



Discussion of Multicounty Planning Policies

The analysis of the growth distribution alternatives are part of a process that will lead to an updated VISION 2020 strategy, complete with updated multicounty planning policies. The updated VISION 2020 will contain a preferred strategy for how the region should grow and the updated policies will be structured to help implement this strategy.

This chapter discusses the existing policies, along with possible revisions for the updated VISION. The chapter is arranged as follows:

- What Are Multicounty Policies and How Are They Used?
- Currently Adopted Public Policy
- Policy Assessment in Initial Phases of the VISION 2020 Update Project
 - Scoping and the Growth Management Policy Board’s Review of Existing Multicounty Planning Policies
 - Information and Material for Developing New Policy
 - Broad Policy Areas that the Growth Management Policy Board Has Asked to Be Incorporated into the Public Review of the EIS
- Evaluation on Existing and Revised Multicounty Planning Policies
 - Environment
 - Development Patterns
 - Economy
 - Transportation
 - Public Services
- Next Steps

What Are Multicounty Policies and How Are They Used?

Multicounty planning policies adopted according to the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.210(7)) are essentially countywide planning policies adopted by two or more counties. According to the Act, multicounty policies are written policy statements that are used for the purpose of establishing a regionwide framework from which the county and city comprehensive plans are developed and adopted. Multicounty policies have both a practical and a substantive effect on the comprehensive plans of cities and counties. VISION 2020 includes the multicounty policies for the four-county region.



PURPOSE OF MULTICOUNTY PLANNING POLICIES

The value of having multicounty planning policies (MPPs) is several-fold. First, the MPPs are incorporated into a long-range strategy (VISION) at a four-county, regional level. They provide a common framework for local plans, as well as for other large-scale planning efforts in the region, including countywide planning policies, functional plans developed by PSRC, and plans developed by other groups and agencies, such as Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, transit agencies, and others.

Second, MPPs also provide an opportunity for the local elected officials in this region to collectively craft solutions that may not be appropriate in other parts of the state. Such policies are developed around issues, which the central Puget Sound region holds in common. The policies serve as statements of shared values. These regional policies can take the form of a definition, a general rule with specifically listed exceptions, or other approaches. MPPs can run the gamut from very detailed to very general.

Finally, MPPs provide assurance to local jurisdictions that those issues with broad benefit that would be difficult for individual localities to address alone will be addressed regionwide, within a collaborative and equitable framework — rather than 86 fragmented and unilateral ones.

GUIDANCE FROM THE GROWTH MANAGEMENT HEARINGS BOARD AND COURT CASES

The same section of the Growth Management Act that authorizes multicounty planning policies (MPPs) also authorizes the adoption of countywide planning policies. The Central Puget Sound Growth Management Hearings Board has clarified the purpose of countywide planning policies — in ways that have applicability to multicounty policies as well. At least three purposes have been assigned to such policies:

1. The immediate purpose of the countywide planning policies is to achieve consistency between and among the plans of cities and counties on regional matters.¹
2. A long-term purpose of the countywide planning policies is to facilitate the transformation of local governance in urban growth areas so that cities become the primary providers of urban governmental services.²
3. Another long-term purpose of the countywide planning policies is to direct urban development to urban areas and to reduce sprawl.³

The same principles apply to VISION 2020 and its multicounty planning policies. A court ruling in the 1997 *Des Moines, et al.* case states that, although the Legislature did not explicitly direct that regional plans should prevail over local plans, “*when construed as a whole, the GMA evinces the Legislature’s intent to discard the traditional land use system in which each jurisdiction functioned as an isolated entity in favor of a scheme which stresses coordination, cooperation, and integration.*”

The case goes on to state that “*in light of this legislative purpose, we agree with the PSRC that if the coordinated planning process does not result in consistency between regional and local plans, the regional plans must prevail.*”⁴

SOME FURTHER USES OF THE MULTICOUNTY PLANNING POLICIES

In addition to the purposes described above, multicounty policies are used to guide a number of regional processes, including the review and certification of local comprehensive plans, the evaluation of transportation projects seeking PSRC funding, and developing criteria for PSRC projects, such as congestion management.

