



## PART III: Multicounty Planning Policies

*The multicounty planning policies provide an integrated framework for addressing land use, economic development, transportation, other infrastructure, and environmental planning. These policies play three key roles: (1) give direction for implementing the Regional Growth Strategy, (2) create a common framework for planning at various levels within the four-county region, including countywide planning, local plans, transit agency plans, and others, and (3) provide the policy structure for the Regional Council's functional plans (the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and the Regional Economic Strategy).*

### Overview

#### **Implementing the Regional Growth Strategy.**

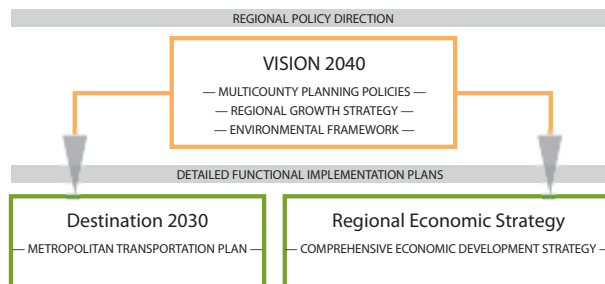
The multicounty planning policies call for concentrating growth within the region's designated urban growth area and limiting development in resource and rural areas. The policies address land use, including urban, rural, and resource lands, urban growth area designations, target-setting for population and employment, and focusing development in centers. They also address the important related issues of providing needed infrastructure and services to manage growth, including transportation facilities. Finally, they recognize the link between development, mobility, the environment, and the economy, and have been designed to provide an integrated approach to sustainability, development, economic prosperity, and the provision of services.

**A Common Framework.** Under the Growth Management Act, multicounty planning policies provide a common regionwide framework for countywide and local planning in the central Puget Sound region. The unified structure established by the multicounty policies has both practical and substantive effects on city and county comprehensive plans. The multicounty policies provide a mechanism for achieving consistency among cities and counties on regional planning matters. They also guide a number of regional processes, including the Regional Council's policy and plan review process, the evaluation of transportation projects seeking regionally managed funding, and the development

### The Growth Management Act and Multicounty Planning Policies

The Growth Management Act states that “multicounty planning policies shall be adopted by two or more counties, each with a population of 450,000 or more, with contiguous urban areas and may be adopted by other counties.” (RCW 36.70A.210 (7))

### A Framework for Regional Planning in Central Puget Sound



of criteria for Regional Council programs and projects. (These and other processes are described in fuller detail in *Part IV*, the *Implementation* section.)

Countywide planning policies complement multicounty policies and provide a more specific level of detail to guide county and local comprehensive planning in each of the four counties. Both multicounty and countywide planning policies address selected issues in a consistent manner, while leaving other issues to local discretion. Much of the implementation of VISION 2040 occurs through local planning and actions.

Multicounty planning policies also guide various regional planning programs and serve as the framework for various growth management, economic development, and transportation projects carried out by the Puget Sound Regional Council and others. Both the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (*Destination 2030*) and the *Regional Economic Strategy* are guided by the multicounty planning policies in VISION 2040.

### VISION 2040 POLICY APPROACH

VISION 2040's focus on people, prosperity and the planet challenges the region to develop healthy and safe communities for all people, to apply an environmental ethic in business and economic practices, to take steps to conserve resources, and to enhance natural and built environments. The policies and provisions in VISION 2040 have been developed with attention to social equity and environmental justice.

To achieve this end, the multicounty planning policies are grouped in six overall categories: (1) environment, (2) development patterns, (3) housing, (4) economy, (5) transportation, and (6) public services. (Note: A small set of general policies is also included following this overview.)

The policies reflect the commitment in the vision statement “to protect the environment, to create vibrant, livable, and healthy communities, to offer economic opportunities for all, to provide for safe and efficient mobility, and to use the region’s resources wisely and efficiently.”

### GOALS — POLICIES — ACTIONS — MEASURES

The multicounty planning policies are presented in a four-part framework with: (1) goals, (2) policies, (3) actions, and (4) measures.

**Goals.** Goals speak to the desired outcomes for each of the topics covered in VISION 2040. They set the tone for the integrated approach and common framework

### VISION 2040 Policy Structure



for the regional policies. Each policy section of VISION 2040 begins with an overarching goal that provides the context for the policies and provisions that follow. Additional goals are then provided for specific policy topics in each section.

**Policies.** The multicounty planning policies are designed to be broad. They provide overall guidance and direction for planning processes and decision-making at both regional and local levels. Given the strong integration across the various policy sections in VISION 2040, the full body of multicounty policies is to be considered in decision-making for various programs, projects, and planning processes. The multicounty policies also serve as planning guidelines and principles as required by state law to provide a common framework for regional and local planning, particularly in the area of transportation planning and its relationship to land use.

**Actions.** VISION 2040 includes actions that relate to implementing each policy section. These actions lay out responsibilities and tasks for implementation. The actions include a wide range of items — some directed at the Puget Sound Regional Council, others geared to member jurisdictions. Recognizing the different capacity of various municipalities to work on plan-related provisions, the Regional Council and/or the counties will make efforts to assist smaller cities and towns in addressing these actions.

The actions are organized according to level of responsibility for implementation. The regional level includes actions for which the Regional Council would primarily be responsible. The county level includes actions identified for each county or its countywide growth management planning body. Finally, local-level actions are intended for implementation by individual counties and cities. Each action includes a brief statement describing the action in general terms, followed by results or products related to the action. Information is also provided on the expected timeframe for carrying out the action. Short-term generally refers to a one- to three-year time period. Mid-term refers to a three- to five-year time period. References are included to specific policies or sets of policies to which each action relates.

**Measures.** Finally, measures for assessing how the region is meeting the goals and provisions of the policies are included in the Implementation section (Part IV). The purpose of these measures is to track whether actions are occurring and whether the region is achieving desired results. This information will assist policymakers

as they assess policies and actions over time.

Regional monitoring is based upon two major components: implementation monitoring and performance monitoring. Implementation monitoring attempts to answer the question, “Are we doing what we said we would do?” Performance monitoring addresses, “Are we achieving the desired results?” Answering these questions provides the guiding framework for the Regional Council’s monitoring program.

The measures selected for this program are not intended to be entirely comprehensive or to provide all of the answers. Rather, they have been selected to provide the region’s decision-makers a broad view of the state of the region, with a high-level perspective about whether key implementation actions are being accomplished, and if the region is seeing desired results.

### **Analysis of Fiscal Impact**

*The Growth Management Act requires that countywide and multicounty planning policies address an analysis of fiscal impact. The Central Puget Sound Hearings Board concluded in City of Snoqualmie versus King County (1993), that “the purpose of the fiscal impact analysis is to realistically assess the fiscal costs and constraints of implementing countywide planning policies and thereby to contribute to the design of an effective strategy to overcome those constraints.” The Hearings Board stated that “this task was imposed on cities and counties because they are the units of government directly responsible for creating and implementing the countywide planning policies, as well as the parties most directly affected fiscally by implementation of the countywide planning policies.” Within the central Puget Sound region, analysis of fiscal impact is deferred to the respective countywide planning policies for King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish counties.*

### **Future Amendments to VISION 2040**

*Amendments to multicounty planning policies require formal action by the Regional Council’s General Assembly. However, revisions, changes, or additions to actions or measures may be made by the Executive Board. Substantive amendments to VISION 2040 will be made — as needed — in advance of the regular schedule for major updates to local comprehensive plans, as required by the Growth Management Act.*



## General Multicounty Planning Policies

*This initial set of five general policies addresses coordination, monitoring, and fiscal challenges and opportunities — topics which are overarching and have implications for all of the other policy sections.*

**Coordination.** A key feature of the Growth Management Act is its emphasis on coordinating planning, especially where there are common borders or related regional issues (RCW 36.70A.100). To that end, VISION 2040 addresses coordination among various local, regional, state, federal, and tribal planning agencies in the four-county region. Planning at all levels of government plays an important role in ensuring implementation of VISION 2040, along with cooperation among various agencies and organizations.

The Growth Management Act calls for local plans in the central Puget Sound region to be updated next in 2011 and at seven-year increments beyond that. To ensure that countywide planning policies provide context and meaningful guidance to local jurisdictions in implementing VISION 2040, a timeframe is provided for updating countywide policies.

### **Tribes in the Region**

*The region's tribal governments are key players in planning for the future. As sovereign nations, tribes are not required to plan under the Growth Management Act. However, the Act recognizes the importance of coordination and cooperation with the tribes regarding environmental planning, land use, economic development, and the provision of services. The federally recognized tribes located in the central Puget Sound region are listed below.*

King County .....	Muckleshoot Indian Tribe Snoqualmie Tribe
Kitsap County .....	Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe Suquamish Tribe
Pierce County .....	Puyallup Tribe of Indians
Snohomish County .....	The Tulalip Tribes Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe Stillaguamish Indian Tribe

**Monitoring.** An important part of VISION 2040 is monitoring its implementation and performance. Monitoring includes tracking action on agreed-upon steps, measuring progress over time, and determining whether the region is achieving desired results.

**Fiscal Opportunities and Challenges.** Local jurisdictions, state and county governments, transit agencies, and other service providers are constantly challenged to find the revenues necessary to maintain and operate services and facilities and to fund and develop new facilities to serve growth.

VISION 2040 recognizes the critical importance of creating and maintaining sufficient infrastructure to accommodate the *Regional Growth Strategy*. This is a goal that is shared among the jurisdictions of the region, and local governments share in its implementation. Implementation of various multicounty policies and actions requires financial resources from all levels of government to provide and maintain services and facilities. This includes funding for programs and projects to restore and protect the environment.

A number of resources already exist among city and county governments, as well as at the regional and state levels. More resources will be needed to serve the region's expected population and employment growth. It will be essential to coordinate the provision of needed infrastructure with various sources of funding — including both existing and new money. That funding will need to continue to come from a variety of federal, state, county, and private sources. Jurisdictions will need to take full advantage of various existing resource options, and the region will need to work with its local governments to approach the state about providing new funding tools.

## POLICIES

**MPP-G-1** Coordinate planning efforts among jurisdictions, agencies, and federally recognized Indian tribes where there are common borders or related regional issues, to facilitate a common vision.

**MPP-G-2** Update countywide planning policies, where necessary, prior to December 31, 2010, to address the multi-county planning policies in VISION 2040.

**MPP-G-3** Monitor implementation of VISION 2040 to evaluate progress in achieving the regional growth strategy, as well as the environment, development patterns, housing, economy, transportation, and public services provisions.

**MPP-G-4** Explore new and existing sources of funding for services and infrastructure, recognizing that such funding is vital if local governments are to achieve the regional vision.

**MPP-G-5** Identify and develop changes to regulatory, pricing, taxing, and expenditure practices, and other fiscal tools within the region to implement the vision.

## VISION 2040 ACTIONS

The following VISION 2040 actions have been developed to help implement the general policies. Detailed information on specific measures that will be used to monitor implementation and performance is contained in *Part IV: Implementation*.

### REGIONAL ACTIONS

#### Develop an Outreach Program: G-Action-1

The Puget Sound Regional Council will develop an outreach program for VISION 2040 that is designed to communicate to member jurisdictions and the public. The program will include an overview brochure describing VISION 2040.

- Short-term / MPP-G-1
- Results and Products: *outreach program, overview brochure*

#### Refine Monitoring Program: G-Action-2

The Puget Sound Regional Council will convene an interjurisdictional advisory group to evaluate possible additional measures and potential expansion of the regional monitoring effort.

- Short-term / MPP-G-3
- Results and Products: *recommendations for additional and refined measures*

#### Investigate Funding Sources: G-Action-3

The Puget Sound Regional Council, together with its member jurisdictions, shall investigate existing and new sources of funding for facilities and services — including natural resource planning and open space — to assist local governments as they accommodate growth and future development. Explore options to develop incentives for jurisdictions that take advantage of various funding mechanisms.

- Short-term / MPP-G-4, 5
- Results and Products: *information on new or expanded funding of infrastructure, technical assistance to help local jurisdictions utilize existing and new funding for services and infrastructure*

#### Communicate VISION 2040 to State Agencies and the Legislature: G-Action-4

The Puget Sound Regional Council will relay the goals and objectives of the regional vision to state agencies and the Legislature, in order to promote changes in funding criteria to ensure that investments in facilities and services advance the regional vision.

- Short-term / MPP-G-4, 5
- Results and Products: *letter (or other reporting) to Legislature and state agencies*

## Environment

***Overarching Goal:** The region will care for the natural environment by protecting and restoring natural systems, conserving habitat, improving water quality, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants, and addressing potential climate change impacts. The region acknowledges that the health of all residents is connected to the health of the environment. Planning at all levels should consider the impacts of land use, development patterns, and transportation on the ecosystem.*

*Before it was a major metropolitan area, the central Puget Sound region was a landscape of seemingly limitless mountains, forests, and prairies surrounding the Puget Sound. The region's inviting and life-sustaining waters, shores, and woodlands lie at the heart of the Pacific Northwest, providing rich resources for its renowned quality of life.*

*VISION 2040 stresses the importance of the natural environment in providing ecological and aesthetic benefits, and protecting our water and air. The natural environment is important not only outside the urban growth area, but within it as well. Taken into account is the strong role the environment plays in the region's economic activity, including recreation and tourism. Development of a regional open space system, which conserves and connects these lands, is embraced.*

VISION 2040 approaches preservation and restoration of the natural environment with multicounty policies that address environmental stewardship, which is concerned with the care of our land, water, and air, as well as climate change. (The term *restore* is used primarily to mean re-establishing to an ecologically functioning state, in which natural systems are healthy for plants, animals, and humans.)

VISION 2040 calls for a better understanding of the region's relationship with and impact on larger ecological bioregions. Land use, transportation, air quality, and human health are interconnected and therefore require integrated planning, regulations, and implementation actions. The region's approach to greater environmental sustainability is to improve coordination and increase the commitment to preserving the environment through conservation of resources, protection of habitat, and restoration of natural systems. The region can also capitalize on economic opportunities to develop green technologies and clean processes. A healthy environment and abundant resources must be available for the use and enjoyment of future generations.



## Environmental Stewardship

Each of us is a caretaker of the resources we use — daily, weekly, and throughout our lives. Stewardship means managing those resources in a manner that is fiscally responsible, sensitive to the needs of others (including future generations), and protective of key ecological functions. The result of stewardship is the continuous improvement of environmental actions and undertakings by individuals, communities, the private sector, and governmental agencies.

Analyzing and managing complex ecological systems requires a variety of scientific disciplines and techniques, using an interdisciplinary approach. New techniques, such as low-impact development, green building practices, green street programs, and other sustainable design practices, are applicable in both rural and urban settings.

A regional systems approach considers planning issues in all their complexities and seeks to understand the interrelationships between various natural elements and systems to better address environmental issues in a holistic manner. Yet because gaps remain in scientific information and knowledge of all the facets of natural systems, it is necessary to make planning recommendations without the benefit of undisputed pure scientific knowledge. As new information becomes available, actions may need to be modified or adapted to meet intended objectives better. In this way, actions can be taken and refined as scientific knowledge is advanced.

VISION 2040 calls for coordinating environmental planning in the region and using the best information possible at all levels of environmental planning. It recognizes that a healthy environment translates into better human health and improved habitat for wildlife.

### ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP GOALS AND POLICIES

**Goal:** The region will safeguard the natural environment by meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

**MPP-En-1:** Develop regionwide environmental strategies, coordinating among local jurisdictions and countywide planning groups.

**MPP-En-2:** Use integrated and interdisciplinary approaches for environmental planning and assessment at regional, countywide and local levels.

**MPP-En-3:** Maintain and, where possible, improve air and water quality, soils, and natural systems to ensure the health and well-being of people, animals, and plants. Reduce the impacts of transportation on air and water quality, and climate change.

**MPP-En-4:** Ensure that all residents of the region, regardless of social or economic status, live in a healthy environment, with minimal exposure to pollution.

**MPP-En-5:** Locate development in a manner that minimizes impacts to natural features. Promote the use of innovative environmentally sensitive development practices, including design, materials, construction, and on-going maintenance.

**MPP-En-6:** Use the best information available at all levels of planning, especially scientific information, when establishing and implementing environmental standards established by any level of government.

**MPP-En-7:** Mitigate noise caused by traffic, industries, and other sources.

#### **Adaptive Management**

*Adaptive management is a structured, iterative process of decision-making when there is incomplete knowledge or a level of uncertainty. It relies on implementing actions to provide knowledge, as well as learning from outcomes, in order to adapt future actions to reduce uncertainty over time.*

#### **Landscape-Scale Ecological Processes**

*Landscape-scale ecological processes address maintenance and function in various subregional ecosystems. This approach gives a broad picture of ecosystems that considers both aquatic and land use processes and how they relate.*



## Earth and Habitat

The central Puget Sound region hosts a wide diversity of native wildlife and habitats. The loss and degradation of terrestrial habitat threatens the region's biodiversity. Fragmentation of habitat, especially in forests, is also a major threat to biodiversity and species sustainability. Connectivity of habitats is more of a concern as new development can jeopardize previously undisturbed areas. Invasive species are also an increasingly difficult problem in the central Puget Sound region. In some cases, invasive species proliferate in disturbed areas and prevent natural plant succession and regeneration.

Measures to reduce habitat fragmentation are important in urban and urbanizing areas, as well as in resource and rural areas. While much attention is given to preserving natural habitat, it is also important to address the quality of the region's urban ecosystems.

Critical areas, such as wetlands, floodplains, aquifer recharge areas, wildlife conservation areas, and certain geologic areas perform key functions that enhance both the natural and built environments, and also protect us from floods and other hazards. Critical areas exist both within and outside the urban growth area. The beneficial functions and values provided by critical areas include air, climate, and water quality protection and enhancement, fish and wildlife habitat, food chain support, flood storage, ground water recharge and discharge, erosion control, and recreation.

One of the first actions local jurisdictions completed under the Growth Management Act was to identify critical areas and develop regulations to protect these areas. However, ongoing assessment and coordination is needed. If the functions of critical areas are not properly protected now, attempting to restore them in the future is likely to be costly, if not impossible. While all designated critical areas must be protected, not all critical areas must be protected in the same manner or to the same degree.

Green places serve as the lungs for communities. Open space is a collective term for a whole range of green places, including natural and environmentally critical areas (such as steep slopes, wetlands, and aquifer recharge areas), parks and recreational areas, and natural resource lands (such as agriculture area and forests). Open space helps to conserve natural resources, protect environmentally critical areas, and preserve cultural and historic resources. Many of these lands are integrally connected and form an ecological system that has unique functions and attributes. They also provide aesthetic, scenic, and recreational benefits. Open spaces provide relief from and buffer urban development and help define urban form.

Climate change will have consequences for habitat and natural ecological processes. Impacts to the physical environment as a result of climate change will likely alter vegetation patterns, food sources for wildlife, snow pack, and runoff cycles.

### Pacific Northwest Ecoregions



### Planning for Open Space

*The Growth Management Act also directs local governments to identify lands that are useful for public purposes and to identify open space corridors within the urban growth area that are useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails, and connection of critical areas (RCW 36.70A.160).*



VISION 2040 calls for preserving habitat and native vegetation, as well as identifying and enhancing the region's open spaces. VISION 2040 recognizes that further work is needed to develop a truly integrated open space and trail system that links urban, rural, and resource lands, provides amenities to all citizens, sustains environmental systems, and contributes to the region's visual identity.

## EARTH AND HABITAT GOALS AND POLICIES

**Goal:** The region will preserve the beauty and natural ecological processes of the Puget Sound basin through the conservation and enhancement of natural resources and the environment.

**MPP-En-8:** Identify, preserve, and enhance significant regional open space networks and linkages across jurisdictional boundaries.

**MPP-En-9:** Designate, protect, and enhance significant open spaces, natural resources, and critical areas through mechanisms, such as the review and comment of countywide planning policies and local plans and provisions.

**MPP-En-10:** Preserve and enhance habitat to prevent species from inclusion on the Endangered Species List and to accelerate their removal from the list.

**MPP-En-11:** Identify and protect wildlife corridors both inside and outside the urban growth area.

**MPP-En-12:** Preserve and restore native vegetation to protect habitat, especially where it contributes to the overall ecological function and where invasive species are a significant threat to native ecosystems.

## Water Quality

In many ways water is the lifeblood of the region. Dozens of rivers and tributaries flow from the nearby mountain ranges and drain into Puget Sound. Many of our communities were originally founded on the shores of Puget Sound — its fish nourished and sustained the region's native peoples and subsequent settlers, and have been a part of our economy.

Human activity and development have affected the water quality of our ponds, lakes, streams, and bays. Sediments from runoff, pollution from farming and roads, toxins from industry and automobiles, sewage outfalls, the spread of non-native plant species, and alteration of natural water courses and shorelines all contribute to their degradation. Impervious surfaces, including pavement and buildings, alter natural drainage and flow patterns, often contributing to flooding and other runoff problems if not properly designed. Dams to control floods or provide hydropower also affect stream flow and water quality.

According to the Washington State Department of Natural Resources, one-third of Puget Sound's shorelines have been modified. The pace of shoreline modifications has slowed in recent years due to shoreline and stormwater management regulations, as well as requirements related to salmon recovery. Aquatic environmental issues are not confined to bodies of water. Some of the most damaging human impacts to water quality and aquatic habitat begin far from the shoreline.

### *Tribes and Water Interests*

*Indian tribes have inhabited the watersheds of western Washington for generations. Their cultures have been based on harvesting fish, wildlife, and other natural resources in the region. The 1974 Boldt decision reaffirmed treaty-protected fishing rights and established tribes as co-managers of the resource. Tribes in the state created the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission to assist in conducting orderly and biologically sound fisheries. With the interconnectedness of all natural resources, tribal participation is necessary in nearly all aspects of natural resource management in the region.*

### *Port Operations and the Region's Waterways*

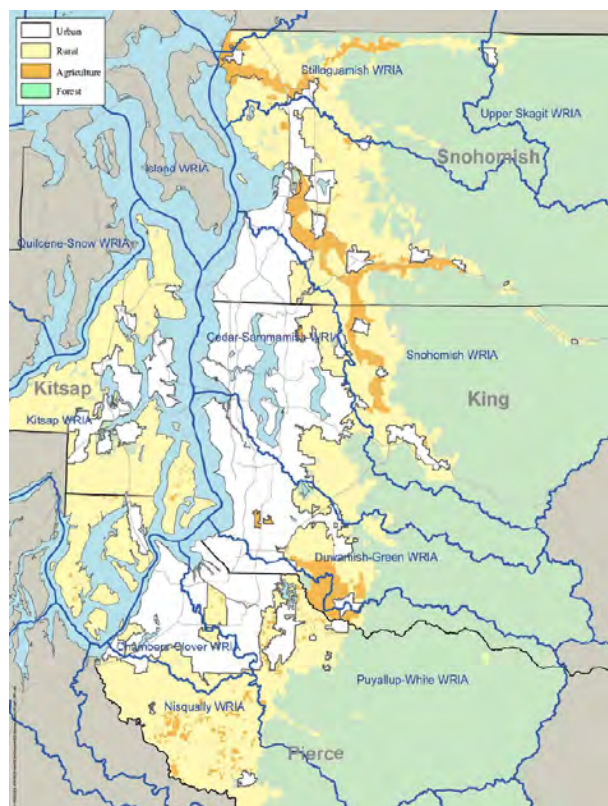
*The region's ports have several challenges, including protecting and enhancing water quality in the region while operating port facilities which serve the local economy as efficiently as possible. Seaport operations — from container and cruise terminals to recreational and commercial marinas — impact fish and other wildlife. The ports are committed to efforts to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the region's waters, including rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands, and marine waters.*

**Pollution in Puget Sound.** Puget Sound, the defining geographical feature of the region, is a vast and beautiful estuary; it is also a complex living ecosystem. However, there are signs that the ecosystem is in trouble. Fish and wildlife suffer from toxic contaminants. Water quality is affected by pollution from human and animal waste, including sewer outfalls. More than half the pollution in the Sound can now be traced to transportation-related activities, especially run-off from streets. In 2006, the region experienced the first-ever consumption advisory for Puget Sound Chinook salmon. Broad-scale actions are needed now if we are to leave a legacy of a healthy Puget Sound for future generations.

