

# Countywide Planning Policies

for Pierce County, Washington

Effective August 27, 2012

**COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICIES  
FOR  
PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

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**I. INTRODUCTION**

A. Background and Statutory Framework

In response to legislative findings that uncoordinated and unplanned growth together with a lack of common goals toward land conservation pose a threat to the environment, to the public health, safety and welfare, and to sustainable economic development, the State legislature enacted the Growth Management Act.<sup>1</sup> The Act identifies 14 planning goals which are intended to be used for the purpose of guiding the development and adoption of comprehensive plans and development regulations of municipalities and counties required to plan.<sup>2</sup> The categories in which goals have been propounded are: urban growth, sprawl reduction, transportation, housing, economic development, property rights, permits, natural resource industries, open space and recreation, shoreline, environment, citizen participation and coordination, public facilities and services, and historic preservation. The Act specifies mandatory<sup>3</sup> and optional<sup>4</sup> plan elements as follows:

Mandatory Elements

land use  
housing  
capital facilities  
utilities  
rural (County only)  
transportation

Optional Elements

conservation  
solar energy  
recreation  
economic development\*  
historic preservation\*  
any other relating to the physical  
development of the jurisdiction

In addition, subarea plans are permitted.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> RCW Chapter 36.70A (1990).

<sup>2</sup> RCW 36.70A.020(1) - (14).

<sup>3</sup> RCW 36.70A.070.

<sup>4</sup> RCW 36.70A.080(1).

<sup>5</sup> RCW 36.70A.080(2).

\* RCW 36.70.070(9): these optional elements become mandatory if state funding is provided.

One of the most important planning tenets expressed in the Growth Management Act is the *consistency* requirement, which takes many forms as follows:

- Consistency of municipal/County plans with the planning goals identified in RCW 36.70A.020
- Internal consistency between plan elements
- Consistency of all other plan elements with the future land use map
- Consistency of any subarea plans with the comprehensive plan
- Consistency of the transportation element with the land use element
- Consistency of the transportation element with the six-year plans required by RCW 35.77.010 for cities, RCW 36.81.121 for counties, and RCW 35.58.2795 for public transportation systems
- Consistency between the County Comprehensive Plan and the comprehensive plans of all municipalities within the County
- Consistency of comprehensive plans of each municipality and county with comprehensive plans of neighboring municipalities and counties with common borders or faced with related regional issues
- Consistency of development regulations with the comprehensive plan
- Consistency of capital budget decisions with the comprehensive plan
- Consistency with the Puget Sound Regional Council's (PSRC) Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs) as required by RCW 36.70A.210(7)
- Consistency of state agency actions in relation to the location, financing and expansion of transportation systems and other public facilities with county and municipal comprehensive planning

Despite the fact that the word "consistency" is used repeatedly in the Growth Management Act, it is not defined. The Standard Planning Enabling Act promulgated in 1928 by the United States Department of Commerce established the concept that zoning regulations should be "in accordance with a comprehensive plan." In the years since the model act was developed this concept has evolved from being merely advisory or guiding to one that mandates that the goals, objectives, policies, and strategies of each document must be in agreement with and harmonious with the provisions of all other required documents. The consistency doctrine has been continually strengthened by both state statutes and by court decisions in both 'consistency statute states' and those states adopting the concept by increasingly vigorous interpretation of the "in accordance with" statutory language.

A second planning tenet which the Growth Management Act promotes is *concurrency* -- *i.e.*, that concept that public facilities and services necessary to serve new development at adopted level of service standards are actually available at the time of development. The concurrency requirement is stated generally in the planning goals<sup>6</sup> as follows:

Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards.

In the transportation element, which is a required plan element for all municipal and County comprehensive plans, the concurrency requirement is restated in more forceful terms as follows:<sup>7</sup>

. . . local jurisdictions must adopt and enforce ordinances which prohibit development approval if the development causes the level of service on a transportation facility to decline below the standards adopted in the transportation element of the comprehensive plan, unless transportation improvements or strategies to accommodate the impacts of development are made concurrent with the development.

These strategies may include increased public transportation service, ride sharing programs, demand management, and other transportation systems management strategies; the importance of considering multimodal transportation improvements is set forth in RCW 36.70A.108. Concurrent with the development means that for non-transportation facilities, improvements or strategies are in place at the time of development and in the case of transportation facilities; that a financial commitment is in place to complete the improvements or strategies within six (6) years.

Portions of the mandatory planning, consistency, and concurrency requirements combine to suggest a strong relationship between the accommodation of growth and the provision and financing of public facilities and services to meet facility and service demands generated by that growth. This relationship is then strengthened by the Urban Growth Area boundary designation and public facility requirements.<sup>8</sup>

In order to accomplish these new planning and plan implementation requirements, the legislature has expressly authorized the use of innovative techniques,<sup>9</sup> including impact fees.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> RCW 36.70A.020(12).

<sup>7</sup> RCW 36.70A.070(6)(b).

<sup>8</sup> RCW 36.70A.110.

<sup>9</sup> RCW 36.70A.090.

<sup>10</sup> RCW 82.02.050 - .090.

In 1991, the State legislature amended the Growth Management Act, *inter alia*, to require that the legislative body of the County adopt countywide planning policies, in cooperation with the municipalities in the County. Countywide planning policies are written policy statements establishing a countywide framework from which county and municipal comprehensive plans are developed and adopted. The framework is intended to ensure that municipal and County comprehensive plans are consistent.<sup>11</sup>

The development of the countywide planning policies is intended to be a collaborative process between the County and the municipalities. The legislation required the County legislative body to convene a meeting with representatives of each municipality. The County and the municipalities then determine the process by which they will agree to all provisions and procedures of the countywide planning policies including, but not limited to, desired planning policies, deadlines, and ratification. The legislative authority of the County is required to adopt countywide planning policies in accordance with the agreed-upon process after holding the requisite public hearing or hearings.<sup>12</sup>

The Countywide Planning Policies are not substitutes for comprehensive plans but, rather goals, objectives, policies, and strategies to guide the production of the County and municipal comprehensive plans.

The Countywide Planning Policies shall, at a minimum, address the following:<sup>13</sup>

- (a) Policies to implement RCW 36.70A.110;
- (b) Policies for promotion of contiguous and orderly development and provision of urban services to such development;
- (c) Policies for siting public capital facilities of a countywide or statewide nature;
- (d) Policies for countywide transportation facilities and strategies;
- (e) Policies that consider the need for affordable housing, such as housing for all economic segments of the population and parameters for its distribution;
- (f) Policies for joint County and city planning within urban growth areas;
- (g) Policies for countywide economic development and employment; and

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<sup>11</sup> RCW 36.70A.210(1).

<sup>12</sup> RCW 36.70A.210(2).

<sup>13</sup> RCW 36.70A.210(3)(a) - (h).

(h) An analysis of the fiscal impact.

B. Framework Agreement for the Adoption of the Countywide Planning Policies

Pursuant to the Growth Management Act, Pierce County and the municipalities have entered into an Interlocal Agreement for the development, adoption, and amendment of the Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs).<sup>14</sup> The Agreement provides for the establishment of a Steering Committee consisting of one elected official from Pierce County and one elected official from every municipality in the County. The principal responsibility of drafting the Countywide Planning Policies was given to the Steering Committee.<sup>15</sup> The Steering Committee is now the Pierce County Regional Council (PCRC) and receives technical/staff support from the Growth Management Coordinating Committee (GMCC) and the Transportation Coordinating Committee (TCC).<sup>16</sup>

Ratification of and amendments to the Countywide Planning Policies requires the affirmative vote of 60% of the affected governments in Pierce County representing a minimum of 75% of the total Pierce County population as designated by the State Office of Financial Management at the time of the proposed ratification.

C. Countywide Planning Policies

Countywide planning policies are policy documents that have both a procedural and a substantive effect on the comprehensive plans of cities and the county. The immediate purpose of the CPPs is to achieve consistency between and among the plans of cities and the county on regional matters. A long-term purpose of the CPPs is to facilitate the transformation of local governance in urban growth areas so that cities become the primary providers of urban governmental services and counties become the providers of regional and rural services and the makers of regional policies. [Poulsbo, 92-3-0009c, FDO, at 23.] [Also, Snoqualmie, 92-3-0004c, FDO, at 9.] Another purpose is to facilitate urban growth at urban densities.

The Countywide Planning Policies are intended to provide the guiding goals, objectives, policies and strategies for the subsequent adoption of comprehensive plans, but are not to be a substitute for such plans. The level of detail in the Countywide Planning Policies must be sufficient to provide specific guidance, yet not so detailed as to constrain appropriate local choice in future comprehensive planning by the County and municipalities. This is particularly true because the Countywide Planning Policies apply to the County and all municipalities, both large and small, both adjacent to other urban areas and remote from other urban areas, each with somewhat different characteristics.

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<sup>14</sup> Interlocal Agreement: Framework Agreement for the Adoption of the Countywide Planning Policy (Pierce County Council Resolution No. R91-172, September 24, 1991)(See Attachment "B").

<sup>15</sup> Interlocal Agreement, 2.

<sup>16</sup> Interlocal Agreement, 4.



Countywide Planning Policies are written policy statements used for establishing a countywide framework from which county and municipal comprehensive plans are developed and adopted. The framework is intended to ensure that municipal and County comprehensive plans are consistent.<sup>17</sup> While the Growth Management Act does not specify the legal effect of adoption of the Countywide Planning Policies, it clearly acknowledges their importance by providing that failure to adopt Countywide Planning Policies meeting the requirements may result in the imposition of sanctions<sup>18</sup> including, but not limited to the withholding of state revenues and rescinding the County or municipality's authority to collect the real estate excise tax.<sup>19</sup> Cities and the Governor may appeal adopted Countywide Planning Policies to the appropriate Growth Planning Hearings Board within sixty (60) days of the adoption of the policy.<sup>20</sup> After the 60-day period, Countywide Planning Policies cannot be directly challenged.

The effectiveness of the Countywide Planning Policies is not based merely on the fact that they are adopted, but rather on the fact that they must be adhered to and implemented in the County and municipality comprehensive plans and development regulations. The legislation provides a process to challenge the failure of a County or municipality to comply with the Countywide Planning Policies through petition to the Growth Management Hearings Board.<sup>21</sup> The Growth Management Hearings Board shall hear and determine only those petitions alleging either: (a) that the State, county or municipality is not in compliance with the Growth Management Act; or (b) that the 20-year growth management planning population projections adopted by the State Office of Financial Management should be adjusted.<sup>22</sup> Petitions must be filed within sixty (60) days after publication of the ordinance adopting the comprehensive plan or development regulations.<sup>23</sup> Comprehensive plans and development regulations and amendments thereto are presumed valid upon adoption.<sup>24</sup>

The Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) must be consistent with the Puget Sound Regional Council's (PSRC) Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs). The most recent set of these is set forth in PSRC's VISION 2040, which specifically requires that the Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies be updated, where necessary, by December 31, 2010, to address the MPPs in VISION 2040. The Countywide Planning Policies should also be updated to address changes in the Growth Management Act language and interpretation that have taken place since the original

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<sup>17</sup> RCW 36.70A.210(1).

<sup>18</sup> RCW 36.70A.210(5).

<sup>19</sup> RCW 36.70A.340(2) and (3).

<sup>20</sup> RCW 36.70A.210(6).

<sup>21</sup> RCW 36.70A.250.

<sup>22</sup> RCW 36.70A.280(1).

<sup>23</sup> RCW 36.70A.290(2).

<sup>24</sup> RCW 36.70A.320.

adoption of the Countywide Planning Policies in 1995. The 2009 update to those provisions of the Washington Administrative Code that provide guidance for implementation of the Growth Management Act should be of assistance in identifying Growth Management Act changes and requirements. It should also be noted that Federal agencies and Indian tribes may participate in and cooperate with the countywide planning policy adoption process and that adopted countywide planning policies must be adhered to by state agencies. RCW 36.70A.210(4)

## **VISION 2040**

VISION 2040 is the long-range growth management, environmental, economic, and transportation strategy for the central Puget Sound region adopted in April 2008 by the PSRC General Assembly. VISION 2040 promotes an environmentally friendly growth pattern that will contain the expansion of urban growth areas, conserve farm and forest lands, support compact communities where people may both live and work, and envisions that a significant share of new employment and housing will occur in vibrant urban centers. VISION 2040 promotes the theme of “people, prosperity, planet” as a sustainability framework.

The Regional Growth Strategy set forth in VISION 2040 provides specific guidance for the distribution of future population and employment growth through the year 2040 into types of places defined as “regional geographies.” The Regional Growth Strategy reflects a substantial shift in future growth patterns for many jurisdictions and implementation will be challenging. Jurisdictions in some regional geographies will likely be planning for targets that are above or below the policy direction set by the Regional Growth Strategy because they are on a front- or back-loaded growth trajectory toward 2040. In other regional geographies, recent growth has been at such significant odds with the policy direction set by the Regional Growth Strategy (such as recent growth in unincorporated urban Pierce County from 2000 to 2007 has already accounted for more than half of the 40-year growth allocation), that the 2040 goal will likely not be met. In such cases, jurisdictions are asked to set growth targets as close to VISION 2040 as reasonably possible in an effort to “bend the trend” of future growth to more closely conform to the Regional Growth Strategy.

## **Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs)**

VISION 2040 includes a set of multicounty planning policies that provide an integrated framework for addressing land use, economic development, transportation, public facilities, and environmental issues. Multicounty planning policies are adopted by two or more counties and establish a common regionwide framework that ensures consistency among county and city comprehensive plans adopted pursuant to RCW 36.70A.070, and countywide planning policies adopted pursuant to RCW 36.70A.210.

Multicounty planning policies provide a framework for regional plans developed within a multicounty region, including regional transportation plans established under RCW 47.80.023, as well as plans of cities, counties, and others that have common borders or related regional issues as required under RCW 36.70A.100. The regional transportation planning organization, pursuant to RCW 47.80.020, should be the agency to develop, adopt, and administer multicounty planning policies.

Multicounty planning policies address, at a minimum, the same topics identified for countywide planning as identified in RCW 36.70A.210(3), except for those responsibilities assigned exclusively to counties.

In order to provide an on-going region-wide framework, a schedule for reviewing and revising the multicounty planning policies may be established. This schedule should relate to the review and revision deadlines for county and city comprehensive plans pursuant to 36.70A.130.

## **II. RULES OF INTERPRETATION**

1. Words and terms used in the Countywide Planning Policies shall be defined as set forth in the Policies and in the Growth Management Act to the extent defined therein. To the extent not defined therein, words and terms shall be given their plain and ordinary meanings.
2. The term "shall" is intended to be mandatory; the terms "may" and "should" are advisory only. While the terms "shall" and "will" are mandatory, it shall be understood and implied that the policy statement in which they are used is applicable to a municipality and/or the County only when, through objective determination, the circumstances on which the Policy is premised are relevant.

### **III. COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICIES (CPPs)**

#### **PREAMBLE TO COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICIES**

Countywide Planning Policies are written policy statements which are to be used for establishing a Countywide framework from which the County and municipal comprehensive plans are developed and adopted. The framework is intended to ensure that the County and municipal comprehensive plans are consistent, as required by the Washington statutes.

RCW 43.17.250 Countywide Planning Policy requires State agencies that provide funding to review local proposals for consistency with any adopted countywide planning policies. State agencies will review local proposals to determine if they are addressed by a Countywide Planning Policy and accord additional preference to the County, city, or town if such Countywide Planning Policy exists. The County, and many of the municipalities within the County, typically address specific proposals within their local comprehensive plans and capital facilities plans. These locally adopted plans serve to supplement and refine the more generalized policies contained within the Countywide Planning Policies. Therefore, this document, as well as any locally adopted comprehensive plan and/or capital facilities plan, shall be considered by State agencies in making determinations under RCW 43.17.250.

**COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICY ON THE "NEED  
FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR ALL ECONOMIC SEGMENTS  
OF THE POPULATION AND PARAMETERS FOR ITS DISTRIBUTION"**

**Background - Requirement of Growth Management Act**

The Washington State Growth Management Act mandates that counties and cities encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of the existing housing stock. [RCW 36.70A.020(4)] The term "affordable housing" is not defined, but the context in which it appears suggests that its meaning was intended to be broadly construed to refer to housing of varying costs, since the reference is to all economic segments of the community.

The Washington State Growth Management Act requires the adoption of countywide planning policies for affordable housing in order to establish a consistent county-wide framework from which county and city comprehensive plans are developed and adopted. These policies are required to, at a minimum, "consider the need for affordable housing, such as housing for all economic segments of the population and parameters for its distribution" [RCW 36.70A.210(3)(e)].

The Washington State Growth Management Act also identifies mandatory and optional plan elements. [RCW 36.70A.070 and .080]. A Housing Element is a mandatory plan element that must, at a minimum, include the following [RCW 36.70A.070(2)]:

- (a) an inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs that identifies the number of housing units necessary to manage projected growth;
- (b) a statement of goals, policies and objectives, and mandatory provisions for the preservation, improvement and development of housing, including single-family residences;
- (c) identification of sufficient land for housing, including, but not limited to, government-assisted housing, housing for low income families, manufactured housing, multi-family housing, group homes, and foster care facilities;
- (d) adequate provisions for existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community.

Since the Comprehensive Plan of every city and county must be an internally consistent document [RCW 36.70A.070] and all plan elements must be consistent with the future land use map prepared as part of the required land use element [RCW 36.70A.070], these other plan elements will, to a great extent, dictate what will be in the housing element.

Thus, the land use element, relying upon estimates of future population, growth, average numbers of persons per household, and land use densities, will indicate how much (and where) land needs to be made available to accommodate the identified housing needs. The capital facilities, transportation

and utilities elements will then indicate when and how public facilities will be provided to accommodate the projected housing, by type, density and location.

### **VISION 2040 Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs)**

VISION 2040 recognizes that to meet the demands of a growing and changing population in the central Puget Sound, the region needs to develop vibrant communities that offer a diverse and well-distributed mix of homes affordable to both owners and renters in every demographic and income group. VISION 2040 encourages housing production that will meet our needs and places a major emphasis providing residences that are safe and healthy, attractive, and close to jobs, shopping, and other amenities. The Multicounty Planning Policies address 1) housing diversity and affordability, 2) jobs-housing balance, and 3) best practices for home construction. These Multicounty Planning Policies place an emphasis on preserving and expanding housing affordability, incorporating quality and environmentally responsible design in homebuilding, and offering healthy and safe home choices for all the region's residents.

### **Countywide Planning Policy**

- AH-1. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall determine the extent of the need for housing for all economic segments of the population, both existing and projected for its jurisdiction over the planning period.
- AH-2. The County, and each municipality in the County, should explore and identify opportunities to reutilize and redevelop existing parcels where rehabilitation of the buildings is not cost-effective, provided the same is consistent with the countywide policy on historic, archaeological, and cultural preservation.
- AH-3. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall encourage the availability of housing affordable to all economic segments of the population for each jurisdiction.
  - 3.1 For the purpose of the Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies the following definitions shall apply:
    - 3.1.1 "Affordable housing" shall mean the housing affordable to households earning up to 80 percent of the countywide median income.
    - 3.1.2 "Low income households" shall mean households earning 80 percent or less of the countywide median income.
    - 3.1.3 "Moderate income households" shall mean households earning 80 to 120 percent of the countywide median income.
    - 3.1.4 "Special Needs Housing" shall mean supportive housing opportunities for populations with specialized requirements, such as the physically and mentally disabled, the elderly, people with medical conditions, the homeless, victims of domestic violence, foster youth, refugees, and others.

