

PSRC PLAN REVIEW REPORT & CERTIFICATION RECOMMENDATION

CITY OF LAKEWOOD COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2016 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

August 31, 2017



BACKGROUND

A major emphasis of the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) is the need to coordinate local, regional, and state planning efforts. To advance this coordination, the GMA requires the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) to formally 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 have been established as the regional guidelines and principles under Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 47.80.026. Certification of local plans and policies 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 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 City of Lakewood Comprehensive Plan, as updated in 2015 and further amended on November 21, 2016. PSRC last certified the City of Lakewood comprehensive plan in 2015. PSRC staff reviewed the comprehensive plan and coordinated with city staff in the development of this report.

CERTIFICATION RECOMMENDATION

Based on the review of the City of Lakewood 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 2016 City of Lakewood Comprehensive Plan conform to the Growth Management Act and are consistent with multicounty planning policies and the regional transportation plan.

This report contains a summary of the PSRC review of the City of Lakewood 2016 Comprehensive Plan. The scope of the certification review, as guided by the Plan Review Manual and Checklist, is listed in high-level

¹ The certification requirement in the Growth Management Act is described Chapter 47.80, Revised Code of Washington (RCW). The specific requirements for transportation elements in local comprehensive plans are spelled out in Chapter 36.70A.070, RCW. The Puget Sound Regional Council'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.

bullets. Discussion in each topic area highlights exemplary elements of the plan, as well as issues identified through the certification review where future work on the part of the city is recommended.

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 Lakewood's comprehensive plan effectively addresses many of the transportation planning requirements of the Growth Management Act. Highlights include:

- ☑ Provisions to support bicycle and pedestrian mobility, including an inventory of facilities, detailed discussion of the Americans with Disabilities Act transition plan, goals and policies that support a safe and convenient nonmotorized network, priority pedestrian and bicycle modal networks and planned investments. The plan includes policies to adopt a "Complete Streets" ordinance and coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions to design for coherent bike and pedestrian corridors (T-14.6, T-14.7).
- ☑ The plan includes multiple policies to support transportation demand management (TDM) and reduce dependence on single-occupant vehicle travel during peak commute hours. For example, the plan includes policies that require TDM improvements serving pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders as impact mitigation for new development. They also encourage employers not affected by the Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) law (with less than 100 employees) to offer CTR programs to their employees on a voluntary basis (Policies T-10.1, T-11.3).
- ☑ The plan includes updated language in Chapters 3.6 and 3.7 describing the military installation and economic profiles of Joint-Base Lewis McChord which provides context for the goals and policies in the chapters.
- ☑ Goal LU-34 and supporting policies call for military-compatible land uses, airport safety and compatibility, and collaboration with Joint Base Lewis-McChord.

DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

The certification review did not identify any major areas for further work needed to better align the plan with regional guidelines and principles on the transportation planning requirements of the Growth Management Act.

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. VISION 2040 calls for local comprehensive plans to contain a brief statement of how the plan addresses the multicounty planning policies. Each policy area addressed in VISION 2040 is discussed in turn below.

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 ELEMENTS

The City of Lakewood comprehensive plan addresses the environmental policy topics in VISION 2040. Highlights include:

- ☑ The plan supports protection of open space and water access needs of future generations through acquisition, development and environmental stewardship (Goal LU-41). This is supported through policies to develop partnership and acquisition strategies to address open space, promote public awareness, develop a connected system of nonmotorized trails throughout the city, and ensure equitable access to parks across the city (LU-41.2, LU-41-5, LU-42.1, LU-42.2, LU-42.3, LU-42.4, LU-45.4).
- ☑ The plan supports protections for environmental critical areas, conservation, and enhancement of habitat areas for fish and wildlife (Goal LU-55 and LU-56). The plan includes policies to integrate environmental considerations into all planning efforts, such as identifying and protecting wildlife habitats (with an emphasis on protecting wildlife corridors and linking remaining habitat pockets), preserving native vegetation in riparian habitats, and integrating suitable native vegetation in residential and commercial landscapes (LU-56.1, LU-56.2, LU-56.3, LU-56.5).
- ☑ The plan includes multiple provisions to protect water quality, including “no net loss” of wetland function, to be implemented through working cooperatively with local water districts to maximize protection of wellheads and aquifers, educating residents and employers on Lakewood’s dependency on groundwater, maintaining groundwater monitoring programs, and implementing a well decommissioning program for all unused wells (LU-59.3, LU-61.9).

- ☑ The plan includes a new element, Chapter 10: Sustainability, which provides a comprehensive approach to promoting sustainability and livability in the city.
- ☑ Goal S-3 and supporting policies promote energy conservation to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.
- ☑ Goal S-6 and supporting policies call for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating the impacts of climate change where reasonably feasible.

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 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 ELEMENTS

The City of Lakewood comprehensive plan addresses the development patterns policy topics in VISION 2040. Highlights include:

- ☑ The plan supports the Transportation 2040 physical design guidelines through various policies that address pedestrian-oriented design and vibrant public spaces. For example, LU-16.1 calls for ensuring that commercial development and redevelopment contributes to Lakewood as a community and to the vitality of individual commercial areas within the city.
- ☑ Policies support the role of the Regional Growth Center. For example, LU-17.2 calls for promoting the central business district as the primary location for businesses serving a citywide market. Various policies also support transit-oriented development in the Lakewood Station area, promoting redevelopment of the central business district as a mixed-use urban center, revising land use and development regulations to require mixed-use development within the center for any new development (with the exception of standalone commercial pads and service commercial uses), and providing incentives for redevelopment of the Lakewood Station area to capitalize on growth and visibility associated with the commuter rail station (Goal LU-19, LU-19.9, LU-20.1, LU-25.4). The plan also calls for directing public investment toward the designated Regional Growth Center and areas targeted for high-density residential growth (CF-7.3).
- ☑ Various policies address land use compatibility and coordination with neighboring Joint Base Lewis-McChord. For example, Goal LU-35 calls for facilitating the host community relationship with the military installations through city-wide planning for the provision of housing, services, and civilian employees. This would support operations on the military installations and provide a high quality of life for military personnel and their families in Lakewood.

