

PSRC PLAN REVIEW REPORT & CERTIFICATION RECOMMENDATION

CITY OF BURIEN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

March 31, 2016



BACKGROUND

The Washington State Growth Management Act calls for coordination between local, regional, and state planning efforts. To advance this coordination, state law requires PSRC to certify that regional transit plans, countywide planning policies, and local comprehensive plans within the central Puget Sound region conform to: (1) established regional guidelines and principles, (2) the adopted long-range regional transportation plan, and (3) transportation planning requirements in the Growth Management Act. Within the central Puget Sound region, the multicounty planning policies in VISION 2040 have been established as the regional guidelines and principles under Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 47.80.026. Certification of local comprehensive plans is also a requirement for jurisdictions and agencies that intend to apply for PSRC funding or proceed with any project submitted into the Regional Transportation Improvement Program, regardless of funding source.

Within the central Puget Sound region, local governments and PSRC have worked together to develop an overall process ([Adopted Policy and Plan Review Process](#), Revised September 2003) for reviewing and certifying local, countywide, regional, and transit agency policies and plans.¹ This process also provides an opportunity to coordinate and share information related to local and regional planning. A set of materials, compiled in a [Plan Review Manual](#), provides details on the review and certification process, background, and framework. The manual also provides guidance and checklists for aligning plans and policies with [VISION 2040](#), [Transportation 2040](#), and [Growth Management Act](#) requirements.

DISCUSSION

This report summarizes the findings and recommendations regarding the periodic update to the comprehensive plan for the City of Burien, adopted by the city on December 21, 2015. PSRC last certified the City of Burien's comprehensive plan amendments in 2012. PSRC staff reviewed the 2015 comprehensive plan amendments and coordinated with city staff in the development of this report.

CERTIFICATION RECOMMENDATION

Based on the review of the City of Burien comprehensive plan, the following action is recommended to the PSRC Growth Management Policy Board, Transportation Policy Board, and Executive Board:

The Puget Sound Regional Council certifies that the transportation-related provisions in the City of Burien 2015 comprehensive plan update conform to the Growth Management Act and are consistent with multicounty planning policies and the regional transportation plan.

The remainder of this report contains a summary of the PSRC review of the City of Burien comprehensive plan update. Under each heading, the scope of the certification review, as guided by the [Plan Review Manual](#) and Local Comprehensive Plan Checklist, is listed in high-level bullets. Discussion in each topic area highlights

¹ The certification requirement in the Growth Management Act is described in RCW 47.80. The specific requirements for transportation elements in local comprehensive plans are spelled out in RCW 36.70A.070. PSRC's Interlocal Agreement, Section VII, also provides direction for the review of local comprehensive plans and countywide policies (Resolution A-91-01, amended March 1998). The Council's Executive Board last updated its process for Policy and Plan Review in September 2003. The process is also described in VISION 2040, Part IV: Implementation.

exemplary provisions of the plan, as well as issues identified through the certification review where future work on the part of the city is needed to more fully address VISION 2040, Transportation 2040, and Growth Management Act planning requirements. PSRC recognizes that the timing and mechanism for addressing each of the comments will vary based on the jurisdiction, its resources and plan update process, and the nature of the comment.

Part I: Conformity with Growth Management Act Transportation Planning Requirements

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.070(6)) includes several requirements related to transportation elements in local comprehensive plans. These requirements are summarized as follows:

Land use assumptions and forecasts of travel demand that are internally consistent and consistent with growth targets.

Service and facility needs, including inventories of existing facilities, and level-of-service standards and concurrency provisions that address multiple modes of travel, planned land uses and densities, and state highways.

Financing and investments, including a multiyear financing plan and reassessment strategy to address potential funding shortfalls.

Intergovernmental coordination with neighboring cities, counties, and regional and state agencies.

Demand management, including programs to implement the Commute Trip Reduction Act.

Pedestrian and bicycle planning, including project funding and capital investments, education, and safety.

Land uses adjacent to airports, identifying relevant facilities, existing and planned uses, and policies that discourage incompatible uses.

