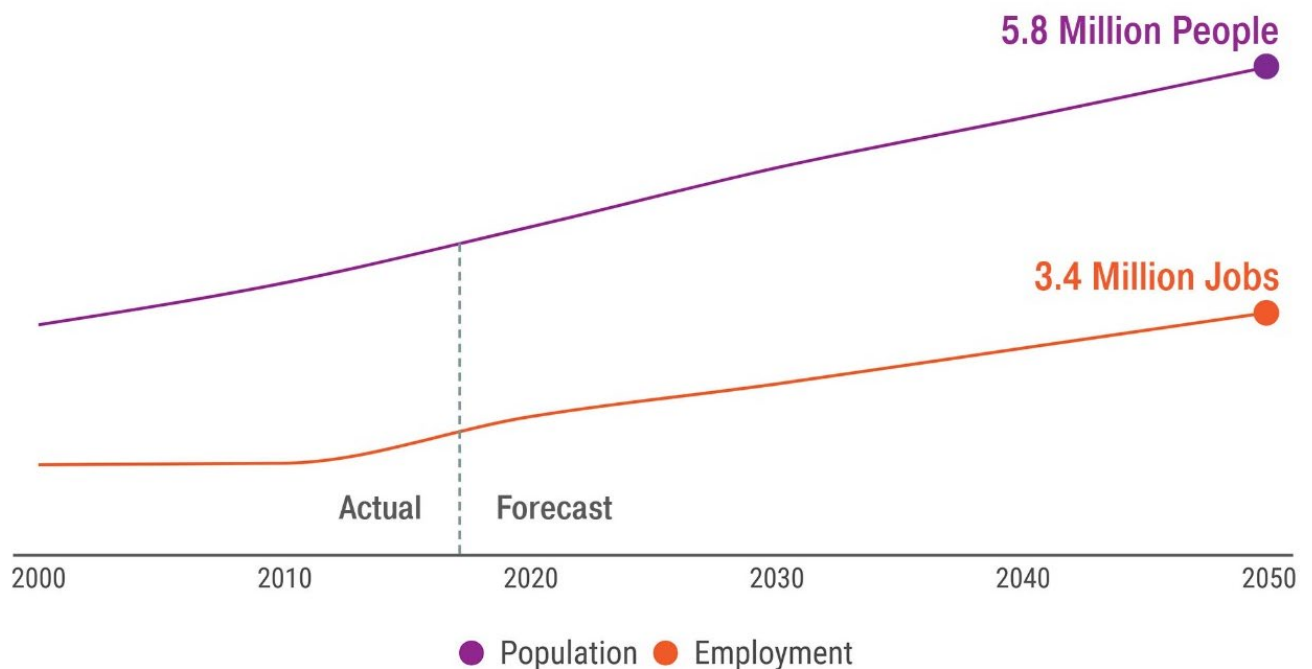




Executive Summary

VISION 2050 is a shared and integrated strategy for how and where the central Puget Sound region should grow. The region has been growing at a strong pace, with today's population at well over 4 million people. More growth is coming. Forecasts show the region needs to plan for 1.8 million additional people and 1.2 million new jobs by 2050 (from a baseline of 2017) (Figure ES-1).

Figure ES-1. Historical and Forecasted Regional Population and Employment



Source: PSRC

VISION 2040 is the region's previous plan for managing growth forecasted through the year 2040, and this update extends the plan through 2050. VISION 2050 includes overarching goals, a strategy to sustainably guide growth in the region, and multicounty planning policies as required by the state Growth Management Act (GMA) (RCW 36A.70.210). The plan also includes implementation actions at the regional, county, and local levels. VISION 2050 policy chapters address regional collaboration, the Regional Growth Strategy, the environment, climate change, development patterns, housing, the economy, transportation, and public services.

The region has had important successes implementing VISION 2040, which helps fulfill the goals of the GMA. Strong economic gains in recent years have made the region among the fastest growing in the country. The plan has helped coordinate state and regional initiatives and support local decisions. Regionally, growth is shifting toward more compact, sustainable development occurring within urban areas and cities, with cost-effective and efficient services, reduced impacts on the environment, and positive health outcomes.

At the same time, the region continues to face challenges, including the climbing cost of housing. Congestion from rapid growth is reducing access to jobs, services, and housing. While recent economic growth has been strong, prosperity has not benefited everyone or all parts of the region. Finally, pressing environmental issues such as climate change, the health of Puget Sound, and open space preservation require more collaborative, long-term action.

PSRC is updating the region's vision to plan for another decade of growth and to consider new information and changes that have occurred in the growing region. Local governments have been implementing the region's growth strategy through population and employment targets and comprehensive planning. This updated plan will guide anticipated growth in ways that support regional objectives for thriving communities, a strong economy, and a healthy environment. The following statements are the desired outcomes for the VISION 2050 plan.

The central Puget Sound region provides an exceptional quality of life and opportunity for all, connected communities, a spectacular natural environment, and an innovative, thriving economy. In 2050:

- Climate. The region's contribution to climate change has been substantially reduced.
- Community. Distinct, unique communities are supported throughout the region.
- Diversity. The region's diversity continues to be a strength. People from all backgrounds are welcome, and displacement due to development pressure is lessened.
- Economy. Economic opportunities are open to everyone, and the region competes globally and has sustained a high quality of life. Industrial, maritime, and manufacturing opportunities are maintained.
- Environment. The natural environment is restored, protected, and sustained, preserving and enhancing natural functions and wildlife habitats.
- Equity. All people can attain the resources and opportunities to improve their quality of life and enable them to reach their full potential.

- **Health.** Communities promote physical, social, and mental well-being so that all people can live healthier and more active lives.
- **Housing.** A range of housing types ensures that healthy, safe, and affordable housing choices are available and accessible for all people throughout the region.
- **Innovation.** The region has a culture of innovation that embraces and responds to change.
- **Mobility and Connectivity.** A safe, affordable, and efficient transportation system connects people and goods to where they need to go, promotes economic and environmental vitality, and supports the Regional Growth Strategy.
- **Natural Resources.** Natural resources are sustainably managed, supporting the continued viability of resource-based industries such as forestry, agriculture, and aquaculture.
- **Public Facilities and Services.** Public facilities and services support the region's communities and plans for growth in a coordinated, fair, efficient, and cost-effective manner.
- **Resilience.** The region's communities plan for and are prepared to respond to potential impacts from natural and manmade hazards.
- **Rural Areas.** Rural communities and character are strengthened, enhanced, and sustained.

What is the Regional Growth Strategy?

The Regional Growth Strategy is a strategy for sustainable growth. It helps to preserve resource lands, protect rural lands from urban-type development, and promote infill and redevelopment within urban areas to create more compact, walkable, and transit-friendly communities. Under GMA, counties, in consultation with cities, are responsible for adopting 20-year growth targets. These population and employment growth targets are a key input to local comprehensive plans, ensuring that each county is accommodating population and employment growth. Jurisdictions use growth targets to inform land use, transportation, and capital facilities in their 20-year comprehensive plans.

The Regional Growth Strategy defines roles for different types of places in accommodating the region's population and employment growth, which inform the countywide growth target-setting process. The Regional Growth Strategy also serves an important role as a coordinated regional statement of the long-range land use development assumptions that underlie the Regional Transportation Plan, required by both GMA and federal transportation planning regulations.

