Puget Sound Regional Council

Regional Staff Committee

Thursday, October 1, 2026 • 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Remote Only

Watch or listen

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1. **Welcome and Introductions (9:30)**
2. **Reports (9:35)**
   a. Meeting Summary for September 3, 2026*
   b. PSRC Announcements and Updates
3. **Discussion Item (9:45)**
   a. 2027 PSRC Recommendations to the State Legislature* – Robin Koskey & Alyssa Quinn, PSRC
4. **Discussion Item (10:00)**
   a. Input on Update Options for Regional Centers Framework: Manufacturing/Industrial Centers* – Paul Inghram & Nancy Ferber, PSRC
5. **Discussion Item (10:30)**
   a. Regional Open Space Plan Update* – Erika Harris, PSRC
6. **Discussion Item (11:00)**
   a. Regional Economic Strategy Release for Public Comment* – Jason Thibedeau, PSRC
7. **Information Item**
   a. TOD Series Flyer: TOD on a Roll – Making the Most of New Transit Connections*
8. **Next Meeting: November 5, 2026 from 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**
9. **Adjourn (11:30)**

***Supporting materials attached**

For more information, contact Mikayla Svob at msvob@psrc.org.

Sign language, and communication material in alternative formats, can be arranged given sufficient notice by calling 206-464-7090, TTY Relay 711.

العربية| Arabic, 中文 | Chinese, Deutsch | German, Français | French, 한국어 | Korean, Русский | Russian, Español | Spanish, Tagalog, Tiếng việt | Vietnamese, visit https://www.psrc.org/contact/language-assistance.

Puget Sound Regional Council

MEETING SUMMARY

Regional Staff Committee
Thursday, September 3, 2026
Remote Meeting

Presentations from the meeting are available on the Regional Staff Committee webpage.

Introductions and Announcements
Andrea Spencer, Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:30 am. Participants were asked to view the meeting attendance on the "chat" feature on Zoom, and phone-in participants were asked to identify themselves verbally. Members attending in person were instructed to use their table tent to identify themselves.

Reports
Ben Bakkenta, Director of Regional Planning, highlighted both the upcoming TOOLBOX webinar, Local Economic Development Efforts, and fall TOD events. He also shared that Liz Underwood-Bultmann, Principal Planner, moved to a position with King County, and that PSRC would be sharing a job opening shortly.

He then introduced Robin Koskey, Director of Government Relations and Communications, who provided a brief legislative update. For additional information, please contact Robin Koskey, at rkoskey@psrc.org.

Discussion Item: Input on Update Options for Regional Centers Framework
Nancy Ferber, Senior Planner, and Paul Inghram, Director of Growth Management, provided an overview of topic ideas for regional growth centers, and sought additional input and feedback from members.

View the Regional Centers Framework: Update Options (PDF) presentation.

For more information, please contact Nancy Ferber, Senior Planner, at nferber@psrc.org, or Paul Inghram, Director of Growth Management, at pinghram@psrc.org.

Discussion Item: Regional Housing Needs Assessment Update

David Dixon, Associate Planner, shared the scope and timeline for the development of the needs assessment as part of the update to the Regional Housing Needs Assessment. The committee was asked for input on how the RHNA and related data resources can best support regional and local planning objectives through a focused update.

View the Regional Housing Needs Assessment – Update (PDF) presentation.

For additional information, please contact David Dixon, Associate Planner, at ddixon@psrc.org.

Discussion Item: Transit Access Tool Demonstration
Gil Cerise, Program Manager, provided a demonstration of a newly developed regional transit access tool and encouraged use of the tool by member organizations.

View the Regional Transit Access Tool (PDF) presentation.

For additional information, please contact Gil Cerise, Program Manager, at gcerise@psrc.org.

Adjourn
The meeting adjourned at 11:17 a.m.

Members and Alternates Present
See attached attendance roster.

PSRC Staff, Alternates and Guests Present
Mikayla Svob, PSRC
Robin Koskey, PSRC
Paul Inghram, PSRC
Anna Petersen, Pierce Transit
Nancy Ferber, PSRC
Gary Simonson, PSRC
Evelyn Shelton, PSRC
Jason Thibedeau, PSRC
David Dixon, PSRC
Heidi Shepard, PSRC
Caroline Eckel, City of Kent
Jeff Aken, Commerce
Josh Brown, PSRC
Brian Lee, PSRC
Ben Tomhave, Pierce Transit
Faith Hall, City of Everett
Emilie Pilchowski, KRCC Staff
Robin Koskey, PSRC
Gurman Kaur, Public Health

David Paine, City of Kent
Gil Cerise, PSRC
Casey Moreau, PSRC
Monica Adkins, PSRC

ATTACHMENTS:

A. RSC Member Attendance for the September 3, 2026 Meeting

PSRC Regional Staff Committee - Attendance Roster

PSRC Regional Staff Committee Member Attendance for September 3, 2026							
Jurisdiction		**Member**		**Jurisdiction**		**Member**	
King County	2	Erin Auzins, Executive Office		**Federal, Regional, State, Tribal & Other Agencies**			
		McCaela Daffern, DHCS	R	FHWA	1	Matthew Pahs, Program Manager	R
		Rebeccah Maskin, Local Services, Alt				Vacant Alt	
		Sam Tedford, DCHS		FTA	1	Danielle Casey	
At-Large	2	Dan Cardwell, DLS				Vacant Alt	
		Evelyn Chow, Executive Office		Health Departments	1	Cristina Ciupitu-Plath, Snohomish County	R
		Susan McLain, DLS Alt				Richard Gelb, King County Alt	
		Lara Thomas, DLS Alt		Ports	1	Geri Poor, Port of Seattle, Gov. Affairs	R
Transit	1	Peter Heffernan, King County Metro	R			Deirdre Wilson, NW Seaport Alliance Alt	R
		Hester Serebrin, King County Metro Alt		PSCAA	1	Jennifer Keene, Program Director	R
Economic Dev.	1	Vacant				Kathy Strange, Air Quality Programs Alt	
		Jesse Reynolds, DLS Alt		Puget Sound	1	Larry Epstein, Deputy Director	
Seattle	2	Michael Hubner, OPCD	R	Partnership		Vacant Alt	
		Jonathan Lewis, SDOT	R	Sound Transit	1	Alex Krieg, Planning & Innovation	R
		Naomi Lewis, OPCD Alt				Vacant Alt	
		Joanna Valencia, SDOT Alt		Tribal Representative	1	Vacant	
Bellevue	1	Thara Johnson, Planning Manager	R	Representatives		Vacant Alt	
		Lacey Jane Wolfe, Alt	R	US EPA	1	Susan Sturges	R
		Laura Benjamin-LaPitz, Alt				Erik Peterson Alt	
Cities/Towns	3	Minnie Dhaliwal, City of Issaquah		US HUD	1	Vacant	
		Eric Perry, City of Renton	R			Vacant Alt	
		Rhonda Ender, City of Carnation	R	WA Dept. of	1	Andrea Chartock	
		Peter Mayer, City of Tukwila, Alt	R	Commerce		Vacant Alt	
		Beckye Frey, City of Redmond, Alt		WSDOT	1	April Delchamps, WSDOT	R
		Cynthia McNabb, City of Duvall, Alt				Matthew Kenna, WSDOT Alt	
Kitsap County	1	Rafe Wysham, Kitsap County	R	**PSRC Committees**			
		Scott Diener, Alt		PSRC Co-Chair	1	Ben Bakkenta, Director of Regional Planning	R
		Cecilia Olsen, Alt		RPEC	1	Doug McCormick, RPEC Chair	
At-Large	1	Heather Wright, Planning Director				Shane Weber, RPEC Vice Chair	
		Vacant		**R** = Remote attendance			
Transit	1	Edward Coviello, Kitsap Transit	R				
		Vacant Alt					
Economic Dev.	1	Elizabeth Court, KEDA					
		Joe Morrison, KEDA					
Bremerton	1	Andrea Spencer, DCD Dir, **Co-Chair**	R				
		Garrett Jackson, Planning Manager, Alt	R				
Cities/Towns	1	Nick Bond, Port Orchard	R				
		Patty Charnas, Bainbridge Island Alt					
Pierce County	1	Cole Kopca, Long Range Planner	R				
		Monica Ghosh, Long Range Planner Alt					
At-Large	2	Tiffany Speir, Lakewood, Planning	R				
		Jason Sullivan, Bonney Lake, Director, **Co-Chair**	R				
		Ryan Windish, Sumner, Alt					
		Angelie Stahlnecker, Milton, Alt					
Transit	1	Andrew Arnes, Pierce Transit					
		Tina Lee, Pierce Transit, Alt					
Economic Dev	1	Kevin Clegg, Special Asst. to the Exec	R				
		Vacant Alt					
Tacoma	1	Brian Boudet, Interim Asst. Director	R				
		Steve Atkinson, Interim Asst. Manager Alt					
Cities/Towns	1	Kendall Wals, Puyallup					
		Chris Larson, Fife, Alt					
Snohomish County	1	Mike McCrary, PDS Director	R				
		Darren Groth, Division Manager	R				
At-Large	2	Kelly Snyder, Director, **Co-Chair**					
		Vacant					
		Jay Larson, Public Works Supervisor, Alt					
		Joshua Dugan, Exec Operations Officer, Alt					
Transit	1	Noah Tunick, Community Transit	R				
		Sabina Araya, Everett Transit Alt					
Economic Dev	1	Grace Yoo, Chief Econ Dev Officer					
		Samantha Paxton, Econ Dev Alt					
Everett	1	Yorik Stevens-Wajda, Planning Director	R				
		Alice Ann Wetzel, Planning Manager Alt	R				
Cities/Towns	1	Russ Wright, Lake Stevens, Director					
		Karl Almgren, Lynnwood, Alt	R				
Total Members	45	Attended	34				

Puget Sound Regional Council

October 1, 2026

DISCUSSION ITEM

To: Regional Staff Committee

From: Robin Koskey, Director, Government Relations & Communications, Alyssa Quinn, Senior Government Relations Specialist

Subject: **PSRC 2027 Recommendations to the State Legislature**

IN BRIEF

PSRC staff will brief the Regional Staff Committee on the process to adopt recommendations to the 2027 Washington State Legislature and ask the committee for feedback.

BOARD CALENDAR

The Economic Development District board provided feedback on PSRC's recommendations to the State Legislature at their September meeting. Staff will provide briefings and ask for feedback from the Equity Advisory Committee and Transportation, Growth Management and Executive Boards in October.

The Executive Committee will propose draft recommendations for adoption by the Executive Board in December.

DISCUSSION

PSRC is developing recommendations to the Washington State Legislature in advance of the 2027 legislative session. Each December the Executive Board adopts recommendations to the Legislature to support progress on adopted regional plans and policies.

PSRC staff propose following a similar framework to the recommendations adopted last year (2026 Recommendations to the State Legislature attached) based on adopted regional plans policies in the following focus areas:

- Transportation - Keep the Region Moving
- Housing - Increase Housing Choices and Affordability
- Climate - Significantly Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Economic Development – Sustain a Strong Economy

For more information, contact Robin Koskey, Director of Government Relations and Communications, at rkoskey@psrc.org or 206-798-4462 or Alyssa Quinn, Senior Government Relations Specialist, at aquinn@psrc.org or 206-587-4822.

ATTACHMENTS

A. 2026 Recommendations to the State Legislature

Recommendations to the
2026 State Legislature

Puget Sound Regional Council

The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) seeks to address regional growth through policies that advance affordable housing, connected transportation, sustainability and a strong economy.

We acknowledge the challenging economic conditions facing our state and region, compounded by federal-level uncertainty and declining state revenue. PSRC values the Legislature's continued partnership and commitment to working with local governments and elected officials to implement shared priorities.

Keep the Region Moving Safely

A reliable, efficient transportation system is critical infrastructure to build a thriving region where people are connected to homes and jobs. All transportation investments should be planned and implemented with emphasis on safety to reduce deaths and serious injuries on the region's roadways.

- Sustain transportation investments to fully fund maintenance and preservation, ensure projects of regional significance are built, and provide tools to address local funding needs, the largest revenue gap for the region.
- Develop an alternative to the state gas tax through an equitable road usage charge or highway use fee system.
- Continue capital and workforce investment in the Washington State Ferries system to ensure reliable service.

Increase Housing Choices and Affordability

Housing affordability continues to be a top concern of residents and local elected officials in communities in the region. We need to build 620,000 more homes by 2044 and 50% of these homes need to be affordable to people earning less than half of the Area Median Income.

- Invest in operating and capital subsidies to create affordable homes to meet local needs and create homeownership opportunities for Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) households.
- Adopt policies to increase housing supply in coordination with local governments to ensure practical and effective implementation.
- Establish the Housing Futures Center at the University of Washington to provide timely analysis and data-driven research for policymakers to address urgent housing needs in our state.

Significantly Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Enact legislation to respond to the urgent environmental, health, economic and equity threats of climate change through:

- Transit-focused land use.
- Multimodal transportation choices.
- Pricing the transportation system.
- Decarbonization of the transportation system, including freight, transit, ferries, passenger vehicles and fuels.

