



Puget Sound Regional Council

## Growth Management Policy Board

Thursday, September 7, 2023 • 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Hybrid Meeting - PSRC Board Room – 1011 Western Avenue, Suite 500, Seattle, 98104

### Attend, watch or listen

- The public can attend meetings at PSRC's offices
- Watch the meeting live at <https://www.psrc.org/watch-meetings>
- Listen by phone 1-888-475-4499, Meeting ID: 859 2629 7926, Passcode: 429706

### Provide public comment

- **Public comment must relate to an action or discussion item on the agenda. Each member of the public will have 2 minutes to speak.**
- **In-person**  
Public comment may be made in person at PSRC's office.
- **Comment during the meeting by Zoom or phone:** [Register here](#)  
To allow staff time to process requests, registration is required and closes at 8:00 AM the day of the meeting. Late registrations will not be accepted.
- **Written comments**  
Comments may be submitted via email to [hculver@psrc.org](mailto:hculver@psrc.org) by 8:00 AM the day of the meeting. Comments will be shared with board members. Comments received after the deadline will be provided to board members after the meeting.

Public comments are public records and may be subject to disclosure pursuant to the Public Records Act, RCW Chapter [42.56](#).

---

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call (10:00) – Councilmember Ed Prince, Chair**
2. **Communications and Public Comment**  
Public comment must relate to an action or discussion item on the agenda.
3. **Report of the Chair**
4. **Director's Report**
5. **Consent Agenda – Action Item (10:15)**
  - a. Approve Minutes of Growth Management Policy Board Meeting held July 6, 2023
6. **Action Item (10:20)**
  - a. Recommend Approval of Non-voting Seats on the Growth Management Policy Board  
– *Josh Brown, PSRC*

**7. Action Item (10:30)**

- a. Recommend Approval of Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies Certification – *Liz Underwood-Bultmann, PSRC*

**8. Discussion Item (10:40)**

- a. Climate Grants – *Sarah Fox, Washington State Department of Commerce*

**9. Discussion Item (10:50)**

- a. Affordable Housing Developer Outreach – *Liz Underwood-Bultmann, PSRC*

**10. Discussion Item (11:05)**

- a. Equity Advisory Committee Report – *Charles Patton, PSRC*

**11. Discussion Item (11:35)**

- a. Data Trends – *Craig Helmann, PSRC*

**12. Information Items**

- a. Passport to 2044 Webinar: Stormwater - Integrating Stormwater Solutions into Comprehensive Plans – September 19, 2023 - [Registration Open!](#)
- b. Fall Transit-Oriented Development Event - September 29, 2023 – [Registration Open!](#)

**13. Next Meeting:**

**Thursday, October 5, 2023, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM – Hybrid, In Person Encouraged!**  
**Lunch at PSRC and optional waterfront walking tour following meeting**

Major topics for October:

- Transit-Oriented Development Event
- Summer Youth Engagement
- Regional Centers Data

**14. Adjourn (12:00)**

Board members please submit proposed amendments and materials prior to the meeting for distribution. Organizations/individuals may submit information for distribution. Send to Heather Culver, e-mail [hculver@psrc.org](mailto:hculver@psrc.org); fax (206) 587-4825; or mail.

For language or ADA assistance at PSRC board meetings, please contact us at (206) 464-7090 at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting. For TTY-based telecommunications relay service dial 711.

العربية | Arabic, 中文 | Chinese, Deutsch | German, Français | French, 한국어 | Korean, Русский | Russian, Español | Spanish, Tagalog, Tiếng Việt | Vietnamese, visit <https://www.psrc.org/contact/language-assistance>.



## Puget Sound Regional Council

### **MINUTES Growth Management Policy Board July 6, 2023 Hybrid Meeting**

[To watch a video of the meeting and hear the discussion, go to <https://www.psrc.org/watch-meetings>]

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m. by Councilmember Ed Prince, Chair.

### **COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC COMMENT**

Alex Tsimerman provided in-person public comment.

### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

Chair Prince recognized a change in representation on the board for the nonvoting Business and Labor seat welcoming new member Hugh Ewart and new alternate Chris Ramirez from Seattle Children's Hospital, and thanked Edna Shim for her years of work with GMPB as she steps down from the board.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Growth Management Director Paul Inghram updated the board on Executive Board action designating Kirkland as a regional growth center as recommended by the board. PSRC's staff continues to meet with cities on plan updates. Mr. Inghram also informed the board of new equity resources available on the PSRC website, the upcoming TOD Event, and the information item in the agenda packet on new stormwater guidance.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

- a. Approve Minutes of Growth Management Policy Board Meeting held June 1, 2023.

**ACTION: It was moved and seconded (Wahl/Dunn) to adopt the Consent Agenda. Motion passed.**

## **RECOMMEND CERTIFICATION OF KING COUNTY COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICIES**

PSRC Principal Planner Liz Underwood-Bultmann reviewed King County's certification report and presented the certification for the board's recommendation. VISION 2050 calls for countywide planning policies to be updated to address regional policies. King County's CPPs were updated through King County's Growth Management Planning Council and a six-week public comment period with King County's equity committees.

