Multicounty Planning Policies for
King, Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish Counties

March 1993
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The multicounty planning policies replace the growth and transportation policies on pages 12 through 19 of VISION 2020. At its March 11, 1993 meeting, the General Assembly adopted the policies and definitions included in this document. An addendum to the VISION 2020 Final Environmental Impact Statement was developed to review the environmental impacts of the multicounty planning policies and found the multicounty policies "are substantially similar to the existing VISION 2020 policies and implement the preferred alternative" and "do not introduce new significant impacts or a new alternative."

The multicounty policies together with the other adopted sections of VISION 2020, comprise the regional growth and transportation strategy. Copies of VISION 2020 are available in area libraries, and from the Puget Sound Regional Council, 216 First Avenue South, Seattle, WA, 98104, (206) 464-7090.
RESOLUTION A-93-02

A RESOLUTION
of the General Assembly of the
Puget Sound Regional Council Amending
VISION 2020: Growth and Transportation
Strategy for the Central Puget Sound Region to
Incorporate Multicounty Planning Policies Pursuant to
the Washington State Growth Management Act.

WHEREAS, the Washington State Growth Management
Act was amended in 1991 to require the adoption of
multicounty planning policies for counties "with a
population of four hundred fifty thousand or more, with
contiguous areas" (RCW 36.70A.210); and

WHEREAS, King, Pierce and Snohomish counties meet
the criteria specified in the Growth Management Act for
counties required to adopt multicounty planning policies;
and

WHEREAS, the Growth Management Act also gives
other counties the option to participate in the adoption of
multicounty planning policies (RCW 36.70A.210); and

WHEREAS, Kitsap County has opted to participate in
adopting multicounty planning policies; and

WHEREAS, in April 1992 the General Assembly of the
Puget Sound Regional Council identified the policies
within VISION 2020: Growth and Transportation
Strategy for the Central Puget Sound Region as
multicounty planning policies for growth management
and regional transportation planning purposes;

WHEREAS, VISION 2020 promotes diverse,
economically healthy and environmentally sensitive
communities that offer housing opportunities for all
economic segments of the population and are connected
and served by a high-quality, efficient transportation
system; and

WHEREAS, the Environmental Impact Statement
Addendum for the proposed multicounty planning
policies finds that the proposed policies do not
substantially change the analysis of alternatives or impacts
in the VISION 2020 Final Environmental Impact
Statement;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that
the Puget Sound Regional Council hereby amends pages
12 through 19 of VISION 2020: Growth and
Transportation Strategy for the Central Puget Sound
Region as identified in Exhibit "A" of this resolution,
attached hereto and by this reference made a part herein,
as the "Multicounty Planning Policies for King, Kitsap,
Pierce and Snohomish counties" developed pursuant to
the Washington State Growth Management Act; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General
Assembly directs Regional Council staff to incorporate
these amendments and the accompanying policy text as
amended by the Executive Board into a revised VISION
2020 document, integrating the new material in a
consistent policy format, including updating the
accompanying text and policy numbering system as
appropriate.

ADOPTED by the Puget Sound Regional Council
General Assembly as the Designated Metropolitan
Planning Organization and Regional Transportation
Planning Organization on this 11th day of March, 1993.

[Signature]
Councilmember Bill Brubaker
President, Puget Sound Regional Council

[Signature]
Mary McCumber
Executive Director

ATTEST: Mary McCumber
Executive Director
Many growth management issues are truly regional in character and cannot be fully addressed at the local or countywide level. The natural environment, the economic region, the transportation system, and the housing market all operate beyond the bounds of a single jurisdiction. These and other issues are appropriately examined from a regional perspective.

The Washington State Growth Management Act was amended in 1991 to require that "multicounty planning policies shall be adopted by two or more counties, each with a population of 450,000 or more, with contiguous urban areas and may be adopted by other counties..." (RCW 36.70A.210). King, Pierce and Snohomish counties are required to adopt multicounty planning policies under this provision. Kitsap County has chosen to participate in adopting these policies.

To meet the Growth Management Act requirement, in April 1992 the Puget Sound Regional Council's Executive Board and General Assembly identified VISION 2020 as the multicounty planning policies for the four-county region. This action was seen as interim. In October the Board affirmed that the Regional Council is the agency responsible for multicounty planning policies.

Multicounty planning policy work is occurring in two phases. The first phase work concluded with General Assembly adoption on March 11, 1993, of broad policies which address major topics identified in the Growth Management Act. These policies, based on VISION 2020 and the countywide planning policies, provide the framework for regionally addressing multicounty growth management issues. The second phase of policy development, starting in the Summer of 1993, will focus on strategic policies and new framework policies that incorporate the actions of other planning processes.