- 3.2 Affordable housing needs not typically met by the private housing market should be addressed through a more coordinated countywide approach/strategy.
    - 3.2.1 Each jurisdiction may adopt plans and policies for meeting its affordable and moderate income housing needs in a manner that reflects its unique demographic characteristics, comprehensive plan vision and policies, development and infrastructure capacity, location and proximity to job centers, local workforce, and access to transportation.
  - 3.3 It shall be the goal of each jurisdiction in Pierce County that a minimum of 25% of the growth population allocation is satisfied through affordable housing.
    - 3.3.1 Jurisdictions with designated regional centers should consider incorporating affordable housing allocations as part of their adopted allocations for these centers.
  - 3.4 Each jurisdiction should provide a sufficient supply of special needs housing opportunities that is equitably and rationally distributed throughout the County.
- AH-4. The County and each municipality in the County should establish a countywide program by an organization capable of long-term consistent coordination of regional housing planning, design, development, funding, and housing management. All jurisdictions should be represented in directing the work program and priorities of the organization.
- AH-5. Jurisdictions should plan to meet their affordable and moderate-income housing needs goal by utilizing a range of strategies that will result in the preservation of existing, and production of new, affordable and moderate-income housing that is safe and healthy.
- 5.1 Techniques to preserve existing affordable and moderate-income housing stock may include repair, maintenance, and/or rehabilitation and redevelopment in order to extend the useful life of existing affordable housing units.
    - 5.1.1 Jurisdictions should seek and secure state funds such as the Housing Trust Fund, and federal subsidy funds such as Community Development Block Grant, HOME Investment Partnership, and other sources to implement housing preservation programs.
  - 5.2 Jurisdictions should promote the use of reasonable measures and innovative techniques (e.g., clustering, accessory dwelling units, cottage housing, small lots, planned urban developments, and mixed use) to stimulate new higher-density affordable and moderate-income housing stock on residentially-zoned vacant and underutilized parcels.



- 5.3 To promote affordable housing and ensure access to services and jobs, jurisdictions should consider the availability and proximity of public transportation, governmental and commercial services necessary to support residents' needs.
- 5.4 Jurisdictions should consider providing incentives to developers and builders of affordable housing for moderate- and low-income households, such as but not limited to:
  - 5.4.1 A menu of alternative development regulations (e.g., higher density, reduced lot width/area and reduced parking stalls) in exchange for housing that is ensured to be affordable.
  - 5.4.2 A toolkit of financial incentives (e.g., permit and fee waivers or multi-family tax exemptions) and grant writing assistance, through the regional housing organization, that may be dependent on the amount of affordable housing proposed.
  - 5.4.3 A toolkit of technical assistance (e.g., mapping, expedited processing and permit approval) to affordable housing developers that may be dependent on the amount of affordable housing proposed.
- 5.5 Jurisdictions should consider inclusionary zoning measures as a condition of major rezones and development.
  - 5.5.1 New fully contained communities in unincorporated Pierce County shall contain a mix of dwelling units to provide for the affordable and moderate-income housing needs that will be created as a result of the development, as well as helping to accommodate a share of the county's overall affordable housing need as expressed in policy 3.3.
- AH-6. The County, and each municipality in the County, should cooperatively maximize available local, state, and federal funding opportunities and private resources in the development of affordable housing for households.
  - 6.1 All jurisdictions should jointly explore opportunities to develop a countywide funding mechanism and the potential for both voter approved measures (bond or levy), and nonvoter approved sources of revenue to support the development of affordable housing.
  - 6.2 All jurisdictions should pursue state legislative changes to give local jurisdictions the authority to provide tax relief to developers of affordable housing.
  - 6.3 All jurisdictions should explore opportunities to dedicate revenues from sales of publicly owned properties, including tax title sales, to affordable housing projects.

- 6.4 All jurisdictions should explore the feasibility of additional resources to facilitate the development of affordable housing such as a new countywide organization (based on inter-local agreements), expansion of existing non-profit partnerships, increased coordination with local public housing authorities, a county-wide land trust, as well as future involvement of larger County employers, in the provision of housing assistance for their workers.
- AH-7. The County, and each municipality in the County, should explore and identify opportunities to reduce land costs for non-profit and for-profit developers to build affordable housing.
- 7.1 Jurisdictions should explore options to dedicate or make available below market-rate surplus land for affordable housing projects.
  - 7.2 All jurisdictions should explore and identify opportunities to assemble, reutilize, and redevelop existing parcels.
  - 7.3 All jurisdictions should review and streamline development standards and regulations to advance their public benefit, provide flexibility, and minimize costs to housing.
- AH-8. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall periodically monitor and assess their success in meeting the housing needs to accommodate their 20-year population allocation.
- 8.1 Jurisdictions should utilize the available data and analyses provided by federal, state, and local sources to monitor their progress in meeting housing demand as part of the required Growth Management Act comprehensive plan update process.
  - 8.2 Countywide housing allocations shall be periodically monitored and evaluated to determine if countywide needs are being adequately met; the evaluation should identify all regulatory, programmatic, and financial measures taken to address the allocation need.
  - 8.3 Each jurisdiction should provide, if available, the quantity of affordable housing units created, preserved, or rehabilitated since the previous required update.
  - 8.4 Jurisdictions should consider using a consistent reporting template for their evaluations to facilitate the countywide monitoring and assessment.
  - 8.5 In conjunction with the Growth Management Act Update schedule, a report should be forwarded from GMCC to the Pierce County Regional Council (PCRC) addressing the progress in developing new affordable housing.

## COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICY ON AGRICULTURAL LANDS

### **Background - Requirements of Growth Management Act**

The Washington State Growth Management Act identifies the maintenance and enhancement of natural resource-based industries, including productive agricultural industries, and the conservation of productive agricultural lands as planning goals to guide the development and adoption of comprehensive plans and development regulations. [RCW 36.70A.020(8)]. While the expression of planning goals in the Growth Management Act is linked to "natural resource industries," including productive timber and fisheries, a separate policy for Agricultural Lands has been developed because of their unique importance in Pierce County and their relationship to urban growth area boundaries and policies. Although the Growth Management Act does not expressly require a countywide planning policy on agricultural lands, the requirement was added by the Interlocal Agreement: Framework Agreement for the Adoption of the Countywide Planning Policy (Pierce County Council Resolution No. R91-172, September 24, 1991).

### **VISION 2040 Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs)**

VISION 2040 recognizes that the agricultural land in the central Puget Sound region is among the most productive in Washington State. It also recognized that the loss of these lands, along with their productivity, has impacts on the environment, including air and water quality and quantity, our economy, and ultimately the health of the region's people.

VISION 2040 also identifies threats to the region's agricultural lands, including urban development, incompatible adjacent land uses, and the loss of supporting services. VISION 2040 seeks to permanently protect these key agricultural resource lands. The Multicounty Planning Policies calls for conserving the region's natural resource lands, establishing best management practices that protect the long-term integrity and productivity of these lands, limiting the conversion of these lands, and ensuring that development does not adversely impact these lands.

### **Countywide Planning Policy**

Ag-1. The County, and each municipality choosing to designate agricultural lands of long term commercial significance, shall do so using the methodology and criteria stated in WAC 365-190-050. Cities are encouraged to coordinate their agricultural resource lands designations with the County and adjacent jurisdictions and are encouraged to adopt the same criteria. Designation shall be based on the following factors:

- 1.1 The land is not already characterized by urban growth.
- 1.2 The land is used or capable of being used for agricultural production.

- 1.2.1 Lands that are currently used for agricultural production and that are capable of being used must be evaluated for designation, including lands receiving “use value assessments”.
  - 1.2.2 The U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Service land use capability soils classification system based on the growing capacity, productivity, and composition shall be assessed.
- 1.3 The long-term commercial significance for agriculture shall be determined by considering:
- 1.3.1 The classification of prime and unique farmland soils;
  - 1.3.2 The types of agriculture that exist in the area and their interactivity and contribution to the regional economy;
  - 1.3.3 The availability of water for agriculture;
  - 1.3.4 The availability of public facilities, including roads used for transporting agricultural products;
  - 1.3.5 Tax status, including current use taxation, optional benefit rating system, and the transfer or purchase of development rights;
  - 1.3.6 The availability of public services;
  - 1.3.7 The relationship and proximity to urban growth areas, markets and suppliers;
  - 1.3.8 Predominant parcel sizes;
  - 1.3.9 Land use settlement patterns and their compatibility with agricultural practices;
  - 1.3.10 Intensity of nearby land uses;
  - 1.3.11 History of land development permits issued nearby, and the extent that permits issued within five hundred feet of designated resource lands have included a notice of potential incompatibility of residential development with activities associated with resource land uses per RCW 36.70A.060 (1)(b); and
  - 1.3.12 Land values under alternative uses.
- 1.4 When designating agricultural resource lands, the County and cities should consider food security issues, including providing food supplies for food banks, schools and institutions, vocational training opportunities and preserving heritage or artisanal foods.
- 1.5 Designation of at least a minimum amount of agricultural land county-wide necessary to maintain economic viability for the agricultural industry, and retain businesses supporting agriculture such as processors, suppliers, and equipment dealers should be considered.
- 1.6 Agricultural lands of local significance should be designated through consultation with the public and stakeholders such as, local conservation districts, and organizations promoting farming and local agricultural producers.

These lands may include designated critical areas such as bogs used to grow cranberries or farmed wetlands.

Ag-2. The purposes of agricultural preservation are:

- 2.1 ensuring that agricultural lands are treated sensitively to their location and the presence of urban growth pressures;
- 2.2 preventing urban sprawl;
- 2.3 maintaining open space and/or providing a visual green belt;
- 2.4 retaining natural systems and natural processes;
- 2.5 preserving the local economic base;
- 2.6 preserving a rural character;
- 2.7 maintaining specialty crops;
- 2.8 maintaining regional, state and national agricultural reserves;
- 2.9 enhancing the local food system through the production of fresh and minimally processed foods.

Ag-3. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall achieve agricultural preservation through:

- 3.1 implementing agricultural area zoning that maintains large minimum lot sizes in agricultural areas, prohibition of conversion to non-farm uses and urban scale development, and flexible approaches such as clustering;
- 3.2 buffering agricultural areas from urban development;
- 3.3 avoiding location of major new roads or capacity expansions in agricultural areas unless management is controlled to inhibit intrusion of non-farming uses;
- 3.4 purchase of development rights;
- 3.5 transfer of development rights within the jurisdiction, including the designation of receiving zones for agricultural development rights and between jurisdictions, including the designation of receiving zones by local agreement;
- 3.6 lease of development rights for a term of years;

- 3.7 "anti-nuisance" laws to protect agricultural activities from being defined as a public nuisance;
  - 3.8 preferential tax treatment ("use value assessment");
  - 3.9 other innovative techniques including, but not limited to, purchase-leaseback through issuance of bonds, university purchase for research, and prevention of the formation of improvement districts or the creation of benefit assessments within designated agricultural preservation areas;
  - 3.10 reduced fee structure for agricultural related permitting.
- Ag-4. The County, and each municipality in the County that chooses to designate agricultural lands, shall address the effect of practices on non-point source pollution and groundwater impacts including the use of "best management practices" to reduce pesticides and fertilizers, and minimize risk to human health and the environment.
- Ag-5. The County, and each municipality in the County that chooses to designate agricultural lands shall work to:
- 5.1 protect agricultural areas from encroachment by incompatible uses;
  - 5.2 encourage related development such as farmers markets and roadside stands;
  - 5.3 protect smaller-sized agricultural parcels which are not individually viable for agricultural production but, which are within a large area of more viable parcels should be considered for designation; and
  - 5.4 to provide agricultural surface water drainage and avoid draining of water from high density residential areas to agricultural lands.
- Ag-6. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall address the conversion of agricultural land from agricultural to non-agricultural use by:
- 6.1 establishing criteria for zoning changes and comprehensive plan amendments;
  - 6.2 establishing legal and financial mechanisms so that property owners realize economic value that would have accrued from conversion, but land remains in agricultural use if within Urban Growth Areas.
- Ag-7. The County, and each municipality in the County choosing to designate agricultural lands, shall ensure that prime agricultural lands presently in the unincorporated County or within a municipality are preserved and protected by the enactment of appropriate land use controls; or by including the land in the urban growth area boundary of a municipality only if the municipality has delineated standards and criteria relating to

preserving the agricultural lands, and transfer and purchase of development right programs.

Ag-8. The County, and each municipality in the County choosing to designate agricultural lands, shall coordinate agricultural land preservation policies with other Countywide Planning Policies through:

8.1 correlating agricultural land preservation policies with urban growth area policies and with public facility and service provision policies to avoid the extension of urban services to areas intended for continued agricultural use;

8.2 ensuring that public facility and service extension, even if not directly serving the agricultural lands, do not stimulate the conversion of agricultural land or make its preservation and protection more difficult and

8.3 joint jurisdictional planning of agricultural land.

Ag-9. Encourage the siting and support the continued operation of community gardens.

## COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICY ON AMENDMENTS AND TRANSITION

### **Background - Requirements of Growth Management Act**

The Washington State Growth Management Act contemplates that the Countywide Planning Policies will remain effective throughout the comprehensive plan preparation, adoption and implementation processes to ensure that municipal and county comprehensive plans are consistent, as required by the Act [RCW 36.70A.210(1)]. Because the factors, data and analysis upon which the Countywide Planning Policies have been formulated are subject to change, it is important that a process be established to effectuate such changes, when appropriate and needed.

The Washington State Growth Management Act requires that each County which adopts a comprehensive plan designate an urban growth area or areas within which urban growth shall be encouraged and outside of which growth can occur only if it is not urban in nature [RCW 36.70A.110(1)]. As discussed above, the factors, data and analysis upon which the UGA designations are initially made are similarly subject to change.

### **Countywide Planning Policy**

- AT-1. Countywide Planning Policies adopted pursuant to the Growth Management Act may be amended by Pierce County and ratified by the municipalities in the County.
  - 1.1 Ratification of amendments to the Countywide Planning Policies requires the affirmative vote of 60% of the affected governments in the County representing a minimum of 75% of the total Pierce County population as designated by the State Office of Financial Management at the time of the proposed ratification.
  - 1.2 Demonstration of ratification shall be by execution of an interlocal agreement or the absence of a legislative action to disapprove a proposed amendment.
    - 1.2.1 A jurisdiction shall be deemed as casting an affirmative vote if it has not taken legislative action to disapprove a proposed amendment within 180 days from the date the Pierce County Council formally authorizes the Pierce County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement.
  - 1.3 An amendment to the Countywide Planning Policies or to any individual policy (all hereinafter referred to as proposed amendments) may be initiated by the County or any municipality in the County or by the Pierce County Regional Council. The proposed amendment shall include the following:
    - 1.3.1 the exact language of the proposed amendment (shown in "strike out" for deletions and "highlight" for additions);
    - 1.3.2 a brief explanation of the need for the proposed amendment, including the factors, data or analyses that have changed since the original adoption of



the Countywide Planning Policies and/or the experiences with the existing Countywide Planning Policies that have prompted the proposed amendment.

- 1.4 A proposed amendment to the Countywide Planning Policies shall be initially referred to the Pierce County Regional Council (PCRC) for analysis and recommendation.

AT-2. Urban Growth Area boundaries designated by the County pursuant to the Growth Management Act may be amended by Pierce County and accepted by the municipalities in the County pursuant to the same process by which the Urban Growth Areas were originally adopted and pursuant to subpolicies UGA-1. and UGA-2. of the “Countywide Planning Policy on Urban Growth Areas, Promotion of Contiguous and Orderly Development and Provision of Urban Services to Such Development.”

- 2.1 An amendment to Urban Growth Area boundaries may be initiated by the County or any municipality in the County.

- 2.2 A proposed amendment to Urban Growth Area boundaries shall include:

- 2.2.1 a map indicating the existing urban growth area boundary and the proposed boundary modification;
- 2.2.2 a statement indicating how, and the extent to which, the proposed boundary modification complies with each of the factors listed in subpolicies 2.2, 2.4, 2.5 and 2.6 of the Countywide Planning Policy on Urban Growth Areas, Promotion of Contiguous and Orderly Development and Provision of Urban Services to Such Development.
- 2.2.3 a statement indicating the factors, data or analyses that have changed since the designation of the initial Urban Growth Area boundaries and/or the experience with the existing Urban Growth Area boundaries that have prompted the proposed amendment.

- 2.3 The urban growth area of a jurisdiction may be expanded only if:

- 2.3.1 the jurisdiction’s observed development densities are consistent with the planned density assumptions as documented in the most recently published Buildable Lands Report as required by RCW 36.70A.215, and
- 2.3.2 there is a demonstrated need for additional residential or employment capacity within the urban growth area affiliated with an individual jurisdiction and a demonstrated need county-wide; or the expansion results in a no net gain to the countywide UGA.
- 2.3.3 the consistency evaluation, as required through the Countywide Planning Policies on Buildable Lands, policies BL-3. and BL-4., identifies an inconsistency between the observed and planned densities, the jurisdiction shall either:

- 1) demonstrate reasonable measures were adopted to rectify the inconsistencies. Documentation shall also be submitted that summarizes the monitoring results of the effectiveness of the measures in rectifying density inconsistencies, or
  - 2) document updated development data that indicates consistency.
- 2.4 To ensure the orderly development of urban lands, predictability in the provision of urban services, and the eventual annexation of urban growth areas, Pierce County may incorporate criteria into its comprehensive plan policies for evaluating amendments proposing to remove properties from the urban growth area. The criteria should, at a minimum, include the existing development pattern and density, vested development applications, and infrastructure and service needs to accommodate the existing and future residents. In general, any lands proposed to be removed from the urban growth area shall be rural in character and not require any urban level infrastructure or service needs.
- 2.5 A proposed amendment to the Urban Growth Area boundaries shall be referred to the PCRC for its review and recommendation.
- AT-3. The PCRC shall have the following responsibilities in addition to those already specified in the Interlocal Agreement: Framework Agreement for the Adoption of the Countywide Planning Policy (Pierce County Council Resolution No. R91-172, dated September 24, 1991):
- 3.1 development of model, uniform implementation methodologies for the County, and all cities in the County, to be used at their discretion;
  - 3.2 assistance in resolution of interjurisdictional disputes;
  - 3.3 input to joint planning issues in Urban Growth Areas;
  - 3.4 input with respect to Countywide facilities;
  - 3.5 advice and consultation on phased development, short plats, vested rights and related issues;
  - 3.6 coordination of these responsibilities with the Puget Sound Regional Council;
  - 3.7 making a recommendation on the respective location of municipal and the County Urban Growth Area boundaries consistent with these policies;
  - 3.8 making a recommendation with regard to dissolution of the Boundary Review Board;

- 3.9 monitoring development in the County, including population and employment growth and its effect on the development capacity within urban growth areas;
- 3.10 advice and consultation on population disaggregation.
- 3.11 The Pierce County council shall be the responsible body for adopting housing and employment targets for Pierce County jurisdictions, subject to appeal to the Growth Management Hearings Board. The adopted targets shall be attached to the CPP publications as Appendix A for ease of reference. Appendix A shall be updated to reflect future County Council action. Appendix A shall not be considered a component of the CPPs and, accordingly, an update to Appendix A shall not constitute an amendment to the CPPs requiring ratification by Pierce County jurisdictions.

## COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICY ON BUILDABLE LANDS

### **Background Requirements of RCW 36.70A.215**

RCW 36.70A.215 requires six counties, including Pierce County, to evaluate whether a county and its municipalities are achieving urban densities within urban growth areas. To do this, the counties and municipalities are to compare growth and development assumptions, targets, and objectives contained in the Countywide Planning Policies and the County and city and town comprehensive plans with actual growth and development that has occurred. At a minimum, the evaluation is to determine if there is sufficient suitable land to accommodate the countywide population projection and determine the density of housing that has been constructed and amount of land developed for commercial and industrial uses within the urban growth area. Detailed procedures, standards, and definitions for implementing this policy and complying with RCW 36.70A.215 are found in the current report titled *Pierce County Buildable Lands, Procedures for Collecting and Monitoring Data*, hereinafter referred to as the *Procedures Report*.

### **Countywide Planning Policy**

- BL-1. Pierce County in cooperation with Pierce County cities and towns shall establish a Pierce County Buildable Lands Program to provide a Countywide monitoring and analysis mechanism to meet the requirements of 36.70.A.215 Buildable Lands.
  - 1.1 The Program shall be coordinated through Pierce County Planning and Land Services.
  - 1.2 The focus of the Buildable Lands Program shall be an analysis of annual development data as related to locally adopted comprehensive plan goals and policies, the calculation of residential and employment land capacity as compared to the 20-year need, and identification of actions to rectify inconsistencies.
  - 1.3 The primary product of the Buildable Lands Program shall be the publication of a Buildable Lands Report every five years, the first being by September 1, 2002.
  
- BL-2. Each municipality within Pierce County shall provide information on land development activities to the County and assist in an inventory of buildable lands. The County and municipalities shall follow the guidelines specified in the *Procedures Report* for the collection, monitoring, and analysis of development activity and potential residential/employment capacity.
  - 2.1 Municipalities are encouraged to submit the annual development data by June 1 of each year.

