



# Puget Sound Regional Council

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## **City of Granite Falls 2017 Comprehensive Plan Update**

- 1) Certification report dated December 19, 2017 (see page 2). As of this Executive Board action taken at the January 25, 2018 meeting, the City of Granite Falls comprehensive plan is now fully certified for consistency with the transportation-related provisions of the Growth Management Act, VISION 2040, and Transportation 2040.
  
- 2) Certification report dated March 31, 2016 (see page 4). This report summarizes complete review of the 2015 comprehensive plan update and a certification condition for the city to address by December 31, 2017.

# PSRC PLAN REVIEW REPORT & CERTIFICATION RECOMMENDATION



## CITY OF GRANITE FALLS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

December 19, 2017

### BACKGROUND

PSRC conditionally certified the City of Granite Falls' 2015 periodic update of the city's comprehensive plan on April 28, 2016. In November 2017, the city adopted amendments to the plan that address the conditions and resubmitted the plan for further review and full certification.

### CERTIFICATION RECOMMENDATION

Based on the review of the 2017 City of Granite Falls comprehensive plan amendments, the following action is recommended to the PSRC Growth Management Policy Board, Transportation Policy Board, and Executive Board:

**The Puget Sound Regional Council certifies that the transportation-related provisions in the City of Granite Falls 2017 comprehensive plan amendments conform to the Growth Management Act and are consistent with multicounty planning policies and the regional transportation plan.**

### 2017 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS

The Growth Management Act requires local comprehensive plans to be updated to accommodate the growth that is anticipated for the succeeding 20-year planning period (see RCW 36.70A.070, .115, and .130). The act also requires that plan elements use consistent land use assumptions in order that a local jurisdiction is coordinating planning for land uses, housing, and capital facilities (RCW 36.70A.070(6)).

The March 2016 certification report for the City of Granite Falls comprehensive plan update identified a shortfall of housing capacity of 88 units (218 people), as provided for in the land use element, compared with adopted targets which establish local responsibility under GMA to accommodate growth and provide the basis for land use assumptions in the transportation element.

Working with Snohomish County and other cities through the Snohomish County Tomorrow process, the population and housing targets for Granite Falls were adjusted through a targets reconciliation process in 2016. In November 2017, the city amended the land use element of the comprehensive plan to document the newly adjusted targets, along with a comparison with land use capacity for housing within the city. The amended plan demonstrates consistency with the GMA in accommodating targeted growth and consistency among plan elements in assumed future growth levels.

### Conclusion

PSRC staff worked closely with the city as they drafted the plan amendments that address the conditions for certification. If the Executive Board acts as recommended, the plan will no longer have conditions on its certification. PSRC looks forward to working with the city on future planning efforts and will continue to provide guidance and technical assistance on any further amendments to the plan, subarea plans, or functional plans developed in response to additional issues identified through the PSRC certification review.

Additional background and resources can be found in the [City of Granite Falls 2015 PSRC Plan Review and Certification Report](#) and on the PSRC website at <https://www.psrc.org/our-work/plan-review>. Questions should be directed to Michael Hubner at 206-971-3289 or [mhubner@psrc.org](mailto:mhubner@psrc.org).

# PSRC PLAN REVIEW REPORT & CERTIFICATION RECOMMENDATION

## CITY OF GRANITE FALLS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

March 31, 2016



### BACKGROUND

The Washington State Growth Management Act calls for coordination between local, regional, and state planning efforts. To advance this coordination, state law requires PSRC to certify that regional transit plans, countywide planning policies, and local comprehensive plans within the central Puget Sound region conform to: (1) established regional guidelines and principles, (2) the adopted long-range regional transportation plan, and (3) transportation planning requirements in the Growth Management Act. Within the central Puget Sound region, the multicounty planning policies in VISION 2040 have been established as the regional guidelines and principles under Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 47.80.026. Certification of local comprehensive plans is also a requirement for jurisdictions and agencies that intend to apply for PSRC funding or proceed with any project submitted into the Regional Transportation Improvement Program, regardless of funding source.