**ACTION: It was moved and seconded (McDermott/Wahl) to recommend that the Executive Board certify that the countywide planning policies for King County are consistent with the VISION 2050 multicounty planning policies and the Regional Transportation Plan. Motion passed.**

The recommendation will be brought to the Executive Board for action July 27<sup>th</sup>.

## **MIDDLE HOUSING PANEL**

The board welcomed David Osaki from the Department of Commerce and Jason Gauthier from the South Sound Housing Affordability Partners for a briefing on work to support the future of middle housing in single-family neighborhoods. The Regional Housing Strategy states that including more middle housing will provide stronger housing choices and cost-effective options for people in the region. The Washington State Department of Commerce Middle Housing Grant Program provides funding to regions that incorporate racial equity analysis and establish anti-displacement policies. Speakers provided information on the [Commerce Middle Housing Grant Program](#), the [South Sound Housing Affordability Partners \(SSHA3P\) grant](#) and [Racial Equity analysis for middle housing](#), and examples of middle housing work in [Fife](#) and [Gig Harbor](#). PSRC is planning to provide an annual review of housing trends and implementation to the board in the fall.

## **MIDDLE HOUSING PRO FORMA TOOL**

The board heard a presentation from Alex Steinberger of Cascadia Partners about a middle housing pro forma tool and how to use it. Middle housing is compatible with neighborhoods but usually is not zoned for it; state House Bill 1110 requires many cities in the region to change their development and allow middle housing more widely. The pro-forma tool helps cities analyze the market potential of middle housing and how policy decisions impact housing costs.

**NEXT MEETING**

The next GMPB board meeting is scheduled for September 7, 2023.

Topics include:

- Climate Grants
- Affordable Housing Developer Survey
- Data Trends
- Equity Advisory Committee Update

**ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 11:57 a.m.

**GUESTS AND PSRC STAFF PRESENT (As determined by staff.)**

Kathryn Johnson, PSRC  
 Paul Inghram, PSRC  
 Piset Khuon, PSRC  
 Liz Underwood-Bultmann, PSRC  
 Paul Inghram, PSRC  
 Maggie Moore, PSRC  
 Andi Markley, PSRC  
 Eric Clute, PSRC  
 Alex Steinberger, Cascadia Partners  
 Josh Linden, BERK Consulting  
 Taylor Jones, City of Fife  
 David Osaki, Washington Department of Commerce  
 Jason Gauthier, SSHA3P  
 Kevin Gifford, BERK Consulting  
 Robin Bolster-Grant, City of Gig Harbor  
 Anne Fritzel, Washington Department of Commerce  
 Alex Tsimmerman

Attachments:

July 6, 2023 GMPB Attendance Roster

Growth Management Policy Board - July 6, 2023					
Voting Members		✓	Non-voting Members		✓
King County	2	CM Dave Upthegrove	1	<b>Associate Members</b>	
		CM Joe McDermott	1	Alderwood Water and Wastewater District	1 COM Paul McIntyre
Seattle	2	CM Andrew Lewis	1	Thurston Regional Planning Council	1 Helen Wheatley
		CM Dan Strauss			MYR Joe DePinto, Yelm Alt
		CM Tammy Morales, Alt	1	<b>Public Agency Members</b>	
Bellevue	1	MYR Lynne Robinson	1	Commerce	1 Dave Andersen
		DM Jared Nieuwenhuis, Alt			Mark Barkley Alt
Cities/Towns	3	DM Traci Buxton, Des Moines	1	<b>PSRC Committees</b>	
		CM Phillippa Kassoever, Lake Forest Park	1	Regional Staff Committee	1 Andrea Spencer, Bremerton
		CM Ed Prince, Renton - Chair	1		Vacant
		CM Melissa Stuart, Alt - Redmond	1	<b>Private/Civic Members-Business/Labor</b>	
		CM Pam Stuart, Alt - Sammamish		Master Builders of King and Snohomish Counties	1 Jennifer Anderson
		CP Lindsey Walsh, Alt - Issaquah	1	Natural and Built Environments	1 Angela Rozmyn
Kitsap County	1	COM Katie Walters			1 Robert Pantley Alt
		Vacant			
Bremerton	1	MYR Greg Wheeler	1	Seattle Children's Hospital	1 Hugh Ewart
		CM Jeff Coughlin, Alt	1		Chris Ramirez Alt
Cities/Towns	1	CM Jon Quitslund, Bainbridge Isl	1	<b>Private/Civic Members-Community/Environment</b>	
		CM Joe Deets, Bainbridge Isl, Alt		Futurewise	1 Alex Brennan
Pierce County	1	CM Robyn Denson	1		1 Tieman Martin Alt
		CM Paul Herrera, Alt		Housing Development Consortium - Seattle/King	1 Patience Malaba
Tacoma	1	CM Joe Bushnell			1 Jesse Simpson Alt
		CM Sarah Rumbaugh, Alt		Metro Parks Tacoma	1 Debbie Terwilleger
Cities & Towns	1	CM Melodi Koenig, Orting	1		
		Mayor Josh Penner, Alt - Orting		Kitsap Public Health District	1 Dr. Gib Morrow, Kitsap Public Health District
Snohomish County	1	CM Megan Dunn - Vice Chair	1		1 Vacant Alt
		CM Sam Low, Alt - Snohomish County		Non Voting	11
Everett	1	CM Don Schwab			
		MYR Cassie Franklin, Alt			
Cities/Towns	1	MYR Pro Tem Bryan Wahl, Mountlake Terrace	1		
		CM Erin Murray, Alt - Mountlake Terrace	1		
<b>Federally Recognized Tribes</b>					
Muckleshoot Indian Tribe	1	Vacant			
Puyallup Tribe of Indians	1	Andrew Strobel			
		Jennifer Keating Alt			
Suquamish Tribe	1	Rob Purser			<b>Abbreviations</b>
		Thomas Ostrom Alt			CM Councilmember
<b>Statutory Members</b>					
Ports	1	COM Fred Felleman, Seattle			COM Commissioner
		COM Don Meyer, Tacoma Alt			CP Council President
WSDOT	1	Jeff Storrar	1		DM Deputy Mayor
		JoAnn Schueler, Alt			MYR Mayor
					1 = Member for Meeting
Voting	22	(Quorum = 11) Quorum Total	15		X = Alternate for Meeting