- 2.2 Pierce County shall summarize the submitted annual development data by zoning classification for each jurisdiction.
  - 2.3 Prior to the publication of submitted annual development data, representatives from each municipality shall have an opportunity to review and suggest modifications to summarized development data.
- BL-3. Each municipality within Pierce County shall assist the County in conducting an inventory of buildable lands. The County and municipalities shall follow the guidelines specified in the *Procedures Report* for the collection, monitoring, and analysis of development activity and potential residential/employment capacity.
- 3.1 Pierce County shall confer with each municipality to identify the appropriate criteria for each of its zoning classifications to identify buildable lands: vacant - subdividable, vacant - not subdividable, underdeveloped residential and redevelopable lands.
  - 3.2 Pierce County shall forward the preliminary results of the buildable lands inventory to representatives of each municipality for local review and modification.
- BL-4. Pierce County, in consultation with its municipalities, shall conduct an analysis of inventoried buildable lands to evaluate the County's ability to accommodate its 20-year population and employment land needs.
- BL-5. Pierce County, in cooperation with the municipalities, shall prepare a Buildable Lands Capacity Report every five years, with the first report completed by September 2002. The report will detail growth, development, and the ability to accommodate future population and employment land needs.
- 5.1 The Buildable Lands Report shall include a summary of development activity by zoning classification and detail assumptions incorporated in the residential and employment capacity analysis for each jurisdiction.
  - 5.2 Prior to the publication of a draft report, representatives from each municipality shall have an opportunity to review and suggest modifications to information associated with their jurisdiction.
- BL-6. Pierce County, in cooperation with the municipalities, shall conduct a consistency evaluation between the Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies, comprehensive plan goals and actual densities of built-out projects within the five-year observation period for Pierce County and the municipalities within it.
- 6.1 The results of the consistency evaluation shall be reported in a separate report.

- 6.2 The consistency evaluation should be completed within one year of the publication of the latest Buildable Lands Report.
  - 6.3 Pierce County shall be the responsible agency for conducting the evaluation.
  - 6.4 The consistency evaluation shall address if the observed density resulted in a jurisdiction achieving at least the average net density of 4 dwelling units per acre as stipulated in Urban Growth Areas, Promotion of Contiguous and Orderly Development and Provision Of Urban Services to Such Development – policy 6.1 of these Countywide Planning Policies.
  - 6.5 The consistency evaluation shall address if the observed density within a jurisdiction was consistent with the density assumption incorporated within the residential capacity analysis.
  - 6.6 The consistency evaluation shall compare the housing needs associated with the allocated population with the housing unit capacity calculated through the residential capacity analysis.
  - 6.7 The consistency evaluation shall compare the land needs associated with the employment targets with the employment capacity calculated through the employment capacity analysis.
  - 6.8 The consistency evaluation report shall be forwarded to the respective jurisdictions for review and comment.
- BL-7. The County and municipalities shall use the results of the consistency evaluation to determine inconsistencies between observed and planned densities and ensure suitable land to accommodate future population and employment needs. In addressing the inconsistencies, the County and municipalities shall identify reasonable measures, other than adjusting urban growth areas, that may be taken to comply with the requirements of RCW 36.70A.215. Each respective jurisdiction shall be responsible for taking action as necessary to rectify the inconsistency as determined by that jurisdiction.
- BL-8. The County and each municipality shall resolve disputes between and among jurisdictions regarding inconsistencies in the collection and analysis of land development activities and residential and employment capacity analysis findings by first attempting to reach an agreement through negotiation or through a designated mediation process agreeable to all parties. In case of an impasse, the matter shall be referred to the Pierce County Regional Council for review and resolution.
- BL-9. The County should establish an opportunity for stakeholders to be informed and provide feedback on the various aspects of the Buildable Lands Program.

9.1 An ad hoc committee should be re-established every five years to review appropriate development information, assumptions, and methodology applied to calculate the residential and employment capacity analysis.

BL-10. Pierce County and its cities and towns are not obligated to fulfill the countywide planning policies for the Buildable Lands Program if GMA is amended with provisions suspending the requirements of RCW 36.70A.215.

## **COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICY ON COMMUNITY AND URBAN DESIGN**

### **Background - Growth Management Act**

The Washington State Growth Management Act identifies as a planning goal to encourage development in urban areas and to reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development. To encourage this type of urban development that has increased density, and is compact and serviced by multiple transportation alternatives, it requires close attention to the urban design, community context and character, in order to function effectively and consistent with the vision of an individual community. The Growth Management Act does not expressly require that the County adopt a planning policy on urban design; however, VISION 2040 and the Multicounty Planning Policies provide goals and policies related to regional design and urban design.

### **VISION 2040 Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs)**

VISION 2040 called 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.

### **Countywide Planning Policy**

- CU-1. The County, and each municipality in the County, will develop high quality, compact communities that:
  - 1.1 impart a sense of place;
  - 1.2 preserve local character;
  - 1.3 provide for mixed uses and choices in housing types; and
  - 1.4 encourage walking, bicycling, and transit use.
- CU-2. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall design public buildings and public spaces that contribute to the unique sense of community and a sense of place.
- CU-3. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall design transportation projects and other infrastructure to achieve community development objectives and improve the community.



- CU-4. Promote context-sensitive design of transportation facilities, both for facilities to fit in the context of the communities in which they are located, as well as applying urban design principles for projects in centers and transit station areas.

## COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICY ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

### **Background - Requirements of Growth Management Act**

The Washington State Growth Management Act mandates that counties and cities encourage economic development throughout the state that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plans, promote economic opportunity for all citizens of the state, especially for unemployed and disadvantaged persons, promote the retention and expansion of existing businesses and recruitment of new businesses, recognize regional differences impacting economic development opportunities, and encourage growth in areas experiencing insufficient economic growth, all within the capacities of the state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities [RCW 36.70A.020(5)]. Additionally, the Growth Management Act expressly requires that the County adopt a planning policy on countywide economic development and employment [RCW 36.70A.210(3)(g)].

### **VISION 2040 Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs)**

VISION 2040 recognizes that a robust economy is integral to our environmental, social, and financial well-being. It acknowledges that a healthy and diverse economy is vital for paying for public services, supporting arts and cultural institutions, and building our communities. The Multicounty Planning Policies for economic development in VISION 2040 are organized around the topics of *business, people, and places*. An emphasis is placed on enriching the region's businesses and employment market through job retention, growth, and diversification. Importance is also placed on small and locally owned businesses, because they create jobs, can offer family-wage jobs, and make vital contributions to the sustainability of the region's economy and prosperity. VISION 2040 recognizes the region's economic well-being is also dependent upon the safe and reliable movement of people, goods and services, and information and includes provisions for prioritizing economic development and transportation funding to centers.

### **Countywide Planning Policy**

- Ec-1. The County, and each municipality in the County, will work to achieve a prospering and sustainable regional economy by supporting business and job creation, investing in all people, sustaining environmental quality, and creating great central places, diverse communities, and high quality of life. This will involve assuring consistency between economic development policies and adopted comprehensive plans by:
  - 1.1 considering the future development of commercial and industrial facilities [RCW 36.70A.210(3)(g)] and creating in the land use element of each comprehensive plan a designation of areas for "commerce" and "industry" [RCW 36.70A.070(1)];
  - 1.2 providing within the areas designated for urban development, sufficient land to accommodate projected development;

- 1.3 designating and zoning large tracts of developable land equitably distributed throughout the various jurisdictions based on the related population, employment base and land areas of the jurisdiction for planned commercial and industrial centers, and local housing and employment targets;
    - 1.3.1. "Equitably" means with consideration for the population and its characteristics, including the skills of the current population; the current employment base and its characteristics (i.e., type of businesses and industries, permanency of the existing employment base, past trends and current projections); the amount of land in the jurisdiction; the amount of vacant land in the jurisdiction appropriately zoned for economic development; the current unemployment rate; current commuting patterns; and other factors as appropriate.
  - 1.4 providing adequate public facilities and services to employment centers and an adequate supply of housing with good access to employment centers.
  - 1.5 separating, buffering, or leaving natural buffers between residential development and areas of economic development where necessary due to the type, characteristics and impacts of the economic development activity;
  - 1.6 developing and adopting standards at the municipal level to guide commercial and industrial development in a setting that is appropriately landscaped;
  - 1.7 evaluating federal, state, and local regulatory, taxing, facility financing and expenditure practices and then making changes to assure that these practices favor economic development at appropriate locations.
  - 1.8 leveraging the region's and county's position as an international gateway by supporting businesses, ports, and agencies involved in trade-related activities.
  - 1.9 encouraging the private, public, and nonprofit sectors to incorporate environmental and social responsibility into their practices.
  - 1.10 maximizing 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.
- Ec-2. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall promote diverse economic opportunities for all citizens of the County, especially the unemployed, disadvantaged persons, minorities and small businesses. The following measures may be used in accomplishing this policy, where appropriate:
- 2.1 determining a reasonable "jobs/housing" balance and then coordinating land use and development policies to help achieve the designated balance of adequate affordable housing accessible to employment centers;

- 2.2 identifying urban land suitable for the accommodation of a wide range of non-residential development activities;
  - 2.3 utilizing state and/or federal programs and financial assistance to the maximum extent appropriate;
  - 2.4 encouraging redevelopment of underutilized commercial areas;
  - 2.5 encouraging flexibility in local zoning and land use controls in order to permit a variety of economic uses, but doing so without sacrificing sound design and development standards;
  - 2.6 encouraging programs, in conjunction with other public, quasi-public and private entities, in order to attract appropriate businesses and industries, particularly those that diversify the economic base and/or provide family-wage jobs;
  - 2.7 encouraging the location of economic development activities in areas served by public transit and adequate transportation facilities;
  - 2.8 maintaining and enhancing natural resource-based industries, including productive timber, agriculture, fishing and mining;
  - 2.9 targeting the appropriate creation and retention of specific firms and industries within established and emerging industry clusters that export goods and services, import capital, and have growth potential;
  - 2.10 promoting educational, job training, and cultural opportunities, particularly for those facing unique obstacles and/or those with special needs;
  - 2.11 providing opportunities and locations for incubator industries;
  - 2.12 fostering a supportive environment for business startups, small businesses, and locally owned businesses to help them continue to prosper.
- Ec-3. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall encourage economic development in areas in which there are insufficient employment opportunities for the local population base by:
- 3.1 considering development incentives;
  - 3.2 marketing development opportunities.
- Ec-4. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall take the following steps to ensure that economic growth remains within the capacities of the state's natural resources, public services and public facilities:

- 4.1 identifying existing and future demand for services;
- 4.2 encouraging the location of economic development within Urban Growth Areas;
- 4.3 limiting incompatible economic development activities in or adjacent to designated natural resource lands and critical areas and/or requiring adequate buffers between economic development projects and designated natural resource lands and critical areas, and ensuring that economic development activities occur in areas with adequate public facilities.

Ec-5. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall plan for sufficient economic growth and development to ensure an appropriate balance of land uses which will produce sound financial position given the fiscal/economic costs and benefits derived from different land uses by:

- 5.1 ensuring that the land use element of each Comprehensive Plan allows for an appropriate mix and balance of uses;
- 5.2 reducing inefficient, sprawling development patterns;
- 5.3 reducing transportation demand;
- 5.4 coordinating the provision of public facilities and services and/or insuring that new development supports the cost of public facility and service expansions made necessary by such development;
- 5.5 promoting development in areas with existing available public facility capacity;
- 5.6 encouraging joint public/private development as appropriate;
- 5.7 concentrating a significant amount of economic growth in designated centers;
- 5.8 ensuring the efficient flow of people, goods, services, and information in and through the region with infrastructure investments, particularly in and connecting designated centers [See the Centers policies in the Urban Growth Area sections].

Ec-6. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall work to strengthen existing businesses and industries and to add to the diversity of economic opportunity and employment by:

- 6.1 promoting infill development to assist in maintaining a viable market for existing businesses;

- 6.2 utilizing redevelopment or other public financing mechanisms, where appropriate, to maintain existing businesses;
  - 6.3 making available information, technical assistance and loans for business expansion and job creation;
  - 6.4 protecting existing viable businesses from incompatible neighbors;
  - 6.5 streamlining permit processing;
  - 6.6 striving to maintain adequate public facilities and service levels;
  - 6.7 evaluating regulatory and other constraints to business operations and devising an appropriate plan to minimize the effect of such constraints;
  - 6.8 supporting the contributions of the region's and county's culturally and ethnically diverse communities in helping the region and the county continue to expand its international economy;
  - 6.9 in rural areas promoting 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, but provides needed employment in cities in the rural areas; and
  - 6.10 in rural and natural resource areas supporting economic activity at a size and scale that is compatible with the long-term integrity and productivity of these lands.
- Ec-7. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall provide both the private sector and the public sector with information necessary to support and promote economic development by:
- 7.1 coordinating the collection and dissemination of information with various local governments;
  - 7.2 cooperating with private and quasi-private entities and sharing information to attract new industries.

## COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICY ON EDUCATION

### **Background - Requirements of Growth Management Act**

The Washington State Growth Management Act does not identify education as a planning goal to guide the development and adoption of comprehensive plans and development regulations. Neither is education listed as a planning policy requirement in the Growth Management Act. However, the list of topics identified in the Growth Management Act is intended to delineate only the minimum policy requirements. Education was identified as an additional policy area in the Interlocal Agreement: “Framework Agreement for the Adoption of the Countywide Planning Policy (Pierce County Council Resolution No. R91-172, September 24, 1991)”.

### **VISION 2040 Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs)**

VISION 2040 contains policies related to education obtainment, services, and the siting of education facilities. It calls for ensuring accessible and high quality education and skills-training programs to all of the region’s residents and integrates the provision of education facilities and services with care for the environment. VISION addresses the provision of educational facilities and services that are provided to both urban and rural populations by calling for the siting of 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. It also calls for locating 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.

### **Countywide Planning Policy**

- Ed-1. "Educational Facilities" means all public and private educational facilities, including, but not limited to, kindergartens, elementary schools, middle schools, junior high schools, high schools, junior colleges, colleges, academies, and similar institutions.
  
- Ed-2. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall strive to achieve excellence in education and to offer diverse educational opportunities to be made available to all residents of the County, cities, and towns by:
  - 2.1 developing a broad tax base;
  - 2.2 encouraging citizen participation;
  - 2.3 encouraging coordination between educational and employment requirements.
  - 2.4 working to ensure that the region and the county 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.

Ed-3. The County, and each municipality the County, shall coordinate with other institutions or governmental entities responsible for providing educational services, in order to ensure the provision of educational facilities along with other necessary public facilities and services and along with established and planned growth patterns through:

- 3.1 the capital facilities plan element;
- 3.2 the land use element;
- 3.3 school site location decisions;
- 3.4 coordination and, if necessary, formal interlocal agreements between school districts and other governmental entities exercising land use planning, regulation, and capital improvement planning functions;
- 3.5 the possible use of impact fees, voluntary advancements, and regulatory requirements for a portion of school facility financing;
- 3.6 encouraging of joint (municipal/school district) use of playgrounds, parks, open-spaces and recreational facilities;
- 3.7 supporting for sufficient funding of educational facilities and services;
- 3.8 supporting for the provision of educational facilities and services to meet specialized needs.

Ed-4. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall coordinate with school districts by:

- 4.1 incorporating school facility location criteria, developed in conjunction with the local school district, in the local comprehensive plan;
- 4.2 including school districts in the comprehensive planning process;
- 4.3 developing a common base of data and sharing the data with school districts concerning population, household, and school-age population projections, non-educational capital facility needs, and land uses;
- 4.4 initiating dialogues with school districts about school district boundaries and service areas in relation to municipal boundaries, designated urban growth areas, annexation plans, and service extension plans and policies.

Ed-5. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall determine specific siting requirements for all public and private educational facilities and shall meet specific educational facility needs by:



- 5.1 locating schools in a manner that is consistent with the local comprehensive plan, including the capital facilities element;
- 5.2 deciding all facility locations, types and sizes with consideration for the provision of other necessary public facilities and services and the compatibility and effect of the provision of such facilities on land use and development patterns; and
- 5.3 working toward standards that would prioritize the location of these facilities to be in urban areas, with consideration to existing facilities in rural areas.

## **COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICY ON FISCAL IMPACT**

### **Background - Requirements of Growth Management Act**

The Washington State Growth Management Act requires that the Countywide Planning Policies address “an analysis of fiscal impact” [RCW 36.70A.210(3)(h)]. However, the legislature did not define the scope of the required fiscal impact analysis. During the legislative proceedings a number of alternatives were discussed, ranging from fiscal analysis of the policies themselves, fiscal analysis of the comprehensive plans and implementing regulations, fiscal analysis of governmental decisions affecting jurisdictional responsibilities and/or boundaries and fiscal analysis of significant public and private development projects. From these alternatives, the County, and each municipality, has determined that at the Countywide Planning Policy level fiscal impact analysis will be required only for governmental decisions affecting jurisdictional responsibilities and/or boundaries and significant public and private development projects.

### **Countywide Planning Policy**

- FI-1. The purposes of fiscal impact analysis are to assess the relative costs of providing public facilities and services, with the public revenues that will be derived from: (a) decisions affecting jurisdictional responsibilities and/or boundaries and (b) significant public and private development projects.
  
- FI-2. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall use the results of any required fiscal impact analysis as one of the factors in determining acceptance, modification, or rejection of the proposal/project.

## **COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICY ON HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**

### **Background - Growth Management Act**

The Washington State Growth Management Act identifies as a planning goal to encourage development in urban areas and to reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development. The GMA also encourages multimodal transportation systems to encourage walking and other alternatives to the automobile. These transportation options provide for greater opportunity for walking and exercise that further promotes health and well-being. Compact communities can also encourage more efficient use of resources, reduced air pollution, and thereby reduce impacts on climate change. The GMA also sets forth a goal to protect the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality. These are also related to healthy living as well as climate change. VISION 2040 contains specific goals and policies addressing health and well-being, climate, change and air and water quality.

In 2005, the legislature amended the GMA to require communities to adopt and implement plans and strategies to promote an increase in physical activity among Washington State citizens. In response to this requirement, jurisdictions updated transportation elements to include a pedestrian and bicycle component, as well as identified planned improvements for those facilities and corridors. Other strategies for achieving improved public health include the adoption of "Complete Streets" policies, policies addressing the development and improvement of infrastructure supportive of community walkability, and improvements addressing the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians. Jurisdictions continue to adopt these mechanisms to enhance public health, consistent with the 2005 amendments to the GMA.

### **VISION 2040 Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs)**

VISION 2040 acknowledges that the health and well-being of the region's people is fundamental to maintaining and improving the region's sustainability and quality of life. It recognizes that human health is affected by the health of the natural environment, the strength of our region's communities and social networks, the way we build our cities and transportation systems, and the aesthetics and functionality of those systems. VISION 2040 addresses numerous ways that human health can be impacted in the central Puget Sound region, such as exposure to air and water pollution, automobile-related injuries and deaths, chronic diseases related to physical inactivity, and lack of fresh and healthy foods. It further recognizes that attention to health as a consequence of planning and infrastructure decisions can improve quality of life, reduce health care costs, and lessen impacts from lost productivity.

VISION 2040 addresses many of the region's health concerns by providing strategies that will significantly reduce air and water pollution from transportation activities and other sources. A core concept of VISION 2040 is improving the safety of the transportation system for drivers, passengers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and others. Multicounty planning policies call for designing transportation facilities to serve all users safely and efficiently. This includes building and

improving sidewalks, bike lanes, trails and paths and adopting land use strategies to bring homes closer to jobs, shopping, services, and recreation activities. VISION 2040 also states that health considerations should be addressed in regional and local planning and decision-making processes. It encourages design guidelines in the construction of buildings and facilities and regional farming and food production.

### **Countywide Planning Policy**

- HW-1. The County, and each municipality in the County, will be designed to promote physical, social, and mental well-being so that all people can live healthier and more active lives by:
  - 1.1 designing communities to provide an improved environment for walking and bicycling; and
  - 1.2 developing and implementing design guidelines to encourage construction of healthy buildings and facilities to promote healthy people; and
  - 1.3 developing and implementing community plans and programs, such as community gardens and farmer’s markets, that provide support for agricultural, farmland, and aquatic uses that facilitate the production of fresh and minimally processed healthy foods, and encourage community access to those resources.
  
