

# Introduction and Background

This chapter discusses the history behind the VISION, describes the regional setting, and discusses the Puget Sound Regional Council. It also outlines the policy context for the VISION, providing an overview of the relationship between the State Growth Management Act and VISION 2020.

Sections in this chapter include the following:

- **A. Regional setting.** This section explains the region's geographic setting, provides information regarding the Regional Council and the State Growth Management Act, and summarizes the existing VISION.
- **B.** The update and environmental process. This section explains the update framework, the SEPA Environmental process, the project schedule, and key next steps.
- **C. Developing alternatives.** This section discusses how alternatives were developed through public involvement, and how regional geographies were used to guide analysis. The section also described decisions about alternatives analyzed in the environmental impact statement, and PSRC's series of issue papers.
- **D.** Criteria for evaluating alternatives. This section contains approximately 50 individual data points and indicators organized under seven overarching measures to help decision-makers evaluate the alternatives.
- **E. Analysis tools.** This discussion includes an explanation of INDEX (an analysis tool used in the update process), the transportation demand model, the air quality model, and our environmental consultants.
- **F. Steps in developing the VISION.** This section discusses the process to select a preferred growth alternative, and develop a new VISION document with revised multicounty planning policies. This section also describes decisions to be made, and describes opportunities for the public to stay involved.

## A. Regional Setting

## ABOUT THE CENTRAL PUGET SOUND REGION

## **Geographic Setting**

The central Puget Sound region is made up of King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish counties, and their 82 cities and towns (see Figure 3-1). The major metropolitan cites of the region are Seattle and Bellevue in King County, Bremerton in Kitsap County, Tacoma in Pierce County, and Everett in Snohomish County.

The region's physical geography is one of its greatest assets, as well as a distinct challenge. Its mountain ranges, waterways, and lush forests and greenery offer a stunningly beautiful natural environment. These features also serve to restrict the region's developable land area. The region is set in a basin between the Cascade and Olympic mountain ranges, and is bisected by the salt-water inlets of the Puget Sound and numerous rivers and lakes.



FIGURE 3-1: REGIONAL SETTING, CENTRAL PUGET SOUND REGION CITIES AND TOWNS



Much of the region's remaining undeveloped land consists of steep hills, environmentally sensitive areas, open space, or preserves and parks, although infill and redevelopment capacity exist within the urban core. Most of the region's other undeveloped land is in rural or natural resource lands outside of the urban growth area. Within the urban area, there are pockets of undeveloped land, as well as lands that could be developed at higher levels.

While the geography imposes additional complexity and expense on infrastructure projects, the physical limits have helped to both frame urbanization and focus growth. The State Growth Management Act reinforces this focus, requiring both the designation of an urban growth area and the protection and preservation of rural and agricultural lands. Through adopted regional policy, growth is further concentrated into a set of regional growth and manufacturing centers.

## Regional Growth and Development

Between 1960 and 2003, the region's population grew from 1.5 million to 3.4 million. Rapid growth occurred in the late 1960s, in the late 1970s, in the late 1980s, and throughout the 1990s. Over half of the population gain during this period (57 percent) is accounted for by people moving into the region. Eighty-six percent of the population lives within the 980 square miles of the region's urban growth area. Population projections indicate that by 2040, nearly five million people will be living within the four-county region. There is a direct relationship between the population increase and the growing number of jobs in the metropolitan area. The number, location and types of employment opportunities continue to increase as the economy diversifies.

## **Economic Structure**

Job growth has been a primary driver in the region's population growth. A strong job market keeps people here and attracts newcomers. The region's economic base evolved from resource-oriented industries early in this century, to manufacturing-dominated industries, including a strong aerospace sector, after World War II. The employment base in the central Puget Sound region more than doubled in the past 30 years. The region's economy remains strongly linked to the aerospace sector, but substantially less so than in previous decades. Employment in the services sector, especially high technology, continued to grow rapidly throughout the 1990s. The strong regional economy will continue to contribute to growth pressures in central Puget Sound, and employment projections indicate that by 2040, there will be about three million jobs in the four-county region.

By effectively planning for this growth, the region has the opportunity to support future economic vitality and environmental health, provide adequate transportation systems and other infrastructure, and help manage costs of doing business and providing public services. All of these things contribute to the region's reputation as a uniquely attractive place to live and work — a distinction critical to the region's economic success.