Within the central Puget Sound region, local governments and PSRC have worked together to develop an overall process ([Adopted Policy and Plan Review Process](#), Revised September 2003) for reviewing and certifying local, countywide, regional, and transit agency policies and plans.<sup>1</sup> This process also provides an opportunity to coordinate and share information related to local and regional planning. A set of materials, compiled in a [Plan Review Manual](#), provides details on the review and certification process, background, and framework. The manual also provides guidance and checklists for aligning plans and policies with [VISION 2040](#), [Transportation 2040](#), and [Growth Management Act](#) requirements.

### DISCUSSION

This report summarizes the findings and recommendations regarding the major update to the comprehensive plan for the City of Granite Falls, adopted by the city on November 4, 2015. PSRC last certified the Granite Falls comprehensive plan in 2007. PSRC staff reviewed the comprehensive plan and coordinated with city staff in the development of this report.

### CERTIFICATION RECOMMENDATION

Based on the review of the City of Granite Falls comprehensive plan, the following action is recommended to the PSRC Growth Management Policy Board, Transportation Policy Board, and Executive Board:

**The Puget Sound Regional Council conditionally certifies that the transportation-related provisions in the City of Granite Falls 2015 comprehensive plan conform to the Growth Management Act and are consistent with multicounty planning policies and the regional transportation plan.**

**Conditional status is in place until the City of Granite Falls addresses the inconsistencies between population and housing growth targets adopted by Snohomish County and the**

<sup>1</sup> The certification requirement in the Growth Management Act is described in RCW 47.80. The specific requirements for transportation elements in local comprehensive plans are spelled out in Chapter 36.70A.070, RCW. PSRC's Interlocal Agreement, Section VII, also provides direction for the review of local comprehensive plans and countywide policies (Resolution A-91-01, amended March 1998). The Council's Executive Board last updated its process for Policy and Plan Review in September 2003. The process is also described in VISION 2040, Part IV: Implementation.

capacity to accommodate those targets under the adopted land use plan. Resolution of these inconsistencies should be accomplished, as appropriate, through revisions to the comprehensive plan and through the Snohomish County Tomorrow targets reconciliation process. The city acknowledges this and commits to addressing the conditions according to the following schedule:

1. **Council adoption of a plan of work that addresses the conditions identified in the certification report by May 31, 2016.**
2. **Submission of a draft amended comprehensive plan and supporting documents that address the conditions to PSRC for review and comment in advance of adoption.**
3. **Once the conditions are adequately addressed, submission of the adopted amended comprehensive plan and supporting documents by December 31, 2017 for review and certification by PSRC.**

**The city understands and acknowledges these conditions.**

The remainder of this report contains a summary of the PSRC review of the City of Granite Falls comprehensive plan update. Under each heading, the scope of the certification review, as guided by the [Plan Review Manual](#) and Local Comprehensive Plan Checklist, is listed in high level bullets. Discussion in each topic area highlights exemplary provisions of the plan, as well as issues identified through the certification review where future work on the part of the city is needed to more fully address VISION 2040, Transportation 2040, and Growth Management Act planning requirements. PSRC recognizes that the timing and mechanism for addressing each of the comments will vary based on the jurisdiction, its resources and plan update process, and the nature of the comment.

## **Part I: Conformity with Growth Management Act Transportation Planning Requirements**

### **SCOPE OF REVIEW**

The Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.070(6)) includes several requirements related to transportation elements in local comprehensive plans. These requirements are summarized as follows:

**Land use assumptions and forecasts of travel demand** that are internally consistent and consistent with growth targets.

**Service and facility needs**, including inventories of existing facilities, and level-of-service standards and concurrency provisions that address multiple modes of travel, planned land uses and densities, and state highways.

**Financing and investments**, including a multiyear financing plan and reassessment strategy to address potential funding shortfalls.