¹ 92-3-0009c, Poulsbo, et al., v. Kitsap Co., Final Decision and Order, April 6, 1993 [at 23]. Central Puget Sound Growth Management Hearings Board.

² Ibid.

³ 93-3-0005c, Edmonds, et al., Final Decision and Order, October 4, 1993 [at 25]. Central Puget Sound Growth Management Hearings Board.

⁴ 97 Wn. App. 920 *The City of Des Moines, et al., Appellants, v. The Puget Sound Regional Council, et al., Respondents.* Central Puget Sound Growth Management Hearings Board.

Currently Adopted Public Policy

VISION 2020 was first adopted in 1990, and last updated in 1995. This strategy is organized around eight policy categories, which are based on the policy topics identified for countywide and multicounty policies in the Washington Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.210(3)). Each of the eight sections includes (1) a strategy discussion, (2) a framework multicounty policy for the specific topic, and (3) additional multicounty policies. Implementation actions are identified in a separate chapter at the end of the document. The eight policy categories are:

- 1. Urban Growth Areas:** 13 policies⁵
- 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 policies
- 8. Transportation:** 41 policies

The existing VISION calls for “diverse, economically and environmentally healthy communities framed by open space and connected by a high-quality, multimodal transportation system that provides effective mobility for people and goods” (page 1). Within urban areas, the VISION “supports creation of compact communities with employment and housing focused in centers” (page 1). The strategy advances “development in our communities to make it easier to walk, bicycle and use transit” (page 1).

In discussing the challenges the region faces in accommodating projected growth in population and jobs for the year 2020, the VISION states that “the crux of the strategy is to restore connections between where we live, work and recreate and create an urban environment that is amenable to walking, bicycling and using transit” (page 8). Urban centers are to be “connected and served by fast and frequent high capacity transit service” (page 8). The strategy calls for a “greater variety of housing choices” and affordable housing for “households of different incomes and needs” (page 8).

Rural lands are to be preserved on a “long-term basis by ensuring that proposed development is consistent with rural character” (page 8). VISION 2020 also advances a regional greenspace network comprised of “portions of rural areas, together with natural resource lands, critical areas and other lands” (page 9).

Regarding the region’s economy, VISION 2020 emphasizes “economic stability and diversity” (page 9). It calls for investment in “services that will promote economic activity” (page 9).

The strategy promotes “a multimodal transportation system for the region that is integrated with and supported by the growth management and economic strategy” (page 11). VISION 2020 contains the following excerpt:

Transportation improvement and programs are balanced to establish a more efficient transportation system, shifting emphasis from highways and vehicle movement to travel options that support the movement of people and goods. This balanced system will provide opportunities for selecting among different travel options, including private automobile, transit, ridesharing, walking, and biking to move around and throughout our communities. (See page 11)

The transportation provisions in VISION 2020 (as well as in its related metropolitan transportation plan, *Destination 2030*) are arranged under four policy headings:

1. Optimize and manage the use of transportation facilities and services.
2. Manage travel demand addressing traffic congestion and environmental objectives.
3. Focus transportation investments supporting transit and pedestrian-oriented land use patterns.
4. Expand transportation capacity offering greater mobility options.

⁵ The number of total policies in parentheses includes both the framework policy and additional multicounty policies for each topic area.



With regard to other services and facilities, the VISION promotes strategic investments in public facilities and services to support the growth pattern called for in the strategy. VISION 2020 emphasizes facility planning and investments that “reinforce cities as the primary locations for growth” (page 10).

Policy Assessment in the Initial Phases of the VISION 2020 Update Project

SCOPING AND THE GROWTH MANAGEMENT POLICY BOARD’S REVIEW OF EXISTING 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 changes or additions to consider in the update to the regional strategy. The intent was not to develop formal recommendations at this time, but to get guidance from the Board on potential issues and opportunities to consider throughout the update process. The Board reviewed six of the eight major policy areas in the 1995 VISION 2020 document, including (1) open space, resource protection and critical areas, (2) rural areas, (3) urban growth areas, (4) economics, (5) housing, and (6) contiguous and orderly development.⁶

The Board issued a preliminary report on its review of existing policies in February 2004, with two addenda produced after its meetings in April and July.⁷ During this review, the Board identified areas where policies needed to be strengthened, areas where there were gaps, policies that could benefit from additional detail and clarity, and ways to keep the VISION *current, relevant, and useful for decision-makers and the public*. In addition, the Board worked with input from the scoping process and concluded that the revised multicounty policies should:

- Build on the current VISION.
- Be bold and provide regional leadership.
- Address new areas (and strengthen those areas that need it).
- Add clarity and detail.
- Provide guidance for implementation.
- Add measurable objectives where possible.

