

VISION 2040 & Public Services

people



prosperity



planet



Having adequate services and facilities ensures that the region can maintain the health, safety, and economic vitality of our communities. How and where schools, libraries, and other community facilities are sited is also essential for successfully managing growth and curbing sprawl.

The Importance of Addressing Public Services

Communities need adequate infrastructure to ensure that development occurs in an efficient and orderly manner. Public services and facilities should be located in a manner that allows jobs and housing to develop where they are desired and planned. The appropriateness and scale of particular public services does vary significantly between urban and rural areas. For example, urban areas require sanitary and storm sewer systems and other vital resources, while the service needs of rural areas are more limited.



What's in VISION 2040?

Key urban services addressed in VISION 2040 include wastewater and stormwater systems, solid waste, energy, telecommunications, emergency services, and water supply. As the region plans for growth, conservation and improved efficiencies in providing services are essential. VISION 2040 describes conservation benefits, including financial and energy savings from maximizing the use of existing facilities, reducing pollution, and decreasing waste.

The *Regional Growth Strategy* highlights the need for strategic investments in services and facilities, especially to support growth and development in centers and compact urban communities. To accommodate growth, services are to be provided in an environmentally sensitive and timely way. Municipalities are identified in the Growth Management Act as the preferred providers of public services — a concept that VISION 2040 embraces as well. Urban types of services, such as municipal sewer systems, are not appropriate in rural areas.

Multicounty Planning Policies. An overarching goal of VISION 2040 is to provide sufficient and efficient public services and facilities in a manner that is healthy, safe, and economically viable. Multicounty planning policies address conservation measures to increase recycling and reduce waste. They also encourage more efficient use of water, low-impact development techniques, and renewable and alternative energy. Additional policies address siting of public facilities, especially regional capital facilities. Jurisdictions and agencies should invest in facilities and amenities that serve centers. Urban facilities are not appropriate in rural and resource areas. Schools and other institutions serving urban residents are discouraged from locating outside the urban growth area. Facilities should also be sited in ways that minimizes adverse social, environmental and economic impacts.

Actions. The Regional Council is directed to determine its appropriate role in addressing regional water issues, including water supply. Counties and cities are asked to work with special service districts to ensure that districts provide services and site facilities in ways that support regional and local growth management planning goals and policies. Local jurisdictions are also asked to perform a consistency assessment of their capital facilities programs to ensure compatibility with growth management objectives and VISION 2040.

What This Means for Other Planning Efforts in the Region

Countywide planning policies should consider improved collaboration with cities and special service districts to identify opportunities for co-location of facilities and services. (An example is placing parks next to schools.) They should also provide guidance for reviewing special district criteria for location and design of new facilities, including schools and other community buildings and structures.

Counties should review special service district plans and identify inconsistencies with regional and local growth management planning objectives. Counties should also work with adjacent cities to ensure that services provided in urban unincorporated areas are compatible with city standards. This will allow for easier annexation of these areas in the future.

As part of the Regional Council's *Plan Review Process*, all jurisdictions are to assess their capital facilities programming processes for compatibility with adopted regional and local growth management plans.



Where failing septic systems occur, jurisdictions should work with residents to replace these systems in order to restore and improve environmental quality.

Transit agencies and special districts should provide services in a manner that supports regional and local growth management objectives. Urban facilities and service levels are not appropriate in rural areas. Service providers should consider conservation, demand management, and public health. Facilities should be designed at the appropriate scale for the communities in which they are located and use state of the art techniques. Energy providers should seek to obtain a greater portion of their power from renewable and alternative energy sources.

For More Information

Additional information on VISION 2040 is available by contacting the Puget Sound Regional Council's Information Center at 206-464-7532 or info@psrc.org.