

Local Comprehensive Plans Certification Report Town of Woodway Comprehensive Plan

March 27, 2025



The Puget Sound Regional Council conducted a certification review of the Town of Woodway comprehensive plan. Woodway adopted their 2024 comprehensive plan update on December 2, 2024. PSRC staff provided comments on the draft plan in May 2024 to inform the final plan adopted by the town.

This document is organized into two primary parts: a statement of certification and any applicable conditions to certification; and a discussion of conformity with the Growth Management Act and consistency with VISION 2050 by topic area.

Certification Action

The Puget Sound Regional Council certifies that the transportation-related provisions in the Town of Woodway 2024 comprehensive plan conform to the Growth Management Act and are substantially consistent with multicounty planning policies and the Regional Transportation Plan.

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 center, and long-range transit plans.¹ Transportation-related provisions that are key for certification are based on RCW 47.80.026 and the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A). This report may recommend additional work to fully address the requirements of the Growth Management Act, VISION 2050, or the Regional Transportation Plan, although such revisions may not be strictly required for certification. Jurisdictions are encouraged to address those items during upcoming comprehensive plan updates and other planning efforts.

Conformity with Growth Management Act Transportation Planning Requirements and Consistency with Regional Plans and Policies

OVERVIEW

This section discusses conformity with the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.070(6)) and the transportation-related requirements for local comprehensive plans. It also discusses consistency with the adopted multicounty planning policies (established regional guidelines and principles under RCW 47.80.026) adopted in VISION 2050 and the Regional

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 2050: Implementation](#).



Transportation Plan. In addition to the multicounty planning policies, VISION 2050 contains a regional growth strategy with a preferred distribution of the region's residential and employment growth, as well as several implementation actions for local governments to carry out. Each policy area addressed in VISION 2050 is discussed in turn below. More information about the requirement to review and certify local plans is provided in the [Adopted Policy and Plan Review Process](#).

Plans are reviewed using PSRC's [VISION 2050 Consistency Tool](#). This report documents where the plan meets requirements, highlights outstanding provisions of the plan, and identifies where additional work is needed to fully address VISION 2050, the Regional Transportation Plan, or Growth Management Act planning requirements. This section is organized by the sections in VISION 2050. While this may align with plan elements, many of these concepts may be addressed in various parts of local comprehensive plans.

Regional Collaboration

Scope of Review

The Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.070(6)) and VISION 2050 call for local comprehensive plans to:

- **Coordinate** with other jurisdictions, agencies, tribes, ports, military installations, and special purpose districts.
- Prioritize **access to opportunity** for people of color, people with low incomes, and historically underserved communities.
- Address opportunities and challenges related to **military installations** when applicable.
- Prioritize investments in **centers**.
- Explore **funding sources** and fiscal tools to meet infrastructure and other needs.

Certification Findings

The Woodway comprehensive plan effectively addresses regional collaboration policies in VISION 2050. The plan describes how the town's goals and policies implement the Growth Management Act and VISION 2050. It includes policies and discussion on coordination with other jurisdictions, agencies, and Tribes.



Regional Growth Strategy

Scope of Review

VISION 2050 calls for local comprehensive plans to:

- Incorporate **housing and employment targets**.
- Use **land use assumptions** substantially consistent with countywide growth targets.
- Demonstrate sufficient zoned **development capacity** to accommodate targets.
- Use consistent **land use assumptions** throughout plan.
- Maintain a **stable urban growth area** with densities that support the Regional Growth Strategy.
- Support growth in designated **centers and high-capacity transit station areas**.
- Manage and reduce **rural growth** and protect natural resource lands.

Certification Findings

The Woodway comprehensive plan effectively addresses the Regional Growth Strategy policies in VISION 2050. The plan demonstrates that the city has sufficient capacity to accommodate the adopted growth targets of 237 additional housing units and 44 additional jobs through 2044. It envisions Point Wells, which was annexed by Woodway in May 2024, as a mixed use, pedestrian-oriented community on the waterfront. The Point Wells subarea plan is included in the land use element of Woodway’s comprehensive plan.

Environment

Scope of Review

VISION 2050 calls for local comprehensive plans to:

- Ensure **air quality standards** are met and reduce emissions of air toxics and greenhouse gases.
- Protect **critical areas and habitat** through coordination and environmental stewardship.
- Plan for **park, trail, and open space** resources and needs.
- Protect and enhance **tree canopy and native vegetation**.
- Protect and restore **water quality**, including actions to restore shorelines and estuaries, remove fish-passage barriers, reduce toxic products, and manage stormwater.
- Ensure **access to healthy environments** for all residents, prioritizing the reduction of impacts for vulnerable residents.

Certification Findings

The Woodway comprehensive plan effectively addresses the environmental policies in VISION 2050. The plan includes many policies to protect wildlife habitat, critical areas, and



water quality. It calls for integrating information from local watershed planning processes, salmon recovery plans, climate change plans, ecosystem recovery plans, and relevant Tribal plans to identify important habitats and species of local and Tribal importance.

