industrial Centers shall be characterized by:
    - 34.6.1 Clearly defined geographic boundaries;
    - 34.6.2 Intensity of land uses sufficient to support alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle use;

- 34.6.3 Direct access to regional highway, rail, air, and/or waterway systems for the movement of goods;
- 34.6.4 Provisions to prohibit housing; and
- 34.6.5 Identified transportation linkages to high-density housing areas.

34.7 Jurisdictions having a designated Manufacturing/Industrial Center shall:

- 34.7.1 Plan for and fund capital facility improvement projects which support the movement of goods;
- 34.7.2 Coordinate with utility providers to ensure that utility facilities are available to serve such Centers;
- 34.7.3 Facilitate land assembly;
- 34.7.4 Assist in recruiting appropriate businesses;
- 34.7.5 Encourage employers to participate in Commute Trip Reduction programs; and
- 34.7.6 Ensure that land uses in MICs are of the appropriate types to promote employment growth, and that MICs are protected from incompatible adjacent uses, through zoning, buffers and other mechanisms.

### Countywide Centers

Through the 2018 Centers Framework Update, designation of Countywide Centers remains delegated to a Countywide process, while a baseline of consistent regional standards for each county to use was adopted. PSRC reviews and certifies Countywide planning policies, but PSRC's role does not include review of Countywide Centers.

Designated Centers may vary substantially in the number of households and jobs they contain today. The intent of the Countywide Planning Policies is that Centers become attractive places to live and work, while supporting efficient public services, such as transit and being responsive to the local market for jobs and housing.

**Countywide Growth Centers** serve important roles as places for concentrating jobs, housing, shopping, and recreational opportunities. These are often smaller downtowns, high-capacity transit station areas, or neighborhood Centers that are linked by transit, provide a mix of housing and services, and serve as focal points for local and county investment.

**Countywide Industrial Centers** serve as important local industrial areas. These areas support living wage jobs and serve a key role in the county's manufacturing/industrial economy.

Within Pierce County, a limited number of additional Centers may be designated through amendment of the Countywide Planning Policies consistent with the basic standards and process included below.

C-35 Countywide Growth Centers are local focal points where people come together for a variety of activities, including business, shopping, living, and recreation. These Centers may include the core of small- to medium-sized cities and may also be located in unincorporated urban areas. Often, Countywide Centers include a strong public presence because they are the location of city hall, main street, and other public spaces.

C-36 Countywide Growth Centers should be developed as complete neighborhoods to allow residents and workers in the centers to walk to daily necessities, amenities and services.

C-37 Encourage focused growth and infill in Countywide Growth Centers by streamlining development standards and regulations for residential and commercial development and public projects, especially around high-capacity transit station areas.

C-38 A jurisdiction may apply for status as a Candidate Countywide Center if it satisfies all required criteria included below, has a minimum of 7 activity units per acre, and is planning for at least 16 activity units per acre. The application for Countywide Center would not be regionally designated until the Center achieves at least 10 activity units per acre. Activity units means the sum of population and job units per gross acre, per PSRC.

C-39 Countywide Centers are potential candidates for designation as Regional Centers.

Pierce County has the following Countywide Growth Centers:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sumner Town Center</li> <li>6<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Tacoma)</li> <li>Lincoln (Tacoma)</li> <li>Lower Pacific (Tacoma)</li> <li>McKinley (Tacoma)</li> <li>Narrow (Tacoma)</li> <li>James Center (Tacoma/Fircrest/University Place)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proctor (Tacoma)</li> <li>South Tacoma Way (Tacoma)</li> <li>Tacoma Central (Tacoma)</li> <li>Upper Pacific (Tacoma)</li> <li>Upper Portland Avenue (Tacoma)</li> <li>Ruston Point (Tacoma/Ruston)</li> <li>Downtown Bonney Lake</li> </ul>
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C-40 To be designated as a Countywide Center, the following criteria shall be met.

Countywide Growth Center	Countywide Industrial Center
<p>Center must meet each of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identified as a Center in the local Comprehensive Plan and adopted regulations.</li> <li>Identified as a Countywide Center in the Countywide Planning Policies.</li> <li>Located within a city, multiple adjacent cities, or unincorporated urban area.</li> </ul>	<p>Center must meet each of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identified as a Center in the local Comprehensive Plan and adopted regulations.</li> <li>Identified as a Countywide Center in the Countywide Planning Policies.</li> <li>Located within a city, multiple adjacent cities, or unincorporated urban area.</li> </ul>
<p>Demonstration that:</p> <p>The Center is a local planning and investment priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identified as a Countywide Center in a local Comprehensive Plan; Subarea Plan recommended</li> <li>Clear evidence that area is a local priority for investment, such as planning efforts or infrastructure.</li> </ul>	<p>Demonstration that:</p> <p>The Center is a local planning and investment priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identified as a Countywide Center in a local Comprehensive Plan; Subarea Plan recommended</li> <li>Clear evidence that area is a local priority for investment, such as planning efforts or infrastructure.</li> </ul>

<p>The Center is a location for compact, mixed-use development, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A minimum existing activity unit density of 10 activity units per acre</li> <li>• Planning and zoning for a minimum mix of uses of 20 percent high-density residential and 20 percent employment, unless unique circumstances make these percentages not possible to achieve</li> <li>• Capacity and planning for additional growth of 16 activity units per acre or more.</li> </ul>	<p>The Center supports industrial sector employment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum 1,000 existing jobs and/or 500 acres of industrial land</li> <li>• Defined transportation demand management strategies in place</li> <li>• At least 75% of land area zoned for core industrial uses*</li> <li>• Industrial retention strategies in place</li> <li>• Capacity and planning for additional growth</li> <li>• Important county role and concentration of industrial land or jobs with evidence of long-term demand.</li> </ul>
<p>The Center supports multimodal transportation, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transit service**</li> <li>• Pedestrian infrastructure and amenities</li> <li>• Street pattern that supports walkability</li> <li>• Bicycle infrastructure and amenities</li> <li>• Compact, walkable size of one-quarter mile squared (160 acres); the size may increase to up to half-mile transit walkshed (500 acres) if more than two points within the center are served by transit services.</li> </ul>	
<p>*“Core industrial uses”: Core industrial zoning is characterized by allowing, and preferring, most industrial uses. Incompatible land uses are generally prohibited but may be allowed in limited instances.</p> <p>**Transit is defined as existing or planned options, such as bus, train, or ferry service.</p>	

### Centers of Local Importance (CoLIs)

CoLIs are designated for the purpose of identifying local Centers and activity nodes that are consistent with PSRC Multicounty Planning Policies. Such areas promote compact, pedestrian-oriented development with a mix of uses, proximity to diverse services, and a variety of appropriate housing options, or be in an established industrial area.

A CoLI is characterized by a concentration of land uses or activities that provide a sense of place or gathering place for the community and neighborhood residents. A CoLI should include two or more of the following characteristics:

- Civic services
- Commercial areas
- Recreational areas
- Industrial areas
- Cultural facilities/activities
- Historic buildings or sites
- Residential areas

- C-41 CoLIs may only be located in a town or city without a Countywide or Regional Center located in Pierce County. CoLIs may be allowed in an urban unincorporated area.
- C-42 Local comprehensive plans should include policies that direct development regulations, including zoning, of the CoLI to uses that provide a focal point or sense of place for a community and its surrounding area.
- C-43 The size of a CoLI and the mix and density of uses are to be locally determined to meet community goals.
- C-44 Each jurisdiction defines the role that the CoLI plays in supporting planned growth.
- C-45 A variety of appropriate transportation options and walkable design should be available or planned within a CoLI.

A CoLI shall be locally adopted; approval by the PCRC or other regional organization shall not be required.

1. A jurisdiction shall document how an area meets the design features of a CoLI in its Comprehensive Plan.
2. The documentation should include examples, plans, or other information that supports the designation of a CoLI.
3. An area adopted as a CoLI shall be definitively delineated on a map within a jurisdiction's Comprehensive Plan.
4. A CoLI shall have appropriate land use designations, zoning regulations, and infrastructure plans for existing and planned development.
5. A Comprehensive Plan that utilizes an alternative label to refer to a CoLI shall be accompanied with adopted findings of fact that recognizes the area as a CoLI per the Pierce County CPPs.

A jurisdiction shall provide the PCRC notice of its intention to locally adopt a CoLI or recognize formally adopted CoLIs that meet the criteria:

1. The notice shall be provided to the PCRC 60 days (minimum) prior to the expected date of adoption.
2. The notice shall provide information that identifies the location of the proposed CoLI and documents how the location meets the CoLI policies.

A locally adopted CoLI will be recognized in the Countywide Planning Policies Appendix. Jurisdictions shall forward a map of locally adopted CoLIs, together with the Comprehensive Plan citations, to the PCRC for inclusion into Appendix B. The adopted CoLIs shall be attached to the CPP publications as Appendix B for ease of reference. Appendix B shall not be considered a component of the CPPs and, accordingly, an update to Appendix B shall not constitute an amendment to the CPPs requiring ratification by Pierce County jurisdictions.

## Community and Urban Design

### Introduction

Urban design is the careful planning and shaping of a community's built environment in such a way that maintains the objectives and interests of the community. Traditionally combining the practices of architecture together with planning and landscape design, urban design addresses the way people perceive and interact with the built environment to achieve a unique sense of place and community. Additionally concepts of transportation compatibility, increased density, equity, plan implementation, and environmental protection can be addressed through community and urban design policies and regulations. Community and Urban design principles can be used by jurisdiction to assure the local history and uniqueness of a community is not lost to the accommodation of future growth.

### Background - Growth Management Act

The Washington State Growth Management Act identifies as a planning goal to encourage development in urban areas and to reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development. To encourage this type of urban development that has increased density, and is compact and serviced by multiple transportation alternatives, it requires close attention to the urban design, community context and character, in order to function effectively and consistent with the vision of an individual community. The Growth Management Act does not expressly require that the County adopt a planning policy on urban design; however, VISION 2050 and the Multicounty Planning Policies provide goals and policies related to regional design and urban design.

### Background - VISION 2050

VISION 2050 called for identifying and protecting significant visual and cultural resources that preserve community character. It calls for designing facilities throughout the region that advance community development, and for creating parks and civic spaces. VISION 2050 also advances redevelopment and infill as opportunities for revitalizing communities, including along linear corridors (such as low-scale retail strips along the thoroughfares). Open space and parks at a variety of scales create public amenities, contribute to the character of communities, and provide opportunities for recreation and physical activity.

### Policies

CU-1 Incorporate community and urban design principles consistent with VISION 2050 to create communities that:

- 1.1 Impart a sense of place;
- 1.2 Preserve local character;
- 1.3 Provide for mixed uses and choices in housing types;
- 1.4 Encourage walking, bicycling, and transit use; and

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#### Resource:

This [Land Use & Community Design and Health Logic Model](#) contains a menu of strategies and policies to support placemaking and built form, universal design, and biophilic principles to improve a sense of place, health and well-being, and livability.

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- 1.5 Provide for access to healthy food purveyors such as grocery stores, farmers markets, and community food gardens in proximity to residential areas and centers.
- CU-2 Design public buildings and public spaces that contribute to the unique sense of community and a sense of place.
- CU-3 Design transportation projects and other infrastructure to achieve community development objectives and improve the community.
- CU-4 Promote context-sensitive design of transportation facilities, both for facilities to fit in the context of the communities in which they are located, as well as applying urban design principles for projects in centers and transit station areas.

## Economic Development and Employment (Urban)

### Introduction

The prosperity of a region's economy relies on thriving natural and built environments, healthy people, and a supportive business climate. Our region's outstanding environment and location relative to international markets are key elements for economic success. Land-use policies that encourage job growth in the communities where people live, promote a better jobs/housing balance across the region.

Abundant natural resources, a beautiful setting, and vibrant communities with housing affordable to local workers make communities more attractive to businesses operating in a global economy. Infrastructure planning must consider future ecommerce, information, and data needs.

Capitalizing on the region's competitive advantages while maintaining healthy and vibrant communities requires policies throughout Pierce County that balance conservation and growth while avoiding displacement and fragmentation of marginalized communities.

### Background - Growth Management Act

The Washington State Growth Management Act mandates that counties and cities encourage economic development throughout the state that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plans, promote economic opportunity for all citizens of the state, especially for unemployed and disadvantaged persons, promote the retention and expansion of existing businesses and recruitment of new businesses, recognize regional differences impacting economic development opportunities, and encourage growth in areas experiencing insufficient economic growth, all within the capacities of the state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities [RCW 36.70A.020(5)]. Additionally, the Growth Management Act expressly requires that the County adopt a planning policy on countywide economic development and employment [RCW 36.70A.210(3)(g)].

### Background - VISION 2050

VISION 2050 recognizes that a robust economy is integral to our environmental, social, and financial well-being. It acknowledges that a healthy and diverse economy is vital for paying for public services, supporting arts and cultural institutions, and building our communities. The Multicounty Planning Policies for economic development in VISION 2050 focus on business, people, and places.

An emphasis is placed on a better balance of equitable job creation among the counties to broaden opportunity and create a better jobs-housing balance. Importance is also placed on small and locally owned businesses, because they create jobs, can offer family-wage jobs, and make vital contributions to the sustainability of the region's economy and prosperity. VISION 2050 recognizes the region's economic well-being is also dependent upon the safe and reliable movement of people, goods and services, and information and includes provisions for prioritizing economic development and transportation funding to centers.

### Policies

EC-1 Jurisdictions will work to achieve a prospering and sustainable regional economy by supporting business and job creation, investing in all people, sustaining

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#### Resource:

The Pierce County [Economic Development & Health Logic Model](#) includes strategy and policy ideas aimed at creating inclusive economies and improving human and environmental health.

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environmental quality, and creating great central places, diverse communities, and high quality of life. This will involve assuring consistency between economic development plans and policies and adopted comprehensive plans by:

- 1.1 Providing within the areas designated for urban development, sufficient land to accommodate projected development including both housing and commerce;
- 1.2 Striving for a balance and match of local jobs and local housing;
- 1.3 Providing adequate public facilities and services to employment centers and an adequate supply of housing with good access to employment centers;
- 1.4 Separating, buffering, or leaving natural buffers between residential development and areas of non-residential development where necessary, due to the type, characteristics and impacts of the development activity;
- 1.5 Evaluating federal, state, and local regulatory, taxing, facility financing and expenditure practices striving for equitable investment at appropriate locations;
- 1.6 Leveraging the region's and county's position as an international gateway by supporting businesses, ports, and agencies involved in trade-related activities;
- 1.7 Encouraging the private, public, and nonprofit sectors to incorporate environmental and social responsibility into their practices;
- 1.8 Maximizing the use of existing designated Manufacturing and Industrial Centers [see Centers chapter for policies] by focusing appropriate types and amounts of employment growth in these areas and by protecting them from incompatible adjacent uses; and
- 1.9 Preserving industrial zoning where the appropriate infrastructure exists or is planned.

EC-2 Promote diverse economic opportunities for all citizens of the County, especially the unemployed, disadvantaged persons, minorities and small businesses. Where appropriate, the following measures are examples of actions that may be used to accomplish this policy:

- 2.1 Determining a reasonable "jobs/housing" balance and then coordinating land use and development policies to help achieve the designated balance of adequate affordable housing attainable to local workers and accessible to areas of employment, in a way that avoids the placement of incompatible land uses next to each other and does not lead to the fragmentation of existing communities;
- 2.2 Identifying urban land suitable for the accommodation of a wide range of non-residential development activities;
- 2.3 Utilizing state and federal programs and financial assistance to the maximum extent appropriate;
- 2.4 Encouraging redevelopment of underutilized commercial and industrial areas;
- 2.5 Encouraging flexibility in local zoning and land use controls, such as performance-based zoning, to permit a variety of economic uses, but doing so without sacrificing sound performance, design, and development standards;

- 2.6 Encouraging programs, in conjunction with other public, quasi-public and private entities, to attract appropriate businesses and industries, particularly those that diversify the economic base and provide living-wage jobs;
- 2.7 Encouraging the location of investment in areas served by public transit and adequate transportation facilities, with emphasis on connecting underserved populations with jobs;
- 2.8 Maintaining and enhancing natural resource-based industries, including productive timber, agriculture, fishing and mining;
- 2.9 Targeting the appropriate creation and retention of specific firms and industries within established and emerging industry clusters that export goods and services, import capital, and have growth potential;
- 2.10 Promoting high-quality and accessible educational, job training, and cultural opportunities, particularly for those facing unique obstacles and/or those with special needs;
- 2.11 Steering investments to community and economic development initiatives that elevate economic opportunity for those communities most marginalized and impacted by disinvestment and economic disruptions; or
- 2.12 Fostering opportunities and a supportive environment for business startups, small businesses, and women- and minority-owned businesses.

**EC-3 Plan for sufficient growth and development balancing fiscal/economic costs and benefits derived from different land uses by:**

- 3.1 Ensuring an appropriate mix and balance of land uses;
- 3.2 Reducing inefficient, sprawling development patterns;
- 3.3 Encouraging developments that include active transportation options and access to transit reducing pressures on transportation facilities with limited capacities;
- 3.4 Coordinating the provision of public facilities and services and/or ensuring that new development supports the cost of public facility and service expansions made necessary by such development;
- 3.5 Promoting development in areas with existing available public facility capacity;
- 3.6 Encouraging joint public/private development as appropriate;
- 3.7 Concentrating, and planning for, a significant amount of investment in designated Centers [see Centers chapter for policies]; and
- 3.8 Planning for the efficient flow of people, goods, services, and information throughout the region with infrastructure investments, particularly in and connecting designated Centers [see the Centers chapter for policies].

**EC-4 Work to strengthen existing businesses and industries and to add to the diversity of economic opportunity and employment by:**

- 4.1 Assisting in maintaining a viable market for existing businesses;

- 4.2 Utilizing public financing mechanisms, where appropriate, to strengthen existing businesses;
- 4.3 Making information, technical assistance, and loans available for business expansion, innovation, and job creation;
- 4.4 Protecting existing viable businesses from incompatible neighbors and from displacement;
- 4.5 Streamlining permit processing;
- 4.6 Striving to maintain adequate public facilities and service levels;
- 4.7 Evaluating regulatory and other constraints to business investment and operations and minimizing the effect of such constraints;
- 4.8 Supporting the contributions of the region's and county's culturally and ethnically diverse communities in fostering local businesses and helping the region and the county continue to expand its international economy;
- 4.9 Identifying, supporting, and leveraging the retention of key regional and local assets to the economy unique to our region's position as an international gateway, such as seaports, airports, educational facilities, research institutions, health care facilities, military installations, long-haul trucking facilities, and manufacturing facilities; and
- 4.10 Supporting the regional food economy including the production, processing, wholesaling, and distribution of the region's agricultural food and food products to all Pierce County communities. Emphasize improving access for those communities with limited healthy, affordable, culturally-relevant food options.

EC-5 Provide both the private sector and the public sector with information necessary to support and promote economic development by:

- 5.1 Coordinating the collection and dissemination of information with various local governments; and
- 5.2 Cooperating with private and quasi-private entities and sharing information to attract new industries.

## Education

### Introduction

A high-quality educational system is integral to a thriving, livable community, and is key to the health of its residents. Educational facilities are an important part of public infrastructure; not only do they provide space for students, but they also provide open space, recreation areas, and community gathering space. Further, access to education increases economic and social opportunity in underserved areas and populations, supporting goals toward equity for all residents. In turn, a well-educated population supports a healthy economy through both a skilled work force and the desirability for businesses to locate in the region.

### Background - Growth Management Act

The Washington State Growth Management Act does not identify education as a planning goal to guide the development and adoption of comprehensive plans and development regulations. Neither is education listed as a planning policy requirement in the Growth Management Act. However, the list of topics identified in the Growth Management Act is intended to delineate only the minimum policy requirements. Education is identified as an additional policy area in the Interlocal Agreement: "Framework Agreement for the Adoption of the Countywide Planning Policy (Pierce County Council Resolution No. R91-172, September 24, 1991)".