Counties, cities, and towns implemented VISION 2040's Regional Growth Strategy through their countywide growth targets and local comprehensive plans following the adoption of VISION 2040 in 2008. The Regional Growth Strategy Background Paper, which is included in Appendix E, outlines data trends since 2000 and after the adoption of VISION 2040 in 2008 (PSRC 2018a).

This VISION 2050 Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (Final SEIS) reviews the environmental effects of a preferred Regional Growth Strategy (the Preferred Growth

Alternative) and three other regional growth alternatives: Stay the Course (no action), Transit Focused Growth, and Reset Urban Growth.

While each of these alternatives is intended to be a strategy for sustainable growth, they distribute growth in unique patterns that have different trade-offs. This Final SEIS shows a range of land use, transportation, environmental, and other impacts that would likely occur with each of these alternatives and identifies opportunities to mitigate them.

PSRC issued a Draft SEIS on February 28, 2019 and sought feedback on the alternatives during a 60-day public comment period. Comments on the Draft SEIS and responses to those comments are provided in Appendix I. The comments and information in the Draft SEIS were considered in the development of the Preferred Growth Alternative, along with board priorities and supplemental information.

Why is PSRC doing an environmental review of VISION 2050?

The Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) requires that public agencies identify environmental impacts likely to result from plans and projects. PSRC is using the environmental review process to analyze the effects of continued growth in the region, and alternative ways of responding to and accommodating that growth. Just as VISION 2050 builds upon VISION 2040, the VISION 2040 Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) provides a foundation for the environmental review of VISION 2050. This Final SEIS builds on the VISION 2040 FEIS and provides additional information for consideration. The information presented in the Draft SEIS and this Final SEIS help inform how regional planning can best achieve the outcomes identified for VISION 2050. The Draft and Final SEIS also helped with the development of the Preferred Growth Alternative and the Executive Board's final recommendation for the growth strategy. Chapter 1 contains more information on the purpose and need for this SEIS.

How has the region changed since VISION 2040 was adopted?

The central Puget Sound region continues to be a desirable major metropolitan area, attracting new residents, employers, and visitors. It is known as a clean, healthy, safe, and diverse place with a vibrant economy and temperate climate. The region has a remarkably beautiful natural setting, including snowcapped peaks, abundant waterways and shorelines, and lush forests and greenery. The natural environment provides habitat for a wide variety of fish and wildlife, and at the same time creates economic opportunity through industries such as fishing and timber harvest, and provides numerous recreational and tourism opportunities. These features have all made the region a magnet for growth.

Key changes in the last decade:

- Technology industry employment is experiencing rapid growth, particularly in Seattle and central King County.
- Job growth has been strong in recent years but has been uneven across the region and by industry.
- Population growth is continuing at a strong pace.
- Regional demographics are changing as the population is becoming older and more ethnically and racially diverse.
- Housing production struggled to keep pace with population growth in the post-recession expansion; rent and home prices increased dramatically, causing a crisis of housing affordability.
- Transit infrastructure around the region is expanding, and transit ridership is increasing.
- Climate change is of growing urgency, and intersects with many resources including air quality, ecosystems, and water.

Chapter 2 details changes to the environmental baseline since the publication of the VISION 2040 FEIS in 2008. VISION 2050 will address these issues through the Regional Growth Strategy and regional policies and actions.

The regional population in 2017 was 4.1 million, an increase of 376,000 people—or 10 percent—from 2010 to 2017 (Figure ES-1). The VISION 2040 FEIS forecast a population of 5.0 million by 2040, whereas current forecasts have updated this to 5.3 million in 2040. By 2050, it is estimated the regional population will have grown to 5.8 million people.

Consistent with VISION 2040, the vast majority of the region's population, employment, and housing is contained inside the region's designated urban growth areas. From 2005 to 2017, the percentage of population within the urban growth area increased from 85 to 87 percent and the percentage of employment remained constant at 96 percent.

VISION 2040's Regional Growth Strategy focuses growth not only in urban areas, but more specifically in regionally designated urban centers. Between 2010 and 2017, 12 percent of the region's population growth occurred in centers. From 2010 to 2017, 37 percent of regional job growth was located in regional growth centers and 8 percent was located in manufacturing/industrial centers. Chapter 2 contains information on existing conditions for land use, population, employment, housing, and other resources.

Alternatives evaluated in this SEIS

At the heart of VISION 2050 is a shared vision of how and where the region should grow. The Regional Growth Strategy provides a description of a planned physical development pattern that the central Puget Sound region will evolve into over time. This Final SEIS includes the Preferred Growth Alternative and three distinct alternatives that initially were reviewed in a Draft SEIS. The Draft SEIS alternatives were developed after a public comment and scoping process (PSRC 2018b), extensive review by PSRC's Growth Management Policy Board, and input from regional staff and other stakeholders. The three alternatives allowed the environmental analysis to consider the effects of extending the growth strategy to 2050 and the potential effects of

changes to that strategy. This information, public comment, and additional discussion by PSRC boards and committees resulted in the development of the Preferred Growth Alternative presented in this Final SEIS. The potential environmental effects of the Preferred Growth Alternative and the other three alternatives, as well as measures to mitigate impacts, are provided in this Final SEIS.

The strategy for accommodating growth asserts that the region will sustain and grow a variety of places, such as active centers and central cities, small towns, and rural areas, into the future. Other than in natural resource lands and military installations, all growth alternatives assume that all types of communities will grow and accommodate forecast growth (1.8 million additional people and 1.2 million additional jobs), though at different rates by geography and by county.

The Regional Growth Strategy uses “regional geographies” to classify cities and unincorporated areas by roles and types. Grouping cities and other place types provides flexibility to counties and cities to identify appropriate growth targets for individual cities in each category, while acknowledging differing roles for accommodating growth. Based on scoping comments and discussion with the board, PSRC identified changes to the VISION 2040 regional geographies and developed updated classifications for cities and unincorporated urban areas. The updated regional geographies are:

- Metropolitan Cities
- Core Cities
- HCT (High-Capacity Transit) Communities
- Cities & Towns
- Urban Unincorporated Areas
- Rural
- Resource Lands
- Major Military Installations
- Indian Reservation Lands

Locations of regional geographies for the Preferred Growth Alternative are depicted in Figure ES-2. Regional geographies are discussed in more detail in Chapter 3, in addition to the alternatives summarized below.