- HW-2. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall incorporate provisions addressing health and well-being into appropriate regional, countywide, and local planning and decision-making processes.
  
- HW-3. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall promote cooperation and coordination among transportation providers, local government, 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.
  
- HW-4. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall promote and develop transportation systems and options that minimize negative impacts to human health by:
  - 4.1 improving the safety of the transportation system and, in the long term, achieve the state’s goal of zero deaths and disabling injuries; and
  - 4.2 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, such as through the adoption of “Complete Streets” policies.
  
- HW-5. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall protect and enhance the environment and public health and safety when providing public services and facilities by:

- 5.1 coordinating, designing, and planning for public safety services and programs;
- 5.2 consider use of health impact assessment tools when developing and evaluating planning projects to identify possible impacts of projects on community health;  
and
- 5.3 encouraging health and human service facilities to locate near centers and transit for efficient accessibility to service delivery.

## **COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICY ON HISTORIC, ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL PRESERVATION**

### **Background - Requirements of Growth Management Act**

The Washington State Growth Management Act mandates that counties and cities identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites and structures, that have historical or archaeological significance. [RCW 36.70A.020(13)]. The term "significance" is not defined. However, it is well-recognized that the federal and state governments have programs that have been in operation for some time by which land, sites, structures and districts of national significance may be placed on the National Register of Historic Places and land, sites and structures of state significance may be placed on the State Register of Historic Places. Certain cities, including Tacoma, have adopted local programs to designate land, sites and structures of local significance. Although the Growth Management Act does not require a countywide planning policy on historic, archaeological and cultural preservation, that requirement was added by the Interlocal Agreement: "Framework Agreement for the Adoption of the Countywide Planning Policy (Pierce County Council Resolution No. R91-172, September 24, 1991)".

### **VISION 2040 Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs)**

VISION 2040 promotes the preservation of significant visual and cultural resources, including public views, landmarks and cultural landscapes, and areas of special interest, in addition to historic and archeological resources. VISION 2040 also contains policies that promote urban design techniques to preserve these assets in recognition of the economic value of sense of place.

### **Countywide Planning Policy**

HAC-1. The County, and each municipality in the County, utilizing applicable federal, state, and local designations, if relevant, (and where appropriate in cooperation with the Indian tribes) shall identify the presence of federal, state, and local historic, archaeological and cultural lands, sites, and structures, of significance within their boundaries.

HAC-2. The County, and each municipality in the County may, utilizing County standards or locally-developed standards, identify and designate local historic, archaeological and cultural lands, sites, and structures of significance within their boundaries.

- 2.1 Recommendations for local designations may be made by any person or entity or by any municipality or governmental body.
- 2.2 The municipality may designate an individual, commission or committee to be responsible for review of recommendations and to forward such recommendations on to the legislative body.

- 2.3 Designations shall only be made by the local legislative body if the land, site, or structure has only local significance.
- 2.4 All such designations shall be reflected in the land use element of the comprehensive plan.
- 2.5 Any municipality may request that the County's Landmarks Commission and/or staff provide assistance in designating land, sites, or structures; if sought, such assistance may be provided pursuant to an interlocal agreement.
- 2.6 Preservation of significant lands, sites, and structures shall be encouraged or accomplished by the County, and each municipality in the County, through any one or a combination of the following techniques, as determined to be appropriate by the local legislative body:
  - 2.6.1 Designation;
  - 2.6.2 Incentives for preservation;
  - 2.6.3 Loans and grants;
  - 2.6.4 Public purchase;
  - 2.6.5 'Non-development' easement;
  - 2.6.6 Development rights transfer;
  - 2.6.7 Restrictive covenants;
  - 2.6.8 Regulations for protection, maintenance, and approval of appropriate development;
  - 2.6.9 Plans/policies/standards for preservation as set by the U.S. Department of the Interior;
  - 2.6.10 Certified Local Government designation.
- 2.7 The County, and each municipality in the County, may utilize one or more of the following criteria, or others as may be determined to be appropriate, to make designation decisions for recommended lands, sites or structures:
  - 2.7.1 Archaeological, historic, or cultural "significance;"
  - 2.7.2 Condition;
  - 2.7.3 Uniqueness;
  - 2.7.4 Accessibility;
  - 2.7.5 Cost/benefit;
  - 2.7.6 Extent to which land, site, or structure is undisturbed;
  - 2.7.7 Presence of incompatible land uses or activities;
  - 2.7.8 Presence of environmental, health, or safety hazards;
  - 2.7.9 Tourism potential;
  - 2.7.10 Educational value;
  - 2.7.11 Consent of owner.

2.8 The legislative body of the County, and each municipality in the County, may utilize one or more of the following criteria or others as may be determined to be appropriate, to make a de-designation decision:

2.8.1 Error in historical/archaeological/cultural research for the original designation;

2.8.2 Economic hardship for the owner leaving no reasonable use of the land, site, or structure;

2.8.3 Deterioration of lands, site, or structure;

2.8.4 Discovery of other (better) examples of lands, sites, or structures;

2.8.5 Presence of land, site, or structure on state or federal registers.

HAC-3. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall encourage public education programs regarding historic, archaeological, and cultural lands, sites, and structures as a means of raising public awareness of the value of maintaining those resources.

HAC-4. Utilize urban design strategies and approaches to ensure that changes to the built environment preserve and enhance the region's and the county's unique attributes and each community's distinctive identity in recognition of the economic value of sense of place.



**COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICY ON  
NATURAL RESOURCES, OPEN SPACE, PROTECTION  
OF ENVIRONMENTALLY-SENSITIVE LANDS, AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Background - Requirements of Growth Management Act**

The Washington State Growth Management Act identifies the following as planning goals: maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries, including productive timber, agricultural and fisheries industries [RCW 36.70A.020(8)]; encourage the conservation of productive forest lands and productive agricultural lands, and discourage incompatible uses [RCW 36.70A.020(8)]; encourage the retention of open space and development of recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks [RCW 36.70A.020(9)]; and, protect the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water [RCW 36.70A.020(10)]. The degree of interconnectedness between these goals leads to the development of a single, comprehensive planning policy. Although the Growth Management Act does not expressly require a countywide planning policy on natural resources, open space, and protection of environmentally sensitive lands, the addition of such a policy was specifically identified in the Pierce County Interlocal Agreement: “Framework Agreement for the Adoption of the Countywide Planning Policy (Pierce County Council Resolution No. R-91-172, September 24, 1991)”.

**VISION 2040 Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs)**

VISION 2040 acknowledges that certain development patterns and practices have damaged and threaten to further disrupt the region’s ecosystems. It recognizes that while some impacts are irreversible, the region can curb pollution, change land use and transportation patterns, and better manage waste to protect key ecological functions and help restore the environment.

VISION 2040 stresses the ecological, economic, and health benefits of preserving and restoring our natural environment. The Multicounty Planning Policies in VISION 2040 have been developed around the theme of environmental stewardship and sustainability. This is further expressed in VISION 2040’s theme of *people, prosperity and planet*. This theme recognizes the important relationship between our communities, our economy, and our environment.

VISION 2040 acknowledges that atmospheric pollution threatens to alter the way the natural environment functions and to affect human health and well-being. It recognizes that the average annual temperatures are already rising in the Pacific Northwest and that reduced snowpack and earlier spring runoffs could result in increasing water shortages and drought conditions. VISION 2040’s commitment to sustainable growth, clean transportation, and environmentally friendly development practices will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create healthier communities.

VISION 2040 also provides guidance for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and planning for various impacts caused by climate change. Included is an overarching goal that calls for reducing pollutants which contribute to climate change. Multicounty planning policies commit the region to comply with recent state directives regarding the reduction of greenhouse gases and call on jurisdictions and agencies to include an analysis of climate change impacts when performing

environmental review under the State Environmental Policy Act. Additional provisions call for reducing the rate of energy use per capita and developing new energy management technology as part of meeting the region's energy needs.

**Countywide Planning Policy**

Env-1. The following governmental entities shall act in a coordinated manner to identify, designate, and conserve resources, and to protect open space and environmentally sensitive lands:

- 1.1 The State [RCW 36.70A.050(1)];
- 1.2 The County;
- 1.3 Municipalities;
- 1.4 Special Purpose Districts and entities;
- 1.5 The Puget Sound Regional Council and Regional Authorities (Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, Regional Transportation Planning Organization *et al*);
- 1.6 The Federal government;
- 1.7 Tribal governments;
- 1.8 Public utilities.

Env-2. Countywide natural resources identified and designated pursuant to this Policy shall be maintained and enhanced through one or more of the following means:

- 2.1 conservation;
- 2.2 conservation combined with planned use;
- 2.3 planned use;
- 2.4 enhancement;
- 2.5 education;
- 2.6 preservation;
- 2.7 purchase/acquisition;
- 2.8 regulatory approaches; and

2.9 compensable approaches.

Env-3. The governmental entities specified in subpolicy 1 shall work cooperatively and consistently with each other to achieve this Policy through:

- 3.1 identifying, designating, maintaining, conserving, enhancing, and/or protecting, as appropriate, natural resources through the adoption of specific elements in the county and municipal comprehensive plans;
- 3.2 developing appropriate implementation strategies and regulations;
- 3.3 adopting local capital improvement programs designed to achieve the objectives of this Policy;
- 3.4 coordinating standards and criteria between the programs of the governmental entities specified in subpolicy 1, including where necessary the use of inter-governmental agreements, so as to be consistent with the objectives of this Policy;
- 3.5 using integrated and interdisciplinary approaches for environmental planning and assessment; and
- 3.6 using the best information available at all levels of planning, especially scientific information, when establishing and implementing environmental standards established by the local, state, or federal government.

Env-4. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall consider the following regarding natural resources:

- 4.1 placing a primary emphasis on maintaining, enhancing, conserving, and/or protecting, as appropriate, designated and identified natural resources including lands of local, county, and statewide significance;
- 4.2 developing and applying criteria for limiting development, if allowed, so as to maintain, enhance, and conserve identified and designated important, productive or economically viable natural resources or natural resource based industries;
- 4.3 ensuring the provision of buffers to protect environmentally sensitive lands where economic use of natural resource lands will cause adverse impacts;
- 4.4 adopting a "no net loss" approach where applicable;
- 4.5 utilizing positive incentives to ensure conservation over time;

- 4.6 utilizing transfer of development rights; purchase of development rights; conservation easements; or other compensable approaches (see CPPs for Agricultural Lands and Open Space);
  - 4.7 educating all segments of the community concerning the importance of these Policy objectives;
  - 4.8 emphasizing the prevention of air and water quality degradation;
  - 4.9 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;
  - 4.10 support the sustainability of designated resource lands. Conversion of lands to other uses is strongly discouraged; and
  - 4.11 ensure that resource lands and their related economic activities are not adversely impacted by development on adjacent non-resource lands.
- Env-5. Environmentally sensitive lands, for the purpose of the Policy, shall include all designated critical areas pursuant to RCW 36.70A.030(5) including, but not limited to, wetlands, aquifer recharge areas, fish and wildlife habitat, geologically hazardous lands and shall include water supply areas, shorelines, creeks, streams, lakes, rivers, deltas, frequently flooded areas, estuaries, and unique geologic features such as canyons. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall maintain the following relationship between environmentally sensitive lands and development:
- 5.1 give priority to protection of environmentally sensitive lands;
  - 5.2 develop standards and criteria for limiting development, if allowed, in the County or in municipal comprehensive plans;
  - 5.3 where development is allowed, provide protection for environmentally-sensitive lands through the provision of appropriate buffers;
  - 5.4 adopt a "no net loss" approach;
  - 5.5 utilize positive incentives for conservation;
  - 5.6 utilize transfer of development rights, purchase of development rights, or other flexible, clustered or compensatory regulatory approaches;
  - 5.7 designate environmentally sensitive lands of local, county and statewide significance;

- 5.8 educate all segments of the community concerning the importance of these Policy objectives.
- Env-6. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall determine the amount of development permitted on environmentally sensitive lands according to the nature of the area sought to be protected and to do so on a case-by-case basis in conjunction with SEPA regulations. Enhancements to environmentally sensitive lands, such as parks and observation towers, may be allowed.
- Env-7. The County, and each municipality in the County, as well as the other governmental entities specified in subpolicy 1 shall be in compliance with and seek to exceed federal and state environmental quality standards where required to achieve the objectives of this Policy.
- Env-8. The County, and each municipality in the County, as well as the other governmental entities specified in subpolicy 1 shall consider policies on environmentally sensitive lands in conjunction with other Countywide Planning Policies, including, but not limited to, policies which address:
- 8.1 urban growth areas;
  - 8.2 contiguous orderly development and the provision of urban services to such development;
  - 8.3 capital facility siting;
  - 8.4 transportation efficiency;
  - 8.5 siting of transportation facilities;
  - 8.6 operations and maintenance of transportation facilities;
  - 8.7 infill development;
  - 8.8 affordable housing;
  - 8.9 state and local Shoreline Master Programs;
  - 8.10 goals and mandates of federal and state land jurisdiction agencies including the Washington State Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service and Tribal governments;
  - 8.11 watershed management.

- Env-9. Open space, for the purpose of this Policy shall include parks, recreation areas, greenbelts/natural buffers, scenic and natural amenities or unique geological features or unique resources.
- Env-10. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall develop a plan for the provision and designation of open space considering the following:
- 10.1 environmentally sensitive lands may also include open space and/or greenbelt areas;
  - 10.2 open space areas are located within urban growth areas;
  - 10.3 open space is defined in conjunction with recreation and facilities;
  - 10.4 open space and environmentally sensitive lands that create linkages across jurisdictional boundaries and coordination with these entities;
  - 10.5 encourage open space cluster design; and
  - 10.6 encourage natural buffering as part of development design.
- Env-11. The County, and each municipality in the County, may make the following uses of open space:
- 11.1 recreational areas, including parks (golf courses, picnic areas, bicycle, equestrian and walking trails) and general recreation;
  - 11.2 uses as considered on a case-by-case basis;
  - 11.3 uses derived from community definition (i.e., greenbelts)
- Env-12. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall encourage new housing to locate in a compatible fashion (i.e., clustered design) with open space designations or outside of designated open spaces.
- Env-13. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall regulate open space through tools such as:
- 13.1 zoning and subdivision ordinances, including but not limited to cluster and minimum lot size zoning, overlay zones and adequate off-site public facility regulations;
  - 13.2 development impact fees for park and open space acquisition;
  - 13.3 dedication of land or money in-lieu of land;

- 13.4 designation of open space corridors;
- 13.5 soil conservation measures;
- 13.6 wetlands, shorelines, floodplain or other environmentally sensitive lands ordinances; and
- 13.7 development agreements.

Env-14. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall cooperatively inventory existing and potential open space by creating local and regional planning inventories.

Env-15. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall authorize the following methods of retention of open space land or wildlife corridors:

- 15.1 public acquisition of property in fee simple or through development easement acquisition;
- 15.2 private acquisition with covenants, conditions and/or restrictions limiting the use of the property to open space;
- 15.3 alternatives to public purchase, including, but not limited to:
  - 15.3.1 flexible zoning, subdivision and regulatory approaches designed for protection or preservation;
  - 15.3.2 land trust;
  - 15.3.3 conservation easement;
  - 15.3.4 transfer of development rights, purchase of development rights, and other compensable regulatory approaches;
  - 15.3.5 rails-to-trails;
  - 15.3.6 donations;
  - 15.3.7 preferential assessments;
  - 15.3.8 planned developments;
  - 15.3.9 dedications;
  - 15.3.10 impact fees;
  - 15.3.11 view easements;
  - 15.3.12 use value assessments.
- 15.4 retention of existing open space through:
  - 15.4.1 the designation of natural resource lands of statewide significance;
  - 15.4.2 required open space preservation within and without Urban Growth Boundaries established by Pierce County;
  - 15.4.3 coordination with agricultural land owners and right to farm policies.
  - 15.4.4 preserving, and enhancing significant regional open space networks and linkages across jurisdictional boundaries.

*General*

Env-16. The County, and each municipality in the County, should protect and enhance the natural ecosystems through comprehensive plan policies and development regulations that reflect natural constraints and protect sensitive features.

- 16.1 Preserve and enhance habitat to prevent species from inclusion on the endangered species list and to accelerate their removal from the list.
- 16.2 Identify and protect wildlife corridors both inside and outside the urban growth area.
- 16.3 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.
- 16.4 Maintain natural hydrological functions, ecosystems and watersheds and, where feasible, restore to a more natural state.
- 16.5 Restore, where appropriate and possible, freshwater and marine shorelines, watersheds, and estuaries to a natural condition for ecological function and value.
- 16.6 Reduce the use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers to the extent feasible and identify alternatives that minimize risks to human health and the environment.
- 16.7 Identify and address the impacts of climate change on hydrological systems.

Env-17. The County, and each municipality in the County, should preserve, protect, and where practicable, restore natural habitat critical for the conservation of salmonid species listed under the federal Endangered Species Act, through the adoption of comprehensive plan policies that seek to protect, maintain, or restore aquatic ecosystems.

- 17.1 Jurisdictions should consider creation of a Public Benefit Rating System under the Current Use Assessment Program (RCW 84.34) or other Tax Incentive Programs that includes a higher priority for fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas.
- 17.2 Consider fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas when designating land use designations and companion zoning regulations.
- 17.3 Amend existing critical area regulations, as necessary, to protect fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas from development impacts.

*Coordination of Watershed Planning and Land Use Planning*



“Watershed” means a geographic area that drains toward or contributes flow to a stream or river and the geographic limits of a watershed are defined by the points at which the ground slope changes to drain surface water into the tributaries that feed the stream or river system.

Env-18. The County, and each municipality in the County, should protect the natural habitat critical for the conservation of salmonid species listed under the federal Endangered Species Act, whenever practicable, through the use of planning activities or study techniques that are capable of determining changes in stream hydrology and water quality.

18.1 The County, and each municipality in the County, should coordinate watershed planning and land use planning activities and implementation activities within a watershed boundary including:

- 18.1.1 recognize that watershed planning may be useful in analyzing changes in stream hydrology, flooding, water quality and capital facilities under different land use scenarios;
- 18.1.2 evaluate the use of vegetation retention, tree conservation, and maximum impervious surface standards;
- 18.1.3 whenever possible, utilize watershed boundaries instead of jurisdictional boundaries for plans and studies;
- 18.1.4 consider the implications of planning and implementation activities on natural environmental and built systems that are located outside jurisdictional boundaries but within the shared watershed;
- 18.1.5 when updating land use plans and regulations, consider information that is contained within watershed plans.

#### *Inter-jurisdictional Cooperation*

Env-19. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall work together to identify and protect natural habitat corridors that cross jurisdictional boundaries.

- 19.1 Establish informational sharing workshops or present information at established coordinating committees.
- 19.2 Whenever possible, utilize watershed boundaries instead of jurisdictional boundaries for plans and studies.
- 19.3 Establish a common method for assessing the habitat needs for sensitive species.

Env-20. The County, and each municipality in the County, should coordinate watershed/aquatic restoration planning and implementation activities within a watershed.

20.1 Consider the implications of planning and implementation activities not only within jurisdictional boundaries, but also the implications of decisions and activities on habitat for critical fish species that is located outside jurisdictional boundaries but within the shared watershed.

20.2 Encourage involvement with local drainage districts in planning process.

Env-21. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall cooperatively work together to create and adopt modifications to their Critical Areas Regulations that include the best available science for the protection of existing habitat, wetlands, estuaries, and riparian areas by avoiding negative impacts.

21.1 Encourage the removal of invasive species and the replanting of natural vegetation.

21.2 Encourage local community groups in critical habitat restoration and enhancement efforts.

21.3 Utilize incentives to encourage landowners to retain, enhance, or restore critical habitat.

21.4 Develop complementary, coordinated, integrated, and flexible approaches for the collection, analysis, and sharing of monitoring information (e.g., GIS data, hydrologic and hydraulic analysis).

#### *Development Standards*

Env-22. Upon adoption of a state classification system, the County and each municipality in the County, should work together to establish a single system for stream typing.

Env-23. The County, and each municipality in the County, should maintain or enhance water quality through control of runoff and best management practices to maintain natural aquatic communities and beneficial uses.