### Background - VISION 2050

VISION 2050 contains policies related to education obtainment, services, and the siting of education facilities. It calls for ensuring accessible and high quality education and skills-training programs to all of the region's residents and integrates the provision of education facilities and services with care for the environment. VISION addresses the provision of educational facilities and services that are provided to both urban and rural populations by calling for the siting of schools, institutions, and other community facilities that primarily serve urban populations within the urban growth area in locations where they will promote the local desired growth plans. It also calls for locating schools, institutions, and other community facilities serving rural residents in neighboring cities and towns and design these facilities in keeping with the size and scale of the local community.

### Policies

- ED-1 "Educational Facilities" means all public and private educational facilities.
- ED-2 Strive to achieve excellence in education and to offer diverse educational opportunities to be made available to all residents of the County, cities, and towns by:
  - 2.1 Developing a broad tax base;
  - 2.2 Encouraging coordination between educational and employment requirements; and
  - 2.3 Working to ensure that the region and the county has high quality and accessible training programs that give people opportunities to learn, maintain and upgrade skills necessary to meet the current and forecast needs of the regional and global economy.
- ED-3 Coordinate with other institutions or governmental entities responsible for providing educational services, in order to ensure the provision of educational facilities along with other

necessary public facilities and services and along with established and planned growth patterns through:

- 3.1 The capital facilities plan element;
- 3.2 The land use element;
- 3.3 School site location decisions;
- 3.4 Coordination and, if necessary, formal interlocal agreements between school districts and other governmental entities exercising land use planning, regulation, and capital improvement planning functions;
- 3.5 The possible use of impact fees, voluntary advancements, and regulatory requirements for a portion of school facility financing;
- 3.6 Encouraging of joint (municipal/school district) use of playgrounds, parks, open-spaces and recreational facilities;
- 3.7 Supporting for sufficient funding of educational facilities and services; and
- 3.8 Supporting for the provision of educational facilities and services to meet specialized needs.

ED-4 Coordinate with educational facilities by:

- 4.1 Incorporating school facility location criteria, developed in conjunction with the local school district, in the local comprehensive plan;
- 4.2 Including school districts in the comprehensive planning process;
- 4.3 Developing a common base of data and sharing the data with school districts concerning population, household, and school-age population projections, non-educational capital facility needs, and land uses; and
- 4.4 Initiating dialogues with school districts about school district boundaries and service areas in relation to municipal boundaries, designated urban growth areas, annexation plans, and service extension plans and policies.

ED-5 Determine specific siting requirements for all public and private educational facilities and meet specific educational facility needs by:

- 5.1 Locating schools in a manner that is consistent with the local comprehensive plan, including the capital facilities element;
- 5.2 Deciding all facility locations, types and sizes with consideration for the provision of other necessary public facilities and services and the compatibility and effect of the provision of such facilities on land use and development patterns; and
- 5.3 Working toward standards that would prioritize the location of these facilities to be in urban areas, with consideration to existing facilities in rural areas.

## Environment

### Introduction

The quality of life and natural beauty of Pierce County are inherently tied to the environment and its protection for future generations. Open spaces, natural resource lands, environmentally sensitive areas, and clean air and water all play an important role in the quality of life and outdoor activities enjoyed by all the residents of Pierce County. Further, it is recognized that active recreation opportunities, natural resource protection, and the attraction of open space, contribute to the economic well-being of the county; both through direct spending and through the desirability of property near recreation, open space, and natural resources.

No single entity can adequately protect all aspects of the environment. Water flows from the easternmost portion of the County at the summit of Mt Rainier through the County and its Municipalities, across both privately and publicly owned lands, and flows into the Puget Sound. This is just one example of the necessity for comprehensive and consistent countywide policies related to protecting the environment.

The health of the natural environment directly impacts human health. Contact with and access to a healthy natural environment has the ability to provide a host of benefits to overall human health. Conversely, a polluted environment can cause equally as much damage to human health.

### Background – Growth Management Act

The Washington State Growth Management Act identifies the following as planning goals related to protection of the environment:

- Maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries, including productive timber, agricultural and fisheries industries.
- Encourage the conservation of productive forest lands and productive agricultural lands, and discourage incompatible uses.
- Encourage the retention of open space and development of recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop park.
- Protect the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.

Although the Growth Management Act does not expressly require a countywide planning policy on natural resources, open space, and protection of environmentally sensitive lands, the addition of such a policy is specifically identified in the Pierce County Interlocal Agreement: "Framework Agreement for the Adoption of the Countywide Planning Policy (Pierce County Council Resolution No. R-91-172, September 24, 1991)".

#### Resource:

This [Natural Environment and Health Logic Model](#) provides a menu of evidence-based policies and strategies to improve the environmental and human health.

This [Parks, Recreation & Open Space Logic Model](#) offers research-backed policies and strategies to improve physical activity, social interaction, health, and well-being.

## Background – VISION 2050

VISION 2050 provides numerous policies for protection of the environment, all aimed at implementing the stated Environmental Goal - *“The region cares for the natural environment by protecting and restoring natural systems, conserving habitat, improving water quality, and reducing air pollutants. The health of all residents and the economy is connected to the health of the environment. Planning at all levels considers the impacts of land use, development, and transportation on the ecosystem.”*

The 2018 Regional Open Space Conservation Plan maps the regionally important open spaces and identifies regionally important access and improvement opportunities. Recovery of the Puget Sound and implementation of the Puget Sound Partnership’s Action Agenda are emphasized by VISION 2050. Beyond preparing for the impacts of climate change by implementing resilience and mitigation strategies, VISION 2050 identifies “substantially reduces emissions of greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change in accordance with the goals of the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (50% below 1990 levels by 2030 and 80% below 1990 levels by 2050).”

## Policies

- ENV-1 Act in a coordinated manner to identify, designate, and conserve resources, and to protect open space and environmentally sensitive lands, and to reduce the production of greenhouse gases and the effects of climate change.
- ENV-2 Countywide natural resources identified and designated pursuant to this chapter shall be maintained and enhanced through one or more of the following means:
  - 2.1 Conservation;
  - 2.2 Conservation combined with planned use;
  - 2.3 Planned use;
  - 2.4 Enhancement;
  - 2.5 Education;
  - 2.6 Preservation;
  - 2.7 Purchase/acquisition;
  - 2.8 Regulatory approaches;
  - 2.9 Compensable approaches;
  - 2.10 Transfer of development rights programs; or
  - 2.11 Mitigation banking.
- ENV-3 Environmentally sensitive lands, for the purpose of the Policy includes all designated critical areas pursuant to RCW 36.70A.030(6) including, but not limited to, wetlands, aquifer recharge areas, fish and wildlife habitat, geologically hazardous lands and shall also include water supply areas, shorelines, creeks, streams, lakes, rivers, deltas, frequently flooded areas, estuaries, and unique geologic features such as canyons. Jurisdictions shall maintain the following relationships, as applicable, between environmentally sensitive lands and development:

- 3.1 Give priority to protection of environmentally sensitive lands.
- 3.2 Develop standards and criteria for limiting development, if allowed, in the County or in municipal comprehensive plans.
- 3.3 Provide protection for environmentally sensitive lands through the provision of appropriate buffers where development is allowed.
- 3.4 Adopt a “no net loss” approach.
- 3.5 Utilize positive incentives for conservation.
- 3.6 Utilize transfer of development rights, purchase of development rights, or other flexible, clustered or compensatory regulatory approaches.
- 3.7 Designate environmentally sensitive lands of local, county and statewide significance.
- 3.8 Educate all segments of the community concerning the importance of these Policy objectives.
- 3.9 Utilize market-based incentives, such as wetland banking and other mechanisms, to encourage innovation and market driven environmental stewardship and protection.

ENV-4 Solicit the input and expertise of the Puget Sound Partnership and/or other entities with expertise who are working to protect the species, habitat, and biodiversity of the Puget Sound, during review and update of applicable plans and regulations.

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**“No net loss”** is intended to halt the introduction of new impacts resulting from new development. This standard aims to maintain, or improve, function of environmental systems, through implementation of appropriate policies and regulations. Both protection and restoration may be appropriate to achieve “no net loss”.

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#### Inter-jurisdictional Coordination

ENV-5 Recognizing the economic, human health, and natural benefits of maintaining and improving environmental quality, all jurisdictions shall work cooperatively and consistently with each other to implement the policies in this chapter through measures such as:

- 5.1 Identifying, designating, maintaining, conserving, enhancing, and/or protecting, as appropriate, natural resources through the adoption of specific elements in the county and municipal comprehensive plans;
- 5.2 Developing appropriate implementation strategies and regulations;
- 5.3 Adopting local capital improvement programs designed to achieve the objectives of this chapter;
- 5.4 Coordinating standards and criteria among the programs of governmental entities, including where necessary the use of inter-governmental agreements, so as to be consistent with the objectives of this chapter;
- 5.5 Using integrated and interdisciplinary approaches for environmental planning and assessment; or

5.6 Using the best information available at all levels of planning, especially scientific information, when establishing and implementing environmental standards established by the local, state, or federal government.

ENV-6 All jurisdictions in the County should explore the opportunities, benefits, challenges, political will and logistics of creating a Pierce County coalition to address the impacts of climate change on a regional scale. Recognize the clear and present danger posed by climate change, and its potential to drastically impact quality of life, the natural and built environment, and human health and safety for future generations.

ENV-7 Consider the following regarding natural resources:

- 7.1 Placing a primary emphasis on maintaining, enhancing, conserving, and/or protecting, as appropriate, designated and identified natural resources including lands of local, county, and statewide significance;
- 7.2 Developing and applying criteria for limiting development (where development may be allowed) so as to maintain, enhance, and conserve identified and designated important, productive or economically viable natural resources or natural resource-based industries;
- 7.3 Ensuring the provision of buffers to protect environmentally sensitive lands where economic use of natural resource lands will cause adverse impacts;
- 7.4 Adopting a "no net loss" approach where applicable;
- 7.5 Utilizing positive incentives to ensure conservation over time;
- 7.6 Utilizing transfer of development rights; purchase of development rights; conservation easements; or other compensable approaches (see CPPs for Agricultural Lands and Open Space);
- 7.7 Educating all segments of the community concerning the importance of the CPP objectives;
- 7.8 Emphasizing the prevention of air and water quality degradation;
- 7.9 Establish best management practices that protect the long-term integrity of the natural environment, adjacent land uses, and the long-term productivity of resource lands;
- 7.10 Support the sustainability of designated resource lands. Conversion of lands to other uses is strongly discouraged; and
- 7.11 Ensure that resource lands and their related economic activities are not adversely impacted by development on adjacent non-resource lands.

ENV-8 Determine the amount of development permitted on environmentally sensitive lands according to the nature of the area sought to be protected and do so on a case-by-case basis in conjunction with SEPA and critical areas regulations. Enhancements to environmentally sensitive lands, consistent with these policies, may be allowed.

ENV-9 All jurisdictions are encouraged to exceed federal, state and regional environmental quality standards where possible.

ENV-10 Recognizing the unique interconnectedness between a healthy environment and a healthy economy, all jurisdictions, as well as other governmental entities, shall consider policies on environmentally sensitive lands in conjunction with other Countywide Planning Policies, including, but not limited to, policies which address:

- 10.1 Urban growth areas;
- 10.2 Contiguous orderly development and the provision of urban services to such development;
- 10.3 Capital facility siting;
- 10.4 Transportation efficiency;
- 10.5 Siting of transportation facilities;
- 10.6 Operations and maintenance of transportation facilities;
- 10.7 Infill development;
- 10.8 Affordable housing;
- 10.9 State and local Shoreline Master Programs;
- 10.10 Goals and mandates of federal and state land jurisdiction agencies including the Washington State Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service and Tribal governments; and
- 10.11 Watershed management.

#### Open Space

ENV-11 Open space, for the purpose of this Policy, includes federal, state, and local parks, recreation areas, greenbelts/natural buffers, scenic and natural amenities, or unique geological features or unique resources.

ENV-12 Plan for and provide access to open space for all segments of the population regardless of race, social, physical ability or economic status.

- 12.1 Consider adoption of increased measures to ensure the creation and retention of adequate nearby (within ½ mile proximity) access to open space for residents of urban areas.
- 12.2 Consider adoption of proactive measures to increase equity in access to open space for underserved populations.

**“Underserved populations”** generally refers to people who are impacted by the action at hand but are often (usually unintentionally) missing from the planning process and plan implementation.

ENV-13 Plan for the provision and designation of open space considering and including the following:

- 13.1 Environmentally sensitive lands may also include open space and/or greenbelt areas.
- 13.2 Open space areas planned, created, maintained, and/or enhanced within urban growth areas.
- 13.3 Open space is defined in conjunction with recreation and facilities.

- 13.4 Open space and environmentally sensitive lands can create linkages across jurisdictional boundaries and coordination needs to occur between entities.
- 13.5 Open space cluster design should be included in development regulations.
- 13.6 Natural buffering should be included as part of development design.

ENV-14 Jurisdictions may make the following uses of open space:

- 14.1 Recreational areas, including parks (golf courses, picnic areas, bicycle, equestrian and walking trails) and general recreation;
- 14.2 Uses as considered on a case-by-case basis; and
- 14.3 Uses derived from community definition (i.e., greenbelts).

ENV-15 Encourage new housing to locate outside of designated open spaces, or in a compatible fashion (i.e., clustered design) with open space designations.

ENV-16 Regulate open space through tools such as:

- 16.1 Zoning and subdivision ordinances, including but not limited to cluster and minimum lot size zoning with required open space, overlay zones and/or open space, and adequate off-site public facility regulations;
- 16.2 Development impact fees for park and open space acquisition;
- 16.3 Dedication of land or money in-lieu of land;
- 16.4 Designation of open space corridors;
- 16.5 Soil conservation measures;
- 16.6 Wetlands, shorelines, floodplain, or other environmentally sensitive lands ordinances;
- 16.7 Development agreements; or
- 16.8 Protection and encouragement of urban tree canopy coverage.

ENV-17 Cooperatively inventory existing and potential open space by creating local and regional planning inventories.

ENV-18 Authorize the following, or other similar methods of retaining open space land or wildlife corridors:

- 18.1 Public acquisition of property in fee simple or through development easement acquisition;
- 18.2 Private acquisition with covenants, conditions and/or restrictions limiting the use of the property to open space;
- 18.3 Alternatives to public purchase, including, but not limited to:
  - 18.3.1 Flexible zoning, subdivision and regulatory approaches designed for protection or preservation;
  - 18.3.2 Land trust;

- 18.3.3 Conservation easement;
- 18.3.4 Transfer of development rights, purchase of development rights, and other compensable regulatory approaches;
- 18.3.5 Rails-to-trails;
- 18.3.6 Donations;
- 18.3.7 Preferential assessments;
- 18.3.8 Planned developments;
- 18.3.9 Dedications;
- 18.3.10 Impact fees;
- 18.3.11 View easements; or
- 18.3.12 Use value assessments.

18.4 Retention of existing open space through:

- 18.4.1 The designation of natural resource lands of statewide significance;
- 18.4.2 Required open space preservation within and without Urban Growth Boundaries established by Pierce County;
- 18.4.3 Coordination with agricultural landowners and right to farm policies; and
- 18.4.4 Preserving and enhancing significant regional open space networks and linkages across jurisdictional boundaries.

#### Natural Habitat and Watershed

ENV-19 Recognizing that almost all surface water in Pierce County flows to the Puget Sound, consider impacts to the health of the Puget Sound in long range planning efforts and the adoption of development and stormwater regulations.

ENV-20 Support implementation of the Puget Sound Partnership's action agenda.

ENV-21 Preserve, protect, and aim to restore natural habitat critical for the conservation of salmonid species, southern resident orcas and other species listed under the federal Endangered Species Act, whenever practicable, through actions such as:

The **Puget Sound Partnership** is the state agency leading the region's collective effort to restore and protect Puget Sound. The Puget Sound Partnership brings together hundreds of partners to mobilize partner action around a common agenda, advance Sound investments, and advance priority actions by supporting partners.

<https://www.psp.wa.gov/>

21.1 Adopting comprehensive plan policies that seek to protect, maintain, or restore aquatic ecosystems and associated upland habitat;

- 21.2 Considering creation of a Public Benefit Rating System under the Current Use Assessment Program (RCW 84.34) or other Tax Incentive Programs that includes a higher priority for fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas;
- 21.3 Considering fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas when designating land use designations and companion zoning regulations;
- 21.4 Amending existing critical area regulations, as necessary, to protect fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas from development impacts;
- 21.5 Addressing fish passage barriers and retrofit with fish friendly passages, as part of publicly funded projects;
- 21.6 Retrofitting storm water systems associated with public infrastructure to meet current standards, as part of publicly funded projects;
- 21.7 Utilizing low impact development standards and techniques;
- 21.8 Reconnecting floodplains and creation of off channel habitat; or
- 21.9 Partnering with others who are seeking to promote species recovery and to protect, enhance, and restore critical habitat such as the tribes, federal and state entities, non-profit organization, and private sector groups and businesses.

ENV-22 Adopt comprehensive plan policies and regulations to protect and enhance natural ecosystems, and reflect natural constraints and protect sensitive features, such as:

- 22.1 Preserving and enhancing habitat to prevent species from inclusion on the endangered species list and to accelerate their removal from the list;
- 22.2 Identifying and protecting wildlife corridors both inside and outside the urban growth area;
- 22.3 Preserving and restoring native vegetation to protect habitat, especially where it contributes to the overall ecological function and where invasive species are a significant threat to native ecosystems; or
- 22.4 Reducing the use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers to the extent feasible and identify alternatives that minimize risks to human health and the environment.

ENV-23 Coordinate watershed planning and land use planning activities and implementation activities within a watershed boundary by undertaking actions such as:

- 23.1 Participating in local watershed council meetings and planning processes;
- 23.2 Recognizing that watershed planning may be useful in analyzing changes in stream hydrology, flooding, water quality and capital facilities under different land use scenarios;
- 23.3 Evaluating the use of vegetation retention, tree conservation, and maximum impervious surface standards;
- 23.4 Utilizing watershed boundaries instead of jurisdictional boundaries for plans and studies whenever possible;

- 23.5 Considering the implications of planning and implementation activities on natural environmental and built systems that are located outside jurisdictional boundaries but within the shared watershed; or
- 23.6 Updating land use plans and regulations, in consideration of the information that is contained within watershed plans.

ENV-24 Coordinate on watershed planning for the purposes of:

- 24.1 Maintaining natural hydrological functions, ecosystems and watersheds and, where feasible, restore to a more natural state;
- 24.2 Restoring, when feasible, freshwater and marine shorelines, watersheds, and estuaries to a natural condition for ecological function and value;
- 24.3 Identifying and addressing the impacts of climate change and sea level rise on hydrological systems; and
- 24.4 Maintaining and enhancing the ecological, social, and economic benefits provided by a healthy Puget Sound.

ENV-25 Work together to identify and protect natural habitat corridors that cross jurisdictional boundaries.

- 25.1 Establish informational sharing workshops or present information at established coordinating committees.
- 25.2 Whenever possible, utilize watershed boundaries instead of jurisdictional boundaries for plans and studies.
- 25.3 Establish a common method for assessing the habitat needs for sensitive species.

ENV-26 Coordinate watershed/aquatic restoration planning and implementation activities within a watershed.

- 26.1 Consider the implications of planning and transportation projects, and implementation activities not only within jurisdictional boundaries, but also the implications of decisions and activities on habitat for critical fish species that is located outside jurisdictional boundaries but within the shared watershed.
- 26.2 Encourage involvement with local drainage districts and watershed councils in planning process.

#### Built Environment

ENV-27 Maintain or enhance water quality through adoption of stormwater regulations to control runoff and best management practices to maintain natural aquatic communities and beneficial uses.

ENV-28 Encourage green building (LEED), low impact development, and other similar technique to reduce the production of greenhouse gases and the impact to climate change, from construction materials, methods, and maintenance of the resulting built environment.

ENV-29 Consider the need for, and encourage electric and alternative fuel vehicle infrastructure in private and public development projects and long range planning efforts.

- 29.1 New public facilities should provide for electric vehicle charging stations or at a minimum the infrastructure necessary to readily upgrade the facility when appropriate.
- 29.2 Establish parking regulations and development standards that support electric and alternative fuel vehicle infrastructure and active transportation infrastructure.