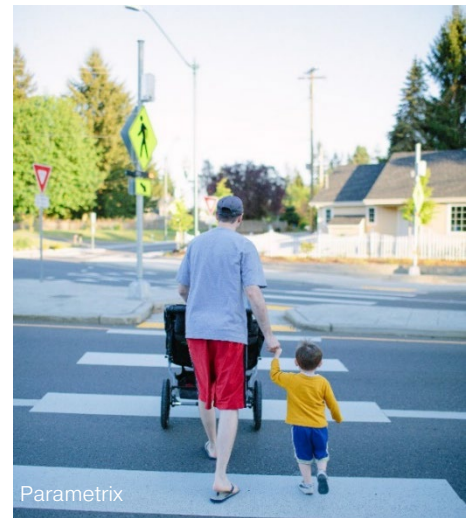
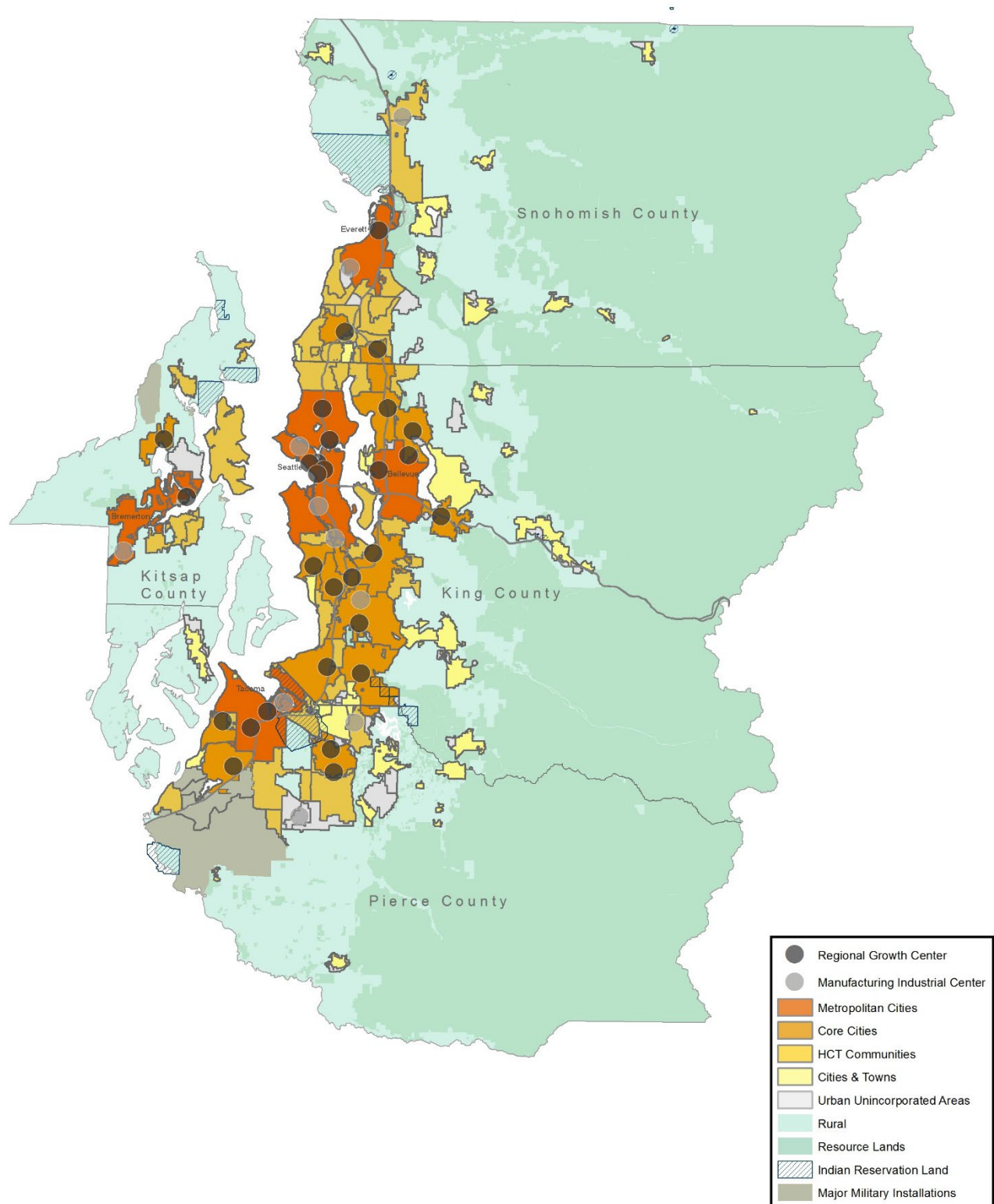


Figure ES-2. Regional Geographies



Source: PSRC

Preferred Growth Alternative

The Preferred Growth Alternative considers a compact growth pattern based on the VISION 2040 Regional Growth Strategy that assumes accelerated growth near the region's existing and planned transit investments.

The Preferred Growth Alternative is primarily based on the Transit Focused Growth Alternative, with adjustments to some growth allocations, regional geographies, and the high-capacity transit growth goal to reflect growth trends and local planning considerations (see below and Chapter 3). The alternative has an explicit goal for 65 percent of the region's population growth and 75 percent of employment growth to occur within regional growth centers and within a quarter-mile to a half-mile from current and planned investments in high-capacity transit, including light rail, bus rapid transit, commuter rail, ferries, and streetcar. This would result in the largest shares of growth to Metropolitan Cities, Core Cities, and HCT Communities.

This alternative assumes a greater role for areas served by high-capacity transit outside of Metropolitan and Core Cities. The remaining share of population and employment growth not identified for regional geographies with high-capacity transit would be distributed largely within the urban growth area among areas not served by high-capacity transit.

Growth in unincorporated urban growth areas with existing or planned high-capacity transit and planned for annexation or incorporation would be similar to cities with high-capacity transit. Growth in rural areas would be lower than in the Stay the Course and Reset Urban Growth alternatives, but slightly higher than Transit Focused Growth, comprising just 2 percent of the region's population growth. Growth in unincorporated areas without access to high-capacity transit and unaffiliated unincorporated areas is the lowest in this alternative, with 3 percent of population growth and 2 percent of employment growth.

Stay the Course (No Action) Alternative

The Stay the Course Alternative (hereafter referred to as Stay the Course) is a direct extension of the VISION 2040 Regional Growth Strategy and assumes a compact growth pattern, focused in the largest and most transit-connected cities in the region within the region's 29 designated regional growth centers. This alternative serves as the required no action alternative that must be evaluated in accordance with SEPA.

This alternative continues to direct the largest share of future growth to the region's five major Metropolitan Cities: Seattle, Bellevue, Everett, Bremerton, and Tacoma. Growth is also focused in the region's Core Cities—those other cities with regional growth centers that are concentrations of growth and serve as economic and transportation hubs for the region.

Compared to historical trends, this alternative allocates less growth in Urban Unincorporated and Rural areas and more growth in cities. Growth in Urban Unincorporated areas is envisioned as occurring in areas affiliated with cities for annexation, and growth in rural areas is minimized when compared to past trends.

This alternative maintains the VISION 2040 Regional Growth Strategy allocation of shares of growth. For this analysis, Stay the Course and subsequent data measures use the revised regional geographies. PSRC developed model inputs for Stay the Course using the existing VISION 2040 regional geographies and then calculated inputs and results based on the revised system of regional geographies.

Transit Focused Growth Alternative

The Transit Focused Growth Alternative (hereafter referred to as Transit Focused Growth) considers a compact growth pattern based on the VISION 2040 Regional Growth Strategy that assumes accelerated growth near the region's existing and planned transit investments.

Transit Focused Growth assumes an explicit goal for 75 percent of the region's population and employment growth to occur within regional growth centers and within a quarter- to a half-mile from current and planned high-capacity transit station areas, including light rail, bus rapid transit, commuter rail, ferries, and streetcar. This would result in the largest shares of growth to Metropolitan Cities, Core Cities, and HCT Communities.

The alternative also assumes a greater role in accommodating future growth for areas served by high-capacity transit outside of Metropolitan and Core Cities. Growth in unincorporated urban growth areas with existing or planned high-capacity transit and planned for annexation or incorporation would be similar to cities with high-capacity transit.