## Puget Sound Regional Council

### **ACTION ITEM**

August 30, 2023

**To:** Growth Management Policy Board

**From:** Paul Inghram, Director of Growth Management

**Subject:** **Recommend Approval of Non-voting Seats on the Growth Management Policy Board**

### **IN BRIEF**

Non-voting community representatives are an important part of PSRC's policy boards. They speak to perspectives that go beyond the boards' traditional membership of counties, cities, transit agencies, ports, and the state, and they help the board coordinate with other important public agencies. Recruiting for the non-voting seats can be challenging, however, and while many of the representatives are very active, some seats remain vacant, and some members don't fully participate.

This memo recommends updating the composition of non-voting seats on the Growth Management Policy Board and details procedures for recruitment of non-voting seats, in conjunction with parallel changes to the Transportation Policy Board, to enhance recruitment and secure meaningful and productive participation.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Staff recommends that the board act to:

*Recommend the Executive Board adopt the proposed changes to the composition of non-voting seats for the Growth Management Policy Board, as shown on Attachment A.*

## **DISCUSSION**

After discussion with the Executive Committee, PSRC staff worked with policy board leadership to craft the proposed changes for non-voting seats that are before you. These changes seek to enhance recruiting for non-voting seats and provide a new opportunity for participation by PSRC's Equity Advisory Committee.

### **Background**

Both the Growth Management Policy Board and Transportation Policy Board have a structure of nonvoting members outlined in their bylaws. The two policy boards each have eight at-large non-voting seats: four for Community / Environment and four for Business / Labor. Seats are three-year positions with staggered recruitment years. Please see Attachment A for the composition and voting structure of the Growth Management Policy Board.

PSRC's interlocal agreement discusses creating an opportunity for community groups and individuals, although this has evolved to the current categories of "Community / Environment" and "Business / Labor." The "Business / Labor" category is typically harder to recruit for and maintain. In addition to the eight non-voting community seats, the policy board has additional defined non-voting seats for the Department of Commerce and for the Regional Staff Committee. The Transportation Policy Board has defined non-voting positions for additional agencies and committees, including the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency; Transportation Improvement Board; Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board; Regional Project Evaluation Committee; and Transportation Operators Committee.

While the interlocal agreement saw an opportunity for individual members of the public to participate as non-voting members, identifying an individual that would represent distinct communities, areas or groups around the region is challenging. The establishment of PSRC's Equity Advisory Committee (EAC) created a new way to recruit individuals to bring different perspectives to PSRC's work and raised the question of how to continually connect the committee's efforts to the policy boards.

After discussions with the Executive Committee and in coordination with the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the two policy boards, the following is a proposal for updating the policies and procedures for non-voting board seats.

### **Increase Flexibility and Participation**

There are challenges in recruiting a diverse and engaged roster of interested organizations, and attendance is often irregular by appointed members for a variety of reasons – e.g., commitment to monthly meetings whose agendas may not always have direct relevance to their area of interest.



Proposed updates to GMPB bylaws:

1. Merge the current two categories of “Community / Environment” and “Business / Labor” into a single category entitled “**Civic Representative.**” This will remove the current required limits between the two categories and allow for greater flexibility in both recruitment and appointments in any given cycle.
2. Given their close relationship to the work of the agency and their historic participation as non-voting members, it is proposed to establish a seat to be shared by the four **Public Health Agencies** as one of the defined Public Agencies non-voting seats on each board.
3. Include a non-voting seat for the **Equity Advisory Committee** as part of the non-voting PSRC Committees seats for both boards. This will bring the important voice of this PSRC advisory committee to each table.
4. Modify the current structure of eight at-large non-voting seats to “**up to six**” seats to provide additional flexibility depending on the applicants at any given time and to achieve robust participation. This also reflects the use of two non-voting seats for the changes suggested above for the health departments and the EAC.