ENV-30 Support and incentivize, where feasible, development that:

- 30.1 Offers new and innovative inter-disciplinary approaches to address climate change, greenhouse gas production and environmental stewardship; and
- 30.2 Utilizes biophilic principles for exterior and/or interior design to encourage construction of healthy buildings and facilities to promote healthy people.

Monitoring, Best Available Science, and Adaptive Management

ENV-31 Work cooperatively toward creating and implementing methodologies designed to determine the effectiveness of enhancement and recovery strategies for listed species. (The term recovery is applied to species and not to habitat.)

- 31.1 Monitoring and evaluation strategies should be designed to develop data and information that can be used to evaluate future policy choices and management actions.
- 31.2 Whenever practicable, adoption of local plans, which include conservation plans or watershed basin plans, should include monitoring and evaluation criteria.
- 31.3 Use the best information available at all levels of planning, especially scientific information.

ENV-32 Recognize that the best available science to address listed species recovery issues is evolving. Each jurisdiction should apply an adaptive management strategy to determine how well the objectives of listed species recovery and critical habitat preservation/restoration are being achieved.

- 32.1 Consider the results of pilot developments in land use planning.

ENV-33 Ensure that all residents, regardless of social or economic status, live in a healthy environment with minimal exposure to pollution.

**“Biophilic design”** is a concept used within the building industry to increase occupant connectivity to the natural environment through the use of direct nature, indirect nature, and space and place conditions. Used at both the building and city-scale, this idea has health, environmental, and economic benefits for building occupants and urban environments, with few drawbacks.

**“Best available science”** means current scientific information used in the process to designate, protect, or restore critical areas, that is derived from a valid scientific process as defined by WAC 365-195-900 through 365-195-925.

ENV-34 Locate development in a manner that minimizes impacts to natural features and promote the use of innovative environmentally sensitive development practices, including design, materials, construction, and on-going maintenance.

ENV-35 Mitigate noise caused by traffic, industries, and other sources or adjust land uses as appropriate to secure the same result.

ENV-36 Jurisdictions, shall cooperatively work together to create and adopt modifications to their Critical Areas Regulations that include the best available science for the protection of existing habitat, wetlands, estuaries, and riparian areas by avoiding negative impacts.

- 36.1 Encourage the removal of invasive species and the replanting of natural vegetation.
- 36.2 Encourage local community groups in critical habitat restoration and enhancement efforts.
- 36.3 Utilize incentives to encourage landowners to retain, enhance, or restore critical habitat.
- 36.4 Develop complementary, coordinated, integrated, and flexible approaches for the collection, analysis, and sharing of monitoring information (e.g., GIS data, hydrologic and hydraulic analysis).

ENV-37 Utilize a single system for stream typing, accepted as the best available science.

#### Air Quality

ENV-38 Reach and maintain air pollution attainment level/standards for carbon monoxide, greenhouse gases, particulates, and toxics as determined by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency.

ENV-39 Strive to improve the countywide overall air quality for greenhouse gases, particulates, and toxics through measures such as:

- 39.1 Providing education to the community about the sources and implications of particulate matter, greenhouse gases, and air toxics;
- 39.2 Coordinating and partnering across jurisdictional boundaries on air quality issues, strategies, funding opportunities, and education efforts;
- 39.3 Employing methods to reduce particulates by improving indoor and outdoor wood burning activities, reducing wood as a primary source of heat, and encouraging the use of low or no emission heat sources;
- 39.4 Strengthening efforts to reduce pollutants from construction activities (i.e., fugitive dust);
- 39.5 Strengthening efforts to reduce pollutants from transportation activities by:

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Under GMA, all jurisdictions in Pierce County are required to adopt **“Critical Areas Ordinance”** to identify and protect wetlands, aquifer recharge areas, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, frequently flooded areas, and geologically hazardous areas. (RCW 36.70A.060)

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**“Stream typing”** is a Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) classification system of streams and other water bodies that identifies whether or not streams/waterbodies are used by fish, and whether or not streams experience perennial or seasonal flow.

<https://www.dnr.wa.gov/forest-practices-water-typing>

- 39.5.1 Including pollution reduction methods through technologies such as the use of cleaner fuels and vehicle programs, for example, electric charging stations, bike and pedestrian infrastructure, and partnering to construct intra-jurisdictional trails and non-motorized facilities, linear trails, and low speed vehicles;
- 39.5.2 Reducing vehicle miles traveled and auto dependency; and
- 39.5.3 Designing and prioritizing compact communities and neighborhood accessibility for daily goods and services.

39.6 Reducing air toxics emissions through freight infrastructure investment, diesel retrofits, woodstove change-out programs, and various community-scale projects; or

39.7 Reviewing the use and duty-specific needs of publicly owned vehicles and consider the benefits of transitioning to electric vehicles or hybrid vehicles, where appropriate.

### Climate Change

#### ENV-40 Jurisdictions, individually or through

cooperation with coalitions, state, and/or regional agencies, shall assess existing plans and regulations, and update as necessary, to address impacts from climate change, sea level rise, and climate resiliency, as applicable to each jurisdiction's unique circumstances.

**"Climate Change"** is defined by the Oxford Dictionary as *"a change in global or regional climate patterns, in particular a change apparent from the mid to late 20th century onwards and attributed largely to the increased levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide produced by the use of fossil fuels"*.

40.1 Consider planning actions and implementing regulations to address impacts from climate change, such as:

40.1.1 Addressing adaptation and mitigation strategies from the effects of climate change and sea level rise in applicable long range planning documents such as shoreline master plans, comprehensive plans, subarea plans, planned actions, transportation improvement plans, utility plans, etc;

**"Climate resilience"** is the ability to anticipate, prepare for, and respond to hazardous events, trends, or disturbance related to climate and climate change.

40.1.2 Requiring the incorporation of climate resiliency measures in all new development, especially new critical infrastructure and public facilities; and

40.1.3 Adopting measures to avoid, mitigate, and reverse climate change impacts on disproportionately impacted communities, including Black, Indigenous, and communities of color, populations without permanent shelter, and low-income residents.

40.2 Consider adopting regulations to avoid impacts from sea level rise by undertaking such actions as:

40.2.1 Strengthening regulations for 500-year flood plains and other at-risk areas to prevent location of essential public facilities and hazardous uses;

- 40.2.2 Locating critical infrastructure outside flood plains, shorelines, and other at-risk locations to the extent possible; where not possible, design and construct infrastructure to withstand climate change impacts; and
- 40.2.3 Adopting regulations to require climate-responsive measures when redevelopment or improvements to existing development take place.

ENV-41 Plan to meet State mandates on climate change and the reduction of greenhouse gases, and support achievement of regional greenhouse gas emission reduction goals.

ENV-42 Jurisdictions, individually or through coordination with coalitions, state, and/or regional entities, shall work to identify, address and mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change on people's health, particularly that of populations at a greater risk of climate change impacts.

ENV-43 Encourage, incentivize, and require where appropriate, the development community to reduce impacts of proposed projects on climate change by undertakings such actions as:

- 43.1 Promote green development building standards (e.g., LEED and equivalent) in both public and private development and operations;
- 43.2 Utilize low impact development techniques;
- 43.3 Incentivize projects that exceed minimum standards, and/or provide for low carbon power sources;
- 43.4 Coordinate with the development community to encourage the use of pilot projects and new and innovative approaches to address climate change and greenhouse gas production; and
- 43.5 Include an analysis (i.e., supplemental greenhouse gas/climate change impact worksheet) of climate change impacts and potential mitigation when conducting an environmental review process under the State Environmental Policy Act.

ENV-44 Work to protect and restore the carbon sequestration potential of environmentally sensitive lands, natural resources, and open space through actions such as:

- 44.1 Direct development into urban areas and centers to prevent and reduce the urbanization of ecologically sensitive areas and natural resources; and
- 44.2 Encourage countywide carbon sequestration through:
  - 44.2.1 Increasing the amount of vegetation and canopy cover in urban areas by coordinating the preservation and growth of open space; and
  - 44.2.2 Developing a comprehensive strategy to maintain and restore vegetation and increase canopy cover in rural areas.

ENV-45 Support energy management technologies as well as zero emission and renewable energy sources.

- 45.1 Cooperate with regional initiatives and efforts toward the development and use of energy management technologies.

- 45.2 Reduce greenhouse gases by expanding the use of biofuels, energy efficiency/conservation, zero emission and renewable energy sources within municipal and private development and operations.
- 45.3 Investigate and pursue opportunities for district heating (thermal energy on a neighborhood scale).
- 45.4 Investigate and pursue opportunities for landfill methane sequestration.
- 45.5 Adjust development standards to allow, encourage, and preserve opportunities for renewable energy infrastructure.
- 45.6 Encourage the electrification of transportation systems.

ENV-46 Include climate change mitigation strategies in local transportation planning through actions such as:

- 46.1 Cooperating with regional and countywide transportation initiatives to develop strong regional public transportation options;
- 46.2 Increasing alternatives to driving alone;
- 46.3 Encouraging private and public development of transit-oriented development adjacent to transit stations and transit areas, to reduce the need for personal vehicle use;
- 46.4 Prioritizing transportation investments that reduce vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions; or
- 46.5 Considering the electrification of agency owned fleets.

## Essential Public Facilities

### Introduction

There are certain types of land use, buildings, and infrastructure that are necessary for a well-functioning society but that often receive little or no public support when they are proposed or sited or improved. The primary components of the definition of an “essential public facility” (EPF) is that it (1) provides a public service; and (2) is difficult to site. In order to ensure that they are able to be established and then to operate, the GMA identifies planning for EPFs as required, and sets out the processes by which they must be allowed.

RCW 36.70A.200 and WAC 365-196-550 discuss how essential public facilities are identified and must be addressed in county and city comprehensive plans. Consistent with countywide planning policies, counties and cities should create their own lists of “essential public facilities,” to include at a minimum those set forth in RCW 36.70A.200. EPFs do not have to be publicly owned, and include both new and existing facilities. In addition, EPFs may include the expansion of existing essential public facilities or support activities and facilities necessary for an essential public facility.

### Background - Growth Management Act

The Washington State Growth Management Act requires that the comprehensive plan of the County and of each municipality in the County include a process for identifying and siting essential public facilities [RCW 36.70A.200(1)]. “Essential public facilities” include those facilities that are typically difficult to site, such as airports, marine port facilities, state education facilities and state or regional transportation facilities as defined in RCW 47.06.140, regional transit authority facilities as defined in RCW 81.112.020, state and local correctional facilities, solid waste handling facilities, and inpatient facilities including substance abuse facilities, mental health facilities, group homes, and secure community transition facilities as defined in RCW 71.09.020. The State Office of Financial Management is required to maintain a list of essential state public facilities that are required or likely to be built within the next six (6) years. Facilities may be added to the list at any time. The Growth Management Act further mandates that no local comprehensive plan or development regulation may preclude the siting of essential public facilities [RCW 36.70A.200(5)].

The GMA requires coordination between cities and large ports, which are designated essential public facilities under [RCW 36.70A.200](#) and [RCW 47.06.140](#).

[WAC 365-196-550](#) further defines requirements for the process for identifying and siting essential public facilities, both existing and new, and on how they should be incorporated into local comprehensive plans and permitting approaches.

### Policies

EPF-1 Adopt a policy in local comprehensive plan, regarding the siting of essential public capital facilities of a Countywide or statewide nature.

1.1 Essential public facilities include airports, marine port facilities, large ports, state education facilities and state or regional transportation facilities as defined in RCW 47.06.140, regional transit authority facilities as defined in RCW 81.112.020, state and local correctional facilities, solid waste handling facilities, and inpatient facilities including substance abuse

facilities, mental health facilities, group homes, and secure community transition facilities as defined in RCW 71.09.020. They must have a useful life of 10 years or more and be either:

- 1.1.1 A Countywide facility which has the potential for serving the entire County or more than one jurisdiction in the County; or
- 1.1.2 A statewide facility which serves or has the potential for serving the entire state, or which serves less than the entire state, but more than one county.

EPF-2 Identify lands useful for public purposes and incorporate such designations in local comprehensive plans.

EPF-3 Incorporate a policy and process in local comprehensive plans to identify and site essential public facilities. The process and policy shall include the following components:

- 3.1 A requirement that the state provide a justifiable need for the public facility and for its location in Pierce County based upon forecasted needs and a logical service area, and the distribution of facilities in the region and state; and
- 3.2 A requirement that the state establish a public process by which the residents of the County and of affected and "host" municipalities have a reasonable opportunity to participate in the site selection process.

EPF-4 Local Comprehensive Plan policies shall be based upon the following criteria:

4.1 Specific facility requirements:

- 4.1.1 Minimum acreage;
- 4.1.2 Accessibility;
- 4.1.3 Transportation needs and services;
- 4.1.4 Supporting public facility and public service needs and the availability thereof;
- 4.1.5 Health and safety;
- 4.1.6 Site design;
- 4.1.7 Zoning of site;
- 4.1.8 Availability of alternative sites;
- 4.1.9 Community-wide distribution of facilities; and
- 4.1.10 Natural boundaries that determine routes and connections.

4.2 Impacts of the facility:

- 4.2.1 Future land use compatibility;
- 4.2.2 Existing land use and development in adjacent and surrounding areas;
- 4.2.3 Existing zoning of surrounding areas;

- 4.2.4 Existing Comprehensive Plan designation for surrounding areas;
- 4.2.5 Present and proposed population density of surrounding area;
- 4.2.6 Environmental impacts and opportunities to mitigate environmental impacts;
- 4.2.7 Physical, social, emotional and mental health impacts and opportunities to mitigate health impacts of those living in the vicinity;
- 4.2.8 Effect on agricultural, forest or mineral lands, critical areas and historic, archaeological and cultural sites;
- 4.2.9 Effect on areas outside of Pierce County;
- 4.2.10 Effect on designated open space corridors;
- 4.2.11 "Spin-off" (secondary and tertiary) impacts; and
- 4.2.12 Effect on the likelihood of associated development being induced by the siting of the facility.

4.3 Impacts of the facility siting on urban growth area designations and policies:

- 4.3.1 Urban nature of facility;
- 4.3.2 Existing urban growth near facility site;
- 4.3.3 Compatibility of urban growth with the facility;
- 4.3.4 Compatibility of facility siting with respect to urban growth area boundaries; and
- 4.3.5 Timing and location of facilities that guide growth and development.

EPF-5 Ensure that the facility siting is consistent with the adopted County and municipal comprehensive plans, including:

- 5.1 The future land use map and other required and optional plan elements not otherwise listed below;
- 5.2 The identification of lands for public purposes in the land use element;
- 5.3 The capital facilities plan element and budget;
- 5.4 The utilities element;
- 5.5 The rural element;
- 5.6 The transportation element;
- 5.7 The housing element;
- 5.8 The comprehensive plans of adjacent jurisdictions that may be affected by the facility siting; and
- 5.9 The regional general welfare considerations.

EPF-6 Local policies may include standards and criteria related to:

- 6.1 The time required for construction;
- 6.2 Property acquisition;
- 6.3 Control of on- and off-site impacts during construction;
- 6.4 Expediting and streamlining necessary government approvals and permits if all other elements of the County or municipal policies have been met;
- 6.5 The quasi-public or public nature of the facility, balancing the need for the facility against the external impacts generated by its siting and the availability of alternative sites with lesser impacts;
- 6.6 Zoning of area around site to protect against encroachment;
- 6.7 Impacts of climate change, economic, and health impacts when siting and building essential public services and facilities;
- 6.8 Addressing rising sea water by siting and planning for relocation;
- 6.9 Facility operations;
- 6.10 Health and safety (consider use of health impact assessment tools when developing and evaluating planning projects to identify possible impacts of projects on community health);
- 6.11 Nuisance effects;
- 6.12 Maintenance of standards congruent with applicable governmental regulations, particularly as they may change and become more stringent over time; and
- 6.13 Sustainable development practices.

EPF-7 Locally adopted policies on facility siting shall be coordinated with and advance other planning goals including, but not necessarily limited to, the following:

- 7.1 Reduction of sprawl development;
- 7.2 Promotion of economic development and employment opportunities;
- 7.3 Protection of the environment;
- 7.4 Positive fiscal impact and on-going benefit to the host jurisdiction;
- 7.5 Serving population groups needing affordable housing;
- 7.6 Receipt of financial or other incentives from the state and/or the County or other municipalities;
- 7.7 Fair distribution of such public facilities throughout the County and state; and
- 7.8 Requiring state and federal projects to be consistent with this policy.

## Fiscal Impact

### Introduction

The Washington State Growth Management Act requires that the Countywide Planning Policies address “an analysis of fiscal impact” [RCW 36.70A.210(3)(h)]. However, the legislature did not define the scope of the required fiscal impact analysis. During the legislative proceedings a number of alternatives were discussed, ranging from fiscal analysis of the policies themselves, fiscal analysis of the comprehensive plans and implementing regulations, fiscal analysis of governmental decisions affecting jurisdictional responsibilities and/or boundaries and fiscal analysis of significant public and private development projects. From these alternatives, the County, and each municipality, has determined that at the Countywide Planning Policy level fiscal impact analysis will be required only for governmental decisions affecting jurisdictional responsibilities and/or boundaries and significant public and private development projects.

### Policies

- FI-1 The purposes of fiscal impact analysis are to assess the relative costs of providing public facilities and services, with the public revenues that will be derived from: (a) decisions affecting jurisdictional responsibilities and/or boundaries and (b) significant public and private development projects.
- FI-2 Use the results of any required fiscal impact analysis as one of the factors in determining acceptance, modification, or rejection of the proposal/project.

## Growth Targets

### Introduction

Countywide growth targets are informed by the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) per the Growth Management Act and by the Regional Growth Strategy within VISION 2050. It is necessary for the County and all 23 cities and towns to participate in and coordinate the allocation of growth targets using information from the OFM and Puget Sound Regional Council while considering the unique characteristics and needs of each jurisdiction.

### Background –Growth Management Act

The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires comprehensive plans to be consistent with the twenty-year population forecast from the Office of Financial Management (OFM). VISION 2050 builds on GMA and establishes Multicounty Planning Policies for the Puget Sound region. The Regional Growth Strategy set forth in VISION 2050, provides guidance for the distribution of future population and employment growth over 30 years through the year 2050 within the Central Puget Sound Region. This strategy, in combination with the OFM's population forecasts, provides a framework for establishing growth targets consistent with the requirements of the GMA. Consistent with VISION 2050, these growth targets are the minimum number of residents, housing units, or jobs a given jurisdiction is planning to accommodate within the appropriate planning horizon and are informational tools integrated into local land use plans to assist in addressing future residential and employment land needs. These targets are to be developed through a collaborative countywide process that ensures all jurisdictions are accommodating a fair share of growth.

The population projections developed by OFM are based on previous growth trends that are projected over the next 20 years and represent a population increase based on existing policy and development trends. The growth targets developed by PSRC are based on a forecast consistent with the OFM projections for the four counties and their jurisdictions so they are within the scope of GMA; however, the growth targets are allocated to regional geographies based on policy direction to focus growth in areas with planned or funded high-capacity transit, regional growth centers, and manufacturing/industrial centers.

### Background –VISION 2050

The Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) in VISION 2050 distributes growth targets to six regional geographies based on their size, function, and access to high-capacity transit, shown below in descending order of accommodating the highest to lowest shares of growth:

- Metropolitan Cities – Tacoma
- Core Cities – Auburn, Lakewood, Puyallup, University Place.
- High-Capacity Transit Communities – DuPont, Fife, Fircrest, Sumner, Mid-County Community Planning Area, Parkland-Spanaway-Midland Community Plan Area, and South Hill community Plan Area.
- Cities and Towns – Bonney Lake, Buckley, Carbonado, Eatonville, Edgewood, Gig Harbor, Milton, Orting, Pacific, Roy, Ruston, South Prairie, Steilacoom, Wilkeson.
- Urban Unincorporated Areas – Pierce County Urban Unincorporated Areas.
- Rural Areas – Pierce County Rural.