Sustain a Strong Economy

- Invest in workforce development programs to support workers and meet the needs of employers and a growing economy, including electrification of the transportation system.
- Commit resources to critical infrastructure to support economic development, including broadband.
- Support clean energy industry technology like Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF), offshore wind, fusion, hydrogen, and other emerging technologies.

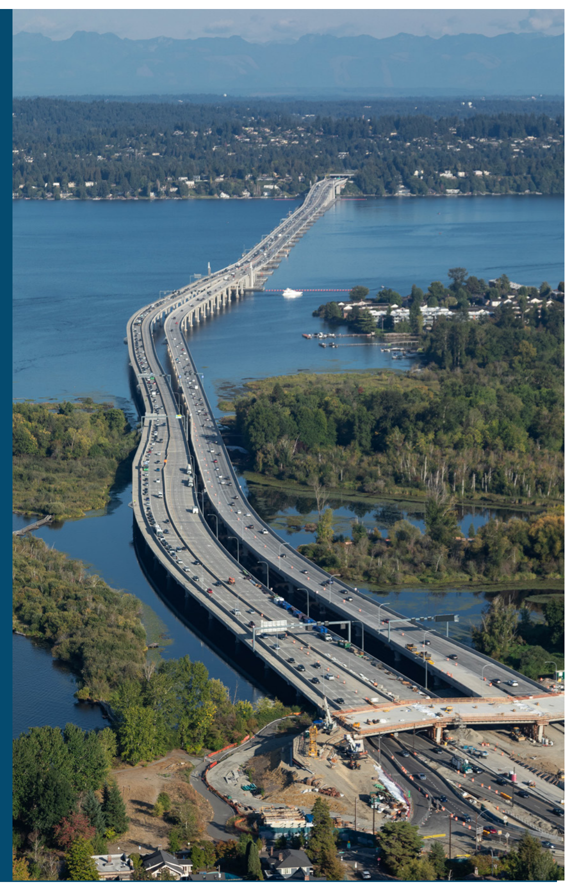
For more information, please contact:

Robin Koskey
Director of Government Relations & Communications
RKoskey@psrc.org | 206-798-4462

Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) develops policies and coordinates decisions about regional growth, transportation and economic development planning within King, Pierce, Snohomish and Kitsap counties. PSRC is composed of nearly 100 members, including the four counties, cities and towns, ports, state and local transportation agencies and Tribal governments within the region.

PSRC recommendations to the Washington State Legislature support implementation of regionally adopted policies and plans, including:

- VISION 2050
- Regional Transportation Plan
- Regional Housing Strategy
- Comprehensive Climate Action Plan
- Regional Economic Strategy



Puget Sound Regional Council

October 1, 2026

DISCUSSION ITEM

To: Regional Staff Committee

From: Paul Inghram, Director of Growth Management

Subject: **Input on Update Options for Regional Centers Framework: Manufacturing/Industrial Centers**

IN BRIEF

The Regional Centers Framework, adopted by the Executive Board in 2018, provides direction and criteria for regional growth and manufacturing/industrial centers. In July, the Growth Management Policy Board directed staff to proceed with an update of the Framework. In September, the Regional Staff Committee discussed topic ideas for growth centers and provided input. At the October meeting, staff will cover topic ideas for manufacturing/industrial centers and seek additional feedback.

BOARD CALENDAR

The Growth Management Policy Board will discuss manufacturing and industrial center update options in October. The board will be asked to make recommendations to the Executive Board on updates to the Regional Centers Framework later this year. Staff will continue to bring additional information and opportunities for input before discussion with GMPB.

DISCUSSION

The recent regional centers redesignation and monitoring process provided an opportunity to assess how well the current centers criteria and policies are working and where limited updates may be needed. GMPB endorsed moving forward with this focused review (Regional Centers Framework Update | Scope of Work) (PDF) . The attached policy topic memos provide more detail on the issues identified and potential options for addressing them.

Staff are seeking committee feedback on options for each topic to help identify which areas should be prioritized for further development. Committee input will help inform staff recommendations to the board and determine what policy options to advance as the Framework update moves forward.

The committee will be engaged on this project throughout the process. The preliminary schedule for upcoming Regional Staff Committee meetings includes:

- September 2026: Review and provide initial feedback on regional growth center policy topics (density, housing, boundaries, exception policy, livable communities)
- October 2026: Review and provide initial feedback on MIC topics (shifts in economic demand, core industrial uses, community impacts)
- November 2026: Review draft amendment text, other administrative updates, proposed subarea checklist updates based on EAC review
- December 2026: Continue review amendment text (*as needed*)

Topic 1: Impacts to Adjacent Communities
Summary: The attached memo reviews how the Regional Centers Framework currently addresses potential impacts of Manufacturing/Industrial Centers (MICs). The review finds that the Framework provides limited direction for addressing these impacts, and that implementation through MIC subarea plans is inconsistent. Potential impacts reviewed relate to transportation safety, air pollution, residential uses. Recent regional research, transportation safety data, and changes in state law provide additional context for considering whether updates to the Framework or subarea planning requirements are warranted.

Options include:
- Strengthening transportation and safety requirements by setting clearer expectations for mode-split goals and transportation impacts.
- Limiting new residential uses in/near MICs in alignment with SB 6026
- Strengthening planning and environmental expectations for addressing climate, environmental justice, and community impacts in subarea plan, and coordinate with ecology, public health districts, and the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency

Discussion questions:
- Do MICs need additional transportation/safety requirements?
- Are existing planning requirements enough to address climate, environmental, and community impacts, or should the Framework add more?
- Which of these issues should be addressed through changes to the Framework criteria, or through guidance for jurisdictions in subarea planning?

Topic 2: Changes in Economic Conditions/Demands

Summary: The attached memo reviews whether the Framework's existing job requirements continue to reflect current economic conditions and the long-term role of MICs as concentrated areas for industrial employment. MICs continue to support a significant share of the region's manufacturing and industrial jobs, but non-industrial employment has grown faster than industrial employment, while demand for uses such as warehousing and data centers is increasing. The options focus on whether the Framework should provide greater direction on the types and density of jobs planned for MICs, particularly where lower-job-density uses may compete with higher-density industrial employment.

Options include:

- Encouraging MICs to plan for higher job-density uses to prioritize employment that makes efficient use of limited industrial land.

Discussion question: How should MICs be encouraged to plan for higher job-density uses?