The remaining share of population and employment growth would be distributed largely within the urban growth area among areas not served by high-capacity transit based on the broad objectives for the Regional Growth Strategy. Growth in Rural areas and Urban Unincorporated areas without access to high-capacity transit and unaffiliated unincorporated areas is the lowest in this alternative.

Reset Urban Growth Alternative

The Reset Urban Growth Alternative (hereafter referred to as Reset Urban Growth) shares similarities with actual growth patterns that occurred from 2000 to 2016 and assumes a more dispersed growth pattern throughout the urban area.

Reset Urban Growth assumes a more distributed pattern throughout the urban area. This alternative would continue to allocate the largest shares of growth to Metropolitan Cities and Core Cities, although the overall growth to these geographies and HCT Communities would be less compared to the other alternatives.

Growth allocations for Cities & Towns and Urban Unincorporated areas are based on land use capacities identified in currently adopted comprehensive plans. Growth in Urban Unincorporated areas without access to high-capacity transit and unaffiliated Urban Unincorporated areas is the highest in this alternative. Growth in Rural areas would be higher than the Preferred Growth and Transit Focused Growth alternatives and slightly higher than Stay the Course.

Comparison of Alternatives

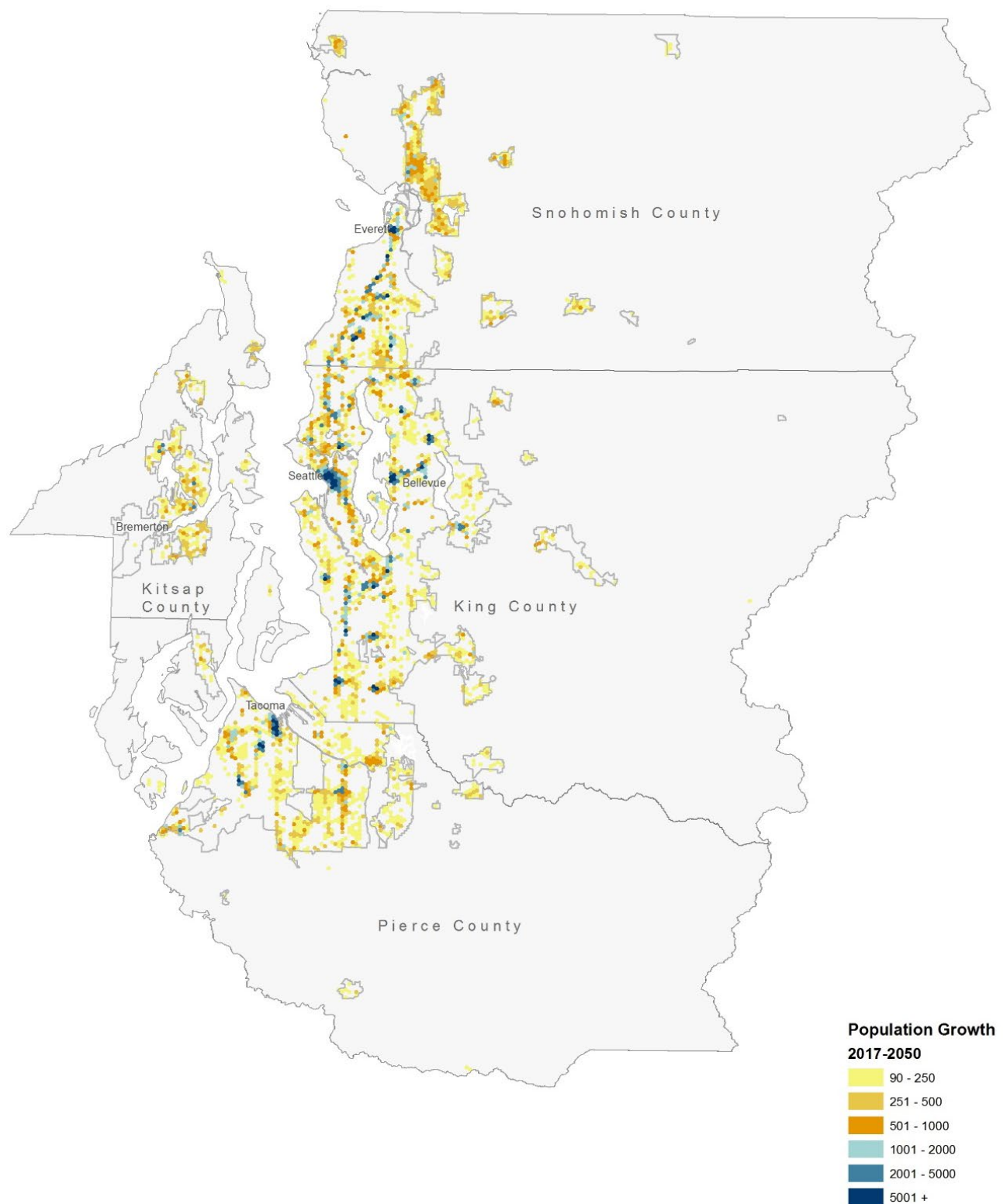
A high-level summary comparing the distribution of growth between the alternatives is presented in Table ES-1. Following the table, maps of each alternative's distribution of population growth throughout the region are shown in Figures ES-3 through ES-6.

Table ES-1. Summary Comparison of Alternatives¹

Topic	Preferred Growth	Stay the Course	Transit Focused Growth	Reset Urban Growth
What would the growth pattern look like?	Compact growth pattern based on the VISION 2040 Regional Growth Strategy that assumes accelerated growth near the region's existing and planned transit investments.	Compact growth focused in Metropolitan and Core Cities with regional growth centers. Extends current growth plan.	More compact growth focused in high-capacity transit areas in Metropolitan, Core, and HCT Communities. Less growth in outlying areas.	Growth is more distributed throughout the urban growth area, while still assuming a large share of growth to Metropolitan and Core Cities. More growth in outlying areas.
Where would population growth go?	Metropolitan Cities: 36% Core Cities: 28% HCT Communities: 24% Cities & Towns: 6% Urban Unincorporated Areas: 3% Rural Areas: 2%	Metropolitan Cities: 35% Core Cities: 28% HCT Communities: 18% Cities & Towns: 9% Urban Unincorporated Areas: 5% Rural Areas: 5%	Metropolitan Cities: 36% Core Cities: 29% HCT Communities: 23% Cities & Towns: 6% Urban Unincorporated Areas: 4% Rural Areas: 2%	Metropolitan Cities: 31% Core Cities: 25% HCT Communities: 18% Cities & Towns: 8% Urban Unincorporated Areas: 12% Rural Areas: 6%
Where would employment growth go?	Metropolitan Cities: 44% Core Cities: 35% HCT Communities: 13% Cities & Towns: 4% Urban Unincorporated Areas: 2% Rural Areas: 1%	Metropolitan Cities: 44% Core Cities: 36% HCT Communities: 12% Cities & Towns: 5% Urban Unincorporated Areas: 3% Rural Areas: 1%	Metropolitan Cities: 44% Core Cities: 35% HCT Communities: 13% Cities & Towns: 4% Urban Unincorporated Areas: 2% Rural Areas: 1%	Metropolitan Cities: 41% Core Cities: 32% HCT Communities: 12% Cities & Towns: 6% Urban Unincorporated Areas: 6% Rural Areas: 2%