**Salmon Recovery and Watershed Planning.** In 1999, Chinook salmon were officially listed as a threatened species in the central Puget Sound region. Local citizens, tribes, technical experts, and policymakers are engaged in building a practical recovery plan endorsed by the people living and working in the watersheds of Puget Sound. This effort recognizes that the health of salmon is an indicator of the health of both human and natural communities. In addition to pollution, low in-stream flows in the region's waterways are also a limiting factor in the recovery of fish species listed under the Endangered Species Act.

The region now has a plan for salmon recovery in its watersheds that has been approved by local governments. The plan includes strategies to ensure sufficient flows in rivers and streams to maintain fish habitat — both inside and outside the urban growth area.

#### Central Puget Sound Watersheds



#### The Puget Sound Partnership

*The Puget Sound Partnership is a new state agency created in 2007 to lead the recovery of Puget Sound by 2020. The Partnership is designed to bring together citizens, governments, tribes, and businesses in that important mission. The Partnership's work includes the actions listed below.*

- Build a long-term recovery plan for Puget Sound
- Engage the public in development and implementation of the plan
- Develop and recommend an organizational framework for taking action
- Review and prioritize funding for the effort
- Recommend how broad-based scientific knowledge should be applied

#### Watershed Resource Inventory Areas

*In 1998, the Legislature created a framework for developing local solutions to water-related issues on a watershed basis, which identified 62 major watershed basins statewide, referred to as Watershed Resource Inventory Areas (WRIAs). Planning for WRIAs includes watershed assessment, mapping, monitoring of conditions and trends in streams and lakes, water quality assessment, gathering other environmental information, and development of a watershed plan. The central Puget Sound region is related to 18 designated watersheds.*

*Within WRIAs, the basin steward serves as an advocate and contact person who shares information with members of the community, school groups, and nongovernmental organizations.*

**Water Quality and Quantity.** The region's water supply is affected both by water quality and water quantity. While water supply to serve the region's population and industries is discussed in more detail in the *Public Services* section, it is important to address here that issues of water quantity affect water quality and vice versa. A goal in the *Public Services* section commits to providing the region with high quality drinking water and includes policies that call for developing additional water supply sources to meet the region's long-term water needs. Water conservation and reuse are also addressed. As the region grows and develops, care must be taken to protect and properly manage our finite water resources. This is particularly pressing in light of likely changes in rainfall and snowmelt patterns as a result of climate change.

Water is of critical importance to sustain the natural environment and meet the region's growth needs. To those ends, VISION 2040 calls for maintaining and restoring the ecological functions of the region's waterways and estuaries. It calls for reducing water pollution and taking steps to address the impacts of climate change on the region's water quality and supply.

## WATER QUALITY GOALS AND POLICIES

**Goal:** The region will meet or do better than standards established for water quality. The quality of the water flowing out of the region — including Puget Sound — should be as good as or better than the quality of water entering the region.

**MPP-En-13:** Maintain natural hydrological functions within the region's ecosystems and watersheds and, where feasible, restore them to a more natural state.

**MPP-En-14:** Restore — where appropriate and possible — the region's freshwater and marine shorelines, watersheds, and estuaries to a natural condition for ecological function and value.

**MPP-En-15:** Reduce the use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers to the extent feasible and identify alternatives that minimize risks to human health and the environment.

**MPP-En-16:** Identify and address the impacts of climate change on the region's hydrological systems.

## Air Quality

Air quality is primarily a public health concern, but it also affects plant and animal life, as well as visibility. Air pollutants damage lung tissue and can lead to respiratory disease. Sensitive populations, including children, the elderly, and those with certain health conditions, are most at risk for developing respiratory illnesses. Health experts are increasingly concerned that air toxics may contribute to cancer and cardiovascular disease.

Historically, ground-level ozone, carbon monoxide, and fugitive dust have been the pollutants of primary concern in the central Puget Sound region. Progress has been made in curbing some of these conventional pollutants. However, today — and into the future — the region's most problematic pollutants are and will continue to be fine particles and toxic emissions, along with ground-level ozone. Greenhouse gases are also major air pollutants. Impaired visibility and climate change concerns compound the problems related to air quality. Dirty air obscures many of our most scenic vistas, such as views of the Olympic and Cascade mountain ranges, including Mount Rainier.

### *Transportation and Air Quality*

*Areas near heavily traveled freeways experience significantly elevated levels of pollution, especially fine particulates. Such exposure contributes to asthma and other respiratory illnesses. The impacts of freeways on various communities and residents, including hospitals and schools in urban environments, need to be addressed when considering increasing road capacity.*

Development can affect air quality by changing the physical environment. For instance, it may replace vegetation with paved surfaces and buildings, concentrate uses and activities, and require the movement of people and goods between different areas. Removing natural vegetation for development changes the local ambient temperature, and results in more carbon in the atmosphere, thereby contributing to climate change. While a number of human activities



### Growth Management and Air Quality

*The Puget Sound Clean Air Agency's emphasis on growth management planning as a means of improving air quality presents an opportunity to reinforce VISION 2040. Alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle travel, including carpooling, biking, telecommuting, and a wider range of transit options, are important ways to improve air quality.*

*In 2007, the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency adopted six policies for local jurisdictions to use in their growth management planning efforts.*

- Implement air- and climate-friendly design, construction and operation
- Promote cleaner travel choices
- Reduce exposure to air pollution
- Install clean fireplaces and stoves in new home construction
- Support environmental justice
- Use the State Environmental Policy Act as a tool and safety net

— including indoor and outdoor burning, construction dust, and lawn care — affect air quality, motor vehicles are by far the largest source of air pollution in the region.

Development that accommodates walking, biking, and transit use, such as in centers and compact, mixed-use communities, can have air quality and climate benefits. Well-designed communities with good access and mobility provide alternatives to driving alone, which in turn reduce emissions.

VISION 2040 calls for improving air quality and reducing airborne pollutants and emissions.

### AIR QUALITY GOAL AND POLICIES

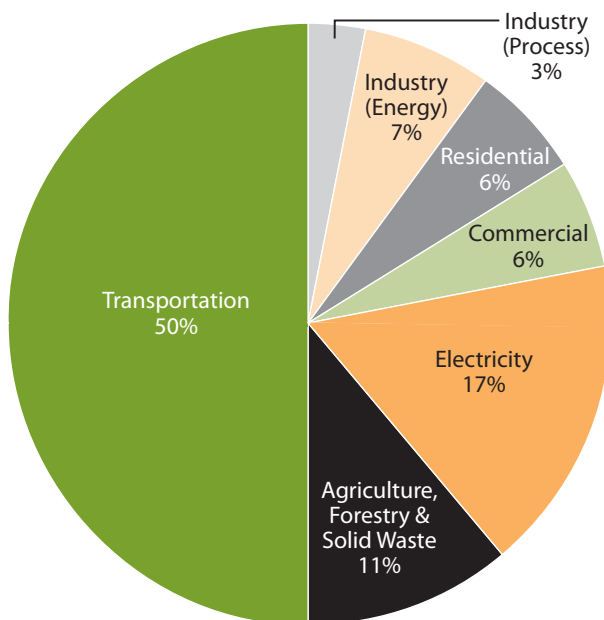
**Goal:** The overall quality of the region's air will be better than it is today.

**MPP-En-17:** Maintain or do better than existing standards for carbon monoxide, ozone, and particulates.

**MPP-En-18:** Reduce levels for air toxics, fine particulates, and greenhouse gases.

**MPP-En-19:** Continue efforts to reduce pollutants from transportation activities, including through the use of cleaner fuels and vehicles and increasing alternatives to driving alone, as well as design and land use.

**Sources of Greenhouse Gas Emissions  
in the Central Puget Sound Region**



Source: Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, 2000

### Climate Change

Climate change has the potential to affect almost every other issue identified in VISION 2040. Though a global issue, local governments can play an important role in reducing its impacts. According to the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, for every gallon of gasoline used, automobiles release roughly 20 pounds of carbon dioxide, one of the primary greenhouse gases contributing to climate change. In the central Puget Sound region, cars and trucks contribute more greenhouse gas emissions than any other source. Burning conventional diesel and gasoline in our motor vehicles and equipment is responsible for the bulk of our greenhouse gases and other air toxics. Choosing cleaner alternatives and retrofitting older machinery to be less-polluting are affordable ways to protect our air.

VISION 2040 calls for reducing our contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and preparing for the anticipated impacts of climate change. Agencies at all levels of government should seek ways to both mitigate and adapt

to climate change. This includes efforts to maximize energy efficiency and increase renewable energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions of new vehicles, reduce motor vehicle miles traveled, improve the convenience and safety of nonpolluting transportation modes such as bicycling and walking, protect the natural landscape and vegetation, and increase recycling and reduce waste.

## CLIMATE CHANGE GOAL AND POLICIES

**Goal:** The region will reduce its overall production of harmful elements that contribute to climate change.

**MPP-En-20:** Address the central Puget Sound region's contribution to climate change by, at a minimum, committing to comply with state initiatives and directives regarding climate change and the reduction of greenhouse gases. Jurisdictions and agencies should work to include an analysis of climate change impacts when conducting an environmental review process under the State Environmental Policy Act.

**MPP-En-21:** Reduce the rate of energy use per capita, both in building use and in transportation activities.

**MPP-En-22:** Pursue the development of energy management technology as part of meeting the region's energy needs.

**MPP-En-23:** Reduce greenhouse gases by expanding the use of conservation and alternative energy sources and by reducing vehicle miles traveled by increasing alternatives to driving alone.

**MPP-En-24:** Take positive actions to reduce carbons, such as increasing the number of trees in urban portions of the region.

**MPP-En-25:** Anticipate and address the impacts of climate change on regional water sources.

## Initiatives in Washington to Address Climate Change

*In 2007 both the Governor and the Legislature took actions to address climate change. While using different benchmark reference points, the two initiatives are compatible in their targets.*

### Washington Climate Change Challenge

*In February 2007, the Governor established greenhouse gas emission targets, calling for the state to reduce emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, 25 percent below 1990 levels by 2035, and 50 percent below 1990 levels by 2050 — a 70 percent reduction below normal projections. The order further directs state agencies to move forward with the Challenge, a process designed to consider the full range of policy options that may be enacted to achieve the state's targets. The Challenge also calls for the full implementation of existing Washington laws for emission standards, building efficiency standards, and biofuel and renewable energy initiatives.*

### Legislative Action

*The Washington Legislature has established specific greenhouse gas emission targets to address climate change. By January 1, 2020, the annual statewide greenhouse gas emission levels must be no greater than the emission levels that occurred in 1990. By January 1, 2035, the annual statewide greenhouse gas emission levels must be 25 percent below the levels in 1990. By 2050 the levels must be 50 percent below 1990 levels. (RCW 80.80.020)*

*This legislation also affirms the Governor's targets for reducing greenhouse gases by reducing energy imports and increasing energy jobs. It also sets emissions performance standards for major new power plants or power purchases. The law authorizes additional financial incentives for electric utilities to invest in energy conservation. Finally, it authorizes electric utilities and counties to continue to invest in reducing their contributions to climate change.*

### Cities and Counties

*Individual cities and counties in the region have already taken steps to address climate change by establishing action plans, including both King County and Seattle. Seattle, Bremerton, Everett, Tacoma, and more than a dozen other cities across the region have signed on to the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement.*

### **VISION 2040 and Climate Change**

Climate change is an issue that affects all facets of VISION 2040 — the natural environment, the built environment, the economy, transportation, and other infrastructure and services. With this recognition, VISION 2040 provides guidance in all policy sections of the plan for reducing air pollution and protecting the climate.

While the entire set of multicounty planning policies has been crafted to be integrated and mutually supportive, the following list identifies those policies that address climate change, the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, or related environmental impacts.

En-3	En-22	T-6
En-16	En-23	T-22
En-17	En-24	T-23
En-18	En-25	T-25
En-19	DP-45	PS-1
En-20	Ec-15	PS-12
En-21	T-5	PS-13

In addition, VISION 2040 includes an implementation action calling for the development of a regional climate change action plan (see En-Action-7). Other actions that contribute to protecting the climate and reducing emissions include:

- En-Action-6
- DP-Action-9
- T-Action-14

Finally, VISION 2040 includes monitoring provisions in the Implementation section that call for measuring emissions of greenhouse gases and tracking local jurisdictions' programs and efforts to address climate change (En-Measure-5, En-Measure-6).



## VISION 2040 ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIONS

The following VISION 2040 actions have been developed to help implement the environment policies. Detailed information on specific measures that will be used to monitor implementation and performance is contained in *Part IV: Implementation*.

### REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIONS

#### Regional Environmental Planning: En-Action-1

The Puget Sound Regional Council, in particular the Growth Management Policy Board, will determine its ongoing role in regional environmental planning and coordination, including sustainable development and addressing the impacts of climate change.

- *Short-term / MPP-En-1, 2*
- *Results and Products: report and recommendations to Growth Management Policy Board and Executive Board, best practices toolkit or other resources to provide guidance for addressing environmental provisions in VISION 2040*

#### Regional Green Space Strategy: En-Action-2

The Puget Sound Regional Council, its member jurisdictions, open-space agencies, and interest groups shall develop a regional green space strategy. (Address regional trail development in such a strategy.)

- *Mid-term / MPP-En-8, 9*
- *Results and Products: Regional Green Space Strategy*

#### Critical Areas Coordination: En-Action-3

The Puget Sound Regional Council will review and report on efforts between counties and cities to coordinate the designation and protection of critical areas.

- *Mid-term / MPP-En-2, 6*
- *Results and Products: report and recommendations to Growth Management Policy Board and countywide coordination groups*

#### Water Quality: En-Action-4

The Puget Sound Regional Council will determine its role in addressing regional water quality issues.

- *Mid-term / MPP-En-13 through 16, MPP-PS-17 through 20*
- *Results and Products: report and recommendations to Growth Management Policy Board and Executive Board*
- *See also action for counties and cities (below), as well as action on water quantity in the Public Services section*

#### Estuary Restoration: En-Action-5

The Puget Sound Regional Council will work with its member jurisdictions and other relevant agencies to develop a best practices toolkit for estuary restoration and redevelopment along urban waterways.

- *Mid-term / MPP-En 14*
- *Results and Products: best practices toolkit for local jurisdictions*

#### Air Quality: En-Action-6

The Puget Sound Regional Council and its member jurisdictions will work with the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency to identify steps to improve air quality beyond the minimum standards.

- *Mid-term / MPP-En-17 through 19*
- *Results and Products: air quality guide with identified steps*

#### Climate Change Action Plan: En-Action-7

The Puget Sound Regional Council and its member organizations will work with the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, state agencies, and other environmental professionals to prepare an action plan containing regional and local provisions. The plan should investigate ways to: (a) address climate change in accordance with the Governor's 2007 Climate Change initiative and state legislation on greenhouse gas emissions reduction (RCW 80.80.020), (b) reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and (c) take specific mitigation steps to address climate change impacts. The plan should also address establishing a regional climate change benchmark program.

- *Short-term / MPP-En-20 through 25*
- *Results and Products: action plan for climate change, climate change benchmark program*

## COUNTY-LEVEL ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIONS

### Critical Areas Coordination: En-Action-8

Counties and cities will coordinate their work to designate and protect critical areas to make identifying and regulating environmentally sensitive areas more consistent.

- Short-term / MPP-En-2, 5, 6
- Results and Products: *Revised Countywide Planning Policies and/or other coordinated plans, regional report and recommendations on progress and outcomes*

### Habitat Assessment: En-Action-9

Counties and cities shall develop common methodologies for assessing the habitat needs of critical and sensitive species.

- Short-term / MPP-En-10 through 12
- Results and Products: *common methodology*

### Water Quality Standards and Targets: En-Action-10

Counties and cities, together with water providers, will develop standards and targets to monitor the region's waterways.

- Mid-term / MPP-En-14, 15, MPP-PS-17 through 20
- Results and Products: *local standards and targets*

## LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIONS

### Environmental Planning: En-Action-11

Local jurisdictions, with assistance from the Puget Sound Regional Council, will expand their efforts to conduct environmental planning, specifically to incorporate a more comprehensive systems approach to ecological considerations. The Regional Council will:

- Assist with information on system approaches, such as landscape-scale analysis and adaptive management principles
- Provide guidance on how to incorporate regionwide environmental planning initiatives — such as the Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) process — into local comprehensive plans
- Develop a system of map overlays to enhance a systems approach to environmental planning

- Mid-term / MPP-En-2
- Results and Products: *expanded ecological assessment in the preparation of local plans*

## Development Patterns: Land Use, Orderly Development and Design

**Overarching Goal:** *The region will focus growth within already urbanized areas to create walkable, compact, and transit-oriented communities that maintain unique local character. Centers will continue to be a focus of development. Rural and natural resource lands will continue to be permanent and vital parts of the region.*

*Development patterns of the last half of the 20th century often separated people from jobs, focused on accommodating the automobile, and altered critical ecosystems. Some of the results have been sprawl development, increasing health concerns, overburdened transportation and infrastructure systems, and increased pollution. The loss of land cover and vegetation to impervious surfaces, including buildings and pavement, also contributes to climate change — although not as significantly as the burning of fossil fuels. More recently, steps have been taken once again to build communities that are walkable and have a mix of uses, and that take advantage of materials and building techniques that have less impact on the environment.*

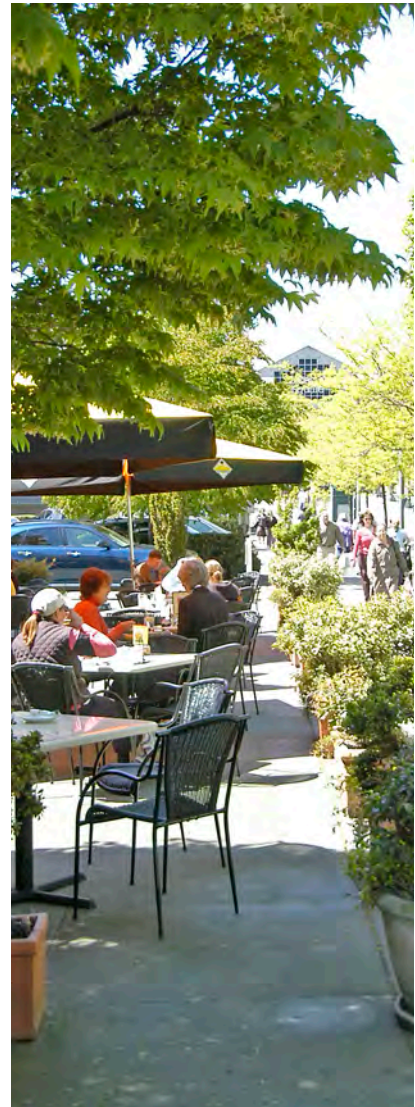
Just as many of the region's natural features — such as river corridors and valleys — transcend political boundaries, so too do most of the region's built systems — such as highways, transit corridors, and industrial areas. These features are the connective fabric that ties the region together.

Sustainable development strives to create and support a built environment that is well-designed and well-connected. Buildings and facilities are constructed in a way that is environmentally sensitive, including reducing the use of nonrenewable resources, minimizing impacts on the natural environment, and being attentive to the implications of climate change. People have access to and are well-served with various public, private, and community services.

VISION 2040 provides guidance for concentrating growth and future development into existing urbanized areas. This creates more vibrant communities, reduces reliance on the automobile, minimizes growth in the region's rural areas, protects resource lands, and ensures that resources are available to meet the needs of future generations.

This section describes the character of the development patterns that support the *Regional Growth Strategy*. It focuses on the continued growth of regional and subregional centers, building on the concept of creating mixed-use central places and vibrant communities connected by an efficient transportation system. Policies are included to establish and meet residential and employment targets at the countywide and local levels. Innovative approaches to development, with high quality urban design, are also addressed.

The development patterns section is divided into two subsections: (1) *Land Use* and (2) *Elements of Orderly Development and Design*. The land use subsection emphasizes an integrated approach to development. This means planning for growth in a manner that protects resource, rural, and critical areas by focusing development within areas that are already urbanized and by locating jobs and housing closer together. The subsection on orderly development and design presents traditional and innovative approaches to maintaining a wide variety of healthy, accessible, and well-designed communities.





## Development Patterns: Land Use, Orderly Development and Design

### Subsection I: Land Use (Urban Lands, Rural Lands, and Resource Lands)

Land has significant importance for people — as a place of identity, as a basis for one's livelihood, or as a commodity. When there are changes in how land is used, these changes are typically long-lasting. They can alter the sense of place people have come to value. The interests of the individual and the interests of the community can often be at odds when changes in land use take place.

Land use planning addresses many different types of land and a variety of ways in which land is used. It provides a public process for ordering and regulating land, along with related resources and facilities, to ensure the physical, economic, and social well-being of communities and their residents.

#### **Private Property Rights**

*The Growth Management Act states that "private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation having been made." The Act goes on to say that "property rights of landowners shall be protected from arbitrary and discriminatory actions." (RCW 36.70A.020)*

**Land Use in Washington State.** In Washington's Growth Management Act, three major categories of land are recognized: urban, rural, and resource. Within each category, further distinctions can be made. For example, forest lands and farm lands are two types of resource lands. Two classifications of land — open space and critical areas — are found in all three land categories. This section addresses each of the three types of land identified in the Act, with distinct expectations for how land functions and is to be used.

### URBAN LANDS

The region's earliest cities developed with a mix of uses and in a manner that supported walking to key destinations and activities. Their compact form can still be seen in many downtowns and city centers.

A pattern of low-density development that began in the 1940s has resulted in the conversion of forests and farms to subdivisions, and made it increasingly expensive to provide water, sewer, streets, and other services. Land uses were separated, with jobs and stores in one location, homes on expansive lots in another, and schools and parks yet someplace else. This pattern also favored single-family homes or complexes of apartment buildings, providing few other choices in housing types. Wide streets with infrequent crosswalks and shopping malls surrounded by parking lots were designed to accommodate cars, not people. This pattern has not supported walking, bicycling, or use of transit to meet daily needs, leading to an overburdening of the roadway system and a loss of regional mobility. Low-density patterns that rely on driving alone for many trips contribute to persistent air pollution problems and greenhouse gas emissions.

Among the goals of the state's Growth Management Act are provisions to reduce sprawling and low-density development, ensure that growth occurs in areas designated for urban land uses, preserve rural lands and conserve natural resources, and enable efficient provision of services and facilities. In order to provide adequate facilities, services, and housing, and maintain economic health, we need to continue to change the way we accommodate growth. This does not mean that all new urban development will be high-density. In fact, in many cases, existing moderate-density locations, especially single-family neighborhoods, will not significantly change. What it does mean is taking small and big steps to integrate better the locations where we work, shop, live, and recreate in a manner that uses resources — public and private — more efficiently.

**The Urban Growth Area.** Counties must work with their cities to designate an urban growth area as the primary location for growth and future development. All four counties in the region designated such an urban growth area in the mid-1990s. Subsequently, only relatively minor adjustments to the urban growth area have been made. The *Regional Growth Strategy* was developed with the assumption that, with good planning and efficient land use, existing urban growth area designations can accommodate the population and employment growth expected by 2040. Any adjustments to the urban growth area in the coming decades should continue to be minor. When adjustments to the urban

growth area are considered, they should avoid encroaching on important habitat and natural resource areas.

VISION 2040 emphasizes coordination among counties in the region to achieve compatible urban growth area designations, based on need and an analysis of land capacity. Recognizing the interrelationships among the counties and cities in the four-county region, VISION 2040 calls for establishing a regional framework for future adjustments to the urban growth area. Such a framework allows adjustments to be considered in a regional context and provides the opportunity for the Regional Council and the counties to collaborate.