### Recruitment

Reflecting the above proposed changes, the “job description” of the policy board non-voting seats would be modified to read as follows:

*Non-voting seats are intended to represent community interests and perspectives to aid policy discussions and decision making of PSRC’s Transportation Policy and Growth Management Policy Boards. Non-voting seats may include representatives of business, labor, community, or environmental organizations or individuals that bring additional perspectives to the board, with a commitment to collaboration and advancement of adopted regional policies and the mission of PSRC. Individuals not representing a larger organization may include students or others that bring unique experience and background relevant to the work program of either policy board.*

The application for non-voting seats will also ask the organization to make a commitment to participate on a regular basis. A non-attendance clause is proposed to be included, to allow for review and potential revocation of membership after a certain number of absences.

Since many regional civic organizations are based in King County, recruitment from the other three counties continues to be challenging. PSRC commits to enhanced efforts to build relationships and pursue contacts with organizations in the other three counties.

It is also proposed that recruitment and appointment opportunities be allowed on an as-needed basis, rather than the current structure of three-year staggered terms on a once-a-year schedule. This will allow for greater flexibility and potentially more

opportunity to engage a larger pool of candidates. The proposal would retain the three-year terms for appointed members, but with these revisions, terms would begin fresh in January 2024. Open recruitment will be available on PSRC's website throughout the year to allow flexibility in appointing new members as needs arise.

### **Next Steps**

Following a recommendation by the policy board, the Executive Board will be asked to take final action on the revised composition for both policy boards in September. The revised structure would then be implemented for the 2023 non-voting seat recruitment process to be conducted in the fall.

Staff will update the application materials for non-voting seats to better reflect the expectations of the positions and experience sought for representation. A more visible web presence will also be developed for more robust and ongoing recruitment and engagement.

For more information, please contact Josh Brown at 206-464-7515 or [jbrown@psrc.org](mailto:jbrown@psrc.org).

Attachment A: Proposed Amendments to Growth Management Policy Board  
Composition

## GROWTH MANAGEMENT POLICY BOARD

Approved by Executive Board on October 29, 2015

*August 2023 Proposed Revisions*

Organizations		Representatives	
<b>Voting GMPB Members</b>	King County	County	2
		Largest City (Seattle)	2
		Metropolitan Center (Bellevue)	1
		Other Cities/Towns	3
	Kitsap County	County	1
		Metropolitan Center (Bremerton)	1
		Other Cities/Towns	1
	Pierce County	County	1
		Metropolitan Center (Tacoma)	1
		Other Cities/Towns	1
	Snohomish County	County	1
		Metropolitan Center (Everett)	1
		Other Cities/Towns	1
	Federally Recognized Tribes	Muckleshoot Tribal Council	1
		Puyallup Tribe of Indians	1
		Suquamish Tribe	1
<b>Subtotal City/County, Federally Recognized Tribes</b>		<b>20</b>	
Statutory Members	Ports (Seattle, Tacoma, Everett, Bremerton)	1	
	WA State Department of Transportation	1	
<b>Subtotal Statutory Representatives</b>		<b>2</b>	
<b>Total Voting Members</b>		<b>22</b>	
<b>Non-Voting GMPB Members</b>	Associate Members	Alderbrook Water and Wastewater District	1
		Thurston Regional Planning Council	1
	Public Agencies	WA State Department of Commerce	1
		<b>Public Health Agencies</b>	<b>1</b>
	PSRC Committees	Regional Staff Committee	1
		<b>Equity Advisory Committee</b>	<b>1</b>
	<u>Private/Civic Members At-Large</u>	<b>Business/Labor</b>	<b>-4</b>
		<b>Community/Environment</b>	<b>-4</b>
	<u>At-Large Civic Representatives</u>	<b>6</b>	
<b>Total Non-Voting Members</b>		<b>12</b>	
<b>TOTAL VOTING AND NON-VOTING MEMBERS</b>		<b>34</b>	



## Puget Sound Regional Council

### **ACTION ITEM**

August 31, 2023

**To:** Growth Management Policy Board

**From:** Paul Inghram, Director of Growth Management

**Subject:** **Recommend Certification of Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies**

### **IN BRIEF**

Consistent with PSRC's adopted plan review process, PSRC staff recommend certification of the countywide planning policies for Pierce County. The certification report (Attachment A) further describes how the policies meet applicable requirements.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Staff recommends that the Growth Management Policy Board and Transportation Policy Board:

*Recommend that the Executive Board certify that the countywide planning policies for Pierce County are consistent with the VISION 2050 multicounty planning policies and the Regional Transportation Plan.*

### **DISCUSSION**

A major emphasis of the Washington State Growth Management Act is the need to coordinate local, regional, and state planning efforts. Within the central Puget Sound region, local governments and the Puget Sound Regional Council have worked together to develop a process for reviewing local, countywide, regional, and transit agency policies and plans for compatibility and consistency.

VISION 2050, the region's long-range plan for growth, calls for countywide planning policies (CPPs) to be updated to address multicounty planning policies included in VISION 2050 (MPP-RC-13). The countywide planning policies provide guidance to

Pierce County and its cities and towns to guide the update of their local comprehensive plans and development regulations.