INFORMATION AND MATERIAL FOR DEVELOPING REVISED MULTICOUNTY PLANNING POLICIES

Parallel to the work that developed the four alternatives under review in this Draft Environmental Impact Statement, was a project to develop a series of issue papers on major topics identified by the Growth Management Policy Board through the scoping process as meriting additional research and analysis. Outcomes from these papers have been incorporated into various parts of the analysis in this Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

This section builds on the policy-related recommendations in the ten issue papers (plus two related papers) that have been reviewed by the Growth Management Policy Board, which also endorsed *action-to-proceed* on these papers.⁸ The issue papers in the series — along with their completion dates — include:

1. What’s Health Got to Do with Growth Management, Economic Development and Transportation? (January 2005)
2. Subregional Centers: Town Centers, Secondary Centers, Activity Nodes, Redevelopment Corridors (March 2005)

⁶ The Transportation Policy Board will also be conducting a similar review of the transportation-related multicounty policies in 2006.

⁷ VISION 2020 Update/Policy Board Review of Existing VISION 2020 Policies and Strategies — Preliminary Report. (February 5, 2004, Growth Management Policy Board). VISION 2020 Update/Policy Board Review of Existing VISION 2020 Policies and Strategies — Addendum: Housing Section. (April 2004, Growth Management Policy Board). VISION 2020 Update/Policy Board Review of Existing VISION 2020 Policies and Strategies — Addendum: Contiguous and Orderly Development. (July 2004, Growth Management Policy Board).

⁸ The Growth Management Policy Board reviewed all ten issue papers (plus the two related papers on the environment), and took *action-to-proceed* on eight of the papers (plus the two related papers). Action-to-proceed means that the Policy Board is providing direction for further development of the considerations in the issue papers into more detailed recommendations for the update. The issue paper addressing the economy was subsequently approved for *action-to-proceed* by the Economic Development District Board. The issue paper on transportation was approved for *action-to-proceed* by the Transportation Policy Board in January 2006.

3. Growth Management by the Numbers: Population, Household and Employment Growth Targets in the Central Puget Sound Region (July 2005)
4. Environmental Planning — *including related papers on Energy Consumption and Infrastructure Capacities and Sewer Utility Status* (August 2005)
5. Rural Areas (August 2005)
6. Housing (August 2005)
7. Regional Demographic and Growth Trends (August 2005)
8. Environmental Justice Research (August 2005)
9. Economics (November 2005)
10. Transportation (January 2006)

These issue papers are included in the appendices to this statement. In addition, two informational papers were also developed under contract during this phase of work to provide additional information to the Growth Management Policy Board:

- At the Microscale: Compact Growth and Adverse Health Impacts (by Gail Sandlin, November 2005)
- Appropriate Urban Densities in the Central Puget Sound Region: Local Plans, Regional Visions, and the Growth Management Act (by Joe Tovar, November 2005)

Two other informational papers were developed by PSRC staff:

- Information Paper on the Cost of Sprawl
- Pre-GMA Vested Development in Rural Areas of the Central Puget Sound Region

All four of these information papers are also included in the appendices. What follows is a discussion of implications by major policy areas.

BROAD POLICY AREAS THE GROWTH MANAGEMENT POLICY BOARD HAS ASKED TO BE INCORPORATED INTO THE PUBLIC REVIEW OF THE EIS

Through its work in reviewing existing policies and developing preliminary recommendations through the issue paper series, the Growth Management Policy Board has 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.

Evaluation on Existing and Revised Multicounty Planning Policies

While the four alternatives selected for evaluation in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement were developed to have distinct emphases, they also share some common features:

- Developed in conjunction with a regional *environmental framework* that is:
 - Designed to preserve resource lands in the region.
 - Attentive to protection of critical areas.
 - Attentive to open space and habitat preservation.
- Advance environmental justice.