The RGS also recognizes Natural Resource Lands as a geography that is not allocated growth and two other regional geographies that plan for their own respective growth:

- Major Military Installations
- Indian Reservation Lands

Countywide growth targets should be adopted consistent with VISION 2050 as reasonably possible in an effort to “bend the trend” of future growth to more closely conform to the Regional Growth Strategy. Achievement of the future envisioned by VISION 2050 will be challenging. Jurisdictions in some regional geographies will likely be planning for growth targets that are above or below the policy direction set by the Regional Growth Strategy. There may be factors outside a jurisdiction’s control that cause the actual growth to exceed or not achieve the adopted target. These factors may create a need to recognize front- or back-loaded growth scenarios. GMA comprehensive plans and associated development projects implemented and vested prior to 2008 also affect the ability to shift trends toward the policy-adjusted growth targets as set by the Multicounty Planning Policies

To recognize the challenges in achieving the policy-adjusted growth targets, a regional geography and/or jurisdiction(s) may provide documentation to acknowledge constraints related to achieving VISION 2050 guidance. If a jurisdiction’s adopted target is lower or higher than expected from a straight-line application of the Regional Growth Strategy, certification by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) will be based on the actions and measures taken or proposed to be put in place to bend the trend, not just on an assessment of the adopted targets.

## Policies

**GT-1** Jurisdictions shall cooperatively develop and propose objective standards and criteria to develop growth targets for housing and employment within the range set by the State Office of Financial Management's Countywide growth forecasts and taking into account the VISION 2050 Regional Growth Strategy forecasts and the availability and concurrency of public facilities and services with the impact of development.

- 1.1 The County shall work with cities and towns to allocate targets within each regional geography based on the VISION 2050 Regional Growth Strategy.
  - 1.1.1 The Growth Management Coordinating Committee (GMCC) may establish working groups based on the regional geographies identified in VISION 2050 to allocate draft targets to their respective jurisdiction.
    - 1.1.1.1 The GMCC will forward recommended targets to Pierce County Regional Council (PCRC), including any documentation that supports the recommendation to be considered as findings.
  - 1.1.2 The PCRC shall review and make a recommendation to the Pierce County Council on proposed growth targets, including any documentation that supports the recommendation to be considered as findings.
    - 1.1.2.1 The PCRC may conduct public meetings to review the proposed designation and, at such meetings, may accept oral or written comments and communications from the public.

- 1.1.2.2 If the Pierce County Council amends the PCRC's growth target recommendation, the PCRC shall be provided time to review and comment on the modifications prior to Council adoption.
- 1.1.2.3 In the case of an impasse, the affected jurisdiction may appeal the adopted target to the GMHB after the growth targets are adopted.

GT-2 The Pierce County Council shall be the responsible body for adopting housing and employment targets for Pierce County jurisdictions, subject to appeal to the Growth Management Hearings Board (GMHB).

- 2.1 The adopted targets shall be attached to the Countywide Planning Policy (CPP) publications as Appendix A for ease of reference.
  - 2.1.1 Appendix A shall be updated to reflect future County Council action.
  - 2.1.2 Appendix A shall not be considered a component of the CPPs and, accordingly, an update to Appendix A shall not constitute an amendment to the CPPs requiring ratification by Pierce County jurisdictions.

GT-3 Jurisdictions should incorporate adopted growth targets when updating their local comprehensive plans.

- 3.1 Growth targets are the minimum number of residents, housing units, or jobs a given jurisdiction is planning to accommodate within the appropriate planning horizon and are to be developed through a collaborative countywide process that ensures all jurisdictions are accommodating a fair share of growth.
- 3.2 The adopted growth targets are based on jurisdictional boundaries at time of adoption, any annexations made after adoption of the growth targets would require reconciliation of growth targets for the affected jurisdictions per GT-5.
- 3.3 Targets are informational tools integrated into local land use plans to assist in formulating future residential and employment land needs.

GT-4 Jurisdictions with Regional Growth Centers and/or Regional Manufacturing/Industrial Centers shall establish targets for the applicable centers in their local comprehensive plans consistent with VISION 2050.

GT-5 If local projections are different than the adopted targets based on VISION 2050, potential modifications to comprehensive plans may be necessary to align with the adopted targets and Regional Growth Strategy.

- 5.1 The County and its cities and towns shall monitor the local projections to determine if the projections are shifting to align with the adopted targets over time.

GT-6 Once the GMA comprehensive plan updates of jurisdictions in Pierce County are adopted, jurisdictions may review and, if necessary, make a request to the Pierce County Council to adjust the population, housing, and employment growth targets.

- 6.1 Once a jurisdiction makes such a request, the County should survey the other jurisdictions to determine if other requests will be made. If so, the County may wait until other requests are made before moving forward with the reconciliation process.

## Health, Healthy Communities, and Healthy Community Planning

### Introduction

Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease ([World Health Organization](#)).

The way we design and build our communities can affect our physical, social and mental health. Not every neighborhood across our County offers health-promoting opportunities, such as connected sidewalks, reliable public transit, affordable housing, safe parks and open space, healthy foods, and other amenities. As a result, not every County resident is given a fair opportunity to attain one's full health potential.

To enable everyone to enjoy a good quality of life, we need healthy communities. These are places where all individuals have access to healthy social, economic, built and natural environments that give everyone the opportunity to live to the fullest, regardless of race and ethnicity, gender, income, age, abilities, or other socially defined circumstances.

### Background - Washington State Growth Management Act

There's a strong research evidence showing that urban sprawl adversely reduces our quality of life. The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) (Chapter 36.70A RCW) was adopted to acknowledge the fact that uncoordinated and unplanned growth poses a threat to the environment, sustainable economic development, and the quality of life in Washington.

The two-fold purpose of the GMA is to protect the environment by encouraging development in urban areas while reducing sprawling into undeveloped lands, and to enhance the state's high quality of life. Each GMA goal has a bearing on our health and a potential to improve community livability. How we plan for urban growth, transportation, housing, economic development, parks and open, etc., impacts our physical, social and mental well-being. Thus, the

Countywide Planning Policies apply a health-in-all-policies approach to integrate health into individual planning elements.

**Social Determinants of Health** are those social, economic, and environmental factors or conditions in which people are born, live, work, and age. ([Healthy People 2020](#) and [US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)). These factors or conditions in our neighborhoods significantly affect our health.

**Health disparity** is the gap or difference in health status between different groups of people, including race, income, education and geographic location. It's a particular type of health difference that is closely linked with social, economic, and/or environmental disadvantage. ([Healthy People 2020](#)).

**Health equity** is the attainment of the highest level of health for all people. ([Healthy People 2020](#)).

**Quality of Life** is a broad multi-dimensional concept comprised of two domains—"individual health and well-being" and "neighborhood livability". The first domain includes physical health and social, emotional and mental well-being. The second relates to those rich opportunities in our neighborhoods affording one to fully enjoy life, such as access to living wage jobs, affordable housing, reliable transit, good schools, safe parks and protected natural areas, etc. ([US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)).

### Relationship between GMA Goals and Health—A Few Examples:

- Urban growth: Compact growth can improve walkability to access daily services and enhance community interactions to build social capital of its residents.
- Reduce sprawl: Research evidence shows that sprawling low-density developments have significant negative health impacts from increased obesity, poor diets, death from vehicular crashes, reduced physical activity, lower community involvement, and increased stress.
- Transportation: Physical and social connectivity and walkability benefit individual health and well-being as well as improve neighborhood livability.
- Housing: The affordability, location, and quality of housing have all been independently linked to health.
- Economic development: Research indicates a direct linkage between the income and economic opportunities of a community and individual health outcomes. Access to living-wage jobs and greater economic opportunities can improve financial stability and make individuals healthier.
- Open space and recreation: Trails, parks, and green space provide opportunities for individuals to escape the concrete built environments, recreate and socially interact, and connect with the nature.
- Environment: Clean air and water are crucial to the health of the ecosystem and region's population.
- Citizen participation and coordination: Civic engagement and citizen participation in both the planning process and the community at large can empower communities and instill a sense of belonging and ownership, which in turn benefit health.

### Background - VISION 2050

Puget Sound Regional Council's Vision 2050 envisages that the Central Puget Sound region provides an exceptional quality of life and opportunity for all, connected communities, a specular natural environment, and an innovative, thriving economy. The region will be made up of healthy people living and working in places and neighborhoods offering diverse opportunities for people of all backgrounds and incomes to attain their full health potential. Among others, it calls out "health and equity" as desired outcomes for the region to achieve. Thus, policies and strategies ensuring health and equity are incorporated throughout the Countywide Planning Policies.

**Equity and health** are two desirable outcomes specifically targeted to address public health. Vision 2050 operationalizes these two outcomes for planners to achieve: Equity: All people can attain the resources and opportunities to improve their quality of life and enable them to reach their full potential. Health: Communities promote physical, social, and mental well-being so that all people can live healthier and more active lives. Vision 2050 embeds health discussions throughout different chapters of the Multicounty Planning Policies. Specifically, under "Development Patterns", the goal is to create walkable, compact, and equitable transit-oriented communities to promote physical health and social well-being, build strong communities with a sense of identity, and make healthy communities more accessible for all

### Policies

Each planning element in the Countywide Planning Policies is vital to human health and well-being. Specific policies relating to each planning element, like transportation, housing, economic development, environment, etc. are integrated into topic-specific chapters throughout the Countywide Planning Policies.

This chapter provides the high-level, overarching policies that support healthy community planning practices to achieve healthy communities and improve quality of life.

- H-1 Incorporate human health considerations into each planning element of comprehensive plans, including subarea plans. Prioritize planning practices (e.g. processes, policies, programs, projects and investment decisions) to support mental, social and physical well-being for all.
- H-2 Apply a “Health-In-All-Policies” framework that considers and integrates healthy community planning when making planning and other policy decisions.
- H-3 Identify and mitigate health and equity impacts of policy, regulation, or development proposals. This may include:
  - 3.1 Seeking to consider the health ramifications of physical and built environment impacts when conducting SEPA reviews;
  - 3.2 Utilizing a Health Impact Assessment when Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required;
  - 3.3 Applying equity tools or other data-informed analyses to assess health and equity impacts, with particular emphasis on negative impacts to underserved populations;
  - 3.4 Identifying, integrating, and implementing mitigation actions in collaboration with the affected populations;
  - 3.5 Developing public investment evaluation criteria to prioritize public investments to address health disparities; or

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**Healthy community planning** is both an “approach” and a “process” which integrates evidence-based health strategies into community planning, transportation and land-use decisions. Its purpose is to create vibrant, equitable and safe places with abundant opportunities for all to live, work and play ([American Planning Association](#)). Its evidence-informed approach helps develop or prioritize planning practices (such as processes, policies, programs and projects, etc.) that support mental, social, and physical well-being for all. Its process simultaneously generates livable natural and built environments, viable economic development, and equitable societies to improve those non-medical (i.e. social, economic and environmental) factors affecting one’s health.

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**Health-in-all-policies** is a collaborative approach that integrates and articulates health considerations into policy-making across sectors to improve the health of all communities and people. ([US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#))

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**Health Impact Assessment (HIA)** is a process that helps evaluate the potential health effects of a plan, project, or policy before it is built or implemented. HIA brings potential positive and negative public health impacts and considerations to the decision-making process for plans, projects, and policies, such as transportation and land use. An HIA provides practical recommendations to increase positive health effects and minimize negative health effects. ([US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)). It typically involves six steps: screening, scoping, assessment, recommendations, reporting and monitoring. It’s an opportunity for the affected communities and vulnerable populations to address health disparities. CDC provides a [Health Impact Assessment Tool and Other Types of Health Assessments](#). APA has a [Health Impact Assessment’s Role in Planning and Toolkit](#). [Tacoma-Pierce County Board of Health adopted Resolutions](#) recommending the use of HIA in conjunction

3.6 Implementing development standards and conditions to prevent, minimize, and mitigate potential negative health impacts from development activities.

H-4 Meaningfully engage and empower all people, particularly the underserved, in planning for communities. This may include:

- 4.1 Increasing familiarity with health data, community-based/grassroots organizations, social and environmental determinants of health, and health inequities;
- 4.2 Making special efforts to outreach and understand community needs and the aspirations of underserved populations;
- 4.3 Working with populations experiencing health disparities and strengthen their capacity for collective efficacy;
- 4.4 Including special needs and diverse populations representative of your jurisdiction demographics or historically underserved; or
- 4.5 Helping communities understand how short- and long-range policy, land use, infrastructure, and other decisions affect the public health of the entire community, and how to effectuate ongoing positive health outcomes.

H-5 Promote cooperation and coordination among public service providers, local government, the local health department, developers, community organizations, and all segments of the community to encourage healthy developments that promote and improve physical and social well-being for all.

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H-6 Apply evidence and performance-based planning practices to carry out healthy community planning. This may include:

- 6.1 Conducting livability needs assessment to help identify needs, opportunities and threats, including, but not limited to, health and equity issues, to inform local comprehensive or subarea plan development;
- 6.2 Collecting, analyzing and interpreting health and other evidence-based data to support comprehensive or strategic planning;
- 6.3 Identifying health-supporting policies and strategies based on well-founded research evidence;

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The differences in one's opportunity and freedom to "control over destiny" often lead to health disparities. Engaging the underserved populations, either under-represented or low-income, in the planning process by hearing, understanding and responding to their concerns can improve their health

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**Resource:**  
TPCHD's [Healthy Community Planning Toolbox](#) includes [Planning Process Tools](#), [Policy Intervention Tools](#), [Health-in-all-policies Tools](#) and a [Health Lens Analysis Tool](#). It also contain resources such as Community Profiles, [Livability Needs Assessment](#), and [Built Environment Performance Measure Samples](#). For data or other assistance, contact Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department

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## Health, Healthy Communities, and Healthy Community Planning

- 6.4 Developing, monitoring and managing meaningful built environment metrics and health outcomes to gauge implementation progress in collaboration with the public; or
- 6.5 Periodically revisiting goals and evaluating related policies and action strategies based on performance outcomes to improve health in collaboration with the affected public.

## Historic, Archaeological, and Cultural Preservation

### Introduction

The preservation of historic, archaeological, and cultural resources is integral to a community's identity and sense of place. The protection, access to, use, and public awareness of Tribal Cultural Resources is vitally important to the continuation of traditional cultural ways of Sovereign Nations. Tribal Cultural Resources are recognized as non-renewable resources that require management to assure their benefit to past, present, and future Tribal History. Cultural resources are generally defined as prehistoric and historic sites, structures, landscapes, districts, and any other physical evidence associated with human activity considered important to a culture, a subculture, or a community for scientific, traditional, religious, or any other reason determined by the Tribe. Tribes have a substantial interest in protecting, accessing, and controlling their cultural resources. Many of these resources may be protected by tribal, state, or federal laws.

- Purpose is to establish a meaningful consultation process with local Federally recognized tribes.
- Consideration of Tribal Cultural Values in determination of project impacts and mitigation.
- Consultation ends when either parties agree to mitigation measures or avoid a significant effect on Tribal Cultural Resources or a party, acting in good faith and after reasonable effort concludes that mutual agreement cannot be reached.
- Public agencies shall, when feasible, avoid damaging effects to Tribal Cultural Resources.
- Mitigation measures agreed upon during consultation shall be recommended for inclusion in environmental document.

### Background – Growth Management Act

The Washington State Growth Management Act mandates that counties and cities identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures that have historical or archaeological significance. [RCW 36.70A.020(13)]. The term "significance" is not defined. However, it is well-recognized that the federal and state governments have programs that have been in operation for some time by which land, sites, structures and districts of national or state significance may be placed on the National Register of Historic Places or State Register of Historic Places, respectively. Certain cities have also adopted local programs to designate land, sites, and structures of local significance. Although the Growth Management Act does not require a countywide planning policy on historic, archaeological and cultural preservation, that requirement was added by the Interlocal Agreement: "Framework Agreement for the Adoption of the Countywide Planning Policy (Pierce County Council Resolution No. R91-172, September 24, 1991)".

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**The Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP)** is Washington State's primary agency with knowledge and expertise in historic preservation. We advocate for the preservation of Washington's irreplaceable historic and cultural resources - significant buildings, structures, sites, objects and districts - as assets for the future.

<https://dahp.wa.gov/>

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Historical, archeological and cultural resources are valuable community capitals that can knit communities together, improve walkability, and help people relate to the past and their roots. They can also help reduce stress and crime.

**Resource:** This [Land Use & Community Design and Health Logic Model](#) offers a menu of strategies and policies to support historic, architectural, arts and cultural resources that would ultimately improve a sense of place and identity.

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## Background – VISION 2050

VISION 2050 promotes the preservation of significant visual and cultural resources, in addition to historic and archeological resources, and also contains policies that promote urban design techniques to preserve these assets in recognition of the economic value of sense of place. Furthermore, VISION 2050 recognizes the importance of culturally significant sites and coordination between tribes and local jurisdictions, including a new policy that recognizes how development could impact those sites and the importance of interjurisdictional coordination.

## Policies

- HAC-1 Utilizing applicable federal, state, and local designations, and in cooperation with the Indian tribes, all jurisdictions shall identify the presence of federal, state, and local historic, archaeological and cultural lands, sites, and structures, of significance within their boundaries.
  - 1.1 In instances where the County or municipalities are making land use decisions resulting in more intense development, those jurisdictions should contact tribal historic preservation officers to identify potential cultural resource impacts.
- HAC-2 Consider the potential impacts of development to culturally significant tribal sites.
  - 2.1 The County and each municipality should reach out to the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation to verify the presence of cultural resources through available databases.
  - 2.2 The County and each municipality should contact local tribal historic preservation officers to determine likelihood of impact to potential cultural resources when reviewing development proposals that involve ground disturbance.
- HAC-3 Jurisdictions may, utilizing County standards or locally-developed standards, identify and designate local historic, archaeological and cultural lands, sites, and structures of significance within their boundaries.
  - 3.1 Recommendations for local designations may be made by any person or entity or by any municipality or governmental body.
  - 3.2 The municipality may designate an individual, commission or committee to be responsible for review of recommendations and to forward such recommendations on to the legislative body.
  - 3.3 Designations shall only be made by the local legislative body if the land, site, or structure has only local significance.
  - 3.4 All such designations shall be reflected in the land use element of the comprehensive plan.
  - 3.5 Any municipality may request that the County's Landmarks Commission and/or staff provide assistance in designating land, sites, or structures; if sought, such assistance may be provided pursuant to an interlocal agreement.

The “**Tribal Consultation, Coordination and Lands Compatibility**” Chapter provides additional guidance to protect invaluable Tribal historical resources.

- 3.6 Preservation of significant lands, sites, and structures shall be encouraged or accomplished by the County, and each municipality in the County, through any one or a combination of the following techniques, as determined to be appropriate by the local legislative body:
  - 3.6.1 Designation;
  - 3.6.2 Incentives for preservation;
  - 3.6.3 Loans and grants;
  - 3.6.4 Public purchase;
  - 3.6.5 'on-development' easement;
  - 3.6.6 Development rights transfer;
  - 3.6.7 Restrictive covenants;
  - 3.6.8 Regulations for protection, maintenance, and approval of appropriate development;
  - 3.6.9 Plans/policies/standards for preservation as set by the U.S. Department of the Interior; and/or
  - 3.6.10 Certified local government designation.
- 3.7 Jurisdictions may utilize one or more of the following criteria, or others as may be determined to be appropriate, to make designation decisions for recommended lands, sites, or structures:
  - 3.7.1 Archaeological, historic, or cultural "significance";
  - 3.7.2 Condition;
  - 3.7.3 Uniqueness;
  - 3.7.4 Accessibility;
  - 3.7.5 Cost/benefit;
  - 3.7.6 Extent to which land, site, or structure is undisturbed;
  - 3.7.7 Presence of incompatible land uses or activities;
  - 3.7.8 Presence of environmental, health, or safety hazards;
  - 3.7.9 Tourism potential;
  - 3.7.10 Educational value; and/or
  - 3.7.11 Consent of owner.
- 3.8 The legislative body of the County, and each municipality in the County, may utilize one or more of the following criteria or others as may be determined to be appropriate, to make a de-designation decision:
  - 3.8.1 Error in historical/archaeological/cultural research for the original designation.
  - 3.8.2 Economic hardship for the owner leaving no reasonable use of the land, site, or structure.
  - 3.8.3 Deterioration of lands, site, or structure.

- 3.8.4 Discovery of other (better) examples of lands, sites, or structures.
- 3.8.5 Presence of land, site, or structure on state or federal registers.