Pierce County and its cities adopted and ratified a major update to the countywide planning policies (CPPs) on May 17, 2022 (Ordinance 2022-29) and ratified on November 14, 2022. Exhibit A of the CPPs including the population, housing, and employment targets was updated to reflect the state provided housing need allocations and adopted on June 20, 2023 (Ordinance 2023-22s).

The adopted Policy & Plan Review Process calls on PSRC to review the countywide planning policies based on a comparative analysis of countywide and multicounty planning policies, focusing on policy areas for regional planning identified in the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.210).

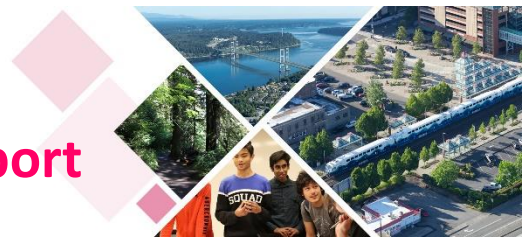
The countywide planning policies update aligns with the multicounty planning policies, the Regional Growth Strategy in VISION 2050, and achieves several local initiatives pursued by the county and its cities. Notable changes include a new Tribal coordination chapter developed in coordination with the Puyallup Indian Tribe, and a new Health in planning chapter developed in coordination with Tacoma-Pierce County Public Health. The CPPs also address the environment, affordable housing, military installations, transportation, countywide centers, and other planning issues. The county's 2044 population, housing, and employment growth targets for 2024 are provided as an Exhibit A to the countywide planning policies but are adopted independently by the county.

The update process included extensive work by the staff group, the Growth Management Coordinating Council, engagement with city councils through the Pierce County Regional Council, public comment, and the county's legislative process. PSRC reviewed the CPPs and found the policies substantially address the VISION 2050 multicounty planning policies and the Regional Transportation Plan. PSRC staff coordinated with county and countywide staff in the review of the policies and drafting of the certification report.

For more information, contact Liz Underwood-Bultmann, Principal Planner, at [LUnderwood-Bultmann@psrc.org](mailto:LUnderwood-Bultmann@psrc.org).

Attachment A: Pierce County CPP Certification Report

# Countywide Planning Policies DRAFT Plan Review Certification Report



## Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies

AUGUST 31, 2023

Pierce County adopted a major update to the countywide planning policies (CPPs) on May 17, 2022, (Ordinance 2022-29), which were subsequently ratified on November 14, 2022. The CPPs were updated to align with the multicounty planning policies and the Regional Growth Strategy in VISION 2050, reflecting local context for the regional policy framework and outlining a countywide vision for the future of Pierce County and its cities. Notable changes to the policies include new and revised policies focused on planning for affordable housing, healthy communities, climate, military installation compatibility, and tribal consultation.

The Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies were updated through a collaborative process including staff from Pierce County, cities, the Puyallup Tribe, and the Port of Tacoma, with input from the Puget Sound Regional Council and state agencies. Recommendations from the Growth Management Coordinating Committee (staff) were made to the Pierce County Regional Council. Action adopting the updated policies was made by the Pierce County Council and ratified by the cities.

Pierce County adopted Exhibit A with housing, population, and employment targets on September 3, 2022 (Ordinance No. 2022-46s), although the exhibit is not a formal part of the countywide planning policies. The Pierce County Council readopted the growth targets with housing need allocations in June 2023 to implement HB 1220 as well as adjustments to the adopted housing targets to be consistent with the state housing need allocation (Ordinance No. 2023-22s).

### COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICIES CERTIFICATION

VISION 2050, the region's long-range plan for growth, calls for countywide planning policies to be updated to address the multicounty planning policies included in VISION 2050 (MPP-RC-13). The adopted [Policy and Plan Review Process](#) calls on PSRC to review the countywide planning policies based on a comparative analysis of countywide and multicounty planning policies, focusing on policy areas for regional planning identified in the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.210). The consistency certification of countywide planning policies and the Regional Transportation Plan is based on a comparative analysis of the adopted countywide transportation-related planning policies and the Regional Transportation Plan (RCW 47.80.023). PSRC coordinated with Pierce County and GMCC staff and reviewed information provided by staff to prepare this report.

### CERTIFICATION RECOMMENDATION

Based on review of the countywide planning policies using the [VISION 2050 Consistency Tool for Countywide Planning Policies](#), 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 countywide planning policies for Pierce County are consistent with the VISION 2050 multicounty planning policies and the Regional Transportation Plan.**

The remainder of this report contains a summary of the PSRC review of the countywide planning policies. Under each heading, the scope of the certification review, as guided by the [Plan Review Manual](#) and the [VISION 2050 Consistency](#)

[Tool for Countywide Planning Policies](#), is listed in high-level bullets. Discussion in each topic area summarizes the policies, as well as issues identified through the certification review where future work on the part of the county and its cities may more fully address VISION 2050 and the Regional Transportation Plan requirements.

## REVIEW OF COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICIES

VISION 2050 emphasizes the value of coordination to achieve shared regional objectives. CPPs complement multicounty planning policies and provide more specific level of detail to guide county and local comprehensive planning. CPPs are reviewed using the VISION 2050 Consistency Tool for Countywide Planning Policies. This section follows the order and content established in the tool, covering the policy chapters in VISION 2050 (regional collaboration, environment, climate change, land use/development patterns, economy, transportation and public services).