#### *Monitoring, Best Available Science and Adaptive Management*

Env-24. The County, and each municipality in the County, should work cooperatively toward creating and implementing methodologies designed to determine the effectiveness of enhancement and recovery strategies for listed species. (The term recovery is applied to species and not to habitat.)

24.1 Monitoring and evaluation strategies should be designed to develop data and information that can be used to evaluate future policy choices and management actions.

24.2 Whenever practicable, adoption of local plans, which include conservation plans or watershed basin plans, should include monitoring and evaluation criteria.

24.3 Use the best information available at all levels of planning, especially scientific information.

Env-25. The County, and each municipality in the County, recognizes that the best available science to address listed species recovery issues is evolving. Each jurisdiction should apply an adaptive management strategy to determine how well the objectives of listed species recovery and critical habitat preservation/restoration are being achieved.

25.1 Consider the results of pilot developments in land use planning.

Env-26. Ensure that all residents, regardless of social or economic status, live in a healthy environment with minimal exposure to pollution.

Env-27. Locate development in a manner that minimizes impacts to natural features and promote the use of innovative environmentally sensitive development practices, including design, materials, construction, and on-going maintenance.

Env-28. Mitigate noise caused by traffic, industries, and other sources or adjust land uses as appropriate to secure the same result.

### Air Quality

Env-29. Reach and maintain air pollution attainment level/standards for carbon monoxide, ozone, and particulates as determined by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency.

Env-30. The County and each municipality in the County shall strive, as appropriate, to improve the countywide overall air quality for particulates, ozone, and toxics through measures such as:

30.1 Providing education to the community about the sources and implications of particulate matter, ozone (smog) and air toxics;

30.2 Coordinating and partnering across jurisdictional boundaries on a air quality issues, strategies, and education efforts;

30.3 Employing methods to reduce particulates by improving indoor and outdoor wood burning activities and wood as a source of heat;

30.4 Strengthening efforts to reduce pollutants from construction activities (i.e., fugitive dust)

- 30.5 Strengthening efforts to reduce pollutants from transportation activities by:
  - 30.5.1 including pollution reduction methods through technologies such as the use of cleaner fuels and vehicle programs, for example, electric charging stations, bike and pedestrian infrastructure, and partnering to construct intra-jurisdictional trails and nonmotorized facilities, linear trails, and low speed vehicles;
  - 30.5.2 reducing vehicle miles traveled and auto dependency;
  - 30.5.3 designing and prioritizing compact communities and neighborhood accessibility for daily goods and services.
- 30.6 Reducing air toxics emissions through freight infrastructure investment, diesel retrofits, woodstove change-out programs, and various community-scale projects.

### Climate Change

Env-31. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall strive to meet State mandates on climate change and the reduction of greenhouse gases.

- 31.1 Jurisdictions should work to address climate change and greenhouse gases by undertaking such actions as:
  - 31.1.1 Conducting a baseline assessment and inventory of carbon/energy footprint of its community and municipal operations;
  - 31.1.2 Creating and adopting a climate action plan;
  - 31.1.3 Providing outreach to developers and residents to educate about the sources of greenhouse gases and the effects of climate change; and
  - 31.1.4 Assessing the impact of the development of capital facilities may have on climate change,
- 31.2 Jurisdictions should address adaptation and mitigation strategies from the effects of climate change in long range plans such as shoreline master programs and comprehensive plans.
- 31.3 Jurisdictions should encourage the development community to reduce impacts of proposed projects on climate change.

- 31.3.1 Work to promote green development standards (e.g., LEED and equivalent, and low impact development) in both public and private development and operations.
- 31.4 Include an analysis (i.e., supplemental greenhouse gas/climate change impact worksheet) of climate change impacts and potential mitigation when conducting an environmental review process under the State Environmental Policy Act.
- 31.5 Jurisdictions should consider the carbon sequestration potential of natural resources and open space.
  - 31.5.1 Direct development into urban areas and compact centers to prevent and reduce the urbanization of ecologically sensitive areas and natural resources; and
  - 31.5.2 Encourage countywide carbon sequestration through:
    - 31.5.2.1 Increasing the amount of vegetation and canopy cover in urban areas by coordinating the preservation and growth of open space;
    - 31.5.2.2 Developing a comprehensive strategy to maintain and restore vegetation and increase canopy cover in rural areas.
- 31.6 Jurisdictions should support energy management technologies and alternative energy sources.
  - 31.6.1 Cooperate with regional initiatives and efforts toward the development and use of energy management technologies;
  - 31.6.2 Reduce greenhouse gases by expanding the use of biofuels, energy efficiency/conservation and alternative energy sources within municipal and private development and operations;
  - 31.6.3 Investigate and pursue opportunities for district heating (thermal energy on a neighborhood scale);
  - 31.6.4 Investigate and pursue opportunities for landfill methane sequestration; and
  - 31.6.5 Adjust development standards to allow, encourage, and preserve opportunities for alternative energy infrastructure, such as solar panels.
- 31.7 Jurisdictions should include climate change mitigation strategies in local transportation planning.

31.7.1 Cooperate with regional and countywide transportation initiatives to develop strong regional public transportation options;

31.7.2 Increase alternatives to driving alone; and

31.7.3 Encourage private and public development of transit oriented development throughout the county to reduce the need for personal vehicle use.

## COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICY ON RURAL AREAS

### **Background - Growth Management Act**

The Washington State Growth Management Act requires that county comprehensive plans include a rural element that includes lands that are not designated for urban growth, agriculture, forest, or mineral resources. This element is guided by multiple sections in the GMA related to rural areas, including RCW 36.70A.030 (Definitions), RCW 36.70A.011 (Findings - Rural lands), RCW 36.70A.070 (5) (Comprehensive plans - Mandatory elements - Rural Element); and others.

Rural elements are intended to recognize the importance of rural lands and rural character to Washington's economy, its people, and its environment, while respecting regional differences. In the rural element, counties are to foster land use patterns and develop a local vision of rural character that will: help preserve rural-based economies and traditional rural lifestyles; encourage the economic prosperity of rural residents; foster opportunities for small-scale, rural-based employment and self-employment; permit the operation of rural-based agricultural, commercial, recreational, and tourist businesses that are consistent with existing and planned land use patterns; be compatible with the use of the land by wildlife and for fish and wildlife habitat; foster the private stewardship of the land and preservation of open space; and enhance the rural sense of community and quality of life.

While the GMA assigns responsibility for adopting a rural element to counties, all jurisdictions in a county, particularly those surrounded by or adjacent to rural lands, have an interest in what occurs on rural lands. Hence, rural lands are included in the Countywide Planning Policies in order to achieve consistency between and among the plans of cities and the county.

### **VISION 2040 Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs)**

VISION 2040 identifies rural lands as permanent and vital parts of the region. It recognizes that rural lands accommodate many activities associated with natural resources, as well as small-scale farming and cottage industries. VISION 2040 emphasizes the preservation of these lands and acknowledges that managing rural growth by directing urban-type development into designated urban lands helps to preserve vital ecosystems and economically productive lands.

VISION 2040 also acknowledges recent successes in directing growth away from rural lands. However, it acknowledges that conversion pressures from urban development continue today, particularly through vesting, and calls for continued use of rural lands for farming, forestry, recreation, and low-density development supported by rural services. The Multicounty Planning Policies reinforce this and call for minimizing environmental impacts to rural lands, while providing long-term solutions for the environmental and economic sustainability of rural-based industries.

## **Countywide Planning Policies**

### *Overarching Goal*

- Rur-1. The County will 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.

### *Development Patterns*

- Rur-2. Ensure that development in rural areas is consistent with the countywide and regional vision.
- Rur-3. Prohibit urban net densities in rural areas.
- Rur-4. Review and revise criteria and regulations to avoid new fully contained communities outside of the designated urban growth area because of their potential to create sprawl and undermine local, countywide, state, and regional growth management goals.
- Rur-5. In the event that a proposal is made for creating a new fully contained community, the county shall make the proposal available to the Growth Management Coordinating Committee, Pierce County Regional Council, other counties, and to the Regional Council for advance review and comment on countywide and regional impacts.
- Rur-6. Use existing and new tools and strategies to address vested development to ensure that future growth meets existing permitting and development standards and encourage consolidation where appropriate.
- Rur-7. Ensure that development occurring in rural areas is rural in character and is focused into communities and activity areas.
- Rur-8. Accommodate the county's growth first and foremost in the urban area. Ensure that development in rural areas is consistent with the rural vision.
- Rur-9. 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.

### *Economic Development*

- Rur-10. 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.



- Rur-11. 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.

*Environment*

- Rur-12. 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.
- Rur-13. Support long-term solutions for the environmental and economic sustainability of agriculture and forestry within rural areas.

*Transportation*

- Rur-14. 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.
- Rur-15. Maintain the long-term viability of permanent rural land by avoiding the construction of new highways and major roads in rural areas.
- Rur-16. Promote transit service to and from existing cities in rural areas.

*Public Services*

- Rur-17. 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.
- Rur-18. 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.
- Rur-19. Work with 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.
- Rur-20. Apply development regulations in rural areas that would mitigate the impact of roadway projects that may lead to unplanned growth in the rural area.

**COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICY ON  
SITING OF ESSENTIAL PUBLIC CAPITAL FACILITIES  
OF A COUNTYWIDE OR STATEWIDE SIGNIFICANCE**

**Background - Requirements of Growth Management Act**

The Washington State Growth Management Act requires that the comprehensive plan of the County and of each municipality in the County include a process for identifying and siting essential public facilities [RCW 36.70A.200(1)]. "Essential" public facilities include, but are not limited to, those facilities that are typically difficult to site, such as airports, state education facilities, state or regional transportation facilities, state and local correctional facilities, solid waste handling facilities, and in-patient facilities, including substance abuse facilities, mental health facilities and group homes [RCW 36.70A.200(1)]. The State Office of Financial Management is required to maintain a list of essential state public facilities that are required or likely to be built within the next six (6) years. Facilities may be added to the list at any time. The Growth Management Act further mandates that no local comprehensive plan or development regulation may preclude the siting of essential public facilities [RCW 36.70A.200(2)].

**Countywide Planning Policy**

EPF-1. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall adopt a policy its comprehensive plan, on the siting of essential public capital facilities of a Countywide or statewide nature.

1.1 Essential public facilities must have a useful life of 10 years or more and be either:

1.1.1 a Countywide facility which has the potential for serving the entire County or more than one jurisdiction in the County; or

1.1.2 a statewide facility which serves or has the potential for serving the entire state, or which serves less than the entire state, but more than one county.

EPF-2. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall identify lands useful for public purposes and incorporate such designations in their respective comprehensive plans.

EPF-3. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall incorporate a policy and process in their respective comprehensive plans to identify and site essential public facilities. The process and policy shall include the following components:

3.1 a requirement that the state provide a justifiable need for the public facility and for its location in Pierce County based upon forecasted needs and a logical service area, and the distribution of facilities in the region and state;

- 3.2 a requirement that the state establish a public process by which the residents of the County and of affected and "host" municipalities have a reasonable opportunity to participate in the site selection process.

EPF-4. The County and municipal policies shall be based upon the following criteria:

4.1 Specific facility requirements:

- 4.1.1 minimum acreage;
- 4.1.2 accessibility;
- 4.1.3 transportation needs and services;
- 4.1.4 supporting public facility and public service needs and the availability thereof;
- 4.1.5 health and safety;
- 4.1.6 site design;
- 4.1.7 zoning of site;
- 4.1.8 availability of alternative sites;
- 4.1.9 community-wide distribution of facilities;
- 4.1.10 natural boundaries that determine routes and connections.

4.2 Impacts of the facility:

- 4.2.1 land use compatibility;
- 4.2.2 existing land use and development in adjacent and surrounding areas;
- 4.2.3 existing zoning of surrounding areas;
- 4.2.4 existing Comprehensive Plan designation for surrounding areas;
- 4.2.5 present and proposed population density of surrounding area;
- 4.2.6 environmental impacts and opportunities to mitigate environmental impacts;
- 4.2.7 effect on agricultural, forest or mineral lands, critical areas and historic, archaeological and cultural sites;
- 4.2.8 effect on areas outside of Pierce County;
- 4.2.9 effect on designated open space corridors;
- 4.2.10 "spin-off" (secondary and tertiary) impacts;
- 4.2.11 effect on the likelihood of associated development being induced by the siting of the facility.

4.3 Impacts of the facility siting on urban growth area designations and policies:

- 4.3.1 urban nature of facility;
- 4.3.2 existing urban growth near facility site;
- 4.3.3 compatibility of urban growth with the facility;
- 4.3.4 compatibility of facility siting with respect to urban growth area boundaries;
- 4.3.5 timing and location of facilities that guide growth and development.

EPF-5. The County and municipal policies shall ensure that the facility siting is consistent with the adopted County and municipal comprehensive plans, including:

- 5.1 the future land use map and other required and optional plan elements not otherwise listed below;
- 5.2 the identification of lands for public purposes in the land use element;
- 5.3 the capital facilities plan element and budget;
- 5.4 the utilities element;
- 5.5 the rural element;
- 5.6 the transportation element;
- 5.7 the housing element;
- 5.8 the comprehensive plans of adjacent jurisdictions that may be affected by the facility siting;
- 5.9 regional general welfare considerations.

EPF-6. The County and municipal policies may include standards and criteria related to:

- 6.1 the time required for construction;
- 6.2 property acquisition;
- 6.3 control of on- and off-site impacts during construction;
- 6.4 expediting and streamlining necessary government approvals and permits if all other elements of the County or municipal policies have been met;
- 6.5 the quasi-public or public nature of the facility, balancing the need for the facility against the external impacts generated by its siting and the availability of alternative sites with lesser impacts;
- 6.6 zoning of area around site to protect against encroachment.

EPF-7. The County and municipal policies may include standards and criteria related to:

- 7.1 facility operations;
- 7.2 health and safety;

- 7.3 nuisance effects;
- 7.4 maintenance of standards congruent with applicable governmental regulations, particularly as they may change and become more stringent over time;
- 7.5 sustainable development practices.

EPF-8. The County and municipal policies on facility siting shall be coordinated with and advance other planning goals including, but not necessarily limited to, the following:

- 8.1 reduction of sprawl development;
- 8.2 promotion of economic development and employment opportunities;
- 8.3 protection of the environment;
- 8.4 positive fiscal impact and on-going benefit to the host jurisdiction;
- 8.5 serving population groups needing affordable housing;
- 8.6 receipt of financial or other incentives from the state and/or the County or other municipalities;
- 8.7 fair distribution of such public facilities throughout the County and state;
- 8.8 requiring state and federal projects to be consistent with this policy.

## **COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICY ON TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES AND STRATEGIES**

### **Background - Requirements of Growth Management Act**

The Washington State Growth Management Act identifies transportation facilities planning and, specifically, encouraging efficient multi-modal transportation systems based on regional priorities and coordinated with local comprehensive plans, as a planning goal to guide the development and adoption of comprehensive plans and development regulations [RCW 36.70A.020(3)]. In addition, it identifies a transportation element as a mandatory element of a county or city comprehensive plan [RCW 36.70A.070(6)]. The transportation element must include: (a) land use assumptions used in estimating travel; (b) facilities and services needs; (c) finance; (d) intergovernmental coordination efforts, including an assessment of the impacts of the transportation plan and land use assumptions on the transportation systems of adjacent jurisdictions; and (e) demand management strategies [RCW 36.70A.070(6)(a)- (c)]. The Growth Management Act expressly requires a Countywide Planning Policy on transportation facilities and strategies [RCW 36.70A.210(3)(d)].

The Commute Reduction Efficiency Act of 2006 (RCW 70.94.521-531) goal is to reduce congestion on the roadway network and help address the air pollution issues within the urban areas. This act requires local governments to work with their larger employers to develop and implement strategies for reducing their single occupant auto trips. Jurisdictions affected by the commute trip reduction (CTR) law are required to develop local CTR plans that include the documenting of local transportation setting of the affected work sites and the strategies by which the rate of single occupant vehicle use may be reduced.

### **VISION 2040 Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs)**

VISION 2040 offers an integrated approach to addressing land use and transportation, along with the environment and economic development. It calls for a clean, sustainable transportation future that supports the regional growth strategy. Sustainable transportation involves the efficient and environmentally sensitive movement of people, information, goods and services – with attention to safety and health. Sustainable transportation minimizes the impacts of transportation activities on our air, water, and climate. It includes the design of walkable cities and bikable neighborhoods, as well as using alternatives to driving alone. It relies on cleaner, renewable resources for energy.

The transportation-related multicounty planning policies in VISION 2040 are presented in three groups. The first group of policies calls for maintaining, preserving, and operating the existing transportation system in a safer and more efficient way. They advance transportation that is less polluting. The second group of policies call for developing the system to support the regional growth center, particularly travel within and between centers. Investments are to be prioritized to serve centers and to support pedestrian-oriented, mixed use development. The policies address complete streets to serve all users, green streets that are better for the environment, and context-sensitive design, that guides the development of transportation facilities to better fit within the context of the communities in which they are located. There are policies addressing nonmotorized transportation as well as freight. The final group of policies address greater transportation options,

including alternatives to driving alone, mobility choices for people with special needs, and avoiding new roads or capacity expansion in rural areas.

**Countywide Planning Policy**

- Tr-1. Promote a sustainable transportation system that assures the ability of future generations to provide transportation infrastructure and services in an effective, efficient, clean, and cost effective manner.
- Tr-2. Improve safety in the transportation system by working toward the state’s “zero death and disabling injury” target.
- Tr-3. For the purpose of this Policy, the following transportation services shall be deemed Countywide in nature:
  - 3.1 state and federal highways;
  - 3.2 major arterials;
  - 3.3 transit facilities and services;
  - 3.4 waterborne transportation (ferries, shipping);
  - 3.5 airports (passenger or freight);
  - 3.6 rail facilities (passenger or freight);
  - 3.7 nonmotorized facilities.
- Tr-4. The following facilities and system components shall be included in the multi-modal network:
  - 4.1 roads, including major highways, arterials and collectors;
  - 4.2 public transit, including bus, rail, vanpool, paratransit, and park and ride lots and other emerging concepts;
  - 4.3 nonmotorized facilities;
  - 4.4 ferries;
  - 4.5 airports;
  - 4.6 parking facilities;
  - 4.7 facilities related to transportation demand management.