HAC-4 Encourage public education programs regarding historic, archaeological, and cultural lands, sites, and structures as a means of raising public awareness of the value of maintaining those resources.

HAC-5 Utilize urban design strategies and approaches to ensure that changes to the built environment preserve and enhance the region's and the county's unique attributes and each community's distinctive identity in recognition of the economic value of sense of place.

## Military Installations and Compatibility

### Introduction

Military readiness can be severely impacted by growth and general congestion near bases, and access is important to maintain for installations and surrounding communities. Installations serve as hubs for both employment and population, and it is important to work together on growth planning in and around bases. This ensures the welfare, safety, and security of community members and military personnel. Limiting incompatible uses adjacent to military installations can take several forms, from adopting development guidelines that restrict height or land uses to analyzing how transportation impacts from new development affect military transportation routes. Background - Growth Management Act

Military installations are of particular importance to the economic health of the state of Washington and it is a priority of the state to protect the land surrounding our military installations from incompatible development. A comprehensive plan, amendment to a plan, a development regulation or amendment to a development regulation, should not allow development in the vicinity of a military installation that is incompatible with the installation's ability to carry out its mission requirements. (RCW [36.70A.530\(3\)](#).)

Per RCW [36.70A.530\(4\)](#), as part of the requirements of RCW [36.70A.070\(1\)](#), each county and city planning under RCW [36.70A.040](#) that has a federal military installation that employs one hundred or more personnel and is operated by the United States department of defense within or adjacent to its border, including Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM), shall notify the commander of the military installation of the county's or city's intent to amend its comprehensive plan or development regulations to address lands adjacent to military installations to ensure those lands are protected from incompatible development. The county or city shall follow notice requirements as stated in RCW [36.70A.530\(5\)](#).

Per RCW [36.70A.085\(3\)](#), cities that include all or part of a port district with annual operating revenues in excess of twenty million dollars may include a marine industrial port element. Such port elements must be developed collaboratively between the city and the applicable port. All 23 cities and towns in Pierce County are located with the Port of Tacoma District.

WAC [365-196-430\(2\)\(b\)](#) states that local comprehensive plan transportation elements' goals and policies should address freight mobility including port facilities, truck, air, rail, and water-based freight.

The Port of Tacoma has been classified as one of 23 strategic ports for the US military and is part of the [National Port Readiness Network \(NPRN\)](#) designed to ensure readiness of commercial ports to support deployment.

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The **South Sound Military Community Partnership (SSMCP)** is a partnership of more than 50 members: cities, counties, tribes, nonprofits, corporations, organizations, and Joint Base Lewis-McChord who seek to bridge military and civilian communities through innovative and flexible partnerships and performing mutually beneficial work in the South Sound. <https://cityoflakewood.us/south-sound-military-and-communities-partnership/>

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## Background – VISION 2050

Per the VISION 2050 Regional Centers Framework, regional expectations for Major Military Installations include:

- Ongoing coordination between the military installation, countywide planning forum, and neighboring jurisdictions regarding planned growth, regional impacts, and implementation of multimodal transportation options;
- Support for multimodal commute planning and mode split goals for the installation; and
- Completed Joint Land Use Study or similar coordinated planning effort.

## Policies

MI-1 Recognize the beneficial land use, housing, and transportation impacts of Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM) as well as the land use, housing, and transportation challenges for adjacent and nearby communities in local comprehensive plans and policies.

MI-2 Protect military lands from encroachment by incompatible uses and development on adjacent land in local comprehensive plans and policies and implementing regulations.

MI-3 Notify JBLM regarding regional and local planning actions, recognizing the mutual benefits and potential for impacts between growth occurring within and outside installation boundaries.

MI-4 Project Selection Criteria: Incorporate criteria into countywide infrastructure evaluation processes that would allow for the inclusion and funding of transportation projects, identified in a completed local or regional transportation study, that relate to and potentially benefit access to military installations and surrounding jurisdictions. Funding for such projects will be consistent with the goals and policies of VISION 2050, including support for regional centers and progress toward greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets.

MI-5 Recognize in local comprehensive plans that the Port of Tacoma has been classified as one of 23 strategic ports for the US military and is part of the National Port Readiness Network (NPRN) designed to ensure readiness of commercial ports to support deployment.

## Rural Areas

### Introduction

A major cornerstone of the Growth Management Act and VISION 2050 is to concentrate growth in the urban areas and preserve rural areas and resource lands. Rural lands are located outside of the urban growth area and are separate from natural resource lands. While the GMA assigns responsibility for adopting a rural element to counties, all jurisdictions in a county, particularly those surrounded by or adjacent to rural lands, have an interest in what occurs on rural lands.

### Background - Growth Management Act

The Washington State Growth Management Act requires that county comprehensive plans include a rural element that includes lands that are not designated for urban growth, agriculture, forest, or mineral resources. This element is guided by multiple sections in the GMA related to rural areas, including RCW 36.70A.030 (Definitions), RCW 36.70A.011 (Findings - Rural lands), RCW 36.70A.070 (5) (Comprehensive plans - Mandatory elements - Rural Element); and others.

Rural elements are intended to recognize the importance of rural lands and rural character to Washington's economy, its people, and its environment, while respecting regional differences. In the rural element, counties are to foster land use patterns and develop a local vision of rural character that will: help preserve rural-based economies and traditional rural lifestyles; encourage the economic prosperity of rural residents; foster opportunities for small-scale, rural-based employment and self-employment; permit the operation of rural-based agricultural, commercial, recreational, and tourist businesses that are consistent with existing and planned land use patterns; be compatible with the use of the land by wildlife and for fish and wildlife habitat; foster the private stewardship of the land and preservation of open space; and enhance the rural sense of community and quality of life.

### Background – VISION 2050

VISION 2050 identifies rural lands as permanent and vital parts of the region. It recognizes that rural lands accommodate many activities associated with natural resources, as well as small-scale farming and cottage industries. VISION 2050 emphasizes the preservation of these lands and acknowledges that managing rural growth by directing urban-type development into designated urban lands helps to preserve vital ecosystems and economically productive lands.

VISION 2050 also acknowledges recent successes in directing growth away from rural lands. However, it acknowledges that conversion pressures from urban development continue today, particularly through vesting, and calls for continued use of rural lands for farming, forestry, recreation, and low-density development supported by rural services. The Multicounty Planning Policies reinforce this and call for minimizing environmental impacts to rural lands, while providing long-term solutions for the environmental and economic sustainability of rural-based industries.

### Policies

#### Overarching Goal

**RUR-1** The County will sustain the ecological functions, resource value, lifestyle, and character of rural lands for future generations by limiting the types and intensities of development in rural areas.

#### Development Patterns

- RUR-2 Ensure that development in rural areas is consistent with the countywide and regional vision.
- RUR-3 Prohibit urban densities in rural areas.
- RUR-4 Avoid creating new fully contained communities outside of the designated urban growth area because of their potential to create sprawl and undermine local, countywide, regional, and State growth management goals.
- 4.1 In the event that a proposal is made for creating a new fully contained community, the County shall make the proposal available to the Pierce County Regional Council, other counties, and Puget Sound Regional Council for advance review and comment on countywide and regional impacts.
- RUR-5 Explore the application of tools and strategies to address vested development and better align future growth with the expectations envisioned within the Puget Sound Regional Council VISION 2050 Regional Growth Strategy.
- RUR-6 Ensure that development occurring in rural areas is rural in character.
- RUR-7 Direct commercial, retail, and community services that serve rural residents into neighboring cities and existing activity areas.
- RUR-8 Support economic activity in rural and natural resource areas at a size and scale that is compatible with the long-term integrity and productivity of these lands.
- RUR-9 Minimize impacts to rural lands and contribute to improved ecological functions and more appropriate use of rural lands through innovative and environmentally sensitive land use management and development practices.
- RUR-10 Support long-term solutions for the environmental and economic sustainability of agriculture and forestry within rural areas.

#### Public Services

- RUR-11 Do not provide urban services in rural areas. Design services for limited access when they are needed for schools or to solve isolated health and sanitation problems, so as not to increase the development potential of the surrounding rural area.
- RUR-12 Encourage the design of public facilities and utilities in rural areas to be at a size and scale appropriate to rural locations, so as not to increase development pressure.
- RUR-13 Work with schools, institutions, and other community facilities serving rural residents in neighboring cities and towns and design these facilities in keeping with the size and scale of the local community.

## Transportation Facilities and Strategies

### Introduction

The population and employment growth in the Puget Sound region poses challenges to the functionality and sustainability of the transportation system. It is paramount that Pierce County jurisdictions work together, and with adjacent Counties and regional partners to address transportation with environmentally sound and equitable multimodal solutions.

Transportation connects people to people, places and resources. It can either be a conduit or a barrier for people of different backgrounds to access employment, medical care, recreation and other opportunities. Effective, equitable and affordable mobility choices integrated into our transportation network support a cleaner environment, better quality of life, a healthy economy, social justice, and positive health outcomes.

### Background – Growth Management Act

The Washington State Growth Management Act identifies transportation facilities planning and, specifically, encouraging efficient multimodal transportation systems based on regional priorities and coordinated with local comprehensive plans, as a planning goal to guide the development and adoption of comprehensive plans and development regulations [RCW 36.70A.020(3)]. In addition, it identifies a transportation element as a mandatory element of a county or city comprehensive plan [RCW 36.70A.070(6)]. The transportation element must include: (i) land use assumptions used in estimating travel; (ii) traffic impacts to state-owned transportation facilities resulting from land use assumptions (iii) facilities and services needs; (iv) financial analysis; (v) intergovernmental coordination efforts, including an assessment of the impacts of the transportation plan and land use assumptions on the transportation systems of adjacent jurisdictions; (vi) demand management strategies; and (vii) a pedestrian and bicycle component.

The Commute Reduction Efficiency Act of 2006 (RCW 70A.15.4000) goal is to reduce congestion on the roadway network and help address the air pollution issues within the urban areas. This act requires local governments to work with their larger employers to develop and implement strategies for reducing their single occupant auto trips. Jurisdictions affected by the [commute trip reduction](#) (CTR) law are required to develop local CTR plans that include the documenting of local transportation setting of the affected work sites and the strategies by which the rate of single occupant vehicle use may be reduced.

### Background – VISION 2050

VISION 2050 is the shared regional plan for moving toward a sustainable and more equitable future. The goal statement of the Vision 2050 multicounty transportation planning policies is “the region has a sustainable, equitable, affordable, safe, and efficient multimodal transportation system, with specific emphasis on an integrated regional transit network that supports the Regional Growth Strategy and promotes vitality of the economy, environment, and health.

VISION 2050 offers an integrated approach to addressing land use and transportation, along with the environment, economic development and equity. It calls for a clean, sustainable transportation future that supports the regional growth strategy. Sustainable transportation involves the efficient and environmentally sensitive movement of people, information, goods and services – with attention to safety, health and access to opportunity. Sustainable transportation minimizes the impacts of

transportation activities on our air, water, and climate. It includes the design of walkable cities and bikeable neighborhoods, as well as using alternatives to driving alone. It relies on cleaner, renewable resources for energy.

The transportation-related multicounty planning policies in VISION 2050 are presented in four groups. The first group of policies speaks to the Regional Transportation Plan and calls for maintaining, preserving, and operating the existing transportation system in safer, cleaner, more efficient, and equitable ways. The second group of policies call for developing the multimodal transportation system to support the economy of the region by investing in a transportation system that attracts and retains businesses and skilled labor in the region, including freight, rail, and aviation infrastructure. The third group of policies addresses protection of the environment, including investment in zero emission vehicles, low carbon fuels and other clean energy options along with providing infrastructure sufficient to support widespread electrification of the transportation system. This section also speaks to resiliency in preparing the transportation system for disaster, reducing stormwater pollution, and enhancing fish passage. The fourth and final group of policies focuses on innovation, by preparing for changes in transportation technologies and mobility patterns, to support communities with a sustainable and efficient transportation system.

GMA and VISION 2050 contain requirements and guidance for creating and implementing sound transportation solutions. [RCW 36.70A.210](#) describes the requirements for CPPs, which include “policies for countywide transportation facilities and strategies.” The following policies are intended to meet the intent of GMA and VISION 2050 and provide guidance to the County, Cities and Towns, and other public agencies in guiding their comprehensive planning.

## Policies

### General

TR-1 Promote a sustainable and coordinated multi-modal transportation system that aligns with the Regional Transportation Plan and the Regional Growth Strategy and provides current and future generations with transportation infrastructure and services that offer mobility for all users in an equitable, efficient, clean, and cost effective manner.

- 1.1 Plan and implement programs for the design, construction, and operation of transportation facilities for all users, including motorists, freight, transit users, pedestrians, bicyclists, and other active transportation modes.
- 1.2 Jurisdictions shall consider the interrelationship of their transportation and land use planning and implementation on neighboring jurisdictions' transportation systems.
  - 1.2.1 Coordinate roadway functional classifications across jurisdictional lines and promote predictability in design and character of roadways.
- 1.3 Identify solutions to address deficiencies on regional facilities, including collaboration with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) when the deficiency is on a State Highway.

TR-2 Improve safety in the transportation system by working toward the State's “[Target Zero](#)”, zero death and disabling injury goal.

TR-3 For the purpose of this Policy, consistent with definitions of essential public facilities in the CPPs, WAC 365-196-550 and facilities of statewide significance in RCW 47.06.140, the following existing and new transportation services and facilities are part of the Countywide multimodal network and should be addressed in local Comprehensive Plans, as applicable:

- 3.1 State and federal highways;
- 3.2 Roads, including major highways, arterials and collectors, and any local streets that are part of the national system and designated by the Federal Highway Administration as National Highway System Intermodal Connectors or Critical Urban or Rural Freight Corridors;
- 3.3 Transit facilities and services including bus, rail, vanpool, paratransit, park and ride lots, and transit hubs and stations;
- 3.4 Waterborne transportation (ferries, cargo shipping);
- 3.5 Airports (passenger and freight);
- 3.6 Rail systems and facilities (passenger and freight);
- 3.7 Active transportation facilities;
- 3.8 Major passenger intermodal terminals excluding all airport facilities and services;
- 3.9 Marine port facilities and services that are related solely to marine activities affecting international and interstate trade;
- 3.10 Key freight transportation corridors serving these marine port facilities;
- 3.11 Regional transit authority facilities as defined under RCW 81.112.020;
- 3.12 Parking facilities;
- 3.13 Facilities related to carpooling and transportation demand management; and
- 3.14 Port cargo facilities.

**Active Transportation Modes Include:**  
 Bicycles/Unicycles/E-Bikes  
 Walking  
 Scooters/E-Scooters  
 Skateboards/Longboards  
 Mobility Assist Devices  
 Other human-powered devices

#### Inclusiveness and Equity

TR-4 Consider, whenever feasible, equity, inclusion, and access to opportunity when developing and implementing programs and actions.

- 4.1 Prioritize investments for historically underserved populations to improve affordable and convenient access to jobs, education, health care, social services, recreation, and culture.
  - 4.1.1 Target active transportation and transit investments in communities of color and areas with higher concentrations of low-income, non-English speaking, seniors, youth, and disabled populations.

- 4.2 Consider current and past inequities in infrastructure development when planning and programming new investment.
- 4.3 Consider using PSRC's Opportunity Index and/or the Countywide Equity Index, when adopted, to identify underserved communities in order to prioritize transportation improvements and service delivery.
- 4.4 Mitigate negative impacts of the transportation system on historically underserved communities when developing plans and programs.
- 4.5 Develop plans to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements and guidance, including facilitating ease of access for the disability community and retrofitting non-compliant sidewalks and walkways.
- 4.6 Coordinate with tribal governments on joint planning and project implementation consistent with the policies under the Tribal Consultation, Coordination, and Lands Compatibility Chapter.

**PRSC's Opportunity Index and Mapping:**

Areas of opportunity is based on an "Opportunity Index", which combines measures of five key elements of neighborhood opportunity and positive life outcomes: education, economic health, housing and neighborhood quality, mobility and transportation, and health and environment. The level of opportunity score (very low, low, moderate, high, very high) is determined by sorting all census tracts into quintiles based on their index scores <https://www.psrc.org/opportunity-mapping>

## Healthy Communities and Transportation Systems

TR-5 Promote and develop policies and comprehensive transportation system options that support health and well-being, such as improving the design of local street patterns to support walking, bicycling, and transit use, placemaking, connectivity, physical activity, health and well-being.

- 5.1 Adopt complete streets policies based on best practices and implement capital improvements to support a safe and inviting multimodal environment such as:
  - 5.1.1 Traffic calming and other measures to increase safety and visibility for active transportation modes;
  - 5.1.2 Connecting on-street facilities to trails;
  - 5.1.3 Green spaces and other pedestrian-friendly amenities; and
  - 5.1.4 A corridor approach that looks for opportunities on parallel facilities when a single roadway cannot accommodate all modes.
- 5.2 Work with School Districts to enhance safety at and near school sites.

**"Complete Streets"** are policy and design principles to plan for, design, operate and maintain, streets that are accessible, safe, convenient and comfortable for all users and abilities regardless of their form of transportation.

- 5.2.1 Create Safe Routes to School Plans that identify capital improvements around school sites.
- 5.2.2 Identify and pursue funding sources for improvements around schools.
- 5.3 Consider a wide range of strategies and policies aimed at improving health and well-being, including universal design standards, safe routes to destinations, etc.

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**Safe Routes to School** is a Washington state and Federal Highway Administration funded program which was created to enable and encourage children to walk and bicycle to school safely, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age.

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#### Land Use/Transportation Integration

TR-6 Address compatibility between land use and community development objectives and transportation facilities by:

- 6.1 Requiring new transportation facilities and/or services in areas in which new growth is appropriate or desirable to be phased within a twenty-year time frame consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy.
  - 6.1.1 Prioritizing multimodal transportation improvements to support the land development patterns of the Regional Growth Strategy, especially within Regional Growth Centers and Manufacturing/Industrial Centers and on corridors serving these Centers.
  - 6.1.2 Focusing capital projects, particularly improvements for active transportation, near high-capacity transit stations and stops, in regional and local centers and along corridors connecting centers.
- 6.2 Discouraging the extension of new roadways and road capacity expansion into designated rural and resource areas, unless there is a proven need to serve travel between two urban areas or between a satellite rural city or town and the urban area and/or another city or town.
  - 6.2.1 Access management strategies should be implemented with such roadway improvements in order to prevent unplanned growth in rural areas.
- 6.3 Using regulations to ensure that development does not create demands exceeding the capacity of the transportation system, including mitigation that includes supporting transit and other modes if consistent with land use plans and the Regional Growth Strategy.
- 6.4 Using land use regulations to increase the share of travel in modes other than the automobile, such as implementing the following strategies:

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**Resource:**

This [Transportation and Health Logic Model](#) contains a host of transportation strategies and policies to improve human and environmental health.

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6.4.1 Encouraging or requiring mixed use development and Transit Oriented Development (TOD) in Centers;

6.4.2 Designating high density land uses in transit/transportation corridors and designated TOD sites;

6.4.3 Considering dedications and impact fees to provide public transit capital improvements within the public right-of-way such as exclusive bus lanes and signal improvements as allowed by state law; or

6.4.4 Requiring construction of sidewalks, bike facilities, trails, and/or other active transportation facilities.

TR-7 Promote cooperation and coordination among transportation providers, local government, and developers, wherever feasible, to ensure that joint- and mixed-use developments are designed to promote and improve physical, mental, and social well-being and improve the natural and built environments.

**Ports, Freight, and Aviation, and Military Installations**

TR-8 Work in cooperation with WSDOT and Port authorities to plan and implement projects and programs to meet freight mobility and access needs, including planning for needed capital improvements, and the establishment of programs designed to maintain, preserve and expand freight rail capacity.

8.1 Participate in interjurisdictional efforts to improve access to regional airports and rail facilities.

8.2 Participate in interjurisdictional efforts to improve access within and to Manufacturing Industrial Centers and Port facilities on connecting corridors and roadway systems for efficient movement of goods movement by trucking and rail, while minimizing impacts and conflicts with other transportation modes.

8.3 Develop plans or planning provisions, where appropriate, to protect the continued operation of military airfields and general aviation airports by using adopted land compatibility standards such as those published by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to discourage incompatible land uses and development on adjacent land.

