

## 2021 Countywide Planning Policies Update

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Subject: **Proposed Changes To Countywide Planning Policies (CPP) Policies**

The undersigned King County Rural Area Unincorporated Area Councils / Unincorporated Area Associations / Organizations share the goal to “Keep the Rural Area Rural.”

Herein, as part of the ongoing **2021 CPP Update**, we present proposed changes to existing 2012 (as amended in 2016) *CPP Policies*. It is our goal to help inform the drafting of Policy changes to be presented to the King County Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC) at its January 27 meeting.

Our proposed changes are shown in **yellow highlighted red**. Our comments and/or supporting rationale are shown in **YELLOW HIGHLIGHTED ALL CAPS BOLD, ITALIC UNDERLINED RED**.

Should you have any questions, please contact our undersigned CPP Coordinator. Thank you.

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### General Comments

**WE DO NOT SEE ANYTHING ANALOGOUS TO “Regional Growth Strategy Policies” (pp. 48-49) and “Regional Growth Strategy Actions”—BOTH “Regional” AND “Local” (pp. 49-51) IN VISION 2050.**

**WE AGREE A SEPARATE CLIMATE CHANGE SUBSECTION SHOULD BE ADDED. IT SHOULD INCLUDE, AMONG OTHER THINGS, “VISION 2050” “CC-Action-3: Policies and Actions to Address Climate Change” (p. 75).**

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## Specific Comments

### 1 ENVIRONMENT

**Overarching Goal:** The quality of the natural environment in King County is restored and protected for future generations.

#### **Environmental Sustainability**

Local governments have a key role in shaping sustainable communities by integrating sustainable development and business practices with ecological, social, and economic concerns. Local governments also play a pivotal role in ensuring environmental justice by addressing environmental impacts on minority and low-income populations and by pursuing fairness in the application of policies and regulations.

**EN-1** Incorporate environmental protection and restoration efforts into local comprehensive plans to ensure that the quality of the natural environment and its contributions to human health and vitality are sustained now and for future generations. **Embed such efforts into permit application reviews and permit condition impositions.**

**EN-2** Encourage low impact development approaches for managing stormwater, protecting water quality, minimizing flooding and erosion, protecting habitat, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

**EN-3** Encourage the transition to a sustainable energy future by reducing demand through planning for efficiency and conservation and by meeting reduced needs from sustainable sources.

**EN-4** Identify and preserve **through community involvement** regionally significant open space networks in both Urban and Rural Areas. **Create goals and policies that address local open space conservation and access needs as identified in the Regional Open Space Conservation Plan.** Develop strategies and funding to protect lands that provide the following valuable functions:

- Physical or visual separation delineating growth boundaries or providing buffers between incompatible uses;
- Active and passive outdoor recreation opportunities;
- Wildlife habitat and migration corridors that preserve and enhance ecosystem resiliency in the face of urbanization and climate change;
- Preservation of ecologically sensitive, scenic or cultural resources;
- Urban green space, habitats, and ecosystems;
- Forest resources; **and**
- Food production potential; **and**
- **Connection of underserved, low income, and communities of color to open space in their neighborhoods.**

**EN-5** Identify and mitigate unavoidable negative impacts of public actions that disproportionately affect people of color and low-income populations.

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## ***Earth and Habitat***

Healthy ecosystems and environments are vital to the sustainability of all plant and animal life, including humans. Protection of biodiversity in all its forms and across all landscapes is critical to continued prosperity and high quality of life in King County. The value of biodiversity to sustaining long-term productivity and both economic and ecological benefits is evident in fisheries, forestry, and agriculture. For ecosystems to be healthy and provide healthful benefits to people, local governments must prevent negative human impacts and work to ensure that this ecosystem remain diverse and productive over time. With the impending effects of climate change, maintaining biodiversity becomes even more critical to the preservation and resilience of resource-based activities and to many social and ecological systems. Protection of individual species, including Chinook salmon, also plays an important role in sustaining biodiversity and quality of life within the county. Since 2000, local governments, citizens, tribes, conservation districts, non-profit groups, and federal and state fisheries managers have cooperated to develop and implement watershed-based salmon conservation plans, known as Water Resource Inventory Area plans, to conserve and restore habitat for Chinook salmon today and for future generations.

**EN-6** Coordinate approaches and standards for defining and protecting critical areas especially where such areas and impacts to them cross jurisdictional boundaries.

**EN-7** Encourage basin-wide approaches to wetland protection, emphasizing preservation and enhancement of the highest quality wetlands and wetland systems.

**EN-8** Develop an integrated and comprehensive approach to managing fish and wildlife habitat conservation, especially protecting endangered, threatened, and sensitive species.

**EN-9** Implement salmon habitat protection and restoration priorities in approved Water Resource Inventory Area plans.

## ***Flood Hazards***

Flooding is a natural process that affects human communities and natural environments in King County. Managing floodplain development and conserving aquatic habitats are the main challenges for areas affected by flooding. The King County Flood Control District exists to protect public health and safety, regional economic centers, public and private property and transportation corridors. Local governments also have responsibility for flood control within their boundaries.

**EN-10** Coordinate and fund flood hazard management efforts through the King County Flood Control District.

**EN-11** Work cooperatively to meet regulatory standards for floodplain development as these standards are updated for consistency with relevant federal requirements including those related to the Endangered Species Act.

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**EN-12** Work cooperatively with the federal, state, and regional agencies and forums to develop regional levee maintenance standards that ensure public safety and protect habitat.

### ***Water Resources***

The flow and quality of water is impacted by water withdrawals, land development, stormwater management, and climate change. Since surface and ground waters do not respect political boundaries, cross-jurisdictional coordination of water is required to ensure its functions and uses are protected and sustained. The Puget Sound Partnership was created by the Washington State Legislature as the state agency with the responsibility for assuring the preservation and recovery of Puget Sound and the freshwater systems flowing into the Sound. King County plays a key role in these efforts because of its large population and its location in Central Puget Sound.

**EN-13** Collaborate with the Puget Sound Partnership to implement the Puget Sound Action Agenda and to coordinate land use **permitting** and transportation plans and actions for the benefit of Puget Sound and its watersheds.

**EN-14** Manage natural drainage systems to improve water quality and habitat functions, minimize erosion and sedimentation, protect public health, reduce flood risks, and moderate peak storm water runoff rates. Work cooperatively among local, regional, state, national and tribal jurisdictions to establish, monitor and enforce consistent standards for managing streams and wetlands throughout drainage basins.

**EN-15** Establish a multi-jurisdictional approach for funding and monitoring water quality, quantity, biological conditions, and outcome measures and for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of monitoring efforts.

### ***Air Quality and Climate Change***

Greenhouse gas emissions are resulting in a changing and increasingly variable climate. King County's snow-fed water supply is especially vulnerable to a changing climate. Additionally, the patterns of storm events and river and stream flow patterns are changing and our shorelines are susceptible to rising sea levels. Carbon dioxide reacts with seawater and reduces the water's pH, threatening the food web in Puget Sound. While local governments can individually work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, more significant emission reductions can only be accomplished through countywide coordination of land use patterns and promotion of transportation systems that provide practical alternatives to single occupancy vehicles.

Efficient energy consumption is both a mitigation and an adaptation strategy. Local governments can improve energy efficiency through the development of new infrastructure as well as the maintenance and updating of existing infrastructure.

**EN-16** Plan for land use patterns and transportation systems that minimize air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, including:

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- Maintaining or exceeding existing standards for carbon monoxide, ozone, and particulates;
- Directing growth to Urban Centers and other mixed use/ high density locations that support mass transit, encourage non-motorized modes of travel and reduce trip lengths;
- Facilitating modes of travel other than single occupancy vehicles including transit, walking, bicycling, and carpooling;
- Incorporating energy-saving strategies in infrastructure planning and design;
- Encouraging inter-jurisdictional planning to ensure efficient use of transportation infrastructure and modes of travel;
- Encouraging new development to use low emission construction practices, low or zero net life-time energy requirements and “green” building techniques; and
- Increasing the use of low emission vehicles, such as efficient electric-powered vehicles.

**EN-17** Establish a countywide greenhouse gas reduction target that meets or exceeds the statewide reduction requirement that is stated as the 2050 goal of a 50 percent reduction below 1990 levels.

**EN-18** Reduce countywide sources of greenhouse gas emissions, compared to a 2007 baseline, by 25% by 2020, 50% by 2030, and 80% by 2050. Assuming 1% annual population growth, these targets translate to per capita emissions of approximately 8.5 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MT-CO<sub>2</sub>e) by 2020, 5 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e, and 1.5 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e by 2050. **THE 1 % ANNUAL POPULATION GROWTH IS JUST FOR THE RURAL AREA. THE OVERALL COUNTY GROWTH, WHICH IS MUCH LARGER, MUST BE ACCOUNTED FOR HERE. ALSO, IS 2007 STILL THE BASELINE YEAR? FINALLY, “2020” SHOULD BE REMOVES FROM THE POLICY AS IT IS NOW PASSED. TO THAT END, IS “50% by 2030” STILL ACHIEVABLE?**

**EN-18A** King County shall assess and report countywide greenhouse gas emissions associated with resident, business, and other local government buildings, on road vehicles and solid waste at least every **two years one year**. King County shall also update its comprehensive greenhouse gas emissions inventory that quantifies all direct local sources of greenhouse gas emissions as well as emissions associated with local consumption at least every **five two** years. **AGAIN, WE EXPECT BOTH EN-17 & EN-18 WILL BE UPDATED TO REFLECT THE MOST RECENT GOALS AND DATA AVAILABLE, E.G., GHG Emissions in King County: Inventory, Contribution Analysis, and Wedge Analysis (PUBLISHED JULY IN 2019) AND “VISION 2050:” (ADOPTED IN OCTOBER 2020).**

**EN-19** Promote energy efficiency, conservation methods and sustainable energy sources to support climate change reduction goals.

