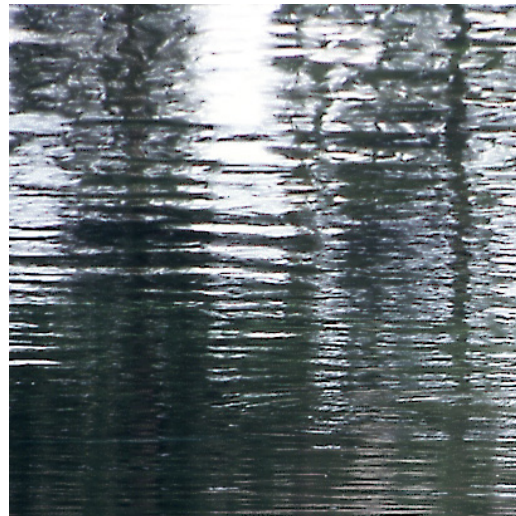
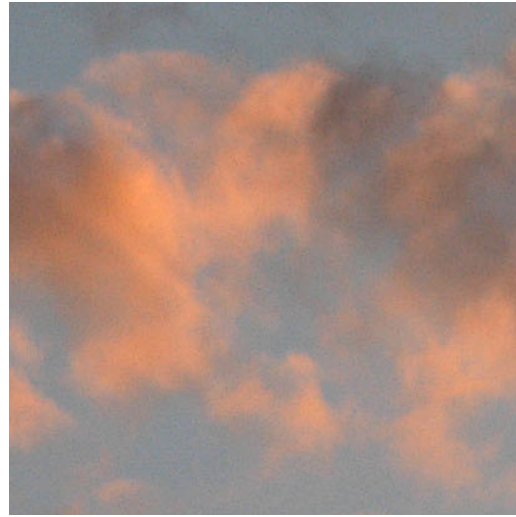


# VISION 2020 Update Draft Environmental Impact Statement



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May 2006

*Dear Regional Council Members, Affected Agencies, Interest Groups, Tribes, and Members of the General Public:*

Nearly two decades ago citizens, interest groups, business leaders, and elected officials came together to create VISION 2020. **Our regional framework helps guide how and where we grow, and how we establish planning and investment priorities.** And it offers local jurisdictions, the public, the business community, and interest groups regional goals that are agreed upon and to which they can contribute.

VISION 2020 recognizes that our Puget Sound communities are connected by ecosystems, transportation systems, and the economy. Our economic health is dependent on our ability to get goods to market and people to their jobs, and our ability to preserve open space and parks depends on the fiscal health of our communities. It also recognizes that the way we develop land affects air and water quality, the character of neighborhoods, and the cost of transportation and utilities.

**The purpose of this letter is to discuss the update of VISION 2020**, which is being extended to the year 2040.

Another 1.6 million people and 1.1 million jobs are expected by 2040, and the VISION update is about getting prepared to accommodate this dramatic amount of growth. You have a chance today to shape the region's future by participating in the update of VISION 2020.

The Puget Sound Regional Council's goal is to assure early and continuous involvement by the public in the update, and its work is organized to encourage public participation. **We want to make sure that you are informed and involved in these important efforts.** Throughout the VISION 2020 update process, Puget Sound Regional Council staff will meet with city and community councils, countywide interjurisdictional groups, and a variety of interest groups to call attention to the choices that the region will have to make, and how these regional policy decisions could affect your community.

Please read and comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and stay involved throughout the update process. **Only with your continued involvement can we ensure that this update reflects a balanced vision for the future that is widely embraced.** With your continued involvement, the VISION will help us grow gracefully and sustainably, so that in the year 2040 the region is still envied for its beauty, economic vitality and overall quality of life.

*Sincerely,*



Bob Drewel, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



May 2006

*Dear Participants in the VISION 2020 Update Process:*

Enclosed is a copy of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the update to VISION 2020. The DEIS is also available through the Puget Sound Regional Council Information Center at 206-464-7532, on our Web site at [psrc.org](http://psrc.org), or through your local library.

The VISION was originally developed in the late 1980s and updated in 1995. The VISION contains the region's multicounty Planning Policies, which are required by the state Growth Management Act. In July 2004, the Regional Council Executive Board set in motion a major effort to both update the VISION and extend it to the year 2040. The Regional Council's Growth Management Policy Board is leading the project. The Board seeks the advice of the Transportation Policy Board and the Economic Development District Board when making recommendations to the Executive Board. The Executive Board will make the final recommendation to the General Assembly for action.