## ABOUT THE PUGET SOUND REGIONAL COUNCIL

The Puget Sound Regional Council is the growth management, transportation, and economic planning agency for the central Puget Sound region of Washington State. It serves as a forum for cities, counties, ports, transit agencies, tribes, and the state to work together on important regional issues.

A General Assembly and Executive Board govern the Regional Council. The Growth Management, and Transportation Policy Boards advise the Executive Board. The General Assembly is composed of all member jurisdictions and

FIGURE 3-2: PUGET SOUND REGIONAL COUNCIL ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

General Assembly

Executive Board 

Operations Committee

Transportation Growth Economic

Policy Board Management Development
Policy Board District

agencies. The Assembly meets at least annually to review and vote on key issues such as the annual budget, new officers, and growth management and transportation plans and policies.

The Executive Board meets monthly and carries out delegated powers and responsibilities between meetings of the General Assembly. The Board is chaired by the Regional Council's President.

The Growth Management Policy Board and the Transportation Policy Board meet monthly and include representatives of Regional Council member jurisdictions, as well as representatives of regional business, labor, civic,

and environmental groups. These boards make recommendations on key issues to the Executive Board, including decisions about the VISION Update.

The Regional Council supports the work of the region's Economic Development District. The Economic Development District coordinates economic development planning in the region, and is governed by a Board of Directors composed of representatives of the region's cities, ports, tribes, business/institutions, and citizen appointees.

## Key responsibilities of the Regional Council include:

- Long Range Growth, Economic, and Transportation Planning
- Transportation Funding
- Economic Development Coordination
- · Regional Data
- Technical Assistance
- Certification of Local Comprehensive Plans' Transportation-Related Elements

The Regional Council is designated under state law as the Regional Transportation Planning Organization, and under federal law as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the central Puget Sound region. PSRC also supports the region's federally designated Economic Development District. PSRC has specific planning responsibilities under federal and state laws, including the federal Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act — a Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), the federal Clean Air Act, the state Growth Management Act the state Clean Air Washington Act, and the federal Public Works Act, as well as responsibilities pursuant to the Interlocal Agreement and Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement, as signed by its members.

## **ABOUT THE GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT**

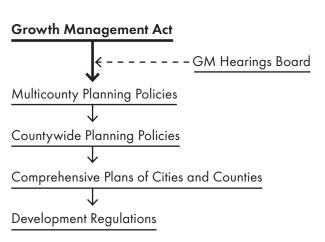
## The Growth Management Act

Public policy to protect the environment and the high quality of life in the State of Washington has evolved during the last 30 years in response to increased growth and on-going development. The first major steps were taken in 1971 with the passage of the State Environmental Policy Act, followed by the Shoreline Management Act. During the 1980s several individual jurisdictions, including King County, engaged in a new generation of comprehensive planning in an attempt to manage growth. In 1990 and 1991 the Washington Legislature passed, and Governor Booth Gardner signed, the Growth Management Act to mandate local comprehensive planning in heavily populated and high growth areas of the state.

The Growth Management Act establishes broad goals, such as managing urban growth, protecting agricultural, forestry, and environmentally sensitive areas, reducing sprawl, and encouraging efficient multi-modal transportation systems. VISION 2020 provides a regional framework for achieving these goals, by building on and supporting local, county, regional, and state planning efforts. The policies in VISION 2020 reflect broad directions agreed to by member jurisdictions and agencies that, in general, will be implemented through local comprehensive and agency plans. These policies are designed to assist the region in managing growth in ways that optimize the movement of goods and people, protect the environment, revitalize communities, and develop a healthy economy.

## **Local Comprehensive Plans**

FIGURE 3-3: GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT PLANNING RELATIONSHIPS



The Growth Management Act requires that all jurisdictions in the central Puget Sound region develop comprehensive plans. Unless a plan is challenged and appealed to a Growth Management Hearings Board, the plan is presumed to be valid and consistent with statewide planning requirements. The Regional Council is required to review local jurisdic-

tions' plans and amendments and certify that they comply with the Growth Management Act, and are consistent with regional guidelines and principles for planning. Certification establishes eligibility for transportation funding available under the Regional Transportation Improvement Program. Of the 86 adopted plans in the region, the Regional Council has certified the transportation provisions of 83.