- Goal LU-47 and supporting policies promote food security, food systems, and local food production for all residents.

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:

- To address an employment capacity shortfall identified in the 2015 plan review process, the city analyzed the 2014 Pierce County Buildable Lands report's underlying assumptions. The city also evaluated the report's alternative capacity analysis methodologies to determine whether it accurately reflected the city's ability to provide sufficient capacity for its employment target. The City of Lakewood should update the employment growth target capacity assumptions and analysis in the comprehensive plan, consistent with the report dated February 22, 2017, at the time of the next major update.
- The land use map element includes information on potential annexation areas. VISION 2040 calls for all unincorporated lands within the urban growth area to transition into cities and assumes this transition to be largely complete by 2040. The city is encouraged to continue working with Pierce County and other relevant parties to plan for the future of potential annexation areas and, as appropriate, incorporate policies and provisions to support efforts such as coordinating development standards, transferring permitting authority, and addressing service and infrastructure financing.

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:

- The plan includes multiple policies that address affordable housing production and preservation. Strategies include supporting non-profit agencies and the Pierce County Housing Authority in providing additional housing, evaluating surplus city land for suitability for development of affordable housing before the property is sold, using federal funds (including Community Development Block Grants and HOME funds), to support low- and moderate-income affordable housing, and working with other Pierce County cities to address regional housing issues.
- The plan advances housing variety and choice by supporting projects that incorporate innovative lot and housing types, clustered detached and semi-attached houses, and a variety of lots and housing types within a site. It also encourages the construction of cottages on small lots through incentives such as density bonuses (LU-2.38, LU-2.40).
- The plan emphasizes providing housing for people with special needs, such as seniors, people with disabilities and the homeless (Goal LU-3). Policies call for supporting the housing programs of social service organizations. They encourage universal design in residential construction or retrofitting of homes to allow aging in place. They support the establishment and operation of emergency shelters

and the location of special needs housing in areas accessible to public transportation (LU-3.2, LU-3.3, LU-3.4, LU-3.10, LU-3.12).

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 housing.

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:

- ☑ An economic development element supported by a detailed analysis of economic trends, conditions, opportunities, and challenges. The plan provides an overview of economic development priorities for subareas within the city and comparisons to nearby jurisdictions.
- ☑ Multiple policies recognizing the mission and viability of Joint Base Lewis McChord, including supporting the South Sound Military Communities partnership and supporting workforce development programs for military personnel transitioning out of military service (Policies ED-7.1-7.7).
- ☑ Provisions supporting economic development activities that provide or retain living-wage jobs for people with low and moderate incomes. These include developing a low-interest loan program, tax credits and other incentives for businesses to create or retain jobs for low- and moderate-income workers and developing a technical assistance program to create or retain jobs for these individuals. They also support giving businesses access to low-interest loans for on-site infrastructure improvements, rehabilitation, acquisition, and other commercial improvements that create or retain jobs for these workers (PS-21.1).

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 economic development.

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 ELEMENTS

The City of Lakewood 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:

- ☑ Policy 13.1.5 directs the city to design transportation facilities to fit within the context of the built or natural environments in which they are located (T-1.2).
- ☑ The plan emphasizes special needs transportation by ensuring mobility choices for people with special transportation needs, including persons with disabilities, the elderly, the young, and low-income populations. The plan also emphasizes minimizing the negative impacts of transportation improvement projects on low-income, minority, and special needs populations (T-9.2, T-9.3).
- ☑ Mode split goals for the Lakewood Regional Growth Center to reduce the work-related drive-alone mode share from 83 percent (year 2010) to 70 percent by 2030 through coordinated improvements to HOV, transit, and nonmotorized facilities (T-12.4).
- ☑ Goal TU-10 and supporting policies promote the design and development of complete streets and safe access for all modes of transportation.

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 transportation.

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

- ☑ Policies to promote conservation, demand management, and efficient use of public services. For example, Policy U-2.2 encourages conservation in coordination with other utility providers and jurisdictions. CF-1.6 calls for reducing the rate of energy consumption through conservation and alternative energy forms to extend the life of existing facilities and infrastructure.
- ☑ Various policies to ensure that new growth is served by sewers and to develop a citywide system to eliminate current service deficits (Goal U-8, Policies U-8.1-8.14).
- ☑ The plan calls for promoting energy conservation by complying with conservation standards in public buildings, working with utility companies to promote and educate the public about energy conservation strategies, converting existing traffic signals to LED fixtures, and promoting the use of renewable energy to meet the region's energy needs (Goal U-16, U-16.1-16.3, CF-1.6, and CF-1.6).
- ☑ Provisions address long-term water availability, such as requiring water conservation features such as low-flow toilets, showerheads, and faucets in the design of all new construction, promoting drought-tolerant landscaping through development standards, encouraging industrial and commercial users to incorporate appropriate water conservation measures into their operations, and promoting increased use of reclaimed water (Policies U-18.1-18.4, CF-1.5).

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 <https://www.psrc.org/plan-review-manual>. If the city has questions or needs additional information, please contact Laura Benjamin at LBenjamin@psrc.org or (206) 464-7134.