- Tr-5. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall consider the impacts of their respective planning activities on neighboring jurisdictional (inclusive of WSDOT) roadway facilities when developing and administering their level of service standards.
- 5.1 designating or adopting multimodal levels of service (LOS) per RCW 36.70A.108 such as:
    - 5.1.1 for roadways and intersection; and
    - 5.1.2 transit levels of service (e.g., hours of service, headways, pedestrian environment, accessibility, safety, rider comfort, reliability, transfer necessity, cost, and travel time).
  - 5.2 entering into interlocal agreements, where necessary, to establish uniform, coordinated service levels between jurisdictions for countywide facilities.
- Tr-6. In the County, and in each municipality in the County, the adopted LOS may be:
- 6.1 set below existing levels (thereby allowing reserve capacity for growth and minimizing the need for new capital investment;
  - 6.2 set above existing levels (thereby increasing comfort and convenience of travel, enhancing economic development and minimizing some environmental impacts;
  - 6.3 set at existing levels (thereby allowing new development to mitigate full marginal impacts;
  - 6.4 set at different levels of service in different zones;
  - 6.5 set at different levels of service based on facility classifications;
  - 6.6 set for multi-modal facilities;
  - 6.7 taken directly from standards developed by the Washington State Department of Transportation for Highways of Statewide Significance and directly from standards developed by the Puget Sound Regional Council for regionally significant state highways.
- Tr-7. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall determine the adequacy of transportation facilities, including transit infrastructure, taking into account existing development, approved but unbuilt development, current and future roadway conditions, and multiple modes of transportation through utilization of:
- 7.1 capacity-to-demand levels of service (LOS);



- 7.2 availability of capacity based on current and future demand including phased capacity;
  - 7.3 appropriate standards of design across jurisdictional lines.
- Tr-8. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall address substandard LOS for existing facilities by:
- 8.1 designating funding mechanisms;
  - 8.2 prioritizing facility needs in capital improvement and transportation improvement programs to correct existing deficiencies;
  - 8.3 using transportation demand management;
  - 8.4 using transportation systems management to promote cost effective methods of moving people and goods;
  - 8.5 promoting nonmotorized travel.
- Tr-9. The County, and each municipality in the County, in cooperation with the transit and transportation agencies, shall:
- 9.1 establish policies and/or regulations for park and ride facilities;
  - 9.2 parking requirements for public facilities so as to encourage public transit use.
- Tr-10. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall address concurrency through the following methods:
- 10.1 providing transportation facilities needed to accommodate new development within six years of development approval;
  - 10.2 limiting new development to a level that can be accommodated by existing facilities and facilities planned for completion over the next six years;
  - 10.3 encouraging new and existing development to implement measures to decrease congestion and enhance mobility through transportation demand and congestion management.
- Tr-11. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall address compatibility between land use and transportation facilities by:
- 11.1 Requiring new transportation facilities and services in areas in which new growth is appropriate or desirable to be phased within a twenty-year time frame consistent with six year capital improvement programs;

- 11.2 Discouraging the extension of new transportation facilities into areas not planned for growth (e.g., outside urban growth areas) and avoiding planning of major roads and capacity expansion in rural and resource areas;
  - 11.3 Using development regulations to ensure that development does not create demands exceeding the capacity of the transportation system, including transit alternatives.
  - 11.4 Using land use regulations to increase the modal split between automobiles and other forms of travel:
    - 11.4.1 Designating high densities in transit and transportation corridors and designated Transit Oriented Development (TOD) sites;
    - 11.4.2 Dedications and impact fees to provide public transit facilities;
    - 11.4.3 Requiring pedestrian-oriented design;
    - 11.4.4 Encouraging or requiring mixed use development and TOD;
    - 11.4.5 Facilitating ease of access for physically challenged individuals.
  - 11.5 Developing plans or planning provisions, where appropriate, to protect the continued operation of general aviation airports by using adopted land compatibility standards such as those published by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to discourage incompatible land uses and development on adjacent land.
- Tr-12. The County and each municipality shall plan and implement programs, as appropriate, for designing, constructing and operating transportation facilities for all users, including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users.
- Tr-13. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall address environmental impacts of the transportation policies through:
- 13.1 programming capital improvements and transportation facilities designed to alleviate and mitigate impacts on land use, air quality and energy consumption such as high-occupancy vehicle lanes, public transit infrastructure, or bicycle/pedestrian facilities designed for home-to-work travel;
  - 13.2 locating and constructing transportation improvements so as to discourage adverse impacts on water quality and other environmental resources.
- Tr-14. The County and each municipality should use low-impact development practices or environmentally appropriate approaches for the design, construction and operation of transportation facilities to reduce and mitigate environmental impacts, including, but not limited to, storm water runoff from streets and roadways.

- Tr-15. The County, and each municipality in the County, and in cooperation with transit agencies, shall promote the facilities and services to encourage alternatives to automobile travel and/or to reduce the number of vehicle miles traveled (modal split, trip generation and trip length) including:
- 15.1 structural alternatives (public transit [such as grade separated guideways, for bus and rail applications]; construction of new high-occupant vehicle lanes; limitations on highway/roadway construction; carpool/vanpool facilities; non-recreational bicycle/pedestrian facilities);
  - 15.2 non-structural/regulatory alternatives (growth management [concurrency; urban growth areas]; road/congestion pricing; auto-restricted zones; parking management; site design; ridesharing incentives, and transportation systems and demand management).
- Tr-16. The County and its cities shall work with transit agencies to identify and preserve existing rights-of-way in order to preserve options for future transit alignments.
- Tr-17. The County and cities will work in cooperation with WSDOT and Port authorities to plan and implement projects and programs to meet freight mobility and access needs, including the establishment of programs designed to maintain, preserve and expand freight rail capacity including planning for needed capital improvements.
- Tr-18. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall consider a number of financing measures, including but not limited to:
- 18.1 general revenues;
  - 18.2 fuel taxes;
  - 18.3 toll roads and other user fees;
  - 18.4 bonding;
  - 18.5 congestion pricing;
  - 18.6 public/private partnerships, and public/public partnerships;
  - 18.7 assessment and improvement districts, facility benefit assessments, impact fees, dedication of right-of-way and voluntary funding agreements;
  - 18.8 grants;
  - 18.9 others, as may be appropriate.

- Tr-19. Protect the transportation investments and preservation of assets through the proper operations and maintenance.
  
- Tr-20. Protect the transportation system against disaster, develop prevention and recovery strategies, and plan for coordinated responses by using transportation-related preparedness, prevention, mitigation, response, and recovery strategies and procedures adopted in the emergency management plans and hazard mitigation plans of the County and cities, as well as the Washington State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

**COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICY ON URBAN GROWTH AREAS,  
PROMOTION OF CONTIGUOUS AND ORDERLY DEVELOPMENT  
AND PROVISION OF URBAN SERVICES TO SUCH DEVELOPMENT**

**Background - Requirements of Growth Management Act**

The Washington State Growth Management Act has as planning goals the encouragement of development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner [RCW 36.70A.020(1)], the reduction of sprawl (*i.e.*, the inappropriate or premature conversion of undeveloped land into low-density development) [RCW 36.70A.020(2)], and the provision of adequate public facilities and services necessary to support urban development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use (without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards) [RCW 36.70A.020(12)] as planning goals.

The Growth Management Act further requires (1) that the County designate an "urban growth area" (UGA) or areas within which urban growth shall be encouraged and outside of which growth shall occur only if it is not "urban" in character; (2) that each municipality in the County be included within an UGA; (3) that an UGA include territory outside of existing municipal boundaries only if such territory is characterized by urban growth or is adjacent to territory that is already characterized by urban growth. [RCW 36.70A.110(1); for definition of "urban growth" see RCW 36.70A.030(17).]

The designated UGAs shall be of adequate size and appropriate permissible densities so as to accommodate the urban growth that is projected by the State Office of Financial Management to occur in the County for the succeeding 20-year period. While each UGA shall permit urban densities, it shall also include greenbelt and open space areas [RCW 36.70A.110(2)].

As to the timing and sequencing of urban growth and development over the 20-year planning period, urban growth shall occur *first* in areas already characterized by urban growth that have existing public facility and service capacities to service such development, *second* in areas already characterized by urban growth that will be served by a combination of both existing public facilities and services and any additional needed public facilities and services that are provided by either public or private sources [RCW 36.70A.110(3)]. Urban government services shall be provided primarily by cities, and it is not appropriate that urban governmental services be extended to or expanded in rural areas except in those limited circumstances shown to be necessary to protect basic public health and safety and environment and when such services are financially supportable at rural densities and do not permit urban development [RCW 36.70A.110(4)].

The Growth Management Act Amendments expressly require that countywide planning policies address the implementation of UGA designations [RCW 36.70A.210(3)(a)], the promotion of contiguous and orderly development, the provision of urban services to such development [RCW 36.70A.210(3)(b)], and the coordination of joint county and municipal planning within UGAs [RCW 36.70A.210(3)(f)].

### **VISION 2040 Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs)**

VISION 2040 calls for a more efficient, sustainable, and strategic use of the region's land. It identifies urban lands as a critical component to accommodate population and employment growth in a sustainable way. VISION 2040 calls for directing development to the region's existing urban lands, especially in centers and compact communities, and limiting growth on rural lands. The Regional Growth Strategy found in VISION 2040 allocates 93 percent of the region's future population growth and 97 percent of its employment growth into the existing urban growth area. Cities are divided into four distinct groups: Metropolitan Cities, Core Cities, Large Cities, and Small Cities. An additional geography is Unincorporated Urban Growth Areas. VISION 2040 recognizes that unincorporated urban lands are often similar in character to cities they are adjacent to, calling for them to be affiliated with adjacent cities for joint planning purposes and future annexation.

VISION 2040 recognizes that compact development creates vibrant, livable, and healthy urban communities that offer economic opportunities for all, provide housing and transportation choices, and use our resources wisely. The Multicounty Planning Policies support the effective use of urban land and include provisions that address brownfield and contaminated site clean-up, the development of compact communities and centers with pedestrian-friendly, transit-oriented locations and a mix of residences, jobs, retail, and other amenities, and the siting of facilities and major public amenities in compact urban communities and centers.

VISION 2040 recognizes that centers provide easy access to jobs, services, shopping, and entertainment. With their mix of uses and pedestrian-friendly design, they can rely less on forms of transportation that contribute to air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. VISION 2040 identifies 27 regional growth centers. These places play an important role as locations of the region's most significant business, governmental, and cultural facilities. The 18 cities that have one or more regional growth centers are expected to accommodate a significant portion of the region's residential growth (53 percent) and employment growth (71 percent).

VISION 2040 calls for local jurisdictions with regional growth centers to adopt housing and employment targets for each center. Eight regional manufacturing/industrial centers have also been designated. These are locations for more intensive commercial and industrial activity. Both regional growth centers and regional manufacturing/industrial centers are focal points for economic development and transportation infrastructure investments. Subregional centers, including downtowns in suburban cities and other neighborhood centers, also play an important role in VISION 2040's *Regional Growth Strategy*. These, too, are strategic locations for concentrating jobs, housing, shopping, and recreational opportunities. VISION 2040 calls for each of the region's cities to develop one or more central places as compact mixed-use hubs for concentrating residences, jobs, shops, and community facilities.

Urban services addressed in VISION 2040 include wastewater and stormwater systems, solid waste, energy, telecommunications, emergency services, and water supply. An overarching goal of VISION 2040 is to provide sufficient and efficient public services and facilities in a manner that is healthy, safe, and economically viable. Conservation is a major theme throughout VISION 2040. The Multicounty Planning Policies address increasing recycling and reducing waste and

encouraging more efficient use of water, low-impact development techniques, and renewable and alternative energy. The Multicounty Planning Policies also address siting of public facilities and the appropriateness and scale of particular public services.

VISION 2040 calls for jurisdictions to invest in facilities and amenities that serve centers and restrict urban facilities in rural and resource areas. The Multicounty Planning Policies also discourage schools and other institutions serving urban residents from locating outside the urban growth area.

### **Principles of Understanding Between Pierce County and the Municipalities in Pierce County**

While following the goals and regulations of the Growth Management Act, Pierce County and the municipalities in Pierce County will strive to protect the individual identities and spirit of each of our cities and of the rural areas and unincorporated communities.

Further agreements will be necessary to carry out the framework of joint planning adopted herein. These agreements will be between the County and each city and between the various cities.

The services provided within our communities by special purpose districts are of vital importance to our citizens. Consistent with the adopted regional strategy, these districts will be part of future individual and group negotiations under the framework adopted by the County and municipal governments.

While the Growth Management Act defines sewer service as an urban service, Pierce County currently is a major provider of both sewer transmission and treatment services. The County and municipalities recognize that it is appropriate for the County and municipalities to continue to provide sewer transmission and treatment services.

The County recognizes that unincorporated lands within UGAs are often potential annexation areas for cities. These are also areas where incorporation of new cities can occur. The County will work with existing municipalities and emerging communities to make such transitions efficiently.

At the same time, annexations and incorporations have direct and significant impacts on the revenue of county government, and therefore, may affect the ability of the County to fulfill its role as a provider of certain regional services. The municipalities will work closely with the County to develop appropriate revenue sharing and contractual services arrangements that facilitate the goals of GMA.

The Countywide Planning Policies are intended to be the consistent "theme" of growth management planning among the County and municipalities. The policies also spell out processes and mechanisms designed to foster open communication and feedback among the jurisdictions. The County and the cities and towns will adhere to the processes and mechanisms provided in the policies.

## **Growth Targets**

The Regional Growth Strategy set forth in VISION 2040 provides guidance for the distribution of future population and employment growth through the year 2040 within the Central Puget Sound Region. This strategy in combination with the Office of Financial Management's population forecasts provide a framework for establishing growth targets consistent with the requirements of the Growth Management Act. Consistent with VISION 2040, these growth targets are the *minimum* number of residents, housing units, or jobs a given jurisdiction is planning to accommodate within the appropriate planning horizon and are informational tools integrated into local land use plans to assist in formulating future residential and employment land needs. These targets are to be developed through a collaborative countywide process that ensures all jurisdictions are accommodating a fair share of growth.

Achievement of the future envisioned by VISION 2040 will be challenging. Jurisdictions in some regional geographies will likely be planning for growth targets that are above or below the policy direction set by the Regional Growth Strategy because they are on a front- or back-loaded growth trajectory toward 2040. In other regional geographies, recent growth has been at such significant odds with the policy direction set by the Regional Growth Strategy (such as recent growth in unincorporated urban Pierce County from 2000 to 2007 has already accounted for more than half of the 40-year growth allocation), that the 2040 goal will likely be exceeded. In such cases, jurisdictions are asked to set growth targets as close to VISION 2040 as reasonably possible in an effort to "bend the trend" of future growth to more closely conform to the Regional Growth Strategy. If a jurisdiction's adopted target is lower or higher than expected from a straight-line application of the Regional Growth Strategy, certification by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) will be based on the actions and measures taken or proposed to be put in place to bend the trend, not just on an assessment of the adopted targets.

It is recognized that some of the urban growth areas in existence prior to the adoption of VISION 2040 may contain more potential housing and employment capacity based upon zoning, allowed density, land division patterns, and other factors than is needed to accommodate the growth target of the associated geography. In many cases, these urban growth areas have been in existence for a decade or more, contain existing development patterns which are urban in character, and are served by sanitary sewer and other urban infrastructure. These areas are largely expected to remain within the urban growth area consistent with their urban character. Expansion of these urban growth area boundaries that do not comply with provisions in the Amendments and Transition section of these policies is acknowledged to be inconsistent with CPPs and is strongly discouraged.

## **Centers**

Centers are to be areas of concentrated employment and/or housing within UGAs which serve as the hubs of transit and transportation systems. Centers and connecting corridors are integral to creating compact urban development that conserves resources and creates additional transportation, housing, and shopping choices. Centers are an important part of the regional strategy (VISION 2040) for urban growth and are required to be addressed in the Countywide Planning Policies. Centers will become focal points for growth within the county's UGA and will be areas where public investment is directed.



Centers are to:

- be priority locations for accommodating growth;
- strengthen existing development patterns;
- promote housing opportunities close to employment;
- support development of an extensive multimodal transportation system which reduces dependency on automobiles;
- reduce congestion and improve air quality; and
- maximize the benefit of public investment in infrastructure and services.

VISION 2040, the adopted regional growth strategy, identifies several centers as an integral feature for accommodating residential and employment growth. The strategy describes Regional Growth Centers, and other centers that may be designated through countywide processes or locally. Regional Growth Centers once regionally designated are located either in Metropolitan Cities, or in Core Cities. VISION 2040 also identifies Manufacturing/Industrial Centers, which consist primarily of manufacturing and industrial uses. Pierce County has five Regional Growth Centers and two Manufacturing/Industrial Centers that have been adopted into the regional growth strategy. Pierce County Regional Growth Centers are located in Tacoma, which is a Metropolitan City, and in Lakewood and Puyallup, which are Core Cities.

Regional Growth Centers in the Metropolitan City

Tacoma Central Business District  
Tacoma Mall

Regional Growth Centers in Core Cities

Lakewood  
Puyallup Downtown  
Puyallup South Hill

Currently there are no designated Countywide Centers.

Manufacturing/Industrial Centers are areas where employee- or land-intensive uses will be located. These centers differ from Regional Growth Centers in that they consist of an extensive land base and the exclusion of non-manufacturing or manufacturing-supportive uses is an essential feature of their character. These areas are characterized by a significant amount of manufacturing, industrial, and advanced technology employment uses. Large retail and non-related office uses are discouraged. Other than caretakers' residences, housing is prohibited within Manufacturing/Industrial Centers. However, these centers should be linked to high density housing areas by an efficient multimodal transportation system. The efficiency of rail and overland freight to markets is the critical element for manufacturers and industries located in these centers.

The designated Manufacturing/Industrial Centers, within Pierce County are as follows:

Manufacturing/Industrial Centers

Frederickson

## Port of Tacoma

Within Pierce County, a limited number of additional centers may be designated through amendment of the Countywide Planning Policies consistent with the process below.

Designated centers may vary substantially in the number of households and jobs they contain today. The intent of the Countywide Planning Policies is that Regional Growth Centers become attractive places to live and work, while supporting efficient public services such as transit and being responsive to the local market for jobs and housing.

The Countywide Planning Policies establish target levels for housing and employment needed to achieve the benefit of a center. Some centers will reach these levels over the next twenty years, while for others the criteria set a path for growth over a longer term, providing capacity to accommodate growth beyond the twenty year horizon.

### **County-Level Centers Designation Process**

The County and any municipality in the County that is planning to include a Metropolitan City Center, Regional Growth Center, Countywide Center or Manufacturing / Industrial Center within its boundaries shall specifically define the area of such center within its comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan shall include policies aimed at focusing growth within the center and along corridors consistent with the applicable criteria contained within the Countywide Planning Policies. The County or municipality shall adopt regulations that reinforce the center's designation.

No more often than once every two years, the Pierce County Regional Council (PCRC) shall invite jurisdictions with centers already adopted in their comprehensive plan that seek to be designated as centers in the Countywide Planning Policies to submit a request for such designation. Said request shall be processed in accordance with established procedures for amending the Countywide Planning Policies.

Each jurisdiction seeking to have a center designated in the Countywide Planning Policies shall provide the PCRC with a report demonstrating that the proposed center meets the minimum criteria for designation together with a statement and map describing the center, its consistency with the applicable Countywide Planning Policies, and how adopted regulations will serve the center.

Transit services shall be defined in the broadest sense and shall include local and regional bus service, rail where appropriate, vanpool, carpool, and other transportation demand measures designed to reduce vehicle trips.

The minimum designation criteria to establish a candidate center by type are as follows:

#### **Metropolitan City Center**

Area: up to 1-1/2 square miles in size;

Capital Facilities: served by sanitary sewers;

Employment: a minimum of 25 employees per gross acre of non-residential lands with a minimum of 15,000 employees;

Population: a minimum of ten households per gross acre; and

Transit: serve as a focal point for regional and local transit services.

Regional Growth Center

Area: up to 1-1/2 square miles in size;

Capital Facilities: served by sanitary sewers;

Employment: a minimum of 2,000 employees;

Population: a minimum of seven households per gross acre; and

Transit: serve as a focal point for regional and local transit services.

Countywide Center

Area: up to one square mile in size;

Capital Facilities: served by sanitary sewers;

Employment: a minimum of 1,000 employees;

Population: a minimum of 6 households per gross acre; and

Transit: serve as a focal point for local transit services.

Manufacturing / Industrial Center

Capital Facilities: served by sanitary sewers;

Employment: a minimum of 7,500 jobs and/or 2,000 truck trips per day; and

Transportation: within one mile of a state or federal highway or national rail line.

The minimum criteria report and statement shall be reviewed by the Growth Management Coordinating Committee (GMCC) for consistency with Countywide Planning Policies, the Transportation Coordination Committee (TCC) for consistency with transportation improvements plans of WSDOT, and with Pierce Transit's comprehensive plan. The coordinating committees shall provide joint recommendation to the PCRC.

Once included in the Countywide Planning Policies, the jurisdiction where a center is located may go on to seek regional designation of the center from the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) in accordance with its established criteria and process.

In order to be designated a Regional Growth Center the center should meet the regional criteria and requirements including those in VISION 2040, the regional growth, economic and transportation strategy as may be amended and designated by the Puget Sound Regional Council.

After county-level designation occurs within the Countywide Planning Policies and until regional-level designation by the PSRC occurs the center shall be considered a "candidate" Regional Growth Center.

Each jurisdiction which designates a Regional Growth Center shall establish 20-year household and employment growth targets for that Center. The expected range of targets will reflect the diversity of the various centers and allow communities to effectively plan for needed services. The target ranges not only set a policy for the level of growth envisioned for each center, but also for the timing and funding of infrastructure improvements. Reaching the target ranges will require careful planning of public investment and providing incentives for private investments.

Two candidate regional centers have been included into the Countywide Planning Policies. One of the candidate centers is a Regional Growth Center and one candidate center is a Manufacturing/Industrial Center.