**Growth Targets.** A growth target is the minimum number of residents (or in the case of employment, the minimum number of jobs) a given jurisdiction is expected to accommodate by some future year. As part of the state's planning process, the target is an information tool intended to provide policymakers and others with a consistent estimate of how much growth is coming, and where it is expected and intended to go. Targets are developed through collaborative countywide processes that ensure that every jurisdiction is accommodating a fair share of growth. Counties and cities work cooperatively with tribal governments in their targeting processes.

VISION 2040 calls for better integrated processes for establishing residential and employment targets among the region's four counties, including setting targets for regionally designated centers. The numeric distributions of population and employment provided in VISION 2040's

*Regional Growth Strategy* are intended for use in the countywide targeting processes.

## URBAN LANDS GOALS AND POLICIES

**Goal:** The region will promote the efficient use of land, prevent urbanization of rural and resource lands, and provide for the efficient delivery of services within the designated urban growth area.

**MPP-DP-1:** Provide a regional framework for the designation and adjustment of the urban growth area to ensure long-term stability and sustainability of the urban growth area consistent with the regional vision.

**MPP-DP-2:** Encourage efficient use of urban land by maximizing the development potential of existing urban lands, such as advancing development that achieves zoned density.

**Goal:** The region, countywide planning bodies, and local jurisdictions will work together to set population and employment growth targets consistent with the regional vision.

**MPP-DP-3:** Use consistent countywide targeting processes for allocating population and employment growth consistent with the regional vision, including establishing: (a) local employment targets, (b) local housing targets based on population projections, and (c) local housing and employment targets for each designated regional growth center.

**MPP-DP-4:** Accommodate the region's growth first and foremost in the urban growth area. Ensure that development in rural areas is consistent with the regional vision.

## VISION 2040 and Centers

The development of centers lies at the heart of VISION 2040 and its related functional plans (the *Metropolitan Transportation Plan* and the *Regional Economic Strategy*). Centers are characterized by compact, pedestrian-oriented development with a mix of uses. Centers provide proximity to a diverse collection of services, shopping, recreation, and jobs, as well as a variety of attractive and well-designed residences. They are locations identified to take a greater proportion of future population and employment in order to curb sprawl — by encouraging development in strategic places inside the region's designated urban growth area.

Centers create environments of improved accessibility and mobility — especially for walking, biking, and transit — and, as a result, play a key transportation role as well. Centers also provide the backbone for the region's transportation network. By developing a highly efficient transportation system linking major centers, the region can take significant steps to reduce the rate of growth in vehicle miles traveled, while accommodating a growing population and an increase in jobs.

Centers also provide environmental benefits by creating communities that rely less on forms of transportation that contribute to air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. A highly efficient transportation system can contribute to

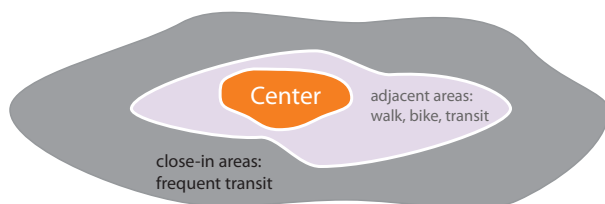
improved air quality and a reduction of pollutants associated with climate change.

**Density and Its Benefits.** Both high urban density and low-density development have costs and impacts. Low-density development, especially urban sprawl, is costly to serve, can fragment and convert resource lands and environmentally significant areas, and is challenging to serve with transportation beyond driving alone. While higher density areas can experience more localized pollution and noise, compact built environments, where businesses, housing, shopping, and entertainment are in closer proximity, produce a number of benefits. These benefits include reducing demand on services (including water supply and energy supply), having fewer impervious surfaces (which is a factor in reducing the amount of urban runoff), and providing opportunities for economic development through infill and redevelopment.

The *Regional Growth Strategy* seeks to focus a major share of employment and housing growth in *Metropolitan Cities* and *Core Cities*. The centers in these cities, the *regional growth centers*, are to be connected and served by fast and frequent high-capacity transit service. Transit investments in these and other subregional and local centers should be supported by planning and zoning for transit-oriented development in adjacent areas.

What happens in the areas adjacent to and near a center is also important. Easy access into a center from neighboring communities and districts makes it convenient to get to concentrations of jobs, shopping, and entertainment. Such access includes bicycle and pedestrian connections, as well as reliable transit service. Even when walking is not an option, if a person can easily travel to the nearby center with a transit trip, and from there connect to other parts of the region by means of high-capacity transit service, mobility and accessibility are greatly improved.

### Centers and Surrounding Areas



**Center Types.** The policies for and descriptions of centers in VISION 2040 provide a framework for the centers concept. This framework includes *regional growth*

*centers* and *regional/manufacturing industrial centers*, as well as subregional centers, which include those centers designated through countywide processes or identified locally. Other types of central places, including neighborhood centers and activity nodes, are also discussed.

### REGIONAL GROWTH CENTERS

Formally designated by the Puget Sound Regional Council, *regional growth centers* play a unique and important role as locations of the region's most significant business, governmental, and cultural facilities. These centers are located in either *Metropolitan Cities* or *Core Cities*. Regional growth centers are areas of higher-intensity development and contain a mix of land uses and services. Major regional investments for transportation and other infrastructure should be prioritized for these locations.

#### Criteria for Regional Growth Centers

*The Regional Council's Executive Board has adopted criteria for the designation of regional growth centers which consider: minimum targets, mix of uses, compact size and shape, block size, and transportation network.*

#### High-Capacity Transit and Centers

*One transit station can serve an area of about one square mile (640 acres), or a half-mile walking radius. To support the use of such a station, a minimum of between 20,000 and 25,000 activity units (some combination of employees and residents) within the square mile is needed (or 30 to 50 activity units per acre).*

### REGIONAL GROWTH CENTERS GOAL AND POLICIES

**Goal:** The region will direct growth and development to a limited number of designated regional growth centers.

**MPP-DP-5:** Focus a significant share of population and employment growth in designated regional growth centers.

**MPP-DP-6:** Provide a regional framework for designating and evaluating regional growth centers.

**MPP-DP-7:** Give funding priority — both for transportation infrastructure and for economic development — to support designated regional growth centers consistent with the regional vision. Regional funds are prioritized to regional growth centers. County-level and local funding are also appropriate to prioritize to regional growth centers.



## REGIONAL MANUFACTURING/INDUSTRIAL CENTERS

Unlike *regional growth centers*, *manufacturing/industrial centers* are primarily locations of more intense employment and are typically not appropriate for housing. VISION 2040 calls for the recognition and preservation of existing centers of intensive manufacturing and industrial activity and the provision of infrastructure and services necessary to support these areas. These centers are important employment locations that serve both current and long-term regional economic objectives. VISION 2040 discourages non-supportive land uses in manufacturing/industrial centers, such as retail or non-related offices.

### Criteria for Regional Manufacturing/Industrial Centers

*The Regional Council's Executive Board has adopted criteria for the designation of regional manufacturing/industrial centers, including a minimum employment target, land planned specifically for industrial and/or manufacturing uses, protection from incompatible land uses, efficient size and shape, planning for transportation facilities and services, and urban design standards.*

## REGIONAL MANUFACTURING/INDUSTRIAL CENTERS GOAL AND POLICIES

**Goal:** The region will continue to maintain and support viable regional manufacturing/industrial centers to accommodate manufacturing, industrial, or advanced technology uses.

**MPP-DP-8:** Focus a significant share of employment growth in designated regional manufacturing/industrial centers.

**MPP-DP-9:** Provide a regional framework for designating and evaluating regional manufacturing/industrial centers.

**MPP-DP-10:** Give funding priority — both for transportation infrastructure and for economic development — to support designated regional manufacturing/industrial centers consistent with the regional vision. Regional funds are prioritized to regional manufacturing/industrial centers. County-level and local funding are also appropriate to prioritize to these regional centers.

## OTHER CENTERS, INCLUDING COUNTYWIDE AND LOCAL CENTERS

Many secondary hubs and concentrations of development also serve important roles as places for concentrating jobs, housing, shopping, and recreational opportunities. These are often the downtowns or city centers of larger cities. *Town centers* in small cities can also provide a mix of housing and services and serve as focal points where people come together for a variety of activities, including shopping and recreation. Finally, small *neighborhood centers* and even *activity hubs* that serve as the crossroads in cities and communities of all sizes are also key in implementing a centers-based approach to development in the region. This includes station areas along major transit routes (including the region's ferry terminals). VISION 2040 calls for developing central places in cities and towns of all sizes.

### A Region of Central Places

*The centers concept is at the core of VISION 2040. While centers in Metropolitan and Core Cities serve key regional functions as major job, commercial, transportation, and government hubs, other types of centers are also important. VISION 2040 expects each city in the region to take steps to further evolve one or more central places as mixed use areas of residences, employment, shops, cultural facilities, and entertainment. Each such center — no matter how large or small — should serve as a focal point of community, be walkable, and have easy access to transit.*

## OTHER CENTERS GOAL AND POLICIES

**Goal:** Subregional centers, such as those designated through countywide processes or identified locally, will also play important roles in accommodating planned growth according to the regional vision. These centers will promote pedestrian connections and support transit-oriented uses.

**MPP-DP-11:** Support the development of centers within all jurisdictions, including town centers and activity nodes.

**MPP-DP-12:** Establish a common framework among the countywide processes for designating subregional centers to ensure compatibility within the region.

**MPP-DP-13:** Direct subregional funding, especially county-level and local funds, to centers designated through countywide processes, as well as to town centers, and other activity nodes.

## Designated Regional Centers



## Centers in VISION 2040

VISION 2040 contains several implementation actions designed to evaluate current regional growth center and manufacturing/industrial center designation criteria, and to refine a description of a regional centers hierarchy. This work will include more explicit descriptions of activity thresholds and targets. (See the Development Patterns actions at the end of this section.)

REGIONALLY DESIGNATED CENTERS		OTHER CENTERS		OTHER CENTRAL PLACES
REGIONAL GROWTH CENTERS	MANUFACTURING/ INDUSTRIAL CENTERS	CENTERS IN LARGER CITIES	SMALL CITY OR TOWN CENTERS	NEIGH. CENTERS, ACTIVITY NODES, STATION AREAS
<b>DEFINITION</b> Regional Growth Centers are designated areas of high-intensity residential and employment development. They are most typically located in the historic downtowns or other major activity areas of the region's five Metropolitan Cities and in Core Cities. Regional growth centers serve as a primary framework for regional transportation and economic development planning.	Manufacturing/ Industrial Centers are locations of intensive employment with facilities having large spaces for the assembly of goods and areas suitable for outdoor storage.	These centers are designated as key areas for concentrating growth in Larger Cities that currently do not have a regional growth center.	Small City or Town Centers are focal points for the region's smaller cities and towns.	Relatively small areas (ranging from an intersection to a couple of blocks), often at key crossroads. These centers can be located in cities of any regional geography type.
<b>DESIGNATION</b> Designated by PSRC.	Designated by PSRC.	Not designated regionally; to be designated through countywide processes.	Not designated regionally; serve more localized needs and identified locally.	Identified locally.
<b>CHARACTERISTICS</b> These are locations with current or planned concentrations of the region's most significant business, governmental, and cultural activities. They support high-density urban neighborhoods with a mix of land uses including housing, jobs, shopping, and recreation. Regional growth centers are often primary cultural, civic, and government hubs with large regional markets. In many respects, these centers function as "small towns" within our largest cities.	Areas in which manufacturing and industrial land uses are concentrated, which cannot easily be mixed with other activities. Housing is not appropriate in these locations.	These centers serve important roles as subregional hubs and secondary concentrations of development. They provide a dense mix of housing and services, such as stores, medical offices, and libraries. They serve as focal points where people come together for a variety of activities, including business, shopping, living, and recreation. They often have a civic character with community facilities, such as municipal buildings and other public places.	These centers provide a moderately dense mix of housing and services, such as stores, libraries, and small parks. They serve as focal points within a small city or town where people come together for a variety of activities, including business, shopping, living, and recreation. They often have a civic character with community centers and facilities, such as City Hall, and frequently include local "Main Streets" and other public places.	These relatively small areas have a mix of uses to serve the immediate vicinity. Housing is often located above ground-floor retail and services.
<b>TRANSPORTATION FEATURES</b> Served by regional high-capacity transit, rail, major highways, and other transportation services. Major investments for transportation and other services and facilities are targeted for these locations. These centers should have a complete network of walkways and bicycle links, with easy access to transit.	Served by major regional transportation infrastructure, including rail, major highways, and port facilities.	Served by regular local transit and regional express transit service. These centers should have a complete network of sidewalks and access to bicycle paths and transit facilities.	Served by local transit. These centers should have a well-developed network of sidewalks and access to bicycle paths and transit stops or other facilities.	Served by local transit. These places should encourage walking, biking, and transit use.
<b>LOCATIONS</b> <b>Metropolitan Cities:</b> Seattle, Bellevue, Bremerton, Everett, Tacoma <b>Core Cities:</b> Auburn, Bothell, Burien, Federal Way, Kent, Kirkland, Lakewood, Lynnwood, Puyallup, Redmond, Renton, SeaTac, Silverdale, Tukwila	Ballard/Interbay (Seattle), Duwamish (Seattle), Frederickson (Pierce County), Kent (Kent), North Tukwila (Tukwila), Paine Field/Boeing (Everett), Port of Tacoma (Tacoma), South Kitsap Industrial Area (Kitsap County)	<b>Larger Cities:</b> Arlington, Bainbridge Island, Des Moines, Edmonds, Fife, Issaquah, Maple Valley, Marysville, Mercer Island, Mill Creek, Monroe, Mountlake Terrace, Mukilteo, Sammamish, Shoreline, University Place, Woodinville	<b>Small cities inside the urban growth area:</b> Algona, Black Diamond, Bonney Lake, Brier, Covington, DuPont, Edgewood, Fircrest, Gig Harbor, Lake Forest Park, Lake Stevens, Medina, Milton, Newcastle, Normandy Park, Orting, Pacific, Port Orchard, Poulsbo, Ruston, Steilacoom, Sumner <b>Residential cities:</b> Beaux Arts, Clyde Hill, Hunts Point, Woodway, Yarrow Point. <b>Free-standing cities:</b> Buckley, Carbonado, Carnation, Darrington, Duvall, Eatonville, Enumclaw, Gold Bar, Granite Falls, Index, North Bend, Roy, Skykomish, Snohomish, Snoqualmie, South Prairie, Stanwood, Sultan, Wilkeson	Could be located in any city. Many cities will have multiple neighborhood and activity areas

## Compact Urban Communities

Compact urban communities offer transportation, housing, and shopping choices that reduce the need for automobile travel and allow residents to walk or bicycle to neighborhood stores. Streets are laid out in a grid pattern or are interconnected, rather than as cul-de-sacs, to support efficient transit operations, as well as walking and bicycling. Typically there are a variety of housing types, such as single-family homes on smaller lots and small apartment buildings. Often small neighborhood activity hubs serve as centers for shopping and local services.

Compact development can be more efficient and cost-effective to serve with infrastructure and services. By creating an environment that is more conducive to walking, bicycling, and using transit, compact development can also contribute to reducing greenhouse gases and other pollutants.

Many of the region's transportation thoroughfares are lined with single-story, single-use developments. These areas present opportunities for redevelopment and infill. Along major transit routes, redevelopment can occur in the form

### **Brownfields and Greyfields**

*These terms are used for sites that are underutilized or not in active use. Brownfields are typically industrial lands that are either contaminated or perceived as contaminated. Greyfields usually are outdated or abandoned commercial properties, such as strip retail or shopping malls, typically surrounded by large surface parking areas. These sites provide opportunities for redevelopment or infill and they often have easier access to existing services and infrastructure.*

of transit-oriented development, where mixed-use projects that provide housing, employment, and retail can focus around a transit station or hub and serve as an activity node for adjacent neighborhoods.

VISION 2040 supports compact urban communities and promotes the development of vacant or underutilized urban land in a manner that supports transit, conserves resources, and builds communities. VISION 2040 also supports redevelopment of selected low-density commercial corridors to make them more transit-oriented and pedestrian-friendly.

## COMPACT URBAN COMMUNITIES POLICIES

**MPP-DP-14:** Preserve and enhance existing neighborhoods and create vibrant, sustainable compact urban communities that provide diverse choices in housing types, a high degree of connectivity in the street network to accommodate walking, bicycling and transit use, and sufficient public spaces.

**MPP-DP-15:** Support the transformation of key underutilized lands, such as brownfields and greyfields, to higher density, mixed-use areas to complement the development of centers and the enhancement of existing neighborhoods.

## Cities in Rural Areas

There are a number of freestanding incorporated cities surrounded by rural lands throughout the region. Under the Growth Management Act, these cities are part of the urban growth area.

VISION 2040 calls for these communities to be the primary places for meeting the service needs — including shopping, jobs, and services — of both their residents and residents in nearby rural areas. Cities in rural areas should also be the focal points of rural-based industries and commerce. Schools and other institutions and facilities serving rural populations should be sited in rural cities. Development patterns in these communities should be at a size and scale appropriate for smaller towns. Commerce should cluster in the town center, which should be walkable and compact.

## CITIES IN RURAL AREA POLICIES

**MPP-DP-16:** Direct commercial, retail, and community services that serve rural residents into neighboring cities and existing activity areas to prevent the conversion of rural land into commercial uses.

**MPP-DP-17:** Promote transit service to and from existing cities in rural areas.



## Unincorporated Urban Growth Area

Within the designated growth area there are unincorporated areas that are urban in form and character, but remain under county jurisdiction. All four counties have such pockets of urban development. Where the ability of the county to provide urban services in these areas has been limited, special service districts have been created as single-purpose units of government. Typically, unincorporated areas are served by dozens of separate special districts, each providing its own type of service. In much of the unincorporated urban growth area, development did not always occur to the same standard as in nearby cities. Roadways lacking gutters, curbs, and sidewalks are just one example.

The Growth Management Act states that cities are the preferred providers of urban services. Urban communities are best served by city governments that provide a complete array of urban services. Some of the region's counties have been working to encourage annexation of unincorporated urban areas by municipalities. Certain unincorporated areas are better suited to incorporate as new cities. VISION 2040 assumes that by 2040 all of the urban area will be within municipalities and the unincorporated urban growth area will be a thing of the past.

VISION 2040 recognizes the issues and challenges of the unincorporated urban growth area, including the historic inconsistency of standards between counties and adjacent municipalities. VISION 2040 calls for joint city-county planning in this area, including establishing common standards for development review and permitting, as well as for services and infrastructure, to ensure that development is efficient and compatible with adjacent communities.

### UNINCORPORATED URBAN GROWTH AREA GOAL AND POLICIES

**Goal:** All unincorporated lands within the urban growth area will either annex into existing cities or incorporate as new cities.

**MPP-DP-18:** Affiliate all urban unincorporated lands appropriate for annexation with an adjacent city or identify those that may be feasible for incorporation. To fulfill the regional growth strategy, annexation is preferred over incorporation.

**MPP-DP-19:** Support joint planning between cities and counties to work cooperatively in planning for urban unincorporated areas to ensure an orderly transition to city governance, including efforts such as: (a) establishing urban development standards, (b) addressing service and infrastructure financing, and (c) transferring permitting authority.

**MPP-DP-20:** Support the provision and coordination of urban services to unincorporated urban areas by the adjacent city or, where appropriate, by the county as an interim approach.

#### **Areas Affiliated for Annexation**

*Within the designated growth area, much of the unincorporated urban growth area has been identified by nearby cities for potential annexation. These areas are referred to as affiliated areas or potential annexation areas. While a city may be interested in including these areas within its municipal boundaries at some future date, for planning purposes these are not areas to which cities may assign any of their established growth target allocations. Rather, as lands under county jurisdiction they have county-established growth targets assigned to them already. At the time of annexation, the county target for the area is added to the city's existing target.*

## RURAL LANDS

Rural areas offer diverse natural amenities and characteristics that form a unique asset in our region. Common elements of rural areas include small-scale farms, wooded areas, lakes, streams, and open spaces. Rural lands primarily contain a mix of low-density residential development, agriculture, and forests. Commercial activity in rural areas is most often associated with resource use and production, open space and natural areas, and recreational uses.

Rural areas also provide important environmental and habitat functions, and are critical for salmon recovery. Counties, small towns, cities, and activity areas provide limited public services to rural residents. Rural lands buffer large resource

areas and accommodate small-scale farming, forestry, and cottage industries, as well as other activities associated with natural resources.

**Development in Rural Areas.** The region's rural areas have distinct characteristics, just as the urban growth area does. Among the region's rural lands are areas with different ecological functions, parcel sizes, and uses. Rural areas provide opportunities for a lifestyle that makes a distinct contribution to the region's sustainability and economy. By accommodating the majority of the region's growth inside the urban growth area, lands with rural character can be maintained for the present, as well as for future generations.

Washington state law enables development to occur based on regulations in effect at the time that a building permit or land division application was submitted — a practice known as vesting. This can lead to situations where development approved before adoption of comprehensive plans under the Growth Management Act is not consistent with the Act's planning goals or more recently adopted local plans. VISION 2040 advances innovative tools and techniques to address the challenges of vesting in rural areas, such as purchase of development rights, transfer of development rights, combining lots, and annual development quotas.

Historically, the region's rural lands have undergone rapid change as they became more accessible. Suburban development has consumed large areas of rural land for housing, schools, stores, and other urban uses. In some cases, rural services, such as sanitary septic systems, wells and roads, have become overused, causing environmental pollution — including air and water pollution and greenhouse gas emissions — as well as health and safety problems. Some locations have experienced growth in traffic volumes on roads not designed for urban levels of development.

#### **Rural Town Centers and Corridors Program**

*Recognizing the importance that rural areas play in the region's economy and sustainability efforts, the Puget Sound Regional Council's Executive Board established the Rural Town Centers and Corridors Program. This program provides assistance and financial incentives to bring together the interests of rural towns and transportation agencies to plan jointly for improvements in a manner that enhances the rural character of these communities.*

When suburban development expands, rural lands can be threatened and rural character and small-scale resource lands lost. These development patterns continue in some places today and threaten the viability of rural lands. Existing development potential in these lands means that current zoning in some areas allows for a level of development that is incompatible with goals for rural areas.

The Growth Management Act and VISION 2040 aim to conserve rural lands and protect these unique areas, along with their ecological and economic importance, by concentrating growth in urban areas, limiting growth in rural areas, and conserving open space and resource lands. The Act requires counties to develop rural elements in their comprehensive plans and to identify land uses, densities, and service levels that are compatible with rural character.

The *Regional Growth Strategy* in VISION 2040 seeks to reduce the amount of growth in rural areas. It builds on the success of the first decade of growth management planning, which reduced the overall amount of growth in the region's rural areas.

VISION 2040 further defines a regional policy framework to guide preservation and enhancement of rural lands for future generations. It promotes environmentally sensitive land management practices and the preservation of rural character. Development that does occur in rural areas should be of a size and scale that is rural in character. The pattern should not produce urban net densities that look or function like suburban subdivisions. Such isolated pockets of higher density development may ultimately require urban types of services and conflict with rural character. Development should also be focused into existing communities in the rural area, to enable these places to become more complete communities.

VISION 2040 calls for continued use of rural lands for farming, forestry, recreation, cottage industries, and low-density housing maintained by rural services. To maintain rural character, it also calls for avoiding the construction of new highways and major roads in rural areas. Transportation facilities located in rural areas should be designed and operated in a way that fits the rural context. Other infrastructure and services serving primarily rural residents should be located in neighboring cities and towns and designed in a manner keeping with the size and scale of the local community.

## RURAL LANDS GOAL AND POLICIES

**Goal:** The region will permanently sustain the ecological functions, resource value, lifestyle, and character of rural lands for future generations by limiting the types and intensities of development in rural areas.

**MPP-DP-21:** Contribute to improved ecological functions and more appropriate use of rural lands by minimizing impacts through innovative and environmentally sensitive land use management and development practices.