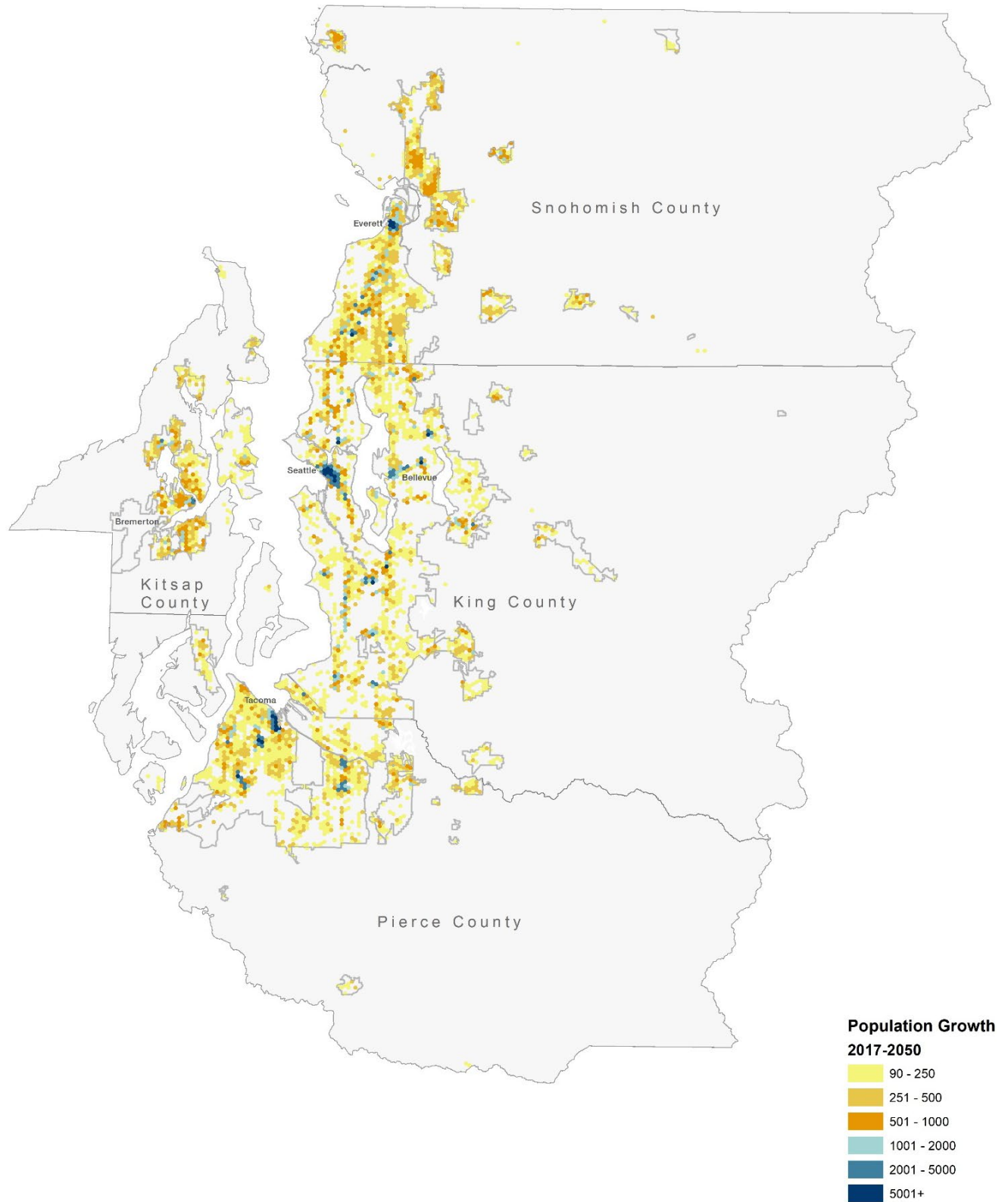
¹ Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding

Figure ES-3. Preferred Growth Alternative: Population Growth Distribution, 2017–2050