Air quality is largely an interjurisdictional issue in which each jurisdiction's travel behaviors, measured through vehicle emissions, affect the regional airshed. The Washington Administrative Code (WAC) requires local transportation elements and plans to include "policies and provisions that promote the reduction of criteria pollutants" for mobile sources (WAC 173-420-080). When PSRC reviews plans, it also certifies that the comprehensive plans include air quality policies and provisions, including a commitment to meeting the requirements of applicable federal and state air quality legislation.

DISCUSSION: EXEMPLARY PLAN PROVISIONS

The City of Burien's comprehensive plan effectively addresses many of the transportation planning requirements of the Growth Management Act and includes adequate air quality policies and provisions. Highlights include:

- ☑ Provisions to support bicycle and pedestrian mobility, including an inventory of existing facilities, goals and policies that support a safe and convenient environment for walking and bicycling, and bicycle modal networks and planned investments. The plan also calls for requiring new development and redevelopment to incorporate pedestrian supportive measures, such as providing secure and attractive pedestrian spaces, providing adequate sidewalks, bikeways, pathways and crosswalks, and clustering buildings close together near streets, sidewalks and transit stops (Policy TR 4.1.5).
- ☑ Multiple policies emphasizing interjurisdictional cooperation on transportation facilities and services, such as coordinating with King County Metro, Sound Transit and other transit service providers to promote and enhance transit use in Burien, coordinating with the Washington State Department of Transportation on HOV system improvements on SR 509, SR 518, and I-5, and working with state, regional and local jurisdictions to develop land use strategies that will support public transportation (Objective TR 3.1 – 3.6, Policies SC 1.10 - SC 1.11).

- ☑ Policies address land use compatibility with Sea-Tac International Airport, particularly in the Northeast Redevelopment Area (for example, Pol. BU 1.9, Pol. IN 1.3).

DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

The city should address the following comments at the earliest opportunity through future amendments to the comprehensive plan, subarea plans, or functional plans:

- ☐ The Transportation Master Plan developed in 2012 documents existing conditions and analysis of the transportation system and addresses Growth Management Act transportation requirements in concert with the transportation plan element. The transportation element refers to the Transportation Master Plan for specific purposes, but this document should be fully incorporated by reference to include the supporting technical analysis as part of the comprehensive plan.

Part II: Consistency with Regional Plans and Policies

OVERVIEW

This section discusses consistency with the adopted multicounty planning policies (established regional guidelines and principles under RCW 47.80.026) adopted in VISION 2040, and Transportation 2040, the region’s long-range transportation plan. In addition to the multicounty planning policies, VISION 2040 contains a regional growth strategy with a preferred distribution of the region’s residential and employment growth, as well as a number of implementation actions for local governments to carry out. Each policy area addressed in VISION 2040 is discussed in turn below.

VISION 2040 Context Statement

VISION 2040 calls for local plans to include a context statement that describes how the comprehensive plan addresses regional policies and provisions adopted in VISION 2040. The introduction includes a regional planning statement describing how the plan supports VISION 2040, including the multicounty planning policies (MPPs) and the Regional Growth Strategy.

Environment

SCOPE OF REVIEW

VISION 2040 calls for local comprehensive plans to address the following environmental policy topics:

Stewardship, including addressing the natural environment throughout the plan, decisions based on best-available science, and regional environmental initiatives.

Earth and habitat, including open space protection, restoration and protection of native vegetation, and coordination with adjacent jurisdictions.

Water quality, including actions that maintain hydrologic functions and reduce water pollution in ecosystems, watersheds, shorelines, and estuaries.

Air quality and climate change, addressing federal and state laws, reduction of pollutants, Puget Sound Clean Air Agency policies, and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation to climate change.

DISCUSSION: EXEMPLARY PLAN PROVISIONS

The Burien comprehensive plan addresses the environmental policy topics in VISION 2040 with strong goals and actionable policies. Highlights include:

- ☑ The plan includes a stand-alone stormwater element with policies that emphasize protection of environmental quality, wildlife habitat, and natural system aesthetics (Goal ST.1).