- Direct future development primarily into designated urban growth areas and their cities.
- Ensure that what development does occur in rural areas (that is, outside of rural town centers) is rural in character.
- Continue to focus on centers — both regional and subregional — as strategic locations for future development.
- Promote coordinated economic planning.
- Assume the provisions of the *Destination 2030* transportation plan will already be in place by 2040.

The overall VISION for the updated strategy should be build on this common foundation and seek to better integrate growth management, economic planning, transportation, and other infrastructure in an environmentally responsible way that improves the well-being of the region’s people.

The remaining portions of this section describe general revisions proposed for the multicounty planning policies to advance the alternatives presented in this Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The discussion of revised policies is arranged around five categories: (1) Environment, (2) Development Patterns, (3) Economy, (4) Transportation, and (5) Public Services and Orderly Development. For each category, there is a brief summary of how the topic is treated in the current multicounty policies, followed by three sets of recommendations:

- 1. Strengthen Strategies and Policies.** This grouping focuses mainly on revising and adding to existing policies to provide clearer direction for decision-making. This includes incorporating new policies on topics not previously addressed in VISION 2020.
- 2. Add Detail and Clarity.** This grouping primarily focuses on adding more specific language to policies and provisions currently in VISION 2020.
- 3. Make Implementing and Monitoring Easier.** This grouping focuses is intended to link policy language to standards-of-comparison in order to better appraise how well policy goals and objectives are to be addressed.

ENVIRONMENT

In the 1995 VISION strategy, the environment was addressed in the section titled *Open Space, Resource Protection and Critical Areas*, as well as through the air quality related assessment of transportation. Open space was recognized as a broad term that could include environmentally sensitive areas, nature resource lands, as well as parks and trails. The VISION called for development of a *greenspace strategy*, which resulted in the completion of some initial work in the form a regional greenspace database. Air and water quality protection were tied to local comprehensive plan development and implementation.

Strengthen Strategies and Policies

- The updated VISION 2020 strategy should expand the breadth of treatment of environmental issues in the 1995 document. The update should be organized around an environmental framework that provides a context for planning, development, the provision of services, and environmental management in the central Puget Sound ecoregion.
- Utilize *landscape-scale ecological processes* for future regional, subregional, and local planning in urban and rural areas, as well as within resource lands.⁹
- Air quality issues have traditionally been analyzed in regional plans with an emphasis on carbon monoxide, ozone, and particulate matter. The update should expand on past analysis and advance opportunities to improve air quality as it relates to other pollutants and toxins as well, including greenhouse gases and microscale pollutants. The update should also address ways of assessing regional impacts on climate change.
- A goal of the update should be to prevent any net loss of greenspace in the four-county region. The update should also address moving forward with development of a regional greenspace strategy. Such a strategy should also address opportunities for greater accessibility to greenspace throughout the urban areas of the region, including linkage within and between communities. The urban portion of the strategy should address amenities such as public squares, boulevards, and viewpoints.
- In addressing greenspace, advance opportunities for ecological connectivity that includes connections and interactions between land and water in urban, rural and natural resource areas.

⁹ A “landscape-scale ecological process” can be defined as a highly interdisciplinary approach for assessing the relationship between spatial patterns and ecological and socioeconomic processes on multiple scales. The purpose for using such a process is to provide guidance and solutions to help develop and maintain sustainable natural and human-dominated land uses.

Add Detail and Clarity

- The update should address coordinating planning with adjacent regions to ensure compatibility of environmental management activities.
- The treatment of environmental protection should be expanded to address: (1) air and water quality, (2) waste management and resource conservation, (3) ecologically important lands, (4) environmentally-sound development and infrastructure practices, and (5) opportunities to enable form and design that enhance quality of community and active living. The update should commit to addressing regional and local roles in addressing the global problem of climate change.
- The update should include provisions designed to maintain and improve water quality and aquatic habitat. The importance of maintaining the natural hydrological surface and groundwater flow should be addressed.
- The update should advance regionwide applications of low-impact development standards and practices.
- The update should address conservation efforts to improve vegetation and habitat within urban areas, along with preserving relatively undisturbed lands beyond the urbanized portions of the region.