**Intergovernmental coordination** with neighboring cities, counties, and regional and state agencies.

**Demand management**, including programs to implement the Commute Trip Reduction Act.

**Pedestrian and bicycle planning**, including project funding and capital investments, education, and safety.

**Land uses adjacent to airports**, identifying relevant facilities, existing and planned uses, and policies that discourage incompatible uses.

Air quality is largely an interjurisdictional issue in which each jurisdiction's travel behaviors, measured through vehicle emissions, affect the regional airshed. The Washington Administrative Code (WAC) requires local transportation elements and plans to include "policies and provisions that promote the reduction of criteria pollutants" for mobile sources (WAC 173-420-080). When PSRC reviews plans, it also certifies that the

comprehensive plans include air quality policies and provisions, including a commitment to meeting the requirements of applicable federal and state air quality legislation.

#### **DISCUSSION: EXEMPLARY PLAN PROVISIONS**

The city's comprehensive plan effectively addresses many of the transportation planning requirements of the Growth Management Act and includes adequate air quality policies and provisions. Highlights include:

- ☑ Emphasis on intergovernmental coordination regarding the assessment of the impacts of planned transportation improvements and land use assumptions on the transportation system of adjacent jurisdictions (T-1.8).
- ☑ Goals and policies to improve the safety, circulation, and efficiency of the pedestrian and bicycle system throughout Granite Falls for users (Goals T-2-3, 7-9, T-3.1, 7.1, 8.1, 9.1-9.2).
- ☑ Policies that encourage ridesharing and other transportation demand management measures designed to reduce demand for roadway space and reduce peak-period vehicular traffic (T-2.1, 5.4).

#### **DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK**

The city should address the following comments at the earliest opportunity through future amendments to the comprehensive plan, subarea plans, or functional plans:

- ☐ The Growth Management Act (see RCW 36.70A.070(6)) requires local plans to include a multiyear transportation financing plan for how each jurisdiction will meet the mobility needs identified for the 20-year planning period. While the plan, as adopted, provides important information, such as the 6-year Transportation Improvement Program, potential revenue sources, and reassessment strategies to address the event of a funding shortfall, the city should more fully address financing for identified needs, including:
  1. Provide a list of recommended roadway improvements and associated cost estimates through the 2035 planning horizon.
  2. Develop an estimate of funding sources, including estimates of total funds available to the city over the planning period.
  3. Revise and expand on the current reassessment strategy based on the findings of 1 and 2 to address steps the city could take to close any gaps between costs of needed improvements and revenues, such as additional demand management strategies, pursuing new revenues, reducing level-of-service standards, and land use changes.

Commerce's [Transportation Element Guidebook](#) discusses finance on pages 202 through 212.

## **Part II: Consistency with Regional Plans and Policies**

### **OVERVIEW**

This section discusses consistency with the adopted multicounty planning policies (established regional guidelines and principles under RCW 47.80.026) adopted in VISION 2040, and Transportation 2040, the region's long-range transportation plan. In addition to the multicounty planning policies, VISION 2040 contains a Regional Growth Strategy with a preferred distribution of the region's residential and employment growth, as well as a number of implementation actions for local governments to carry out. Each policy area addressed in VISION 2040 is discussed in turn below.

### **VISION 2040 Context Statement**

VISION 2040 calls for local plans to include a context statement that describes how the comprehensive plan addresses regional policies and provisions adopted in VISION 2040. The city should explicitly describe how the

plan addresses VISION 2040 when the city next amends the comprehensive plan. Examples of context statements are provided in PSRC’s [Plan Review Manual](#), page 2-1.

## Environment

### SCOPE OF REVIEW

VISION 2040 calls for local comprehensive plans to address the following environmental policy topics:

**Stewardship**, including addressing the natural environment throughout the plan, decisions based on best-available science, and regional environmental initiatives.

**Earth and habitat**, including open space protection, restoration and protection of native vegetation, and coordination with adjacent jurisdictions.