The Puget Sound Regional Council adopts and maintains the regional vision and strategies for responding to and accommodating future growth in the region. Together, VISION 2020 and its functional plans for transportation (*Destination 2030*) and the economy (the *Regional Economic Strategy*) envision a future for our region and identify the actions we need to take to get there. The Economic Strategy was adopted in 2005 along with 18 first year action steps that are currently underway. *Destination 2030* was adopted in 2001 and will be extended to 2040 and amended to address the updated VISION in 2007.

Extending the VISION to 2040 requires that this update address how the region can best accommodate over 1.6 million more people and 1.1 million more jobs over the next 35 years. It also requires that the update consider wide-ranging new information that reflects changes that have taken place over the last decade and a half.

This update is designed to build on the existing VISION. The questions that are being asked in this update are similar to those asked when the original VISION was developed. The overarching question in this update is "*what is the preferred way to accommodate the large amount of expected population and employment growth while maintaining our quality of life?*"

The question is being asked again because a lot has changed since the late 1980s. The update must consider new information regarding:

- New data and forecasts.
- Projects that have been completed.
- New local comprehensive plans.
- New tools and models to analyze data.

This update incorporates a finer grain of analysis and attempts to create a more complete, more measurable, and clearer VISION than ever before.

The State Environmental Policy Act requires that environmental review regulations be followed on *non-project* actions. Non-project actions are governmental actions involving decisions on policies, plans, or programs that contain standards controlling use or modifications of the environment, or that will govern a series of connected actions. This includes, but is not limited to, the adoption or amendment of comprehensive plans, transportation plans, ordinances, and rules and regulations [Washington Administrative Code 197-11-704(2)(b)]. A full EIS is needed as part of this update to VISION 2020 because of the amount of new information that is available to be analyzed and considered by decision-makers.

The Regional Council's Executive Board adopted a three-phase schedule for completion of the project. Phase One (summer 2004 to fall 2005) focused on pre-EIS research (10 issue papers) and identification of four alternative growth distribution alternatives for analysis in the environmental impact statement. Phase Two (fall 2005 to winter 2007) focuses on the environmental analysis. The final phase (winter to fall 2007) will consist of the final EIS and public review and action of Regional Council boards and committees on the revised growth VISION and multicounty planning policies.

**Key steps to be accomplished as the project moves forward:**

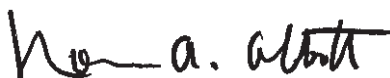
- **Draft Environmental Impact Statement** (without a preferred alternative). Currently being reviewed by the public.
- **Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement with Preferred Alternative and Draft VISION Document.** Following the Draft Environmental Impact Statement public review period of 60 days, the Growth Management Policy Board will work with staff and consultants to incorporate changes, select a preferred alternative, and publish a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS). The preferred growth alternative will be selected from the range of alternatives examined in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (including the potential for a hybrid of the alternatives) and will be analyzed alongside the other alternatives. A draft VISION document containing revised multicounty planning policies will accompany the SDEIS. The preferred alternative will then be published in a supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement for additional public comment in mid 2007.
- **Final Environmental Impact Statement and Final VISION Document.** After the second public review period, PSRC's boards will work with staff and consultants to incorporate changes and publish a Final EIS and Final VISION document. The tentative schedule is to release the Final EIS and revised VISION in 2008.
- **Final Review and Action.** PSRC policy boards and committees will review and take final action to recommend approval to the Executive Board. The Executive Board will, in turn, make its recommendation to the Puget Sound Regional Council's General Assembly. The General Assembly will take action on the updated VISION in 2008.

The public is encouraged to provide thoughts, ideas, and concerns on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement to help select a preferred growth alternative. **Information on how to comment is provided on the Fact Sheet, and a Comment Form is included on the last page of this document.** Participants in the review process are asked to comment on the growth alternative that appears to best meet the needs of the region. You are welcome to mix and match portions of the alternatives that have been included in the EIS to form a hybrid that represents the alternative you prefer.

For all parties who are commenting, PSRC requests a name and return address. **All comments are due by close of business on Monday, July 31, 2006.**

If you have any questions or comments regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, please contact Sheila Rogers at 206-464-5815 or email at [srogers@psrc.org](mailto:srogers@psrc.org).