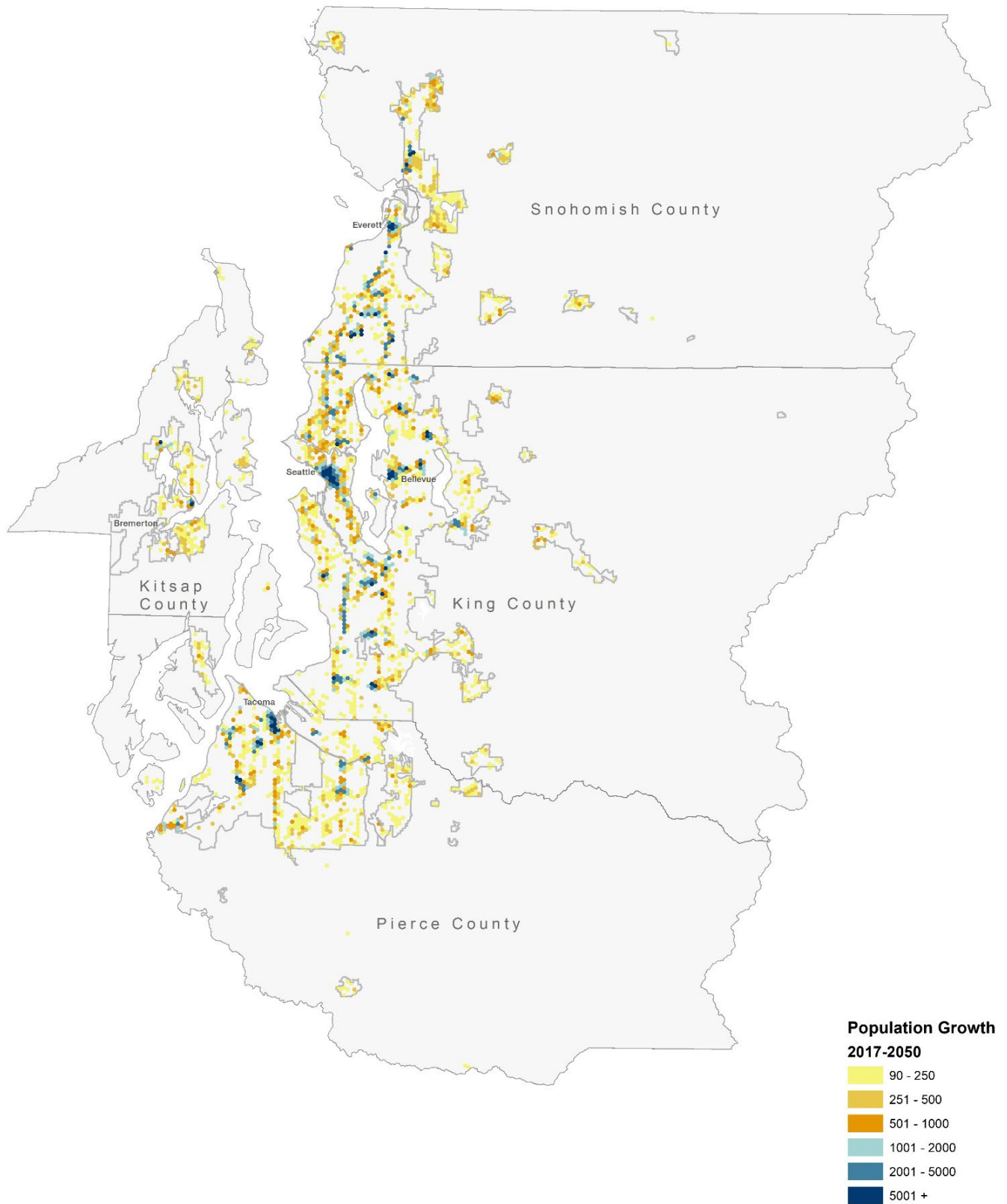
Source: PSRC

Figure ES-4. Stay the Course: Population Growth Distribution, 2017–2050



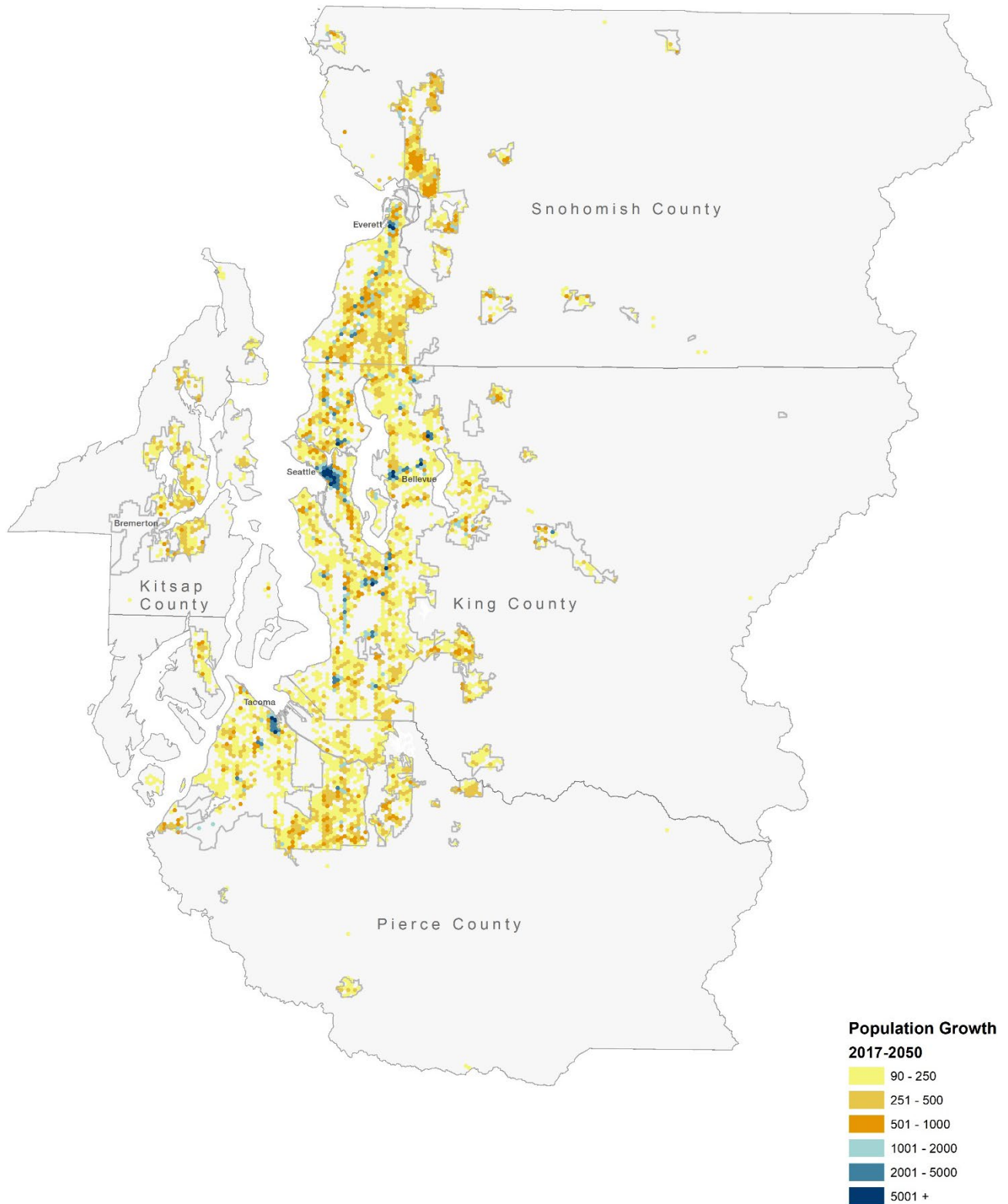
Source: PSRC

Figure ES-5. Transit Focused Growth: Population Growth Distribution, 2017–2050



Source: PSRC

Figure ES-6. Reset Urban Growth: Population Growth Distribution, 2017–2050



Source: PSRC

All alternatives assume the same amount of regional growth in population and employment from 2017 to 2050—1.8 million additional people and 1.2 million additional jobs. As described above, the difference between alternatives is how the growth is allocated among the regional geographies—Metropolitan Cities, Core Cities, HCT Communities, Cities & Towns, Urban Unincorporated, and Rural areas—and among the region’s four counties. This distribution of additional growth throughout the region results in environmental impacts. Some impacts are similar across all alternatives, and some impacts show differences between alternatives. Key impacts common to all alternatives are summarized in Table ES-2 and key differences are summarized in Table ES-3.

Comprehensive discussion of all impacts can be found in Chapters 4 and 5. See Appendix C for discussion of the modeling process and results.

The results summarized here are the result of analysis of the growth distribution patterns for each alternative. Local plans that will be updated in accordance with GMA are not included. These results also do not include planning and improvements that may occur at transit station areas or the effects of other upcoming subarea plans.

Table ES-2. Impacts Common to All Alternatives

Resource	Impacts Common to All Alternatives
Population, Employment, Housing, and Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population and employment growth directed toward built areas will increase density and encourage infill and redevelopment. Population and employment growth in less-developed and Rural areas would result in lower-density land uses and potential development pressures on natural resource lands. There is potential for displacement unless affordable housing opportunities and/or other supports are provided.
Transportation	<p>Compared to current conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The average distance people drive and the amount of time spent in a vehicle each day would be reduced. The average time people spend in congestion each year is forecast to increase. Overall transit ridership is forecast to more than double. Generally, the percentage of trips made by driving alone would decrease, while walking, biking, and transit use would increase. Substantially more jobs would be accessible by transit, walking, or biking.
Air Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There would be a marked reduction in all pollutants, including CO₂e (a measure used for reporting greenhouse gases).
Ecosystems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities associated with development, including clearing, grading, vegetation removal, and conversion of land to impervious surface would have adverse impacts to ecosystem resources such as fragmentation and degradation of habitat.
Water Quality and Hydrology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amount of impervious surface would increase as a result of added development, which may alter stormwater hydrology, reduce aquatic habitat, and degrade water quality.
Public Services and Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demand for additional utilities including energy, solid waste, sanitary sewer, water, and stormwater would be anticipated. Costly repair and replacement would be needed for many of these utilities between now and 2050. General service expansions of fire and police services, health and medical services, and schools would be anticipated.