Organizations and agencies throughout the region are developing plans and policies related to specific growth management issues. It is the goal of the multicounty planning policies to coordinate and complement the work of these organizations and agencies, and to include them fully in regional growth management planning efforts. Citizen participation in the development and implementation of the multicounty planning policies is also an important part of the planning process.

The Growth Management Act requires development of multicounty policies for the designation of urban growth areas, contiguous and orderly development and urban services, transportation facilities and strategies, siting regional capital facilities, interjurisdictional planning, economic development, and affordable housing. An additional topic area, open space linkages, resource protection and critical areas, was identified as an important issue through the countywide planning policies and is included in the multicounty planning policies. Analysis of fiscal impact, required under the GMA, is addressed by local governments in the central Puget Sound region through countywide planning efforts.

**POLICY NOTATION**

To distinguish the multicounty policies from other policy work in the region, the capital letter "R" preceding each policy in this document indicates that it is a regional policy. The second letter refers to the topic area. Policy numbering in each topic area is sequential. The following is a list of the topic areas and the notation used to refer to each:

- Framework policies ......................................................RF
- Designation of urban growth areas .................................RG
- Contiguous and orderly development and the provision of services ..............................................RC
- Transportation facilities and strategies ...........................RT
- Siting regional capital facilities ......................................RS
- Interjurisdictional planning ..........................................RI
- Economic development ..................................................RE
- Affordable housing ......................................................RH
- Open space linkages, resource protection and critical areas .............................................................RO
In 1990, VISION 2020 was adopted by local governments in the central Puget Sound region. VISION 2020 is the regional long-range growth and transportation strategy for central Puget Sound. VISION 2020 was the result of a planning process initiated in 1987 by the Puget Sound Council of Governments, the predecessor agency to the Puget Sound Regional Council. This planning process included broad participation by local government technical staff, the region’s policy-makers and the public. One important product of this process was the integration of land use and transportation planning, thus replacing the separate Regional Transportation Plan and Regional Development Strategy planning programs.

Also in 1990, the Washington State Legislature passed the Growth Management Act to guide land use and transportation planning in the largest and fastest growing areas of the state. This Act provides an opportunity for communities to define how they will develop in the future. The 1991 amendments to the Act require the development of countywide and multicounty planning policies.

Since its adoption, VISION 2020 has served as the basis for a number of planning efforts. VISION 2020 has provided the framework for countywide planning policies and local comprehensive planning efforts, mandated by Washington’s Growth Management Act. VISION 2020 also provided guidance for transportation planning efforts, including the Regional Transit Project.

With the adoption of multicounty planning policies, VISION 2020 has been updated to reflect current countywide planning efforts and to establish an integrated regional vision. These policies promote diverse, economically healthy and environmentally sensitive communities that offer affordable housing for all economic segments of the population and are connected and served by a high-quality, efficient transportation system. The following set of policies, building on existing regional policies and newly-adopted countywide planning policies, establish the framework for the adopted regional vision.

| RF-1 | Concentrate development in urban areas to conserve agricultural, forest and environmental resources. Within urban growth areas, promote growth into centers that are connected by an efficient, transit-oriented, multi-modal transportation system. |
| RF-2 | Protect critical areas, conserve resource lands, and preserve lands and resources of regional significance. |
| RF-3 | Phase development of public facilities and services to achieve the adopted regional vision. |
| RF-4 | Develop a transportation system that emphasizes accessibility, includes a variety of mobility options, and enables the efficient movement of people, goods and freight. |
| RF-5 | Provide diversity and choice in housing and employment options. |
| RF-6 | Maintain economic opportunities while managing growth. |
| RF-7 | Mitigate potential adverse effects of concentrating development by early action. |
The Growth Management Act requires counties to designate and encourage growth in urban growth areas specifically designated to accommodate the urban growth projected to occur in the county for the succeeding 20-year period (RCW 36.70A.110). The Act identifies cities as the preferred place for urban growth and the preferred providers of urban services (RCW36.70A.110).

**RG-1** Concentrate growth into compact, well-defined central places (from metropolitan centers to small towns) that are connected by an efficient, transit-oriented, multi-modal transportation system and provide the opportunity for residents to live near jobs and urban activities. Connect centers by a regional rapid transit system and other forms of high capacity transportation.

**RG-2** Promote design that preserves community character and livability, creates lively and people-oriented areas, and supports transit, pedestrian and bicycle access.

**RG-3** Change regulatory, pricing (such as parking fees and tolls), taxing and expenditure practices within the region to encourage concentrated rather than dispersed development.