## ABOUT VISION 2020 AND THE MULTICOUNTY PLANNING POLICIES

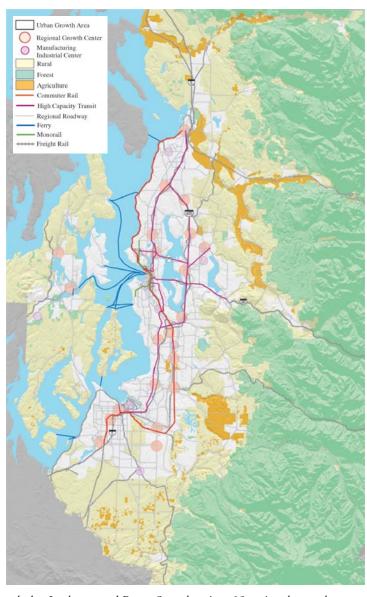
## The VISION

VISION 2020 serves as integrated long-range growth management, economic and transportation strategy for King, Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish counties (see Figure 3-4). VISION 2020 was first adopted in 1990, and last updated in 1995. VISION 2020 calls for locating development in defined urban growth areas, creating compact communities with employment and housing growth focused in centers. This strategy is designed to foster a greater mix of land uses, a more complete and efficient network of streets and other public rights-of-way, and, in general, support an urban environment which is amenable to walking, biking and using transit.

VISION 2020 also aims to conserve forests and other natural resources, and to preserve rural areas through low-density residential living maintained by rural levels of service and locating employment, housing and services in cities and towns in rural areas. It represents a major public policy commitment to both managed growth and the efficient provision of public services and facilities, particularly transportation investments that emphasize transit, ridesharing, demand management and the maintenance of current facilities.

A key element of the VISION's growth strategy is the development of "regional growth centers." Such centers are places that contain a mix of business, commercial, residential, and cultural activity within a compact area. Centers are places where walking and transit use, as well as automobile and bicycle access, are viable transportation options. VISION 2020 and the region's growth management plans envision these centers in revitalized

FIGURE 3-4: VISION 2020 MAP



downtown districts, as well as in emerging suburban hubs. In the central Puget Sound region, 25 regional growth centers have been formally designated by the counties and cities as a result of growth management planning efforts. Fifteen centers are located in King County, two in Kitsap County, five in Pierce County, and three in Snohomish County.

In addition to regional growth centers, the regional vision also encourages the creation and support of areas between centers that currently function as, or offer the potential to be "compact communities." These compact communities should be located throughout the urban area, offer transportation, housing, and shopping choices, reduce the need for car travel, and support efficient development patterns.

## **Multicounty Planning Policies**

VISION 2020 contains the multicounty planning policies for the four-county region, as adopted according to the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.210(7)). The policies are essentially countywide planning policies except that they have been adopted by two or more counties. They have both a practical and a substantive effect on the comprehensive plans of cities and counties. The multicounty policies are meant to guide countywide and local planning efforts. VISION 2020 contains eight policy categories, each of which is guided by a "framework" policy.

1. Urban growth areas: 13 policies 1

2. Contiguous and orderly development: 13 policies

3. Regional capital facilities: 5 policies

4. Housing: 6 policies

5. Rural areas: 8 policies

6. Open space, resource protection and critical areas: 10 policies

7. Economics: 18 policies8. Transportation: 41 policies

For more information of the multicounty planning policies, and efforts to update them as part of the VISION 2020 update, see *Chapter 7 – Evaluation of the Multicounty Planning Policies*. The complete set of multicounty planning policies is contained in *Appendix F* on the attached compact disk.

## B. The Update and Environmental Process

In October 2003 the Regional Council, the lead agency for the update and environmental review, determined that population and employment growth associated with extending VISION 2020 to 2040 would likely result in environmental impacts that need to be documented and mitigated. The Regional Council issued a Determination of Significance, pursuant to SEPA — RCW 43.21C.030 (2)(c)).

The Determination of Significance marked the beginning of an extended public outreach and scoping process that began in October 2003 and extended to March 2004. Public outreach included a variety of methods, including a public opinion survey, workshops, public open houses, presentations to a diverse set of stakeholders, and more.

During the 5-month comment period, the PSRC received comments raising more than 1,200 points, and agency staff had contact with over 2,000 individuals, organizations, and local jurisdictions throughout the region. The scoping process was the most rigorous that the Regional Council has conducted. This expanded scoping process provided ample time to listen to Regional Council members, affected agencies, interest groups, tribes, and members of the general public in order to establish the scope of the update.