Topic 3: Industrial Use Zoning
Summary: The attached memo reviews whether the Framework's current definition and 75% core industrial zoning requirement continue to support the long-term preservation of industrial land and industrial/manufacturing related employment. The Framework defines core industrial uses as *zoning designations dominated by traditional industrial activities, including manufacturing, transportation, warehousing, and freight terminals, with commercial uses strictly limited*. All MICs currently meet the 75% threshold, and most continue to have strong industrial functions, although a few centers have experienced local pressure for non-industrial uses. The options focus on whether to increase the regional zoning threshold, provide jurisdictions with more tools to identify and manage incompatible uses, or maintain the current requirements while improving monitoring and technical assistance.

Options include:

- Increasing the minimum core industrial zoning requirement above 75% to provide greater protection for industrial lands.
- Limit incompatible or low-employment uses through subarea planning or updating development codes
- Tighten PSRC's industrial zoning definition: Narrow what qualifies as a core industrial use. This could include narrowing the definition of qualifying industrial uses or providing additional guidance on uses with relatively low.

Discussion questions

- Should the 75% core industrial zoning requirement be increased?
- Should the Framework provide a more specific definition of core industrial uses?
- What level of direction should the Framework provide for managing incompatible uses?

NEXT STEPS

The Growth Management Policy Board will be asked to discuss these topics at its October meeting. Additional topics related to administrative updates and improving equitable outcomes in subarea planning, based on input from the Equity Advisory Committee, will be discussed at upcoming committee meetings. The committee will continue to discuss the Regional Centers Framework throughout the fall.

For additional information, please contact Paul Inghram, Director Growth Management at Pinghram@psrc.org 206-464-7549, or Nancy Ferber, Senior Planner at Nferber@psrc.org 206-464-6179.

ATTACHMENTS

A. Considering Impacts on Adjacent Communities
B. Changes in Economic Conditions
C. Core Industrial Zoning Policy Options

Attachment A: Considering Impacts to Adjacent Communities

Background
Manufacturing and industrial activities have impacts on adjacent communities due to the nature of the uses, including air and noise pollution, and transportation safety impacts. Strategically locating and concentrating these uses in Manufacturing/Industrial Centers (MICs) is an important part of the regional growth strategy. MICs help preserve industrial land and provide dedicated locations for industrial activities, reducing potential conflicts with other land uses while supporting the regional economy.

While MICs are intended to accommodate industrial activities, impacts on adjacent communities are unintended consequences of their function. However, there are opportunities to consider mitigating these impacts. The Regional Centers Framework (PDF) includes limited requirements to address the impact of MICs on adjacent areas. This memo addresses opportunities to improve mitigating impacts though potential updates to the Framework and/or MIC subarea planning requirements and associated consistency tool (PDF).

What does the Regional Centers Framework currently require?
Currently, the Regional Centers Framework expects MICs to address residential encroachment, transitional barriers, and environmental justice impacts in their subarea plans. MICs outside of a transit service district are required to document commute impacts through transportation demand management strategies consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan.

How are jurisdictions currently meeting requirements?
To reduce impacts on adjacent communities, jurisdictions have adopted policies on developing buffers between industrial and residential uses. These buffers are typically within MICs and intend to protect space for core industrial uses and reducing residential encroachment.

Residential uses within MICs raise policy questions about how to balance the need to preserve industrial land with the potential impacts of industrial activities on residents. Multifamily uses are often allowed in commercial zones within MICs. Additionally, supportive housing, shelters, emergency housing, and group housing are commonly allowed in industrial zones as conditional uses. These uses can increase the potential for residents, particularly those in more vulnerable circumstances, to experience adverse impacts from nearby industrial activities.

During the monitoring review, it became apparent that transportation impact mitigation requirements were not consistently addressed in MIC subarea plans. In particular, many plans did not establish mode-split goals. Without these measures, communities within and adjacent to MICs may experience impacts associated with commuter traffic, including congestion, air pollution, and traffic safety concerns.

Notable Changes Since the 2018 Framework Was Adopted
In 2024, PSRC released its Industrial Lands Analysis update, which included a section on impacts to adjacent communities. The update details the health risks from industrial pollution through air pollution and stormwater runoff. It also identifies communities with a higher burden of air pollution and equity concerns regarding the high percentage of people of color that live within a mile of MICs.

In 2025, PSRC released the Regional Safety Action Plan to respond to the transportation safety crisis. 9 of the 10 MICs have rights-of-way on the high injury network.

In 2026, SB 6026 became session law. The bill requires local jurisdictions with a population of 30,000 or more to be able to prohibit residential uses in commercial or mixed-use zones. Commercial zones are present in the region's MICs, further allowing housing in the MICs. The bill does carve out exemptions for this prohibition, including industrial zone areas. However, due to the presence of commercial zones with MICs this bill presents uncertainty to industrial uses with more potential capacity for incompatible uses.

What Trends Do Research and Data Identify?
Transportation Safety
Data from WSDOT finds that nine out of ten MICs overlap with the high-injury network map. The high-injury network was developed by including the top 15th percentile of rights-of-way based on killed and severe injury crashes (KSI). KSI is strongly linked to vehicle size in a crash, and industrial vehicles typically have much more mass than standard vehicles.

Mode-split goals were identified in the Framework as a potential performance measure to track reducing transportation-related environmental impacts. To reduce transportation impacts, jurisdictions could better coordinate with environmental agencies and partners to develop and track performance measures, including mode-split goals where appropriate. Tracking mode share could provide data on progress toward reducing single-occupancy vehicle trips and increasing the use of transit, walking, biking, and other non-auto modes where feasible.

Residential Uses Within MICs
Residents within MICs are among those most directly exposed to potential impacts from industrial activities. Existing zoning in some MICs allows residential uses, and SB 6026 may create additional opportunities for residential development in commercially zoned areas in or adjacent to industrial lands. Without changes to current policies, the population living within MICs could increase as housing capacity increases.

Environmental Justice & Air Quality
In 2023, the Washington State Department of Ecology identified 16 overburdened communities across the state that are highly impacted by air pollution. There is

significant overlap between regional industrial lands and the overburdened communities identified by the Department. The Paine Field/Boeing Everett MIC, Duwamish MIC, North Tukwila MIC, Kent MIC, and the Port of Tacoma MIC are all located fully or partially within the identified areas. The Department of Ecology reports that residents in these communities experience higher rates of asthma and lower life expectancies compared to the rest of Washington.