Table ES-2. Impacts Common to All Alternatives (continued)

Resource	Impacts Common to All Alternatives
Parks and Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For both local and regional parks, recreation, and open space resources, growth would lead to increased use, which could lead to degradation of the recreational experience, potential degradation of natural and open space resources, and increased conflicts between users.
Environmental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development or redevelopment could occur in contaminated areas and expose construction workers or people living near construction activities to contamination or pollution; however, growth in contaminated areas would result in a beneficial impact through cleanup activities. Human health would experience beneficial impacts from increased walking, biking, and transit and increased access to open spaces. Increasing density of the urban environment could cause localized air quality and noise impacts if not properly planned for and mitigated.
Historic, Cultural, and Archaeological Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development could alter landscapes and properties with archaeological, cultural, or historic resources through damage and destruction.
Visual Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development in existing urban areas would result in an increase in density, height, and scale of new and redeveloped areas, which could impede viewsheds and increase shading but may provide beneficial impacts through redevelopment of aging infrastructure and poorly maintained properties. Development in existing outlying and Rural areas would potentially convert undeveloped spaces to other uses and may not be consistent with community visual character.
Earth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impacts from earthquakes, landslides, volcanic activities, and floods could result in damage to buildings and infrastructure, disruptions to utilities, economic losses, and injuries and loss of life.
Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth in urban areas would likely increase localized noise impacts through the replacement of vegetation with paved surfaces and buildings, an increase in the number of noise sources (e.g., vehicles, construction equipment, and emergency vehicles), and an increase in population density.

Key differences that can be distinguished between alternatives are summarized in Table ES-3. A ranking is included for each key difference. The circles represent the performance ranking of the four alternatives for each indicator. The rankings are relative and do not capture the magnitude of the difference between alternatives. Not all indicators utilize all four available rankings. Where performance is considered essentially the same, two or more alternatives may receive the same ranking. A protocol based on evaluating both the absolute numeric and percentage difference between alternatives was used to determine whether values are distinct, slightly distinct, or essentially the same. Rankings are based on unrounded results. See the supplemental data tables in Appendix B for the detailed results for each indicator.

Table ES-3. Summary Comparison of Impacts that can be Differentiated Between Alternatives²

Rating Key:



Worst Performing Alternative



Best Performing Alternative

	2050 Growth Alternatives			
Topic	Preferred Growth	Stay the Course	Transit Focused Growth	Reset Urban Growth
Population, Employment, Housing				
What would the balance of jobs and housing be? In 2017, King County subareas: 0.97 to 1.32. Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish counties: 0.71 to 0.78 (jobs-housing ratios indexed to the regional average)	 Improves jobs-housing ratios compared to baseline (2017) and Stay the Course. In 2050, King County subareas: 1.03 to 1.29. Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish counties: 0.80 to 0.81.	 Worsens jobs-housing ratios compared to baseline (2017) and the other alternatives. In 2050, King County subareas: 1.12 to 1.37. Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish counties: 0.65 to 0.77.	 Improves jobs-housing ratios compared to baseline (2017) and Stay the Course. In 2050, King County subareas: 1.03 to 1.29. Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish counties: 0.80 to 0.81.	 Improves jobs-housing ratios compared to baseline (2017) and Stay the Course. In 2050, King County subareas: 1.02 to 1.27. Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish counties: 0.79 to 0.81.
How much moderate-density housing would be built? Regional housing stock in 2017: 16% high-density 20% moderate-density 64% low-density (regional housing stock by density) Moderate-density housing tends to provide more affordable housing choices.	 Regional housing stock growth (2017–2050): 61% high-density 15% moderate-density 24% low-density	 Regional housing stock growth (2017–2050): 51% high-density 15% moderate-density 34% low-density	 The highest level of moderate-density housing built. Regional housing stock growth (2017–2050): 63% high-density 16% moderate-density 20% low-density	 The lowest level of moderate-density housing built. Regional housing stock growth (2017–2050): 52% high-density 14% moderate-density 34% low-density

² Table ES-2 describes impacts common to all alternatives.

Table ES-3. Summary Comparison of Impacts that can be Differentiated Between Alternatives (continued)













Topic	2050 Growth Alternatives			
	Preferred Growth	Stay the Course	Transit Focused Growth	Reset Urban Growth
Land Use				
How close would growth be to rural and resource lands? Population and employment growth in proximity to urban growth boundary (2017–2050)	 8% of growth throughout the region occurs in proximity to the urban growth boundary.	 9% of growth throughout the region occurs in proximity to the urban growth boundary.	 6% of growth throughout the region occurs in proximity to the urban growth boundary, the lowest level.	 10% of growth throughout the region occurs in proximity to the urban growth boundary, the highest level.
How much land would be needed for development? Acres of developed land (2017–2050)	 184,000 acres of land developed or redeveloped.	 324,000 acres of land developed or redeveloped, tied with Reset Urban Growth for the highest amount.	 151,000 acres of land developed or redeveloped, the lowest amount.	 322,000 acres of land developed or redeveloped, tied with Stay the Course for the highest amount.
How close would transit be? Population and employment growth in Regional Growth Centers and in proximity to high-capacity and all transit service (2017–2050)	 69% of population and employment growth occurs near high-capacity transit and 76% near all types of transit service.	 46% of population and employment growth occurs near high-capacity transit and 65% near all types of transit service.	 75% of population and employment growth occurs near high-capacity transit and 81% near all types of transit service, the highest levels of the alternatives.	 45% of population and employment growth occurs near high-capacity transit and 61% near all types of transit service, the lowest levels of the alternatives.

Table ES-3. Summary Comparison of Impacts that can be Differentiated Between Alternatives (continued)

















Topic	2050 Growth Alternatives			
	Preferred Growth	Stay the Course	Transit Focused Growth	Reset Urban Growth
Transportation				
How much would the average person drive? 38.0 minutes, 16.1 miles in 2014 (average daily drive time and drive distance, per person), higher than all of the alternatives	 33.2 minutes, 12.8 miles in 2050.	 34.5 minutes, 13.3 miles in 2050.	 32.8 minutes, 12.7 miles in 2050, the shortest drives.	 34.9 minutes, 13.4 miles in 2050, the longest drives.
How long would the average person be stuck in traffic each year? 21.0 hours in 2014 (average annual time spent in congestion, per person), lower than all of the alternatives	 28.2 hours in congestion in 2050.	 30.2 hours in congestion in 2050.	 27.5 hours in congestion in 2050, the fewest hours stuck in traffic.	 31.2 hours in congestion in 2050, the most hours stuck in traffic.
How many transit trips would be taken? 194 million trips in 2014 (annual transit boardings), substantially lower than all of the alternatives	 504 million trips in 2050, tied with Transit Focused Growth for the highest number of transit trips.	 474 million trips in 2050, the lowest number of transit trips.	 507 million trips in 2050, tied with the Preferred Growth Alternative for the highest number of transit trips.	 481 million trips in 2050.
How many jobs would be accessible by walking, biking, or transit? (Average jobs accessible by walking, biking, or transit per person) baseline levels lower compared to the alternatives	 The second-highest numbers of jobs accessible by transit, walking, and biking.	 The lowest numbers of jobs accessible by transit, walking, and biking.	 The highest numbers of jobs accessible by transit, walking, and biking.	 Slightly higher numbers of jobs accessible by transit, walking, and biking compared to Stay the Course.

