

# PSRC PLAN REVIEW REPORT & CERTIFICATION RECOMMENDATION

## THE CITY OF SHORELINE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

June 24, 2015



### 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 ([Adopted Policy and Plan Review Process](#), Revised September 2003) for reviewing and certifying local, countywide, regional, and transit agency policies and plans.<sup>1</sup> 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 major update to the comprehensive plan for the City of Shoreline, adopted by the city on December 10, 2012. PSRC last certified the Shoreline comprehensive plan in 2006. Since 2006, the plan has also been updated with annual amendments. PSRC staff reviewed the comprehensive plan, including amendments through 2012, and coordinated with city staff in the development of this report.

### CERTIFICATION RECOMMENDATION

Based on the review of the City of Shoreline 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 Shoreline comprehensive plan, including amendments through 2012, conform to the Growth Management Act and are consistent with multicounty planning policies and the regional transportation plan.**

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

The remainder of this report contains a summary of the PSRC review of the City of Shoreline 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 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 ELEMENTS

The City of Shoreline's comprehensive plan satisfies the transportation planning requirements of the GMA and includes adequate air quality policies and provisions. The plan includes many provisions that go above and beyond minimum requirements, including:

- ☑ In policy T14 and others, a commitment to regional coordination on transportation planning, operations, and finance with identified strategies that include local actions to improve the performance of state highways, strategic public and private alliances, and engagement in federal, state, regional, countywide processes.
- ☑ Concurrency provisions that encourage multiple modes of travel, such as setting level-of-service (LOS) standards for transit in policy T45. Further, the city allows "trip reduction credits" to allow mitigation of transportation impacts through multimodal improvements and transportation demand management strategies.
- ☑ The city's transportation master plan (TMP), which was adopted by the city in 2011, satisfies a range of requirements in the GMA for transportation planning. These include inventories of existing facilities and services, documentation of forecast assumptions for land use, transportation demand management, 20-

year project lists, a financing plan, and reassessment strategy. Together, the TMP and comprehensive plan demonstrate a consistent and comprehensive approach to coordinating land use and transportation in the city. The comprehensive plan carries forward the commitment to the priorities and investments in the TMP, most notably the investments identified in the bicycle and pedestrian system plan components.

#### **DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK**

The City of Shoreline should address the following provisions of the Growth Management Act and VISION 2040 through annual amendments or in the next update of the comprehensive plan:

- The plan establishes a strong foundation for future planning to encourage multiple modes of travel, including through the city’s concurrency and impact fee provisions. Future updates to the comprehensive or subarea plans should consider further incorporating pedestrian, bicycle, and transit enhancements to the city’s concurrency program.

## **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 Shoreline comprehensive plan addresses the environmental policy topics in VISION 2040 with strong goals and actionable policies in all topic areas. Highlights include:

- The natural environment element addresses both air quality and climate change, with policies that protect clean air, advance transportation demand management strategies, reduce air-borne particulates, and mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. The plan further cites the city’s commitment as a signatory to the U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection agreement and the King County-Cities Climate Collaboration.
- Policies that advance sustainable land use practices, including participation in regional transfer of development rights programs (LU58) and the creation of “ecodistricts” to establish local sustainability goals and partnerships for energy efficiency and renewable energy technology (LU55).

- ☑ Policies in the land use and natural environment elements address water quality in a comprehensive and integrated fashion, and include policies that call for collaborative efforts to improve regional surface water management, to design stormwater retention and detention facilities to provide supplemental benefits (habitat, treatment, recreation), to allow and encourage residential clustering to reduce surface water runoff, and to educate citizens about waste disposal and eliminating pollutants entering the system.

#### **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 Shoreline comprehensive plan addresses the development patterns policies in VISION 2040. Highlights include:

- ☑ Accommodation of housing and jobs within locally defined centers and corridors. The plan recognizes the potential for growth around the SR 99 corridor and also addresses a station area planning framework for transit-supportive development near future light rail stations. The plan contains an exceptionally comprehensive set of policies guiding future station area planning (LU20 to LU43), including policies that address transit-oriented development (TOD) potential within a ½ mile of transit stations and along connecting transit corridors, transitional land uses and long-term phased development of station areas, flexible parking requirements, and environmental sustainability.
- ☑ The plan explicitly addresses redevelopment and infill, including policies that encourage assembly and redevelopment of key underdeveloped parcels through incentives and partnerships (LU13), and housing policies that encourage infill development on vacant or underutilized sites.
- ☑ Health and active living are advanced throughout the plan, including policies that establish land use patterns that promote walking, biking and transit with accessibility to services and employment and access to healthy foods by encouraging healthy food purveyors near residential uses and transit and within farmers markets.

## DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

The City of Shoreline should address the following provisions of adopted regional plans and policies, where possible, through annual amendments or in the next update of the comprehensive plan:

- Shoreline’s commendable policy focus promoting compact mixed-use development within high capacity transit station areas and corridors would be enhanced by explicitly recognizing and building on the Growing Transit Communities Strategy and the city’s status as a regional GTC compact signatory.
- VISION 2040 supports regional and local centers with policies that call for prioritization of regional and subregional infrastructure investments that serve these areas. Implementation of a centers-based land use pattern in Shoreline would be strengthened with explicit prioritization of local capital improvements—pedestrian and bicycle improvements, parks and open space, and other public facilities—to transit station areas and corridors.

## 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 ELEMENTS

The Shoreline comprehensive plan addresses the housing provisions contained in VISION 2040. The plan incorporates a number of best housing practices that address identified housing needs. Highlights include:

- ☑ Strong overarching goals to provide for a range of housing choices and affordability levels to meet community needs. Planned land uses and zoning accommodate adopted housing growth targets and the plan (see policies H1 to H6) call for the city to consider revisions to the development code to allow and create a wider variety of housing types.
- ☑ Policies to encourage affordable housing throughout the city, especially near transit, employment, and educational opportunities. The plan advances innovative tools and incentives, such as density bonuses, a housing trust fund, financing options, and multifamily tax exemptions. The city has committed to explore the use of surplus public property for housing affordable to low and moderate income households as well as the adoption of an affordability requirement for transit-oriented development.
- ☑ The housing element directs the city to work with and support social and health service organizations that offer housing programs, including housing for the homeless, and housing with appropriate services for those with special needs, and opportunities for elderly and those with disabilities that enable them remain in the community.

### 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 and housing affordability.

## Economic Development

### 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 ELEMENTS

The Shoreline comprehensive plan update contains an economic development element that addresses many of the economic provisions of VISION 2040. Highlights include:

- ☑ The plan leverages the confluence of economic development and place-making (see policies ED26 to ED32), such as encouraging compact mixed-use redevelopment in targeted locations around transit, including the Aurora Corridor.
- ☑ The plan advances quality of life goals to attract businesses and ensure that economic development complements other community goals (see especially policies ED5, ED6, ED20, and others), along with business retention strategies and assistance to small businesses.
- ☑ Policy ED10 directs the city to coordinate economic development initiatives with educational institutions in the areas of workforce training with a focus on attracting living-wage jobs to allow people to live and shop in the community.

### 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 Shoreline 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:

- ☑ Goals and policies in the comprehensive plan substantively promote multimodal travel choices and encourage alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle trips. Policies provide direction on implementation of multimodal improvements (see T41 and others), provide clear infrastructure investment priorities (see T2, T46, and others), and address ROW improvements to enhance the efficiency and attractiveness of transit service.
- ☑ The plan places a clear priority on enhancing safety over expanding vehicle capacity, and includes a policy commitment to develop a regular maintenance program and schedule based on safety and preservation (T12).
- ☑ Policy support in T10 for using low impact design techniques or other components of complete or green streets, including partnerships with adjacent property owners on innovative stormwater treatment options.
- ☑ The plan promotes connectivity through collaborative efforts across agencies. The city establishes as a goal to work with transportation providers to connect all areas of the city to existing and planned high capacity transit services. In addition to coordination with transit providers, policies in the plan call for neighborhood planning, safety enhancements, and new facilities that add multimodal capacity to support transit stations. Policies that support implementation of the pedestrian and bicycle system plans provide for greater connectivity between neighborhoods and station areas.

## DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

The City of Shoreline should address the following regional policies, where possible, through annual amendments or in the next update of the comprehensive plan:

- ☐ VISION 2040 and Transportation 2040 address special needs transportation planning. As the plan is updated, the city should include discussion and policy language addressing special needs transportation (see MPP-T-25).

## 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 ELEMENTS

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

- ☑ The plan sets as a goal (see goals CF V and U I along with implementing policies) to provide continuous, reliable, and cost-effective capital facilities and public services in the city and its Urban Growth Area in a phased, efficient manner, reflecting the sequence of development as described in other plan elements.
- ☑ The utilities element promotes water reuse and water conservation opportunities in order to reduce impacts on water, wastewater, and surface water systems, and promote conservation or environmental health.

**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.