People of color are disproportionately affected by pollution, raising concerns related to equity and environmental justice. Numerous studies at the national level have found that people of color are exposed to higher levels of air pollutants and heavy metals than their white peers. Many studies point to the lingering effects of racist urban policies and redlining that resulted in the siting of undesirable uses in communities of color. Statewide data indicates that people of color have worse health outcomes than white residents. People of color are also disproportionately located within a one-mile buffer of MICs in the region. While people of color made up 38% of the region's population in 2021, they represented 46% of those living within a one-mile buffer of MICs. This overrepresentation was especially notable in the North Tukwila and Kent MICs, where people of color represented 73% and 64% of the population, respectively.

What are the policy options to address this topic? Is an amendment to the Regional Centers Framework needed to address this topic?

On air pollution, the Climate Commitment Act directed the Department of Ecology to reduce pollution in overburdened communities that are highly impacted by air pollutants. PSRC could monitor the work and rulemaking that Ecology is undertaking. The rulemaking will determine processes and strategies for emission reductions to achieve air quality targets. In Ecology's 2025 report (PDF) on the impacts of air pollution on overburdened communities, mitigation strategies are noted. An amendment to the Regional Centers Framework to include public health measures on industrial pollution could be required for future updates of MICs.

Similarly, the Regional Safety Action Plan (PDF) could see implementation through the Regional Center Framework. The framework could ask jurisdictions to analyze transportation safety data, identify high-injury prone right-of-way, and develop projects to improve transportation safety. The Regional Safety Action Plan contains much of the information local jurisdictions need to do this work.

SB 6026 creates uncertainty for industrial areas with commercial zoning because it allows residential uses in commercial and mixed-use zones while exempting industrial-zoned areas. Additional guidance could address existing housing in MICs through subarea planning policies or more formal Framework criteria.

Summary of Potential Options to Address Impacts to Adjacent Communities:

Issue	Option	Challenges
MICs generate significant vehicle/freight trips, associated congestion and emissions without consistent expectations for mitigating impacts.	Strengthening transportation and safety requirements by setting clearer expectations for mode-split goals and transportation impacts.	Balancing consistent MIC criteria with unique, site-specific conditions
Adjacent residents exposed to impacts from industrial activities; disproportionate impacts for emergency/supportive housing residents	Limit new residential uses in/near MICs in alignment with SB 6026	
Potential community and environmental impacts	Strengthen planning and environmental expectations for addressing climate, environmental justice, and community impacts in subarea plans. Coordinate with ecology, public health districts, and the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency	Identifying which areas, if any, warrant additional criteria to support HB 1181, GHG, VMT, and environmental health impacts

Discussion Questions:

- Do MICs need additional transportation/safety requirements?
- Are existing planning requirements enough to address climate, environmental, and community impacts, or should the Framework add more?
- Which of these issues should be addressed through changes to the Framework criteria, or through guidance for jurisdictions in subarea planning?

Attachment B: Changes in Economic Conditions

Background

The Regional Centers Framework includes requirements for existing and planned jobs in manufacturing industrial centers (MICs). This memo will consider whether changes to the framework are warranted to better align with changes in economic conditions.

What does the Regional Centers Framework currently require?

The Regional Centers Framework includes requirements around the number and types of jobs located in manufacturing industrial centers. The requirements are summarized below:

Industrial Employment Centers	Industrial Growth Centers
A minimum of: • 10,000 existing jobs • 20,000 planned jobs • 50% industrial employment	A minimum of: • 4,000 existing jobs • 10,000 planned jobs • 50% industrial employment

PSRC's current definition of industrial employment includes a wide variety of industries across five employment categories (see Figure 1). All of these job types currently count towards the 50% industrial employment criteria, although it is worth noting they may not all be equally desirable for communities in terms of employment density and the provision of family wage jobs. PSRC's 2024 Industrial Lands Analysis found there are significant variations in pay between different industrial sectors.

Figure 1. Industrial Employment Job Categories

Category	Industry
Construction	Builders & Contractors
	Heavy & Civil Construction
Manufacturing	Electronics & Components
	Food & Bev Processing
	Machinery & Transportation Equipment
	Metals & Fabrication
	Other Manufacturing
	Printing & Publishing
	Refining, Chemicals & Plastics
	Textiles, Apparel & Leather
	Wood & Paper Products
TDL	Transportation, Distribution & Logistics (TDL)
	Warehousing & Storage

Warehousing & Wholesale	Wholesaling
Other Industrial	Building & Grounds Services
	Industrial Services
	Other Industrial
	Telecom, Broadcasting & Video Production
	Utilities
	Waste Management & Remediation

How are jurisdictions currently meeting requirements?
There are currently ten manufacturing industrial centers in the region: six Industrial Employment Centers and four Industrial Growth Centers. Overall, manufacturing industrial centers are meeting the employment criteria well. In the 2026 centers redesignation process, three variances from the criteria on jobs were noted.

- Two manufacturing industrial centers, North Tukwila and Puget Sound Industrial Center – Bremerton, fell short on the criteria for the number of existing jobs in the center. North Tukwila is just shy of the 10,000 jobs minimum. Bremerton is significantly below the 4,000 jobs minimum.
- One manufacturing industrial center, Ballard-Interbay-Northend, did not meet the criteria for at least 50% of jobs being classified as industrial.

These variances were noted during the redesignation process. The three centers were redesignated with an expectation that future work will address these how these centers meet the criteria.

What has changed that has prompted review of this topic?
Manufacturing industrial centers are envisioned as employment areas in the region with intensive, concentrated manufacturing and industrial land uses that cannot be easily mixed with other activities. These areas 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. MICs are host to unique and irreplaceable economic assets including ports, rail and freight corridors, and other critical infrastructure. At the same time, the demand for warehousing and distribution space, data centers, and emerging and innovative uses are competing for industrial space across the region. As the Framework calls for future job growth in manufacturing industrial centers, jurisdictions should work to ensure the jobs being created in MICs reflect the intention of the centers.

The regional economy has faced slower growth in recent years, with regional employment declining in 2025. Manufacturing employment also fell 1.9% from 2024-

2025.[1], and national projections show little manufacturing job growth through 2034.[2] At the same time, the region remains a nationally significant center for aerospace, maritime, biotech, and clean tech manufacturing, with stakeholders reporting a shortage of small and medium-sized manufacturing spaces. Demand for warehousing and, more recently, data centers are also increasing pressure on industrial land.