**Water quality**, including actions that maintain hydrologic functions and reduce water pollution in ecosystems, watersheds, shorelines, and estuaries.

**Air quality and climate change**, addressing federal and state laws, reduction of pollutants, Puget Sound Clean Air Agency policies, and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation to climate change.

### DISCUSSION: EXEMPLARY PLAN PROVISIONS

The city’s comprehensive plan addresses many of the environmental policy topics in VISION 2040 with strong goals and actionable policies. Highlights include:

- ☑ Goals and policies that promote community-wide stewardship of the natural environment and minimization of environmental impacts by public utilities (Goal NF-2, U-1.8).
- ☑ Policies that encourage the retention and use of native vegetation (NF-3.12, T-1.4).
- ☑ Protection and preservation of critical areas and open spaces, including the Pilchuck and South Stillaguamish Rivers, for fish and wildlife habitats and shoreline access (Goal NF-3, NF-3.1-3.2, 3.4, PRO-3.1, 3.4-3.5).
- ☑ Transportation-related policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants, as well as non-transportation-related provisions to improve air quality (T-11.1-11.3, NF-1.4, 5.1-5.2, 5.4).

### DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

The certification review did not identify any major areas for improvement of the plan to better align with regional guidelines and principles on the environment.

## Development Patterns – including Regional Growth Strategy

### SCOPE OF REVIEW

VISION 2040 calls for local comprehensive plans to address the following development patterns policy topics:

**Urban areas**, including targets for housing and employment growth, compact communities that support transit and walking, and provisions for redevelopment of underused land.

**Centers**, including planning for one or more central places as locations for compact, mixed-use development, with policies that prioritize funding to centers to advance development.

**Unincorporated urban areas**, including policies that advance annexation and orderly transition of governance.

**Resource lands**, including identification of steps to limit development.

**Regional design**, addressing local provisions that apply the Transportation 2040 Physical Design Guidelines, energy efficient building, historic preservation, and enhanced sense of community.

**Health and active living**, addressing healthy environment, physical activity and well-being, and safety.

### **DISCUSSION: EXEMPLARY PLAN PROVISIONS**

The city's comprehensive plan addresses the development patterns policies in VISION 2040 with a particular emphasis on planning for the city's downtown area. Highlights include:

- ☑ Goals and policies that encourage infill development, rehabilitation and reuse of existing commercial buildings (Goal LU-2, LU-2.1, 3.1, 8.8).
- ☑ Promotion of a compact and walkable downtown that supports day and evening activities for all ages (LU-1.7, 8.12, ED-2.6).
- ☑ Policies to preserve and enhance local archaeological, historical, and cultural resources (LU11.1-11.4, PRO-6.1-6.6).
- ☑ Encouragement of urban planning approaches that promote increased recreational opportunities and physical activity (Goal LU-6, LU-6.1-6.3, Goal PRO-2, PRO-2.1-2.4).

### **DISCUSSION: CONDITIONS FOR CERTIFICATION**

The City of Granite Falls must address the following provision of the Growth Management Act and VISION 2040 in order to maintain certified status:

- ☐ The Growth Management Act requires local comprehensive plans to be updated to accommodate the growth that is anticipated for the succeeding 20-year planning period (see RCW 36.70A.070, .115, and.130). Snohomish County, in consultation with its cities through the Snohomish County Tomorrow process, developed and adopted growth targets for the City of Granite Falls amounting to growth of 1,831 additional housing units and 4,471 additional residents by the year 2035. The adopted comprehensive plan does not fully provide sufficient development capacity to accommodate the population and housing targets in the city, resulting in a capacity shortfall of 218 people and 88 housing units. The city is able to accommodate the employment target of 1,516 additional jobs. In order to fully comply with the Growth Management Act, the plan should be amended to rectify the discrepancy between the adopted targets and future land use capacity provided by the comprehensive plan within the city limits. Options include the following:
  1. Work with Snohomish County to adjust the growth targets through reconciliation, consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy, to reflect future growth in Granite Falls that can be accommodated by the land use plan over the planning period. Amend the comprehensive plan to document such a change.
  2. Amend the plan, including land use, transportation, housing and other relevant elements, to reflect and affirmatively plan for the targeted growth, including through provision of sufficient land uses and densities.