Make Implementing and Monitoring Easier

- Identify measurable objectives for tracking at a regional level (1) air quality, (2) water quality, (3) waste management, (4) the status of ecologically important lands, including critical areas and wildlife habitat.
- Coordinate with those entities and agencies already monitoring various environmental issues and impacts. Identify opportunities to collaborate in monitoring and reporting.

DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

This section focuses primarily on land use — including the region’s urban form or land use typology, along with other features of the built environment, especially housing. The 1995 VISION 2020 strategy presented a land use typology with three basic categories: (1) urban areas, (2) rural lands, and (3) open space, critical areas and resource lands.

Development patterns are addressed in several portions of the 1995 document, including the sections on *Urban Growth Areas, Contiguous and Orderly Development, Housing, and Rural Areas*. The strategy for urban growth areas calls for supporting “compact communities” and to focus growth in “centers.” Compact communities are defined as “urban locations which offer transportation, housing, and shopping choices that reduce the need for automobile travel and support an efficient development pattern” (page 15). VISION 2020 also calls for the redevelopment of “selected urban transportation corridors” (page 16). The document anticipates that the region would have 20 or so designated “regional growth centers” (page 8). Three types of centers are described in the document: (1) regional growth centers, (2) town centers, and (3) manufacturing/industrial centers.

“Contiguous and orderly development” is a term used in the Growth Management Act.¹⁰ VISION 2020 applies the term to the principle of encouraging the siting and timing of growth to (1) support the development of centers, and (2) to use existing service and facility capacity. The multicounty policies in this section address a wide variety of topics, including phasing growth, annexation, regulatory and taxing practices, service provision, and monitoring. Priority is given to regional growth centers and manufacturing/industrial centers for providing services and facilities. Joint planning and implementation activities to achieve local-regional consistency are also addressed in this section.

The housing provisions in the existing VISION are brief and primarily promote a variety of “housing types to meet the needs of all segments of the population” (page 32).

The strategy recognizes that rural areas are diverse and seeks to preserve rural character by “protecting and enhancing” natural areas and low-density living areas (page 33). The VISION addresses (1) permitted land uses in rural areas, (2) densities appropriate for rural character, (3) rural levels-of-service, and (4) interjurisdictional coordination.

Strengthen Strategies and Policies

- Reorganize the several topic areas that address regional land use and urban form into a single section on regional development patterns. This section would discuss development patterns in resource, rural and urban areas, including centers, housing, health and urban design.

¹⁰ RCW 36.70A.210(3).



- Support ways to further understanding and develop information on the relationship between the built environment, transportation, and public health. Better integrate planning for land use, mobility and personal well-being.
- Environmental public health should be a theme of the multicounty policies as a way to develop and maintain communities that are healthy, safe and livable.
- Clearly articulate a vision for the rural area and define “rural character.”
- Recognize distinct subareas in the rural area.
- Encourage collaboration and consistent planning with special purpose districts, tribes and military facilities — for example, the siting of school facilities.
- Maintain a centers concept that emphasizes regional growth centers, while recognizing the importance of other types of subregional centers and complete communities. A revised hierarchy should distinguish the largest 5 regional growth centers from the remaining ones. (Note: Regional funding should continue to be focused on regional scale centers.)
- Determine whether to propose that existing designated centers should be reevaluated at certain intervals in the future.
- Advance a regional housing strategy that provides constructive and specific guidance to localities for how to meet Growth Management Act and regional housing provisions for the preservation, improvement, and development of a diversity of housing types to meet the existing and projected (and changing) needs of all economic segments of the region’s population.
- Establish housing development in regional growth centers as a policy priority.
- Further define the concept of “fully contained communities” for the region. Describe provisions for evaluating if and where such developments might be appropriate.
- Encourage green development practices.
- Evaluate the concept and role of urban separators.
- Assess the relevance of the “jobs-housing balance” for planning in the central Puget Sound region.