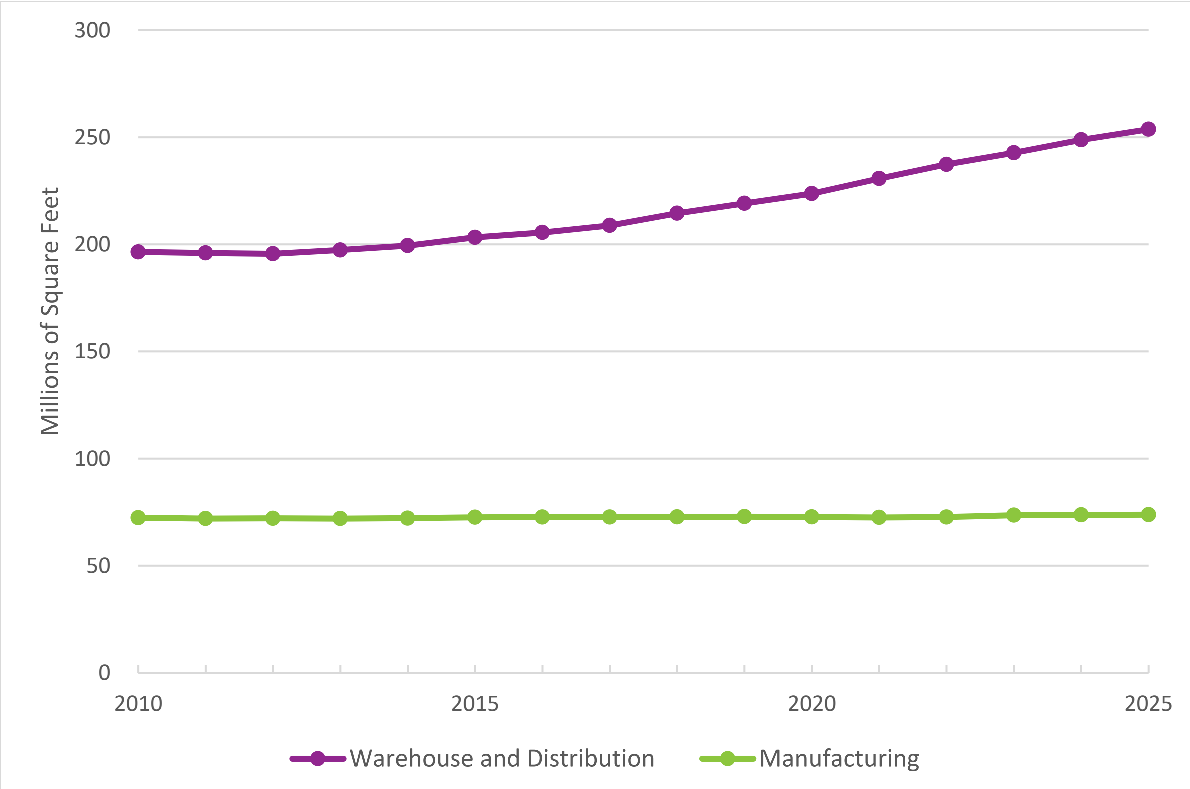
Warehousing

The construction of warehousing and distribution spaces has significantly increased in recent years while manufacturing space has stagnated. The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a significant increase in warehousing space. As seen in Figure 2, from 2010 to 2025, the square footage of warehouse and distribution space in the region increased 29% while manufacturing square footage increased only 2%. Although these numbers are regional and account for more than just MICs, increased demand for warehousing space may increase pressure on MICs to accommodate warehousing. Compared to manufacturing, warehousing activities may elevate traffic impacts while offering fewer jobs, lower job density, lower average wages and limited supply chain economic impacts. Warehousing and delivery employment is currently included in PSRC's industrial jobs classification.

[1] Washington State Employment Security Department

[2] U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2026). Industry and occupational employment projections overview and highlights, 2024-34. Accessed here: https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2026/article/industry-and-occupational-employment-projections-overview.htm

Figure 2. Regional Inventory of Warehousing and Manufacturing Space, 2010-2025



Source: Costar, Warehouse and Distribution Inventory SF in King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties, 2010-2025; Costar, Manufacturing Inventory SF in King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties, 2010-2025.

Data Centers

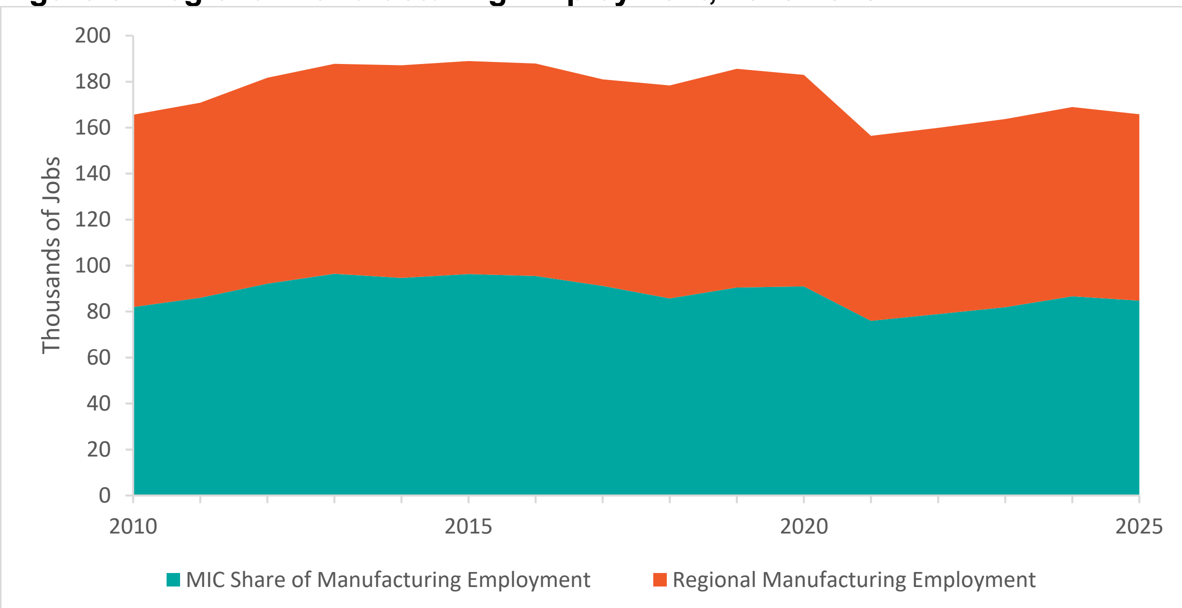
Although not a new land use, data centers have become a hotly contested issue as the advancement of artificial intelligence has increased the appetite for large data centers. Data centers are resource intensive, requiring high levels of power and water supply, while seemingly offering few community benefits. The connection between data centers and jobs is still not fully understood, with recent research by Brookings finding that only certain types of data centers produce local jobs.[3] Data centers have come into focus as an area of community concern with some jurisdictions, including the City of Seattle, City of Tacoma, and Snohomish County, passing moratoriums or limiting the establishment of data centers. Manufacturing industrial centers will likely come under pressure to accommodate data centers, which may or may not be to the benefit of the MIC. Data center employment is not currently included in PSRC's industrial jobs classification.