**EN-20** Plan and implement land use **permitting**, transportation, and building practices that will greatly reduce consumption of fossil fuels.

**EN-21** Formulate and implement climate change adaptation strategies that address the impacts of climate change to public health and safety, the economy, public and private infrastructure, water resources, **forestry resources**, and habitat.

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## 2 DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

**WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE SEPARATE “URBAN COMMUNITIES AND CENTERS” AND “RURAL AREAS AND NATURAL RESOURCE LANDS” CHAPTERS, MUCH LIKE AS IS DONE IN THE KING COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (CHAPTERS 2 AND 3, RESPECTIVELY). THIS WOULD RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF PRESERVING/PROTECTING THE RURAL AREA.**

The policies in this chapter address the location, types, design and intensity of land uses that are desired in King County and its cities. They guide implementation of the vision for physical development within the county. The policies also provide a framework for how to focus improvements to transportation, public services, the environment, and affordable housing, as well as how to incorporate concerns about climate change and public health into planning for new growth. Development patterns policies are at the core of growth management efforts in King County; they further the goals of VISION 2040, and recognize the variety of local communities that will be taking action to achieve those goals.

**Overarching Goal:** Growth in King County occurs in a compact, centers-focused pattern that uses land and infrastructure efficiently and that protects Rural and Resource Lands.

The Countywide Planning Policies designate land as Urban, Rural, or Resource. The Land Use Map in Appendix 1 shows the Urban Growth Area boundary and Urban, Rural, and Resource Lands within King County. Further sections of this chapter provide more detailed descriptions and guidance for planning within each of the three designations.

**DP-1** All lands within King County are designated as:

- Urban land within the Urban Growth Area, where new growth is focused and accommodated;
- Rural land, where farming, forestry, and other resource uses are protected, and very low-density residential uses, and small-scale non-residential uses are allowed; or
- Resource land, where permanent regionally significant agricultural, forestry, and mining lands are preserved.

### **Urban Growth Area**

The Urban Growth Area encompasses all of the urban designated lands within King County. These lands include all cities as well as a portion of unincorporated King County. Consistent with the Growth Management Act and VISION 2040, urban lands are intended to be the focus of future growth that is compact, includes a mix of uses, and is well-served by public infrastructure. Urban lands also include a network of open space where ongoing maintenance is a local as well as a regional concern.

The pattern of growth within the Urban Growth Area implements the Regional Growth Strategy through allocation of targets to local jurisdictions. The targets create an obligation to plan and provide zoning for future potential growth, but do not obligate a jurisdiction to guarantee that a given number of housing units will be built or jobs added during the planning period.

Several additional elements in the Development Patterns chapter reinforce the vision and targeted growth pattern for the Urban Growth Area. Procedures and criteria for amending the Urban Growth

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Area boundary address a range of objectives and ensure that changes balance the needs for land to accommodate growth with the overarching goal of preventing sprawl within the county. A review and evaluation program provides feedback for the county and cities on the effectiveness of their efforts to accommodate and achieve the desired land use pattern. Joint planning facilitates the transition of governance of the Urban Growth Area from the county to cities, consistent with the Growth Management Act.

Urban form and development within the Urban Growth Area are important settings to provide people with choices to engage in more physical activity, eat healthy food, and minimize exposure to harmful environments and substances. In particular, the quality and safety of walking and biking routes children use to reach school is known to affect their health.

**Goal Statement:** The Urban Growth Area accommodates growth consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy and growth targets through land use patterns and practices that create vibrant, healthy, and sustainable communities.

### **Urban Lands**

**DP-2** Promote a pattern of compact development within the Urban Growth Area that includes housing at a range of urban densities, commercial and industrial development, and other urban facilities, including medical, governmental, institutional, and educational uses and parks and open space. The Urban Growth Area will include a mix of uses that are convenient to and support public transportation in order to reduce reliance on single occupancy vehicle travel for most daily activities.

**DP-3** Efficiently develop and use residential, commercial, and manufacturing land in the Urban Growth Area to create healthy and vibrant urban communities with a full range of urban services, and to protect the long-term viability of the Rural Area and Resource Lands. Promote the efficient use of land within the Urban Growth Area by using methods such as:

- Directing concentrations of housing and employment growth to designated centers;
- Encouraging compact development with a mix of compatible residential, commercial, and community activities;
- Maximizing the use of the existing capacity for housing and employment; and
- Coordinating plans for land use, transportation, capital facilities and services.

**DP-4** Concentrate housing and employment growth within the designated Urban Growth Area. Focus housing growth within countywide designated Urban Centers and locally designated local centers. Focus employment growth within countywide designated Urban and Manufacturing/Industrial Centers and within locally designated local centers.

**DP-5** Decrease greenhouse gas emissions through land use strategies that promote a mix of housing, employment, and services at densities sufficient to promote walking, bicycling, transit, and other alternatives to auto travel.

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**DP-6** Plan for development patterns that promote public health by providing all residents with opportunities for safe and convenient daily physical activity, social connectivity, and protection from exposure to harmful substances and environments.

**DP-7** Plan for development patterns that promote safe and healthy routes to and from public schools.

**DP-8** Increase access to healthy food in communities throughout the Urban Growth Area by encouraging the location of healthy food purveyors, such as grocery stores and farmers markets, and community food gardens in proximity to residential uses and transit facilities.

**DP-9** Designate Urban Separators as permanent low-density incorporated and unincorporated areas within the Urban Growth Area. Urban Separators are intended to protect Resource Lands, the Rural Area, and environmentally sensitive areas, and create open space and wildlife corridors within and between communities while also providing public health, environmental, visual, and recreational benefits. Changes to Urban Separators are made pursuant to the Countywide Planning Policies amendment process described in policy G-1. Designated Urban Separators within cities and unincorporated areas are shown in the Urban Separators Map in Appendix 3.

**DP-10** Discourage incompatible land uses from locating adjacent to general aviation airports throughout the county.

### **Growth Targets**

**DP-11** GMPC shall allocate residential and employment growth to each city and unincorporated urban area in the county. This allocation is predicated on:

- Accommodating the most recent 20-year population projection from the state Office of Financial Management and the most recent 20-year regional employment forecast from the Puget Sound Regional Council;
- Planning for a pattern of growth that is consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy including focused growth within cities with countywide designated centers and within other larger cities, limited development in the Rural Area, and protection of designated Resource Lands;
- Efficiently using existing zoned and future planned development capacity as well as the capacity of existing and planned funded improvements to infrastructure, including road, stormwater, sewer and water systems;
- Promoting a land use pattern that can be served by a connected network of public transportation services and facilities and pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and amenities;
- Improving the jobs/housing balance within the region and the county;

**THIS IS AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT PLANNING CONCEPT, BUT ONE WHERE THE FOLLOWTHROUGH HAS PROVEN TO BE DIFFICULT. CITIES PLAN FOR BOTH HOUSING AND COMMERCIAL GROWTH, BUT OFTEN ATTRACT THE FORMER, WHILE THE LATTER LAGS BEHIND OR, WORSE, NEVER MATERIALIZES AT A LEVEL THAT PROVIDES THE CITY AN ADEQUATE TAX BASE TO PROVIDE NEEDED SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE FOR BOTH RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES. THIS ESPECIALLY IS PREVALENT FOR CITIES ALONG THE EDGE OF THE URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY (I.E., THE "URBAN FRINGE"). WHICH QUITE OFTEN BUSINESSES HAVE TENDED TO AVOID (DUE TO LOWER POPULATION DENSITIES,**

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**LONGER SUPPLY LINES, ETC.) OR ATTRACT PRIMARILY RETAIL BUSINESSES THAT OFTEN PROVIDE ONLY LOW-PAYING JOBS FURTHER ADVERSELY IMPACT THE TAX BASE. AS A RESULT, SUCH CITIES EXHIBIT A GREAT IMBALANCE, I.E., BEING HOUSING RICH AND EMPLOYMENT POOR. THIS THEN RESULTS IN EVEN MORE COMMUTERS TRAVELING EVEN LONGER DISTANCES. CONSEQUENTLY, WE AGREE POLICIES NEED TO ENCOURAGE HOUSING IN JOB-RICH LOCATIONS AND NOT HOPE FOR JOBS TO MATERIALIZE IN HOUSING-RICH LOCATIONS, WHICH OFTEN APPEARS TO BE WHAT SOME CITIES CONTINUE TO DO.**

- Promoting sufficient opportunities for housing and employment development throughout the Urban Growth Area;
- Allocating growth to individual Potential Annexation Areas within the urban unincorporated area proportionate to its share of unincorporated capacity for housing and employment growth.