- ☑ The plan includes policies to work with property owners to encourage non-purchase options to preserve open space and greenbelts within the city’s neighborhoods, such as conservation easements, current use easements, and development covenants. The plan also calls for accepting donations of properties where public access is anticipated or planned (Pol. EQ 1.3).
- ☑ The plan includes policies to take action to both mitigate and adapt to climate change and continue to partner with agencies and organizations to collectively monitor and take action to reduce impacts of climate change. Actions may include increasing use of renewable energy, supporting green infrastructure, promoting alternatives to single occupant vehicle travel and supporting recycling and waste reduction (Pol. SU 6.1, SU 6.2).

DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

The certification review did not identify any major areas for improvement of the plan to better align with regional guidelines and principles on the environment.

Development Patterns – Including the Regional Growth Strategy

SCOPE OF REVIEW

VISION 2040 calls for local comprehensive plans to address the following development patterns policy topics:

- Urban areas**, including targets for housing and employment growth, compact communities that support transit and walking, and provisions for redevelopment of underused land.
- Centers**, including planning for one or more central places as locations for compact, mixed-use development, with policies that prioritize funding to centers to advance development.
- Unincorporated urban areas**, including policies that advance annexation and orderly transition of governance.
- Resource lands**, including identification of steps to limit development.
- Regional design**, addressing local provisions that apply the Transportation 2040 Physical Design Guidelines, energy efficient building, historic preservation, and enhanced sense of community.
- Health and active living**, addressing healthy environment, physical activity and well-being, and safety.

DISCUSSION: EXEMPLARY PLAN PROVISIONS

The city’s comprehensive plan effectively addresses many of the development patterns policies in VISION 2040. Highlights include:

- ☑ Designated as a Core City, the plan accommodates an additional 5,150 housing units and 8,780 new jobs by 2035. The plan includes policies that support growth within Burien’s regional growth center by encouraging a mix of residential, office and commercial uses to create a vibrant city center and providing a range of housing opportunities (Pol. LU 1.4).
- ☑ The plan supports efficient use of urban land by encouraging redevelopment and development of underutilized and vacant land compatible with the envisioned character, scale and design of surrounding development (Pol. LU 1.6).
- ☑ The plan supports the Transportation 2040 physical design guidelines through various policies that address parking and pedestrian-oriented design. Policies focus on encouraging “gateways” and landscaping at points around the community which distinctively identify the entrances to downtown, developing a town square as the central public focal point for the downtown core, and encouraging pedestrian amenities in the downtown area (Pol. DB 1.3, Pol. DB 1.4, Pol. DB 1.16, Pol. DB 1.20).
- ☑ Emphasis on health and wellness in the city’s planning. For example, the plan includes a goal to ensure that transportation plans and policies support active living, healthful food access and safe use of the transportation system, including access to schools (Goal 9). The transportation element includes an

objective to develop a health and safety index to place emphasis on active living and healthful food access components when considering transportation project funding priorities (Objective TR 9.1).

DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

The city should address the following comments at the earliest opportunity through future amendments to the comprehensive plan, subarea plans, or functional plans:

- The existing conditions report that accompanies the plan has not been updated in this plan cycle. Given change over time and the sizeable Highline annexation, existing conditions in the city have changed since this document was completed in 2003. To inform goals and policies in the plan, the city should update the existing conditions report to document existing demographics, land uses, capacity and other current conditions in the city.
- PSRC will be reviewing center subarea plans for certification, and the city should ensure that it has addressed requirements of [PSRC's Center Plan Checklist](#) for the Burien regional growth center. More information on center planning can be found in PSRC's [Plan Review Manual](#), page 3-1.
- MPP-DP-3 calls for jurisdictions to establish housing and employment targets for designated regional growth centers. The Transportation Master Plan has included growth assumptions for 2030 in the downtown regional growth center. These housing and employment targets for the center should be included in the comprehensive plan (extended to 2035) to clearly reflect where the city is anticipating future growth.
- VISION 2040 contains policies to prioritize infrastructure funding within the regional growth centers. Policies to prioritize funding in the downtown center for transportation and capital facilities investments should be considered to further support development of the regional growth center (MPP-DP-7, MPP-T-12).

Housing

SCOPE OF REVIEW

VISION 2040 calls for local comprehensive plans to address the following housing policy topics:

Increased housing production opportunities, including diverse types and styles for all income levels and demographic groups.