**RG-4** Provide enough urban land to allow private enterprise to create opportunities for employment and affordable housing for all economic segments of the population in a cost-effective and efficient manner.

**RG-5** All jurisdictions support the development of a regional industrial siting policy.

**RG-6** Allocate population and employment at the countywide level in a manner which is consistent with the adopted regional vision.

**RG-7** Ensure that urban growth area and land use designations near jurisdictional borders are compatible.

**RG-8** Encourage annexation proposals that conform to an orderly expansion of city boundaries within the urban growth area and provide for a contiguous development pattern. When proposed annexations are near county borders, the process should include collaboration and proposal review by the neighboring county to ensure proper expansions and interjurisdictional cooperation.

**RG-9** Promote efficient service delivery in urban growth areas by encouraging efforts to reduce the number of special districts providing urban governmental services and discouraging the creation of new special districts.
Under the Growth Management Act, the public facilities and services necessary to support development should be in place or committed to at the time of development without decreasing current service levels below locally established standards (RCW 36.70A.110).

The provision of services is a key component in the implementation of a regional plan. It is critical that jurisdictions work together to provide adequate and efficient services in a manner that protects and enhances the natural ecosystem. The intent of these policies is to give first priority to the provision of services and facilities in areas where growth is to be directed.

RC-1 Coordinate regional facilities planning, financing and phasing in a manner which supports land use plans and the adopted regional vision.

RC-2 Ensure that the type and level of services accommodate the adopted regional growth forecasts while supporting land use policies and the adopted regional vision.

RC-3 Give high priority to protecting and enhancing the natural environment and the public health of residents when providing services and facilities.

RC-4 In coordinating growth management for urban development with natural resource planning, promote urban development solutions that conserve water, energy, and land resources and protect air quality.

RC-5 Integrate land use and transportation planning with health and human services planning to promote service delivery at affordable costs.
The Growth Management Act recognizes the importance of regional transportation planning and requires the development of a regional transportation plan that is consistent with local and regional growth management plans. Moreover, transportation planning, land use planning, and financing strategies are to be internally consistent in all planning efforts.

RT-1 Regional transportation plans and strategies should be consistent with local comprehensive plans and the adopted regional vision, using the Puget Sound Regional Council, as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO), as the primary forum for development of regional plans and strategies.

RT-2 Develop and expand an efficient, balanced, multi-modal regional transportation system which connects centers and residential areas.

RT-3 Regional transportation plans and strategies should address the mobility and accessibility of people, freight and goods.

RT-4 Promote land use and transportation solutions that reduce air pollution, conserve energy and offer the best opportunity to cope with energy shortages.

RT-5 Emphasize transportation investments that provide alternatives to single-occupancy vehicles, such as transit, bikeways and pedestrian paths, passenger ferry service, and demand management.

RT-6 Promote an interconnected system of high-occupancy vehicle lanes serving the urban areas, focusing on centers and accessing regional facilities that provide options for ridesharing and for facilitating other local and express transit services.

RT-7 Develop a regionally coordinated network of facilities for pedestrians and bicycles, which also provides effective accessibility to transit, ferry and rail stations and within centers.

RT-8 Work with both the public and private sectors to promote demand management and education programs that shift travel demand to high-occupancy vehicles and to less congested times of the day and eliminate part of the travel demand altogether.

RT-9 Promote a moderate expansion of key roadways that support centers and provide access to non-center job and residential areas within designated urban growth areas and rural centers.

RT-10 Maintain the existing transportation system in a safe and usable state.

RT-11 Recognize the mobility needs of business and industry and provide for these needs within the intent of the adopted regional vision.

RT-12 Local jurisdictions are encouraged to consider establishing mode-split goals for non-single occupancy vehicle travel to all significant employment centers to reflect that center’s contribution to the solution of the region’s transportation problem.
Siting regional capital facilities

The Growth Management Act defines essential public facilities as "those facilities that are typically difficult to site, such as airports, state education facilities and state or regional transportation facilities, state and local correctional facilities, solid waste handling facilities, and in-patient facilities, including substance abuse facilities, mental health facilities and group homes" (RCW 36.70A.200). Public facilities needs must be balanced with concerns for equity and fairness among jurisdictions when locating such facilities.

RS-1 Invest in major public facilities and urban amenities in a manner that supports the development of centers.

RS-2 Develop a process to identify and prioritize the number and type of regional public facilities significant to two or more counties and needed to support the adopted regional vision and the population forecasts for twenty years. The list should include the essential public facilities identified in the Growth Management Act, and may be expanded to include utility corridors or other facilities meeting this definition.