### DP-12 GMPC shall:

- Update housing and employment targets periodically to provide jurisdictions with up-to-date growth allocations to be incorporated in state-mandated comprehensive plan updates;
- Adopt housing and employment growth targets in the Countywide Planning Policies pursuant to the procedure described in policy G-1; and
- Adjust targets administratively upon annexation of unincorporated Potential Annexation Areas by cities. Growth targets for the 2006-2031 planning period are shown in table DP-1.

### DP-13 All jurisdictions **including special purpose districts** shall plan to accommodate housing and employment targets. This includes:

- Adopting comprehensive plans and zoning regulations that provide capacity for residential, commercial, and industrial uses that is sufficient to meet 20-year growth needs and is consistent with the desired growth pattern described in VISION 2040;
- **Adopting local Coordinating water, sewer, transportation and other infrastructure plans and funding requirements that are consistent with regional plans investments among agencies, including special purpose districts;** and
- Transferring and accommodating unincorporated area housing and employment targets as annexations occur.
- **Identifying infrastructure capacity needs both within and beyond the jurisdiction to accommodate local growth targets at the 6-, 10-, and 20- year horizons.**

Table DP-1: *King County Jurisdiction Growth Targets 2006-2031*

### Amendments to the Urban Growth Area

The following policies guide the decision-making process by both the GMPC and King County regarding proposals to expand the Urban Growth Area.

**DP-14** Review the Urban Growth Area at least every ten years. In this review consider monitoring reports and other available data. As a result of this review, and based on the criteria established in policies DP-15 and DP-16, King County may propose and then the Growth Management Planning Coun-

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cil may recommend amendments to the Countywide Planning Policies and King County Comprehensive Plan that make changes to the Urban Growth Area boundary.

**DP-15** Allow amendment of the Urban Growth Area only when the following steps have been satisfied:

- a) The proposed expansion is under review by the County as part of an amendment process of the King County Comprehensive Plan;
- b) King County submits the proposal to the Growth Management Planning Council for the purposes of review and recommendation to the King County Council on the proposed amendment to the Urban Growth Area;
- c) The King County Council approves or denies the proposed amendment; and
- d) If approved by the King County Council, the proposed amendment is ratified by the cities following the procedures set forth in policy G-1.

**DP-16** Allow expansion of the Urban Growth Area only if at least one of the following criteria is met:

- a) A countywide analysis determines that the current Urban Growth Area, **in total**, is insufficient in size and additional land is needed to accommodate the housing and employment growth targets, including institutional and other non-residential uses, and there are no other reasonable measures, such as increasing density or rezoning existing urban land, that would avoid the need to expand the Urban Growth Area; or
- b) A proposed expansion of the Urban Growth Area is accompanied by dedication of permanent open space to the King County Open Space System, where the acreage of the proposed open space
  - 1) is at least four times the acreage of the land added to the Urban Growth Area;
  - 2) is contiguous with the Urban Growth Area with at least a portion of the dedicated open space surrounding the proposed Urban Growth Area expansion; and
  - 3) Preserves high quality habitat, critical areas, or unique features that contribute to the band of permanent open space along the edge of the Urban Growth Area; or
- c) The area is currently a King County park being transferred to a city to be maintained as a park in perpetuity or is park land that has been owned by a city since 1994 and is less than thirty acres in size.

**DP-17** If expansion of the Urban Growth Area is warranted based on the criteria in DP-16(a) or DP-16(b), add land to the Urban Growth Area only if it meets all of the following criteria:

- a) Is **adjacent contiguous** to the existing Urban Growth Area;
- b) For expansions based on DP-16(a) only, is no larger than necessary to promote compact development that accommodates anticipated growth needs;
- c) Can be efficiently provided with urban services and does not require supportive facilities located in **or transited through** the Rural Area;
- d) Follows topographical features that form natural boundaries, such as rivers and ridge lines and does not extend beyond natural boundaries, such as watersheds, that impede the provision of urban services;
- e) Is not currently designated as Resource Land;
- f) is sufficiently free of environmental constraints to be able to support urban development without significant adverse environmental impacts, unless the area is designated as an Urban Separator by interlocal agreement between King County and the annexing city; and

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- g) Is subject to an agreement between King County and the city or town adjacent to the area that the area will be added to the city's Potential Annexation Area. Upon ratification of the amendment, the Countywide Planning Policies will reflect both the Urban Growth Area change and Potential Annexation Area change.

**DP-18** Allow redesignation of Urban land currently within the Urban Growth Area to Rural land outside of the Urban Growth Area if the land is not needed to accommodate projected urban growth, is not served by public sewers, is contiguous with the Rural Area, and:

- a) Is not characterized by urban development;
- b) Is currently developed with a low density lot pattern that cannot be realistically redeveloped at an urban density; or
- c) Is characterized by environmentally sensitive areas making it inappropriate for higher density development.

### **Review and Evaluation Program**

The following policies guide the decision-buildable lands program conducted by the GMPC and King County.

**DP-19** Conduct a buildable lands program that meets or exceeds the review and evaluation requirements of the Growth Management Act. The purposes of the buildable lands program are:

- To collect and analyze data on development activity, land supply, and capacity for residential, commercial, and industrial land uses;
- To evaluate the consistency of actual development densities with current comprehensive plans; and
- To evaluate the sufficiency of land capacity to accommodate growth for the remainder of the planning period.

**DP-20** If necessary based on the findings of a periodic buildable lands evaluation report, adopt reasonable measures, other than expansion of the Urban Growth Area, to increase land capacity for housing and employment growth within the Urban Growth Area, **where sufficient urban infrastructure exists or can easily be supplied**, by making more efficient use of urban land consistent with current plans and targets.

### **Joint Planning and Annexation**

**DP-21** Coordinate the preparation of comprehensive plans among adjacent and other affected jurisdictions as a means to avoid or mitigate the potential cross-border impacts of urban development **and to ensure our transportation infrastructure is continuous and multipurpose. AS THIS DOES NOT ALWAYS HAPPEN. "TEETH" ARE NEEDED.**

**DP-22** Designate Potential Annexation Areas in city comprehensive plans and adopt them in the Countywide Planning Policies. Ensure that Potential Annexation Areas do not overlap or leave unincorporated urban islands between cities.

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**DP-23** Facilitate the annexation of unincorporated areas within the Urban Growth Area that are already urbanized and are within a city's Potential Annexation Area in order to provide urban services to those areas. Annexation is preferred over incorporation.

**DP-24** Allow cities to annex territory only within their designated Potential Annexation Area as shown in the Potential Annexation Areas Map in Appendix 2. Phase annexations to coincide with the ability of cities to coordinate the provision of a full range of urban services to areas to be annexed.

**DP-25** Within the North Highline unincorporated area, where Potential Annexation Areas overlapped prior to January 1, 2009, strive to establish alternative non-overlapping Potential Annexation Area boundaries through a process of negotiation. Absent a negotiated resolution, a city may file a Notice of Intent to Annex with the Boundary Review Board for King County for territory within its designated portion of a Potential Annexation Area overlap as shown in the Potential Annexation Areas Map in Appendix 2 and detailed in the city's comprehensive plan after the following steps have been taken:

- a) The city proposing annexation has, at least 30 days prior to filing a Notice of Intent to annex with the Boundary Review Board, contacted in writing the cities with the PAA overlap and the county to provide notification of the city's intent to annex and to request a meeting or formal mediation to discuss boundary alternatives, and;
- b) The cities with the Potential Annexation Area overlap and the county have either:
  - i) Agreed to meet but failed to develop a negotiated settlement to the overlap within 60 days of receipt of the notice, or
  - ii) Declined to meet or failed to respond in writing within 30 days of receipt of the notice.

**DP-26** Develop agreements between King County and cities with Potential Annexation Areas to apply city-compatible development standards that will guide land development prior to annexation.

**DP-27** Evaluate proposals to annex or incorporate unincorporated **urban** land based on the following criteria:

- a) Conformance with Countywide Planning Policies including the Urban Growth Area boundary;
- b) The ability of the annexing or incorporating jurisdiction to provide urban services at standards equal to or better than the current service providers; and
- c) Annexation or incorporation in a manner that will avoid creating unincorporated islands of development.

**DP-28** Resolve the issue of unincorporated road islands within or between cities. Roadways and shared streets within or between cities, but still under King County jurisdiction, should be annexed by adjacent cities. **ARE THERE ANY "ROADWAYS" "BETWEEN CITIES" "UNDER KING COUNTY JURISDICTION" (E.G., ISSAQUAH-HOBART-RAVENSDALE, BLACK DIAMOND RD) THAT HAVE BEEN SO "ANNEXED" ? IS ANYTHING LIKE THIS IN THE KCCP ?**

### **Centers**

A centers strategy is the linchpin for King County to achieve the Regional Growth Strategy as well as a range of other objectives, particularly providing a land use framework for an efficient and effective

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regional transit system. Countywide designation of Urban Centers and local designation of local centers provide for locations of mixed-use zoning, infrastructure, and concentrations of services and amenities to accommodate both housing and employment growth. Manufacturing/Industrial Centers preserve lands for family-wage jobs in basic industries and trade and provide areas where that employment may grow in the future.

**Goal Statement:** King County grows in a manner that reinforces and expands upon a system of existing and planned central places within which concentrated residential communities and economic activities can flourish.