All comments were transcribed and entered into a scoping database and summarized in a scoping report. The scoping report documented the efforts and results of the outreach and planning, including public comments.

In July 2004, the PSRC Executive Board adopted the VISION 2020 update project scoping report, and set in motion a major effort to update the VISION. The Executive Board directed PSRC the VISION to be updated and extended to the year 2040. The Regional Council's Growth Management Policy Board is taking the lead in developing the update. The Growth Management Policy Board is being assisted by the Regional Council staff and by the Council's Regional Staff Committee (which is comprised of planning, economic development, and public works officials from throughout the region). The Growth Management Policy Board is also working with the Transportation Policy Board and the Economic Development District Board to make recommendations to the Executive Board. The Executive Board is currently scheduled to make final recommendations to the General Assembly for action in 2007.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The number of total policies in parentheses includes both the framework policy and additional multicounty policies for each topic area.



This DEIS for the VISION update marks an important milestone. In it, PSRC provides a detailed definition of regional growth alternatives through the year 2040. This definition allows the region to assess the magnitude of growth considered in all the alternatives, review the potential environmental effects of distributing growth in the region, evaluate mitigation efforts, and indicate a preference for an alternative.

#### **NEXT STEPS**

- Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement with Preferred Alternative and Draft VISION Document. Following the Draft Environmental Impact Statement public review period of 45 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.

## C. Developing Alternatives

Phase One focused on identification of growth distribution alternatives for analysis in the environmental impact statement and pre-EIS research (issue papers). The Growth Management Policy Board and the Regional Staff Committee met monthly to advise and provide direction to the Regional Council staff. PSRC staff also conducted wide ranging outreach efforts to interest groups, county planning directors, and countywide staff and elected groups. Through this process, they established a series of key assumptions to guide the update and environmental review. PSRC also used these assumptions to help identify alternatives to be included in the DEIS.

## ASSUMPTIONS GUIDING THE UPDATE AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

- Forecasts. The update focuses on the region's long-range VISION to accommodate continued growth through the year 2040 and beyond. The alternatives are based on the same regional forecasts for population and employment growth through the year 2040. These forecasts anticipate a year 2040 regional population of 4,988,000 and 3,047,000 jobs.
- Build on the Current VISION. In order to comply with the objectives and mandates of the state Growth Management Act and to fulfill the purpose and need for action, the update builds on the base of the policies and strategies adopted in VISION 2020. The focus of the update will be to clarify aspects of the VISION, emphasize efficiency, establish priorities, and reinforce the concept of a common purpose for the region's many stakeholders. The VISION continues to reflect the Growth Management Act's objectives of containing the expansion of urban areas, conserving farmlands, forests, and open spaces, supporting more compact, people-oriented living and working places, and focuses a significant amount of new employment and housing into cities with vibrant urban centers.
- **Transportation Plan.** The growth distribution alternatives are being analyzed to see (among other things) which is best served by the existing transportation plan. In a separate planned action that will follow the selection of a preferred VISION, *Destination 2030* will be extended to 2040 and amended to address the preferred growth alternative in March 2008.



### **SELECTION OF GROWTH ALTERNATIVES FOR EIS REVIEW**

PSRC's Growth Management Policy Board took action on September 8, 2005 to identify the alternatives to be included in the VISION Draft EIS. The alternatives were selected in response to suggestions made during the comment period and reflected the following considerations to help narrow and refine the alternatives to be included in the EIS:

- The most extreme scenarios should not be further considered.
- The alternatives have been designed so that they represent regional growth patterns that are highly distinct from one another and represent a wide range of choices.
- A "No Action" alternative is to be defined as the continuation of currently adopted growth targets, with the targets extended to 2040 to match PSRC's regional growth forecasts. The land use patterns and distribution of regional growth seen in current comprehensive plans and local growth targets represent currently adopted public policy, which would continue if no action were taken to alter the current regional vision. While recent growth trends have resulted in a larger share of regional growth in King County than is envisioned in current targets, commenters felt that in the future the distribution of growth among the regional geographies will correspond more closely with currently adopted targets.
- Two of the alternatives represent a wider distribution of population and employment between the four counties than current conditions, while two represent greater concentration than current conditions.
- The alternatives include a pattern that is more highly focused than current comprehensive plans and one in which growth is less focused than current comprehensive plans.
- While the overall amount of forecast growth in the region does not change, it has been redistributed in the alternatives to reflect possible future growth patterns.
- The differences between cities and how they grow were taken into consideration when distributing population and employment. To distribute within each geographic class (i.e., Metropolitan Cities, Core Suburban Cities, etc.), each city's share of geographic class growth in the alternatives is based on the ratio of the jurisdiction's targets compared to the geographic class total growth forecast for the 2022-2025 time period. These ratios are then applied to the class share of growth in each alternative.
- Growth in the rural area has been minimized for center-focused alternatives.
- Currently designated UGAs have been maintained in the alternatives. Specific changes to the UGA may or may not occur in the urban growth area in the future, and decisions on expanding urban growth areas are made at the county level. Therefore, for the purposes of the regional VISION, PSRC has focused the analysis on what it would take for existing designated urban areas to accommodate anticipated growth. PSRC also expects that the effects of UGA changes, if they are to be proposed, could be addressed through the overall EIS process.