8.3.1 Implement compatibility measures recommended in Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM) [Joint Land Use Study \(JLUS\)](#), as described in the Essential Public Facilities section of these Countywide Planning Policies.

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## Sustainability and the Environment

TR-9 Jurisdictions shall address environmental impacts of transportation policies, project implementation, and operations wherever practicable through:

- 9.1 Programming capital improvements and transportation facilities designed to alleviate and mitigate impacts on land use, air quality and energy consumption such as high-occupancy vehicle lanes, public transit infrastructure, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, and designated truck freight corridors;
- 9.2 Locating and/or constructing transportation improvements so as to discourage adverse impacts on water quality and other environmental resources;
- 9.3 Retrofitting fish passages and storm systems to meet best available science and standards of practice as part of publicly and privately funded transportation improvement projects;
  - 9.3.1 Prioritize improvements to deficient structures that contribute to fish blockage.
- 9.4 Combining infrastructure projects where possible, for instance, constructing road and sewer projects in same time window; and
- 9.5 Strengthening efforts to reduce pollutants from transportation activities by:
  - 9.5.1 Including pollution reduction methods through technologies such as the use of cleaner fuels and vehicle programs, for example, electric charging stations, bike and pedestrian infrastructure, intersection control strategies such as roundabouts and signal modifications and bike and pedestrian infrastructure partnering to construct (including trails and other active transportation facilities);
  - 9.5.2 Reducing vehicle miles traveled and auto dependency;
  - 9.5.3 Designing and prioritizing compact communities and neighborhood accessibility for daily goods and services; and
  - 9.5.4 Implementing and coordinating Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) and Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) technology to reduce congestion.

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An **intelligent transportation system** is an advanced application which aims to provide innovative services relating to different modes of transport and traffic management and enable users to be better informed and make safer, more coordinated, and 'smarter' use of transport networks.

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9.5.1 Including pollution reduction methods through technologies such as the use of cleaner fuels and vehicle programs, for example, electric charging stations, bike and pedestrian infrastructure, intersection control strategies such as roundabouts and signal modifications and bike and pedestrian infrastructure partnering to construct (including trails and other active transportation facilities);

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**TSMO** is a set of strategies that focus on operational improvements that can maintain and even restore the performance of the existing transportation system before extra capacity is needed. This may enable transportation agencies to "stretch" their funding to benefit more areas and customers. TSMO also helps agencies balance supply and demand and provide flexible solutions to match changing conditions.

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TR-10 Use low-impact development practices or environmentally appropriate approaches for the design, construction and operation of transportation facilities to reduce and mitigate environmental impacts, including, but not limited to, greenhouse gas emissions and storm water runoff from streets and roadways.

10.1 Use vegetative installations such as bioswales, rain gardens, green spaces and other features to assist with carbon uptake and reduction of stormwater runoff.

TR-11 Jurisdictions, in cooperation with transit agencies, shall strive to reduce environmental impacts by implementing and promoting facilities and services to encourage alternatives to automobile travel and/or to reduce the number of vehicle miles traveled (modal split, trip generation and trip length) including:

11.1 Structural alternatives such as grade separated guideways and exclusive lanes for bus and rail; construction of new high-occupancy vehicle lanes; carpool/vanpool facilities; and constructing active transportation facilities; and

11.2 Non-structural/regulatory alternatives such as concurrency-based measures to focus or phase growth; limiting the size of urban growth areas and other measures to limit sprawl; road/congestion pricing; auto-restricted zones; parking management; site design; active transportation programs and promotion, ridesharing incentives, and transportation systems and demand management.

## Transit

TR-12 Jurisdictions that receive transit service shall work with transit agencies in the creation and implementation of their long-range plans to ensure consistency between entities.

12.1 Implement transit supportive zoning and land use actions that accommodate transit service and facilities and create demand for ridership in targeted residential, commercial, and mixed-used growth areas.

12.1.1 Consider reducing parking requirements for new development along transit corridors with frequent service and consideration of developer mitigation requirements that improve nearby transit facilities.

12.1.2 Consider siting new and relocated public facilities/offices to areas with transit service.

12.1.3 Identify and attempt to preserve property for park-and-ride facilities in areas at or near the end of transit routes.

12.1.4 Look for opportunities to densify jobs and create workforce development opportunities in Regional Growth Centers.

12.1.5 Involve transit agencies in the pre-application process for large development proposals.

12.1.6 Consider dedication of a percentage of Transportation Impact Fees for transit related infrastructure improvements within the public right-of-way to increase

efficiency, such as exclusive bus lanes and transit signal priority as allowed by state law.

12.2 Look for opportunities to densify jobs and create workforce development opportunities in/next to Manufacturing/Industrial Centers.

TR-13 Jurisdictions shall work with transit agencies to ensure consistency and efficiency of existing and future transit service and timely expansion of all types of service to serve the urban area.

13.1 Identify, acquire, and preserve rights-of-way to better accommodate existing and future transit alignments.

13.2 Coordinate expansion of public transit benefit area boundaries as development occurs and new growth areas are planned.

13.3 Work collaboratively to increase transit ridership and instill a sense of safety for riders by requiring transit stop improvements (if near existing or planned route), or other multimodal needs to improve access to transit as part of SEPA transportation mitigation requirements.

13.4 By coordinating Capital Infrastructure planning with transit agencies to ensure a safe operation of transit throughout the system for the users and fleet. The County and Cities will contact the transit agency when considering capital infrastructure improvements or revisions along an existing service route that apply to:

- 13.4.1 Curb radius adjustments;
- 13.4.2 Intersection improvements (adjustments to signal phasing/timing, and type of intersection control); and
- 13.4.3 Sidewalk/Crosswalk additions.

13.5 Plan for the interrelationship and connectivity of different agencies and modes of transit including commuter rail, light rail, bus rapid transit, and local transit.

13.6 Work collaboratively and pursue funding for bus rapid transit, including the Pacific Avenue/SR 7 line and additional routes, to support regional and local growth plans, particularly in designated Regional Growth Centers and High-Capacity Transit Communities.

#### Performance Standards and Concurrency

TR-14 Consider the impacts of local planning activities on neighboring jurisdictional (inclusive of WSDOT) roadway facilities when developing and administering a jurisdiction's performance standards or level of service (LOS) standards.

14.1 Designate or adopt performance standards or LOS per RCW 36.70A.108, such as:

- 14.1.1 Roadways and intersections;
- 14.1.2 Existing and planned measures used for transit performance standards or LOS (e.g., hours of service, headways, pedestrian environment, accessibility, safety, rider comfort, reliability, transfer necessity, cost, and travel time);

14.1.3 Performance standards or LOS that measure multiple modes of travel, including active transportation; or

14.1.3.1 Seek regional guidance and agreement on the application of multimodal measures.

14.2 Enter into interlocal agreements, where necessary, to establish uniform, coordinated performance standards or service levels between jurisdictions for countywide facilities.

TR-15 Adopted performance standards or LOS may be:

- 15.1 Set below existing levels thereby allowing reserve capacity for growth and minimizing the need for new capital investment;
- 15.2 Set above existing levels (thereby increasing comfort and convenience of travel, enhancing economic development and minimizing some environmental impacts);
- 15.3 Set at existing levels (thereby allowing new development to mitigate full marginal impacts);
- 15.4 Set at different levels of service in different zones, especially in designated centers and on transit and freight corridors;
- 15.5 Set at different levels of service based on facility classifications;
- 15.6 Set to measure multiple modes of travel (e.g. transit, bicycling and/or walking); or
- 15.7 Taken directly from standards developed by the Washington State Department of Transportation for Highways of Statewide Significance and directly from standards developed by the Puget Sound Regional Council for regionally significant state highways.

TR-16 Determine the adequacy of transportation facilities, taking into account existing development, approved but unbuilt development, current and future roadway conditions, and multiple modes of transportation through utilization of one or more of the following:

- 16.1 Capacity-to-demand thresholds;
- 16.2 A regionally agreed upon method for measuring the availability of person and freight carrying capacity based on current and future demand including phased capacity; and/or
- 16.3 Appropriate standards of design across jurisdictional lines.

TR-17 Address substandard performance or LOS for existing facilities by one or more of the following:

- 17.1 Designating funding mechanisms;
- 17.2 Prioritizing facility needs in capital improvement and transportation improvement programs to correct existing deficiencies;
- 17.3 Using transportation demand management;
- 17.4 Using transportation systems management to promote cost effective methods of moving people and goods such as:

- 17.4.1 Exclusive lanes, signal priority, queue jumps and/or other measures to expedite transit and freight travel; or
- 17.4.2 Traffic management such as ramp meters and travel time notices to maximize the performance of the system.
- 17.5 Providing infrastructure to allow for travel by active transportation modes; or
- 17.6 Addressing regional facilities through inter-jurisdictional collaboration and coordinated strategies for addressing deficiencies, including involvement from WSDOT when the issue is on a State Highway.

TR-18 Address concurrency through the following methods:

- 18.1 Provide transportation facilities needed to accommodate new development within six years of development approval.
- 18.2 Limit new development to a level that can be accommodated by existing facilities and facilities planned for completion over the next six years.
- 18.3 Encourage new and existing development to implement measures to decrease congestion and enhance mobility through transportation demand and congestion management.
- 18.4 Identify solutions to address deficiencies on regional facilities, including collaboration with WSDOT when the deficiency is on a State Highway.

#### Maintenance, Operations, and Preservation

TR-19 Protect transportation investments and assets through the proper operations, maintenance, and preservation to provide safe, efficient, and reliable movement of people, goods, and services.

- 19.1 Reduce life-cycle costs through effective preservation and maintenance programs.
- 19.2 Implement best practice recommendations including those contained in the Regional Transportation Plan.
- 19.3 Promote increased funding for maintenance, operations, and preservation.

#### Resiliency and Disaster Preparedness

TR-20 Advance the resilience of the transportation system by incorporating redundancies, preparing for disasters and other impacts, and coordinated planning for system recovery by using transportation-related preparedness, prevention, mitigation, response, and recovery strategies and procedures adopted in the emergency management plans and hazard mitigation plans of the County and Cities, Ports, and those contained in the Washington State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

- 20.1 Plan for resilience in the transportation system to prepare for a variety of imminent and potential disaster events, including but not limited to:
  - 20.1.1 Pandemics;
  - 20.1.2 Earthquakes;

- 20.1.3 Tsunamis;
- 20.1.4 Flooding;
- 20.1.5 Lahars;
- 20.1.6 Fires;
- 20.1.7 Windstorms;
- 20.1.8 Winter storms;
- 20.1.9 Terrorism;
- 20.1.10 Cyberattacks; and
- 20.1.11 Climate change impacts.

#### Transportation Technologies

TR-21 Incorporate technological advances into transportation system planning that is coordinated among jurisdictions and transit agencies where feasible and applicable:

- 21.1 Participate in efforts to expand electrification and other zero emissions technology in vehicle fleets, transit, and freight mobility. (including unmanned aerial delivery, maritime vessels, and aircraft).
- 21.2 Participate in efforts to expand infrastructure for electric vehicles, consistent with improvements to the power infrastructure in utility provider plans.
  - 21.2.1 Implement and encourage new electric and other zero emissions vehicle charging or fueling stations at public and private locations.
  - 21.2.2 Incorporate provisions for charging stations into development regulations and building codes.
- 21.3 Plan for the deployment of autonomous vehicles in the transportation system.
- 21.4 Expand corridor systems management efforts by implementing and coordinating Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) and Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) technology, including the use and installation of information systems for operating conditions on roads and at rail crossings.
  - 21.4.1 Coordinate with private mapping vendors to integrate accurate roadway representations and real-time information into wayfinding apps.
- 21.5 Expand and coordinate incident response team efforts along State highways and arterials serving as alternate routes for state facilities.

#### Funding

TR-22 Strive for sustainable funding sources and consider a number of financing measures, including but not limited to:

- 22.1 General revenues;

- 22.2 Fuel taxes;
- 22.3 Toll roads and other user fees;
- 22.4 Bonding;
- 22.5 Congestion pricing;
- 22.6 Public/private partnerships, and public/public partnerships;
- 22.7 Assessment and improvement districts, transportation benefit districts, facility benefit assessments, traffic transportation impact fees, tax increment financing, dedication of right-of-way and voluntary funding agreements;
- 22.8 Grants; or
- 22.9 Others, as may be appropriate.

## Tribal Consultation, Coordination, and Lands Compatibility

### Introduction

There are several Tribes within Pierce County with reservations and/or federally adjudicated treaty rights within the County. These Tribes are parties to treaties with the United States Government in which certain rights and privileges both on and off reservation were articulated and remain in effect. Through the Treaty of Medicine Creek (1854) and Treaty of Point Elliot (1855) tribes ceded their land which allowed for Pierce County and local jurisdictions to incorporate. The responsibility of local jurisdictions to uphold aspects of those treaties is essential to Tribes. Tribes have, responsibilities, interests, and treaty rights that are not only on reservation but can extend well off reservation boundaries. Not having Tribes as part of the regional picture of growth has led to historical conflict over the impact development sometimes has over treaty resources. Including Tribes in the framework of local planning will better characterize how the Pierce County region grows collectively and deliver more certainty to our communities.

As sovereign governments, Tribes have jurisdiction and interests over several areas throughout the County. The Federal Government designated reservations through the signing of treaties where Tribes relinquished all claim to their traditional territory. The purpose of these reserves was to provide housing, the ability to hunt and fish, and the opportunity to provide facilities for education and healthcare. Most of these responsibilities were first placed on the Federal Government, but now have been moved in the interest of self-determination to Tribal Governments. Treaty Rights, like fishing and hunting occur both within the Reservation & Usual and Accustomed areas where Tribes ceded their traditional territory. That is why it is important that in order to maintain the integrity of treaties, local governments should recognize the complex issues related to land use and planning when considering Tribal lands and treaty resources.

### Background – Growth Management Act

As part of RCW 36.70A.210(4) Federal agencies and Indian Tribes may participate in and cooperate with the countywide planning policy adoption process. Adopted countywide planning policies shall be adhered to by state agencies.

### Background – VISION 2050

Puget Sound is a part of a larger area that has been the traditional aboriginal territory of the Coast Salish peoples, who live around the Salish Sea in what is now Washington State and the Canadian province of British Columbia. The Coast Salish Tribes have lived here since time immemorial and while each tribe is unique, all share in having a deep historical connection and legacy of respect for the land and natural resources. These sovereign Tribal nations enrich the region through environmental stewardship, cultural heritage, and economic development, and collaborate with local governments to shape the region's future.

As part of Vision 2050 Federally recognized Indian Tribes were included as part of many regional planning processes. Like all governments, Tribes engage in land use planning and economic development to provide jobs, housing, and services, as well as the infrastructure to support and plan for growth of their land base and reservations. As sovereign nations, Tribes are not required to plan under the Growth Management Act but recognize the importance of coordination and cooperation with all governments to deal with the challenges and benefits of growth and development.

### **Policy Intent**

The following Countywide Planning Policies formulate best practices to consult and coordinate land use matters between Tribes and local jurisdictions. Local jurisdictions should continue to follow notification and consultation protocols where State and Federal laws exist (For example Section 106 cultural resources, project specific Federal permits conditioning consultation with Tribes, specific laws requiring consultation like the 1989 Settlement Agreement). The purpose of these policies is to support both formal and informal communication between each government and provide flexibility in handling land use matters where there is no existing guidance.

They follow recommendations outlined by the Washington State Centennial Accord and the Millennium Agreement.

Additionally, the chapter addresses Tribal land compatibility and Treaty Rights. As the trustee for Tribes, the Federal Government may intervene when Federal obligations to Tribes are not being fulfilled.

These policies recognize the unique designation of reservation land and provide proactive measures working with local jurisdictions to protect treaty rights. The policies serve the mutual interest to resolve conflicts before development occurs.

### **Tribes Definition**

For the purposes of following and implementing the following countywide planning policies “Tribe” is defined as all Federally recognized Tribes with reservations and adjudicated rights within the exterior boundaries of Pierce County.

### **Consultation Definition**

Consultation means the process of seeking, discussing, and considering the views of other participants, and, where feasible, seeking agreement. The process may be formally outlined by State and Federal law. Consultation may also be conducted informally over matters related to the normal planning process. This definition is supportive of both acts. The goal of consultation is to further the government-to-government relationship with Tribes and local jurisdictions, and ensure the mutual respect for the rights, interests, and obligations of each government.

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**Treaties** are the highest law of the land. [The Treaty of Medicine Creek \(1854\)](#) and [The Treaty of Point Elliot \(1855\)](#) are the Treaties that encompass the ceded land of Pierce County. The Treaties and the designation of reservations guaranteed specific rights. Those rights can extend beyond reservations throughout the ceded areas as usual and accustomed grounds and stations.

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[The Washington State Centennial Accord](#) (1989) and [Millennium Agreement](#) (1999) are Tribal-State agreements that provide a framework for government-to-government relationships and implementation procedures to assure the execution of that relationship.

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## Policies

TC-1 Tribes and jurisdictions should notify each other when making significant land use decisions that may have potential impacts to the other jurisdiction and provide opportunity for consultation.

- 1.1 Meaningful and substantial opportunities for early and continuous Tribal government participation and consultation should be incorporated into regional and local planning activities.
- 1.2 The County and each municipality are encouraged to work with Tribes to understand common interests and issues of concern over development and planning. Tribal and local governments should seek regular input from one another so they are properly consulted on significant land use decisions of interest.
- 1.3 A Tribe, the County, or municipality may request on a government-to-government basis to develop a memorandum of agreement that defines how and under what circumstances the local governments and Tribe will formally consult with each other when making significant land use decisions.
- 1.4 These agreements will recognize the importance of early and continuous Tribal government participation in regional and local planning activities, acknowledging a Tribe's status as a sovereign government with a unique history and interest in the land and natural environment while providing the framework for opportunities to promote the open communication regarding land uses and development that may impact the other jurisdiction.
- 1.5 Jurisdictions are encouraged to review the Treaty of Medicine Creek, Treaty of Point Elliot, Puyallup Land Claims Settlement Agreement, Centennial Accord and Millennium Agreement, and other relevant governing authorities when developing these agreements.
- 1.6 Tribal consultation is commonly cited in Federal and State legislation or through preexisting agreements. The purpose of this policy is to support those existing agreements and legislation. Some municipalities may have no agreements in place regarding Tribal consultation. It is encouraged that those municipalities work with local Tribes to develop guidelines for notification and consultation over significant land use decisions.

TC-2 Separate from any other obligation to consult with each other, Tribes, the County, and each municipality should coordinate planning efforts and notify each other of opportunities to comment regularly.

- 2.1 All Tribal, County, and municipal government agencies shall be included in public notice and comment procedures of other jurisdictions. Examples of this include adding interested Tribes to SEPA notification lists or streamlining project notifications to be sent to Tribes when a project may be near a reservation or Tribal land.
- 2.2 Tribal, County, and municipal governmental agencies should coordinate planning efforts among jurisdictions, agencies, federally recognized Tribes, ports, and adjacent regions, where there are common borders or related regional issues, to facilitate a common vision.
- 2.3 All Tribal, County, and municipal governmental agencies are encouraged to keep one another informed about matters of local and regional interest by mutually agreeable means and schedule.

TC-3 Upon the request of a Tribal Council, The County and each applicable municipal government within a Tribal reservation will explore with the requesting Tribe voluntary agreements for coordinated land use permitting and code enforcement with Tribes.

- 3.1 As part of these agreements, the County and each applicable municipal government on a Tribal reservation may work with Tribes to develop ongoing administrative processes to jointly discuss and comment on permit applications, including and not limited to development activities on reservations and development impacting Tribal treaty rights; and may identify enhanced opportunities to include Tribal governments in joint comprehensive and other long-range planning activities.
- 3.2 As part of these agreements, the County and each municipal government shall provide an opportunity to include Tribal governments in joint comprehensive and other long-range planning activities.

TC-4 Strive to protect Tribal reservation lands from encroachment by incompatible land uses and development both within reservation boundaries and on parcels abutting the reservation boundary.