### **Urban Centers**

**DP-29** Concentrate housing and employment growth within designated Urban Centers.

**DP-30** Designate Urban Centers in the Countywide Planning Policies where city-nominated locations meet the criteria in policies DP-31 and DP-32 and where the city's commitments will help ensure the success of the center. Urban Centers will be limited in number and located on existing or planned high capacity transit corridors to provide a framework for targeted private and public investments that support regional land use and transportation goals. The Land Use Map in Appendix 1 shows the locations of the designated Urban Centers.

**DP-31** Allow designation of new Urban Centers where the proposed Center:

- a) Encompasses an area up to one and a half square miles; and
- b) Has adopted zoning regulations and infrastructure plans that are adequate to accommodate:
  - i) A minimum of 15,000 jobs within one-half mile of an existing or planned high-capacity transit station;
  - ii) At a minimum, an average of 50 employees per gross acre within the Urban Center; and
  - iii) At a minimum, an average of 15 housing units per gross acre within the Urban Center.

**DP-32** Adopt a map and housing and employment growth targets in city comprehensive plans for each Urban Center, and adopt policies to promote and maintain quality of life in the Center through:

- A broad mix of land uses that foster both daytime and nighttime activities and opportunities for social interaction;
- A range of affordable and healthy housing choices;
- Historic preservation and adaptive reuse of historic places;
- Parks and public open spaces that are accessible and beneficial to all residents in the Urban Center;
- Strategies to increase tree canopy within the Urban Center and incorporate low-impact development measures to minimize stormwater runoff;
- Facilities to meet human service needs;
- Superior urban design which reflects the local community vision for compact urban development;
- Pedestrian and bicycle mobility, transit use, and linkages between these modes;

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- Planning for complete streets to provide safe and inviting access to multiple travel modes, especially bicycle and pedestrian travel; and
- Parking management and other strategies that minimize trips made by single-occupant vehicle, especially during peak commute periods.

**DP-33** Form the land use foundation for a regional high-capacity transit system through the designation of a system of Urban Centers. Urban Centers should receive high priority for the location of transit service.

### **Manufacturing/ Industrial Centers**

**DP-34** Concentrate manufacturing and industrial employment within countywide designated Manufacturing/ Industrial Centers. The Land Use Map in Appendix 1 shows the locations of the designated Manufacturing/Industrial Centers. **MICs ARE NOT SHOWN ON THE LAND-USE MAP.**

**DP-35** Adopt in city comprehensive plans a map and employment growth targets for each Manufacturing/ Industrial Center and adopt policies and regulations for the Center to:

- Provide zoning and infrastructure adequate to accommodate a minimum of 10,000 jobs;
- Preserve and enhance sites that are appropriate for manufacturing or other industrial uses;
- Strictly limit residential uses and discourage land uses that are not compatible with manufacturing and industrial uses, such as by imposing low maximum size limits on offices and retail uses that are not accessory to an industrial use;
- Facilitate the mobility of employees by transit and the movement of goods by truck, rail, air or waterway, as appropriate;
- Provide for capital facility improvement projects which support the movement of goods and manufacturing/industrial operations;
- Ensure that utilities are available to serve the center;
- Avoid conflicts with adjacent land uses to ensure the continued viability of the land in the Manufacturing/ Industrial Center for manufacturing and industrial activities; and
- Attract and retain the types of businesses that will ensure economic growth and stability.

**DP-36** Minimize or mitigate potential health impacts of the activities in Manufacturing/ Industrial Centers on residential communities, schools, open space, and other public facilities.

**DP-37** Designate additional Manufacturing/ Industrial Centers in the Countywide Planning Policies pursuant to the procedures described in policy G-1 based on nominations from cities and after determining that:

- a) the nominated locations meet the criteria set forth in policy DP-35 and the criteria established by the Puget Sound Regional Council for Regional Manufacturing/ Industrial Centers;
- b) the proposed center's location will promote a countywide system of Manufacturing/ Industrial Centers with the total number of centers representing a realistic growth strategy for the county; and
- c) the city's commitments will help ensure the success of the center.

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## **Local Centers**

**DP-38** Identify in comprehensive plans local centers, such as city or neighborhood centers, transit station areas, or other activity nodes, where housing, employment, and services are accommodated in a compact form and at sufficient densities to support transit service and to make efficient use of urban land.

## ***Urban Design and Historic Preservation***

The countywide vision includes elements of urban design and form intended to integrate urban development into existing built and natural environments in ways that enhance both the urban and natural settings. These elements include high quality design, context sensitive infill and redevelopment, historic preservation, and the interdependence of urban and rural and agricultural lands and uses.

**Goal statement:** The built environment in both urban and rural settings achieves a high degree of high quality design that recognizes and enhances, where appropriate, existing natural and urban settings.

**DP-39** Develop neighborhood planning and design processes that encourage infill development, redevelopment, and reuse of existing buildings and that, where appropriate based on local plans, enhance the existing community character and mix of uses.

**DP-40** Promote a high quality of design and site planning in publicly-funded and private development throughout the Urban Growth Area.

**DP-41** Preserve significant historic, archeological, cultural, architectural, artistic, and environmental features, especially where growth could place these resources at risk. Where appropriate, designate individual features or areas for protection or restoration. Encourage land use patterns and adopt regulations that protect historic resources and sustain historic community character.

**DP-42** Design new development to create and protect systems of green infrastructure, such as urban forests, parks, green roofs, and natural drainage systems, in order to reduce climate-altering pollution and increase resilience of communities to climate change impacts.

**DP-43** Design communities, neighborhoods, and individual developments using techniques that reduce heat absorption, particularly in Urban Centers.

**DP-44** Adopt design standards or guidelines that foster infill development that is compatible with the existing or desired urban character.

## ***Rural Area and Resource Lands***

The Rural Area and Resource Lands encompass all areas outside of the Urban Growth Area and include Vashon Island in Puget Sound and the area just east of the Urban Growth Area all the way to

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the crest of the Cascade Mountains. The Rural Area is characterized by low density development with a focus on activities that are dependent on the land such as small scale farming and forestry. The Rural Area also provides important environmental and habitat functions and is critical for salmon recovery. The location of the Rural Area, between the Urban Growth Area and designated Resource Lands, helps to protect commercial agriculture and timber from incompatible uses. The Rural Area, outside of the Rural Cities, is to remain in unincorporated King County and is to be provided with a rural level of service.

### **Rural Area**

**Goal Statement:** The Rural Area provides a variety of landscapes, maintains diverse low density communities, and supports rural economic activities based on sustainable stewardship of the land.

**DP-45** Limit growth in the Rural Area to prevent sprawl and the overburdening of rural services, reduce the need for new rural infrastructure, maintain rural character, and protect the natural environment. **Limit public investment in capital projects; keep focus on maintaining rural service levels; and avoid roadway expansions.**

**DP-46** Limit residential development in the Rural Area to housing at low densities that are compatible with rural character and comply with the following density guidelines:

- a) One home per 20 acres where a pattern of large lots exists and to buffer Forest Protection Districts and Agricultural Districts;
- b) One home per 10 acres where the predominant lot size is less than 20 acres; or
- c) One home per five acres where the predominant lot size is less than 10 acres.
- d) Allow limited clustering within development sites to avoid development on environmentally critical lands or on productive forest or agricultural lands, but not to exceed the density guidelines cited in (a) through (c).
- e) **Prohibit upzones; consider downzones if property owner requested. Establish clear criteria for all rural zoning categories to protect rural character and control rural development.**
- f) **Reduce subsidies for rural development by adopting impact fees for transportation, fire facilities, and other public facilities that recover capital costs of serving development.**

**DP-47** Limit the extension of urban infrastructure improvements through the Rural Area to only cases where it is necessary to serve the Urban Growth Area and where there are no other feasible alignments. Such limited extensions may be considered only if land use controls are in place to restrict uses appropriate for the Rural Area and only if access management controls are in place to prohibit tie-ins to the extended facilities.

**DP-48** Establish rural development standards to protect the natural environment by using seasonal and maximum clearing limits for vegetation, limits on the amount of impervious surface, surface water management standards that preserve natural drainage systems, water quality and groundwater recharge, and best management practices for resource-based activities.

**DP-49** Prevent or, if necessary, mitigate negative impacts of urban development to the adjacent Rural Area **and industrial-scale development within the Rural Area.**

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**DP-50** Except as provided in Appendix 5 (March 31, 2012 School Siting Task Force Report), limit new nonresidential uses located in the Rural Area to those that are demonstrated to serve the Rural Area, unless the use is dependent upon a rural location. Such uses shall be of a size, scale, and nature that is consistent with rural character.

**DP-51** Allow cities that own property in the Rural Area to enter into interlocal agreements with King County to allow the cities to provide services to the properties they own as long as the cities agree to not annex the property or serve it with sewers or any infrastructure at an urban level of service. The use of the property must be consistent with the rural land use policies in the Countywide Planning Policies and the King County Comprehensive Plan.