#### Candidate Regional Centers

University Place – Candidate Regional Growth Center

South Tacoma – Candidate Industrial/Manufacturing Center

#### Urban Growth Outside of Centers

A variety of urban land uses and areas of growth will occur outside of designated centers but within the UGA. Local land use plans will guide the location, scale, timing and design of development within UGAs. The UGA will be where the majority of future growth and development will be targeted. Development should be encouraged which complements the desired focus of growth into centers and supports a multimodal transportation system. For example, policies which encourage infill and revitalization of communities would help to achieve the regional and statewide objectives of a compact and concentrated development pattern within urban areas. The Countywide Planning Policies provide guidance for development and the provision of urban services to support development within the UGA.

#### Satellite Cities and Towns

The cities and towns in the rural areas are a significant part of Pierce County's diversity and heritage. They have an important role as local trade and community centers. These cities and towns are the appropriate providers of local rural services for the community. They also contribute to the variety of development patterns and housing choices within the county. As municipalities, these cities and towns provide urban services and are located within the County's designated UGA. The urban services, residential densities and mix of land uses may differ from those of the large, contiguous portion of the UGA in Pierce County.

#### Countywide Planning Policy

- UGA-1. The County shall designate a countywide urban growth area, and identify where appropriate municipal urban growth areas within the countywide urban growth area, based on consultations between the County and each municipality.
- 1.1 County referral of proposed urban growth area designations to the Pierce County Regional Council (PCRC).
    - 1.1.1 The PCRC may refer the proposed designations to the Growth Management Coordinating Committee (GMCC), or its successor entity for technical advice and for a report.
    - 1.1.2 The PCRC may conduct public meetings to review the proposed designation and, at such meetings, may accept oral or written comments and communications from the public.

- 1.1.3 At the conclusion of its review and analysis, the PCRC shall make a recommendation to the County and to the municipalities in the County.
- 1.2 Once adopted by the County, the urban growth area designations shall not be changed except in accordance with the Countywide Policy on “Amendments and Transition.”
  - 1.2.1 A jurisdiction shall not be required to modify existing urban growth area boundaries in order to reduce the residential or employment capacity to conform to adopted growth targets reflecting VISION 2040’s Regional Growth Strategy. Jurisdictions shall, however, consider the adopted growth targets when updating their local comprehensive plans.
  - 1.2.2 Growth targets are the minimum number of residents, housing units, or jobs a given jurisdiction is planning to accommodate within the appropriate planning horizon and are to be developed through a collaborative countywide process that ensures all jurisdictions are accommodating a fair share of growth. These targets are informational tools integrated into local land use plans to assist in formulating future residential and employment land needs.
- UGA-2. The following specific factors and criteria shall dictate the size and boundaries of urban growth areas:
  - 2.1 Size
    - 2.1.1 Urban growth areas must be of sufficient size to accommodate the urban growth projected to occur over the succeeding 20-year planning period taking into account the following:
      - a. land with natural constraints, such as critical areas (environmentally-sensitive land);
      - b. agricultural land to be preserved;
      - c. greenbelts and open space;
      - d. New Fully Contained Communities pursuant to RCW § 36.70A.350;
      - e. maintaining a supply of developable land sufficient to allow market forces to operate and precluding the possibility of a land monopoly but no more than is absolutely essential to achieve the above purpose;
      - f. existing projects with development potential at various stages of the approval or permitting process (i.e., the "pipeline");
      - g. land use patterns created by subdivisions, short plats or large lot divisions;
      - h. build-out of existing development and areas which are currently only partially built out;

- i. follow existing parcel boundary lines (if a parcel is split and more than 50% is within the urban growth boundary, the entire parcel shall be considered part of the urban growth area as long as the increase does not exceed 2% of the municipality's total urban growth area).
- 2.1.2. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall cooperatively develop and propose objective standards and criteria to disaggregate the State Office of Financial Management's Countywide growth forecasts and VISION 2040 Regional Growth Strategy forecasts for the allocation of projected population to the County and municipalities, taking into account the availability and concurrency of public facilities and services with the impact of development, as well as the VISION 2040 Regional Growth Strategy.
- 2.1.3 The County shall use a consistent countywide targeting process 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.
- 2.2 Boundaries
  - 2.2.1 Any of the following shall be considered in determining the location of urban growth area boundaries:
    - a. geographic, topographic, and manmade features;
    - b. public facility and service availability, limits and extensions;
    - c. jurisdictional boundaries including special improvement districts;
    - d. location of designated natural resource lands and critical areas;
    - e. avoidance of unserviceable islands of County land surrounded by other jurisdictional entities;
    - f. Destination 2030 urban/rural line and PSCAA burn ban line.

*Phasing of Development within the Urban Growth Area*

- 2.3 The County and each municipality in the County shall seek to direct growth as follows:
  - a. first to cities and towns, centers and urbanized areas with existing infrastructure capacity;
  - b. second to areas that are already urbanized such that infrastructure improvements can be easily extended; and
  - c. last to areas requiring major infrastructure improvements.
- 2.3.1 Capital facilities plans shall identify existing, planned, and future infrastructure needs within Urban Growth Areas.

- 2.3.2 The County and each municipality in the County should identify appropriate levels of service and concurrency standards that address schools, sewer, water, and parks.
- 2.3.3 The County and each municipality in the County shall identify appropriate levels of service and multimodal concurrency standards that address roads.
- 2.4 Municipal urban growth area boundaries shall be determined as set forth above and with consideration for the following additional factors:
  - 2.4.1 the VISION 2040 document, including Multicounty Planning Policies;
  - 2.4.2 the carrying capacity of the land considering natural resources, agricultural land and environmentally-sensitive lands;
  - 2.4.3 population, housing, and employment projections;
  - 2.4.4 financial capabilities and urban services capacities;
  - 2.4.5 consistency and compatibility with neighborhood, local and regional plans;
  - 2.4.6 the existing land use and subdivision pattern.
- 2.5 The urban growth area in unincorporated portions of the County shall be limited to the following:
  - 2.5.1 build-out of existing partially developed areas with urban services;
  - 2.5.2 new fully contained communities;
  - 2.5.3 redevelopment corridors.
- 2.6 The County's urban growth area may be extended to allow for build-out of newly developed areas only if development capacity within municipal urban growth boundaries and growth in the areas identified in Policy 2.5 is determined to be inadequate to meet total population and employment projections consistent with the other policies set forth herein.
- 2.7 Encourage efficient use of urban land by maximizing the development potential of existing urban lands, such as advancing development that achieves zoned density.
- 2.8 The municipal urban growth areas as well as unincorporated urban growth areas not affiliated with a city or town, in existence prior to the adoption of VISION 2040 may contain capacity beyond that needed to accommodate the growth target per regional geography for the succeeding 20-year planning period based upon existing zoning designations, allowed density, existing land division patterns, and similar factors. It is permissible for such areas to continue to be designated as urban growth areas. Expansion of these urban growth areas boundaries is acknowledged to be inconsistent with the CPPs and strongly discouraged if the urban growth area expansion is not in accordance with policy AT-2.3.

*Urban Public Services*

- UGA-3. Within the delineated urban growth areas, the County, and each municipality in the County, shall adopt measures to ensure that growth and development are timed and phased consistent with the provision of adequate public facilities and services.
- 3.1 "Adequacy" shall be defined by locally established service level standards for local facilities and services both on the site and off-site. For facilities and services provided by other agencies, adequacy shall be defined by level of service standards mutually agreed upon by the service provider and the jurisdiction served. The definition of levels of service standards may allow for the phasing-in of such standards as may be provided in the capital facilities element of County or municipal comprehensive plans.
- 3.2 "Public facilities" include:
- 3.2.1 Streets, roads, highways, sidewalks, street and road lighting systems, and traffic signals;
  - 3.2.2 Domestic water systems;
  - 3.2.3 Sanitary sewer systems;
  - 3.2.4 Storm sewer systems;
  - 3.2.5 Park and recreational facilities;
  - 3.2.6 Schools.
- 3.3 "Public services" include:
- 3.3.1 Fire protection and suppression;
  - 3.3.2 Law enforcement;
  - 3.3.3 Public health;
  - 3.3.4 Education;
  - 3.3.5 Recreation;
  - 3.3.6 Environmental protection;
  - 3.3.7 Other governmental services, including power, transit and libraries.
- 3.4 Public Sanitary Sewer Service. The following policies shall be applicable to the provision of public sanitary sewer service in the County and its municipalities:
- 3.4.1 Relationship of Sewer Interceptors to Comprehensive Plans. The timing, phasing and location of sewer interceptor expansions shall be included in the capital facilities element of the applicable municipal or County comprehensive plans and shall be consistent with Countywide Planning Policies, the Urban Growth Area boundaries and the local comprehensive land use plan. The phased expansions shall be coordinated among the County and the municipalities therein and shall give priority to existing



unserved urbanized areas within the Urban Growth Area except as provided in 3.4.2 a. and b. below.

3.4.2 Public Sewer Interceptor and Service Extensions/Expansions:

- a. Public sewer interceptors shall only extend or expand outside of Urban Growth Areas where:
  - (i) sewer service will remedy ground water contamination and other health problems by replacing septic systems, or
  - (ii) a formal binding agreement to service an approved planned development was made prior to the establishment of the Urban Growth Area, or
  - (iii) an interceptor will convey wastewater originating within a designated Urban Growth Area to sewerage facilities in another designated Urban Growth Area, or
- b. New sanitary sewer service inside Urban Growth Areas must follow phasing of capital facilities as provided in the municipality's adopted comprehensive plan or any adopted Sewer Master Plan unless:
  - (i) sewer service will remedy ground water contamination and other health problems by replacing septic systems and community on-site sewage systems, or
  - (ii) a new municipality incorporates, or
  - (iii) a formal binding agreement to service an approved planned development was made prior to the establishment of the Urban Growth Area;
  - (iv) an interceptor will convey wastewater originating within a designated Urban Growth Area to sewerage facilities in another designated Urban Growth Area.
- c. New sanitary sewer service connections from interceptors shall not be made available to properties outside the Urban Growth Area except as provided in (a) above.
- d. Sanitary Sewer service shall not be provided in areas designated "rural," except as provided in 3.4.2(a)(i)(ii)
- e. A sewer interceptor or trunk line constructed or planned for construction through a rural area to convey wastewater from a designated Urban Growth Area to sewerage facilities in a designated Urban Growth Area shall not constitute a change of conditions that can be used as the basis for a change in land use designation or urban/rural designation, either for adjacent or nearby properties.

3.4.3 On-Site and Community Sewage Systems

- a. In order to protect the public health and safety of the citizens of Pierce County and of the municipalities in the County, to preserve and protect environmental quality including, but not limited to, water quality and to protect aquifer recharge areas, to work toward the goal of eliminating the development of new residential and commercial uses on on-site and community sewage systems within the urban areas in the unincorporated County or within municipal boundaries consistent with the Countywide Planning Policies, the County and

each municipality shall adopt policies on the use of on-site and community sewage including:

- (i) the most current Tacoma-Pierce County Board of Health Land Use Regulations for On-Site and Community Sewerage Systems
  - (ii) policies which require connection to sanitary sewers when they are available in the following circumstances:
    - (a) if a septic system fails,
    - (b) for all new development except existing single-family lots,
    - (c) for development with dry sewer systems.
  - (iii) if sewer service is not available, dry sewer facilities shall be required.
- b. New industrial development on community or on-site sewage systems shall not be allowed in urban areas in the unincorporated County or within municipal boundaries. Sanitary facilities necessary for recreation sites may be exempt from this policy.
- c. It is not the intent of these policies to require any individual property owner on an existing, properly permitted and functioning septic system to connect to a public sewer unless:
- (i) the septic system fails;
  - (ii) or the system is not in compliance with the most current version of the Tacoma-Pierce County Board of Health Land Use Regulations or the current use of the property changes;
  - (iii) or the density of development on the property increases;
  - (iv) or the existing septic system was originally permitted as an interim system to be abandoned when sewers became available;
  - (v) or a municipality had a mandatory policy.

#### 3.4.4 Achieving an adopted Level of Sewer Service

- a. The County, each municipality, and sewer providers shall work together to achieve adopted levels of service for sewers. All sewer service providers shall work with municipalities to process sewer permits in a manner that allows municipalities to comply with timelines imposed under RCW 36.70B.080(1).
- b. The County, each municipality, and their sewer providers shall work to secure funding sources to achieve the adopted levels of sewer service such as:
  - (i) Grants
  - (ii) Public Works Trust Fund
  - (iii) State Revolving Fund
  - (iv) Centennial Clean Water Fund
  - (v) Municipally imposed surcharges to fund sewer improvements in the jurisdictions where the surcharges are collected.

- 3.4.5 The availability or potential for availability of sewer treatment plant capacity shall not be used to justify expansion of the sewer system or development in a manner inconsistent with the Countywide Planning Policy, Urban Growth Area boundaries and the applicable municipal or County comprehensive land use plans.
- 3.5 Non-Municipal Service-Provision Entities
  - 3.5.1 Special purpose districts shall conform their capital facility and service plans so as to be consistent with the capital facility element of the County or municipal comprehensive plans.
  - 3.5.2 Where facilities and services will be provided by special purpose, improvement or facility service provision entities, such entities shall coordinate the provision of facilities and services with the County, and each affected municipality in the County, so that new growth and development is, in fact, served by adequate public facilities and services at the time of development.
- 3.6 The County, and each municipality in the County, shall adopt plans and implementation measures to ensure that sprawl and leapfrog development are discouraged in accordance with the following:
  - 3.6.1 Urban growth within UGA boundaries is located first in areas already characterized by urban growth that have existing public facility and service capacities to serve such development;
  - 3.6.2 Urban growth is located next in areas already characterized by urban growth that will be served by a combination of both existing public facilities and services and any additional needed public facilities and services that are provided by either public or private sources;
  - 3.6.3 "Urban growth" refers to a predominance of areas or uses within the Urban Growth Area which exhibit one or a combination of the following:
    - a. intensive use of land for buildings and structures;
    - b. high percentage of impermeable surfaces;
    - c. incompatibility with the primary use of land for the production of food, other agricultural products or fiber, or the extraction of mineral resources;
    - d. need for urban governmental services.
  - 3.6.4 "Characterized by urban growth" refers to:
    - a. land having urban growth on it;
    - b. land located in relationship to an area with urban growth on it as to be appropriate for urban growth.
  - 3.6.5 Urban government services shall be provided primarily by cities and urban government services shall not be provided in rural areas.
- 3.7 Public facilities and services will be considered available "*at the time of development*" as follows:

- 3.7.1 As to all public facilities and services other than transportation, if the facility or service is in place at the time demand is created, or if the County or municipality has made appropriate provision to meet the demand for the public facility or service through one or more of the following techniques:
  - a. inclusion of the public facility or service in the applicable County or municipal capital facilities plan element and specification of the full source of the funding for such project;
  - b. impact fees;
  - c. required land dedication;
  - d. assessment districts;
  - e. users fees and charges;
  - f. utility fees;
  - g. other.
- 3.7.2 As to transportation facilities, if needed transportation improvements are within the then existing 6-year capital facilities plan element and program, but only if a specific financial commitment to the transportation improvement project has been made.
- 3.7.3 Public facilities and services will not be considered available at the time of development unless they are provided consistently with the applicable level of service standards adopted in the capital facilities element of the Comprehensive Plan.
  
- 3.8 Public facility and service *adequacy* shall be determined by the County, and each municipality in the County, based upon:
  - 3.8.1 The specific public facility or service;
  - 3.8.2 The adopted or established level of service standard
    - a. established by each municipality for local facilities and services;
    - b. by mutual agreement between provider and municipality served for other facilities and services;
    - c. established through interlocal agreements for cross-jurisdictional facilities and services.
  - 3.8.3 The current usage of the existing public facilities and services, existing development commitments and obligations, the vested or non-vested status of pipeline approvals or existing lots of record, and new development applications.
  - 3.8.4 Where development projects partially meet adequacy of public facilities and services standards, development approval may be authorized for that portion of the project that meets the adequacy standards or the project may be phased to coincide with the phasing of future availability of adequate public facilities and services.
  
- 3.9 Facility and service provision/extension to new development areas shall be subject to the following:

- 3.9.1 Imposition of requirement for payment of the full, but fair, share of costs of needed facilities and services on the new development through:
  - a. impact fees;
  - b. assessment districts;
  - c. user fees and charges;
  - d. surcharges;
  - e. dedication;
  - f. utility fees;
  - g. other, as appropriate.
- 3.9.2 Consideration of the total impact of the facility or service extension on the achievement of other policies, goals and objectives, in addition to the impact on the area being served.
- 3.9.3 If necessary to minimize off-site impacts, specify that such service extensions (e.g., sewer, water) are *not* subject to connection by intervening landowners.

### *Joint Planning*

- UGA-4. Joint planning. Joint planning between local governments can provide numerous possible benefits, including but not limited to:
  - a. More efficient delivery of services;
  - b. Shared use of public facilities;
  - c. Coordinated permitting processes;
  - d. Cost-sharing for planning and construction of public facilities (e.g., water, sewer infrastructure, parks, etc.);
  - e. Consistent development standards;
  - f. Shared regional data, including GIS data;
  - g. Proactive identification of potential issues.
- 4.1 Joint planning may be municipal-municipal as well as municipal-County. The County and each municipality shall jointly plan for the designated urban growth area of that municipality (outside of municipal corporate limits) and may include municipal utility service areas. Joint municipal-municipal planning may occur in those other areas where the respective jurisdictions agree such planning would be beneficial.
- 4.2 Any jurisdiction initiating joint planning with one or more other jurisdictions shall do so by submitting a written proposal from its legislative authority to the legislative authority of the other jurisdiction(s). In forming its proposal, the initiating jurisdiction should consider the Joint Planning Framework recommended by the Pierce County Regional Council, April 15, 1993, and adopted by Resolution No. R93-127 of the Pierce County Council, July 13, 1993. The proposal shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
  - 4.2.1 Size of the proposed joint planning study area;

- 4.2.2 Location of the proposed study area in relation to urban growth boundaries;
  - 4.2.3 Description of the issues proposed to be addressed in the joint planning process;
  - 4.2.4 Proposed end-product of the joint planning process (e.g., amendments to comprehensive plans or implementing ordinances of each jurisdiction, interlocal agreement, etc.);
  - 4.2.5 Proposed resources (e.g., staff, funding, technology, etc.) to be provided by the initiating jurisdiction toward completing the joint planning process;
  - 4.2.6 Evidence that notification of the joint planning process will be provided to residents, property owners, businesses, service providers, special districts, or other parties affected by the proposed joint planning process.
- 4.3 A jurisdiction receiving a proposal for joint municipal-County planning shall respond by either:
- 4.3.1 issuing a resolution of its legislative authority indicating an intent to enter into a joint planning process as proposed; or
  - 4.3.2 entering into discussions with the proposing jurisdiction regarding alternatives to joint planning proposal; or
  - 4.3.3 proposing to Pierce County that the proposal be included as part of an appropriate community planning process, if mutually agreeable to all jurisdictions involved.
- 4.4 If at any time Pierce County receives more proposals for participation in joint planning than its resources will provide, the County shall forward the proposals to the Pierce County Regional Council (PCRC) for consideration and a recommendation on prioritization based on planning needs. The PCRC shall consider proposals for joint planning that have been forwarded to them, and prioritize the proposals according to the probable benefit to the County as a whole. Prioritization shall be based on the information included in the proposal, plus other criteria agreed upon by the PCRC. These criteria could include, but are not limited to:
- 4.4.1 Rate of growth in the proposed study area;
  - 4.4.2 Scope of existing municipal utility provision in the proposed study area;
  - 4.4.3 Existence of special districts serving both the proposed study area and the municipality;
  - 4.4.4 Degree to which development standards or comprehensive plan policies may differ between jurisdictions within the proposed study area;
  - 4.4.5 Criteria 4.5.1 through 4.5.3 below.
- 4.5 When joint planning is required, the joint planning effort shall determine and resolve issues including, but not limited to, the following:

- 4.5.1 How zoning, subdivision and other land use approvals in designated urban growth areas of municipalities will be coordinated;
  - 4.5.2 How appropriate service level standards for determining adequacy and availability of public facilities and services will be coordinated;
  - 4.5.3 How the rate, timing, and sequencing of boundary changes will be coordinated;
  - 4.5.4 How the provision of capital improvements to an area will be coordinated;
  - 4.5.5 To what extent a jurisdiction(s) may exercise extra jurisdictional responsibility.
- 4.6 Joint planning may be based upon factors including, but not limited to, the following:
- 4.6.1 Contemplated changes in municipal and special purpose district boundaries;
  - 4.6.2 The likelihood that development, capital improvements, or regulations will have significant impacts across a jurisdictional boundary;
  - 4.6.3 The consideration of how public facilities and services are and should be provided and by which jurisdiction(s).