Affordable housing needs, including an assessment of existing and future housing needs based on regional and local factors, including household income, demographics, special needs populations, and adequacy of existing housing stocks.

Regional housing objectives in VISION 2040, including promotion of housing diversity and affordability, jobs-housing balance, housing in centers, and flexible standards and innovative techniques.

DISCUSSION: EXEMPLARY PLAN PROVISIONS

The city's comprehensive plan effectively addresses the housing provisions contained in VISION 2040.

Highlights include:

- Multiple strategies to address affordable housing, including preservation of existing housing, allowing prefabricated housing within single family neighborhoods, facilitating multifamily development in downtown and areas close to services and facilities, allowing accessory dwelling units, providing incentives such as density bonuses, and encouraging mixed use within commercial nodes (Policies HS 1.8-1.10). Policy HS 1.20 also calls for creating a Demonstration Housing Program to test innovative residential designs that would encourage affordable housing production, such as cottage housing or other clustered small-lot planning concepts.

- ☑ The plan includes multiple policies supporting fair housing and development and preservation of housing for residents with special needs. For example, the plan includes a policy to support and plan for assisted housing opportunities using available federal, state, and county resources in coordination with other local and regional agencies (Policy HS 3.4).

DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

The city should address the following comments at the earliest opportunity through future amendments to the comprehensive plan, subarea plans, or functional plans:

- ☐ The housing needs assessment that accompanies the plan was last updated in 2003. Per RCW 36.70A.070 (2), the housing element should be supported by an updated inventory and needs assessment to document the existing housing needs and inform housing element policies. The city should update the housing needs assessment to reflect current and projected housing needs. PSRC's [Housing Element Guide](#) is a resource for developing analysis, policies, and implementation tools that address housing choice and affordability in local plans.

Economy

SCOPE OF REVIEW

VISION 2040 calls for local comprehensive plans to address the following economic development policy topics:

Include an **economic development element** that addresses: business, people, and places.

Retention and recruitment efforts that support family wage jobs, industry clusters that export goods and services, and small businesses that are locally owned.

Equitable benefits and impacts, including provisions and programs that promote economic vitality in distressed areas or areas with disadvantaged populations.

Adequate housing growth in centers through collaboration with the private sector and provision of infrastructure.

DISCUSSION: EXEMPLARY PLAN PROVISIONS

The city's comprehensive plan effectively addresses many of the economic provisions of VISION 2040.

Highlights include:

- ☑ The plan includes an economic development element that recognizes multiple aspects of community prosperity, such as the arts, education, natural environment, employment diversity and job creation.
- ☑ Pol. ED 3.5 calls for encouraging and supporting locally owned, right-sized businesses.
- ☑ Policies support jobs-housing balance by promoting housing opportunities in centers, such as Pol. HS 1.3, which encourages multifamily residential uses near and within designated commercial nodes and within the urban center.

DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

The city should address the following comments at the earliest opportunity through future amendments to the comprehensive plan, subarea plans, or functional plans:

- ☐ RCW 36.70A.070(7) calls for a summary of local economic conditions when developing an economic development element. The plan includes partial and dated information on existing economic sectors and existing employment. The plan should include an updated baseline assessment of existing economic conditions to support the economic development element.

Transportation

SCOPE OF REVIEW

VISION 2040 and Transportation 2040 call for local comprehensive plans to address the following transportation policy topics:

Maintenance, management, and safety, including clean transportation with reductions in pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, environmental factors, health and safety, stable and predictable funding sources, system and demand management strategies, and security and emergency response.

Support for the regional growth strategy, including system improvements that align with planned growth, prioritized investments that support compact development in centers, joint- and mixed-use development, complete streets and improvements to promote biking and walking, and context-sensitive design.

Improved transportation options and mobility, including alternatives to driving alone, facilities and services for special needs transportation, avoidance of new or expanded facilities in rural areas, and financing methods.

Linking land use and transportation, including integrating Transportation 2040 physical design guidelines in planning for centers and transit station areas, and land development tools that promote transportation alternatives.