### **Resource Lands**

The Resource Lands are designated areas with long term commercial significance for agriculture, forestry, and mining, and are depicted in the Land Use Map in Appendix 1 as Forest Product Districts, Agricultural Production Districts, and Mineral Resource Lands. The use and designation of these lands are to be permanent, in accordance with the Growth Management Act. King County has maintained this base of agriculture and forest lands despite the rapid growth of the previous decades. The Resource Lands are to remain in unincorporated King County but their benefit and significance is felt throughout the county into the cities. Within cities, farmers markets are becoming important and sought after neighborhood amenities.

The forests of the Pacific Northwest are some of the most productive in the world and King County has retained two-thirds of the county in forest cover. Large scale forestry is a traditional land use in the eastern half of King County and remains a significant contributor to the rural economy. In addition, forests provide exceptional recreational opportunities, including downhill and cross-country skiing, mountain biking, hiking, and backpacking.

**Goal Statement:** Resource Lands are valuable assets of King County and are renowned for their productivity and sustainable management.

**DP-52** Promote and support forestry, agriculture, mining and other resource-based industries outside of the Urban Growth Area as part of a diverse and sustainable regional economy.

**DP-53** Conserve commercial agricultural and forestry resource lands primarily for their long-term productive resource value and for the open space, scenic views, wildlife habitat, and critical area protection they provide. Limit the subdivision of land so that parcels remain large enough for commercial resource production.

**DP-54** Encourage best practices in agriculture and forestry operations for long-term protection of the natural resources.

**DP-55** Prohibit annexation of lands within designated Agricultural Production Districts or within Forest Production Districts by cities.

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**DP-56** Retain the Lower Green River Agricultural Production District as a regionally designated resource that is to remain in unincorporated King County.

**DP-57** Discourage incompatible land uses adjacent to designated Resource Lands to prevent interference with their continued use for the production of agricultural, mining, or forest products.

**DP-58** Support local production and processing of food to reduce the need for long distance transport and to increase the reliability and security of local food. Promote activities and infrastructure, such as farmers markets, farm worker housing and agricultural processing facilities, that benefit both cities and farms by improving access to locally grown agricultural products.

**DP-59** Support institutional procurement policies that encourage purchases of locally grown food products.

**DP-60** Ensure that extractive industries **and other industrial-scale operations** maintain environmental quality and minimize negative impacts on adjacent lands. **Ensure full reclamation and restoration of the land after closure.**

**DP-61** Use a range of tools, including land use designations, development regulations, level-of-service standards, and transfer or purchase of development rights to preserve Rural and Resource Lands and focus urban development within the Urban Growth Area.

**WE SUPPORT THE VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THIS POLICY, BUT ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE SPECIFIC DETAILS OF ACTUAL EXAMPLES OF CLOSED MINES THAT SEEK RE-DEVELOPMENT INTO LARGE RESIDENTIAL TRACTS, WHILE STILL BEING THE SUBJECT OF THE STATE'S MODEL TOXICS CONTROL ACT (MTCA) AND REMAIN HIGHLY POLLUTED AND UNDER RIGOROUS LONG-TERM MONITORING. WE ALSO HAVE SEEN EXAMPLES WHERE MINING, MATERIALS PROCESSING, COMPOSTING FACILITIES, AND SOLID WASTE LANDFILLS HAVE EITHER BEEN EXPANDED IN FOOTPRINT OR BECOME FAR BUSIER THAN ORIGINALLY INTENDED—ALL TO THE DETRIMENT (I.E., NOISE, AIR AND WATER POLLUTION, ROAD CONGESTION, ETC.) OF NEARBY RURAL AREA RESIDENTS, THUS BECOMING MORE AND MORE INCOMPATIBLE IN THEIR RURAL LOCATIONS.**

**DP-62** Use transfer of development rights to shift potential development from the Rural Area and Resource Lands into the Urban Growth Area, especially cities. Implement transfer of development rights within King County through a partnership between the county and cities that is designed to:

- Identify rural and resource sending sites that satisfy countywide conservation goals and are consistent with regionally coordinated transfer of development rights efforts;
- Preserve rural and resource lands of compelling interest countywide and to participating cities;
- Identify appropriate transfer of development rights receiving areas within cities;
- Identify incentives for city participation in regional transfer of development rights (i.e. county-to-city transfer of development rights);
- Develop interlocal agreements that allow rural and resource land development rights to be used in city receiving areas;
- Identify and secure opportunities to fund or finance infrastructure within city transfer of development rights receiving areas; and.
- Be compatible with existing within-city transfer of development rights programs.

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**DP-63** Prohibit redesignations of resource lands (forest, agriculture, mineral) to rural residential uses.

**DP-64** Tighten thresholds for categorical exemptions under SEPA. While thresholds may be raised in urban areas, consider tightening them in rural areas.

**DP-65** Fund and conduct permit code enforcement to ensure all required permit conditions are met.

**VISION 2050 CONTAINS A SECTION AT THE END OF ITS "Development Patterns" CHAPTER CALLED "Supporting Growth Through Concurrency." IT CONTAINS THREE MPPs. YET, THE CPPs HAVE NOTHING EQUIVALENT. IN PARTICULAR, WE RECOMMEND ADDING A "DP" SIMILAR TO THE FOLLOWING MULTICOUNTY PLANNING POLICY (MPP):**

**MPP-DP-52** Develop, implement, and evaluate concurrency programs and methods that fully consider growth targets, service needs, and level-of-service standards. Focus level-of-service standards for transportation on the movement of people and goods instead of only on the movement of vehicles.

**WE FULLY SUPPORT MODERNIZING CONCURRENCY TO INTRODUCE A "REGIONAL" PERSPECTIVE. THE "SILO-MENTALITY" OF CONCURRENCY TESTING NEVER MADE SENSE AND HAS PROVEN TO BE A FAILURE. ALSO, WE FULLY SUPPORT ELIMINATING THE OMISSION OF NOT REQUIRING CONCURRENCY TESTING FOR HIGHWAYS OF STATEWIDE SIGNIFICANCE (HSS), WHICH ESSENTIALLY GAVE THEM A PASS, THUS MAKING LOCAL CONCURRENCY TESTING INCOMPLETE, AT BEST, AND LARGELY INEFFECTIVE, AT WORST. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD BY STATE LEGISLATORS THIS WAS NEVER THEIR INTENT. IT MUST BE FIXED.**

# 2021 Countywide Planning Policies Update

## 3 HOUSING

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### **Strategies to Meet Housing Needs**

VISION 2040 encourages local jurisdictions to adopt best housing practices and innovative techniques to advance the provision of affordable, healthy, sustainable, and safe housing for all residents. Meeting the county's affordable housing needs will require actions by a wide range of private for profit, non-profit and government entities, including substantial resources from federal, state, and local levels. No single tool will be sufficient to meet the full range of needs in a given jurisdiction. The county and cities are encouraged to employ a range of housing tools to ensure the countywide need is addressed and to respond to local conditions. Further detail on the range of strategies for promoting housing supply and affordability is contained in Appendix 4.

Jobs-housing balance, addressed in H-9, is a concept that advocates an appropriate match between the number of existing jobs and available housing supply within a geographic area. Improving balance means adding more housing to job-rich areas and more jobs to housing-rich areas.

. . .

**H-9** Plan for housing that is accessible to major employment centers and affordable to the workforce in them so people of all incomes can live near or within reasonable commuting distance of their places of work. Encourage housing production at a level that improves the balance of housing to employment throughout the county.

**THIS POLICY IS ADMIRABLE, BUT IN A PRACTICAL SENSE REALLY IS MORE OF A GOAL, AS WE SEE NO LEGAL MECHANISMS AVAILABLE TO "(e)ncourage housing production...that improves the balance of housing to employment..." POSSIBLY, CONCURRENCY REQUIREMENTS CAN HELP HERE, BUT THEY ARE WEAK, SOMEWHAT DISCRETIONARY, AND FULL OF LOOPHOLES, E.G., LEVEL-OF-SERVICE (LOS) STANDARDS CAN SIMPLY BE REDUCED.**

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## 4 ECONOMY

### Places

Economic activity in the county predominantly occurs within the Urban Growth Area, including Urban Centers and Manufacturing/ Industrial Centers. Continuing to guide local investments to these centers will help provide the support needed to sustain the economy and provide greater predictability to businesses about where capital improvements will be located. In addition to making productive use of urban land, economic activity adds to the culture and vitality of our local communities. Businesses create active, attractive places to live and visit, and make significant contributions to the arts. The Rural Area and Resource Lands are important for their contribution to the regional food network, mining, timber and craft industries, while Rural Cities are important for providing services to and being the economic centers for the surrounding Rural Area.

**EC-21** Encourage economic activity within Rural Cities that does not create adverse impacts to the surrounding Rural Area and Resource Lands and will not create the need to provide urban services and facilities to those areas.

