

# VISION 2040 & Climate Change



*Climate change has the potential to dramatically affect not only our environment, but also our communities and economy. Significant steps are needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the region and to plan for various impacts caused by climate change.*

## The Importance of Addressing Climate Change

Atmospheric pollution threatens to alter the way the natural environment functions and to affect human health and well-being. In the Pacific Northwest average annual temperatures are already rising. Reduced snow-pack and earlier spring runoffs could result in increasing water shortages and drought conditions. Approximately half of the greenhouse gas emissions in the central Puget Sound region come from cars, trucks, and other transportation. A long-term commitment to sustainable growth, clean transportation, and environmentally friendly development practices will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create healthier communities.



## What's in VISION 2040?

VISION 2040 recognizes that caring for our planet is critical for our personal and economic well-being, both now and for generations to come. While recognizing that climate change is a global phenomenon, VISION 2040 addresses steps the region can take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for the impacts of a changing climate. Provisions relating to climate change are found throughout VISION 2040.

**Multicounty Planning Policies.** VISION 2040 provides guidance for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and planning for various impacts caused by climate change. Included is an overarching goal that calls for reducing pollutants which contribute to climate change. Multicounty planning policies commit the region to comply with recent state directives regarding the reduction of greenhouse gases and call on jurisdictions and agencies to include an analysis of climate change impacts when performing environmental review under the State Environmental Policy Act. Additional provisions call for reducing the rate of energy use per capita and developing new energy management technology as part of meeting the region's energy needs.

**Actions.** VISION 2040 calls for a regional *Climate Change Action Plan* to investigate ways to: (a) address state climate change initiatives, (b) reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and (c) take specific mitigation steps to address climate change impacts. In addition, the Regional Council is directed to update its programming and project selection criteria to address health impacts and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Transportation 2040, the functional transportation plan for VISION 2040, provides specific details for maintaining mobility while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled as required under state legislation.

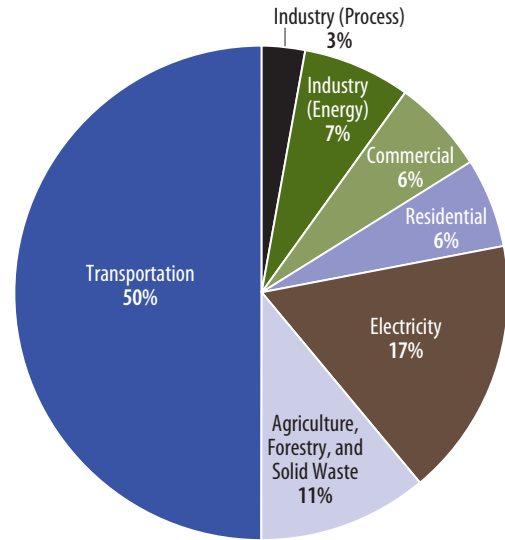
## What This Means for Other Planning Efforts in the Region

Countywide planning policies should provide guidance for common strategies and programs for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, such as addressing emissions from pass-through traffic.

Cities and counties should address climate change by developing programs and actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as well as planning for impacts associated with change in climate. Local jurisdictions can access tools from the International Council of Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) to inventory their greenhouse gas emissions and identify ways to reduce pollutants.

Given the significant role of transportation as the primary source of greenhouse gas emissions in our region, local jurisdictions and transit agencies should advance more efficient and less polluting alternatives to driving alone. Regulatory and incentive approaches should also be explored, including changing zoning regulations to promote more mixed-use and higher-density development. These approaches can create more walkable and transit-friendly communities. Local jurisdictions should also encourage alternative energy sources at work and at home. Development practices that retain or restore vegetation and conserve water and energy also can help address issues related to climate change and should be pursued.

### Sources of Greenhouse Gas Emissions in the Central Puget Sound Region



Source: Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (2000)

### For More Information

Additional information on VISION 2040 and how it addresses climate change is available by contacting the Puget Sound Regional Council's Information Center at 206-464-7532 or [info@psrc.org](mailto:info@psrc.org).

Resource: International Council of Local Environmental Initiatives: [www.iclei.org/](http://www.iclei.org/)