Climate Change

Scope of Review

VISION 2050 calls for local comprehensive plans to:

- Reduce **greenhouse gas emissions** in support of state, regional, and local reductions goals.
- Protect and restore natural resources that **sequester and store carbon**.
- Address impacts to **vulnerable populations** that have been or will be impacted by climate change.
- Retrofit **existing buildings** to reduce building energy use.
- Increase **resilience** by identifying and addressing the impacts of climate change and natural hazards.
- Address **rising sea levels** by siting and planning for relocation out of the floodplain.

Certification Findings

The Woodway comprehensive plan effectively addresses the climate change policies in VISION 2050. The plan supports actions that substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions in support of state and regional goals and planning policies. It includes a policy to protect and restore natural resources that sequester and store carbon such as forests, wetlands, estuaries, and tree canopy.

The town should address the following comment in future updates to the plan:

- The town has made important progress on addressing climate change in the comprehensive plan. The Department of Commerce plans to release final guidance on climate planning consistent with House Bill 1181 in 2025, which will apply to the implementation progress report for jurisdictions in the Puget Sound region. The town should be aware of this upcoming deadline and monitor whether the plan's current state reflects the new requirements.



Land Use/Development Patterns

Scope of Review

VISION 2050 calls for local comprehensive plans to:

- Build **thriving urban communities** through inclusive engagement.
- Support **centers** as connections to opportunity.
- Address **healthy environment**, physical activity and well-being, and safety, while reducing disparities.
- Support **annexation and incorporation** by planning for phased growth of communities.
- Preserve **rural areas and natural resource lands**.
- Evaluate potential **residential and commercial displacement** and mitigate impacts.
- Limit **incompatible uses** adjacent to military lands, industrial centers, and tribal reservation lands.

Certification Findings

The Woodway comprehensive plan effectively addresses the land use and development patterns policies in VISION 2050. The plan promotes community health through supportive policies in the land use, transportation, conservation, utilities, and parks elements. It supports the restoration and clean-up of Point Wells so that it can be developed into an urban village with a mix of uses.

Housing

Scope of Review

The Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.070) and VISION 2050 call for local comprehensive plans to:

- Provide an **inventory and analysis** of existing housing and housing needs at each income level.
- Document **sufficient land capacity** to accommodate housing for all income levels and emergency shelters.
- Identify **actions** to provide housing for all income levels.
- Identify and address **racially disparate impacts, displacement, or exclusion** in housing.
- Expand housing capacity for **moderate-density housing**.
- Promote **jobs-housing balance**.
- Support the **development and preservation of affordable housing** by considering inclusionary and incentive zoning and promoting affordable housing near high-capacity transit.
- Promote **homeownership** opportunities.



Certification Findings

The Woodway comprehensive plan addresses the housing policy topics in VISION 2050. Plan policies include strategies to support the development of affordable housing and a range of middle housing types and densities. It analyzes housing needs and demonstrates capacity to meet its overall housing target, including capacity for multifamily housing in Point Wells. The plan calls for the town to consider innovative regulatory tools and strategies to increase housing types and supply, and to address racially disparate impacts to housing affordability. The plan also directs the town to continue to provide financial support for the Alliance for Housing Affordability, a countywide effort to create affordable housing.

The town should address the following comments in future updates to the plan:

- The Growth Management Act requires comprehensive plans to demonstrate capacity for allocated housing needs at all income levels. Information on the Point Wells subarea indicates the town can accommodate housing needs at various income levels; however, future updates should provide clear quantitative documentation to address Commerce guidance. As the town works on implementing the Point Wells Urban Village zone district, it should ensure that capacity to meet housing need allocations for extremely low-, very low-, low-, and moderate-income brackets are provided. In addition, RCW 36.70A.070(2)(c) states jurisdictions must ensure sufficient capacity for emergency housing and emergency shelter. Commerce provides [examples](#) of this type of capacity analysis and [guidance](#) on how to complete the work (see p. 43). PSRC encourages the town to continue to monitor housing production and affordability, implement housing strategies, and amend the plan periodically to adjust to changing conditions.
- The Growth Management Act requires plans to identify and begin to undo local policies and regulations that result in racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing, including zoning, that may have a discriminatory effect and areas of disinvestment and infrastructure availability. The plan points to the development of Point Wells as the pathway to address and overcome racially disparate impacts. The plan should provide additional data and policy evaluation to assess racially disparate impacts, exclusion, and displacement. Commerce has provided [guidance](#) on how to address these requirements.