The following table summarizes key dates associated with the identification of alternatives.

#### FIGURE 3-5: KEY PUBLIC REVIEW DATES ASSOCIATED WITH IDENTIFICATION OF ALTERNATIVES

DateDescription		
s	The Growth Management Policy Board was introduced to INDEX, a new geographic information system-based sketch planning tool, its capabilities, and how it would be used in the development of scenarios and alternatives.	
, .	The Regional Technical Forum was introduced to INDEX, its capabilities, and how it would be used in the development of scenarios and alternatives.	
, .	The Regional Staff Committee was introduced to INDEX, its capabilities, and how it would be used in the development of scenarios and alternatives.	
, .	The Regional Council conducted a half-day workshop on INDEX for board members, regional staff and nterested parties. Comments on INDEX assumptions, scenario design, and indicator output were collected.	
q	Regional Council staff met with the UrbanSim Technical Advisory Committee to review INDEX indicators, assumptions, and draft scenarios. Comments on INDEX assumptions, scenario design, and indicator butput were collected.	
•	NDEX and the first five scenarios were reviewed and discussed as part of a regional VISION 2020 workshop. Comments on INDEX assumptions, scenario design, and indicator output were collected.	

	e Regional Council conducted a half-day workshop on INDEX to review, discuss, and take comment on group of 8 scenarios. Comments on INDEX assumptions and scenario design were collected.
COI	e Growth Management Policy Board was introduced to the group of 8 scenarios for review and mment. Comments on INDEX assumptions and scenario design were collected. The Transportation licy Board was briefed on the VISION 2020 Update decision-making schedule and framework.
,	e Regional Staff Committee was introduced to the group of 8 scenarios for review and comment.  omments on INDEX assumptions and scenario design were collected.
sta tio	e Growth Management Policy Board convened an Ad Hoc Committee to review and comment on a off recommendation of four alternatives developed out of the eight scenarios. Comments on assump- ns and alternative design were collected. The committee suggested some minor modifications, and pressed general support for the staff recommendation.
out	e Regional Staff Committee was introduced to a staff recommendation of four alternatives developed tof the eight scenarios. Comments on assumptions and alternative design were collected. The commitee expressed support for the staff recommendation.
	e Growth Management Policy Board was introduced to a staff recommendation of four alternatives veloped out of the eight scenarios. The board expressed support for the staff recommendation.
•	e Growth Management Policy approved four growth distribution alternatives for review in the vironmental Impact Statement process.

### USING REGIONAL GEOGRAPHIES TO GUIDE THE ANALYSIS

The Regional Council identified the region's cities, towns, unincorporated urban growth areas, and rural areas as the basic units of analysis for distribution of population and employment within regional growth scenarios. This approach was taken in part because cities bear the primary responsibility of implementing the Growth Management Act and the regional VISION at the local level through locally adopted land use plans and development regulations.

The region was also divided for analysis purposes into seven separate geographic categories, based on current incorporated boundaries, population and employment, adopted urban growth areas, and current thinking about the variety of roles that these different types of cities might play in the region's future.

These regional geographies were used to develop the alternatives and to distribute future population and employment growth. More information on the alternatives and regional geographies is provided in *Chapter 4 – the Definition of Alternatives*.

#### **EARLY EIS DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS**

PSRC conducted pre-EIS research that resulted in 10 issue papers. The 25 broad areas of interest identified in the scoping process were consolidated by the Growth Management Policy Board to form the topics covered by the 10 papers. The issue papers took the concepts identified in scoping and turned them into concrete proposals for consideration in the update.