**MPP-DP-22:** Do not allow urban net densities in rural and resource areas.

**MPP-DP-23:** Avoid new fully contained communities outside of the designated urban growth area because of their potential to create sprawl and undermine state and regional growth management goals.

**MPP-DP-24:** In the event that a proposal is made for creating a new fully contained community, the county shall make the proposal available to other counties and to the Regional Council for advance review and comment on regional impacts.

**MPP-DP-25:** Use existing and new tools and strategies to address vested development to ensure that future growth meets existing permitting and development standards and prevents further fragmentation of rural lands.

**MPP-DP-26:** Ensure that development occurring in rural areas is rural in character and is focused into communities and activity areas.

**MPP-DP-27:** Maintain the long-term viability of permanent rural land by avoiding the construction of new highways and major roads in rural areas.

**MPP-DP-28:** Support long-term solutions for the environmental and economic sustainability of agriculture and forestry within rural areas.

## RESOURCE LANDS

In Washington, resource lands include forest, agricultural, and mineral lands. These lands serve resource-based industries, and are the sources of wood products, food, sand, gravel, and minerals — which are crucial to the region's sustainability, including development needs and the economy. These lands also provide an environment for wildlife habitat, open space, and groundwater recharge. Timberlands and farmlands can be viewed as renewable natural resources with the potential to produce wood fiber and food on an ongoing basis. The productivity of these lands can be compromised if they are overworked or polluted, and is lost when resource lands are converted to other uses.

Sustainable use of resource lands seeks to maintain their biodiversity, productivity, and regenerative capacity, while attending to both their current and future ecological, economic, and social functions. Resource-based activities should be conducted in a manner that does not harm ecosystems.

Development does occur on resource lands because of vested development rights. Although this growth is relatively small, it can have significant impacts on the economic viability of industries depending on these lands. VISION 2040 seeks to permanently protect the region's key resource lands.

**Forest Lands.** Forests are diversified ecosystems, as well as valuable renewable resources. Timber harvesting has been a mainstay of the region's economy for more than a century — providing jobs, economic opportunity, and recreation. Forests provide critical habitat for wildlife and absorb precipitation, which limits flooding and controls erosion. Trees take in carbon dioxide and release oxygen. They filter air pollution — including dust, ozone, and carbon monoxide — from industry and vehicles.

Research by the *Puget Sound Clean Air Agency* and others has shown that in western Washington forest ecosystems are in danger of becoming severely stressed by a combination of rising temperatures and insect damage due to climate change, public overuse, fire susceptibility, and lack of active management. Forested lands adjacent to urbanized areas can be subjected to economic pressures to convert to suburban-type uses. The fragmentation and extensive loss of

the forest land base could also have serious consequences for the environment and the region's economy. Addressing threats to our forests requires a cooperative regional effort.

### **Agriculture Production and Farmland Preservation**

- *King County has more than 42,000 acres in its Agriculture Production Districts, including 13,200 acres protected in the Farmland Preservation Program. The latter began as an initiative approved by voters.*
- *Pierce County's Agriculture Strategic Plan preserves commercially significant and productive farmland.*
- *Snohomish County's Agriculture Initiative is a comprehensive effort to preserve and enhance the agricultural economy.*
- *In Kitsap County, agriculture primarily consists of small farms, with producers who concentrate on small acreage production and livestock.*

### **Cascade Agenda**

*A private initiative spearheaded by community leaders and regional stakeholders, the Cascade Agenda includes long-term strategies to conserve 1.3 million acres of working farms, forests, and natural areas. At the same time, the Cascade Agenda seeks to create vibrant cities to attract the growth coming to our region over the next 100 years.*

**Agricultural Lands.** The agricultural land in the central Puget Sound region is among the most productive in the state, especially the rich bottom land adjacent to many of our rivers. Working farmlands contribute to commercial production within the region and create markets for local produce, which support the principles of sustainability. The loss of good quality farmland in the region has implications for air quality, water quality and quantity, and our region's self-sufficiency. When the region loses farmland, its residents must rely on food from more distant locations. Threats to the continued productivity of the region's farmlands include urban development, incompatible adjacent land uses, and the loss of supporting services for farming. Climate change is also expected to exacerbate problems, such as seasonal flooding, which can impact soil quality, and water shortages, which would impact irrigation.

At the same time, certain farming practices can contribute to water pollution and air pollution. Limiting or finding viable alternatives to the use of harmful chemical fertilizers and taking steps to minimize soil erosion can help to protect both surface streams and groundwater. It is important for the region's farmers, urban and rural residents, and decision-makers to plan strategically for the future of agriculture in the region.

**Mineral lands.** While forest and agricultural lands can be managed and maintained as renewable resources, mines contain nonrenewable resources. In the past, coal was mined in parts of the region. Today mining primarily focuses on aggregates, such as crushed stone, gravel, and sand — materials used to produce concrete. Reclaiming mined land is desirable for safety, health, and aesthetic reasons, but can be costly.

Certain mining practices contribute to air pollution — practices that can and should be avoided. So-called fugitive dust that drifts away from mining areas to other locations, both adjacent and farther away, can be particularly problematic.

## **RESOURCE LANDS GOAL AND POLICIES**

**Goal:** The region will conserve its natural resource land permanently by designating, maintaining, and enhancing farm, forest, and mineral lands.

**MPP-DP-29:** Protect and enhance significant open spaces, natural resources, and critical areas.

**MPP-DP-30:** Establish best management practices that protect the long-term integrity of the natural environment, adjacent land uses, and the long-term productivity of resource lands.

**MPP-DP-31:** Support the sustainability of designated resource lands. Do not convert these lands to other uses.

**MPP-DP-32:** Ensure that resource lands and their related economic activities are not adversely impacted by development on adjacent non-resource lands.



# Development Patterns: Land Use, Orderly Development and Design

## Subsection II: Elements of Orderly Development and Design

The Growth Management Act advances “orderly development” to ensure that growth is contiguous and can be served efficiently. Well-planned and well-designed development protects open space and farmland, revitalizes communities, keeps housing affordable, improves mobility and transportation choices, and contributes to healthier living. A more orderly approach to development focuses on the long-term implications of growth and how it may affect the community instead of viewing growth simply as an end in itself. It takes into account efficiencies, cost-effectiveness, and the many facets of the built environment that contribute to quality of life.

This part of the development patterns section addresses five subjects: (1) regional design, (2) the built environment and health, (3) innovative techniques, (4) incompatible land uses, and (5) concurrency. The section’s themes address developing vibrant communities, reducing land use conflicts, and promoting well-being — all in terms of how we create more livable environments.

### Regional Design

The central Puget Sound region is characterized by natural physical beauty that is integrated with high quality human-made features, attractive living and working conditions, and recreational opportunities. This gives the region a unique identity that significantly contributes to its economic vitality, social cohesiveness, and quality of life — features that are worth maintaining and enhancing.

Design — especially the concept of regional design — is not simply about aesthetics, although visual character shapes our perceptions and experiences. Functional, ecological, economic, and social objectives are equal, if not greater, concerns than physical beauty alone. Achieving environmental, economic, and community-based objectives involves enhancing both the physical and visual environment. Good design is an important factor to ensure that the region grows strategically, gracefully, and efficiently.

A strong identity or connection with place enhances a sense of belonging to and caring for a community, thereby increasing economic activity, livability, and collective action. The natural environment — along with the ecological processes that support it — is a primary basis for regional form and is fundamental to regional character. This principle acknowledges that protecting and enhancing the region’s ecological system is a priority. Because ecological systems are regional in scale, design efforts must be applied at the regional as well as the local level.

Design advances a *systems approach* to address land use, transportation, environmental, urban form, and social concerns holistically. However, design (and systems thinking) at the regional scale involves larger, more complex systems, such as watersheds, clusters of communities, regional land use allocation, and more integrated transportation systems. Regional design must identify common values that shape the region’s character and ways to support those values at all scales, seeking to integrate various systems and elements through design measures.

VISION 2040 calls for identifying and protecting significant visual and cultural resources that preserve community character. It calls for designing facilities throughout the region that advance community development and for creating parks and civic spaces. VISION 2040 also advances redevelopment and infill as opportunities for revitalizing communities, including along linear corridors (such as low-scale retail strips along the thoroughfares). Open space and parks at a variety of scales create public amenities, contribute to the character of communities, and provide opportunities for recreation and physical activity.

### REGIONAL DESIGN GOAL AND POLICIES

**Goal:** The region will use design to shape the physical environment in order to create more livable communities, better integrate land use and transportation systems, and improve efforts to restore the environment.

- MPP-DP-33:** Identify, protect and enhance those elements and characteristics that give the central Puget Sound region its identity, especially the natural visual resources and positive urban form elements.
- MPP-DP-34:** Preserve significant regional historic, visual and cultural resources including public views, landmarks, archaeological sites, historic and cultural landscapes, and areas of special character.
- MPP-DP-35:** Develop high quality, compact urban communities throughout the region's urban growth area that impart a sense of place, preserve local character, provide for mixed uses and choices in housing types, and encourage walking, bicycling, and transit use.
- MPP-DP-36:** Provide a wide range of building and community types to serve the needs of a diverse population.
- MPP-DP-37:** Support urban design, historic preservation, and arts to enhance quality of life, improve the natural and human-made environments, promote health and well-being, contribute to a prosperous economy, and increase the region's resiliency in adapting to changes or adverse events.
- MPP-DP-38:** Design public buildings and spaces that contribute to a sense of community and a sense of place.
- MPP-DP-39:** Identify and create opportunities to develop parks, civic places and public spaces, especially in or adjacent to centers.
- MPP-DP-40:** Design transportation projects and other infrastructure to achieve community development objectives and improve communities.
- MPP-DP-41:** Allow natural boundaries to help determine the routes and placement of infrastructure connections and improvements.
- MPP-DP-42:** Recognize and work with linear systems that cross jurisdictional boundaries — including natural systems, continuous land use patterns, and transportation and infrastructure systems — in community planning, development, and design.

## The Built Environment and Health

Health and well-being are linked with how we live and how we get around. Public health agencies largely concern themselves with keeping entire communities healthy, safe, and livable. These agencies work to prevent the spread of disease, to protect people from unsafe water, polluted air, and hazardous waste, and to help people live healthy lives. In recent years, public health agencies, local land use planners, and transportation staff have begun to focus increased attention on the health implications of our built environment and the way we travel.

Research findings link the country's obesity epidemic in part to both community design and food choices. Physical inactivity is a growing health problem in the United States, contributing not only to obesity, but also to chronic disease,

### **HealthScape**

*A King County study (begun in 2001) on the relationship of health to how we live and travel. It concludes that low-density, separated land uses and disconnected street networks are associated with: (1) increased automobile use, per capita air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and energy consumption; (2) reduced transit ridership and physical activity; and (3) increased obesity and likelihood of cardiovascular disease, type II diabetes, and colorectal cancer. Similar studies elsewhere in the United States and abroad are causing communities to consider new approaches for creating or improving opportunities for walking, biking, and other physical activity.*

osteoporosis, depression, and premature death. Several studies link low-density development and travel behavior to the lack of everyday physical activities that are known to prevent certain life-shortening illnesses. For instance, the separation of land uses creates a situation where more time is spent driving and less time is spent walking or bicycling. Too often, this land use pattern is also characterized by having few sidewalks or few safe cycling routes. On the other hand, communities that feature a mix of land uses, are connected by pedestrian and bicycle facilities and transit, and rely less on driving, are more conducive to physical activity.

The built environment affects the natural environment. Uncontrolled and expansive development patterns

contribute not only to habitat loss, but also to declining water resources and quality. Our built environment — along with the way we travel — has safety implications. Longer trips to jobs, schools, shopping, and entertainment associated with a more dispersed, lower density development pattern result in the need for more driving. More driving results in more vehicle-related accidents.

Programs and investments to provide alternatives to driving, especially to improve the walkability and bikability of our communities, can result in mobility choices that are healthier and safer. Our built environment, including the design of our communities, the completeness of our sidewalk networks, and the provision of open space, affects not only our physical well-being, but also our mental well-being. Reintegrating public health into planning, particularly land use and transportation planning, is a way to ensure our communities are more sustainable and truly provide opportunities for improved quality of life.

Good planning decisions are also good public health decisions — helping to make places and communities that are good for living, working, and playing. This includes protecting important farming areas to ensure a safe and reliable source of food production.

## **THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH GOAL AND POLICIES**

**Goal:** The region's communities will be planned and designed to promote physical, social, and mental well-being so that all people can live healthier and more active lives.

**MPP-DP-43:** Design communities to provide an improved environment for walking and bicycling.

**MPP-DP-44:** Incorporate provisions addressing health and well-being into appropriate regional, countywide, and local planning and decision-making processes.

**MPP-DP-45:** Promote cooperation and coordination among transportation providers, local governments, and developers to ensure that joint- and mixed-use developments are designed to promote and improve physical, mental, and social health and reduce the impacts of climate change on the natural and built environments.

**MPP-DP-46:** Develop and implement design guidelines to encourage construction of healthy buildings and facilities to promote healthy people.

**MPP-DP-47:** Support agricultural, farmland, and aquatic uses that enhance the food system in the central Puget Sound region and its capacity to produce fresh and minimally processed foods.

## **Innovative Techniques**

Counties and cities throughout the central Puget Sound region have come to realize the value of more flexible and adaptive approaches to incorporating new development into their communities. The Growth Management Act states that local comprehensive plans should provide for innovative land use and development techniques. Several such practices are advanced in VISION 2040.

### **Food Production**

*The system for producing and delivering food is highly complex and involves processing, transportation, distribution, consumption, and disposal. The food system is highly dependent on fossil fuel consumption, traveling on average 1,500 miles before reaching our plates — often in refrigerated containers.*

*This region has many businesses (from farms to fisheries to grocery stores) that depend on the vitality of the local food economy. By addressing food system issues systematically, the region can protect agricultural land, promote more fresh food consumption, and support local food and farm-based businesses to improve the health of the local food economy. In addition, strengthening the region's food system provides more security for our food supply in times of need, such as during natural disasters, food shortages, and disease outbreaks.*

### **Community Gardens**

*These are areas set aside for gardening within a neighborhood or town. Each garden is unique, with diverse crops and flowers. Most community gardens provide neighbors with access to fresh produce and plants. In urban settings, community gardens can bring city gardeners closer to their own sources of food, can take the form of a neighborhood improvement, and can contribute to a sense of community.*

*Low-impact development* relies on more environmentally sensitive approaches to how land is developed and used, especially in managing stormwater runoff. Using low-impact development practices can help a community better protect its streams, fish and wildlife habitat, and drinking water supplies. Reducing stormwater drainage infrastructure — pipes, ponds, and other structures — can actually lower infrastructure costs. Low-impact development can also help communities be more attractive and green. Instead of stretches of impervious surfaces and large stormwater ponds, low-impact practices can result in more trees, plantings, and open space.

*Environmentally friendly construction and homebuilding* is another innovation that can provide people with comfortable, durable, and healthy homes that are resource-efficient. Rating systems have been created to assess how green or environmentally friendly buildings are. Factors include key human and environmental health considerations, such as sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality.

Techniques and practices exist to ensure that development takes place in ways that maintain or improve the ecological function of environmentally sensitive areas. One such example is flexible siting, which allows structures to be farther from sensitive areas. In newly developing areas, shadow platting allows buildings to be sited in an earlier phase, with a view toward locating adjacent structures in a more efficient manner at a future date.

*Purchase of development rights* refers to programs through which local governments may purchase development rights and dedicate the land for conservation easements, protecting it as open space or agricultural areas. *Transfer of development rights* is a more involved system that gives landowners the option to sell development rights while retaining the ownership of the land. In these transactions, a landowner gives up the right to develop the property more intensively, but the buyer may use the rights to develop another piece of land at a greater intensity than would otherwise be permitted.

VISION 2040 calls for the use of innovative techniques to encourage sustainable development practices that also help to focus growth within the urban growth area, especially centers, and to lessen development pressures on rural and resource lands.

## INNOVATIVE TECHNIQUES POLICIES

**MPP-DP-48:** Encourage the use of innovative techniques, including the transfer of development rights, the purchase of development rights, and conservation incentives. Use these techniques to focus growth within the urban growth area (especially cities) to lessen pressures to convert rural and resource areas to more intense urban-type development, while protecting the future economic viability of sending areas and sustaining rural and resource-based uses.

**MPP-DP-49:** Support and provide incentives to increase the percentage of new development and redevelopment — both public and private — to be built at higher performing energy and environmental standards.

**MPP-DP-50:** Streamline development standards and regulations for residential and commercial development, especially in centers, to provide flexibility and to accommodate a broader range of project types consistent with the regional vision.

## Incompatible Land Uses

Incompatible land uses are those that may result in negative impacts on one property or another, such as noise, glare, increased traffic, or potential safety or health hazards, including exposure to harmful air emissions. The principle of separating incompatible land uses has application in urban and rural settings, as well as in resource areas. Encroachment of incompatible land uses around airports, particularly in the critical approach and departure paths, is a significant problem. Washington law calls for the protection of both general aviation airports and military installations from incompatible land uses.



## INCOMPATIBLE LAND USES POLICIES

**MPP-DP-51:** Protect the continued operation of general aviation airports from encroachment by incompatible uses and development on adjacent land.

**MPP-DP-52:** Protect military lands from encroachment by incompatible uses and development on adjacent land.

**MPP-DP-53:** Protect industrial lands from encroachment by incompatible uses and development on adjacent land.

## Concurrency

Concurrency requirements underlie a fundamental premise of growth management — namely, that development should occur where adequate facilities and infrastructure already exist or are to be provided in the near future. Yet local governments have a significant amount of flexibility concerning how to apply concurrency provisions. Cities, especially those with designated centers, would benefit from tailoring their concurrency programs to set different level-of-service and impact assessment expectations in the centers or downtown districts from those that apply elsewhere in their jurisdiction.

Under the Growth Management Act, part of the concurrency requirement is the establishment of level-of-service standards for arterials, transit service, and other facilities. These standards are to be used to determine whether a proposed development can be served with available facilities, or whether mitigation of some sort may be required. The Act requires cities and counties to have a reassessment strategy in the event of a service deficiency or shortfall. Such a strategy allows a jurisdiction to consider: (1) other sources of funding to provide the service, (2) changing the level-of-service standard that was established, and/or (3) reconsidering the land use assumptions.

Recent amendments to state law encourage handling transportation-related concurrency problems with solutions such as transit, walking or biking, system efficiencies, and transportation demand management. Improved coordination among the concurrency programs established by neighboring jurisdictions helps to address the cross-jurisdictional impacts of development and facility needs.

As the region's centers and compact communities continue to grow and evolve, future mobility solutions will require integrating multimodal forms of transportation into our communities, including transit improvements and more complete bicycle and pedestrian facilities. VISION 2040 calls for tailoring concurrency programs, especially for centers, and for addressing multimodal transportation options.

## CONCURRENCY POLICIES

**MPP-DP-54:** Develop concurrency programs and methods that fully consider growth targets, service needs, and level-of-service standards. Focus level-of-service standards for transportation on the movement of people and goods instead of only on the movement of vehicles.

**MPP-DP-55:** Address nonmotorized, pedestrian, and other multimodal types of transportation options in concurrency programs — both in assessment and mitigation.

**MPP-DP-56:** Tailor concurrency programs for centers and other subareas to encourage development that can be supported by transit.

## VISION 2040 Development Patterns Actions

The following VISION 2040 actions have been developed to help implement the development patterns policies. Detailed information on specific measures that will be used to monitor implementation and performance is contained in Part IV: Implementation.

### REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS ACTIONS

#### Urban Growth Area Adjustments: DP-Action-1

The Puget Sound Regional Council will develop a framework for the review of and comment on adjustments to the urban growth area throughout the four-county region.

- Short-term / MPP-DP-1
- Results and Products: *Regional Framework adopted by Executive Board*

#### Track and Evaluate Growth: DP-Action-2

The Puget Sound Regional Council will study, track, and evaluate growth and development occurring in the central Puget Sound region in terms of meeting the goals and objectives of the regional vision.

- Ongoing / Overarching Goal
- Results and Products: *Milestones report*

#### Evaluate Designated Centers: DP-Action-3

The Puget Sound Regional Council will study and evaluate existing regional growth centers and manufacturing/ industrial centers to assess their designation, distribution, interrelationships, characteristics, transportation efficiency, and performance.

- Short-term / MPP-DP-6, 9
- Results and Products: *Milestones report*

#### Funding for Centers: DP-Action-4

The Puget Sound Regional Council, together with its member jurisdictions, will pursue additional funding mechanisms (including incentives) to develop projects and facilities in designated regional growth centers.

- Short-term / MPP-DP-7, 10
- Results and Products: *funding for projects in centers*

#### Other Centers, Including Countywide and Local Centers: DP-Action-5

The Puget Sound Regional Council, together with its member jurisdictions and countywide planning bodies, will develop a common framework for identifying various types of central places beyond regional centers. Address the role of smaller nodes that provide similar characteristics as centers.

- Short-term / MPP-DP-12
- Results and Products: *common framework for hierarchy of centers (for regional, countywide, and local planning purposes)*

#### Industrial Lands Inventory: DP-Action-6

The Puget Sound Regional Council will update its inventory of industrial lands in the region. The inventory will be supplemented with a regionwide strategy for industrial lands.

- Mid-term / MPP-DP-8, 9
- Results and Products: *updated PSRC Industrial Lands Inventory, regionwide strategy*

#### Growth Targets Methodology: DP-Action-7

The Puget Sound Regional Council, together with its member jurisdictions, will develop a regional methodology to guide countywide processes that set local housing and employment targets. The Regional Council will also provide guidance for developing local affordable housing targets, as well as targets for housing and employment in designated regional growth centers.

- Short-term / MPP-DP-3
- Results and Products: *(1) common methodology for target setting, (2) regional guidance for developing affordable housing targets, (3) regional guidance for establishing residential and employment targets in centers*

### **Buildable Lands Methodology: DP-Action-8**

The Puget Sound Regional Council, together with countywide planning groups and member jurisdictions, will develop recommended methods for buildable lands data collection and analysis as part of a regionwide effort to increase the consistency and compatibility of reporting. This will enhance the ability to monitor and evaluate the sufficiency of plans within the region to meet future growth needs. As part of this effort, the Regional Council may provide technical support to counties and cities, including guidance for addressing reasonable measures.

- Mid-term / MPP-DP-2 through 4
- Results and Products: *(1) common process for buildable lands analysis, (2) regional guidance for addressing reasonable measures, (3) report on buildable lands processes focusing on their compatibility, (4) technical support for addressing regional measures*

### **Sustainable Practices Toolkit: DP-Action-9**

The Puget Sound Regional Council will develop a best practices toolkit for sustainable design for both urban and rural areas including, but not limited to, adaptive reuse low-impact development, green development, and low-energy efficient development practices for development and infrastructure.

- Mid-term / MPP-DP-21, 28, 30, 31, 48, 49
- Results and Products: *Best Practices Toolkit*

### **Regional Design Best Practices: DP-Action-10**

The Puget Sound Regional Council, together with its member jurisdictions, will develop best practices and approaches for incorporating community and regional design into various local, regional, and other agency planning processes. This action will include highlighting and promoting model codes.

- Mid-term / MPP-DP-33 through 42
- Results and Products: *Best Practices Toolkit (or similar)*

### **Land Use, Mobility, and Health Toolkit: DP-Action-11**

The Puget Sound Regional Council, together with its member jurisdictions, will explore land use and planning practices and tools that promote and improve physical, social, and mental health. These practices and tools will promote and encourage greater multimodal travel to, from, and within designated regional growth centers. TELUMI (the Transportation Efficient Land Use Mapping Index developed by the University of Washington under a WSDOT research grant) is an example of such an analytical tool.

