

# PSRC PLAN REVIEW REPORT & CERTIFICATION RECOMMENDATION

## TOWN OF WOODWAY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

October 29, 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 Town of Woodway, adopted by the town on June 1, 2015. PSRC last certified the Town of Woodway's comprehensive plan in September 2007. PSRC staff reviewed the updated 2015 comprehensive plan and coordinated with town staff in the development of this report.

### CERTIFICATION RECOMMENDATION

Based on the review of the Town of Woodway 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 Town of Woodway 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 Town of Woodway comprehensive plan update. Under each heading, the scope of the certification review, as guided by the [Plan Review Manual](#) and

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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.

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 town 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 Town of Woodway's 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:

- Policy TG-2 supports community livability and mobility by providing a connected system of pedestrian and bicycle ways that is also integrated into a coordinated regional network.

### DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

The town 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 town, and a strategy to reassess the plan in the event revenues fall short of costs. While the plan addresses some of these requirements through the descriptions and cost estimates of transportation improvement projects listed in

the capital facilities/utilities element, the town should work to more fully address financing 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. While the plan refers to VISION 2040, the city should more explicitly describe how the plan addresses VISION 2040 when the city next amends the comprehensive plan. Examples of context statements are provided in PSRC’s [Plan Review Manual](#), page 2-1.

### 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 Woodway comprehensive plan addresses the environmental policy topics in VISION 2040. Highlights include:

- ☑ Policy LUP-14 promotes the retention, conservation, and acquisition of open space and environmentally sensitive areas to promote education and maintain natural resource values.
- ☑ Policy CG-1 supports the preservation of the town’s natural systems, including landforms, soils, watercourses, and vegetation in order to protect public health, safety, and welfare, and maintain the integrity of the natural environment and environmentally sensitive areas, clean air and clean water.
- ☑ Policies WRP-1-12 enhance water quality through maintaining stream buffers, managing stormwater, retaining native vegetation within riparian corridors, and implementing other best practices to protect streams, wetlands, and aquifer recharge areas.

#### DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

The town should address the following comments 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. The plan includes policies that support positive actions to reduce greenhouse gases, such as promoting walking and biking. The plan would be stronger in this area with the addition of policies that explicitly address climate change and promote additional tools to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, such as through energy efficiency in municipal operations.
- The MPPs reflect the regional vision’s emphasis on protecting water quality (MPP-En-13-16). These policies promote maintaining and improving water quality through actions such as retrofitting stormwater systems, restoring shorelines to natural conditions, and reducing the use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers to the extent feasible. The town should add policies and provisions to address these water quality MPPs.

## Development Patterns – Including 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 town’s comprehensive plan effectively addresses many of the development patterns policies in VISION 2040. Highlights include:

- ☑ Policy LUG-3 calls for implementing development regulations that allow for innovation and flexibility in the development of single-family housing while preserving the character, natural environment, and environmentally sensitive areas of the town.
- ☑ Policy LUG-4 discourages development in environmentally sensitive areas determined to be potentially hazardous to public safety.

### DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

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

- The Snohomish County countywide planning policies include planning requirements for urban growth areas and require each jurisdiction to accommodate housing and employment growth targets. The plan adequately addresses the housing growth target (6 additional units) by referencing the countywide planning policies and demonstrating sufficient residential capacity. However, the plan does not address the employment target (12 additional jobs). The land use element should be amended to acknowledge the adopted employment growth target and describe the city’s plan for accommodating those jobs.

## 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 town's comprehensive plan effectively addresses the housing provisions contained in VISION 2040.

Highlights include:

- Policy HP-5 supports continued participation in the countywide effort to create affordable housing through financial contributions to the Alliance for Housing Affordability.
- Policy HP-2 promotes conserving existing housing stock through public infrastructure investments such as street maintenance, storm drainage, and walkway system improvements.

### DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

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

- The Growth Management Act requires that the housing element of the plan contain an analysis of current and future housing need, including housing that is affordable at a variety of income levels. The town should provide additional information on affordable housing; for instance, by adopting the Housing Needs Assessment prepared by Snohomish County into the comprehensive plan by reference.
- While policy HP-4 calls for the town to consider innovative regulatory tools and strategies to increase housing choices, the policy would be strengthened by identifying and supporting specific affordable housing tools, such as accessory dwelling units.

## 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: APPLICABILITY

The Town of Woodway is a residential community without any commercial land within the town. As such, the town 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 Woodway comprehensive plan addresses the major transportation emphases in VISION 2040 and Transportation 2040. Highlights include:

- ☑ Policy TP-8 recognizes the contribution that walking makes to personal health, mobility, and environmental objectives and encourages enhancement of the pedestrian environment throughout the town.
- ☑ Policy TP-10 supports maintaining a bikeway and pedestrian plan in coordination with the King County Bicycling Guide map and the City of Edmonds Bikeway Comprehensive Plan.
- ☑ Policies TP-6 and TP-12 call for the town to enact street standards and employ traffic calming measures that improve pedestrian safety, discourage high speeds and pass-through traffic, and enhance the street environment.

### DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

The certification review did not identify any major areas for further work on to better align the plan with regional guidelines and principles on transportation or Transportation 2040 (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 Woodway comprehensive plan update contains policies that address the public services provisions of VISION 2040. Highlights include:



- ☑ Policy WRP-3 promotes environmentally sound stormwater management and water resource practices.
- ☑ Policy CFP-2 calls for the town to require stormwater management facilities as a condition of new development review and approval that incorporate treatment components recommended by the most current Department of Ecology Stormwater Manual, including low-impact development techniques.

#### **DISCUSSION: AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK**

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

- ☐ VISION 2040 recognizes the importance of serving development with sanitary sewer systems. To be more consistent with MPP-PS-9, consider strengthening policy language on new development and adding language addressing standards and maintenance plans for alternative technologies.
- ☐ VISION 2040 contains several MPPs that promote energy and water conservation, renewable 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 recycling, the plan would be strengthened by adding policies to address energy and water conservation and renewable energy production.

#### **COMMENTS AND GUIDANCE**

PSRC staff thanks the town 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 town has questions or needs additional information, please contact Erika Harris at 206-464-6360 or [eharris@psrc.org](mailto:eharris@psrc.org).