### **DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK**

The city should address the following comment at the earliest opportunity through future amendments to the comprehensive plan, subarea plans, or functional plans:

- ☐ VISION 2040 supports regional and local centers with policies that call for prioritization of regional and subregional infrastructure investments that serve these areas (MPP-DP-13). Implementation of a centers-based land use pattern in Granite Falls would be strengthened with explicit prioritization of local capital improvements—pedestrian and bicycle improvements, parks and open space, and other public facilities—to Granite Falls' downtown area.

## Housing

### SCOPE OF REVIEW

VISION 2040 calls for local comprehensive plans to address the following housing policy topics:

**Increased housing production opportunities**, including diverse types and styles for all income levels and demographic groups.

**Affordable housing needs**, including an assessment of existing and future housing needs based on regional and local factors, including household income, demographics, special needs populations, and adequacy of existing housing stocks.

**Regional housing objectives** in VISION 2040, including promotion of housing diversity and affordability, jobs-housing balance, housing in centers, and flexible standards and innovative techniques.

### DISCUSSION: EXEMPLARY PLAN PROVISIONS

The city's comprehensive plan addresses the housing provisions contained in VISION 2040. The plan incorporates a number of best housing practices that address identified housing needs. Highlights include:

- ☑ The housing element includes a comprehensive assessment of existing and future housing within Granite Falls. The assessment includes analyses on home sale affordability and Granite Falls residents by income bracket, as well as a discussion of current challenges and opportunities within the city to improve housing affordability.
- ☑ Policies that promote a variety of housing types and densities throughout Granite Falls to accommodate the needs of Granite Falls residents with various income levels, such as manufactured homes, accessory dwelling units, mixed-use developments, and cottage housing (LU-4.1, 4.4, 7.1, H-1.3-1.4, 1.9).
- ☑ Various strategies to preserve and increase the availability of affordable housing within Granite Falls (H-2.1, 2.4, 3.1-3.2).

### DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

The certification review did not identify any major areas for improvement of the plan to better align with regional guidelines and principles on housing.

## Economy

### SCOPE OF REVIEW

VISION 2040 calls for local comprehensive plans to address the following economic development policy topics:

Include an **economic development element** that addresses: business, people, and places.

**Retention and recruitment efforts** that support family wage jobs, industry clusters that export goods and services, and small businesses that are locally owned.

**Equitable benefits and impacts**, including provisions and programs that promote economic vitality in distressed areas or areas with disadvantaged populations.

**Adequate housing growth in centers** through collaboration with the private sector and provision of infrastructure.

### DISCUSSION: EXEMPLARY PLAN PROVISIONS

The city's comprehensive plan update contains a thorough and detailed economic development element that effectively addresses many of the economic provisions of VISION 2040. Highlights include:

- ☑ The economic development element contains policies to support economic development within Granite Falls, which include planning for infrastructure, providing basic public services and facilities, and forming partnerships with economic development agencies (ED-2.4, 3.2).

- ☑ Policy LU-8.10 encourages mixed-use development that balances residential and business uses within commercial areas.
- ☑ Policies that encourage a clean industrial business cluster, prevent incompatible land uses in industrial areas, and minimize negative impacts of industrial lands (LU-9.1-9.2, 9.6-9.8).

**DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK**

The city should address the following comment at the earliest opportunity through future amendments to the comprehensive plan, subarea plans, or functional plans:

- ☐ The city is commended for including an economic development element that contains many provisions to support business development. The multicounty planning policies provide a framework that focuses on the theme of business, people, and place in economic development planning. When next updating its plan, the city should review and incorporate relevant economic development policies that have not been addressed in regard to this item. These could include, for example, provisions addressing the provision of family-wage jobs and support for disadvantaged populations. See MPP-Ec-1 – 22. PSRC’s [Planning for Whole Communities Toolkit](#) has tools on enhancing economic opportunity.