The issue papers were developed incrementally over the year. The Growth Management Policy Board and the Regional Staff Committee reviewed and worked on each paper over several meetings. The papers were featured at a May 2005 Public Event, that also introduced the future growth scenarios that became the basis for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement alternatives. All of the issue papers are found in *Appendix E*, on the attached compact disk.

The issue papers included:

- Housing. An overview of housing issues and trends, with special attention given to projected demographics and
  potential housing needs in the year 2040. Covers innovations in providing housing, including an examination of
  affordable housing.
- Environment. An assessment of the current state of information and resources for environmental planning at the regional level. Considers the human impacts, trends, indicators, and implications for a variety of environmental factors, including water, air, land, and wildlife. Two supplemental papers were developed on Sewer Utilities and Energy.
- Social and Environmental Justice. Documentation of PSRC regional environmental justice research, with an examination of issues and needs of various population groups in the region, particularly minority and low-income groups.

- **Health.** An overview of how health provisions including active living, safety, and environmental quality can be better integrated into regional policy and planning.
- **Demographics.** A description of current growth trends, along with population issues that are likely to be in play in the year 2040.
- **Growth Targets.** An examination of the various processes used to assign growth targets to the region's counties and their municipalities, and how these processes might be improved.
- **Economics.** An examination of key employment issues, with attention given to work of the region's Prosperity Partnership and its efforts to maintain existing jobs and create new ones in strategic economic clusters.
- **Subregional Centers.** An examination of locations other than the designated regional growth centers and the potential roles these places could play in accommodating significant portions of the population and employment growth anticipated by the year 2040.
- **Transportation.** Information about the strengths and weaknesses of the current transportation system in the region. A number of transportation issues are discussed to help define how transportation improvements can support and implement the VISION 2020 growth strategy and economic development efforts.
- Rural Areas. A study of major issues of importance in the rural portions of the region, looking especially at their long-term viability and protection.

Each of these papers were reviewed by the Growth Management Policy Board. That Board took an action-to-proceed to advance the papers for public review and to be used in subsequent phases of the update process. For more information on the issue papers, see *Chapter 7 – Evaluation of Multicounty Planning Policies*.

## D. Criteria for Evaluating Growth Distribution Alternatives

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement contains criteria for evaluating alternatives and selecting a preferred growth alternative. The criteria can be used to document differences between the alternatives and provide useful information to PSRC's boards when they are selecting a preferred growth alternative.

The following measures are included in the evaluation criteria: environmental quality, health, economic prosperity (the objectives of the *Regional Economic Strategy*), land use, transportation (the objectives of *Destination 2030*), social justice and human potential, maintaining rural character, protecting resource lands, efficiencies in the provision and use of infrastructure, and public facilities and services.

The measures will be scored by the Regional Council staff and reviewed by the Growth Management Policy Board after the Draft Environmental Impact Statement is issued and the board begins to discuss a preferred growth alternative.

The measures used to evaluate the alternatives are outlined below.

### **Environmental Measures**

- Nonpoint pollution (INDEX)
- Imperviousness (INDEX)
- Wastewater generation (INDEX)
- Solid waste generation (INDEX)
- · Air quality Particulate matter, carbon monoxide, nitrous oxide, ozone, and carbon dioxide
- Climate change Note: measured under greenhouse gases as part of air quality
- Remaining environmental impacts from EIS
  - Noise
  - Environmental health
  - Earth
  - Water
  - Parks and Recreation
  - Visual/Aesthetic quality
  - Historic and cultural resources

## **Health Measures**

- Potential for reducing automobile injuries Note: Measured under transportation
- Reduce air and water pollutants Note: Measured under environmental health
- Increased potential for physical activity

#### **Economic Measures**

- · Access to jobs
  - Transit adjacency to employment
  - Travel time between selected links
  - Access to jobs for lower income workers
- Geographic relationship between households and jobs
  - Land area with 20 jobs per acre and above
  - Proximity of people to land area with 20 jobs per acre and above
- Specific jobs/housing balance measures
  - Generally Increase regional share of jobs in Everett, Tacoma and Bremerton areas
  - Generally Increase regional share of housing in Seattle and east King County subarea

## Land Use Measures

- Urban Areas
  - Land at 7 units per acre or higher
  - Amenities adjacency (INDEX)
  - Amount of population in cities with regional growth centers
- Rural and Resource Lands
  - Population levels in rural area
  - Environmental impacts in rural area
  - Transportation impacts in rural area
  - Increased growth pressure on resource lands