### Regional Collaboration

#### SCOPE OF REVIEW

VISION 2050 calls for the countywide planning policies to address the following topics:

**Support joint planning and coordination** among jurisdictions, agencies, Tribes, ports, military installations, special purpose districts and adjacent regions.

**Prioritize services and access to opportunity** for people of color, people with low incomes, and historically underserved communities.

**Recognize military installations** and their beneficial impacts and challenges.

**Prioritize transportation investments** to centers and high-capacity transit station areas.

**Promote existing and new funding sources** to implement the regional vision.

#### WHAT'S IN THE POLICIES

The Pierce County CPPs work to advance regional policies and objectives for regional collaboration:

- Policies emphasize joint planning and collaboration between the cities, the county, and the port. (TR-7-8)
- A new policy chapter recognizes the importance and provides a detailed framework for working with Tribal governments and preserving treaty rights. (Policies TC-1-5)
- A new policy chapter addresses the importance and benefits of coordinating with Joint Base Lewis McChord and the need to jointly address challenges, such as housing and transportation. (MI1-5)
- New policies address equity, including a new Health chapter and policy that seeks to identify and mitigate the equity impacts of policy, regulation, and development proposals (H-3), and transportation policies that consider equity (TR-4).

#### DISCUSSION

- Pierce County's new chapter on Tribal Consultation is an impressive set of policies that will further development of strong relationships between the county, cities and Tribes, helping to work towards mutually agreed upon objectives for transportation, economy, and the environment.
- VISION 2050 encourages the use of a system of regional, countywide, and local centers as a means to organize infrastructure planning and prioritize funding. Pierce County has a detailed framework of regional centers, countywide centers, and centers of local importance. As the county reevaluates its countywide funding process it will be important to ensure consistency with the countywide policies that prioritize centers.

## Regional Growth Strategy

### SCOPE OF REVIEW

VISION 2050 calls for the countywide planning policies to address the following topics:

**Implement the Regional Growth Strategy by providing direction for growth targets**, including growth in centers and near high-capacity transit, addressing jobs-housing balance, reducing the rate of rural growth and supporting infill within the urban growth area.

**Ensure urban growth area stability and sustainability** over the long term.

Include a **process to reconcile discrepancies** between growth targets and local plans.

### WHAT'S IN THE POLICIES

The Pierce County CPPs work to advance regional policies and objectives for the Regional Growth Strategy:

- ☑ A policy chapter that guides a collaborative process for adopting housing and employment targets consistent with VISION 2050 and directs inclusion of targets in local comprehensive plans (chapter GT).
- ☑ Policy GT-6 directs a target reconciliation process.

### DISCUSSION

- Pierce County is commended for a collaborative process to develop growth targets that implement VISION 2050. While, Pierce County adopts growth targets separately from the countywide planning policies and therefore they are not included in certification, PSRC looks for substantial consistency with adopted growth targets during certification review of local plans. Pierce County adopted growth targets in 2022 in Ordinance No. 2022-46s and recently updated the housing targets and adopted income-level housing need allocations on June 20, 2023, with Ordinance No. 2023-22s.
  - Overall, the county's growth targets are more closely aligned with VISION 2050 and orient much of Pierce County's growth in larger cities and areas with greater transit service. As noted in Pierce County Ordinance No. 2022-46s, the population and employment targets for Core Cities are lower than planned for by VISION 2050 and significant growth is planned for the unincorporated urban area, both within the HCT Communities designation (near transit) and outside of the transit service area. As communities and Pierce Transit continue to plan for growth it will be important to ensure implementation of the planned Pierce Transit Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) lines that support a significant portion of the county's growth allocation, especially in unincorporated urban areas, or to reassess growth allocations to the urban unincorporated areas if BRT service is significantly delayed. Core Cities, which collectively have lower targets than VISION 2050, are encouraged to plan for their full targets and to seek opportunities to more closely align with VISION 2050.
  - Growth targets are directly included in other county CPPs. Pierce County is advised to consider formally incorporating targets in future updates to reduce certification risks for individual comprehensive plans.
- VISION 2050 and the Regional Growth Strategy emphasize transit-supportive densities and growing near high-capacity transit station areas, such as future bus rapid transit stops, where services and infrastructure exist and are planned. Local plans should focus growth and support transit-supportive densities in centers and near high-capacity transit station areas beyond designated centers. (MPP-RC-8, MPP-RGS-8, H-7-8, MPP-DP-22).



## Environment

### SCOPE OF REVIEW

VISION 2050 calls for the countywide planning policies to address the following topics:

**Coordinate and integrate environmental strategies** among jurisdictions, Tribes, countywide and watershed groups.

**Promote environmentally sensitive development**, including minimizing impacts to natural features.

**Support protection of critical areas** and incentivize environmental stewardship.

**Plan for open space** and encourage protection of native vegetation and tree canopy.

**Promote the protection of water quality** and restoration of hydrological function.

**Avoid and/or mitigate environmental impacts** for vulnerable populations.

**Reduce pollution**, including air toxics, greenhouse gases and stormwater.

### WHAT'S IN THE POLICIES

The Pierce County CPPs work to advance regional policies and objectives for the environment:

- ☑ A comprehensive set of environmental policies support a coordinated, inter-jurisdictional approach to protecting natural and critical areas and minimize impacts from pollution (chapter ENV).
- ☑ Policy support for working collaboratively with the Puget Sound Partnership to protect the species, habitat, and biodiversity of Puget Sound (ENV-4).
- ☑ Policies to plan for the provision and designation of open space (ENV11-18).