Add Detail and Clarity

- Provide guidance and best practices for addressing health and well-being in local planning.
- The VISION for the rural area should address growth allocations, rural services and infrastructure, level-of-service standards, context-sensitive design for transportation, and rural economic development. Discuss the challenges and benefits of clustering development in rural areas.
- Discuss the role of unincorporated rural towns and cities surrounded by rural lands as service providers and priority locations for the majority of employment growth.
- Establish regional criteria for urban growth areas, including issues relating to expansion.
- Address the roles and expectations for the region’s municipalities to advance centers development. Each city should identify at least one central place to develop as a town center, with denser, mixed-use development in a more walkable, transit-oriented pattern that is a focus for the community.
- Clearly define the concept for redevelopment corridors as a particular planning geography of regional and local importance to land use planning. The definition should address concentrations and people and jobs along such corridor, along with a discussion of transit, pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Discuss specific strategies for such geographies and how they support the centers concept.
- Expand and refine physical design guidelines as needed. Urban design provisions should address: (1) overall design principles for integrating growth management, transportation, and economic development, (2) context-sensitive design, and (3) coordination of physical design guidance for unincorporated joint-planning areas.
- In the update, address regional housing comprehensively and more extensively.
- Provide guidance for regional review of housing elements in local comprehensive plans.
- In their housing provisions, localities would be asked to:

- Coordinate with other jurisdictions within their county in converting population growth targets into housing units.
- Adopt local housing targets.
- Establish direct linkages between the housing target and other housing and land use actions and provisions.

Make Implementing and Monitoring Easier

- Work with health agencies and the academic community to identify measures for assessing environmental and public health related to (1) land use, (2) water quality, (3) air quality, and (4) walkability and bikability.
- Provide direction to countywide planning policies to ensure that the various types of centers established throughout the four-county region are compatible with regional policies and provisions for centers. Also provide guidance for countywide decision-making to link centers development to infrastructure funding, including funding for transportation.
- Develop design guidelines for redevelopment corridors that can be applied locally. Guidelines should address community character, pedestrian environment, and opportunities for increased travel options for transit, walking and biking.
- Monitor and report on issues and trends affecting centers — including areas immediately adjacent to and served by centers.
- Develop a regional housing monitoring program. Related to such a program, establish a process for advancing and monitoring affordable housing, including its production and retention.
- Provide technical assistance to local jurisdictions related to innovations in housing.

ECONOMY

The existing VISION’s economic strategy description identifies a number of principles and objectives designed to address economic needs based on public-private perspectives, balancing these demands with public resources, and developing information to support decision-making. The current VISION emphasizes business retention, expansion, and diversification through public-private coordination that helps to identify needs. It also recognizes the unique business needs in centers, to enhance the viability of centers and complete communities by providing adequate housing, employment, amenities and transportation. The 1995 strategy calls for supporting viable economic growth in rural areas and land use management practices that protect long-term productivity. It also discusses the need to identify transportation and communications investments that are necessary to support economic activity, accessibility, and the flow of people, information and goods. Finally, the existing economic provisions describe the need to build a regional database to track the economy and support decision-making.

Strengthen Strategies and Policies

- Emphasize the important roles and responsibilities of local governments for the successful implementation of the region’s economic strategy.
- Foster an integrated approach to local and regional economic development. Ensure that local economic planning and economic development activities are consistent and coordinated.
- Recognize the important role that local governments play in implementing the region’s VISION and Regional Economic Strategy. Describe the existing diversity of regulatory processes and the value of creating greater consistency.
- Promote an integrated approach to economic development to consider a whole variety of quality-of-life issues. Prioritize investments in our people. Support educational opportunities to provide more skilled and knowledgeable human resources. Promote economic opportunity for all citizens of the region, especially for unemployed and disadvantaged persons.
- Support industry clusters for both diversification and specialization. Identify existing and emerging industry clusters.
- Ensure that multicounty policies describe and address the clusters framework, including provisions for adding new clusters as identified through the Regional Economic Strategy process.
- Continue to encourage jobs in areas with adequate public services and in centers.



- Maintain the existing concepts of focusing and supporting growth through infrastructure investments, and including public-private perspectives in economic decision-making.
- Promote sustainable building and development practices that reinforce communities and their vitality.

Add Detail and Clarity

- Recognize the critical importance of coordinated planning for our economy.
- Articulate the mutually supportive relationship between the region’s economic strategy, the regional growth strategy, and the metropolitan transportation plan.
- Further elaborate the need to use public infrastructure funds to leverage private investment in desired locations.