### **THE CPPs HERE SHOULD REFLECT RCW 36.70A.011 (our emphases):**

*“The legislature finds that this chapter is intended to recognize the importance of rural lands and rural character to Washington's economy, its people, and its environment, while respecting regional differences. Rural lands and rural-based economies enhance the economic desirability of the state, help to preserve traditional economic activities, and contribute to the state's overall quality of life. . . . [T]he legislature finds that in defining its rural element under RCW 36.70A.070(5), a county should 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.”*

**WE CONSIDER MANY OF THE POLICIES IN THIS CHAPTER AS CRITICAL TO ENSURING THE INTEGRITY OF THE RURAL AREA AS THE REGION GROWS. WE SUPPORT POLICIES TO PROMOTE A BETTER “balance between jobs and housing.” WE DO SEE SOME MAJOR PROBLEMS WITH COMPATIBILITY DUE TO OLD “LEGACY” INDUSTRIAL ZONING IN THE RURAL AREA. TWO EXAMPLES ARE: THE PROPOSED MOVE OF AN ASPHALT FACILITY FROM THE CITY OF COVINGTON, INSIDE THE URBAN GROWTH AREA, TO THE RURAL AREA ALONG THE CEDAR RIVER, THE ENUMCLAW RECYCLING CENTER, AND THE PROPOSED MARIJUANA FACTORY IN A RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD NEAR A CHURCH IN THE RURAL AREA. NONE OF THESE EXAMPLES ARE IN “cities in the rural areas.”**

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## 5 TRANSPORTATION

The Regional Growth Strategy identifies a network of walkable, compact, and transit-oriented communities that are the focus of urban development, as well as industrial areas with major employment concentrations. In the Countywide Planning Policies, these communities include countywide designated Urban Centers and Manufacturing/ Industrial Centers, and locally designated local centers. An essential component of the Regional Growth Strategy is an efficient transportation system that provides multiple options for moving people and goods into and among the various centers. Transportation system, in the context of this chapter, is defined as a comprehensive, integrated network of travel modes (e.g. airplanes, automobiles, bicycles, buses, feet, ferries, freighters, trains, trucks) and infrastructure (e.g. sidewalks, trails, streets, waterways, railways, airports) for the movement of people and goods on a local, regional, national and global scale.

Goals and policies in this chapter build on the 1992 King County Countywide Planning Policies and the Multicounty Planning Policies in VISION 2040. Policies are organized into three sections:

- Supporting Growth – focusing on serving the region with a transportation system that furthers the Regional Growth Strategy;
- Mobility – addressing the full range of travel modes necessary to move people and goods efficiently within the region and beyond; and
- System Operations – encompassing the design, maintenance and operation of the transportation system to provide for safety, efficiency, and sustainability.

**Overarching Goal:** The region is well served by an integrated, multi-modal transportation system that supports the regional vision for growth, efficiently moves people and goods, and is environmentally and functionally sustainable over the long term.

### **Supporting Growth**

An effective transportation system is critical to achieving the Regional Growth Strategy and ensuring that centers are functional and appealing to the residents and businesses they are designed to attract. The policies in this section reinforce the critical relationship between development patterns and transportation and they are intended to guide transportation investments from all levels of government that effectively support local, county and regional plans to accommodate growth. Policies in this section take a multi-modal approach to serving growth, with additional emphasis on transit and non-motorized modes to support planned development in centers.

**Goal Statement:** Local and regional development of the transportation system is consistent with and furthers realization of the Regional Growth Strategy.

**OUR PROPOSED POLICY CHANGES BELOW EMPHASIZE A REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE WITH THE ADDITIONAL INTENT TO PRESERVE RURAL AREAS FROM URBAN IMPACTS.**

**T-1** Work cooperatively with the Puget Sound Regional Council, the state, and other relevant agencies to finance and develop a multi-modal transportation system that enhances regional mobility and reinforces the countywide vision for managing growth. Use VISION 2040 2050 and Transportation

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2040 the Regional Transportation Plan as the policy and funding framework for creating a system of Urban Centers and Manufacturing/ Industrial Centers linked by high-capacity transit, bus transit and an interconnected system of freeways and Principal Arterials and high-occupancy vehicle lanes.

T-2 Avoid construction of major roads and capacity expansion on existing roads in the Rural Area and Resource Lands. Where increased roadway capacity is warranted to support safe and efficient travel through the Rural Area, appropriate rural development regulations and effective access management should be in place prior to authorizing such capacity expansion in order to make more efficient use of existing roadway capacity and prevent unplanned growth in the Rural Area. Minimize through-travel on rural roads between urban centers by prioritizing capacity improvements on federally-classified arterials that serve vehicular travel between centers, and by prioritizing increased transit service between centers to maximally remove vehicle-miles of travel from the road system between centers. This strategy also benefits environmental concerns about climate change. Implement rural road design standards for all routes not federally classified as arterials, to maximally support preservation of rural lifestyles with facilities for pedestrians, bicycles, and equestrians, traffic-calming strategies to discourage through-travel, and speed-control measures consistent with maximum safety of rural residents. On a regionally coordinated basis implement development regulations that condition urban development in cities on avoidance of rural area impacts by concurrent development of inter-city capacity improvements and transit services as anticipated by this policy.

**THIS POLICY MEANS WELL, BUT MISREPRESENTS THE ACTUAL PROBLEM CONFRONTING THE RURAL AREA—THE CURRENT FAILURE OF STATE HIGHWAYS TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE CAPACITY FOR EXISTING TRAVEL VOLUMES BETWEEN CITIES, LEADING TO LARGE DIVERSIONS OF CITY-TO-CITY TRAFFIC ONTO RURAL ROADS AS A BYPASS TO THE OVER-LOADED STATE HIGHWAYS.**

**UPGRADING RURAL ROADS TO SERVE CITY-TO-CITY MOVEMENTS IS THE WRONG ANSWER. ISSAQUAH-HOBART RD IS A GOOD EXAMPLE. WE HAVE INDEPENDENTLY STUDIED THE USER PATTERNS OF THIS CORRIDOR AND RECENTLY DETERMINED THAT ~75% OF THE TRAFFIC PASSING THROUGH HOBART IS COMING FROM CITIES TO THE SOUTH, AND A MAJORITY OF THAT IS ACTUALLY COMING FROM THE ENUMCLAW AREA (IN THE PRE-BLACK DIAMOND MASTER-PLANNED DEVELOPMENT ERA). OTHER STUDIES HAVE FOUND MOST OF THE TRAFFIC ENTERING ISSAQUAH FROM THE SOUTH PASSES THROUGH TO CITIES SUCH AS BELLEVUE AND REDMOND.**

**WE CONCLUDE SUCH TRAFFIC IS PASSING THROUGH RURAL HOBART AND RAVENSDALE AS A BYPASS AROUND CONGESTION ON SR 169 FROM RENTON TO/THROUGH MAPLE VALLEY, NOT TO MENTION I-405. THIS IS NOT FAIR, JUST, OR EQUITABLE TO RURAL AREA RESIDENTS. THE STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM IS CHARTERED TO PROVIDE FOR TRAVEL BETWEEN CITIES, AND SHOULD THEREFORE PROVIDE ADEQUATE CAPACITY FOR AT LEAST THE EXISTING TRAVEL VOLUMES AND THAT THE REGIONAL GROWTH VISION BE SUPPORTED BY TRANSIT SOLUTIONS AS WELL IN THIS CORRIDOR. IF THE REGIONAL STRATEGY TO DISCOURAGE SPRAWL IN OUTLYING AREAS WILL BE TO TACITLY ALLOW CONGESTION TO GROW ON STATE HIGHWAYS LIKE SR 169, THEN JUSTICE FOR RURAL AREA RESIDENTS REQUIRES A COLLATERAL POLICY AND ACTION PLAN TO PROTECT RURAL ROADWAYS FROM THE SPILLOVER EFFECTS SUCH AS NOW WITNESSED DAILY ON THE CORRIDOR BETWEEN SR 18 AND THE CITY OF BLACK DIAMOND VIA THE CONTINUOUS**

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**ROUTE CONSISTING OF THE ISSAQUAH HOBART RD, 276TH AVENUE SE, LANDSBURG ROAD, AND RAVENSDALE WAY CORRIDOR. ALSO, TRAFFIC TRAVELLING NORTH VIA ISSAQUAH/HOBART RD IS PASSING THROUGH ENUMCLAW, BUT ACTUALLY COMING FROM CITIES IN PIERCE COUNTY SUCH AS BUCKLEY AND BONNEY LAKE. ONE POSSIBILITY FOR PROTECTING SUCH RURAL ROADS MAY BE TO DECLASSIFY THEM FROM ARTERIAL TO COLLECTOR STATUS WITH ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS TO DISCOURAGE THROUGH TRAFFIC BETWEEN CITIES.**

**THERE ARE OTHER SIMILAR CORRIDORS WITH SIMILAR ISSUES BETWEEN THE BLACK DIAMOND/ENUMCLAW AREA AND THE AUBURN/KENT URBAN AREA, AND IN NORTHEAST KING COUNTY BETWEEN DUVALL AND THE WOODINVILLE/KIRKLAND/REDMOND URBAN AREA.**

**T-3** Increase the share of trips made countywide by modes other than driving alone through coordinated land use planning, public and private investment, and programs focused on centers and connecting corridors, consistent with locally adopted mode split goals.

**WE OFTEN REVIEW AND COMMENT ON VARIOUS CITY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATES, BOTH ANNUAL AND MAJOR. UNFORTUNATELY, WE SEE LITTLE TO NO COORDINATION OF SUCH PLANS AMONG CITIES. IT APPEARS WE MUST RELY ONLY ON THE PSRC CERTIFICATION PROCESS OF SUCH PLANS WHEN IT COMES TO ENSURING SOME REGIONAL COORDINATION AMONG CITIES. UNFORTUNATELY, THAT PROCESS LACKS SUFFICIENT TEETH TO KEEP CITIES IN LINE.**

**T-4** Develop station area plans for high capacity transit stations and transit hubs. Plans should reflect the unique characteristics and local vision for each station area including transit supportive land uses, transit rights-of-way, stations and related facilities, multi-modal linkages, and place-making elements.