RS-3 Site specifically defined regional facilities in a manner that (1) reduces adverse societal, environmental and economic impacts on the host community, (2) balances new or existing regional facilities needs with equity considerations through distributional or mitigation solutions, and (3) addresses regional growth planning objectives.

Interjurisdictional planning

The Growth Management Act requires that the comprehensive plan for each county and city be coordinated and consistent with the comprehensive plans of other jurisdictions with which the county or city shares common borders or regional issues (RCW 36.70A.100). The Act further requires that the regional transportation plan and the transportation elements of comprehensive plans adopted by counties, cities and towns are consistent (RCW 47.80.030).

RI-1 Coordinate planning efforts among jurisdictions, agencies and federally recognized tribes where there are common borders or related regional issues to facilitate a common vision, consistency and effective implementation of planning goals.

RI-2 Establish and maintain equitable allocations of public costs and revenue among the region's jurisdictions.
The Growth Management Act requires that jurisdictions encourage economic development that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plans and promote economic opportunities for all citizens. Further, it is important to link economic development with the capacities of natural resources, public services and public facilities (RCW 36.70A.020).

RE-1  Support the evolution of a strong, diversified and sustainable regional economy, while providing equal opportunity for all, protecting the natural environment for future generations, and preserving the quality of life.

RE-2  Promote the retention of existing employment and employers in the region and minimize obstacles to their expansion. Direct new employment to support the adopted regional vision and local plans for economic growth. Target new employment growth for centers, particularly the slower growing centers such as Tacoma, Everett and Bremerton, both to share benefits and relieve growth pressures in King County.

The Growth Management Act states that counties and cities should "encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock" (RCW 36.70A.020).

RH-1  Promote fair and equal access to housing for all persons regardless of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, national origin, family status, source of income or disability.

RH-2  Strengthen interjurisdictional efforts to ensure a fair, equitable and rational distribution of low-income, moderate-income and special needs housing throughout the region consistent with land use policies, transportation and employment locations. Provide a diversity of housing types to meet the housing needs of all economic segments of the population.

RH-3  Promote interjurisdictional cooperative efforts, including land use incentives and funding commitments, to ensure that an adequate supply of housing is available to all economic segments of the population.

RH-4  Preserve existing affordable housing and serve it with transit. Promote development of institutional and financial mechanisms to provide for affordable housing near all centers.

RH-5  Consider the economic implications of private and public regulations and practices so that the broader public benefit they serve is achieved with the least additional cost to housing.
Open space linkages and resource protection were identified as important issues in the countywide planning policies and are included in the multicounty planning policies. The Growth Management Act establishes the following as planning goals concerning open space and resource protection: (1) 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 parks; (2) protect the environment and enhance the state’s high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water; (3) maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries, including productive timber, agricultural, and fisheries industries; and (4) encourage the conservation of productive forest lands and productive agricultural lands, and discourage incompatible use (RCW 36.70A.020).

RO-1  Preserve and enhance the region's natural resources and environmental amenities while planning for and accommodating growth.

RO-2  Promote regional air and water quality protection in conjunction with comprehensive plan development and implementation.

RO-3  Protect significant regional open space, resource lands and critical areas through interjurisdictional planning by the identification, designation, preservation and enhancement of these lands, including linkages and networks.

RO-4  Frame and separate central places and urban growth areas by creating and preserving a network of permanent urban and rural open space, including parks, recreation areas, critical areas, and resource lands.

RO-5  Preserve significant regional historic, visual and cultural resources including views, landmarks, archaeological sites and areas of special locational character.

RO-6  Encourage the use of environmentally sensitive development practices to minimize the effects of growth on the region’s natural resource systems.
Definitions

The following terms are defined according to their intended use in this document.

Centers:
Compact, well-defined areas to which a mix of higher density growth or intensive land uses will be directed, connected by an efficient, transit-oriented, multi-modal transportation system.

Consistency:
Guidance concerning the term consistency is provided by WAC Chapter 365-195: "In general, the phrase "not incompatible with" conveys the meaning of "consistency" most suited to preserving flexibility for local variations."

Executive Board:
The managerial and administrative body of the Puget Sound Regional Council, composed of elected officials appointed by their General Assembly governments to represent their member governments and representatives of statutory members.

General Assembly:
The governing body of the Puget Sound Regional Council, composed of all elected officials from the executive and legislative branches of member cities, towns and counties, representatives of Tribal governments and representatives of statutory members.

Jurisdiction:
Includes counties and cities. As appropriate, the term "jurisdiction" also includes federal and state agencies and federally recognized tribes.

Region:
Refers to the central Puget Sound region, including King, Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish counties and the cities within those counties.

Regional Council:
Puget Sound Regional Council.