Economy

Scope of Review

VISION 2050 calls for local comprehensive plans to:

- Identify and enhance **industry clusters**, including those that provide goods and services for export.
- Support retention and recruitment of **family wage jobs** and small businesses that are **locally, women-, and minority-owned**.
- Develop a **range of employment opportunities** to create a closer balance between jobs and housing.
- Address and prevent potential **physical, economic, and cultural displacement** of existing businesses.
- Expand **access to opportunity** and remove barriers for disconnected communities.
- Recognize and empower the contributions of the region's **culturally and ethnically diverse communities**.

Certification Findings

The Woodway comprehensive plan addresses economy policies in VISION 2050. Policies in the Point Wells subarea plan describe the Point Wells urban village having a mix of uses such as retail, office, and multifamily residential.

The town should address the following comment in future updates to the plan:

- Prior to the annexation of Point Wells, Woodway was an exclusively residential community without any commercial land. With the annexation of Point Wells and plans for a mix of commercial uses, the town should work to more fully address the economy policies in VISION 2050.



Transportation

Scope of Review

The Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.070(6)) requires local comprehensive plans to:

- Use **internally consistent land use assumptions** and forecasts of travel demand and that are consistent with growth targets.
- Provide **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.
- Include a **multiyear financing plan** and reassessment strategy to address potential funding shortfalls.
- Direct **demand management**, including programs to implement the Commute Trip Reduction Act.
- Plan for **pedestrians and bicycles**, including capital investments, education, and safety.
- Discourage **incompatible uses adjacent to airports**.
- Address **air quality** and the reduction of pollutants consistent with WAC 173-420-080.

VISION 2050 also calls for local comprehensive plans to:

- Plan for **system maintenance, safety and emergency management**.
- Support the **Regional Growth Strategy**.
- Provide **alternatives to driving alone**.
- Plan facilities and services for **special needs transportation**.
- Avoid the creation of new and expanded facilities in **rural areas**.
- Identify **racial and social equity** as a core objective when implementing transportation projects.
- Protect the **environment** and reduce stormwater pollution.

Certification Findings

The Woodway comprehensive plan effectively addresses the transportation planning requirements of the Growth Management Act and the transportation policies in VISION 2050. The plan emphasizes the importance of walking and the contribution walking makes to personal health, mobility, and environmental objectives. It includes policies to enhance quality of life and transportation safety for residents through employing a variety of traffic calming measures. The plan calls for maintaining and improving the town's street system, with added emphasis on stormwater management facilities that improve water quality and fish passage.

The town should address the following comments in future updates to the plan:

- VISION 2050 calls for multimodal level of service standards (MPP-DP-52-53). The town includes policies supportive of walking and biking, and the town should work to



develop standards and regulatory approaches that incorporate multiple travel modes. Making progress in this area would strengthen and reinforce the plan's goals. PSRC's [Transportation Element Guide](#) provides minimum standards for addressing multimodal level of service standards.

- The plan includes a 6-year transportation project list. The town is encouraged to identify projects and programs, including active transportation projects, necessary to meet demands through 2044. The plan notes that adopted levels of service will be reassessed in conjunction with population growth and future development within the town and Point Wells. PSRC encourages this work to plan for long-term transportation and other capital facility needs.
- Like the project list, the town is encouraged to include a 20-year transportation financing plan. In addition to providing projects and project cost estimates needed to meet transportation needs through 2044, the financing plan should also include estimated probable revenues available to the town through the planning horizon, an analysis of the sufficiency of funding resources compared to estimated costs identified, and a reassessment strategy in the event revenues fall short of costs. Further guidance on how to address the financial analysis in the plan can be found in Commerce's [Transportation Element Guidebook](#), pages 202-212.

Public Services

Scope of Review

VISION 2050 calls for local comprehensive plans to:

- Promote **coordinated and efficient** use of public services.
- Protect **water quality** by serving urban development with sewer systems and replacing failing septic systems.
- Consider the **impacts of climate change on public facilities** and promote renewable energy.
- Promote **affordable and equitable access to public services**, especially for underserved communities.
- Promote working with school districts on **school siting and design** to support safe, walkable access.

Certification Findings

The Woodway comprehensive plan effectively addresses the public services policies in VISION 2050. The plan calls for the town to work with the Olympic View Water and Sewer District to promote wellhead protection to safeguard the quality and quantity of water from the Deer Creek watershed. It includes a policy promoting low impact development to manage stormwater for new development.



Conclusion and Next Steps

PSRC found the Town of Woodway comprehensive plan is substantially consistent with the transportation-related provisions of the Growth Management Act, VISION 2050 and the Regional Transportation Plan.

PSRC encourages the town to address areas identified for additional work in upcoming plan updates and other planning efforts. These may be areas where additional work would make the plan more consistent with the Growth Management Act or VISION 2050 and areas that may be necessary to address prior to the 2029 Growth Management Act Implementation Progress Report.

PSRC is available to provide assistance with future plan updates. Find additional planning resources on [PSRC's Plan Review webpage](#). If the town has questions or needs additional information, please contact Erika Harris at 206-464-6360 and eharris@psrc.org.

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