UGA-5. Urban Development Standards.

- 5.1 The provisions of this section shall apply to all municipalities and urban growth areas located in the County.
- 5.2 The following development standards shall be the minimum required for urban development and shall apply to all new development in urban growth areas, except as provided in Section 5.6 below.
  - 5.2.1 Streets, Roads and Arterials. All public streets, roads, and arterials shall be constructed to the minimum requirements outlined in the City and County Design Standards adopted pursuant to RCW 35.78.030 and RCW 43.32.020. Curbs, gutters, and sidewalks will be required on both sides. Private streets and roads may be approved, but shall be required to meet these requirements.
  - 5.2.2 Street Lighting. Street lighting shall be required at signalized intersections. Street lighting in new subdivisions shall be provided at all intersections controlled by a traffic signal or sign, and at certain road corners, elbows, and cul-de-sacs. Installation and maintenance of street lighting in subdivisions shall be the responsibility of the developer or homeowner's association unless the local jurisdiction assumes responsibility. When ownership of the street lighting has not been assumed by the local jurisdiction, the light standards shall be located on private property.

- 5.2.3 Domestic Water. A domestic water system must meet requirements under RCW 70.119 and WAC 246-290 for group "A" systems, or the functional equivalent.
  - 5.2.4 Storm Water Facilities. A storm water drainage system shall be designed and constructed in accordance with the Department of Ecology Storm Drainage Technical Manual or a locally adopted storm water manual approved by DOE.
  - 5.2.5 Sanitary Sewer. (Refer to policy 3.4)
  - 5.2.6 The County and each municipality shall develop policies that require developers to extend sewers to their developments to design the facilities to allow further extension to adjacent unsewered areas.
  - 5.2.7 Fire Protection. Fire protection and flow requirements shall be in accordance with Pierce County Code Chapter 15.12.
  - 5.2.8 Solid Waste and Recycling. Garbage pick-up shall be provided weekly, and recycling and yard waste pick-up biweekly, consistent with federal and state laws and regulations.
- 5.3 It is desired by the signatories to these policies that the following Urban Development Standards be the minimum goals for urban developments in Urban Growth Areas.
- 5.3.1 Street Cleaning. Standards for street cleaning shall be discussed and should be developed, consistent with requirements of federal and state water quality standards.
  - 5.3.2 Transit. Urban transit service plans adopted by the Pierce County Public Transit Benefit Authority.
  - 5.3.3 Library. Appropriate jurisdictions should provide 450 square feet of library space per 1,000 persons.
  - 5.3.4 Parks and Recreation. Provisions for parks at a level of 3.0 acres of neighborhood/community parks per 1,000 population should be made for all plats and short plats as required by RCW 58.17. Such provision can be made either through dedication to the public of land, or through provision of funds, as mitigation, for park land purposes.
- 5.4 All development within an urban growth area shall be provided services pursuant to the provision of this agreement and the joint planning agreements adopted pursuant to it. It is recognized that the County may provide certain urban services within an Urban Growth Area, and that cities may provide certain urban services within the same area, but outside their current municipal boundaries.
- 5.5 The County and each municipality shall enter into an interlocal cooperation agreement providing for the approval and delivery of public facilities and services in the Urban Growth Area. Such further agreements shall include, where appropriate, provisions relating to services such as law enforcement and schools and the services of special purpose districts and other service providers.



- 5.6 Ordinances allowing low impact development standards and create environmentally-sensitive development shall be allowed as alternative development standards. Any other ordinances allowing variances and deviations to the urban development standards may be adopted by each responsible jurisdiction for those limited circumstances necessary to allow for recognition of community plans and goals, recognized historic character, or special physical or engineering circumstances, as long as such variances and deviations are otherwise consistent with these policies. A legislative authority adopting a variance or deviation to the minimum urban development standards under this section must inform the Pierce County Regional Council (PCRC) of such adoption.
- UGA-6. The County and each municipality shall adopt within their respective comprehensive plans, policies to ensure that development within the urban growth area uses land efficiently, provides for a wide variety of uses, conserves natural resources, and allows for the connection of communities to an efficient, transit-oriented, multimodal transportation system. Policies shall:
- 6.1 provide for more choices in housing types and moderate increases in density to achieve at least an average net density of four units per acre;
  - 6.2 support infill and compact development; and
  - 6.3 provide for land uses that encourage travel by foot, bike and transit.
- UGA-7. The County and each municipality shall provide for conveniently located, appropriately scaled commercial development to serve the immediate local needs of the surrounding community by encouraging revitalization of underused commercial areas before establishing new areas.
- UGA-8. The County and each municipality shall adopt plans to encourage concentrated development within the urban growth area which will accommodate the twenty year projected population and employment growth.
- UGA-9. The County and each municipality neighboring Joint Base Lewis-McChord should develop planning provisions, including development regulations that encourage adjacent land uses that are compatible with military uses.
- UGA-10. Satellite Cities and Towns are local focal points where people come together for a variety of activities, including business, shopping, living and recreation. These cities and towns may include the core of small to medium sized cities and towns and may also be located in unincorporated areas. Often Satellite Cities and Towns include a strong public presence because they are the location of city hall, main street and other public spaces.

UGA-11. Satellite Cities and Towns will be characterized by a compact urban form that includes a moderately dense mix of locally-oriented retail, jobs and housing that promotes walking, transit usage and community activity.

11.1 Satellite Cities and Towns will be developed at a higher density than surrounding urban and rural areas;

11.2 Small scale forms of intensification such as accessory housing units and development of vacant lots and parking lots help achieve the qualities of centers while preserving the neighborhood character.

UGA-12. At a minimum, Satellite Cities and Towns will be served by State Routes which connect them to other centers and to the regional high capacity transit system. In some instances, Satellite Cities and Towns may have direct connections to the local public transportation system.

## **OVERALL POLICIES FOR NON-INDUSTRIAL CENTERS**

### *Concepts and Principles*

UGA-13. Centers shall be designated based upon the following:

13.1 Consistency with specific criteria for centers adopted in the Countywide Planning Policies;

13.2 The center's location in the County and its potential for fostering a logical and desirable countywide transportation system and distribution of centers;

13.3 The total number of centers in the County that can be reasonably developed based on projected growth over the next twenty years;

13.4 Environmental analysis which shall include demonstration that urban services including an adequate supply of drinking water are available to serve projected growth within the center and that the jurisdiction is capable of ensuring concurrent urban services to new development;

13.5 If a jurisdiction designates a center, it must also adopt the center's designation and provisions in its comprehensive plans and development regulations to ensure that growth targeted to centers is achieved and urban services will be provided;

13.6 Centers shall be characterized by all of the following:

13.6.1 Clearly defined geographic boundaries;

13.6.2 Intensity/density of land uses sufficient to support high-capacity transit;

13.6.3 Pedestrian-oriented land uses and amenities;

- 13.6.4 Pedestrian connections shall be provided throughout;
- 13.6.5 Urban design standards which reflect the local community;
- 13.6.6 Provisions to reduce single-occupancy vehicle use especially during peak hours and commute times;
- 13.6.7 Provisions for bicycle use;
- 13.6.8 Sufficient public open spaces and recreational opportunities;
- 13.6.9 Uses which provide both daytime and nighttime activities; and
- 13.6.10 Centers shall be located in urban growth areas.

UGA-14. Each jurisdiction which designates a center within its comprehensive plan shall define the type of center and specify the exact geographic boundaries of the center. Centers shall not exceed one and one-half square miles of land and Countywide centers shall not exceed one square mile of land. Infrastructure and services shall be either present and available or planned and financed consistent with the expected rate of growth.

14.1 Infrastructure and services shall be either present and available or planned and financed consistent with the expected rate of growth.

14.2 Priority for transportation and infrastructure funds shall be given to designated centers.

#### *Design Features of Centers*

UGA-15. The County and each jurisdiction that designates a center within its comprehensive plan shall encourage density and development to achieve targeted growth.

15.1 Any of the following approaches could be used to implement center development:

- 15.1.1 Encouraging higher residential densities within centers;
- 15.1.2 Avoiding creation of large blocks of single-use zones;
- 15.1.3 Allowing for greater intensity of use within centers;
- 15.1.4 Increasing building heights, greater floor/area ratios within centers;
- 15.1.5 Minimizing setbacks within centers;
- 15.1.6 Allowing buildings to locate close to street to enhance pedestrian accessibility; and
- 15.1.7 Encouraging placement of parking to rear of structures.

15.2 Designated centers are expected to receive a significant share of projected growth in conjunction with periodic disaggregation of countywide population allocations.

UGA-16. Centers shall provide necessary capital facilities needed to accommodate the projected growth in population and employment. Facilities include, but are not limited to, roads, sewers and other utilities, schools, parks, and open space. In order to provide balance

between higher intensity of use within centers, public and/or private open space shall be provided.

UGA-17. Streetscape amenities (landscaping, furniture, etc.) shall be provided within centers to create a pedestrian friendly environment.

UGA-18. The following regulatory mechanisms shall be used within centers.

18.1 Adopt development standards that encourage pedestrian-scaled development such as those that address:

18.1.1 interconnections between buildings and sidewalks;

18.1.2 pedestrian links between residential and non-residential areas;

18.1.3 street trees/furniture; and

18.1.4 minimizing separations between uses.

### *Transportation, Parking and Circulation*

UGA-19. To encourage transit use within centers, jurisdictions shall establish mechanisms to limit the use of single occupancy vehicles. Such mechanisms should include:

19.1 charges for parking;

19.2 limiting the number of off-street parking spaces;

19.3 establishing minimum and maximum parking requirements;

19.4 commute trip reduction (CTR) measures and other transportation demand management measures;

19.5 development of commuter programs for multiple employers not otherwise affected by the CTR law; and

19.6 providing nonmotorized transportation facilities.

UGA-20. Centers should receive a high priority for the location of high-capacity transit stations and/or transit centers.

UGA-21. Locate higher densities/intensities of use close to transit stops within centers and seek opportunities to:

21.1 create a core area to support transit and high occupancy vehicle use;

21.2 allow/encourage all types of transit facilities (transit centers, bus pullouts, etc.) within centers; and

- 21.3 establish incentives for developers to provide transit and transportation demand management supportive amenities.
- UGA-22. Allow on-street parking within centers in order to narrow the streetscape, provide a buffer between moving traffic and pedestrians, and provide common parking areas.
- UGA-23. Provisions for non-motorized transportation shall be provided, including but not limited to:
  - 23.1 bicycle-friendly roadway design;
  - 23.2 wider outside lane or shared parking/bike lanes;
  - 23.3 bike-activated signals;
  - 23.4 covered, secure bicycle parking at all places of employment;
  - 23.5 bicycle racks; and
  - 23.6 pedestrian pathways.

*Implementation Strategies*

- UGA-24. Jurisdictions should consider incentives for development within centers such as:
  - 24.1 streamlined permitting;
  - 24.2 financial incentives;
  - 24.3 density bonuses or transfer of development rights;
  - 24.4 using SEPA Planned Action provisions to streamline environmental review by conducting environmental analysis during planning and providing permit applicants and public with more certainty of how impacts will be addressed; and
  - 24.5 shared mitigation such as stormwater detention and joint parking.
- UGA-25. Improve transit service efficiency through the development of transportation infrastructure within and between countywide and regional centers.
- UGA-26. Design roadway and nonmotorized networks to promote more and better utilize transit services.

## **METROPOLITAN CITY CENTER**

### *Concepts and Principles*

UGA-27. Metropolitan City Centers function as anchors within the region for a high density mix of business, residential, public, cultural and recreational uses, and day and night activity. They are characterized by their historic role as the central business districts and regional centers of commerce. Metropolitan City Centers may also serve national or international roles.

### *Design*

UGA-28. Metropolitan City Centers shall plan for a development pattern that will provide a successful mix of uses and densities that will efficiently support high capacity transit and shall plan to meet the following criteria:

- 28.1 a minimum of 50 employees per gross acre of non-residential lands;
- 28.2 a minimum of 15 households per gross acre;
- 28.3 a minimum of 30,000 employees; and
- 28.4 not exceed a maximum of 1-1/2 square miles in size.

### *Transportation, Parking and Circulation*

UGA-29. Metropolitan City Centers shall be planned to have fast and frequent high capacity transit and other forms of transit.

UGA-30. A Metropolitan City Center shall meet at minimum the following criteria for consideration as a candidate for countywide center:

- 30.1 Area: up to 1-1/2 square miles in size;
- 30.2 Capital Facilities: served by sanitary sewers;
- 30.3 Employment: a minimum of 25 employees per gross acre of non-residential lands with a minimum of 15,000 employees;
- 30.4 Population: a minimum of ten households per gross acre; and
- 30.5 Transit: serve as a focal point for regional and local transit services.

## **REGIONAL GROWTH CENTER**

### *Concepts and Principles*

UGA-31. Regional Growth Centers are locations that include a dense mix of business, commercial, residential and cultural activity within a compact area. Regional Growth Centers are targeted for employment and residential growth, and provide excellent transportation service, including fast, convenient high capacity transit service, as well as investment in major public amenities.

### *Design Features of Centers*

UGA-32. Regional Growth Centers shall plan to meet the following criteria:

- 32.1 A minimum of 25 employees per gross acre of non-residential lands; and
- 32.2 A minimum of 10 households per gross acre; and/or
- 32.3 A minimum of 15,000 employees; and
- 32.4 Not to exceed a maximum of 1-1/2 square miles in size; and
- 32.5 Planning policies recognizing the need to receive a significant share of the regional growth.

### *Transportation, Parking and Circulation*

UGA-33. Regional Growth Centers shall plan to have fast and frequent high capacity transit, as well as other forms of transit.

UGA-34. A Regional Growth Center shall meet at a minimum the following criteria for consideration as a candidate for countywide center:

- 34.1 Area: up to 1-1/2 square miles in size;
- 34.2 Capital Facilities: served by sanitary sewers;
- 34.3 Employment: a minimum of 2,000 employees;
- 34.4 Population: a minimum of seven households per gross acre; and
- 34.5 Transit: serve as a focal point for regional and local transit services.

## **COUNTYWIDE CENTER**

### *Concepts and Principles*

UGA-35. Countywide Centers are local focal points where people come together for a variety of activities, including business, shopping, living and recreation. These centers may include the core of small to medium-sized cities and may also be located in unincorporated areas. Often Countywide Centers include a strong public presence because they are the location of city hall, main street, and other public spaces. Countywide Centers are also potentially candidates for designation as regional centers.

### *Design Features of Centers*

UGA-36. Countywide Centers shall be characterized by a compact urban form that includes a moderately dense mix of locally-oriented retail, jobs and housing that promotes walking, transit usage and community activity.

36.1 Countywide Centers shall be developed at a higher density than surrounding urban areas to take advantage of connecting centers.

36.2 Small-scale forms of intensification such as accessory housing units and development of vacant lots and parking lots help achieve the qualities of centers while preserving neighborhood character.

UGA-37. Countywide Centers shall plan for a development pattern that will provide a successful mix of uses and densities that will efficiently support transit. Each Countywide Center shall plan to meet the following criteria:

37.1 A minimum of 15 employees per gross acre of non-residential lands;

37.2 A minimum of 7 households per gross acre;

37.3 A minimum of 2,000 employees; and

37.4 Not to exceed a maximum of 1 square mile in size.

### *Transportation, Parking and Circulation*

UGA-38. At a minimum, Countywide Centers shall plan to be served by public transit and/or ferries which connect them to other centers, to surrounding residential communities, and to the regional high capacity transit system. Countywide Centers should have direct connections to high capacity local and regional transit hubs.

UGA-39. Minimum criteria for designation as Countywide Center:

39.1 Area: up to one square mile in size;



- 39.2 Capital Facilities: served by sanitary sewers;
- 39.3 Employment: a minimum of 1,000 employees;
- 39.4 Population: a minimum of six households per gross acre; and
- 39.5 Transit: serve as a focal point for local transit services.

## **MANUFACTURING/INDUSTRIAL CENTER**

### *Concepts and Principles*

UGA-40. Manufacturing/Industrial Centers shall be locally determined and designated based on the following steps:

- 40.1 Consistency with specific criteria for Manufacturing/Industrial Centers adopted within the Countywide Planning Policies;
- 40.2 Consideration of the Center's location in the County and region, especially relative to existing and proposed transportation facilities;
- 40.3 Consideration of the total number of Manufacturing/Industrial Centers in the County that are needed over the next twenty years based on projected need for manufacturing/industrial land to satisfy regional projections of demand for manufacturing/industrial land uses;
- 40.4 Environmental analysis which shall include demonstration that the jurisdiction is capable of concurrent service to new development; and
- 40.5 Adoption within the jurisdiction's comprehensive plan of the center's designation and provisions to ensure that job growth targeted to the Manufacturing/Industrial Center is achieved.

### *Design Features of Centers*

UGA-41. Manufacturing/Industrial Centers shall be characterized by the following:

- 41.1 Clearly defined geographic boundaries;
- 41.2 Intensity of land uses sufficient to support alternatives to single-occupant vehicle use;
- 41.3 Direct access to regional highway, rail, air and/or waterway systems for the movement of goods;

- 41.4 Provisions to prohibit housing; and
- 41.5 Identified transportation linkages to high-density housing areas.

UGA-42. Provisions to achieve targeted employment growth should include:

- 42.1 Preservation and encouragement of the aggregation of vacant land parcels sized for manufacturing/industrial uses;
- 42.2 Prohibition of land uses which are not compatible with manufacturing/industrial, manufacturing/industrial supportive, and advanced technology uses;
- 42.3 Limiting the size and number of offices and retail uses and allowing only as an accessory use to serve the needs of employees within centers; and
- 42.4 Reuse and intensification of the land.

*Transportation, Parking and Circulation*

UGA-43. Transportation network within Manufacturing/Industrial Centers should provide for the needs of freight movement and employees by ensuring a variety of transportation modes such as transit, rail, and trucking facilities.

UGA-44. The transportation system within Manufacturing/Industrial Centers shall be built to accommodate truck traffic and acceleration. Review of projects should consider infrastructure enhancements such as:

- 44.1 turn lanes and turn pockets to allow turning vehicles to move out of through traffic lanes;
- 44.2 designing turn lanes with a width to allow freight vehicles to turn without interrupting the flow of traffic in other lanes;
- 44.3 designing the far side of intersections with acceleration lanes for trucking vehicles and heavy loads to facilitate traffic flow;
- 44.4 constructing climbing lanes where necessary to allow for slow moving vehicles;
- 44.5 providing off-street truck loading facilities to separate goods loading and unloading; and
- 44.6 arterial grade separations with rail freight and designation of Heavy Haul corridors or truck only lanes.

*Implementation Strategies*

UGA-45. All jurisdictions will support transportation capital improvement projects which support access and movement of goods to Manufacturing/Industrial Centers.

UGA-46. Jurisdictions having a designated Manufacturing/Industrial Center shall:

- 46.1 Plan for and fund capital facility improvement projects which support the movement of goods;
- 46.2 Coordinate with utility providers to ensure that utility facilities are available to serve such centers;
- 46.3 Provide buffers around the center to reduce conflicts with adjacent land uses;
- 46.4 Facilitate land assembly;
- 46.5 Assist in recruiting appropriate businesses; and
- 46.6 Encourage employers to participate in commute trip reduction program.

UGA-47. A Manufacturing/Industrial Center shall meet at a minimum the following criteria for consideration as a candidate for Countywide Center:

- 47.1 Capital Facilities: served by sanitary sewers;
- 47.2 Employment: a minimum of 7,500 jobs and/or 2,000 truck trips per day; and
- 47.3 Transportation: within one mile of a state or federal highway or national rail line.

**Prioritization of Funding for Centers**

UGA-48. Regional and countywide transportation and economic development funds should be prioritized for centers and transportation and infrastructure servicing centers in Pierce County that have been designated regionally; it is also appropriate for countywide and local funding to be directed to centers and transportation and infrastructure servicing centers designated exclusively at the countywide level or identified locally by a jurisdiction.