DISCUSSION: EXEMPLARY PLAN PROVISIONS

The Burien comprehensive plan addresses the major transportation emphases in VISION 2040 and Transportation 2040, including maintenance, management, and safety; support for the Regional Growth Strategy; and providing greater options and mobility. Highlights include:

- ☑ Multiple goals and policies support transit use on transit priority roadways, including providing transit stop amenities, maintaining adequate vehicle level of service, providing sidewalks and marked crosswalks at all major transit stops, and encouraging transit agencies to provide all-day service with minimum 15-minute peak/30-minute midday bus frequencies (Objective TR 1.2, Goal 3, Policies TR 3.1.1-3.1.5). Pol. TR 3.1.5 calls for working to improve transit system efficiency by incorporating transit-supportive design features into capital projects and road standards, such as signal prioritization and stop-in-lane roadway designs.
- ☑ The plan addresses environmental considerations in transportation planning, including encouraging energy conservation through promoting roadway connectivity, use of alternative transportation modes, development that minimizes reliance on single-occupant vehicles, and exploring street improvement standards that incorporate surface water management strategies such as minimizing impervious surfaces and using landscaping to reduce runoff (Objective TR 8.1, Pol. TR 8.2.1).
- ☑ The plan supports a multimodal transportation system. Pol. TR 1.5.4, for example, requires developers to mitigate development impacts through improvements or strategies, such as nonmotorized transportation modes, transit, ridesharing or transportation demand management. The plan includes detailed level-of-service (LOS) standards for all modes, and Pol. TR 1.3.1 states that the city shall maintain and monitor transportation LOS for all modes of travel. The plan also includes tailored LOS standards in downtown Burien.

DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

The city should address the following comments at the earliest opportunity through future amendments to the comprehensive plan, subarea plans, or functional plans (please also see comments addressing Growth Management Act transportation planning requirements on page 3 of this report):

- ☐ VISION 2040 and Transportation 2040 address special needs transportation planning (see MPP-T-25). The plan should include discussion and policy language that more explicitly addresses mobility for people

with special transportation needs, including persons with disabilities, the elderly, youth, and low-income populations.

- VISION 2040 (DP-Action-18) calls for mode split goals for regional growth centers, and the comprehensive plan includes a goal to reduce drive-alone trips for downtown Burien by 10 percent. This should be clarified to provide a baseline of existing mode split for downtown to help measure progress. PSRC recently produced [additional guidance](#) about setting mode split goals that the city may find helpful.

Public Services

SCOPE OF REVIEW

VISION 2040 calls for local comprehensive plans to address the following public services policy topics:

Promote more efficient use of existing services, such as waste management, energy, and water supply, through conservation – including demand management programs and strategies.

Promote renewable energy and alternative energy sources.

Plan for long-term water needs, including conservation, reclamation and reuse.

DISCUSSION: EXEMPLARY PLAN PROVISIONS

The Burien comprehensive plan update contains policies that address the public services provisions of VISION 2040. Highlights include:

- ☑ Policies to protect water quality and supply, promote water conservation, and encourage water reuse and reclamation for irrigation and other non-potable water needs. For example, Pol. UT 3.5 calls for the city to support cooperative regional efforts in pursuing options for additional water sources for future needs and supporting efforts to encourage the efficient use of water from existing sources.
- ☑ Policies to promote conservation, demand management, and efficient use of public services. For example, the plan includes policies to consider using non-financial options to meet its public facility development needs and working to become more efficient in daily activities and usage of resources (Pol. CF 1.5, Pol. SU 3.2).
- ☑ Goals to achieve an overall waste diversion rate goal of 65% by the year 2024, striving for 95% recycling participation rate in the single family sector, 75% recycling participation rate in the multifamily sector, and 60% recycling participation rate in the commercial sector. (Pol. UT 4.2 and 4.3).

DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

The certification review did not identify any major areas for improvement of the plan to better align with regional guidelines and principles on public services.

Conclusion

PSRC staff thanks the city for working through the plan review and certification process. PSRC is available to provide assistance for future plan updates. Additional planning resources can also be found at <http://www.psrc.org/growth/planreview/resources/>. If the city has questions or needs additional information, please contact Liz Underwood-Bultmann at 206-464-6174 or LUnderwood-Bultmann@psrc.org.