- Mid-term / MPP-DP-43 through 47
- Results and Products: *Best Practices Toolkit*

### **Transfer and Purchase of Development Rights Strategy: DP-Action-12**

The Puget Sound Regional Council, together with its member jurisdictions, will develop a regional strategy for transfer of development rights programs (TDR), purchase of development rights programs (PDR), and other innovative techniques and strategies to protect rural areas and resource lands from overdevelopment.

- Short-term / MPP-DP-21, 25, 30, 48
- Results and Products: *report and recommendations to Growth Management Policy Board and Executive Board*

### **Concurrency Best Practices: DP-Action-13**

The Puget Sound Regional Council will develop innovative approaches to concurrency programs to help incorporate new legislative guidance (RCW 36.70A.108) that encourages stronger efforts for local and regional multimodal concurrency. The Regional Council also will develop and provide guidance for regional and local implementation strategies and actions to address concurrency and multimodal travel for greater transportation efficiency and effectiveness jurisdiction-wide and in designated regional growth centers.

- Mid-term / MPP-DP-54 through 56
- Results and Products: *(1) report on strategies and approaches to multimodal concurrency, (2) best practices and examples toolkit (or similar)*

## COUNTY LEVEL ACTIONS

### Brownfield Clean-up: DP-Action-14

Countywide planning bodies, in cooperation with their cities, will develop strategies for cleaning up brownfield and contaminated sites. Counties, in cooperation with their cities, should also identify redevelopment sites, such as low-density retail strips along thoroughfares. (Note: This process should be linked with the transportation system assessment process for manufacturing/industrial centers.)

- Mid-term / MPP-DP-15
- Results and Products: *strategies for clean-up*

### Coordinated Planning in Unincorporated Urban Areas: DP-Action-15

Countywide planning bodies, in cooperation with their cities, will develop approaches to reconcile different standards for development and infrastructure in unincorporated urban areas, especially in areas already identified for future annexation. Such approaches should acknowledge and address the impacts of development in unincorporated areas on adjacent cities. Such cooperative efforts should also establish mechanisms to ensure that appropriate forms, densities, and mixes of uses are identified and addressed in development that occurs prior to annexation.

- Mid-term / MPP-DP-19, 20
- Results and Products: *(1) countywide bodies, in consultation with cities, are to evaluate standards, (2) revised standards and practices to reconcile differences*

## LOCAL ACTIONS

### Identification of Underused Lands: DP-Action-16

Local jurisdictions should identify underused lands (such as brownfields and greyfields) for future redevelopment or reuse.

- Mid-term / MPP-DP-15
- Results and Products: *inventory of underused land*

### Center Plans: DP-Action-17

Each city with a designated center shall develop a subarea plan for the designated regional growth center and/or the manufacturing/industrial center.

- Short-to mid-term / MPP-DP-5, 8
- Results and Products: *subarea plan*

### Mode Split Goals for Centers: DP-Action-18

Each city with a designated regional growth center and/or manufacturing/industrial center shall establish mode split goals for these centers.

- Short-term / MPP-DP-43, MPP-T-23, 24
- Results and Products: *mode split goals for each designated center*





## Housing

**Overarching Goal:** *The region will preserve, improve, and expand its housing stock to provide a range of affordable, healthy, and safe housing choices to every resident. The region will continue to promote fair and equal access to housing for all people.*

*Housing is a basic need for every individual. With the opportunities and challenges that come with growth and new development, the region must be attentive to how we address the housing needs of the region's population while protecting our environment, supporting our economy, and enhancing our communities. Our success depends on ensuring the availability of a variety of housing types and densities, as well as an adequate supply of housing affordable at all income levels, to meet the diverse needs of both current and future residents.*

*VISION 2040's housing policies respond to changing demographics and the need to diversify the region's housing supply. The policies address affordability, jobs-housing balance, focusing housing in centers, and innovations in housing.*

The Growth Management Act calls for making affordable housing available to “all economic segments of the population,” providing a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encouraging preservation of existing housing stock. Local governments are to plan for housing that meets the varied needs of their diverse communities and residents and to ensure they are providing sufficient zoned land capacity for housing to accommodate 20-year growth targets. To this end, a primary goal of the Act is to facilitate sufficient and appropriate housing production and supply.

A sustainable community is one that has a stable mix of residents and workers at different income levels, living and working right in the community. Affordability is a key element for ensuring sustainable housing. Sustainable homes rely on efficient building techniques that allow for the reuse and recycling of materials, or the use of new materials that come from sources that can be more rapidly renewed. As housing stocks increase to accommodate the region's growth, there are a number of steps that can be taken to improve the sustainability, efficiency, and comfort of our homes.

**What the Region Can Do.** The complexity of addressing the full range of housing needs and challenges requires a coordinated regional-local approach. Through VISION 2040 and its regional housing policies and actions, the Puget Sound Regional Council is in a position to work with its member jurisdictions on housing both today's and tomorrow's population, including our children, grandchildren, and new residents.

### **The Sustainable Home and Green Building**

*Conserving resources and reducing environmental impacts can literally begin at home. Efficient fixtures, appliances, and landscaping can help conserve water and energy. New systems and technology provide opportunities for the reuse of wastewater. Improved indoor air quality and increased daylight contribute to better health and comfort. More efficient sources of energy allow each household to decrease the amount of carbons entering the atmosphere and can save money as well.*

Through the *Regional Growth Strategy*, the region has articulated a preferred pattern of urbanization that will help direct new housing development to the urban growth area and regionally designated growth centers. By prioritizing the investment of regionally managed funding to support housing, affordable housing, and infrastructure projects in regional growth centers, the Regional Council can help promote strategically located workforce housing and improved access to and between major employment centers.

To assist counties and cities, the Regional Council can serve as a forum for setting regional priorities and facilitating coordination among its member jurisdictions and housing interest groups. A key tool is the development of a regional housing strategy.

Through guidance and technical assistance, the Regional Council can encourage jurisdictions to adopt best housing practices and establish coordinated local housing

### **Local Housing Responsibilities Under the Growth Management Act**

*Local housing elements should ensure the vitality and character of established residential neighborhoods and include the following components: (1) an inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs, (2) goals, policies, objectives, and mandatory provisions for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing, (3) identification of sufficient land for a range of housing types to match community needs, and (4) adequate provisions for the needs of all economic segments of the community. (RCW 36.70A.070)*

*Under the Act's buildable lands provisions, local governments must also determine whether there is sufficient zoned land to accommodate their county's 20-year population projection and the local growth target allocations adopted by counties and their cities. Reasonable measures must be taken to address any inconsistencies. (RCW 36.70A.215)*

### **A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH)**

*This coalition — which includes King County and 15 Eastside cities — was organized to preserve and increase the supply of housing for low- and moderate-income households. ARCH supports a wide range of local organizations to produce housing that serves families, seniors, the homeless, and people with special needs.*

### **Addressing Homelessness**

*In 2005, the Washington Legislature directed counties to develop ten-year homeless plans (RCW 43.185C). The minimum goal is to eliminate 50 percent of homelessness by 2015. All four counties in the central Puget Sound region now have ten-year plans. The counties must also conduct a count of homeless persons each year and provide annual reports. The legislation identifies proposed strategies in three areas: (1) prevention and reentry strategies, to keep individuals from slipping into homelessness, (2) short-term emergency responses, to move people rapidly from homelessness, and (3) affordable permanent housing services, to assist people in maintaining stable housing.*

### **Universal Design**

*Universal design involves designing products and environments to be usable by all people to the greatest extent possible — regardless of special needs or age — without requiring adaptation or specialized design.*

and affordable housing targets. Through the regional plan review process, the Regional Council can work with jurisdictions to develop effective local housing elements, strategies, and implementation plans. The Regional Council can also help to collect and monitor housing data, as well as track the implementation and outcomes of various housing efforts and report on the region's successes and challenges.

**What Local Governments Can Do.** Local governments play a critical role in housing, including its production. Local governments possess regulatory control over land use and development. They are key players, both individually and in cooperation with other housing interests, in stimulating various types of development activity. The Growth Management Act assigns them roles in setting targets, as well as in analyzing *buildable lands* — that is, assessing where new development or redevelopment can be accommodated.

There are numerous tools and strategies available to local governments to encourage housing diversity and promote affordable housing. While one size does not fit all, many of these tools can be applied in a manner that is tailored to and respectful of local market conditions, community characteristics, and the vision for growth embodied in local comprehensive plans.

**Changing Demographics.** The characteristics of the region's households have been changing over time and will continue to do so. The size of the average household has been decreasing. Fewer people are living in family households with two parents and children. More households are comprised of singles, couples without children, or single-parent families. Many households have two or more workers. The region's population is becoming far more racially and ethnically diverse. And as the population ages and new generations enter the housing market, there will be demands and preferences for new and different types of housing. Changes in the region's housing market may range from the desire of some households for smaller, lower-maintenance homes to ownership of second homes.

Changing circumstances require diversifying the region's housing stock. Local jurisdictions should develop more mechanisms to allow for a wider array of housing types — especially more affordable housing opportunities — and encourage the use of emerging best practices in the areas of green building and universal design.

**Affordability.** Housing affordability continues to be a major challenge for the region. Housing costs are a greater burden for many households today than a decade ago, leaving less for other basic needs and amenities. Renters, in particular, face a considerable shortage of affordable housing opportunities.

With housing prices significantly outpacing income growth over the last several years, it has become more difficult for low-, moderate-, and even middle-income households to purchase first homes. Homeownership rates in King and Pierce counties lag behind the national average, and rates for minorities remain well below the average rate for all households.

Paying a mortgage or rent is only a portion of the overall cost of housing. To address housing affordability more completely, it is also important to account for utility costs, insurance and taxes, appliances and furniture expenditures, and repair and maintenance, including yard care. Expenses for commuting to and from work and for travel to services and other daily destinations are also critical factors when considering the true costs of housing.

Finding affordable housing options near employment centers can be difficult for many workers. Low- to middle-wage workers — such as teachers, health care professionals, retail workers, administrative personnel, police officers, and firefighters — who are essential to the economic and social vitality of a community, often cannot afford to live in the places where they work. The imbalance between where people live and where people work can result in longer and more expensive commutes. More driving also leads to worsening air quality, including greenhouse gas emissions.

VISION 2040 calls for increasing the supply of housing throughout the region by providing a variety of housing types and densities for both renters and owners. Special emphasis is placed on providing equitably distributed affordable housing for low-, moderate-, and middle-income households and appropriate housing for special needs populations. It also encourages more low- to middle-income homeownership opportunities.

### **Affordable Housing**

*Affordable housing is commonly defined in terms of housing costs as a percentage of household income. Housing is considered unaffordable when a household's monthly housing costs exceed a certain threshold — most commonly 30 percent of gross income — thereby reducing the budget available for basic necessities and other amenities.*

### **Housing Affordability**

*Housing affordability refers to the balance (or imbalance) between incomes and housing costs within a community or region. A common measurement compares the number of households in certain income categories to the number of units in the market that are affordable — at 30 percent of gross income.*

*VISION 2040 uses the following household income categories and definitions to track regional housing affordability:*

- *Middle: 80%-120% of area median income*
- *Moderate: 50%-80% of area median income*
- *Low: Below 50% of area median income*
- *Very Low: Below 30% area median income*

### **Workforce Housing**

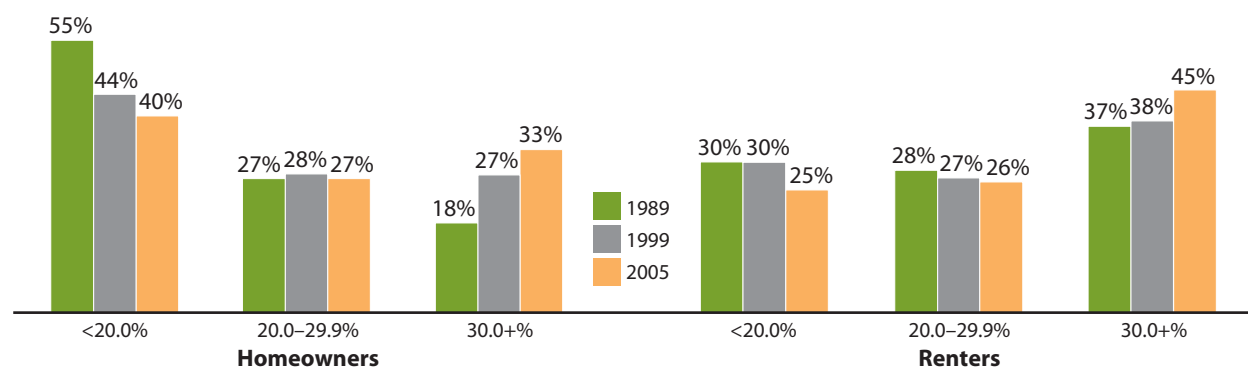
*Workforce housing refers to housing that is affordable to households with at least one full-time worker in which earned incomes are too high to qualify for significant federal housing subsidies, and which — given local housing market conditions — have difficulty affording market prices for homes or apartments in the communities where the residents work.*

*See also "Family Wage" sidebar in the Economy section.*

### **Special Needs Housing**

*Special needs housing refers to supportive housing arrangements for populations with specialized requirements, such as the physically and mentally disabled, the elderly, people with medical conditions (for example, HIV/AIDS, Alzheimer's, and chemical dependency), the homeless, victims of domestic violence, foster youth, refugees, and others.*

## Percent Gross Monthly Income Spent on Housing Costs



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Note: For homeowners, housing costs are defined as including monthly payments for mortgage principal and interest, real estate taxes, property insurance, utilities and fuels, and condominium and mobile home fees. For renters, housing costs include contract rent plus the estimated monthly cost of utilities and fuels, whether paid by the renter or someone else.

**Jobs-Housing Balance.** Jobs-housing balance is a concept that advocates an appropriate match between the jobs base and available housing supply within a geographic area. Balance is a means to address travel demand by improving accessibility to jobs, as well as to goods, services, and amenities. Improving balance means adding more housing to job-rich areas and more jobs to housing-rich areas. There is also an affordability aspect to achieving balance that involves matching the mix of dwelling types and prices with labor force needs and wages.

Better mobility and efficiency can also improve jobs-housing balance. For example, convenient and efficient travel to major job centers, especially because of easy accessibility to high-capacity transit, can also serve some of the objectives of balancing jobs and housing. Facilitating travel by transit also serves to reduce vehicle miles traveled — which benefits air quality and the climate — and offers mobility options for residents who do not drive or have access to vehicles. Ensuring that services are located near home or work also helps to reduce travel demands.

VISION 2040 encourages adding housing opportunities to job-rich places, and promotes economic development to bring jobs to all four counties — with special attention given to Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish counties. (See also “Places” subsection under *Economy*.)

**Focusing Housing into the Urban Area.** Another key growth management goal is to focus new development within the urban growth area. Within the central Puget Sound region emphasis is placed on directing housing and jobs into centers — that is, places designated for higher densities and a mix of land uses. Communities all across the region are realizing these aims by encouraging infill, redevelopment, and more compact development, including in designated centers and around transit stations.

VISION 2040 continues to advance the centers strategy as a way to provide greater accessibility to employment. In this approach, centers function as major concentrations of jobs and housing, which can be easily accessed from nearby neighborhoods and communities, and are linked by a highly efficient, high-capacity transportation network.

**Innovations and Best Practices.** There are numerous incentives and tools that local jurisdictions can work with to help increase the overall supply and diversity of housing, including: (1) innovative land use practices, such as flexible zoning, streamlined development regulations, and density bonuses, (2) funding approaches, such as housing levies and tax exemptions, (3) provision of needed infrastructure and public services, such as transportation facilities and services, utilities, parks, and other amenities, and (4) public education to increase awareness and acceptance of housing alternatives and innovations, such as accessory dwelling units, small lot single-family homes, townhomes and other multifamily housing options, and mixed-use projects. Such techniques and practices offer greater affordability and promote more efficient use of urban land.



It is also important to provide homeowners and renters with more complete information on the true costs of housing — that is, costs beyond mortgage and rent payments. Information on innovative private sector programs can also help individuals and families identify affordable housing opportunities. One example is a location efficient mortgage, which adjusts the amount that can be borrowed based on proximity of the home to transit. The rationale behind this program is that if a household has the ability to use transit regularly, it may eliminate the need to own one or more automobiles. Not having additional car payments and related maintenance costs provides more buying power for that household, making mortgages more affordable.

VISION 2040 encourages local jurisdictions to adopt available best housing practices and innovative techniques to advance the provision of affordable, healthy, and safe housing for all the region's residents.

## **HOUSING POLICIES**

### **Housing diversity and affordability:**

**MPP-H-1:** Provide a range of housing types and choices to meet the housing needs of all income levels and demographic groups within the region.

**MPP-H-2:** Achieve and sustain — through preservation, rehabilitation, and new development — a sufficient supply of housing to meet the needs of low-income, moderate-income, middle-income, and special needs individuals and households that is equitably and rationally distributed throughout the region.

**MPP-H-3:** Promote homeownership opportunities for low-income, moderate-income, and middle-income families and individuals.

### **Jobs-housing balance:**

**MPP-H-4:** Develop and provide a range of housing choices for workers at all income levels throughout the region in a manner that promotes accessibility to jobs and provides opportunities to live in proximity to work.

### **Centers housing:**

**MPP-H-5:** Expand the supply and range of housing, including affordable units, in centers throughout the region.

**MPP-H-6:** Recognize and give regional funding priority to transportation facilities, infrastructure, and services that explicitly advance the development of housing in designated regional growth centers. Give additional priority to projects and services that advance affordable housing.

### **Best housing practices:**

**MPP-H-7:** Encourage jurisdictions to review and streamline development standards and regulations to advance their public benefit, provide flexibility, and minimize additional costs to housing.

**MPP-H-8:** Encourage the use of innovative techniques to provide a broader range of housing types for all income levels and housing needs.

**MPP-H-9:** Encourage interjurisdictional cooperative efforts and public-private partnerships to advance the provision of affordable and special needs housing.

## VISION 2040 HOUSING ACTIONS

The following VISION 2040 actions have been developed to help implement the housing policies. Detailed information on specific measures that will be used to monitor implementation and performance is contained in *Part IV: Implementation*.

### REGIONAL HOUSING ACTIONS

#### Regional Housing Strategy: H-Action-1

The Puget Sound Regional Council, together with its member jurisdictions, housing interest groups, and housing professionals, will develop a comprehensive regional housing strategy. The housing strategy will provide the framework for a regional housing program (see H-Action-2, below) and shall include the following components:

1. A regional housing needs assessment
2. Strategies to promote and/or address: housing diversity, housing affordability, special needs housing, centers and workforce housing, innovative techniques, and best local housing planning practices
3. Coordination with other regional and local housing efforts

- Short-term / H-1 through 9
- Results and Products: *regional housing strategy*

#### Regional Housing Program: H-Action-2

The Puget Sound Regional Council will develop and implement a program to encourage best housing practices and stimulate local housing production, including affordable housing. The program will make planning for housing more transparent and shall include the following components:

1. Guidance for developing local housing targets (including affordable housing targets), model housing elements, and best housing practices
2. Regional guidelines for and the review of local housing elements, that call for documentation of strategies and implementation plans for meeting housing targets and goals, i.e., a “show your housing work” provision
3. Technical assistance to support local jurisdictions in developing effective housing strategies and programs
4. Collection and analysis of regional housing data as part of the region’s monitoring program, including types and uses of housing

- Short- to mid-term / H-1 through 9
- Results and Products: *(1) guidance and best practices, (2) regional review of local housing elements, (3) technical assistance for local governments, (4) monitoring of regional housing data and trends*

## Economy

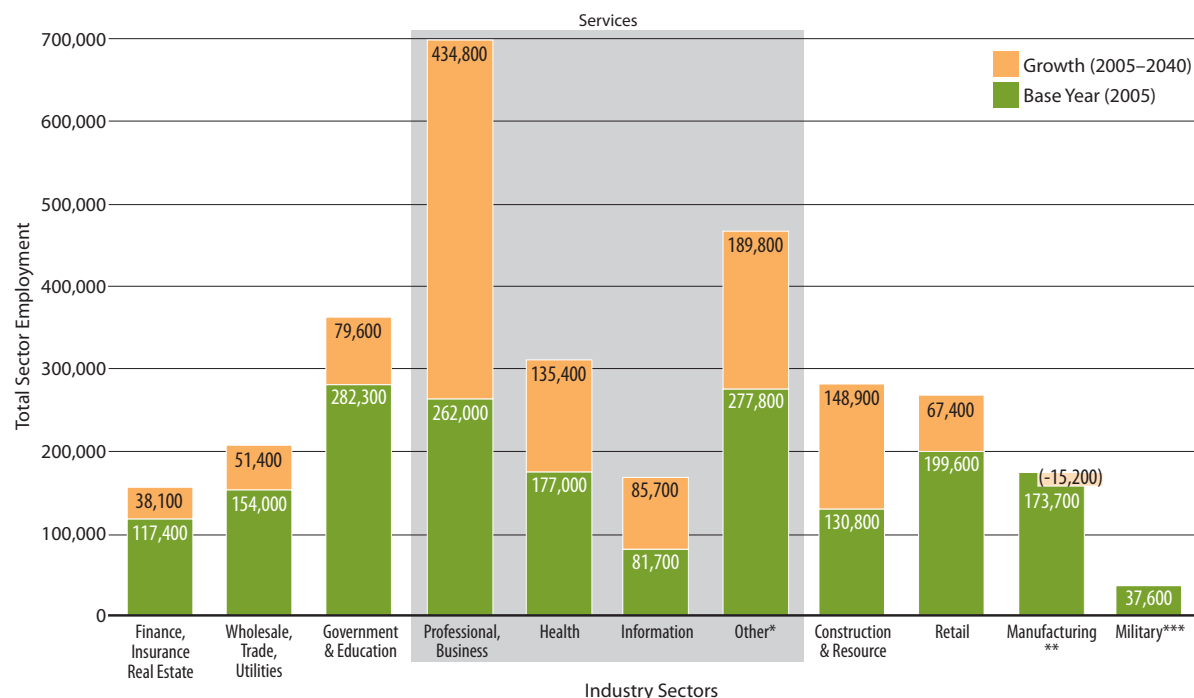
**Overarching Goal:** *The region will have a prospering and sustainable regional economy by supporting businesses and job creation, investing in all people, sustaining environmental quality, and creating great central places, diverse communities, and high quality of life.*

*VISION 2040's economic goals and policies promote a sustainable economy that creates and maintains a high standard of living and quality of life for all. To create stable and lasting prosperity, VISION 2040 focuses on businesses, people, and places, recognizing that growth management, transportation, economic, and environmental policies must be integrated, and must take social, economic, and environmental issues into account while preserving key regional assets.*

A sustainable economy embraces growth that can be supported over the long term by the region's physical infrastructure, financial resources, and natural resources. The region's outstanding natural environment is a key element for economic progress. Our abundant natural resources, spectacular setting, and vibrant communities make every industry more competitive in a global economy. These and other features have helped to attract and retain talented, active, and creative people. The region's connection to the environment gives it a strategic advantage in developing clean, green processes and technologies, and providing new economic opportunities that it can export to the rest of the world. Maintaining this advantage depends on a healthy built and natural environment — with clean industries, good jobs with good incomes, managed growth, and lively centers.

**The Region's Economy.** The central Puget Sound region's economy is a complex system of business, trade, and individual relationships. The region is the major center in the Pacific Northwest for information technology, aerospace, finance, insurance, health care, business and professional services, recreation, and tourism. It is also one of the most technologically advanced regions in the United States for turning cutting-edge research into products and services. These sectors are forecast to play an increasingly important role in the region's job growth. (See chart below.)

### Central Puget Sound Region Economic Sector Employment and Forecasts



\* Other includes a wide range of occupations, such as food and drink establishments, private education, and nonprofit organizations.

\*\* Manufacturing is forecast to decrease by 15,200 between 2005 and 2040.

\*\*\* PSRC forecasts do not include figures for the Military sector.