- 4.1 Recognize adopted Tribal land use plans within or adjacent to their respective jurisdiction.
- 4.2 Recognize the unique Federal designation and purpose of reservation lands for Tribes to provide a diversity of services, housing, jobs, and preserving the rights to hunt, fish, and gather.
- 4.3 Consider amendments that identify approaches to provide consistency and compatibility between their respective comprehensive plan's land use designations and policies and comprehensive plan.
- 4.4 Jurisdictions shall regularly coordinate with Tribes regarding regional and local planning within reservation boundaries and on parcels abutting the reservation boundary, recognizing the mutual benefits and the possible potential for impacts.
- 4.5 Tribes and jurisdictions will work with one another to seek solutions for resolving inconsistencies between local comprehensive plans and Tribal plans, within the requirements of Federal, State, and local laws.

TC-5 Jurisdictions shall update their comprehensive plan during its next amendment cycle to incorporate ways to preserve Tribal treaty rights when notified by Tribes of their presence in a particular location.

- 5.1 All Jurisdictions shall consider the potential impacts to Tribal treaty fishing, hunting, and gathering grounds, which may include the development patterns in their comprehensive plans.
- 5.2 Consideration of impacts may appear in a variety of ways such as goals, policies, implementation measures, and other forms of documentation.

## Urban Growth Areas

### Introduction

When following the goals and requirements of the Growth Management Act, it is important to balance coordination of focusing growth within the urban growth area with protection of the individual identities and spirit of the cities towns, the rural areas and unincorporated urban communities.

The Countywide Planning Policies are intended to be the consistent "theme" of growth management planning among Pierce County jurisdictions. The policies also establish processes and mechanisms designed to foster open communication and feedback among the jurisdictions.

### Background - Growth Management Act

The Washington State Growth Management Act has as planning goals the encouragement of development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner [RCW 36.70A.020(1)], the reduction of sprawl (i.e., the inappropriate or premature conversion of undeveloped land into low-density development) [RCW 36.70A.020(2)], and the provision of adequate public facilities and services necessary to support urban development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use (without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards) [RCW 36.70A.020(12)] as planning goals.

The Growth Management Act further requires (1) that the County designate an "urban growth area" (UGA) or areas within which urban growth shall be encouraged and outside of which growth shall occur only if it is not "urban" in character; (2) that each municipality in the County be included within an UGA; (3) that an UGA include territory outside of existing municipal boundaries only if such territory is characterized by urban growth or is adjacent to territory that is already characterized by urban growth. [RCW 36.70A.110(1); for definition of "urban growth" see RCW 36.70A.030(17).]

The designated UGAs shall be of adequate size and appropriate permissible densities so as to accommodate the urban growth that is projected by the State Office of Financial Management to occur in the County for the succeeding 20-year period. While each UGA shall permit urban densities, it shall also include greenbelt and open space areas [RCW 36.70A.110(2)].

As to the timing and sequencing of urban growth and development over the 20-year planning period, urban growth shall occur first in areas already characterized by urban growth that have existing public facility and service capacities to service such development, second in areas already characterized by urban growth that will be served by a combination of both existing public facilities and services and any additional needed public facilities and services that are provided by either public or private sources [RCW 36.70A.110(3)]. Urban government services shall be provided primarily by cities, and it is not appropriate that urban governmental services be extended to or expanded in rural areas except in those limited circumstances shown to be necessary to protect basic public health and safety and environment and when such services are financially supportable at rural densities and do not permit urban development [RCW 36.70A.110(4)].

The Growth Management Act Amendments expressly require that countywide planning policies address the implementation of UGA designations [RCW 36.70A.210(3)(a)], the promotion of contiguous and orderly development, the provision of urban services to such development [RCW 36.70A.210(3)(b)], and the coordination of joint county and municipal planning within UGAs [RCW 36.70A.210(3)(f)].

## Background - VISION 2050

VISION 2050 calls for a more efficient, sustainable, and strategic use of the region's land. It identifies urban lands as a critical component to accommodate population and employment growth in a sustainable way. VISION 2050 calls for directing development to the region's existing urban lands, especially in centers and near transit, while limiting growth on rural lands. The Regional Growth Strategy found in VISION 2050 allocates 98 percent of the region's future population growth and 99 percent of its employment growth into the existing urban growth area. Urban Areas are divided into five distinct groups: Metropolitan Cities, Core Cities, High-Capacity Transit Communities, Cities and Towns, and Unincorporated Urban (outside of High-Capacity Transit Communities. Additional geographies include Rural, Natural Resources Lands, and Military Installations. Tribal lands are acknowledged as overlapping the various geographies. VISION 2050 recognizes that unincorporated urban lands are often similar in character to cities they are adjacent to, calling for them to be affiliated with adjacent cities for joint planning purposes and future annexation.

VISION 2050 recognizes that transit oriented compact development creates vibrant, livable, and healthy urban communities that offer economic opportunities for all, provide housing and transportation choices, and use our resources wisely. The Multicounty Planning Policies support the effective use of urban land and include provisions that address brownfield and contaminated site clean-up, the development of compact communities and centers with pedestrian-friendly, transit-oriented locations and a mix of residences, jobs, retail, and other amenities, and the siting of facilities and major public amenities in compact urban communities and centers.

VISION 2050 recognizes that centers provide easy access to jobs, services, shopping, and entertainment. With their mix of uses and pedestrian-friendly design, they can rely less on forms of transportation that contribute to air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. VISION 2050 identifies 29 regional growth centers. These places play an important role as locations of the region's most significant business, governmental, and cultural facilities. The 18 jurisdictions that have one or more regional growth centers are expected to accommodate a significant portion of the region's residential growth (64 percent) and employment growth (79 percent).

VISION 2050 calls for local jurisdictions with regional growth centers to adopt housing and employment targets for each center. Ten regional manufacturing/industrial centers have also been designated. These are locations for more intensive commercial and industrial activity. Both regional growth centers and regional manufacturing/industrial centers are focal points for economic development and transportation infrastructure investments. Subregional centers, including downtowns in suburban cities and other neighborhood centers, also play an important role in VISION 2040's Regional Growth Strategy. These, too, are strategic locations for concentrating jobs, housing, shopping, and recreational opportunities. VISION 2050 calls for each of the region's cities to develop one or more central places as compact mixed-use hubs for concentrating residences, jobs, shops, and community facilities.

Urban services addressed in VISION 2050 include wastewater and stormwater systems, solid waste, energy, telecommunications, emergency services, and water supply. An overarching goal of VISION 2050 is to provide sufficient and efficient public services and facilities in a manner that is healthy, safe, and economically viable. Conservation is a major theme throughout VISION 2050. The Multicounty Planning Policies address increasing recycling and reducing waste and encouraging more efficient use of water, low-impact development techniques, and renewable and alternative energy. The Multicounty Planning

Policies also address siting of public facilities and the appropriateness and scale of particular public services.

VISION 2050 calls for jurisdictions to invest in facilities and amenities that serve centers and restrict urban facilities in rural and resource areas. The Multicounty Planning Policies also discourage schools and other institutions serving urban residents from locating outside the urban growth area.

### Growth Targets

The Regional Growth Strategy set forth in VISION 2050 provides guidance for the distribution of future population and employment growth through the year 2050 within the Central Puget Sound Region. This strategy in combination with the Office of Financial Management's population forecasts provide a framework for establishing growth targets consistent with the requirements of the Growth Management Act. Consistent with VISION 2050, these growth targets are the minimum number of residents, housing units, or jobs a given jurisdiction is planning to accommodate within the appropriate planning horizon and are informational tools integrated into local land use plans to assist in formulating future residential and employment land needs. These targets are to be developed through a collaborative countywide process that ensures all jurisdictions are accommodating a fair share of growth.

It is recognized that some of the urban growth areas in existence prior to the adoption of VISION 2040 may contain more potential housing and employment capacity based upon zoning, allowed density, land division patterns, and other factors than is needed to accommodate the growth target of the associated geography. In many cases, these urban growth areas have been in existence for a decade or more, contain existing development patterns which are urban in character, and are served by sanitary sewer and other urban infrastructure. These areas are largely expected to remain within the urban growth area consistent with their urban character. Expansion of these urban growth area boundaries that do not comply with provisions in the Amendments and Transition section of these policies is acknowledged to be inconsistent with CPPs and is strongly discouraged.

### Urban Growth Outside of Centers

A variety of urban land uses and areas of growth will occur outside of designated centers but within the UGA. Local land use plans will guide the location, scale, timing and design of development within UGAs. The UGA will be where the majority of future growth and development will be targeted. Development should be encouraged which complements the desired focus of growth into centers and supports a multimodal transportation system. For example, policies which encourage infill and revitalization of communities would help to achieve the regional and statewide objectives of a compact and concentrated development pattern within urban areas. The Countywide Planning Policies provide guidance for development and the provision of urban services to support development within the UGA.

### Urban Facilities and Services

Beyond inter-jurisdictional coordination, services provided within our communities by special purpose districts are of vital importance to our residents. Consistent with the adopted regional strategy, these districts will be part of future individual and group negotiations under the Countywide Planning Policies.

While the Growth Management Act defines sewer service as an urban service, Pierce County currently is a major provider of both sewer transmission and treatment services. The County and municipalities

recognize that it is appropriate for the County and municipalities to continue to provide sewer transmission and treatment services.

### Freestanding Cities and Towns

Freestanding cities and towns are incorporated communities separated from the contiguous urban growth area and surrounded by unincorporated rural areas. These communities are a significant part of Pierce County's diversity and heritage. They have an important role as local trade and community centers. These communities continue to be the primary providers of shopping, job and service needs of both their residents and residents in neighboring rural areas. Development patterns in these communities reflect the size and scale appropriate for smaller towns and should continue to support their walkable town centers. They also contribute to the variety of development patterns and housing choices within the county. As municipalities, these cities and towns provide many urban services. Under the Growth Management Act, these communities are a designated urban growth area.

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Freestanding Cities and Towns:
Buckley
Carbonado
Eatonville
Roy
South Prairie
Wilkeson

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### Policies

#### Designating Urban Growth Areas

**UGA-1** The County shall designate the countywide Urban Growth Area and Potential Annexation Areas within it, in consultations between the County and each municipality.

- 1.1 County referral of proposed Urban Growth Area and Potential Annexation Area designations to the Pierce County Regional Council (PCRC).
  - 1.1.1 The PCRC may refer the proposed designations to the Growth Management Coordinating Committee (GMCC), or its successor entity for technical advice and for a report.
  - 1.1.2 The PCRC may conduct public meetings to review the proposed designation and, at such meetings, may accept oral or written comments and communications from the public.
  - 1.1.3 At the conclusion of its review and analysis, the PCRC shall make a recommendation to the County and to the municipalities in the County.
- 1.2 The Urban Growth Area and Potential Annexation Area designations shall only be changed in accordance with Countywide Planning Policy UGA-3.
  - 1.2.1 A jurisdiction shall not be required to modify existing Urban Growth Area boundaries or Potential Annexation Areas in order to reduce the residential or employment capacity to conform to adopted growth targets reflecting VISION 2050's Regional Growth Strategy. Jurisdictions shall, however, consider the adopted growth targets when updating their local comprehensive plans.

**UGA-2** The following specific factors and criteria shall dictate the size and boundaries of urban growth areas:

- 2.1 Size

- 2.1.1 Urban growth areas must be of sufficient size to accommodate the urban growth projected to occur over the succeeding 20-year planning period taking into account the following:
  - 2.1.1.1 Land with natural constraints, such as critical areas (environmentally-sensitive land);
  - 2.1.1.2 Greenbelts and open space;
  - 2.1.1.3 Maintaining a supply of developable land sufficient to allow market forces to operate and precluding the possibility of a land monopoly but no more than is absolutely essential to achieve the above purpose;
  - 2.1.1.4 Existing projects with development potential at various stages of the approval or permitting process (i.e., the "pipeline");
  - 2.1.1.5 Land use patterns created by subdivisions, short plats or large lot divisions;
  - 2.1.1.6 Build-out of existing development and areas which are currently only partially built out; and
  - 2.1.1.7 Follow existing parcel boundary lines.
- 2.2 Boundaries
- 2.2.1 Any of the following shall be considered in determining the location of urban growth area boundaries:
  - 2.2.1.1 Geographic, topographic, and manmade features;
  - 2.2.1.2 Public facility and service availability, limits and extensions;
  - 2.2.1.3 Jurisdictional boundaries including special improvement districts;
  - 2.2.1.4 Location of designated natural resource lands and critical areas;
  - 2.2.1.5 Avoidance of unserviceable islands of County land surrounded by other jurisdictional entities; and
  - 2.2.1.6 Destination 2030 urban/rural line and PSCAA burn ban line.

#### Urban Growth Area Capacity and Bank

The Growth Management Act requires Pierce County to designate an Urban Growth Area (UGA) that is sufficient in size to accommodate the projected urban population growth for the 20-year planning period. Expansion of the UGA requires a demonstrated countywide need for additional residential or employment capacity, or that the expansion results in a no net gain in capacity within the countywide UGA. It is expected that Pierce County and its cities and towns, collectively, will continue to contain an adequate amount of buildable land needed to accommodate the planned growth, as documented in the past Buildable Lands Reports.

Effectively, until there is a demonstrated need, any application to expand the UGA to accommodate new growth would need an accompanying application to reduce the UGA in another area. This is a difficult

endeavor for individuals and jurisdictions. To address this, the following policies establish a UGA Capacity Bank (Bank) that allows for credits of residential and employment capacity to be formally established and deposits made associated with areas removed from the UGA. A jurisdiction may make a request to the Pierce County Regional Council to use all or a portion of the capacity credits deposited in the Bank to offset additional capacity associated with a proposed UGA expansion.

UGA-3 Urban Growth Area boundaries designated by the County pursuant to the Growth Management Act may be amended by Pierce County and accepted by the municipalities in the county pursuant to the same process by which the Urban Growth Areas were originally adopted and pursuant to subpolicies UGA-1. and UGA-2.

- 3.1 An amendment to Urban Growth Area boundaries may be initiated by the County or any municipality in the County.
- 3.2 A proposed amendment to Urban Growth Area boundaries shall include:
  - 3.2.1 A map indicating the existing Urban Growth Area boundary and the proposed boundary modification;
  - 3.2.2 A statement indicating how, and the extent to which, the proposed boundary modification complies with each of the factors listed in subpolicies UGA-2.2, 2.4, 2.5 and 2.6;
  - 3.2.3 A statement indicating the factors, data or analyses that have changed since the designation of the initial Urban Growth Area boundaries and/or the experience with the existing Urban Growth Area boundaries that have prompted the proposed amendment; and
  - 3.2.4 Documentation, if applicable, that an adequate number of capacity credits have been authorized to be withdrawn from the Urban Growth Area Capacity Bank as set forth in UGA 3.5
- 3.3 The Urban Growth Area of a jurisdiction may be expanded only if:
  - 3.3.1 The jurisdiction's observed development densities are consistent with the planned density assumptions as documented in the most recently published Buildable Lands Report as required by RCW 36.70A.215; and
  - 3.3.2 There is a demonstrated need for additional residential or employment capacity within the Urban Growth Area affiliated with an individual jurisdiction and a demonstrated need countywide; the expansion results in a no net gain to the countywide Urban Growth Area; or an adequate number of capacity credits from the Urban Growth Area Capacity Bank are available and have been authorized to be used; and
  - 3.3.3 The consistency evaluation, as required through the Countywide Planning Policies on Buildable Lands, policies BL-6. and BL-7., identifies an inconsistency between the observed and planned densities, the jurisdiction shall either:
    - 3.3.3.1 demonstrate reasonable measures were adopted to rectify the inconsistencies. Documentation shall also be submitted that

summarizes the monitoring results of the effectiveness of the measures in rectifying density inconsistencies; or

3.3.3.2 document updated development data that indicates consistency.

3.4 To ensure the orderly development of urban lands, predictability in the provision of urban services, and the eventual annexation of Urban Growth Areas, Pierce County may incorporate criteria into its Comprehensive Plan policies for evaluating amendments proposing to remove properties from the Urban Growth Area. The criteria should, at a minimum, include the existing development pattern and density, vested development applications, and infrastructure and service needs to accommodate the existing and future residents. In general, any lands proposed to be removed from the Urban Growth Area shall be rural in character and not require any urban level infrastructure or service needs.

3.5 Pierce County, in conjunction with its cities and towns, may establish and utilize an Urban Growth Area Capacity Bank for unincorporated lands that are removed from the Urban Growth Area.

3.5.1 Portions of the existing Urban Growth Area, which are rural in character or where it has been determined that urban services will not be available, may be removed from the Urban Growth Area.

3.5.2 The land capacity associated with undeveloped or underutilized properties removed from the Urban Growth Area may be placed in the Urban Growth Area Capacity Bank in the form of housing and/or employment capacity credits.

3.5.2.1 The land capacity for underdeveloped and underutilized properties shall be calculated using the methodology and assumptions incorporated in the most recent Pierce County Buildable Lands Report.

3.5.3 The Urban Growth Area may be expanded using capacity credits from the Urban Growth Area Capacity Bank.

3.5.3.1 The banked capacity credits should only be utilized for the expansion of the Urban Growth Area when the area is affiliated with a city or town through the designation of a Potential Annexation Area.

3.5.4 Pierce County Regional Council is the body for authorizing distribution of capacity credits from the Urban Growth Area Capacity Bank.

3.5.5 The Pierce County Regional Council shall establish an application and review process for authorizing use of capacity credits.

3.5.6 The Pierce County Regional Council shall consider the following preference in the distribution of capacity credits:

3.5.6.1 Cities and towns that have not had a Potential Annexation Area since 1996;

- 3.5.6.2 Cities and towns that have had a reduction in their Potential Annexation Area that has resulted in deposits into the Urban Growth Area Capacity Bank;
- 3.5.6.3 Cities and towns that have annexed all of their associated Potential Annexation Areas; and
- 3.5.6.4 The creation of logical city or town boundaries.

- 3.5.7 Cities and towns utilizing capacity credits to expand its Urban Growth Area must demonstrate a commitment to annex the associated property.
- 3.5.8 Pierce County will provide an annual report to the PCRC identifying the number of available capacity credits in the Urban Growth Area Capacity Bank.
- 3.5.9 Participation in the Pierce County Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program is not required when the Urban Growth Area is expanded using capacity credits from the Urban Growth Area Capacity Bank.

- 3.6 A proposed amendment to the Urban Growth Area boundaries shall be referred to the PCRC for its review and recommendation.

#### Annexation within the Urban Growth Area

The County recognizes that unincorporated lands within UGAs are often Potential Annexation Areas for cities. Although annexation is preferred, these are also areas where incorporation of new cities could occur. The County will work with existing municipalities and emerging communities to make such transitions efficiently. The identification of "Potential Annexation Areas" (PAAs) is intended to serve as the foundation for future strategies to annex areas within the urban growth area. A Potential Annexation Area refers to an unincorporated area within the designated urban growth area which a city or town has identified as being appropriate for annexation at some point in the future. A Potential Annexation Area designation does not obligate a jurisdiction to annex an area within a defined timeline. It is the County's authority, in consultation with cities and towns, to adopt the urban growth area(s), and identify individual Potential Annexation Areas.

In order to promote logical, orderly, and systematic annexations of the urban growth area(s), the County in partnership with cities and towns, should establish joint planning agreements and annexation plans prior to expanding or adding to existing PAAs. Creation of new PAAs prior to the annexation of existing PAAs may directly impact Pierce County government and its service obligations, and may undermine the transition of existing unincorporated lands into cities and towns.

The County encourages cities and towns to annex land within its respective PAAs. The County recognizes cities and towns may not have a financial incentive to annex areas that will require more expenditures than the revenue produced through property or sales tax. Jurisdictions need to be creative in identifying potential financial incentives, in addition to establishing partnerships to overcome the financial obstacles. As a means to allocate resources, the County should prioritize the PAAs, with the highest being unincorporated "islands" between cities and towns. Pierce County shall support future annexations for areas in which a joint planning agreement exists between the County and appropriate city or town.

At the same time, annexations and incorporations have direct and significant impacts on the revenue of county government, and therefore, may affect the ability of the County to fulfill its role as a provider of certain regional services. The municipalities will work closely with the County to develop appropriate revenue sharing and contractual services arrangements that facilitate the goals of GMA.

UGA-4 Potential Annexation Areas shall be designated through the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan in consultation with cities and towns.