## Transportation Measures (measured against Destination 2030)

- Travel time
- · Daily vehicle miles traveled
- Daily vehicle hours traveled
- Average trip length
- Daily hours of delay
- Mode split (Percent of auto work trips)
- · Percent of households with access to jobs and activities
  - 10 minute walk (1/2 mile)
  - 20 minute bike ride (4 miles)
  - 30 minute transit ride

## Infrastructure, Public Facilities and Services

- Public services and utilities
- Water supply
- · Sanitary sewer
- Electrical power
- Relative cost to provide Infrastructure, Public Facilities and Services

## **Environmental Justice Measures**

- Transportation services and facilities
- Overall relative distribution of impacts
- Access to jobs for lower income workers

## Gap between Alternatives and Forecast Growth

· Compare PSRC small area forecasts with growth alternatives

## E. Analysis Tools

To develop alternatives and support the EIS analysis, PSRC uses a suite of analytical tools for long-range planning. These are discussed briefly below, and in greater detail in *Appendix D*, on the attached compact disk.

## INDEX - PAINT THE REGION

At the outset of the VISION 2020 project, the PSRC recognized the value a new sketch-planning tool would add in helping decision makers consider various growth scenarios and select alternatives for evaluation in an environmental impact statement.

INDEX is software that works within a Geographic Information System, allowing the user to "paint" a variety of land uses in a neighborhood or region, and then evaluate the impacts of changes that are made.

Within INDEX, PSRC defined a custom set of land use categories that correspond with local comprehensive plan designations. Each land use category carries with it set population and employment values. Through the application of these land use categories, the user simulates the end state of development in an area.

PSRC next defined a variety of regional growth scenarios based on distribution among broad classes of cities and other regional geographies.

The INDEX tool was used to paint these regional scenarios.

## TRAVEL DEMAND MODEL

EMME/2 is the modeling software used by PSRC to run the regional travel demand model. The travel demand model currently employs the traditional four-step modeling process (trip generation, trip distribution, mode choice, assignment).

The travel model uses demographic, employment, and land use inputs. These are combined with travel survey data to generate trips used as demand. The trips are paired up in the trip distribution process (destination choice model for work-trips, gravity model for non-work trips). The mode choice model determines the mode of travel for each trip and the time-of-day model allocates trips to the five time periods. Finally the assignment process uses shortest path algorithms iteratively to load the networks.

A vehicle availability model and a time-of-day model are included. Five time periods are modeled overall (two time periods for transit trips) with seven vehicle types (Single Occupant Vehicle [SOV], High Occupancy Vehicle with two occupants [HOV2], High Occupancy Vehicle with three or more occupants [HOV3+], Vanpool, Light Truck, Medium Truck, Heavy Truck) as well as bus, ferry, rail, and non-motorized modes. Resulting performance measures include daily and peak period traffic volumes, congested speeds/times, mode splits, origins/destinations, trips by purpose and Volume-to-Capacity ratios among others.

#### **AIR QUALITY MODEL**

The process for estimating regional air quality involves the integration of the Regional Council's land use and travel demand modeling with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's MOBILE 6.2 vehicle emissions modeling software. The air quality analysis is based on the most recent population and employment forecasts. The modeling process and results are coordinated with the Regional Council's air quality partner agencies.

## F. Next Steps in Developing the VISION

## PREFERRED GROWTH ALTERNATIVE

A 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). The preferred growth alternative will then be published in a supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement for additional public comment in the winter of 2007. A draft VISION document containing the Multicounty Planning Policies will accompany the supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The preferred growth alternative is not an attempt to forecast growth. As with the original VISION in 1990, the update is meant to identify a preferred way to grow. The question is, "what is the preferred way to accommodate 1.6 million more people and 1.1 million new jobs while maintaining our quality of life?" One of the objectives of the update project is to analyze alternatives in order to understand the impacts of different growth distributions. The preferred growth alternative must be within our abilities to achieve or to make significant progress towards achieving. The VISION is meant to set high but achievable goals.

The selection of the preferred growth alternative will be guided by the following:

- · Public comments.
- Decisions by elected officials.
- EIS analysis.
- Existing VISION and adopted public policy.
- Evaluation criteria.
- Comparison to sub-county forecasts (e.g., PSRC's small area forecasts).