**Transportation**

**SCOPE OF REVIEW**

VISION 2040 and Transportation 2040 call for local comprehensive plans to address the following transportation policy topics:

- Maintenance, management, and safety**, including clean transportation with reductions in pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, environmental factors, health and safety, stable and predictable funding sources, system and demand management strategies, and security and emergency response.
- Support for the regional growth strategy**, including system improvements that align with planned growth, prioritized investments that support compact development in centers, joint- and mixed-use development, complete streets and improvements to promote biking and walking, and context-sensitive design.
- Improved transportation options and mobility**, including alternatives to driving alone, facilities and services for special needs transportation, avoidance of new or expanded facilities in rural areas, and financing methods.
- Linking land use and transportation**, including integrating Transportation 2040 physical design guidelines in planning for centers and transit station areas, and land development tools that promote transportation alternatives.

**DISCUSSION: EXEMPLARY PLAN PROVISIONS**

The city’s comprehensive plan addresses the major transportation emphases in VISION 2040 and Transportation 2040, including maintenance, management, and safety; support for the Regional Growth Strategy; and providing greater options and mobility. Highlights include:

- ☑ Policies within the transportation element that utilize land use development tools to support alternatives to driving alone (T-5.2, 5.6).
- ☑ Goals and policies to ensure the mobility of people with special needs, including improving public transit services, providing disabled-accessible pedestrian walks to bus stops, and prioritizing local revenues designated for sidewalk improvements to facilitate movement by the elderly, the disabled, and children (Goal T-5, T-5.1, 5.3, 8.2).

**DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK**

The city should address the following comment at the earliest opportunity through future amendments to the comprehensive plan, subarea plans, or functional plans:

- The multicounty planning policies and Transportation 2040 emphasize providing a system for all users and increasing mobility and choice in transportation. The city has adopted provisions addressing various users of the system. Consideration should be given to adopting a “complete street” provision in the plan to further reinforce this. See VISION 2040, page 82.

## Public Services

### SCOPE OF REVIEW

VISION 2040 calls for local comprehensive plans to address the following public services policy topics:

**Promote more efficient use of existing services**, such as waste management, energy, and water supply, through conservation – including demand management programs and strategies.

**Promote renewable energy and alternative energy sources.**

**Plan for long-term water needs**, including conservation, reclamation and reuse.

### DISCUSSION: EXEMPLARY PLAN PROVISIONS

The city’s comprehensive plan update contains policies that address the public services provisions of VISION 2040. Highlights include:

- ☑ Policies that promote voluntary water conservation, as well as recycling to reduce solid waste (U-1.1, CF-1.7).
- ☑ Policy U-1.2 strongly encourages city conversion to technologies and energy sources that are environmentally sensitive and cost-effective.

### DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

The city should address the following comment at the earliest opportunity through future amendments to the comprehensive plan, subarea plans, or functional plans:

- We commend the city for prioritizing sanitary sewer service for development within the city. Please consider adding a policy on connection to the sewer system to address MPP-PS-9: *Serve new development within the urban growth area with sanitary sewer systems or fit it with dry sewers in anticipation of connection to the sewer system. Alternative technology to sewers should only be considered when it can be shown to produce treatment at standards that are equal to or better than the sewer system and where a long-term maintenance plan is in place.*

## Conclusion

PSRC staff thanks the jurisdiction for working through the plan review process. PSRC is available to provide assistance for future plan updates, and additional planning resources can also be found at <http://www.psrc.org/growth/planreview/resources/>. If the jurisdiction has questions or needs additional information, please contact Liz Underwood-Bultmann at 206-464-6174 or [LUnderwood-Bultmann@psrc.org](mailto:LUnderwood-Bultmann@psrc.org).