### DISCUSSION

The certification review found the CPPs to be generally aligned with the environmental policies of VISION 2050.

## Climate Change

### SCOPE OF REVIEW

VISION 2050 calls for the countywide planning policies to address the following topics:

**Support achieving regional emission reduction goals** by encouraging electrifying the transportation system, prioritizing investments that reduce emissions, promoting reduced vehicle miles travelled, and expanding use of conservation, alternative energy sources and energy management technology.

**Support reducing building energy.**

Coordinate work to **sequester and store carbon.**

**Address impacts** on water, land, infrastructure, health and the economy.

Address siting and planning for relocation of hazardous industries away from the **500-year floodplain.**

Address impacts to **vulnerable populations and areas disproportionately affected by climate change.**

### WHAT'S IN THE POLICIES

The Pierce County CPPs work to advance regional policies and objectives for climate change:

- ☑ Policy to explore creating a Pierce County coalition to address the impacts of climate change on a regional scale that recognizes the clear and present danger posed by climate change (ENV-6).
- ☑ Updated policies address adaptation and mitigation of climate change strategies, including sea level rise and resiliency (ENV-40).

- ☑ Policy to avoid, mitigate, and reverse climate impacts on disproportionately impacted communities, including Black, Indigenous, communities of color, populations without permanent shelter, and low-income residents (ENV40.1.3).
- ☑ Policy to direct development to urban areas and centers to support carbon sequestration in natural areas (ENV-44).
- ☑ Policy to meet state goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions (ENV-41).

#### DISCUSSION

- The Pierce County CPPs have thorough support for mitigating and responding to climate change impacts. The state Legislature recently passed HB 1181, which stipulates additional planning requirements related to climate change and resilience. The CPPs may need to be further amended to ensure consistency with HB 1181.

## Land Use/Development Patterns

#### SCOPE OF REVIEW

VISION 2050 calls for the countywide planning policies to address the following topics:

**Reduce disparities in opportunity** by supporting inclusive community planning, investments to expand opportunity, and strategies to mitigate displacement in centers and near high-capacity transit.

Implement the **Regional Centers Framework**.

**Maximize transit investments** through appropriate densities.

**Support center and station area planning.**

**Facilitate annexation and incorporation**, support joint planning, and affiliate unincorporated areas.

**Reduce rural growth** over time, ensure long-term **integrity of resource lands** and avoid conversion to other uses.

**Prioritize reducing health disparities** and improving outcomes.

**Avoid incompatible uses** near airports, military installations, manufacturing/industrial centers and Tribal reservation lands.

**Address impacts on culturally significant sites and Tribal treaty** fishing, hunting and gathering grounds.

#### WHAT'S IN THE POLICIES

The Pierce County CPPs work to advance regional policies and objectives for Land Use/Development Patterns:

- ☑ A new policy chapter on public health considers human health consideration and works to address disparities in opportunity through public investments (H-3.5, 4).
- ☑ Policies work implement the Regional Centers Framework, including detailed policies to designate countywide centers and centers of local importance. (Centers chapter)
- ☑ Policies support coordinated land use and transportation planning and encourage transit-oriented development in centers (TR-6.4.1-6.4.4).
- ☑ Policies to protect the rural areas from urban encroachment and to persevere agricultural and resource lands. (RUR-2-7, AG-4, 6, 7, TR-6.2)

#### DISCUSSION

The certification review found the CPPs to be generally aligned with the development pattern policies of VISION 2050.

## Housing

### SCOPE OF REVIEW

VISION 2050 calls for the countywide planning policies to address the following topics:

**Increase housing production opportunities** to address supply, including diverse types and styles.

**Address housing affordability needs**, with an emphasis on housing near transit and in centers.

**Promote jobs-housing balance** by providing housing choices accessible to workers.

Expand **moderate-density housing** capacity.

Address **residential displacement**.

### WHAT'S IN THE POLICIES

The Pierce County CPPs work to advance regional policies and objectives for housing:

- ☑ Policies support meeting the full range of affordable and moderate income housing needs through a range of strategies, including housing action plans and the adoption of innovative techniques. (AH-2)
- ☑ Support for a countywide housing affordability program. (AH-4)
- ☑ Direction to periodically monitor and assess housing needs and the accommodation of 20-year allocations. (AH-6)
- ☑ Policy to identify potential, physical, economic, and cultural displacement and to use a range of strategies to prevent and mitigate impacts of displacement. (AH-8)

### DISCUSSION

- The county adopted population and housing targets in 2022 and recently adopted revised housing targets along with housing need allocations to implement requirements in HB 1220. (Ordinance No. 2023-22s, June 20, 2023)

## Economy

### SCOPE OF REVIEW

VISION 2050 calls for the countywide planning policies to address the following topics:

**Support recruitment and retention** to foster a positive business climate.

**Focus employment growth in centers.**

**Support industry clusters** recognized in the Regional Economic Strategy.

**Promote environmentally and socially responsible** business practices.

Expand **access to opportunity and remove barriers** for economically disconnected communities.