**T-5** Support countywide growth management objectives **including both mobility needs and climate change concerns** by prioritizing transit service to areas where **the maximum reduction of vehicle-miles of travel is achievable. This would entail transit service within existing urban areas where existing housing and employment densities support transit ridership and also emphasize transit connections between growth centers where planned travel growth would inappropriately utilize rural roads and add long-distance commuter travel to the regional transportation system. and to Urban Centers and other areas planned for housing and employment densities that will support transit ridership.** Address the mobility needs of transit-dependent populations in allocating transit service and provide at least a basic level of service throughout the Urban Growth Area.

**T-6** Foster transit ridership by designing transit facilities and services as well as non-motorized infrastructure so that they are integrated with public spaces and private developments to create an inviting public realm.

**T-7** Ensure state capital improvement policies and actions are consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy and support VISION **2040 2050** and the Countywide Planning Policies.

**T-8A** Prioritize regional and local funding to transportation investments that support adopted growth targets, **and are focussed on multi-modal mobility and safety, equity, and climate change goals.**

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**T-8B** Strengthen the linkage of transportation with land use by replacing all existing concurrency and impact fee systems with a new regional system used by all jurisdictions and using vehicle-miles of travel (VMT) to measure development impacts, system performance, mitigation costs, and concurrency, in an equitable manner that also accounts for transit service, alongside road capacity where appropriate. Design the regional impact fee system to support regional plans, provide new multi-modal capacity on a schedule commensurate with the pace of new growth, provide for uniformity of transportation-impact analysis and mitigation across all jurisdictions, and reduce the complexity of local development reviews.

**WE ENCOURAGE FOLLOWING THE EXAMPLE OF CALIFORNIA, WHICH, LAST YEAR, REMOVED “LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS)” FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) AS IT’S MEASURE OF TRANSPORTATION IMPACTS AND REPLACED IT WITH VEHICLE MILES TRAVLED (VMT).**

### ***Mobility***

Mobility is necessary to sustain personal quality of life and the regional economy. For individuals, mobility requires an effective transportation system that provides safe, reliable, and affordable travel options for people of all ages, incomes and abilities. While the majority of people continue to travel by personal automobile, there are growing segments of the population (e.g. urban, elderly, teens, low income, minorities, and persons with disabilities) that rely on other modes of travel such as walking, bicycling, and public transportation to access employment, education and training, goods and services. According to the 2009 American Community Survey, about 8.7 percent of all households in King County had no vehicle available. For many minority populations, more than 20 percent had no vehicle available to them.

The movement of goods is also of vital importance to the local and regional economy. International trade is a significant source of employment and economic activity in terms of transporting freight, local consumption, and exporting of goods. The policies in this section are intended to address use and integration of the multiple modes necessary to move people and goods within and beyond the region. The importance of the roadway network, implicit in the policies of this section, is addressed more specifically in the System Operations section of this chapter.

**Goal Statement:** A well-integrated, multi-modal transportation system transports people and goods effectively and efficiently to destinations within the region and beyond.

**T-9** Promote the mobility of people and goods through a multi-modal transportation system based on regional priorities consistent with VISION 2040 2050 and local comprehensive plans **with emphasis on continuity and consistency of plans among adjacent jurisdictions as required by GMA.**

**T-10** Support effective management of existing air, marine and rail transportation capacity and address future capacity needs in cooperation with responsible agencies, affected communities, and users.

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**T-11** Develop and implement freight mobility strategies that strengthen King County's role as a major regional freight distribution hub, an international trade gateway, and a manufacturing area, with emphasis on providing additional lanes for truck travel in high volume corridors to alleviate conflicts between trucks and automobiles.

**T-12** Address the needs of non-driving populations in the development and management of local and regional transportation systems by locating transit and related services where non-driving populations are concentrated and by prioritizing facility improvements and operational practices to increase the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians on all roads, consistent with guidelines from the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and other sources of engineering best practices.

**T-13** Site Locate and design transit stations and transit hubs to promote connectivity and access for pedestrian and bicycle patrons.

### System Operations

The design, management and operation of the transportation system are major factors that influence the region's growth and mobility. Policies in this section stress the need to make efficient use of the existing infrastructure, serve the broad needs of the users, address safety and public health issues, and design facilities that are a good fit for the surroundings. Implementation of the policies will require the use of a wide range of tools including, but not limited to:

- technologies such as intelligent transportation systems and alternative fuels;
- demand management programs for parking, commute trip reduction and congestion; and
- incentives, pricing systems and other strategies to encourage choices that increase mobility while improving public health and environmental sustainability.

**Goal Statement:** The regional transportation system is well-designed and managed to protect public investments, promote public health and safety, and achieve optimum efficiency.

**T-14** Prioritize essential maintenance, preservation, and safety improvements of the existing transportation system to protect mobility and avoid more costly replacement projects.

**T-15** Design and operate transportation facilities in a manner that is compatible with and integrated into the natural and built environments in which they are located. Incorporate features such as natural drainage, native plantings, and local design themes that facilitate integration and compatibility.

**T-16** Protect the transportation system (e.g. roadway, rail, transit, air, and marine) against major disruptions by developing prevention and recovery strategies and by coordinating disaster response plans.

**T-17** Promote the use of tolling and other pricing strategies to effectively manage the transportation system, provide a stable and sustainable transportation funding source, and improve mobility. Possible pricing strategies include tolling, road user charges, and development impact mitigation charges,

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in combination with state and regionally assessed taxes for transportation system support, all integrated for the economic health of the region.

### **OUR PROPOSED CHANGES ABOVE ARE SUPPORTED BY VISION 2050:**

**MPP-T-6** Pursue alternative transportation financing methods, such as user fees, tolls, and other pricing mechanisms to manage and fund the maintenance, improvement, preservation, and operation of the transportation system.

**T-18** Develop a countywide monitoring system to determine how transportation investments are performing over time consistent with **Transportation 2040 the Regional Transportation Plan** recommendations, including provision of road capacity and transit services in growing corridors within and between urban growth centers, and prevention of increased urban intercity travel on rural roads.

**T-19** Design roads and streets, including retrofit projects, to accommodate a range of motorized and non-motorized travel modes in order to reduce injuries and fatalities and to encourage non-motorized travel. The design of urban facilities should include well-defined, safe and appealing spaces for pedestrians and bicyclists. Rural facilities should emphasize priority for non-motorized safety and mobility.

**T-20** Develop a transportation system that minimizes negative impacts to human health, including exposure to environmental toxins generated by vehicle emissions.

**T-21** Provide opportunities for an active, healthy lifestyle by integrating the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists and equestrians where applicable, in the local and regional transportation plans and systems. Provide in local plans for the elevation of nonmotorized safety and mobility over vehicular capacity per se, on all roads not federally classified as arterials.

**T-22** Plan and develop a countywide transportation system that reduces greenhouse gas emissions by advancing strategies that shorten trip length or replace vehicle trips to decrease vehicle miles traveled, including financial strategies to charge road users appropriately for vehicle-miles of usage.

**T-23** Apply technologies, programs and other strategies that optimize the use of existing infrastructure in order to improve mobility, reduce congestion, increase energy-efficiency, reduce greenhouse-gas emissions, and reduce the need for new infrastructure.

**T-24** Promote the expanded use of alternative fuel vehicles by the general public with measures such as converting public and private fleets, applying incentive programs, and providing for electric vehicle charging stations throughout the Urban Growth Area.

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## 6. PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

**Overarching Goal:** *County residents in both Urban and Rural Areas have access to the public services needed in order to advance public health and safety, protect the environment, and carry out the Regional Growth Strategy.*

### **Urban and Rural Levels of Service**

The Growth Management Act directs jurisdictions and special purpose districts to provide public facilities and services to support development. The Growth Management Act distinguishes between urban and rural services and states that land within the Urban Growth Area should be provided with a full range of services necessary to sustain urban communities while land within the Rural Area should receive services to support a rural lifestyle. Certain services, such as sanitary sewers, are allowed only in the Urban Growth Area, except as otherwise authorized. The Growth Management Act also requires jurisdictions to determine which facilities are necessary to serve the desired growth pattern and how they will be financed, in order to ensure timely provision of adequate services and facilities.

**PF-1** Provide a full range of urban services in the Urban Growth Area to support the Regional Growth Strategy and adopted growth targets and limit the availability of services in the Rural Area consistent with VISION 2040.

### **Collaboration Among Jurisdictions**

More than 100 special purpose districts, including water, sewer, flood control, stormwater, fire, school and other districts, provide essential services to the residents of King County. While cities are the primary providers of services in the Urban Growth Area, in many parts of the county special purpose districts also provide essential services. Coordination and collaboration among all of these districts, the cities, King County, the tribes, and neighboring counties is key to providing efficient, high-quality and reliable services to support the Regional Growth Strategy.

**PF-2** Coordinate among jurisdictions and service providers to provide reliable and cost-effective services to the public.