What does research or data indicate about current conditions or opportunities for improvement?

[3] Brookings. (2026). New evidence on data center employment effects. Accessed here: https://www.brookings.edu/articles/new-evidence-on-data-center-employment-effects/

MICs continue to be major industrial employment centers — 76% of all jobs in MICs are categorized as industrial. MICs represent 29% of the region's industrial jobs and 11% of the region's overall jobs. The 2025 Centers Monitoring report found that while the number of industrial jobs in MICs had increased since 2005 by 18%, the number of non-industrial jobs has risen at a faster rate (37%). In the long term, the mismatch between this growth rate could result in more MICs falling short of the 50% industrial jobs target.

Figure 3. Regional Manufacturing Employment, 2010-2025



Source: PSRC Covered Employment Data, 2010-2025

Over the last fifteen years, MICs have hosted roughly half the region's manufacturing jobs (see Figure 3). Over the same time period, manufacturing jobs located in MICs outperformed the rest of the region, growing by over 3% while manufacturing jobs located outside of MICs fell by 3% (see Figure 4). Similarly, manufacturing employment in MICs fared better than the rest of the region in terms of COVID-19 recovery. Regional manufacturing jobs located outside of MICs are still nearly 15% below 2019 levels, while MIC manufacturing employment has fallen by only 6%. Historically, the data shows that manufacturing jobs hosted in MICs have been more insulated from volatility than those located in other parts of the region.

Figure 4. Percent Change in Regional Manufacturing Employment, 2010-2025

	Manufacturing Jobs in MICs	Manufacturing Jobs Elsewhere
2010 – 2025 % Change	3.4%	-3.1%
2019 – 2025 % Change	-6.4%	-14.7%

What are the policy options to address this topic? Is an amendment to the Regional Centers Framework needed to address this topic?

If uses such as distribution and data centers consume more space in manufacturing industrial centers, they may see reduced growth and few industrial jobs.

Issue	Options	Challenges with this option
Shift in economic demands for uses without high number of associated jobs	Jurisdictions could plan for higher job-density uses	Would need to establish appropriate thresholds and account for different MIC conditions. New criteria could make it harder to accommodate lower job-density uses where they are appropriate.

Attachment C: Core Industrial Zoning Policy Options

Background

The Regional Centers Framework requires existing and new Manufacturing/Industrial Centers (MICs) to maintain at least 75% of their land area zoned for core industrial uses. The Framework defines core industrial uses as zoning designations dominated by traditional industrial activities, including manufacturing, transportation, warehousing, and freight terminals, with commercial uses strictly limited.

As industrial areas evolve and respond to changing economic demands, there is an opportunity to evaluate whether the current definition and zoning threshold for MICs continue to support the long-term intent of preserving industrial land and industrial-related employment. During the 2025–26 monitoring process, jurisdictional staff and board members expressed interest in exploring whether the current criteria provides sufficient flexibility for complementary uses to allow employee amenities while continuing to protect land for manufacturing and industrial activity.

Jurisdictions are balancing the need to preserve land for industrial use with opportunities to accommodate uses that support the manufacturing/industrial workforce and respond to market demands. Limited commercial retail and small restaurants provide services for employees while having minimal impact on the availability of industrial land.

However, larger commercial and destination-oriented developments, such as hotels, conference centers, and other non-industrial uses, compete with industrial activities and can limit opportunities for future industrial growth. Non-compatible, non-industrial uses consuming what is intended to be industrial land and gradually undermines the role of centers as concentrated areas for manufacturing and industrial employment.

What does the Regional Centers Framework currently require?

The Regional Centers Framework requires existing and new Manufacturing/Industrial Centers (MICs) to maintain at least 75% of their land area zoned for core industrial uses. The Framework defines core industrial uses as zoning designations dominated by traditional industrial activities, including manufacturing, transportation, warehousing, and freight terminals, with commercial uses strictly limited.

How are jurisdictions currently meeting requirements?

During the 2025-26 monitoring process, all MICs met the requirement of at least 75% of land zoned for core industrial uses, suggesting the criteria threshold has been effective at maintaining the region's industrial land base. Nine of the ten MICs also meet the requirement that at least 50% of jobs be in industrial sectors, with Ballard-Interbay as the only center currently below the threshold at 39%. And, while North Tukwila and Bremerton meet the 50% industrial employment threshold, they don’t have enough total jobs to meet their respective MIC job thresholds. North Tukwila has 9,650 jobs, just below the 10,000-job threshold for an Industrial Employment Center, while Bremerton has 1,250 jobs, below the 4,000-job threshold for an Industrial Growth Center.

What has changed that has prompted review of this topic?
Based on the Industrial Lands Analysis, MICs continue to maintain strong industrial functions. Frederickson, Kent, Duwamish, Paine Field/Boeing Everett, North Tukwila, and PSIC Bremerton have the highest shares of industrial acreage. Most MICs contain less than 5% non-industrial acreage.

A few MICs include a larger share of non-industrial uses. Ballard-Interbay, Duwamish, and North Tukwila show the largest shifts in industrial/non-industrial classifications. In conversation with jurisdictions, demand for uses on industrial land is also changing. Uses such as warehousing, data centers, and battery storage facilities is changing the types of manufacturing development usually encouraged in MICs. These uses can have different employment and transportation characteristics than traditional manufacturing, raising questions about whether the Framework should provide more direction on the types of industrial uses MICs are intended to support.

What does research or data indicate about current conditions or opportunities for improvement?
Protecting core industrial zoning helps maintain long-term industrial capacity and prevent displacement of industrial uses. Data shows that changes in land-use composition have been localized rather than widespread. Ballard-Interbay, Duwamish, and North Tukwila experienced the largest declines in core industrial land. Maintaining contiguous industrial areas helps support manufacturing clusters and freight-oriented businesses, while limiting non-industrial encroachment can help preserve industrial capacity over time.

Maintaining industrial land capacity remains important, even where employment levels vary among MICs. The experience of centers such as Bremerton highlights the importance of considering multiple indicators when assessing whether an MIC is maintaining its industrial role, including industrial land retention, employment, business activity, and investment. Zoning is one tool for maintaining industrial land uses.

