



Puget Sound Regional Council

Regional Centers Framework Update | Scope of Work

July 2026

Purpose

The Regional Centers Framework set criteria and expectations for regional growth centers, manufacturing/industrial centers (MICs), and countywide centers. Since the framework was adopted in 2018, PSRC and local governments have made significant progress implementing the policy goals of the framework.

To support a thriving system of centers, PSRC will consider updates to the Regional Centers Framework to address changes needed based on new state laws, development trends in centers and insights from the redesignation process. This review will focus on targeted amendments rather than substantial change in policy direction given the short time period for this work prior to the next VISION update, and many successful outcomes for regional centers under the existing framework. Review of the policy issues identified in this scope may result in discrete amendments to the framework or identify broader policy questions that may be explored in the VISION update or other processes.

Focus Areas

Regional growth center topics:

Density criteria/state TOD bill (HB 1491): Review density standards for consistency with new state law on transit-oriented development (HB 1491) and updates needed to support density in centers.

Housing affordability: Review housing criteria and subarea planning requirements for opportunities to support housing affordability and consistency with new state laws.

Boundaries and connectivity: Review standards for boundaries and connectivity for opportunities to clarify regional requirements.

- **Boundary exception policy:** Develop an exception policy for boundary review per GMPB and Executive Board action on regional growth center redesignation.

Livable communities: Review criteria and planning requirements to encourage amenities or programs that foster a sense of place and livable, complete communities.

Manufacturing/industrial center topics:

Changes in economic conditions: Review employment requirements for MICs to consider shifts in job demand and function.

Definition of core industrial zoning: Review definition of “core industrial zoning” and opportunities to strictly limit commercial uses, such as retail, hotels, and industrial-commercial uses.

Impacts to adjacent communities: Research potential impacts on communities adjacent to MICs and identify guidance or strategies to mitigate negative community impacts. This may be a longer-term research question.

Other topics:

Equity Advisory Committee review: Review regional center planning requirements and identify potential updates to support underserved communities, which may include displacement impacts.

Administrative updates: Compile updates to the regional center application, redesignation processes and other requirements.

Project Schedule and Process

- **Summer 2026.** Once the project scope is finalized, staff will develop briefing memos with policy options for areas identified in the scope. Equity Advisory Committee will review subarea plan requirements.
- **Fall 2026.** Regional Staff Committee will provide feedback on policy options. Growth Management Policy Board will be asked for direction on Framework amendments.
- **Winter 2026/27.** GMPB will consider Framework amendments. Once GMPB acts, Executive Board will consider final amendments.

Roles and Engagement

- **Regional Staff Committee** will review and provide feedback on policy options for topics identified in the project scope of work.
- **Equity Advisory Committee** will review and provide feedback on PSRC’s subarea planning requirements.
- **Growth Management Policy Board** will serve as lead policy board to recommend updates to the Regional Centers Framework or related policy documents.
- **Executive Board** will be responsible for action on final updates to the Framework.
- **Countywide organizations and jurisdictions** with regional centers will be updated at key project milestones.

Implementation

This project may result in amendments to the Regional Centers Framework or updates to other implementing documents. Those documents include the Designation Procedures for New Regional Centers, the Administrative Procedures for Existing Regional Centers, PSRC's Consistency Tools for Regional Center Subarea Plans, additional guidance documents, or future updates to VISION 2050.