- 4.1 A city or town shall first identify a Potential Annexation Area(s) within its respective Comprehensive Plan.
- 4.2 Potential Annexation Area boundaries shall be determined with consideration for the following additional factors:
  - 4.2.1 The VISION 2050 document, including Multicounty Planning Policies;
  - 4.2.2 The carrying capacity of the land considering natural resources, agricultural land, and environmentally-sensitive lands;
  - 4.2.3 Population, housing, and employment projections;
  - 4.2.4 Financial capabilities and urban services capacities;
  - 4.2.5 Consistency and compatibility with neighborhood, local and regional plans;
  - 4.2.6 The existing land use and subdivision pattern; and
  - 4.2.7 Property access and ownership.
- 4.3 Potential Annexation Areas should not overlap or leave unincorporated urban islands between cities and towns.
  - 4.3.1 Future requests to establish a new Potential Annexation Area shall not result in an overlap with an existing Potential Annexation Area or create islands between cities and towns.
  - 4.3.2 Cities and towns with existing Potential Annexation Area overlaps should work toward resolving the existing overlaps.
- 4.4 The urban service areas and freestanding urban growth areas as designated through the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan as of June 30, 2013 shall be recognized as designated Potential Annexation Areas.
  - 4.4.1 Urban service area designations approved by the Pierce County Council through its 2013 Comprehensive Plan Amendment Cycle shall be recognized as a Potential Annexation Area.
  - 4.4.2 Boundaries of the Potential Annexation Areas should not split parcels. Efforts should be put forth to resolve split parcels prior to the initial designation of Potential Annexation Areas.

UGA-5 Pierce County, in conjunction with its cities and towns, shall establish a strategy for future annexations within the urban growth area.

- 5.1 Annexation is preferred over incorporation within the urban growth area.
- 5.2 The Potential Annexation Areas as identified in the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan shall be the foundation to an annexation strategy.
  - 5.2.1 Cities and towns are allowed to annex territory only within their adopted Potential Annexation Area as identified in the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan.
  - 5.2.2 Annexation of an area should be phased to coincide with a city or town's ability to coordinate the provision of a full range of urban services to the areas proposed for annexation.
- 5.3 The County and its cities and towns should proactively coordinate the annexation of unincorporated areas within the urban growth area that are within each respective city or town's Potential Annexation Area.
  - 5.3.1 The County and each city and town should work towards the establishment of annexation plans and joint planning agreements, with an exception for lands associated with Joint Base Lewis McChord and Camp Murray.
    - 5.3.1.1 A joint planning agreement is to serve as a mechanism where the County or a city can, prior to notice of annexation, identify potential objections and resolutions.
    - 5.3.1.2 An annexation plan should identify a potential schedule for annexation of areas with a city or town.
  - 5.3.2 The County should explore and implement financial incentives for a city or town to annex areas associated with its respective Potential Annexation Area.
    - 5.3.2.1 Financial incentives may include the establishment of a County level grant fund to assist in financial challenges a city or town may have in annexing an area.
    - 5.3.2.2 Financial incentives may include the elimination or reduction in a fee associated with a County service to a city or town in exchange for annexing an area.
  - 5.3.3 The County, and cities and towns, should explore potential partnerships in grant funding opportunities to overcome obstacles associated with annexing specific areas.
  - 5.3.4 Cities and towns should recognize the financial impacts experienced by the County when annexation only encompasses commercial or greenfield areas and avoids existing residential development.
    - 5.3.4.1 Cities and towns are encouraged to include a mix of existing commercial, residential, and greenfield areas, where appropriate, in future annexation proposals.

- 5.4 The County should prioritize the adopted Potential Annexation Areas for annexation.
  - 5.4.1 The County's highest priority should be Potential Annexation Areas representing unincorporated "islands" between cities and towns; and,
  - 5.4.2 The County shall support annexation for areas in which a joint planning agreement exists between the County and appropriate city or town.

#### Phasing of Development within the Urban Growth Area

UGA-6 Seek to direct growth as follows:

- 6.1 First to cities and towns, centers and urbanized areas with existing infrastructure capacity;
- 6.2 Second to areas that are already urbanized such that infrastructure improvements can be easily extended; and
- 6.3 Last to areas requiring major infrastructure improvements.
  - 6.3.1 The County's urban growth area may be extended to allow for build-out of newly developed areas only if development capacity within Potential Annexation Areas and growth in the areas determined to be inadequate to meet total population and employment projections consistent with the other policies set forth herein.
- 6.4 Encourage efficient use of urban land by maximizing the development potential of existing urban lands, such as advancing development that achieves zoned density.
- 6.5 The Urban Growth Areas in existence prior to the adoption of VISION 2040 may contain capacity beyond that needed to accommodate the growth target per regional geography for the succeeding 20-year planning period based upon existing zoning designations, allowed density, existing land division patterns, and similar factors. It is permissible for such areas to continue to be designated as Urban Growth Areas. Expansion of these Urban Growth Area boundaries is acknowledged to be inconsistent with the CPPs and strongly discouraged if the Urban Growth Area expansion is not in accordance with policy UGA-3.3.

UGA-7 Adopt policies within their respective comprehensive plans, to ensure that development within the urban growth area uses land efficiently, provides for a wide variety of uses, conserves natural resources, and allows for the connection of communities to an efficient, transit-oriented, multimodal transportation system. Policies shall:

- 7.1 Provide for more choices in housing types, including missing middle housing like duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, rowhouses and townhomes, and moderate increases in density to achieve at least an average net density of four units per acre;
- 7.2 Support infill and compact development; and
- 7.3 Provide for land uses that encourage travel by foot, bike and transit.

UGA-8 Provide for conveniently located, appropriately scaled commercial development to serve the immediate local needs of the surrounding community by encouraging revitalization of underused commercial areas before establishing new areas.

UGA-9 Adopt plans to encourage concentrated development within the urban growth area which will accommodate the twenty-year population and employment growth targets.

### Joint Planning

Joint planning between local governments can provide numerous possible benefits, including but not limited to:

- More efficient delivery of services;
- Shared use of public facilities;
- Coordinated permitting processes;
- Cost-sharing for planning and construction of public facilities (e.g., water, sewer infrastructure, parks, etc.);
- Consistent development standards;
- Shared regional data, including GIS data;
- Proactive identification of potential issues.

UGA-10 Joint planning may be municipal-municipal as well as municipal-County. The County and each municipality shall jointly plan for the designated urban growth area of that municipality (outside of municipal corporate limits) and may include municipal utility service areas. Joint municipal-municipal planning may occur in those other areas where the respective jurisdictions agree such planning would be beneficial.

10.1 Any jurisdiction initiating joint planning with one or more other jurisdictions shall do so by submitting a written proposal from its legislative authority to the legislative authority of the other jurisdiction(s). In forming its proposal, the initiating jurisdiction should consider the Joint Planning Framework recommended by the Pierce County Regional Council, April 15, 1993, and adopted by Resolution No. R93-127 of the Pierce County Council, July 13, 1993. The proposal shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- 10.1.1 Size of the proposed joint planning study area;
- 10.1.2 Location of the proposed study area in relation to urban growth boundaries;
- 10.1.3 Description of the issues proposed to be addressed in the joint planning process;
- 10.1.4 Proposed end-product of the joint planning process (e.g., amendments to comprehensive plans or implementing ordinances of each jurisdiction, interlocal agreement, etc.);
- 10.1.5 Proposed resources (e.g., staff, funding, technology, etc.) to be provided by the initiating jurisdiction toward completing the joint planning process; and
- 10.1.6 Evidence that notification of the joint planning process will be provided to residents, property owners, businesses, service providers, special districts, or other parties affected by the proposed joint planning process.

10.2 A jurisdiction receiving a proposal for joint municipal-County planning shall respond by either:

- 10.2.1 Issuing a resolution of its legislative authority indicating an intent to enter into a joint planning process as proposed;

- 10.2.2 Entering into discussions with the proposing jurisdiction regarding alternatives to joint planning proposal; or
- 10.2.3 Proposing to Pierce County that the proposal be included as part of an appropriate community planning process, if mutually agreeable to all jurisdictions involved.

10.3 If at any time Pierce County receives more proposals for participation in joint planning than its resources will provide, the County shall forward the proposals to the Pierce County Regional Council (PCRC) for consideration and a recommendation on prioritization based on planning needs. The PCRC shall consider proposals for joint planning that have been forwarded to them and prioritize the proposals according to the probable benefit to the County as a whole. Prioritization shall be based on the information included in the proposal, plus other criteria agreed upon by the PCRC. These criteria could include, but are not limited to:

- 10.3.1 Rate of growth in the proposed study area;
- 10.3.2 Scope of existing municipal utility provision in the proposed study area;
- 10.3.3 Existence of special districts serving both the proposed study area and the municipality;
- 10.3.4 Degree to which development standards or comprehensive plan policies may differ between jurisdictions within the proposed study area; and
- 10.3.5 Criteria 10.4.1 through 10.4.3 below.

10.4 When joint planning is required, the joint planning effort shall determine and resolve issues including, but not limited to, the following:

- 10.4.1 How zoning, subdivision and other land use approvals in designated urban growth areas of municipalities will be coordinated;
- 10.4.2 How appropriate service level standards for determining adequacy and availability of public facilities and services will be coordinated;
- 10.4.3 How the rate, timing, and sequencing of boundary changes will be coordinated;
- 10.4.4 How the provision of capital improvements to an area will be coordinated; or
- 10.4.5 To what extent a jurisdiction(s) may exercise extra jurisdictional responsibility.

10.5 Joint planning may be based upon factors including, but not limited to, the following:

- 10.5.1 Contemplated changes in municipal and special purpose district boundaries;
- 10.5.2 The likelihood that development, capital improvements, or regulations will have significant impacts across a jurisdictional boundary; or
- 10.5.3 The consideration of how public facilities and services are and should be provided and by which jurisdiction(s).

UGA-11 The County and each municipality shall enter into an interlocal cooperation agreement providing for the approval and delivery of public facilities and services in the Urban Growth Area. Such further agreements shall include, where appropriate, provisions relating to services such as law enforcement and schools and the services of special purpose districts and other service providers.

Public Facilities and Services

UGA-12 Capital facilities plans shall identify existing, planned, and future infrastructure needs within Urban Growth Areas.

12.1 The County and each municipality in the County should identify appropriate levels of service and concurrency standards that address schools, sewer, water, and parks.

12.2 The County and each municipality in the County shall identify appropriate levels of service and multimodal concurrency standards that address roads.

UGA-13 Within the delineated urban growth areas, the County, and each municipality in the County, shall adopt measures to ensure that growth and development are timed and phased consistent with the provision of adequate public facilities and services.

13.1 "Adequacy" shall be defined by locally established service level standards for local facilities and services both on the site and off-site. For facilities and services provided by other agencies, adequacy shall be defined by level of service standards mutually agreed upon by the service provider and the jurisdiction served. The definition of levels of service standards may allow for the phasing-in of such standards as may be provided in the capital facilities element of County or municipal comprehensive plans.

13.2 "Public facilities" include:

13.2.1 Streets, roads, highways, sidewalks, street and road lighting systems, and traffic signals;

13.2.2 Domestic water systems;

13.2.3 Sanitary sewer systems;

13.2.4 Storm sewer systems;

13.2.5 Park and recreational facilities; and

13.2.6 Schools.

13.3 "Public services" include:

13.3.1 Fire protection and suppression;

13.3.2 Law enforcement;

13.3.3 Public health;

13.3.4 Education;

13.3.5 Recreation;

- 13.3.6 Environmental protection;
- 13.3.7 Access to broadband internet; and
- 13.3.8 Other governmental services, including power, transit, and libraries.

13.4 Public Sanitary Sewer Service. The following policies shall be applicable to the provision of public sanitary sewer service in the County and its municipalities:

- 13.4.1 Relationship of Sewer Interceptors to Comprehensive Plans. The timing, phasing and location of sewer interceptor expansions shall be included in the capital facilities element of the applicable municipal or County comprehensive plans and shall be consistent with Countywide Planning Policies, the Urban Growth Area boundaries and the local comprehensive land use plan. The phased expansions shall be coordinated among the County and the municipalities therein and shall give priority to existing unserved urbanized areas within the Urban Growth Area except as provided in 13.4.2 a. and b. below.
- 13.4.2 Public Sewer Interceptor and Service Extensions/Expansions.
  - a. Public sewer interceptors shall only extend or expand outside of Urban Growth Areas where:
    - (i) Sewer service will remedy ground water contamination and other health problems by replacing septic systems;
    - (ii) A formal binding agreement to service an approved planned development was made prior to the establishment of the Urban Growth Area; or
    - (iii) An interceptor will convey wastewater originating within a designated Urban Growth Area to sewerage facilities in another designated Urban Growth Area.
  - b. New sanitary sewer service inside Urban Growth Areas must follow phasing of capital facilities as provided in the municipality's adopted comprehensive plan or any adopted Sewer Master Plan unless:
    - (i) Sewer service will remedy ground water contamination and other health problems by replacing septic systems and community on-site sewage systems;
    - (ii) A new municipality incorporates;
    - (iii) A formal binding agreement to service an approved planned development was made prior to the establishment of the Urban Growth Area; or
    - (iv) An interceptor will convey wastewater originating within a designated Urban Growth Area to sewerage facilities in another designated Urban Growth Area.

- c. New sanitary sewer service connections from interceptors shall not be made available to properties outside the Urban Growth Area except as provided in (a) above.
- d. Sanitary Sewer service shall not be provided in areas designated "rural," except as provided in 13.4.2(a)(i)(ii).
- e. A sewer interceptor or trunk line constructed or planned for construction through a rural area to convey wastewater from a designated Urban Growth Area to sewerage facilities in a designated Urban Growth Area shall not constitute a change of conditions that can be used as the basis for a change in land use designation or urban/rural designation, either for adjacent or nearby properties.

13.4.3 On-Site and Community Sewage Systems.

- a. In order to protect the public health and safety of the citizens of Pierce County and of the municipalities in the County, to preserve and protect environmental quality including, but not limited to, water quality and to protect aquifer recharge areas, to work toward the goal of eliminating the development of new residential and commercial uses on on-site and community sewage systems within the urban areas in the unincorporated County or within municipal boundaries consistent with the Countywide Planning Policies, the County and each municipality shall adopt policies on the use of on-site and community sewage including:
  - (i) The most current Tacoma-Pierce County Board of Health Land Use Regulations for On-Site and Community Sewerage Systems.
  - (ii) Policies which require connection to sanitary sewers when they are available in the following circumstances:
    - a. If a septic system fails;
    - b. For all new development except existing single-family lots; and
    - c. For development with dry sewer systems.
  - (iii) If sewer service is not available, dry sewer facilities shall be required unless the local jurisdiction has adopted criteria that otherwise must be met.
- b. New industrial development on community or on-site sewage systems shall not be allowed in urban areas in the unincorporated County or within municipal boundaries. Sanitary facilities necessary for recreation sites may be exempt from this policy.
- c. It is not the intent of these policies to require any individual property owner on an existing, properly permitted and functioning septic system to connect to a public sewer unless:
  - (i) The septic system fails;

- (ii) The system is not in compliance with the most current version of the Tacoma-Pierce County Board of Health Land Use Regulations or the current use of the property changes;
- (iii) The density of development on the property increases;
- (iv) The existing septic system was originally permitted as an interim system to be abandoned when sewers became available; or
- (v) A municipality had a mandatory policy.

13.4.4 Achieving an adopted Level of Sewer Service.

- a. The County, each municipality, and sewer providers shall work together to achieve adopted levels of service for sewers. All sewer service providers shall work with municipalities to process sewer permits in a manner that allows municipalities to comply with timelines imposed under RCW 36.70B.080(1).
- b. The County, each municipality, and their sewer providers shall work to secure funding sources to achieve the adopted levels of sewer service such as:
  - (i) Grants;
  - (ii) Public Works Trust Fund;
  - (iii) State Revolving Fund;
  - (iv) Centennial Clean Water Fund; or
  - (v) Municipally imposed surcharges to fund sewer improvements in the jurisdictions where the surcharges are collected.

13.4.5 The availability or potential for availability of sewer treatment plant capacity shall not be used to justify expansion of the sewer system or development in a manner inconsistent with the Countywide Planning Policy, Urban Growth Area boundaries and the applicable municipal or County comprehensive land use plans.

13.5 Non-Municipal Service-Provision Entities.

- 13.5.1 Special purpose districts shall conform their capital facility and service plans so as to be consistent with the capital facility element of the County or municipal comprehensive plans.
- 13.5.2 Where facilities and services will be provided by special purpose, improvement or facility service provision entities, such entities shall coordinate the provision of facilities and services with the County, and each affected municipality in the County, so that new growth and development is, in fact, served by adequate public facilities and services at the time of development.
- 13.6 Urban government services shall be provided primarily by cities and urban government services shall not be provided in rural areas.

13.7 Public facilities and services will be considered available "at the time of development" as follows:

- 13.7.1 As to all public facilities and services other than transportation, if the facility or service is in place at the time demand is created, or if the County or municipality has made appropriate provision to meet the demand for the public facility or service through one or more of the following techniques:
  - a. Inclusion of the public facility or service in the applicable County or municipal capital facilities plan element and specification of the full source of the funding for such project;
  - b. Impact fees;
  - c. Required land dedication;
  - d. Assessment districts;
  - e. Users fees and charges;
  - f. Utility fees; or
  - g. Other.
- 13.7.2 As to transportation facilities, if needed transportation improvements are within the then existing 6-year capital facilities plan element and program, but only if a specific financial commitment to the transportation improvement project has been made.
- 13.7.3 Public facilities and services will not be considered available at the time of development unless they are provided consistently with the applicable level of service standards adopted in the capital facilities element of the Comprehensive Plan.

13.8 Public facility and service adequacy shall be determined by the County, and each municipality in the County, based upon:

- 13.8.1 The specific public facility or service;
- 13.8.2 The adopted or established level of service standard;
  - a. Established by each municipality for local facilities and services;
  - b. By mutual agreement between provider and municipality served for other facilities and services; or
  - c. Established through interlocal agreements for cross-jurisdictional facilities and services.
- 13.8.3 The current usage of the existing public facilities and services, existing development commitments and obligations, the vested or non-vested status of pipeline approvals or existing lots of record, and new development applications; and

13.8.4 Where development projects partially meet adequacy of public facilities and services standards, development approval may be authorized for that portion of the project that meets the adequacy standards or the project may be phased to coincide with the phasing of future availability of adequate public facilities and services.

13.9 Facility and service provision/extension to new development areas shall be subject to the following:

13.9.1 Imposition of requirement for payment of the full, but fair, share of costs of needed facilities and services on the new development through:

- a. Impact fees;
- b. Assessment districts;
- c. User fees and charges;
- d. Surcharges;
- e. Dedication;
- f. Utility fees; or
- g. Other, as appropriate.

13.9.2 Consideration of the total impact of the facility or service extension on the achievement of other policies, goals and objectives, in addition to the impact on the area being served.

13.9.3 If necessary to minimize off-site impacts, specify that such service extensions (e.g., sewer, water) are not subject to connection by intervening landowners.

#### Freestanding Cities and Towns

UGA-14 Freestanding Cities and Towns are local focal points where people come together for a variety of activities, including business, shopping, living and recreation. Often, Freestanding Cities and Towns include a strong public presence because they are the location of city hall, main street, and other public spaces.

14.1 Freestanding cities and towns should provide the majority of services and jobs for surrounding rural residents.

UGA-15 Freestanding Cities and Towns will be characterized by a compact urban form that includes a moderately dense mix of locally oriented retail, jobs and housing that promotes walking, transit usage, when feasible, and community activity.

15.1 Freestanding Cities and Towns will be developed at a higher density than surrounding urban and rural areas.

15.2 Small scale forms of intensification such as accessory housing units and development of vacant lots and parking lots help achieve the qualities of centers while preserving the neighborhood character.

15.3 Freestanding cities and towns should provide more concentrated and varied housing options than surrounding rural areas.

UGA-16 At a minimum, Freestanding Cities and Towns will be served by State Routes which connect them to other centers and to the regional high-capacity transit system. In some instances, Freestanding Cities and Towns may have direct connections to the local public transportation system.