The regional VISION is longer range and addresses a much larger and complex geography than that of a local jurisdiction. The regional VISION is not simply a much larger version of a local comprehensive plan. While the relationship of regional plan to local plan is mutually reinforcing, the regional plan plays the role of portraying the larger picture. As with the original VISION 2020 strategy, this big-picture VISION provides a benefit to localities by creating a common planning context. In turn, the local plan offers the details and specifics for implementation, including fiscal, infrastructure, and capacity analysis. It is appropriate for local level planning to be more detailed and address specific issues that are more appropriately addressed locally.

The following pyramid diagram (Figure 3-7) and table explain the structure of the preferred growth alternative. The diagram shows the four scales of the analysis. The top two layers represent the scale of the preferred growth alternative. It shows that the preferred alternative will be adopted for each of the "regional geographies" at the regional level — metropolitan cities, core suburban cities, larger suburban cities, small cities, unincorporated areas, and rural areas. In addition, each of these geographies will be broken down by county.

The two remaining levels of analysis (the individual city level and the 5.5 acre grid cell level) will not be adopted as part of the preferred growth alternative. These two levels of work serve only as technical inputs to support model runs and the environmental review.

Regional Geographies - By Region, Metro Cities, Core Suburban Cities, Larger Suburban Cities, Small Cities, Preferred Growth Unincorporated Areas, and **Alternative** Rural Areas Regional Geographies - By County with Explanation Used as Technical Inputs for Model Individual Cities Runs and 750,000 Grid Cells Environmental Review Only

FIGURE 3-6: STRUCTURE OF THE PREFERRED GROWTH ALTERNATIVE

## VISION DOCUMENT AND NEW MULTICOUNTY PLANNING POLICIES

Between September 2003 and July 2004, the Growth Management Policy Board conducted an extended process to review policies and provisions in the existing VISION 2020 document. The purpose of this review was to provide preliminary guidance during the VISION 2020 Update scoping process on possible additions, deletions, or revisions to consider in the update to the regional strategy.<sup>2</sup>

Through its work, the Growth Management Policy Board offered the following direction:

- Fully integrate growth management, economic development, transportation, and environmental planning.
- The updated VISION should be developed with an "environmental framework."
- Health should be a theme woven throughout the updated VISION.
- Address the importance of centers development at all levels: regional, subregional and local.
- · Improve coordination between regional, countywide and local planning where there is regional agreement.
- Provide regional guidance for addressing housing-related issues, including affordable housing and jobs-housing balance.
- Expand the treatment of rural areas in the updated VISION beyond a one-size-fits-all approach.
- Be attentive to issues related to social and environmental justice.

Once a preferred growth alternative has been selected, revised multicounty planning policies will be drafted. They will address all policy requirements outlined in the Growth Management Act (36.70A.210), and are proposed to be arranged in five topic areas: (1) environment, (2) development pattern, (3) economy, (4) transportation, and (5) service provision and orderly development. For more information, see *Chapter 7 – Discussion of Multicounty Planning Policies*.

The draft policies will then be released with the supplemental draft environmental impact statement (SDEIS) for review and comment. The release will be followed by a 45-day public comment period. Input and feedback received during this period will be reviewed and considered and the draft policies will be revised accordingly. Revised draft policies, along with revisions to the preferred growth alternative, will then be finalized for review and action by the region's elected officials in 2007. Final action on the updated VISION and the updated multicounty planning policies will take place at a meeting of PSRC's General Assembly in 2007.

## G. How to Stay Involved

The Puget Sound Regional Council's goal is to assure early and continuous involvement by the public in the plan update, and its work is organized to encourage public participation. The region has some tough choices to make to get from four broad alternatives to a single vision that reflects the values and aspirations of the region.

The Council wants to make sure that you are informed and involved as the VISION update project moves forward. Throughout the VISION 2020 process, Puget Sound Regional Council staff will go out to 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.

Participants in the review process are asked to comment on 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 EIS to form a hybrid that represents the alternative you prefer.

For information on how to comment or stay involved, please see the *Fact Sheet* at the beginning of the DEIS or use the *Comment Form* at the end of the document.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> For more information on the Policy Board's review of existing VISION 2020 policies and strategies, please see: http://www.psrc.org/projects/vision/pubs/policyreview.pdf. Note: This document was finalized as a "Preliminary Report" in order to reflect that any final decisions on the policies and strategies will be made at a later stage in the VISION 2020 Update project.