**PF-3** Cities are the appropriate providers of services to the Urban Growth Area, either directly or by contract. Extend urban services through the use of special districts only where there are agreements with the city in whose Potential Annexation Area the extension is proposed. Within the Urban Growth Area, as time and conditions warrant, cities will assume local urban services provided by special service districts.

### **Utilities**

Utilities include infrastructure and services that provide water supply, sewage treatment and disposal, solid waste disposal, energy, and telecommunications. Providing these utilities in a cost-effective way

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is essential to maintaining the health and safety of King County residents and to implementing the Regional Growth Strategy.

### **Water Supply**

Conservation and efficient use of water resources are vital to ensuring the reliability of the region's water supply, the availability of sufficient water supplies for future generations, and the environmental sustainability of the water supply system.

**PF-4** Develop plans for long-term water provision to support growth and to address the potential impacts of climate change on regional water resources.

**PF-5** Support efforts to ensure that all consumers have access to a safe, reliably maintained, and sustainable drinking water source that meets present and future needs.

**PF-6** Coordinate water supply among local jurisdictions, tribal governments, and water purveyors to provide reliable and cost-effective sources of water for all users, including residents, businesses, fire districts, and aquatic species.

**PF-7** Plan and locate water systems in the Rural Area that are appropriate for rural uses and densities and do not increase the development potential of the Rural Area.

**PF-8** Recognize and support agreements with water purveyors in adjacent cities and counties to promote effective conveyance of water supplies and to secure adequate supplies for emergencies.

**PF-9** Implement water conservation and efficiency efforts to protect natural resources, reduce environmental impacts, and support a sustainable long-term water supply to serve the growing population.

**PF-10** Encourage water reuse and reclamation, especially for high-volume non-potable water users such as parks, schools, and golf courses.

### **Sewage Treatment and Disposal**

Within the Urban Growth Area, connection to sanitary sewers is necessary to support the Regional Growth Strategy and to accommodate urban densities. Alternatives to the sanitary sewer system and the typical septic system are becoming more cost effective and therefore, more available. Alternative technology may be appropriate when it can perform as well or better than sewers in the Urban Growth Area. Septic systems are not considered to be alternative technology within the Urban Growth Area.

In the Rural Area and Resource Lands, which are characterized by low-density development, sewer service is not typically provided. In cases where public health is threatened, sewers can be provided

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in the Rural Area but only if connections are strictly limited. Alternative technology may be necessary to substitute for septic systems in the Rural Area.

**PF-11** Require all development in the Urban Growth Area to be served by a public sewer system except:

- a) single-family residences on existing individual lots that have no feasible access to sewers may utilize individual septic systems on an interim basis; or
- b) development served by alternative technology other than septic systems that:
  - provide equivalent performance to sewers;
  - provide the capacity to achieve planned densities; and
  - will not create a barrier to the extension of sewer service within the Urban Growth Area.

**PF-12** Prohibit sewer service in the Rural Area and on Resource Lands except:

- a) where needed to address specific health and safety problems threatening existing structures; or
- b) as allowed by Countywide Planning Policy DP-47; or
- c) as provided in Appendix 5 (March 31, 2012 School Siting Task Force Report).

Sewer service authorized consistent with this policy shall be provided in a manner that does not increase development potential in the Rural Area.

### **Solid Waste**

King County and the entire Puget Sound region are recognized for successful efforts to collect recyclable waste. Continuing to reduce and reuse waste will require concerted and coordinated efforts well into the future. It is important to reduce the waste stream going into area landfills to extend the usable life of existing facilities and reduce the need for additional capacity.

**PF-13A** Reduce the solid waste stream and encourage reuse and recycling.

**PF-13B** Develop a plan and shall close all municipal landfills within the County by 20xx and to process or transport the waste stream going forward in an environmental manner that protects the health and safety of all residents.

### **Energy**

While King County consumers have access to electrical energy derived from hydropower, there are challenges for securing long-term reliable energy and for becoming more energy efficient.

**PF-14** Reduce the rate of energy consumption through efficiency and conservation as a means to lower energy costs and mitigate environmental impacts associated with traditional energy supplies.

**PF-15** Promote the use of renewable and alternative energy resources to help meet the county's long-term energy needs, reduce environmental impacts associated with traditional energy supplies, and increase community sustainability. **SOLAR IS VIABLE AND NEW DEVELOPMENT SHOULD**

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**BE PHYSICALLY ORIENTED (I.E., STREETS LAID OUT AND ROOFS CONSTRUCTED) TO ALLOW FOR SOLAR INSTALLATIONS ON RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES SO PROPERTY OWNERS CAN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF STATE INCENTIVE PROGRAMS. THERE APPEARS TO BE A DISCONNECT HERE AND IT'S MOSTLY A DESIGN ISSUE THAT IS EASILY SOLVABLE THROUGH PLANNING AND PROPER IMPLEMENTATION.**

### Telecommunications

A telecommunications network throughout King County is essential to fostering broad economic vitality and equitable access to information, goods and services, and opportunities for social connection.

**PF-16** Plan for the provision of telecommunication infrastructure to serve growth and development in a manner consistent with the regional and countywide vision. **THERE SHOULD BE EFFORTS TO INCENTIVIZE USING ALTERNATIVES TO TRAVEL NOW THAT WE ARE ALL MORE ACCUSTOMED TO REMOTE WORKING. THE COUNTY SHOULD LOOK AT THIS IN A SYSTEMATIC WAY - EVEN IF ONLY TO ENHANCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FREE WI-FI AT PUBLIC LIBRARIES.**

### Human and Community Services

Public services beyond physical infrastructure are also necessary to sustain the health and quality of life of all King County residents. In addition, these services play a role in distinguishing urban communities from rural communities and supporting the Regional Growth Strategy.

**PF-17** Provide human and community services to meet the needs of current and future residents in King County communities through coordinated planning, funding, and delivery of services by the county, cities, and other agencies.

### Locating Facilities and Services

VISION 2040 calls for a full range of urban services in the Urban Growth Area to support the Regional Growth Strategy, and for limiting the availability of services in the rural area. In the long term, there is increased efficiency and cost effectiveness in siting and operating facilities and services that serve a primarily urban population within the Urban Growth Area. At the same time, those facilities and services that primarily benefit rural populations provide a greater benefit when they are located within neighboring cities and rural towns.

**PF-18** Locate schools, institutions, and other community facilities and services that primarily serve urban populations within the Urban Growth Area, where they are accessible to the communities they serve, except as provided in Appendix 5 (March 31, 2012 School Siting Task Force Report). Locate these facilities in places that are well served by transit and pedestrian and bicycle networks.

**PF-19** Locate new schools and institutions primarily serving rural residents in neighboring cities and rural towns, except as provided in Appendix 5 (March 31, 2012 School Siting Task Force Report) and

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locate new community facilities and services that primarily serve rural residents in neighboring cities and rural towns, with the limited exceptions when their use is dependent upon a rural location and their size and scale supports rural character.

Public school facilities to meet the needs of growing communities are an essential part of the public infrastructure. Coordination between each jurisdiction's land use plan and regulations and their respective school district[s] facility needs are essential for public school capacity needs to be met. The following policy applies countywide and requires engagement between each school district and each city that is served by the school district. The policy also applies to King County as a jurisdiction for areas of unincorporated King County that are within a school district's service boundary. The policy initiates a periodic procedure to identify if there are individual school district siting issues and if so, a process for the school district and jurisdiction to cooperatively prepare strategies for resolving the issue.

**PF-19A** Plan, through a cooperative process between jurisdictions and school districts, that public school facilities are available, to meet the needs of existing and projected residential development consistent with adopted comprehensive plan policies and growth forecasts. Cooperatively work with each school district located within the jurisdiction's boundaries to evaluate the school district's ability to site school facilities necessary to meet the school district's identified student capacity needs. Use school district capacity and enrollment data and the growth forecasts and development data of each jurisdiction located within the school district's service boundaries. By January 2016 and every two years thereafter, determine if there is development capacity and the supporting infrastructure to site the needed school facilities. If not, cooperatively prepare a strategy to address the capacity shortfall. Potential strategies may include:

- Shared public facilities such as play fields, parking areas and access drives
- School acquisition or lease of appropriate public lands
- Regulatory changes such as allowing schools to locate in additional zones or revised development standards **WE DO NOT SUPPORT THIS, AS NEW SCHOOLS SHOULD NOT BE LOCATED IN THE RURAL AREA.**
- School design standards that reduce land requirements (such as multi-story structures or reduced footprint) while still meeting programmatic needs

In 2017, and every two years thereafter, King County shall report to the GMPC on whether the goals of this policy are being met. The GMPC shall identify corrective actions as necessary to implement this policy.

### **Siting Public Capital Facilities**

While essential to growth and development, regional capital facilities can disproportionately affect the communities in which they are located. It is important that all jurisdictions work collaboratively and consider environmental justice principles when siting these facilities to foster the development of healthy communities for all.

**PF-20** Site or expand public capital facilities of regional or statewide importance within the county in a way that equitably disperses impacts and benefits and supports the Countywide Planning Policies. **THIS SHOULD INCLUDE SOME METRICS.**

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**PF-21** Do not locate regional capital facilities outside the urban growth area unless it is demonstrated that a non-urban site is the most appropriate location for such a facility.  
**THIS IN CONCERT WITH VISION 2050's MPP-PS-30.**