In-migration is important to the region's economy and contributes to innovation, the development of new technologies, the creation of startup companies, and related job growth. In-migration also enriches the region's communities with a growing diversity of cultures, languages, and knowledge. These diverse communities serve as a competitive asset in an increasingly connected global economy, creating potential trade linkages and other economic opportunities that would not otherwise exist.

More than any other state in the nation, Washington's economy depends on foreign trade — and the central Puget Sound region is vital to the majority of the state's trade activity. The presence of internationally known and successful companies (such as Amazon, Boeing, Costco, Microsoft, Paccar, Starbucks, and Weyerhaeuser), our internationally competitive ports, and the state's natural resources, make information technology, aerospace, and agricultural products major international exports.

Historically, the region's rate of economic growth has fluctuated greatly due to national and international business cycles and the strong regional influence of aerospace and natural resource based industries. The growth of information technology, life sciences, tourism, clean technology, healthcare, and other trade and service-sector businesses helps to diversify the region's economy and moderates severe fluctuations. However, the region's continued economic prosperity in an increasingly competitive global economy is not ensured.

**A Global Economy.** In today's economy, information technology and the mobility of goods and services means that many businesses can choose to locate anywhere. New centers of the global creative economy — which increasingly are urban regions rather than states or nations — are emerging quickly, and established players can lose position easily.

Urban regions are pooling their public and private talent and resources to pursue economic goals. Such a regional approach makes sense for central Puget Sound, where communities are so interconnected that they can be seen as a single economic unit.

New, emerging economic sectors, particularly those related to the environment and clean technology, can help us meet the challenges of the coming decades. Climate change, for example, brings both a need to address carbon impacts and provides opportunities for economic growth, due to new technologies and new industries.

### **Prosperity Partnership Regional Economic Strategy**

*In July 2004, the Prosperity Partnership was launched. This coalition is made up of over 200 government, business, labor, and community organizations from King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish counties, representing public, private, and nonprofit interests. The Partnership works together to help us think, act, and market ourselves as one region to become more prosperous and more competitive in national and international economies.*

*Adopted by the region's Economic Development District in September 2005, the Regional Economic Strategy is the region's federally required comprehensive economic development strategy, as well as the economic functional plan of VISION 2040. The strategy takes a two-pronged approach:*

- **Foundation Initiatives:** *Linked to supporting fundamental economic foundations, initiatives were developed for the areas of education, technology commercialization, new and small business support, tax structure, transportation, social capital, and quality of life.*
- **Cluster Initiatives:** *Five pilots were chosen in 2004 to develop cluster specific action initiatives. The five pilot clusters are aerospace, clean technology, information technology, life sciences, and logistics and international trade. In 2007, two additional clusters — military and tourism — were added.*

A healthy and growing economy provides good jobs and opportunity. It pays for vital public services such as education, criminal justice, transportation, and environmental preservation. It allows us to support the arts and cultural institutions, maintain our parks, and build our communities. A healthy economy permits us to provide for ourselves and our families. It enables us to care for those who are vulnerable, to protect the environment, and to preserve the quality of life that makes the region such a special place.

### **BUSINESS**

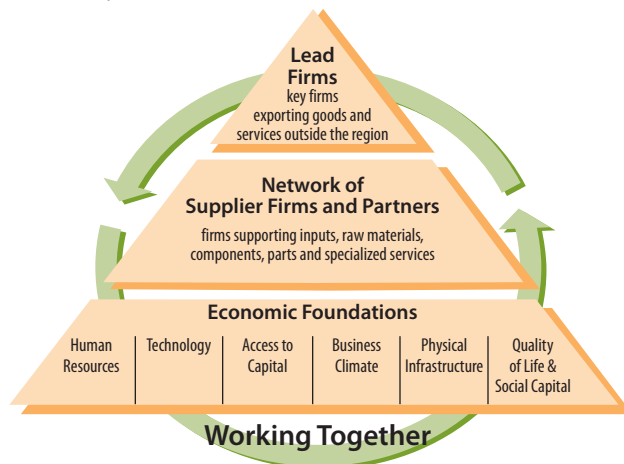
VISION 2040 emphasizes supporting business and job creation through retention, expansion, and diversification of the region's employment base. It calls for fostering a positive business climate through coordination among public institutions, private businesses, and the nonprofit sector.

This coordination helps us to recognize and address the diverse needs of the region's economy and to support key employment sectors. These sectors include established and emerging industry clusters, industries involved in trade-related activities, startups, and new businesses.

Industry clusters are concentrated sets of competing and complementary industries that create wealth in a region by selling products or services to outside markets, generating income that fuels the rest of the economy (see diagram). Without these economic drivers, a region would only circulate money already in the local economy and risk losing economic momentum over time.

VISION 2040 places an emphasis on small and locally owned businesses, recognizing their importance in both job growth and promoting sustainable economic development. Supporting clusters and sectors that provide family-wage jobs involves leveraging the region's position as an international gateway to ensure an efficient flow of people, goods, services, and information throughout the region — particularly in and between designated growth centers.

### Industry Clusters



Source: Regional Economic Strategy  
Copyright: Economic Competitiveness Group

Although numerous factors affect the region's business climate, the public sector plays a key role by investing in a way that capitalizes on natural and place-based assets, such as high quality infrastructure and ports. This is consistent with growth management and transportation objectives, and recognizes the important role that the private, public and nonprofit sectors play in fostering environmental and social sustainability.

VISION 2040 recognizes that businesses depend on a multimodal transportation system — serving both personal mobility and freight movement — as well as communications infrastructure to develop, support, and expand commercial relationships, move intermediate and finished products within the region, and support global trade and export activities.

### BUSINESS GOAL AND POLICIES

**Goal:** The region's economy prospers by supporting businesses and job creation.

**MPP-Ec-1:** Support economic development activities that help to retain, expand, or diversify the region's businesses. Target recruitment activities towards businesses that provide family-wage jobs.

**MPP-Ec-2:** Foster a positive business climate by encouraging regionwide and statewide collaboration among business, government, education, labor, military, workforce development, and other nonprofit organizations.

**MPP-Ec-3:** Support established and emerging industry clusters that export goods and services, import capital, and have growth potential.

**MPP-Ec-4:** Leverage the region's position as an international gateway by supporting businesses, ports, and agencies involved in trade related activities.

**MPP-Ec-5:** Foster a supportive environment for business startups, small businesses, and locally owned businesses to help them continue to prosper.

**MPP-Ec-6:** Ensure the efficient flow of people, goods, services, and information in and through the region with infrastructure investments, particularly in and connecting designated centers, to meet the distinctive needs of the regional economy.

**MPP-Ec-7:** Encourage the private, public, and non-profit sectors to incorporate environmental and social responsibility into their practices.

### PEOPLE

Whereas the region's economic prosperity was once driven by natural resource extraction and industrial-scale manufacturing, the new economy relies to a greater extent on highly skilled, well-educated, and diverse populations to stimulate creative and innovative enterprise. VISION 2040 responds to the changing reality of the global economy by placing people at the center of a prosperous region.



VISION 2040 underscores investment in all of the region's people to create shared prosperity and to sustain a diversity of family wage jobs. Investing in people means ensuring accessible and high quality education and skills-training programs, fostering economic opportunities in distressed areas, and sustaining the region's arts and cultural activity.

All of the region's residents are valued. VISION 2040 calls for supporting our culturally and ethnically diverse communities, including our tribal communities. It also calls for addressing the unique obstacles and special needs of the region's economically disadvantaged populations, as well as the assets and contributions they bring or have the potential to bring to our regional prosperity.

### **Family Wage**

*The term family wage generally refers to a full-time wage level needed to independently support and meet the basic needs of a family. The wage should reflect differing cost-of-living factors, such as housing, food, transportation, utilities, health care, child care, and recreation.*

*Local definitions vary, with some setting the level above the poverty line, whereas others use the average wage or median household income in the local area.*

## **PEOPLE GOAL AND POLICIES**

**Goal:** The region's economy prospers by investing in all of its people.

**MPP-Ec-8:** Promote economic activity and employment growth that creates widely shared prosperity and sustains a diversity of family wage jobs for the region's residents.

**MPP-Ec-9:** Ensure that the region has a high quality education system that is accessible to all of the region's residents.

**MPP-Ec-10:** Ensure that the region has high quality and accessible training programs that give people opportunities to learn, maintain, and upgrade skills necessary to meet the current and forecast needs of the regional and global economy.

**MPP-Ec-11:** Address unique obstacles and special needs — as well as recognize the special assets — of disadvantaged populations in improving the region's shared economic future.

**MPP-Ec-12:** Foster appropriate and targeted economic growth in distressed areas to create economic opportunity for residents of these areas.

**MPP-Ec-13:** Support the contributions of the region's culturally and ethnically diverse communities in helping the region continue to expand its international economy.

**MPP-Ec-14:** Sustain and enhance arts and cultural institutions to foster an active and vibrant community life in every part of the region.

## **PLACES**

The region's diverse communities and natural setting are assets that make us a magnet for growth. Protecting and enhancing the environment — both natural and built — helps the region remain both competitive and livable. As the region's economy grows, VISION 2040 calls for sustaining and respecting the area's environmental quality and unique attributes, as well as each community's distinctive identity.

This is accomplished by ensuring an adequate supply of housing with good access to employment centers to support job creation. It also requires using public resources and incentives wisely to help implement the Regional Growth Strategy. The strategy focuses a significant share of economic growth in designated centers, seeks to bolster the region's designated manufacturing and industrial centers, and advances a closer balance between jobs and housing. Commercial, retail, and service businesses are the economic foundation upon which designated regional and county-wide centers are based. Thriving centers are fundamental to the overall economic well-being of the central Puget Sound region and to fulfilling the goals of VISION 2040.

VISION 2040 also recognizes the role of employment in cities and towns in the rural area, and resource-based economic activity. These are supported at a size, scale, and type that are compatible with the long-term integrity, productivity, and character of these areas.

## PLACES GOAL AND POLICIES

**Goal:** The region's economy prospers through the creation of great central places, diverse communities, and high quality of life that integrates transportation, the economy, and the environment.

**MPP-Ec-15:** Ensure that economic development sustains and respects the region's environmental quality.

**MPP-Ec-16:** Utilize urban design strategies and approaches to ensure that changes to the built environment preserve and enhance the region's unique attributes and each community's distinctive identity in recognition of the economic value of sense of place.

**MPP-Ec-17:** Use incentives and investments to create a closer balance between jobs and housing, consistent with the regional growth strategy.

**MPP-Ec-18:** Concentrate a significant amount of economic growth in designated centers and connect them to each other in order to strengthen the region's economy and communities and to promote economic opportunity.

**MPP-Ec-19:** Maximize the use of existing designated manufacturing and industrial centers by focusing appropriate types and amounts of employment growth in these areas and by protecting them from incompatible adjacent uses.

**MPP-Ec-20:** Provide an adequate supply of housing with good access to employment centers to support job creation and economic growth.

**MPP-Ec-21:** Recognize the need for employment in cities in the rural areas and promote compatible occupations (such as, but not limited to, tourism, cottage and home based businesses, and local services) that do not conflict with rural character and resource-based land uses.

**MPP-Ec-22:** Support economic activity in rural and natural resource areas at a size and scale that is compatible with the long-term integrity and productivity of these lands.

## VISION 2040 Economy Actions

The following VISION 2040 actions have been developed to help implement the economy policies. Detailed information on specific measures that will be used to monitor implementation and performance is contained in *Part IV: Implementation*.

### REGIONAL ECONOMY ACTIONS

#### Regional Economic Strategy: Ec-Action-1

The Puget Sound Regional Council and the Economic Development District will implement and regularly update the Regional Economic Strategy.

- Ongoing / Goals of Business, People, and Places subsections
- Results and Products: (1) *updated implementation actions (annually)*, (2) *revised Regional Economic Strategy (as determined)*

#### Regional Support for Local Governments: Ec-Action-2

The Puget Sound Regional Council will support the economic development planning efforts of local governments by:

1. Conducting an inventory and analysis that examines local government economic development programs and practices. (short-term)
  2. Revising its plan review process for economic development provisions in countywide planning policies, local comprehensive plans, transit agency plans, and regional center plans. As part of the revised review process, the Regional Council will provide examples of the types of economic development provisions plans can address.
- Short-term, ongoing / MPP-Ec-1, Places subsection
  - Results and Products: (1) *inventory and analysis of local programs*, (2) *revised Plan Review provisions*

### **Regional Cooperation: Ec-Action-3**

The Puget Sound Regional Council and the Economic Development District, in collaboration with county Economic Development Councils and other partners, will:

1. Maintain a regionwide clearinghouse of data.
2. Prepare regionwide and subarea forecasts.
3. Monitor performance and implementation, including the region's cluster profile.

- Ongoing / MPP-Ec-3, Business subsection

- Results and Products: *(1) regional data clearinghouse, (2) regional and subregional forecasts, (3) monitoring reports on clusters*

### **Education: Ec-Action-4**

The Puget Sound Regional Council will work with its economic development partners to further identify educational opportunities as they relate to the region's economic vitality.

- Mid-term, ongoing / MPP-Ec-9, 10, 11

- Results and Products: *report to Economic Development District Board on educational opportunities*

## **COUNTY-LEVEL AND CITY ECONOMY ACTIONS**

### **Leveraging Public Investments: Ec-Action-5**

Countywide planning policies will address strategies to leverage public investment to promote economic development.

- Mid-term — next update cycle, ongoing / MPP-Ec-16, 17


- Results and Products: *updates (as needed) to Countywide Planning Policies*

### **Economic Development Elements: Ec-Action-6**

Cities and counties will adopt an Economic Development Element — tailored to meet the jurisdiction's unique needs as specified in the Growth Management Act — when conducting the next major comprehensive plan update.

- Mid-term, ongoing / Business, People, and Places subsections

- Results and Products: *Economic Development Element in local comprehensive plans*



## Transportation

***Overarching Goal:** The region will have a safe, cleaner, integrated, sustainable, and highly efficient multimodal transportation system that supports the regional growth strategy and promotes economic and environmental vitality, and better public health.*

*VISION 2040 provides a framework for long-range transportation planning in the region by integrating freight, ferries, highways, local roads, transit, bicycling, and walking. The regional perspective for transportation recognizes the critical link between transportation, land use planning, economic development, and the environment.*

*A safe and efficient transportation system is essential to the quality of our lives, supports the Regional Growth Strategy, and serves as the backbone of the region's economy. Improving mobility, while growing to a region of five million people with changing travel needs, will be a challenging task. VISION 2040 establishes the long-range regional direction for meeting this challenge and provides a basis for the more detailed planning and investment strategies in the region's Metropolitan Transportation Plan.*

Rapid population and employment growth in the region over the last several decades has led to substantial increases in travel, straining our transportation system. Since the late 1970s, there has been an increase in the number of people per household commuting to work. Land use patterns evolved in a manner that further separated housing from jobs and other locations, including shopping, schools, and other activities — increasing the need for more daily travel and lengthening trip distances. This pattern of urbanization has made walking, bicycling, and transit use less convenient and has increased the use of automobiles for meeting our daily needs.

Quality transportation is about personal mobility and the movement of freight and goods. It places a priority on an effective system, rather than on a specific mode of transportation. Cars, buses, bicycles, streetcars, and trains are modes of transportation. Developing particular facilities should not be the end goal; rather, the result should be improved mobility and accessibility. VISION 2040 addresses the goal of providing transportation in our region: improving mobility and creating a user-oriented transportation system. Convenience, safety, travel time, flexibility, options, and cost are key features of a user-oriented transportation system. A user-oriented system combines modes, routes, transfer facilities, and management into a system centered on the need for mobility.

**Transportation, the Environment, and Climate.** The operation of vehicles and the construction of transportation infrastructure affect both the natural and built environment. In particular, transportation has a direct relationship with the production of the greenhouse gases that are related to climate change. Currently, the way we travel relies primarily on a finite natural resource: fossil fuel, particularly oil. That reliance has significant environmental and economic consequences. Half of the sources of greenhouse gas in the central Puget Sound region are related to transportation, primarily through the burning of gasoline and diesel fuel. There is a growing urgency in the region, the nation, and internationally to reverse this trend. Changes in fuels, technologies, and travel patterns are all needed to meet the region's greenhouse gas reduction goals.

Sustainable transportation involves the efficient and environmentally sensitive movement of people, information, goods, and services, with attention to health and safety. It includes the design of walkable cities and bikable neighborhoods, as well as using telework and other travel options. Sustainable transportation minimizes the environmental impacts of transportation activities, including reducing air pollutants and greenhouse gases. It relies on cleaner, renewable resources for energy and on dependable financing mechanisms.

Protecting and enhancing the environment, promoting energy conservation, and improving the quality of life must be considered as part of the transportation planning process. If transportation programs and projects are to support

social and economic activity, they must also contribute to the health and vitality of human and natural environments. Innovative design and construction — as seen in *green streets* — can minimize environmental impacts.

**Section Overview.** VISION 2040's transportation section is structured around three broad areas: (1) *Maintenance, Management, and Safety*, (2) *Supporting the Growth Strategy*, and (3) *Greater Options and Mobility*. These policy areas address getting more out of current systems and past investments, the critical link between transportation and land use, and an approach to improving mobility through a variety of viable travel choices.

The continued development and support of centers is a core component of the region's growth strategy. *Regional growth centers* are the focal points of cultural, civic, and economic activities within urban areas and are connected to other centers by frequent and fast high-capacity transit and other transportation infrastructure. Communities and neighborhoods surrounding centers should have easy access to the regional system through transit, improved roadways, sidewalks, trails, and paths.

VISION 2040 addresses the critical transportation function of moving freight, goods, and services. From the materials we use in our jobs to the food we eat, the goods we transport use a complex system of roadways, rail lines, and sea and air routes, as well as the intermodal terminals that connect them. As one of the world's global gateways and a major entry point into North America, the freight system in the Pacific Northwest reaches far beyond this region's boundaries and involves a mix of public and private ownership.

To implement the *Regional Growth Strategy*, improvements and programs need to focus on establishing a more sustainable, user-oriented, and balanced transportation system, along with maximizing existing system capacity and managing demand on the system.

To develop and support a comprehensive transportation system, the region needs to concentrate on transportation facilities and services, as well as on the factors that affect how travel choices are made. These factors include a greater regional understanding of the true costs of transportation at the personal, regional, and environmental levels. Finally, VISION 2040 supports improvements to roads, ferries, transit centers and lines, walkways, bike facilities, and other infrastructure to increase mobility and support different travel options.

VISION 2040 and the *Metropolitan Transportation Plan* are designed to address the region's transportation challenges in compliance with federal and state transportation, air quality, and growth management legislation. VISION 2040

### **Green Streets**

*Green streets feature enhanced landscaping, pervious and decorative paving, and other features that increase their attractiveness to pedestrians, calm traffic, and help to retain and purify stormwater in passive systems. Many green streets are primarily designed to integrate innovative stormwater management techniques into the right-of-way of a road. Green streets create street tree canopies and other "green infrastructure" that can add to the aesthetics of a community, as well as mitigate temperature and contribute to improving air quality.*

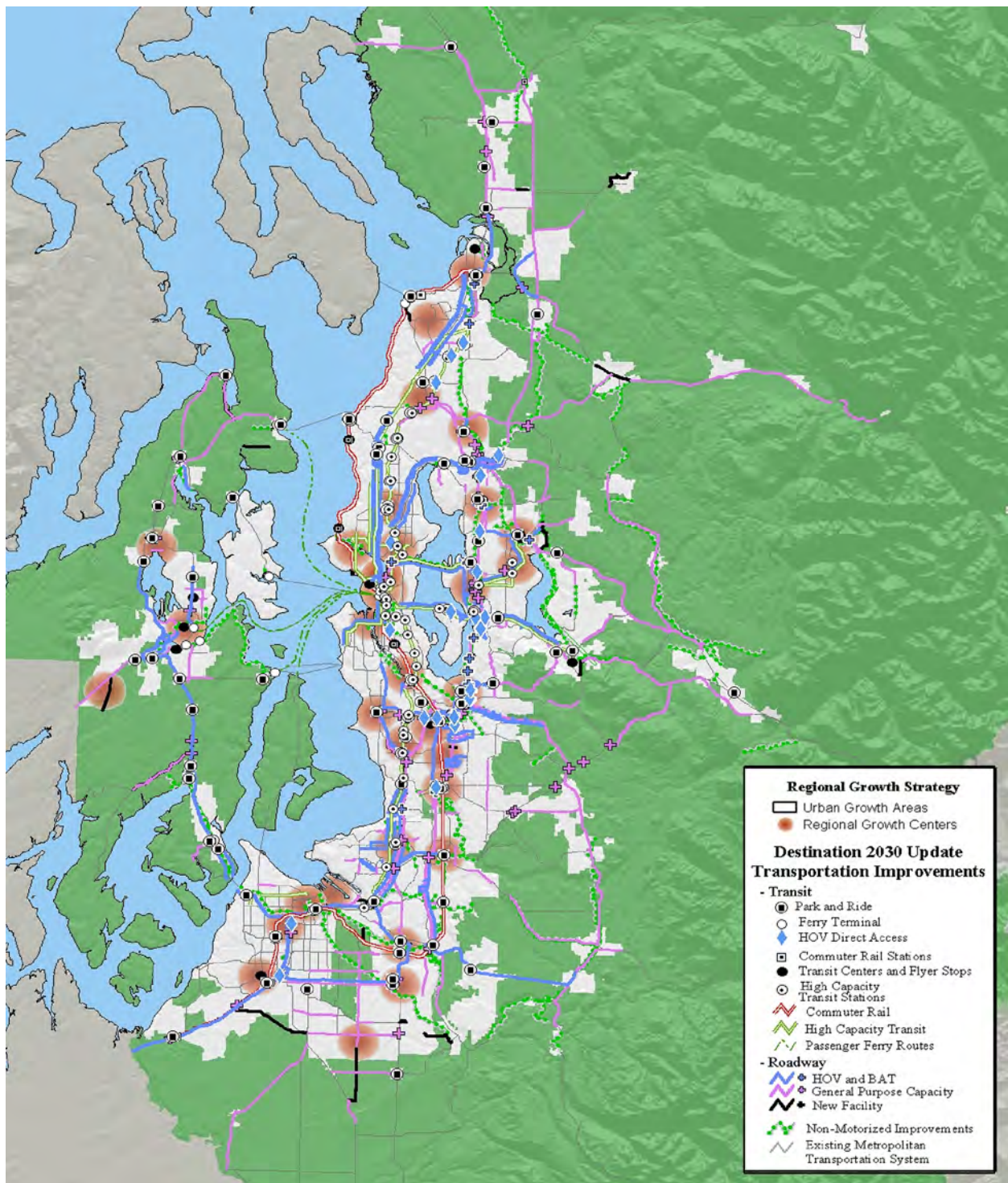
### **The Metropolitan Transportation Plan**

*The region's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (Destination 2030) provides a long-range strategy for regional transportation and serves as the functional transportation plan for VISION 2040. Developed and maintained to meet federal and state transportation planning requirements, it defines a metropolitan transportation system made up of major roadways, nonmotorized transportation, regional and local transit systems, passenger-only and passenger-auto ferries, aviation, and freight facilities. It is supported by system management and demand management facilities and programs. The Metropolitan Transportation Plan's guiding policy framework is established in VISION 2040 multicounty policies.*

*The Metropolitan Transportation Plan addresses emerging transportation requirements of the region's adopted growth strategy. This includes system preservation, managing congestion, improving personal mobility, improving system efficiencies, addressing safety and security, sustaining a healthy environment, and providing for the special needs of particular population groups. The plan supports a globally competitive and prosperous economy and addresses the distinct requirements of freight movement. Transportation systems should be financed in a manner that maintains facilities and services over time.*



## Central Puget Sound Region Metropolitan Transportation System



provides the policy framework and long-range direction for the region's functional transportation plan. That plan identifies priorities and action steps for the region's major investment decisions. Together, these long-range policy and action documents provide the mechanism through which the region coordinates its approach to transportation planning and makes challenging, fiscally constrained decisions about priorities and trade-offs.

