

# PSRC PLAN REVIEW REPORT & CERTIFICATION RECOMMENDATION

## CITY OF MEDINA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

December 31, 2015



### 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 Medina, adopted by the city on October 12, 2015. PSRC last certified the Medina comprehensive plan in September 2007. PSRC staff reviewed the 2015 comprehensive plan and coordinated with the city in the development of this report.

### CERTIFICATION RECOMMENDATION

Based on the review of the City of Medina 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 Medina 2015 comprehensive plan 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 Medina comprehensive plan update. Under each heading, the scope of the certification review, as guided by the [Plan Review Manual](#) and Local Comprehensive Plan Checklist, is listed in high level bullets. Discussion in each topic area highlights

<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.

exemplary provisions of the plan, as well as issues identified through the certification review where future work is needed to more fully address VISION 2040, Transportation 2040, or 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's comprehensive plan addresses the transportation planning requirements of the Growth Management Act and includes adequate air quality policies and provisions. Highlights include:

- The plan contains many policies to promote active transportation through enhancements to the nonmotorized transportation system, including pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access projects (Policies T-P1-5 and T-P8-11).

### 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. PSRC recognizes the limited scale and scope of transportation needs in a small city like Medina and the plan addresses many of these requirements through the 6-year Transportation Improvement Program. However, to fully meet the Growth Management Act requirement, the city should address planning for its transportation system for the entire 20-year planning period. For more information, see Commerce's [Transportation Element Guidebook](#).

## 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 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 city's comprehensive plan addresses many of the environmental policy topics in VISION 2040. Highlights include:

- The plan promotes community-wide stewardship of the natural environment for future generations through protection, preservation/conservation, and enhancement of those natural environment features which are most sensitive to human activities and which are critical to fish and wildlife survival and proliferation (Goal NE-G3).
- Policies T-P12 and 13 promote improving air quality through working with state, regional, and local agencies and jurisdictions and through public education efforts aimed at reducing transportation related activities.
- The plan supports salmon habitat by directing the city to develop and implement a salmon restoration/habitat recovery plan and to work to preserve stream corridors wide enough to maintain and enhance existing stream and habitat functions (Policies NE-P5-8).

#### 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 multicounty planning policies (MPPs) in VISION 2040 and the strategies in Transportation 2040 call for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to impacts related to climate change (see page 42 of

VISION 2040). The plan already includes some policies that support positive actions to reduce greenhouse gases, such as improving walking, bicycling and transit access. However, the plan could be strengthened by directly addressing the climate change-related MPPs and including additional strategies such as energy-efficiency building provisions and additional transportation demand management strategies.

## 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

Medina is a small, primarily residential community. The city's comprehensive plan addresses the development patterns policies in VISION 2040 in a manner appropriate for that context. For example:

- Policy LU-P4 directs the city to develop a program to preserve community treasures, such as historical structures, that reflect the city's heritage and history.
- Policies in the plan support maintaining and enhancing Medina's parks and open spaces, including increasing waterfront access and protecting views from parks (PO-P1-P3).

### DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

The certification review did not identify any major areas for further work under the topic of land use to better align the plan with regional guidelines and principles.

## 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 in VISION 2040. Highlights include:

- ☑ Provisions in the plan support affordable housing through participating in A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH) and allowing accessory dwelling units.

## DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

The certification review did not identify any major areas for further work under the topic of housing to better align the plan with regional guidelines and principles.

## 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 through the provision of infrastructure.

### DISCUSSION: APPLICABILITY

The City of Medina is a primarily residential community with minimal commercial land within the city and no target for local employment growth. As such, the city has a limited opportunity to address the regional guidelines and principles on the economy.

## 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 city's comprehensive plan addresses the major transportation policies in VISION 2040 and Transportation 2040. Highlights include:

- ☑ The plan prioritizes safety through maintaining streets, adding nonmotorized facilities, and improving access to schools, parks, transit, and community facilities (Policies T-P1-5).
- ☑ The plan supports transit use through public education, access projects, and participation in regional transportation discussions and coordination (Policies T-P2, 10 and 13).

## DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

The certification review did not identify any major areas for further work under the topic of transportation to better align the plan with regional guidelines and principles (see comments addressing Growth Management Act transportation planning requirements on page 2 of this report).

## 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 city's comprehensive plan addresses the public services provisions of VISION 2040. Highlights include:

- ☑ Policy CF-P7 promotes public information programs and educational efforts to raise the awareness of city residents concerning water quality and quantity issues and solutions.
- ☑ The plan protects water quality through implementing strategies in the Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan, Department of Ecology Best Management Practices, and Puget Sound Water Quality Management Plan (Policies CF-P4-7).

## 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:

- ☐ VISION 2040 contains conservation policies that are relevant to residential communities like Medina. Several MPPs promote energy and water conservation, renewable energy, alternative energy sources, and water reclamation and reuse (MPP-PS-12-13; MPP-En-21-23; MPP-T-6). While the plan has policies to promote solid waste reduction and recycling and water conservation, the plan would be strengthened by adding policies to address energy conservation and water reuse.

## Conclusion

PSRC staff thank the city for working through the plan review process. PSRC is available to provide assistance for future plan updates, and 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).