

# PSRC PLAN REVIEW REPORT & CERTIFICATION RECOMMENDATION

## CITY OF LAKE FOREST PARK COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

January 28, 2016



### BACKGROUND

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

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

### DISCUSSION

This report summarizes the findings and recommendations regarding the periodic update to the comprehensive plan for the City of Lake Forest Park, adopted by the city on January 14, 2016. PSRC last certified the City of Lake Forest Park's comprehensive plan in September 2006. PSRC staff reviewed the updated 2015 comprehensive plan and coordinated with city staff in the development of this report.

### CERTIFICATION RECOMMENDATION

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

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

The remainder of this report contains a summary of the PSRC review of the City of Lake Forest Park comprehensive plan update. Under each heading, the scope of the certification review, as guided by the [Plan](#)

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

[Review Manual](#) and Local Comprehensive Plan Checklist, is listed in high-level bullets. Discussion in each topic area highlights exemplary provisions of the plan, as well as issues identified through the certification review where future work on the part of the city is needed to more fully address VISION 2040, Transportation 2040, and Growth Management Act planning requirements.

## Part I: Conformity With Growth Management Act Transportation Planning Requirements

### SCOPE OF REVIEW

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### DISCUSSION: EXEMPLARY PLAN PROVISIONS

The City of Lake Forest Park comprehensive plan effectively addresses many of the transportation planning requirements of the Growth Management Act and includes adequate air quality policies and provisions.

Highlights include:

- ☑ The plan directs the city to improve safety for nonmotorized transportation and expand nonmotorized access to Lake Forest Park neighborhoods and destinations and for recreation (Goal T-2 and Policies T-2.1-16). For example, Policy T-2.15 recommends increasing driver awareness of the need to honor the space of pedestrians, joggers, and bicyclists.
- ☑ The plan promotes transportation demand management through policies such as T-1.12, which encourages the use of alternative modes of transportation and non-peak use of regional arterials.
- ☑ Goal T-4 and Policies T-4.1-8 support the development of a sustainable funding plan for constructing and maintaining an adaptive multimodal system. This includes incorporating environmental factors into transportation decision-making (Policy T-4.8).

## DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

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

- The Growth Management Act (see RCW 36.70A.070(6)) requires that local comprehensive plans include a multiyear transportation financing plan for how the jurisdiction will meet the mobility needs identified for the 20-year planning period. The financing plan should include a list of projects and maintenance needs over the planning period, estimated costs, estimated revenues available to the city, and a strategy to reassess the plan in the event revenues fall short of costs. While the plan partially addresses some of these requirements through discussion of long-term projects and the six-year transportation project and funding lists, the city should amend the plan to more fully address financing for the entire 20-year planning period. For more information, see Commerce’s [Transportation Element Guidebook](#) (Pages 202 to 212).

## Part II: Consistency With Regional Plans and Policies

### OVERVIEW

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

### VISION 2040 Context Statement

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

### Environment

#### SCOPE OF REVIEW

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

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

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

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

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

#### DISCUSSION: EXEMPLARY PLAN PROVISIONS

The Lake Forest Park comprehensive plan addresses the environmental policy topics in VISION 2040. Highlights include:

- The plan encourages the maintenance and enhancement of natural drainage systems to protect water quality, reduce public costs, protect property, and prevent environmental degradation (Policy EQ-3.1).

- ☑ Goal EQ–5 and Policies EQ-5.1-6 direct the city to be a role model in addressing climate change and promoting alternative energy use by encouraging clean, renewable energy production and use throughout the city.
- ☑ Policy EQ–9.1 calls for the city to maintain or exceed the minimum citywide canopy cover established by the *Community Forest Management Plan* through regular evaluation and refinement of the city’s land use and environmental regulations and policies.

**DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK**

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

**Development Patterns – Including the Regional Growth Strategy**

**SCOPE OF REVIEW**

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

- Urban areas**, including targets for housing and employment growth, compact communities that support transit and walking, and provisions for redevelopment of underused land.
- Centers**, including planning for one or more central places as locations for compact, mixed-use development, with policies that prioritize funding to centers to advance development.
- Unincorporated urban areas**, including policies that advance annexation and orderly transition of governance.
- Resource lands**, including identification of steps to limit development.
- Regional design**, addressing local provisions that apply the Transportation 2040 Physical Design Guidelines, energy efficient building, historic preservation, and enhanced sense of community.
- Health and active living**, addressing healthy environment, physical activity and well-being, and safety.

**DISCUSSION: EXEMPLARY PLAN PROVISIONS**

The city’s comprehensive plan effectively addresses many of the development patterns policies in VISION 2040. Highlights include:

- ☑ The plan promotes design and development that respects and preserves the natural environment (Goal LU-3 and Policies LU-3.1-6).
- ☑ The plan promotes the efficient use of urban land by directing the city to identify underused land and encourage infill development (Policy LU–4.3). The plan also encourages mixed-use commercial and transit-oriented development, including housing, in redevelopment of the Town Center district. Higher-intensity multifamily development is encouraged near transportation facilities, commercial services, open space, and other amenities (Policies EQ–1.2 and LU-4.4).
- ☑ The plan supports public health by promoting access to healthy food, active transportation, and neighborhood connectivity (Goal LU-7 and Policies LU-7.1-6).

**DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK**

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

## Housing

### SCOPE OF REVIEW

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

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

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

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

### DISCUSSION: EXEMPLARY PLAN PROVISIONS

The city's comprehensive plan effectively addresses the housing provisions contained in VISION 2040.

Highlights include:

- The plan supports affordable housing by directing the city to develop incentives for it, such as density bonuses, height increases, tax incentives, and simplified design requirements (Policy H-3.2).
- Policy H-3.4 encourages locating new affordable housing units near community amenities and services, such as transit.
- The plan supports the development of housing opportunities for those with special needs, including older adults, people with disabilities, and the homeless, through strategies such as encouraging universal design and locating facilities near services and transit (Goal H-4 and Policies H-4.1-5).

### DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

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

- The housing element policies address VISION 2040's housing goals and the requirements of the Growth Management Act. The city should consider adding a discussion of implementation actions that advance housing tools, such as regulatory changes to promote housing diversity and incentivize affordable housing.

## Economy

### SCOPE OF REVIEW

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

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

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

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

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

## DISCUSSION: EXEMPLARY PLAN PROVISIONS

The city's comprehensive plan effectively addresses many of the economic provisions of VISION 2040. Highlights include:

- ☑ A primary economic development strategy of the plan is supporting the Town Center district as a vibrant mixed-use center and the cultural heart of Lake Forest Park (Goal ED-3 and Policies ED-3.1-10).
- ☑ Policy ED-4.4 supports incubator and home-grown economic development opportunities, such as compatible home occupations in residential areas.
- ☑ The plan promotes local businesses and locally produced goods and services (Policy ED-6.1).

## DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

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

## Transportation

### SCOPE OF REVIEW

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

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

## DISCUSSION: EXEMPLARY PLAN PROVISIONS

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

- ☑ The plan directs the city to expand intermodal transportation connections, including walking, bicycling, driving/park & rides, and transit. Strategies to accomplish this include developing multimodal level-of-service standards, planning for nonmotorized connections to future light rail stations, updating roadway and sidewalk standards to ensure they meet multimodal transportation needs, and expanding bicycle parking (Goal T-1 and Policies T-1.1-16).
- ☑ Policy T-3.5 promotes developing clean transportation programs and facilities, including actions to reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from transportation.
- ☑ Policy T-6.5 supports creative mobility options for "last mile" connectivity for the elderly through strategies such as providing vanpool services, neighborhood pickup vans, or park & ride lots closer to Lake Forest Park.

## DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

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

- The Growth Management Act requires level-of-service standards for all locally owned arterials and transit routes, and the multicounty planning policies call for other modes, such as biking and walking, to be addressed as well (MPP-DP-54-56). PSRC commends the city for including a policy to adopt multimodal level-of-service standards in the future, as well as the many policies that are supportive of walking, biking and transit. PSRC encourages the city to continue developing policies, standards, and regulatory approaches that incorporate multiple travel modes. While there are many challenges involved in implementing multimodal level-of-service standards, progress in this area would strengthen and reinforce the plan's vision of supporting walking, biking and transit. For example, the plan could support transit, pedestrian, and bicycle projects as mitigation for development impacts. The Washington State Department of Commerce's [Transportation Element Guidebook](#) has information on how to set level-of-service standards and identify system needs (pages 143-150 and 183-189). PSRC also has resources on [multimodal concurrency](#).

## Public Services

### SCOPE OF REVIEW

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

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

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

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

### DISCUSSION: EXEMPLARY PLAN PROVISIONS

The Lake Forest Park comprehensive plan update contains policies that address many of the public services provisions of VISION 2040. Highlights include:

- ☑ Policy CF-4.4 encourages reducing the use of energy and potable water by city buildings and operations. It also promotes the use of renewable energy sources.
- ☑ The plan promotes water reuse and water conservation opportunities that help water, sewer, and drainage systems (Policy CF-4.9).
- ☑ Policy CF-4.12 encourages the adoption of a standard for sustainability, environmental design, and energy conservation in public buildings.
- ☑ The plan directs the city to ensure new development is connected to sanitary sewer and supports a long-term strategy to convert existing development from septic systems to sanitary sewer. It also directs the city to undertake all means reasonable to ensure the quality of water discharged from existing on-site sewage treatment systems (Policy EQ-3.5).

## DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

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

## Conclusion

PSRC staff thanks the city for working through the plan review and certification process. PSRC is available to provide assistance for future plan updates. Additional planning resources can also be found at <http://www.psrc.org/growth/planreview/resources/>. If the city has questions or needs additional information, please contact Erika Harris at 206-464-6360 or [eharris@psrc.org](mailto:eharris@psrc.org).