*Sincerely,*



Norman A. Abbott, DIRECTOR OF GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLANNING AND SEPA RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL



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## Fact Sheet

# Draft Environmental Impact Statement for VISION 2020 Update: Available for Public Review

## Proposed Action

*The Puget Sound Regional Council is updating VISION 2020, the regional long-range growth management, economic, and transportation strategy for the central Puget Sound region. VISION 2020 was last revised in 1995, and is being updated to provide a comprehensive regional approach to manage growth through the year 2040. The strategy covers King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish counties and their respective cities and towns.*

The VISION 2020 Update Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) is being prepared in accordance with the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 43.21C and the adopted rules for EIS preparation under Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 197-11-400 to 460. The update is a non-project action. The DEIS presents and discusses the potential significant environmental impacts that may occur upon implementation of four growth management alternatives: Growth Targets Extended (No Action), Metropolitan Cities, Larger Cities, and Smaller Cities. None of these is defined as a preferred alternative.

## Proponent and SEPA Lead Agency

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## Licenses and Approvals

No licenses or approvals are required before PSRC updates VISION 2020.

## Principal Contributors

Please see List of Preparers in *Appendix G*, on the attached compact disk.

## Date of Issue of Draft Environmental Impact Statement

May 2006

## Comment Period

The public comment period on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will last 60 days, and will end on Monday, July 31, 2006.

This comment period length exceeds the public comment requirements of the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 197-11-455 (6), which requires at least 30 days. As authorized by WAC 197-11-455 (7), and as stated in the Puget Sound Regional Council's Public Involvement Plan for the VISION 2020 Update, and at the request of PSRC's boards, the Puget Sound Regional Council is extending the required period by 30 days in order to encourage additional comments.

## Commenting on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement

The public is encouraged to provide thoughts, ideas, and concerns on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement to help PSRC identify a preferred growth alternative. The public can comment in one of the following ways:

- By writing to Norman Abbott, State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Responsible Official, at the PSRC address listed on the previous page.
- By visiting the Regional Council's Web site [www.psrc.org](http://www.psrc.org). To submit a comment, go to Comment section of the VISION update Web page and follow the instructions.
- By sending an email to [vision2020update@psrc.org](mailto:vision2020update@psrc.org).
- By attending any of PSRC's board or committee meetings. A public comment period is offered at the beginning of each meeting.
- By returning the comment card that is included at the end of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

For all parties who are commenting, PSRC requests a name and return address. All comments are due by close of business on July 31, 2006.

Participants in the review process are asked to identify their preference for the growth alternative that appears to best meet the needs of the region. Please feel free to mix and match portions of the alternatives that have been included in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement to form a hybrid that represents the alternative you prefer.

*Regional VIEW*, the Regional Council's monthly newsletter, is one good way to stay informed and involved. To receive a print copy of *Regional VIEW*, visit <http://www.psrc.org/datapubs/pubs/view/viewform.htm>, or call 206-464-7090.

## Next Steps

- **Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement with Preferred Alternative and Draft VISION Document.** Following the Draft Environmental Impact Statement public review period of 60 days, the Growth Management Policy Board will work with staff and consultants to incorporate changes, select a preferred alternative, and publish a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS). The preferred growth alternative will be selected from the range of alternatives examined in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (including



the potential for a hybrid of the alternatives) and will be analyzed alongside the other alternatives. A draft VISION document containing revised multicounty planning policies will accompany the SDEIS. The preferred alternative will then be published in a supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement for additional public comment in mid 2007.

- **Final Environmental Impact Statement and Final VISION Document.** After the second public review period, PSRC's boards will work with staff and consultants to incorporate changes and publish a Final EIS and Final VISION document. The tentative schedule is to release the Final EIS and revised VISION in 2008.
- **Final Review and Action.** PSRC policy boards and committees will review and take final action to recommend approval to the Executive Board. The Executive Board will, in turn, make its recommendation to the Puget Sound Regional Council's General Assembly. The General Assembly will take action on the updated VISION in 2008.

## Related Documents

A complete list of references for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement is provided in *Appendix A*, on the attached compact disk.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement is available in a number of formats — on a compact disk and in electronic format on PSRC's Web site at no cost.

Paper copies are available for review at the offices of PSRC, 1011 Western Ave., Suite 500, Seattle, WA 98104-1035. Paper copies are also available for review at the libraries listed in *Appendix H*, on the attached compact disk.

Compact disks can be requested by contacting the PSRC Information Center at 206-464-7532, or by email at [infoctr@psrc.org](mailto:infoctr@psrc.org).