### **PSRC Federal Funds Competitive Process**

*Since the mid-1990s, the Regional Council has maintained a policy framework for evaluating grant applications for PSRC's federal Surface Transportation Program, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality program, and certain Federal Transit Administration transportation funds. Policies guiding those regional competitions have put a priority on projects that serve and connect designated regional growth centers and manufacturing/industrial centers, and promote alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle travel. Policy direction in VISION 2040 is used as a basis for developing the policy framework and project selection criteria for each competitive process.*

## **Maintenance, Management, and Safety**

VISION 2040 emphasizes efficient maintenance and management of the transportation system. Efficient management of existing transportation facilities and services can affect how well the region's transportation system performs. Federal transportation law and state transportation policy emphasize making maintenance, preservation, safety, and optimization of existing transportation infrastructure and services a high priority. These types of projects and programs are often the most cost-effective — and help to ensure that current assets continue to function properly, in order to sustain regional mobility into the future.

System management strategies influence how different travel modes operate. They can increase the capacity of transportation facilities without adding major new infrastructure. Transportation system management activities include ramp-metering, priority lane access for transit and other high-occupancy vehicles, traveler information, incident management, traffic signal optimization, road or lane pricing, and advanced system technology. The Regional Council's *Congestion Management Process*, developed in response to federal requirements, looks at where the region plans to grow, identifies congested and other problem areas, evaluates different approaches to providing relief, and provides input for developing solutions.

*Transportation demand management* is the term for strategies that influence how and when we travel. Specifically, demand management strategies aim to increase transit ridership, vehicle occupancy, walking, and bicycling, and reduce the duration of some trips — often by moving them to off-peak periods or eliminating them altogether. Demand management reduces the rate of growth — as well as the overall number — of people

driving alone. This results in less traffic congestion, fewer vehicle emissions, and less fuel consumption.

The region has been at the forefront of using demand management strategies since the 1970s. Central Puget Sound boasts the largest vanpool program in the nation. This is supplemented with preferential treatment for vanpools and carpools on ferries, which reduces the space required for transporting cars, as well as vehicle traffic at both ends of the trip. The region's ride-matching system, which helps people form and maintain carpools and vanpools, has been expanded to serve the entire state. The region is confronted with a growing population and the increasing costs of road construction. At the same time, the region is working to achieve goals for clean air, scenic beauty, and reduced fuel consumption. Strategies that reduce demand for drive-alone travel will continue to become even more important in the future.

The state's *Commute Trip Reduction* program continues to be the primary transportation demand management strategy in the region. The program targets commutes in high-traffic areas, and includes strategies such as employee parking management and incentives for commuting by means other than driving alone.

Nationally, we are witnessing for the first time in decades a reduction of vehicle miles traveled per capita, according to *Federal Highway Administration* data. Analysts attribute this reduction to expanded public transportation, redevelopment and infill in urban areas, changing demographics, and increases in gas prices.

VISION 2040 emphasizes safety of the transportation system. Federal transportation planning guidelines call for increasing the safety and security of the transportation

system for motorized and nonmotorized users. Washington state has implemented programs to encourage safety and security statewide and throughout the region.

Safety issues address the design and operation of the system, as well as threats from harmful acts and natural disasters. Areas of primary concern are vehicle-related deaths and injuries, as well as pedestrian and bicyclist deaths and injuries. A safe and secure regional transportation system pays careful attention to design and operation of facilities, as well as multiagency coordination and communication. VISION 2040 also addresses transportation activities and how they impact the natural and built environment and human health.

## **MAINTENANCE, MANAGEMENT, AND SAFETY GOAL AND POLICIES**

**Goal:** As a high priority, the region will maintain, preserve, and operate its existing transportation system in a safe and usable state.

**MPP-T-1:** Maintain and operate transportation systems to provide safe, efficient, and reliable movement of people, goods, and services.

**MPP-T-2:** Protect the investment in the existing system and lower overall life-cycle costs through effective maintenance and preservation programs.

**MPP-T-3:** Reduce the need for new capital improvements through investments in operations, pricing programs, demand management strategies, and system management activities that improve the efficiency of the current system.

**MPP-T-4:** Improve safety of the transportation system and, in the long term, achieve the state's goal of zero deaths and disabling injuries.

### **Sustainable Transportation**

**MPP-T-5:** Foster a less polluting system that reduces the negative effects of transportation infrastructure and operation on the climate and natural environment.

**MPP-T-6:** Seek the development and implementation of transportation modes and technologies that are energy-efficient and improve system performance.

**MPP-T-7:** Develop a transportation system that minimizes negative impacts to human health.

**MPP-T-8:** Protect the transportation system against disaster, develop prevention and recovery strategies, and plan for coordinated responses.

## **Supporting the Growth Strategy**

The *Regional Growth Strategy* integrates planning for land use and transportation. Land use patterns that support a variety of travel choices contribute significantly to improving accessibility and mobility. Supportive land use patterns include the appropriate placement, intensity, configuration, and proximity of housing, jobs, stores, and schools. Land use patterns are also shaped by and include the roads, pathways, trails, sidewalks, and other public travel infrastructure. Locating stores, offices, and services near homes, along with building sidewalks to bus stops, are effective ways to promote walking, bicycling, and transit use. These land use strategies, which support *transit-oriented development*, can relieve pressure on regional transportation systems for nonwork trips.

According to the *Federal Transit Administration*, transit-oriented development contributes to a significant reduction in vehicle trips, vehicle miles traveled, and travel times for trips. Additional benefits include slowed deterioration of air quality and greater pedestrian

### **Transit-Supportive Densities**

*Extensive national research has shown that residential densities exceeding 7 or 8 homes per gross acre support efficient and reliable local transit service. Household densities should reach, at minimum, 10 to 20 dwelling units per gross acre close to transit stations. Residential densities exceeding 15 to 20 homes per acre, as well as employment areas with densities of 50 jobs per acre and higher, are preferred targets for the higher frequency and high-volume service provided by high-capacity transit.*



### **Complete Streets**

*Federal policy guidance for street design, also known as “routine accommodation.” Complete streets are designed and operated to enable safe and convenient access for all road users, while accommodating the movement of freight and goods. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities can safely move along and across a complete street. By designing and operating streets to be complete, transportation agencies increase capacity, avoid expensive retrofits, encourage physical activity, and help create walkable communities.*

### **Context-Sensitive Design**

*This is a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach for addressing the design and construction of transportation projects to fit within the specific community in which they are located. Projects are tailored to be harmonious with their surroundings. Emphasis is placed on preserving the visual, aesthetic, historic, cultural, and environmental resources of the community, while maintaining safety, accessibility, and mobility.*

### **Freight Initiatives**

*The Puget Sound region’s Freight Action Strategy for the Everett-Seattle-Tacoma Corridor (FAST Corridor) has been a landmark public-private partnership, bringing together the region’s railroads, ports, local jurisdictions, counties, and private shippers. These partners identify and contribute to some of the most important freight mobility projects in the Puget Sound region. Since 1998, they have identified and assembled \$568 million of public and private funding to build nine strategic infrastructure improvements and start four more. The partnership continues to work to secure resources to complete the remaining 15 most important FAST Corridor projects, and to identify additional freight needs.*

*The region also has a nationally recognized Regional Freight Mobility Roundtable, a public-private forum to define and recommend actions serving freight mobility needs in and through central Puget Sound. Members of the regional roundtable meet regularly with the state’s Freight Mobility Roundtable to identify ways to influence freight transportation planning at regional, state, and national levels.*

*In addition to policies T-17, T-18, and T-19, other policies related to freight and goods movement and manufacturing/industrial centers are located in the Development Patterns and Economy sections: DP-12, DP-15, DP-16, DP-17, DP-51, Ec-4, Ec-6, and Ec-17.*

movement. VISION 2040 calls for investments in transit and nonmotorized transportation facilities to serve the preferred land use patterns in the *Regional Growth Strategy*.

The *Regional Growth Strategy* is built around the concept that additional transportation infrastructure and services are to be provided to areas that accept an increased share of the region’s growth. The strategy focuses on preserving and developing compact urban communities, directing employment and housing growth into centers, and redeveloping underutilized urban land.

The region’s designated centers are the most visible examples of progress in integrating land use and transportation policy. The centers strategy is devised to achieve multiple growth management goals, including the creation of an efficient transportation system that supports travel options by all modes and maximizes the benefits of system investments. Transit and nonmotorized travel modes can reduce the number and length of automobile trips and are, in general, supported by higher concentrations of development and activity. Because of their potential to dramatically impact their surroundings, transportation facilities should be carefully designed to fit within and enhance the context of the built or natural environments in which they are located.

Transportation infrastructure and services that support reliable freight and goods movement are also important to implementing the *Regional Growth Strategy*. Efficient transportation is key to maintaining a strong regional economy. This means investing in strategic projects and programs that support the movement of freight and goods, as well as facilities and services that improve access to job locations and residential access to nearby goods and services.

## **SUPPORTING THE GROWTH STRATEGY GOAL AND POLICIES**

**Goal:** The future transportation system will support the regional growth strategy by focusing on connecting centers with a highly efficient multimodal transportation network.

### **Coordination**

**MPP-T-9:** Coordinate state, regional, and local planning efforts for transportation through the Puget Sound Regional Council to develop and operate a highly efficient, multimodal system that supports the regional growth strategy.

**MPP-T-10:** Promote coordination among transportation providers and local governments to ensure that joint- and mixed-use developments are designed in a way that improves overall mobility and accessibility to and within such development.

### **Centers and Compact Communities**

**MPP-T-11:** Prioritize investments in transportation facilities and services in the urban growth area that support compact, pedestrian- and transit-oriented densities and development.

**MPP-T-12:** Give regional funding priority to transportation improvements that serve regional growth centers and regional manufacturing and industrial centers.

**MPP-T-13:** Make transportation investments that improve economic and living conditions so that industries and skilled workers continue to be retained and attracted to the region.

**MPP-T-14:** Design, construct, and operate transportation facilities to serve all users safely and conveniently, including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users, while accommodating the movement of freight and goods, as suitable to each facility's function and context as determined by the appropriate jurisdictions.

**MPP-T-15:** Improve local street patterns — including their design and how they are used — for walking, bicycling, and transit use to enhance communities, connectivity, and physical activity.

**MPP-T-16:** Promote and incorporate bicycle and pedestrian travel as important modes of transportation by providing facilities and reliable connections.

### **Freight**

**MPP-T-17:** Ensure the freight system meets the needs of: (1) global gateways, (2) producer needs within the state and region, and (3) regional and local distribution.

**MPP-T-18:** Maintain and improve the existing multimodal freight transportation system in the region to increase reliability and efficiency and to prevent degradation of freight mobility.

**MPP-T-19:** Coordinate regional planning with railroad capacity expansion plans and support capacity expansion that is compatible with state, regional, and local plans.

### **Context and Design**

**MPP-T-20:** Design transportation facilities to fit within the context of the built or natural environments in which they are located.

**MPP-T-21:** Apply urban design principles in transportation programs and projects for regional growth centers and high-capacity transit station areas.

**MPP-T-22:** Implement transportation programs and projects in ways that prevent or minimize negative impacts to low-income, minority, and special needs populations.



## Greater Options and Mobility

To provide for the future mobility of the growing number of people living and working in the region, VISION 2040 prioritizes transportation projects and services that produce greater efficiency, reduce trips, and provide more choices — such as transit, ferry services, trails, bicycle lanes, passenger rail, and additional airport capacity. VISION 2040 recognizes that strategic capacity expansion also is needed, particularly in centers and in providing efficient transportation between centers. Capacity expansion should take place after efforts have been made to optimize capacity and use of existing facilities. With continued expansion of international trade and local increases in the movement of freight, goods, and services, there is also a need for additional port capacity, rail capacity, and freight access — especially to manufacturing and warehousing areas.

The region's aggressive, long-range growth management and transportation goals depend on providing more efficient and effective public transportation services. Achieving these goals also requires better access to these services. Evolving from an automobile-dependent region to a region where numerous travel options are available and attractive requires ongoing investment in fixed-route, rideshare, and demand-response systems and services. One such step in that direction was taken with the initial investment in the regional high-capacity transit system that Sound Transit provides.

Additionally, numerous service changes and facility improvements by local transit operators and Washington State Ferries have been implemented. Others are on the horizon. Making sure that all of these investments in transit facilities and services are working toward the region's long-range land use and transportation objectives requires extensive coordination.

According to the *Federal Transit Administration*, nearly one-third of the population in the United States does not drive a car. The estimate is similar for the central Puget Sound region. Included are those who simply do not want to drive, seniors who no longer have licenses, people with disabilities who depend on transit or other transportation services, lower-income people who cannot afford a car, and children under the driving age.

The region will continue to experience an increase in elderly residents as the baby-boomer generation ages.

The number of children under the age of 16 will also continue to grow. An increase in the overall number of people living in poverty will also have implications for a greater need for transit service for those without access to automobiles.

While the region has invested in public transportation as a practical mobility option, segments of the special needs population cannot rely on fixed-route transit as a primary mode of travel. These individuals rely on alternative forms of public transportation, such as paratransit or community-based services. VISION 2040 calls for ongoing work to coordinate disparate funding programs and services and prioritize goals and implementation strategies to improve transportation options for special needs populations.

Infrastructure for improved mobility takes many forms, depending upon need, demand, location, and environmental, financial, and other constraints. Providing additional transportation choices throughout the region should take the form of a variety of local, regional, national, and international public transportation services. This includes local transit, light rail, bus rapid transit, intercity passenger rail, and other methods of efficiently and conveniently moving large numbers of people.

Improving mobility requires funding — and funding is limited. VISION 2040 calls for the region to consider its investments carefully, prioritize its needs, and concentrate funding where it brings the greatest net benefits in supporting the *Regional Growth Strategy*. The nature of facilities and services can vary. For example, in the region's densest urban areas, mobility is improved by expanding the region's transit system and pedestrian and bicycle networks. In rural areas, transportation capacity expansion is limited and contingent on having local land use provisions in place to prevent unplanned growth.

Missing links in the region's bicycle, pedestrian, and local street networks should be completed to improve local and regional connections. Relatively inexpensive projects that provide connections between existing facilities can increase capacity and ease of use for a variety of transportation modes on surrounding streets, sidewalks, and trails. Improvements to existing bottlenecks — such as substandard exits, on-ramps, and interchanges — can optimize the use of existing highway facilities. All transportation projects and programs need to consider impacts to the natural environment, public health, and

the climate, as well as to the communities in which they are located.

In addition to targeting the right projects and programs to the right situations, the region must develop a sustainable funding system. Less revenue is available from the traditional gas tax source due to fuel efficiency increases, the use of alternative fuels, and erosion of real buying power due to inflation. New public and private partnerships are needed, along with different ways of collecting revenue to reflect the changing use of the region's transportation systems.

## **GREATER OPTIONS AND MOBILITY GOAL AND POLICIES**

**Goal:** The region will invest in transportation systems that offer greater options, mobility, and access in support of the regional growth strategy.

**MPP-T-23:** Emphasize transportation investments that provide and encourage alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle travel and increase travel options, especially to and within centers and along corridors connecting centers.

**MPP-T-24:** Increase the proportion of trips made by transportation modes that are alternatives to driving alone.

**MPP-T-25:** Ensure mobility choices for people with special transportation needs, including persons with disabilities, the elderly, the young, and low-income populations.

**MPP-T-26:** Strategically expand capacity and increase efficiency of the transportation system to move goods, services, and people to and within the urban growth area. Focus on investments that produce the greatest net benefits to people and minimize the environmental impacts of transportation.

**MPP-T-27:** Improve key facilities connecting the region to national and world markets to support the economic vitality of the region.

**MPP-T-28:** Avoid construction of major roads and capacity expansion on existing roads in rural and resource areas. Where increased roadway capacity is warranted to support safe and efficient travel through rural areas, appropriate rural development regulations and strong commitments to access management should be in place prior to authorizing such capacity expansion in order to prevent unplanned growth in rural areas.

**MPP-T-29:** Promote the preservation of existing rights-of-way for future high-capacity transit.

**MPP-T-30:** Encourage public and private sector partnerships to identify and implement improvements to personal mobility and freight movement.

**MPP-T-31:** Support effective management of existing air transportation capacity and ensure that future capacity needs are addressed in cooperation with responsible agencies, affected communities, and users.

**MPP-T-32:** Integrate transportation systems to make it easy for people and freight to move from one mode or technology to another.

**MPP-T-33:** Promote transportation financing methods, such as user fees, tolls, and pricing, that sustain maintenance, preservation, and operation of facilities and reflect the costs imposed by users.

## **The Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Implementation Strategy**

*The nonmotorized component of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan outlines actions the region should take to implement improvements to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and programs. It specifies areas of responsibility for city, county, regional, and state agencies, as well as private and nonprofit organizations. State law now requires communities to include a bicycle and pedestrian component in the transportation element of comprehensive plans. (RCW 36.70A.070(6)vii)*

## **Variable Pricing**

*An innovative approach for transportation management and finance is to provide incentives and disincentives for traffic on our roads. This can improve traffic flow, as well as help pay for roads and transit. Transportation agencies could allow people to choose to buy into the use of a faster lane, or charge fees on roads at peak hours when they are most clogged, while making sure that everyone can also choose among many different ways to reach their destination. This is known as variable pricing or time-of-day tolling. This type of innovation can manage existing roadways more efficiently, reduce costs for all, and provide more funding to build, operate, and maintain critical transportation infrastructure and services.*

## VISION 2040 Transportation Actions

The following VISION 2040 actions have been developed to help implement the transportation policies. Detailed information on specific measures that will be used to monitor implementation and performance is contained in *Part IV: Implementation*.

### REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ACTIONS

#### Updating the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (Destination 2030): T-Action-1

The Puget Sound Regional Council will update the Metropolitan Transportation Plan to be consistent with and implement VISION 2040.

- Short-term / overarching goal and subsection goals
- Results and Products: *update to Destination 2030 scheduled for completion in 2010*

#### Congestion Relief and Mobility Strategies: T-Action-2

The Puget Sound Regional Council will continue to advance strategies for congestion relief, including identifying the location and causes of congestion, integrating land use and transportation planning, managing demand, improving efficiency (with both system and economic solutions), and expanding roads and transit service.

- Short-term, ongoing / MPP-T-3
- Results and Products: *recommendations for regional congestion relief strategies*

#### System Performance Strategies: T-Action-3

The Puget Sound Regional Council will pursue new technologies and innovative strategies to ease congestion and improve travel times, including intelligent transportation systems, congestion pricing, and planning for operations and management.

- Short-term, ongoing \ MPP-T-1, 3
- Results and Products: *reports and recommendations on new technologies and innovative strategies*

#### Regional Mobility Plan for Special Populations: T-Action-4

The Puget Sound Regional Council, together with the region's transportation and human services providers, will develop and regularly update the regional *Coordinated Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan*. The Regional Council will provide examples for addressing mobility and accessibility for low-income and special needs populations (including youth, seniors, and disabled persons) in local transportation planning efforts.

- Mid-term, ongoing \ MPP-T-25
- Results and Products: *(1) update(s) to the Coordinated Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan, (2) examples and best practices*

#### Safety Trends and Data: T-Action-5

The Puget Sound Regional Council will report on safety trends for all modes of travel using data provided by the state and local jurisdictions within the region to monitor the regional progress of the Washington State Strategic Highway Safety Plan.

- Short-term, ongoing \ MPP-T-4
- Results and Products: *report(s) to the Transportation Policy Board and Executive Board*

#### Freight Mobility Coordination and Planning: T-Action-6

The Puget Sound Regional Council will continue to:

1. Identify the Regionally Significant Freight and Goods Transportation System in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (*Destination 2030*). (Identification and designation of the system will describe critical freight intermodal sites and corridors and priorities for operation and investment for elements of the system.)
  2. Provide guidance for including the system in the transportation elements of local plans.
  3. Identify freight mobility investments that support the movement of goods and services and link to regional growth centers and regional manufacturing/industrial centers.
- Mid-term \ MPP-T-17, 18, 19
  - Results and Products: *(1) report and recommendations to the Transportation Policy Board on freight, goods, and services transportation, (2) updated description of the Freight and Goods Movement component of the regionally defined Metropolitan Transportation System in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan*

### Coordinated Transit Planning: T-Action-7

The Puget Sound Regional Council will work with member jurisdictions and transportation providers to strengthen the coordination of local and regional planning for transportation, growth management and economic development. Use the Regional Council as a forum to coordinate transit agency planning and projects.

- Short-term / MPP-T-9, 10, 23, 29
- Results and Products: *(1) guidance for local comprehensive plans regarding transit, (2) strengthened relationships among transit agencies, and between transit agencies and local governments, (3) guidance and recommendations for transit agency long-range plans regarding growth management and the regional vision, (4) guidance for prioritizing funding to those transit projects that best integrate growth management plans and the regional vision*

### Long-Range Regional Ferry Service Planning: T-Action-8

The Puget Sound Regional Council will take a leadership role to coordinate development and implementation of a long-range regional ferry service plan, ensuring vehicle and passenger-only ferry service is integrated with transit and roadway investments.

- Mid-term / MPP-T-32
- Results and Products: *an integrated regional ferry service plan that: (a) identifies ferry investments to make service more viable, (b) identifies the role that ferry terminals play as subregional centers and intermodal hubs, and (c) addresses relationships with other travel modes*

### Certification Update: T-Action-9

The Puget Sound Regional Council will update the process for certifying the transportation-related provisions of local comprehensive plans required under the Growth Management Act, in cooperation with member jurisdictions, the Washington State Department of Community Trade and Economic Development, and the Washington State Department of Transportation.

- Short-term / MPP-T-9
- Results and Products: *revised provisions for the Policy and Plan Review Process*

### Aviation Systems Planning: T-Action-10

The Puget Sound Regional Council will regularly assess the regional airport system and, as needed, update the Regional Airport System Plan, Strategic Plan for Aviation, Regional Airport Ground Access Plan, and Regional Air Cargo Strategy, in cooperation with member jurisdictions, airport sponsors, state agencies, and the Federal Aviation Administration.

- Ongoing / MPP-T 31
- Results and Products: *(1) report(s) on the airport system to the Transportation Policy Board and Executive Board, (2) plan updates as needed*

### Commute Trip Reduction: T-Action-11

The Puget Sound Regional Council will provide regional coordination for planning and implementation of Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) programs and will consider *Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers* as priority areas for service and facility investments, according to state law. The Regional Council will continue to support the development and implementation of Transportation Demand Management programs throughout the region.

- Short-term, ongoing / MPP-T-3, 23, 24
- Results and Products: *(1) recommendations for CTR programs to PSRC boards and member jurisdictions, (2) recommendations and example provisions for transportation demand management*

#### ***Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers (GTECs)***

*GTECs are to be identified under the state Commute Trip Reduction Act (RCW 70.94.996). In the central Puget Sound region, they are a subset of the designated regional growth centers.*

### Disaster Planning: T-Action-12

The Puget Sound Regional Council will identify and define its role in disaster response and recovery. This task needs to address transportation considerations, as well as issues related to other critical infrastructure — for both natural and human-caused disasters. The Regional Council will also address disaster planning factors in the review of transportation projects and programs.

- Short-term / MPP-T-8
- Results and Products: *(1) report and recommendations to the Transportation Policy Board and Executive Board, including mobility plans to provide transportation to emergency shelters in the region, (2) develop provisions for the emergency use of the regional transportation system during a disaster event, including major storms*

### **Compliance with Regional Plans: T-Action-13**

The Puget Sound Regional Council will continue to carry out a project selection process for PSRC funding that reflects clear policy direction from VISION 2040, *Destination 2030* and the *Regional Economic Strategy* — that is, to fund or prioritize projects and programs in centers or connecting centers.