Issues	Options	Challenges
Industrial land facing pressure for non-industrial uses, may reduce the amount of land available for future industrial activities.	Change the minimum percentage of core industrial zoning. Increase the minimum above 75% to maintain land capacity for manufacturing/industrial uses	A higher threshold could limit flexibility for employee-serving amenities and complementary uses and may have limited impact on encroaching uses.
Encroachment by incompatible uses and/or low employment uses consume industrial land.	Limit incompatible or low-employment uses through subarea planning or updating development codes	New zoning use standards may require plan amendments and public engagement.

Issues	Options	Challenges
Industrial zoning can be overly permissive and allows incompatible uses.	Tighten PSRC's industrial zoning definition: Narrow what qualifies as a core industrial use. This could include narrowing the definition of qualifying industrial uses or providing additional guidance on uses with relatively low.	Requires determining what makes sense across all MICs while accounting for existing nonconforming uses and potential impacts recently adopted/updates plans and zoning.

Discussion Questions:

- Should the 75% core industrial zoning requirement be increased?
- Should the Framework provide a more specific definition of core industrial uses?
- What level of direction should the Framework provide for managing incompatible uses?

Puget Sound Regional Council

October 1, 2026

DISCUSSION ITEM

To: Regional Staff Committee

From: Erika Harris, Principal Planner, Growth Management

Subject: **Regional Open Space Plan Update**

IN BRIEF

PSRC staff will provide an update on the development of the Regional Open Space plan. A draft will be shared with the committee when it is ready in late October or early November. Comments on the draft plan are appreciated.

BOARD CALENDAR

The Growth Management Policy Board will get an update on the plan at the October 15, 2026, meeting.

DISCUSSION

PSRC initiated the update of the Regional Open Space Conservation Plan (PDF) at the start of the year, in advance of the upcoming update to VISION 2050. At its March meeting, the committee discussed the process to update the plan and provided feedback on the scope of work. Since March, project staff have met with the advisory committee for the plan, the Growth Management Policy Board, the Executive Board and others and received additional feedback.

Staff have made progress on updating the regional open space network, conservation needs, park gaps, the regional trail network, tree canopy cover, and other data. At its October meeting, staff will share this progress with the committee. Staff is also working to update the strategies, tools and performance measures in the plan. Some examples of key strategies in the plan include: support growth in the right places, keep working lands working and increase access to nearby open space for urban residents.

A draft of the plan is expected to be ready for review in late October or early November, with the goal of having the plan finalized in the first quarter of 2027.

NEXT STEPS

Committee members are encouraged to share the draft plan with staff who work on open space issues and send comments to Erika Harris.

For comments and additional information, please contact Erika Harris, Principal Planner, at eharris@psrc.org or 206-464-6360.

Puget Sound Regional Council

October 1, 2026

DISCUSSION ITEM

To: Regional Staff Committee

From: Jason Thibedeau, Economic Development Program Manager

Subject: **Regional Economic Strategy Release for Public Comment**

IN BRIEF

At the October meeting, staff from PSRC will provide an update to the Regional Staff Committee on the process to finalize the Regional Economic Strategy, which includes a 30-day public comment period.

BOARD CALENDAR

The Economic Development District Board is scheduled to meet on December 2 to address public comments and adopt the Regional Economic Strategy.

DISCUSSION

PSRC is home to the region's Economic Development District (EDD) which is authorized by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA). The EDD is responsible for updating the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), which is a specific type of strategy that meets EDA requirements. After adoption by the EDD Board, the CEDS is then approved by the EDA, which enables local jurisdictions and eligible organizations to qualify for funding under EDA programs.

A CEDS is designed to build capacity and guide the economic prosperity and resilience of a region, building off other regional planning efforts. The CEDS is required to be updated every five years and includes a summary background of the region's economic conditions, a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis and a set of strategies to address the identified challenges and opportunities.
The current CEDS, referred to locally as the Regional Economic Strategy, covers the period from 2022-2026. The EDD Board is required to adopt an updated 5-year CEDS by the end of 2026 for the 2027-2031 period.

Throughout 2025 and 2026, the EDD Board led the development of the draft RES. PSRC staff engaged with stakeholders, gathered data, and reviewed existing economic development strategies. Staff discussed the strategy update and its major themes with the EDD Board, PSRC's Executive Board, the Growth Management Policy Board, the Regional Staff Committee and other stakeholders. These discussions focused on validating the challenges and opportunities identified in the Regional Economic Strategy, the strategic direction, and identifying implementation areas. At its June 2026 meeting, the EDD Board gave staff authority to prepare and release a draft strategy for public comment.

Implementation of the RES is accomplished by a broad ecosystem of partners including state agencies, local jurisdictions, ports, workforce development organizations, chambers of commerce, industry sector organizations, and other economic development partners. Throughout the five-year period, new implementation initiatives will be identified by PSRC and others. The EDD Board and staff will work to engage with these partners and efforts, show alignment to the adopted RES, track progress, and support and amplify these initiatives as needed.
Since early 2026, PSRC has been coordinating the RES update with an effort by Challenge Seattle to develop a regional economic development plan. Challenge Seattle, led by former Washington State Governor Christine Gregoire, is an alliance of organizations who represent some of the region's largest employers.

In September, Challenge Seattle released *Keeping Puget Sound Strong: A Regional Plan for Jobs and Opportunity*. The Challenge Seattle plan includes a set of practical recommendations to strengthen the region's ability to retain employers, attract investment and create jobs. Alongside this plan, Challenge Seattle launched the Partnership for a Competitive Puget Sound, a new regional effort to strengthen job creation, innovation, and economic opportunity across the region. Implementation of the Challenge Seattle plan through the newly formed Partnership targets some of the goals and strategies identified in the RES.

NEXT STEPS

The public comment period for the Regional Economic Strategy will begin on October 2 and run through October 31. At its December 2 meeting, the EDD Board will review public comments and take action to adopt the RES.

For more information, contact Jason Thibedeau, Economic Development Program Manager, at jthibedeau@psrc.org or 206-389-2879.

Puget Sound Regional Council

TOD on a Roll:

Making the Most of New Transit Connections

The region has been on a roll opening new transit stations, fulfilling a decades-long promise to connect communities with high-capacity transit. Join community leaders to hear highlights of recent TOD opportunities and discuss what's next. A webinar will highlight recent work to support transit-oriented development. In-person walking tours will feature work in Shoreline and Redmond to improve transit access, provide more housing, and connect neighborhoods.

Friday, October 16, 2026

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Zoom – Virtual Event
Register for the webinar

1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Shoreline TOD Walking Tour
Register for the tour

Friday, October 23, 2026

1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Marymoor and Downtown Redmond Walking Tour
Register for the tour

Free to attend. Space limited for walking tours.

Learn more about the event at psrc.org.