Make Implementing and Monitoring Easier

- Identify measures for monitoring the provisions in the regional economic strategy.
- Continue to collaborate with other entities and agencies to develop and maintain data and to monitor performance and implementation.
- Research and document the challenges and opportunities for achieving long-term efficiencies in the region’s transportation system to enable greater household economic benefits.

TRANSPORTATION

A hallmark of both VISION 2020 and *Destination 2030*, which is the transportation plan for VISION 2020, is the foundational principle that land use and transportation are mutually supportive and therefore inextricably linked. The way land is developed affects mobility and accessibility — and vice versa. Both VISION 2020 and *Destination 2030* have received national recognition for addressing land use and growth strategies as part of the overall transportation plan for the central Puget Sound region. The transportation system in VISION 2020 and *Destination 2030* calls for connecting multiple regional centers. Additional emphasis is also placed on improving total regional mobility within and between the region’s diverse communities by preserving the basic elements of all transportation modal systems. These documents also recognize that transportation is a vital component of a vibrant and economically sound region. More recently, as the Regional Council has taken on the development of a regional economic strategy, there is a recognition that each land use and transportation decision involves an economic nexus.

As envisioned in VISION 2020, the region’s future will include development in designated urban growth areas where services can be provided efficiently and where employment and housing growth will be focused in centers. The region’s land development pattern is to be served by an integrated and coordinated transportation system. This system includes roads, local and high capacity transit, ferries, freight facilities, aviation, and nonmotorized facilities. More than 40 multicounty transportation policies are in the regional strategy and they support an overall goal to “develop a transportation system that emphasizes accessibility, includes a variety of mobility options, and enables the efficient movement of people, goods and freight, and information” (Policy RT-8).

Strengthen Strategies and Policies

- Retain the benefits found in current policies that describe “how to” aspects of broader policies, but convert such statements into more appropriate and descriptive forms of regional plan direction and guidance.
- Streamline current policies to better describe desired results and outcomes of a successful regional transportation plan.
- Incorporate *environmental, health, social equity, and environmental justice* provisions more prominently throughout the discussion of transportation.
- Streamline current four-part policy framework to three parts, combining the land use section (part 3) with the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) section (part 2).
- Describe prioritization of the policy framework in the following order of importance:
 1. Preserve and optimize the existing regional transportation system.
 2. Support the regional growth strategy and increase travel choices, through TDM, pricing, land use strategies (including the development of centers), and nonmotorized travel and transit use.
 3. Address additional mobility and accessibility needs, including congestion, safety, security, health, and special needs.

- Continue to emphasize and elaborate support for a centers-based regional land use pattern served with a multimodal regional transportation system that is increasingly transit-oriented.
- In discussing *congestion, mobility and efficiency*, strengthen description of intent regarding the high-quality movement of people and goods.
- Develop regional provisions that address more effective, efficient and integrated systems operations.
- Develop provisions and best practices for context sensitive design, complete streets, and green streets.
- Support planning and zoning decisions that promote integrated land uses that provide support for walking and biking.
- Incorporate concepts and provisions from *Rural Town Centers and Corridors* project.
- Discuss the role the region can play in addressing national and international issues, such as fossil fuel availability and climate change. Such factors need to be considered in weighing the costs and benefits of proposed transportation solutions over the long term.
- Track changes in technology with implications for improving mobility, transportation system management, transportation demand management (including telecommunications and telecommuting), environmental protection and enhancement, and safety.
- Address the need within the region for coordinated security and evacuation planning in the event for natural or human-caused disasters.
- Strengthen the discussion of the region's public obligation and duty to serve the travel needs for *all segments of the region's population*, including the young, and old, those with special needs, and others for whom vehicle ownership and operation is not an option.
- Incorporate policies and provisions on transportation *finance and funding*.