- Short-term \ MPP-T-9
- Results and Products: *updated criteria for PSRC funding processes*

### **Program and Project Selection Criteria: T-Action-14**

The Puget Sound Regional Council will update its programming and project selection criteria to address health impacts and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

- Short term \ MPP-T-5, 6
- Results and productions: *updated criteria for PSRC programs*

### **Ensure Consistency with Growth Management Planning: T-Action-15**

The Puget Sound Regional Council will evaluate major transportation proposals in terms of their impacts on local transportation plans and consistency with Growth Management Act goals and make appropriate recommendations.

- Ongoing / Subsection goal — supporting the Growth Strategy
- Results and Products: *updated criteria for the review of transportation proposals*

### **Coordinate Planning with State Agencies: T-Action-16**

The Puget Sound Regional Council will take a leadership role to work with state agencies responsible for transportation planning and programming to ensure that state projects address the regional vision and local growth management planning goals and objectives.

- Ongoing / Subsection goal — supporting the Growth Strategy
- Results and Products: *(1) correspondence and follow-up with WSDOT and other state agencies regarding goals and policies of the regional vision, (2) lobbying the state Legislature as needed*

### **Transportation Funding Sources: T-Action-17**

The Puget Sound Regional Council, together with its member jurisdictions, shall investigate existing and new sources of funding for transportation facilities and services to assist local governments and transportation agencies for maintenance and operations, as well as for facilities and services to serve future development in a manner consistent with the vision.

- Short-term / Subsection goal — greater options and mobility
- Results and Products: *new or expanded funding for transportation*

### **Notification of Revised Transportation Funding Criteria: T-Action-18**

The Puget Sound Regional Council will relay the goals and objectives of the regional vision to state agencies and the Legislature, in order to address useful changes in funding criteria to ensure that investments in transportation facilities and services advance the vision, particularly projects in or connecting centers.

- Short-term / Subsection goal — supporting the Growth Strategy
- Results and Products: *letter (or other reporting) to Legislature and state agencies*

### **Nonmotorized Planning: T-Action-19**

The Puget Sound Regional Council will work with member jurisdictions and others to establish a safe and efficient regional nonmotorized network that provides connections to and within centers and along corridors connecting centers.

- Short-term \ MPP-T-9, 14, 15, 16, 23, 24)
- Results and Products: *(1) update regional bicycle/pedestrian network to reflect local and state plans, address missing links, and document changes in status of projects, (2) develop guidelines and criteria for local jurisdictions in developing bicycle and pedestrian components of comprehensive plans, (3) identify, catalog, and centralize existing data on bicycling and walking, (4) develop a regional bicycle network signage program, (5) update the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Implementation Strategy*



## Public Services

**Overarching Goal:** *The region will support development with adequate public facilities and services in a coordinated, efficient, and cost-effective manner that supports local and regional growth planning objectives.*

*Having adequate services and facilities ensures that the region can maintain the health, safety, and economic vitality of our communities. Key urban services include sanitary and storm sewer systems, water supply, energy, telecommunications, public safety and emergency services, schools, libraries, and other community facilities.*

*New development needs new or expanded public services and infrastructure. At the same time, existing facilities require ongoing maintenance and upgrading. Taking advantage of renewable resources and using efficient and environmentally sensitive technologies can curb some of the need for new infrastructure. A commitment to sustainable infrastructure ensures the least possible strain on the region's resources and the environment, while contributing to healthy and prosperous communities.*

The Growth Management Act distinguishes between urban and rural services. For instance, certain services, such as sanitary sewers, are allowed only in the urban area — with very few exceptions. The Act also requires local jurisdictions to determine which facilities are necessary to serve the desired growth pattern and how they will be financed. These provisions are intended to ensure timely provision of adequate services and facilities.

Conservation is key to meeting many of our service and facility needs today and will be even more essential in the future. Reducing waste is more efficient and cost-effective than disposal or clean-up. Reusing materials minimizes the demands for and effects on limited resources. Recycling prevents pollution and helps to protect the environment.

Conservation and more efficient use of services are a vital part of sustainability and are important to ensure that resources will be there for future generations. They can also provide benefits for the climate, particularly in the area of energy efficiency.

VISION 2040 encourages improving infrastructure to support development and maintain healthy and livable communities. Having reliable power, telecommunications, and water supply, along with other services and infrastructure, contributes to quality of life and the region's economic well-being.

VISION 2040 promotes strategic investment in services and facilities to support the *Regional Growth Strategy*. Examples of strategic investments include siting major public amenities, such as libraries and community centers, in centers and compact urban communities. VISION 2040 emphasizes the use of existing and planned facility capacity and investing in facilities and services that reinforce cities as primary locations for growth.

Taking advantage of existing infrastructure and services is both efficient and cost-effective. VISION 2040 also stresses that new public facilities, whether landfills, libraries, or schools, be located in a manner consistent with the proposed growth pattern. These facilities must be constructed and operated in ways that minimize adverse impacts to both people and the environment, and maximize benefits.

Policies are included for the following areas: (1) general services and special service districts, (2) the provision of key regional services, which include solid waste, sanitary sewer, septic, and stormwater, energy, public safety and emergency services, and telecommunications, (3) water supply, and (4) siting facilities, including schools, institutions, and other community facilities. Efficiency and conservation are common themes throughout.

## Services in General

Providing infrastructure that is economical, clean, and reliable is a primary challenge as the region accommodates growth. VISION 2040 emphasizes efficiencies and conservation when providing services. Public services and facilities need to be located in a manner that allows jobs and housing to develop where they are desired and planned, and discourages unplanned growth and sprawl.

**Special Service Districts.** Many parts of the region, especially the unincorporated urban growth area, receive a variety of services through *special service districts*. Washington state law allows such districts to be created for a variety of services, including sewer, water, drainage, flood control, parks and recreation, fire, library, public hospital, school, and public transportation. There are nearly two dozen distinct types of special districts in the four-county area. All together, there are more than 330 such districts operating in the region.

Some special districts provide a specific service to a single community, while others may serve residents from a number of different cities and communities. Special district boundaries often overlap with municipal boundaries; both can change over time due to annexation and incorporation. Within the same vicinity, different special districts — for example, one that provides flood control and one that operates parks and recreational facilities — may have very different service boundaries. Some special districts overlap the urban growth area boundary and provide services to both urban and rural areas.

Coordination between special districts and general purpose governments is often lacking, especially with regard to regional planning. Washington state law requires cooperation in planning for solid waste management and collection, flood control management, sewer and water systems, and public transportation. However, special service districts remain outside of the planning requirements of the Growth Management Act. At the same time, the Act states that cities are the preferred providers of urban services.

VISION 2040 calls for services to be provided efficiently and in an environmentally sensitive and timely manner. Urban services are appropriately provided by municipalities. Urban types of services are not appropriate in rural areas.

### SERVICES IN GENERAL POLICIES

**MPP-PS-1:** Protect and enhance the environment and public health and safety when providing services and facilities.

**MPP-PS-2:** Time and phase services and facilities to guide growth and development in a manner that supports the regional vision.

**MPP-PS-3:** Promote demand management and the conservation of services and facilities prior to developing new facilities.

**MPP-PS-4:** Do not provide urban services in rural areas. Design services for limited access when they are needed to solve isolated health and sanitation problems, so as not to increase the development potential of the surrounding rural area.

**MPP-PS-5:** Encourage the design of public facilities and utilities in rural areas to be at a size and scale appropriate to rural locations, so as not to increase development pressure.

**MPP-PS-6:** Obtain urban services from cities or appropriate regional service providers, and encourage special service districts, including sewer, water, and fire districts, to consolidate or dissolve as a result.

## Services by Type

**Solid Waste Collection and Disposal.** Americans generate more solid waste per capita than citizens of any other country. Many of the products we consume come in packaging that is thrown away soon after purchase. Increased use of recycled products, recycling of construction waste, and reductions in nonrecyclable packaging all help to reduce the amount of solid waste generated. The central Puget Sound region is recognized both nationally and internationally for its efforts to collect recyclable waste and identify new markets and applications for recovered waste materials. Reducing and reusing waste will require concerted efforts well into the future.

**Sewage Treatment.** With very few exceptions — generally provided only for schools or for specific health, safety, or environmental concerns — sanitary sewer service is allowed only in urban areas. The region continues to need to manage capacity at treatment plants and make improvements in the overall system.

In rural areas, septic systems are commonplace for the collection of sanitary waste. However, there are still parts of the region's designated urban growth area that also rely on on-site septic systems. Septic systems do not allow for urban levels of density or significant urban growth. Within the urban growth area, sewers are preferred to septic systems. In limited instances, alternative technology to sewers may be appropriate, when it can perform as well or better than sewers. In both rural and urban settings, when septic drain fields are located in sandy or coarser soils adjacent to a water body, the soils can become saturated with phosphate. Once polluted, groundwater takes a long time to clean.

**Stormwater Management Systems.** The health of Puget Sound is declining, and much of that decline is due to stormwater runoff. Stormwater — the rainwater runoff from roads, parking lots, and rooftops — is considered one of the greatest threats to the Sound's marine life, because it carries pollution and erodes streams. Increased volumes of runoff in both upland and downstream water bodies adjacent to the Sound have worsened water quality over the years. This degradation results in a variety of impacts — environmental, economic, and social — including destruction of habitat and restrictions to shellfish harvesting.

Urban runoff can disrupt the natural water balance, resulting in less recharge of groundwater supplies. Impervious surfaces and alterations to natural processes for percolation affect water quality and quantity in streams and lakes, which in turn can create hazards, such as landslides and flooding. In planning for the future, improvements to stormwater management practices are necessary.

The region needs to be more attentive to groundwater recharge, water quality treatment, channel protection, aquatic practices, and flood control. Measures could include retrofitting existing systems that currently lack stormwater controls, as well as improving collection systems to reduce the amount of rainwater and groundwater that infiltrates the pipes. Increasing capacity at existing treatment plants could reduce the need for expanded treatment facilities. Low-impact development practices create opportunities to employ more natural ways to manage stormwater. Redevelopment also creates opportunities to restore urban streams, reestablish stream buffers, and take steps to better control erosion and sediment.

**Energy Supply.** Energy provides the power for our homes, our businesses, and our mobility. Energy comes in a variety of forms — electricity, natural gas, and petroleum being the most common. While the region is blessed with abundant electrical energy derived from hydropower, it faces challenges for securing additional long-term reliable energy — including how to become more energy efficient and how to reduce energy-related pollution.

#### **Dry Sewers**

*A dry sewer refers to a pipe that has been installed but is not yet functioning, because it is intended to carry waste when full service sewerage and treatment facilities are eventually constructed. In most instances, it is more cost-effective to put in a dry sewer in anticipation of a future connection with a sewage system. In such cases, the septic system can be only an interim form of treatment that will then be phased out when the sewer system becomes operational.*

#### **The Polluted Waters of Hood Canal**

*Within the Hood Canal watershed, there are now thousands of homes, mostly on septic tanks. It is estimated that more than 150,000 pounds of nitrogen pour into this unique and beautiful saltwater environment every year as a result of inadequate septic tanks leaching into the ground, which then pollute groundwater and adjacent bodies of water. In water, nitrogen feeds algae, and algae are notorious for consuming oxygen. This starves other aquatic life, including fish, of the oxygen they need to survive. Hood Canal now has dead zones — areas with little or no oxygen to support life. Leaching from septic tanks is a contributing factor to this situation. Unless there are changes in how the land adjacent to the Canal is used and the leaching is eliminated, the entire waterway will become permanently devoid of fish.*

*Source: Puget Sound Action Team*

## **The Region's Energy**

**Electricity.** *The region's electricity suppliers face the challenge of meeting peak load demands without acquiring greater production capability. As a result, energy-generating companies have begun to develop wind and other power sources. Between now and 2040, we will likely see more advancements in energy conservation and the further development of alternative energy sources, particularly in the areas of solar, wind power, tidal, and perhaps even geothermal energy, all of which are currently being used on some scale.*

*In 2006, Washington voters passed Initiative I-937, which establishes targets for energy conservation and the use of renewable resources by the state's electric utilities (that serve more than 25,000 customers). These utilities, both public and private, must secure 15 percent of their power supply from renewable resources by 2020. The utilities must also set and meet energy conservation targets starting in 2010.*

**Natural Gas.** *Three providers supply most of the region's natural gas: Puget Sound Energy, Cascade Natural Gas, and Williams. Northwest Pipeline delivers wholesale gas to providers, which distribute the product to retail consumers in the region. There is only a single main bidirectional pipeline serving the Puget Sound region with lateral feeders.*

**Petroleum.** *Most of the growth in energy consumption in our region is due to transportation and the use of fossil fuels. Several factors influence consumption of fuels for travel, including the number of trips made by automobiles, vehicle idling, and the mix of vehicles using the system. Petroleum, gasoline, and diesel are projected to continue to be critical to nearly all forms of regional vehicular mobility — cars, trucks, buses, trains, and ferries. Given continued U.S. dependence on foreign oil imports, international oil supply and demand has implications for both public and private transportation in our region.*

## **Law and Justice Services**

*In Washington, county governments provide much of the staffing and facilities for the state's trial court system and for nearly all of its criminal justice system. On average statewide, counties now spend more than 70 percent of their general fund dollars on law and justice. Adequate funding for criminal justice services is an ongoing concern. In some instances, counties have established innovative agreements for the provision of intergovernmental services that share costs and benefits.*

Conservation and the use of renewable and alternative sources of energy — especially low-carbon technologies — can make our communities cleaner, healthier, and more efficient. Renewable and alternative sources of energy also allow the region to keep energy dollars invested at home, rather than exporting them to overseas oil and gas suppliers. The region's economy is stimulated through the development of clean energy solutions, and new jobs can be created in local energy sectors.

Designing communities for biking and walking can make a difference in energy use. Energy-saving materials and design can maximize energy efficiency. The increased use of renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar, generates much less air and water pollution than nonrenewable coal, gas, and oil. Energy efficiency also benefits the climate.

**Public Safety and Emergency Services.** Fire, safety, police, and other emergency services are provided by cities, counties, and special purpose districts throughout the region, and by the state highway patrol. Each county in the region also provides a variety of health care facilities and other social services.

The region's communities and service providers also depend on coordinated and reliable access to emergency communications. An emergency can be anything from an everyday incident, such as a traffic accident, to major incidents or disasters, such as plane crashes or earthquakes. Effective services are needed to facilitate emergency calls, warning systems, communication among various authorities and organizations, and notifications to citizens.

**Telecommunications.** Telecommunication allows for distant communication by electronic transmission of signals, including by cable, telephone lines, or airwaves. As the region's economy continues to center more and more on the exchange of information, it is important for our homes, our businesses, and our communities to maintain and improve our electronic communication connections. Future computer and Internet connectivity — both within the region and worldwide — will rely increasingly on wireless technology.

**Water Supply.** Water is often taken for granted as a readily renewable resource in the Pacific Northwest. Yet some of our supplies of water, particularly aquifers, are not as renewable as we once thought. The development of land in our major watersheds and adjacent to

other water sources can affect critical water supplies that are necessary, or may become necessary, to serve the needs of a growing population. Climate change threatens to alter traditional water sources from winter snow pack in the nearby mountains. Climate experts warn of low water levels in the summer, drought, and competition among water uses.

Improved coordination in water supply planning will help the region better accommodate growth by: (1) taking steps to ensure reliable long-term water supplies, (2) managing water demand, and (3) increasing the efficiency of water use. Key steps include coordinating water planning, improving conservation and supply management, and acquiring, constructing, and managing essential water infrastructure. Water utility providers could meet increased demand through strategies such as additional conservation, water reclamation and reuse, surface and groundwater storage and release, and inter-ties between water systems and sharing supplies. One example is the installation of dual piping for business or home plumbing. One pipe supplies potable water and the second one provides reclaimed water for uses other than human consumption.

**Preservation of Utility Corridors.** Many utility services, including water supply, sewer treatment, stormwater systems, and energy supply, operate as part of networks that require vast systems of infrastructure connections and lines to function. It is important for both existing and future utility corridors to be preserved to ensure reliable and efficient service delivery as the region grows.

## **SERVICES BY TYPE GOAL AND POLICIES**

**MPP-PS-7:** Develop conservation measures to reduce solid waste and increase recycling.

**MPP-PS-8:** Promote improved conservation and more efficient use of water, as well as the increased use of reclaimed water, to reduce wastewater generation and ensure water availability.

**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.

**MPP-PS-10:** Replace failing septic systems within the urban growth area with sanitary sewers or alternative technology that is comparable or better.

**MPP-PS-11:** Use innovative and state-of-the-art design and techniques when replacing septic tanks to restore and improve environmental quality.

**MPP-PS-12:** Promote the use of renewable energy resources to meet the region's energy needs.

**MPP-PS-13:** Reduce the rate of energy consumption through conservation and alternative energy forms to extend the life of existing facilities and infrastructure.

**MPP-PS-14:** Plan for the provision of telecommunication infrastructure to serve growth and development in a manner that is consistent with the regional vision and friendly to the environment.

**MPP-PS-15:** Coordinate, design, and plan for public safety services and programs.

**MPP-PS-16:** Encourage health and human services facilities to locate near centers and transit for efficient accessibility to service delivery.

**Goal:** Residents of the region will have access to high quality drinking water that meets or is better than federal and state requirements.

**MPP-PS-17:** Identify and develop additional water supply sources to meet the region's long-term water needs, recognizing the potential impacts on water supply from climate change and fisheries protection.

**MPP-PS-18:** Promote coordination among local and tribal governments and water providers and suppliers to meet long-term water needs in the region in a manner that supports the region's growth strategy.

**MPP-PS-19:** Reduce the per capita rate of water consumption through conservation, efficiency, reclamation, and reuse.

**MPP-PS-20:** Protect the source of the water supply to meet the needs for both human consumption and for environmental balance.



## Siting Facilities

Regional capital facilities are transportation, recreation, education, human services, water, sewer, and similar facilities. While capital facilities are essential to our communities, our commerce, and our quality of life, they often affect the environment and adjacent areas.

It is often difficult to locate major facilities, such as airports and landfills, due to the potential for substantial impacts on residences and other nearby uses. Less intensive facilities, such as libraries and schools, are not always located in a manner that supports key growth management principles.

VISION 2040 calls for strategically locating major capital facilities so that they support the *Regional Growth Strategy*. It stresses the importance of investment in capital facilities and amenities to support urban centers and manufacturing/industrial centers. For example, adding amenities that attract people, such as performing arts centers, plazas, parks, and other recreational facilities, is an excellent way to support the vitality of urban centers. VISION 2040 discourages the placement of urban facilities in rural and resource areas.

VISION 2040 stresses equity to ensure that the benefits of regional capital facilities are shared by communities throughout the region. Facilities that generate adverse impacts should not be sited in a manner that unduly burdens certain communities or population groups. Reducing adverse impacts can be addressed not only by avoiding them, but also by providing amenities, such as collocating parks with wastewater treatment plants.

**Siting School Facilities.** In the central Puget Sound region, school districts own, operate, and maintain the public schools. School district boundaries have been long established and, in many instances, districts that were historically rural have become major suburban education providers, with a host of buildings, facilities, and programs. As a result, there are some districts throughout the four counties that provide school services to both urban and rural populations.

A careful examination of resources and their optimal allocation could lessen adverse effects of — and to — schools. In some cases, this could mean reassessing current school district boundaries. Schools should be encouraged to become the cornerstones of their communities by locating in more urban settings and designing facilities to better integrate with their urban neighborhoods.

### *School Siting and Transportation*

*Over the past several decades, it has been the practice of many school districts in suburbanizing areas across the United States to site new schools on large, undeveloped acreages that are neither easy to walk to nor accessible by transit. Districts then either operate large programs to transport students to school sites, or end up requiring students to drive or be driven to school.*

*Source: Issue Paper on Rural Areas*

**Other Institutions and Community Facilities.** Other cultural, civic and religious facilities — including libraries, performing arts centers, sports facilities, and houses of worship — also contribute to creating a sense of community. They better serve their populations when they locate in more centralized places, which people can reach by walking, biking, or using transit. In the long-term, there is increased efficiency and cost-effectiveness by siting and operating facilities that serve a primarily urban population within the urban growth area. At the same time, those facilities and services that primarily benefit rural populations provide a greater benefit when they are designed and scaled to fit within an adjacent town or established rural community.

## SITING FACILITIES POLICIES

**MPP-PS-21:** Site schools, institutions, and other community facilities that primarily serve urban populations within the urban growth area in locations where they will promote the local desired growth plans.

**MPP-PS-22:** Locate schools, institutions, and other community facilities serving rural residents in neighboring cities and towns and design these facilities in keeping with the size and scale of the local community.

**MPP-PS-23:** Site or expand regional capital facilities in a manner that (1) reduces adverse social, environmental, and economic impacts on the host community, (2) equitably balances the location of new facilities, and (3) addresses regional planning objectives.

**MPP-PS-24:** Do not locate regional capital facilities outside the urban growth area unless it is demonstrated that a non-urban site is the most appropriate location for such a facility.

## VISION 2040 Public Services Actions

The following VISION 2040 actions have been developed to help implement the public services policies. Detailed information on specific measures that will be used to monitor implementation and performance is contained in *Part IV: Implementation*.

### REGIONAL PUBLIC SERVICES ACTIONS

#### Communication with Legislature Regarding Special Service Districts: PS-Action-1

The Puget Sound Regional Council, on behalf of its member jurisdictions, will communicate to the Legislature that special service districts should be required to comply with the Growth Management Act.

- Short-term \ MPP-PS-4 through 6, 21 through 24
- Results and Products: *letter (or other reporting) to Legislature*

#### Water Issues: PS-Action-2

The Puget Sound Regional Council will determine its role in addressing regional water issues — including water supply.

- Mid-term \ MPP-PS-17 through 20
- Results and Products: *report and recommendations to Growth Management Policy Board and Executive Board*

#### Communication with Energy Providers: PS-Action-3

The Puget Sound Regional Council will relay to energy providers the goals and objectives of the regional vision. Providers are encouraged to identify tools and practices to address energy supply and conservation for local jurisdiction planning purposes.

- Short-term \ MPP-PS-12, 13
- Results and Products: *letter (and/or other correspondence) to energy providers*

#### Telecommunications Report: Action-PS-4

The Puget Sound Regional Council will work with its member jurisdictions and telecommunication providers to monitor the availability of high-speed data communication services.

- Mid-term \ MPP-PS-14
- Results and Products: *report and recommendations to PSRC's policy boards*

### LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICES ACTIONS

#### Special Service Districts Planning: PS-Action-5

Counties, in their review of special service districts' plans, will identify any inconsistencies with local growth management goals and objectives, as well as the regional vision. As part of this review, counties, in consultation with pertinent cities, will work with special service districts to provide guidance for facilities and service planning to ensure that districts develop long-range plans that implement the regional vision.

- Short-term \ MPP-PS-4 through 6, 21 through 24
- Results and Products: *(1) consistency report (or similar) to special districts, (2) recommendations and examples to districts concerning the regional vision*

#### Facilities Siting and Design: PS-Action-6

Counties and cities will collaborate with special service districts to review district location and design criteria for new schools, libraries, and other such public facilities — to ensure that growth management goals and the regional vision are addressed.

- Short-term \ MPP-PS-21 through 24
- Results and Products: *report (or similar) and recommendations on siting and design criteria*

### **Facilities Location: PS-Action-7**

Counties and cities will collaborate with special service districts to identify opportunities for co-location of facilities and services — such as parks adjacent to schools.

- Short-term \ MPP-PS-4 through 6, 21 through 24
- Results and Products: *recommendations to districts and local governments for facility siting criteria*

### **Coordinated Planning and Programming for Facilities: PS-Action-8**

Counties and cities will submit a consistency assessment of their capital facilities programming processes to the Regional Council as part of the Policy and Plan Review process. This assessment should address consistency of capital improvement programs and facility plans with adopted growth management objectives, the comprehensive plan, and the regional vision. The Puget Sound Regional Council will provide guidance and assistance.

- Short-term, ongoing \ MPP-PS-1 through, 3, 23
- Results and Products: *Consistency Assessment Report as part of material submitted for review of local plans*