Table ES-3. Summary Comparison of Impacts that can be Differentiated Between Alternatives (continued)













	2050 Growth Alternatives			
Topic	Preferred Growth	Stay the Course	Transit Focused Growth	Reset Urban Growth
Air Quality				
What would be the contribution to climate change and air pollution? Pollutant emissions: 47,200 tons per day CO ₂ e in 2014, see Section 4.4 for other pollutants (CO ₂ e is a measure used for reporting greenhouse gas emissions)	 39,400 tons per day CO ₂ e, tied with Transit Focused Growth for the lowest levels of greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants.	 40,500 tons per day CO ₂ e, tied with Reset Urban Growth for the highest levels of greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants.	 39,100 tons per day CO ₂ e, tied with the Preferred Growth Alternative for the lowest levels of greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants.	 40,900 tons per day CO ₂ e, tied with Stay the Course for the highest levels of greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants.
Ecosystems				
How much land would be needed for development? Acres of land developed (2017–2050)	 184,000 acres needed for development.	 324,000 acres needed for development, tied with Reset Urban Growth for the most acres needed.	 151,000 acres needed for development, the fewest acres needed.	 322,000 acres needed for development, tied with Stay the Course for the most acres needed.
Would important habitat be harmed? Development in areas likely to have regionally significant habitat	 The least amount of growth in areas likely to have regionally significant habitat, tied with Transit Focused Growth.	 Lower amount of growth in areas likely to have regionally significant habitat.	 The least amount of growth in areas likely to have regionally significant habitat, tied with the Preferred Growth Alternative.	 The most amount of growth in areas likely to have regionally significant habitat.

Table ES-3. Summary Comparison of Impacts that can be Differentiated Between Alternatives (continued)

















	2050 Growth Alternatives			
Topic	Preferred Growth	Stay the Course	Transit Focused Growth	Reset Urban Growth
Water				
How much hardened surface would be added by growth? Total impervious surface added through new development and redevelopment (2017–2050)	 15,100 acres of impervious surface.	 22,600 acres of impervious surface, tied with Reset Urban Growth for the most acres added.	 12,200 acres of impervious surface, the fewest acres added.	 22,600 acres of impervious surface, tied with Stay the Course for the most acres added.
How much would redevelopment improve old stormwater systems? Acres of land redeveloped (2017–2050) with outdated stormwater controls can result in water quality benefits	 Redevelopment of 25,800 acres of impervious surface in areas with outdated stormwater controls.	 Redevelopment of 32,100 acres of impervious surface in areas with outdated stormwater controls, the highest level of redevelopment.	 Redevelopment of 22,000 acres of impervious surface in areas with outdated stormwater controls, the lowest level of redevelopment.	 Redevelopment of 30,300 acres of impervious surface in areas with outdated stormwater controls.
Public Services, Utilities, and Energy				
How much new infrastructure would be needed? Population growth (2017–2050) in Urban Unincorporated and Rural areas, which are more likely to need new or extended infrastructure	 5% of population growth to Urban Unincorporated and Rural areas, the lowest level in those areas more likely to need new or extended infrastructure.	 11% of population growth to Urban Unincorporated and Rural areas.	 6% of population growth to Urban Unincorporated and Rural areas.	 18% of population growth to Urban Unincorporated and Rural areas, the highest level in those areas more likely to need new or extended infrastructure.
Parks and Recreation				
Would parks be nearby? 59% of population was located near parks in 2017 (urban population growth in proximity to parks providing local urban access)	 57% of population growth would be near parks in 2050.	 55% of population growth would be near parks in 2050, tied with Reset Urban Growth for the lowest level of growth with access to parks.	 58% of population growth would be near parks in 2050, the highest level of growth with access to parks.	 55% of population growth would be near parks in 2050, tied with Stay the Course for the lowest level of growth with access to parks.

Table ES-3. Summary Comparison of Impacts that can be Differentiated Between Alternatives (continued)





















	2050 Growth Alternatives			
Topic	Preferred Growth	Stay the Course	Transit Focused Growth	Reset Urban Growth
Visual Quality				
How would areas change visually?	 Less development in outlying and Rural areas would slightly reduce negative impacts to these areas.	 More development in outlying and Rural areas could result in negative visual impacts in these areas.	 Less development in outlying and Rural areas would slightly reduce negative impacts to these areas.	 More development in outlying and Rural areas would slightly increase negative impacts to these areas.
Environmental Justice				
How would people color and people with low incomes be affected by changes in jobs and housing?	 The second-greatest improvement in the balance of jobs and housing for census tracts that are greater than 50 percent people with low incomes or people of color. The ratios are still well above the regional average, indicating these communities are jobs-rich and housing may be less affordable or available.	 The least improvement in the balance of jobs and housing for census tracts that are greater than 50 percent people with low incomes or people of color, tied with Reset Urban Growth.	 The greatest improvement in the balance of jobs and housing for census tracts that are greater than 50 percent people with low incomes or people of color.	 The least improvement in the balance of jobs and housing for census tracts that are greater than 50 percent people with low incomes or people of color, tied with Stay the Course.
How would people of color and people with low incomes be affected by changes in availability of moderate density housing?	 The second-highest level of moderate-density housing stock growth overall for census tracts that are greater than 50 percent people with low incomes or people of color.	 The third-highest level of moderate-density housing stock growth overall for census tracts that are greater than 50 percent people with low incomes or people of color.	 The highest level of moderate-density housing stock growth overall for census tracts that are greater than 50 percent people with low incomes or people of color.	 The lowest level of moderate-density housing stock growth overall for census tracts that are greater than 50 percent people with low incomes or people of color.

Table ES-3. Summary Comparison of Impacts that can be Differentiated Between Alternatives (continued)

Topic	2050 Growth Alternatives			
	Preferred Growth	Stay the Course	Transit Focused Growth	Reset Urban Growth
Would people of color and people with low incomes benefit from changes to land use and transportation?	 Greater proximity to transit for census tracts that are greater than 50 percent people with low incomes or people of color.	 Less proximity to transit for census tracts that are greater than 50 percent people with low incomes or people of color.	 The greatest proximity to transit for census tracts that are greater than 50 percent people with low incomes or people of color.	 The lowest proximity to transit for census tracts that are greater than 50 percent people with low incomes or people of color.
Would the risk of displacement increase? Population growth in areas of higher displacement risk (2017-2050)	 22% of population growth would occur in areas of higher displacement risk.	 17% of population growth would occur in areas of higher displacement risk, tied with Reset Urban Growth for the lowest level.	 23% of population growth would occur in areas of higher displacement risk, the highest level.	 17% of population growth would occur in areas of higher displacement risk, tied with Stay the Course for the lowest level.

Multicounty Planning Policies

VISION 2050 includes the multicounty planning policies for the four-county region required by the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.210(7)). Multicounty planning policies provide a common, coordinated policy framework for local plans and other large-scale planning efforts in the region. They are designed to support implementation of the Regional Growth Strategy, including concentrating growth within the region's designated urban growth area and limiting development in resource and Rural areas. The policies provide an integrated framework for addressing planning for regional collaboration, the Regional Growth Strategy, the environment, climate change, land use, housing, the economy, transportation, and public services.

Chapter 6 of this Final SEIS summarizes the policies and their purpose, describes differences from VISION 2040 policies, and discusses the environmental effects for each topic area. Most of the policies would produce environmental benefits, as they would help to implement the mitigation measures identified in Chapters 4 and 5 of this Final SEIS. The VISION 2040 FEIS includes additional detail on the multicounty planning policies, their purpose, and environmental effects.