Add Detail and Clarity

- Clarify regional policy intent by eliminating current redundancies and overlap among a number of the transportation-related policies.
- Clarify regional and local expectations regarding *maintenance and preservation of the existing system*.
- Prioritization principles should be designed for application to various decision-making responsibilities, including regional and countywide TIP project selection.
- Revised transportation provisions should be developed with attention to carrying out various PSRC responsibilities, such as the review and certification of local comprehensive plans. (The plan review process should be updated to incorporate provisions relating to the 2005 amendments to the Growth Management Act.)
- Add detail to regional bicycle and pedestrian strategies and actions, relating to their health benefits and key role in accessing centers, as well as to alternatives to driving alone. Treat nonmotorized travel and its supporting facilities network as a functional transportation use (rather than a recreational use).
- Provide guidance to localities regarding desired components for incorporating nonmotorized and active living provisions into their comprehensive plans as required by the 2005 amendment to the Growth Management Act.
- Describe mobility and accessibility not only to and from centers, but also within centers and between centers and their adjacent areas.
- Further describe the benefits of the relationship that mixed-use, compact and pedestrian-oriented development has with transit — both local and high-capacity.
- Expand and further detail transportation demand management strategies for the region, including growth strategies intended to address mobility and accessibility. Provide guidance to localities on incorporating TDM into local planning efforts.
- Provide guidance to local jurisdictions for their concurrency programs (1) to address multimodal considerations in both assessment and mitigation and (2) to tailor programs to focus growth.
- Expand the discussion of *safety and security* to address planning and programming for all modes of travel.



Make Implementing and Monitoring Easier

- Identify key issues for transportation monitoring.
- Work with local governments, as well as transportation and transit agencies, to establish level-of-service or other performance criteria for all modes of transportation.
- Identify means to better measure and monitor pedestrian and bicycle travel.
- Establish goals for increasing transit use, bicycle use and pedestrian travel by 2040.
- Develop a program for assessing sidewalk connectivity throughout the urbanized portions of the four-county region.
- Develop a monitoring and reporting program that incorporates estimates of total annual public and private costs of transportation. To the extent possible compare transportation costs with key economic indicators — for the region and the individual household.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES

The discussion of public services and facilities in the 1995 VISION occurs primarily in two sections: *Contiguous and Orderly Development* (see discussion above under *Development Patterns*) and *Regional Capital Facilities*. The current document discusses public services and facilities in very general terms. There is little mention of specific types of services; there are only limited references to health and human services facilities, parks, and wastewater facilities. One policy calls for developing a process for siting regional public facilities — which has not been completed (RF-3.2).

Strengthen Strategies and Policies

- Combine into a single section the various policies and provisions that address infrastructure (other than transportation), public services and facilities, and orderly development.
- Use multicounty policies to ensure that timeframes for Growth Management Act-mandated targets are standardized across the four-county region.
- Ensure that methods are in place to set employment targets.
- Integrate planning for regional growth centers into the target process.
- Address consistency in standards for facilities adjacent to and/or crossing county boundaries — for example, reconcile infrastructure standards and critical area designations at county lines.
- For all services, promote conservation and environmentally sensitive alternatives.
- Include policies that seek to ensure that special purpose district planning and programming is consistent with and supportive of regional and local growth management planning — especially regarding facility location decisions.
- Address sewer capacity and expectations for the quality of treated water.
- Address strains on onsite septic systems.
- Address water capacity and quality.
- Address natural gas supply infrastructure.
- Address electric transmission facilities, including resource adequacy, planning and operations, and environmental implications.
- Address telecommunications.

Add Detail and Clarity

- Support annexation or incorporation of all unincorporated areas within the urban growth area.
- Encourage service providers to work with 2040 (or beyond) as a target year for their planning efforts.

Make Implementing and Monitoring Easier

- Work with service providers to coordinate monitoring efforts — including data and information collection, review and assessment, and reporting.
- Continue to take advantage of new information on the provision of services.
- Track and participate in forums and roundtables relating to the provision of services.

Next steps

REVIEW PUBLIC COMMENTS

All comments received on this section of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement during the public comment period will be reviewed and considered in the development of the preferred growth alternative and draft multicounty planning policies.

DEVELOP DRAFT MULTICOUNTY PLANNING POLICIES

Once a preferred growth alternative has been selected, revised multicounty planning policies will be drafted. The preferred alternative and draft policies will then be released in a supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) for review and comment. The SEIS will be released in autumn 2006 and 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. Final action on the updated VISION and the updated multicounty planning policies will take place in fall 2007.