Support and empower **contributions of culturally and ethnically diverse communities.**

Address **commercial displacement**.

### WHAT'S IN THE POLICIES

The Pierce County CPPs work to advance regional policies and objectives for the economy:

- ☑ Policy to achieve a prospering and sustainable regional economy by supporting business and job creation, investing in all people, sustaining environmental quality, and created great central places, diverse communities, and high quality of life. (EC-1)

**DISCUSSION**

- While the housing chapter recognizes and works against residential displacement, a similar policy approach that addresses physical, economic, and cultural displacement of existing businesses could be valuable to add to the economic chapter, consistent with MPP-Ec-12.

**Transportation****SCOPE OF REVIEW**

VISION 2050 calls for the countywide planning policies to address the following topics:

**Prioritizing improvements** that support the Regional Growth Strategy, centers and high-capacity transit areas.

**Maintain and preserve** the transportation system.

**Manage demand** and support alternatives to driving alone.

**Identify stable and predictable funding sources** and pursuit of alternative transportation financing.

Strategies and actions for changes in **transportation technologies and mobility**.

**Racial and social equity** as a core objective in transportation improvements, programs and services.

**Provide mobility choices** for people with special needs.

**Promote human health** and the state's goal of zero deaths and serious injuries.

**Support the economy** and the movement of people and goods.

**WHAT'S IN THE POLICIES**

The Pierce County CPPs work to advance regional policies and objectives for transportation:

- ☑ Policies promote a sustainable and coordinated multi-modal transportation system that aligns with the Regional Transportation Plan and the Regional Growth Strategy and provides current and future generations with transportation infrastructure and services that offer mobility for all users in an equitable, efficient, clean, and cost effective manner. (TR-1)
- ☑ Support for Target Zero and meeting transportation safety goals of zero deaths and serious injuries. (TR-2)
- ☑ Policy to consider equity, inclusion, and access to opportunity, including prioritizing investments for historically underserved communities. (TR-4)
- ☑ Policies support coordination between land use and transportation planning, including locating new transportation facilities near new growth and prioritizing multimodal improvements that support the Regional Growth Strategy. (TR-6)

**DISCUSSION**

- VISION 2050 continues the regional policy to prioritize transportation investments in centers and near transit, where growth is most likely to occur. A countywide subcommittee has been exploring transportation funding process. Any changes to the countywide funding process should continue to prioritize countywide centers, high-capacity transit areas, and designated local centers. County-level and local funding are also appropriate to prioritize for regional centers.
- Achieving regional goals to provide transportation alternatives, manage congestion, reduce vehicle miles traveled, and mitigate pollution requires providing access to high quality transit service throughout the urban area. While the Pierce County CPPs support the use of transit, policies should be considered that directly support the expansion of the Pierce Transit service area and for land use patterns designed to support transit use and operations.

## Public Services

### SCOPE OF REVIEW

VISION 2050 calls for the countywide planning policies to address the following topics:

- Protect and enhance the environment and public health** when providing services and facilities.
- Coordinate planning for services and facilities** to support the Regional Growth Strategy.
- Provide guidance to locate urban services** and regional facilities in urban areas and appropriately scale rural facilities.
- Serve new development** within urban areas with sanitary sewer and replace failing septic systems.
- Consider impacts of climate change** on public facilities.
- Plan for affordable and equitable access to public services**, especially to underserved communities.
- Encourage interjurisdictional coordination** of public safety and emergency management.
- Locate community facilities and services in centers and near transit.**
- Work with school districts** on siting, design and strategies to provide adequate urban capacity.

### WHAT'S IN THE POLICIES

The Pierce County CPPs work to advance regional policies and objectives for public services:

- Policies to provide urban services within urban areas and to design public facilities in the rural area to be a size and scale appropriate to rural locations. (RUR11-12)
- Clear policies on the siting of essential public facilities. (EPF-1-7)

### DISCUSSION

- The certification review found the CPPs to be generally aligned with the public service policies of VISION 2050.

## Conclusion and Next Steps

PSRC congratulates Pierce County and its cities for working collaboratively on this major update of the Countywide Planning Policies and through the plan review and certification process. The policies effectively address regional requirements for countywide planning policies, demonstrate consistency with VISION 2050, and are recommended for certification.

For additional information regarding this certification report, please contact Liz Underwood-Bultmann at [LUnderwood-Bultmann@psrc.org](mailto:LUnderwood-Bultmann@psrc.org).



## Puget Sound Regional Council

### DISCUSSION ITEM

August 31, 2023

**To:** Growth Management Policy Board  
**From:** Paul Inghram, Director of Growth Management  
**Subject:** **State Climate Planning Grants**

### IN BRIEF

At the September 7 Growth Management Policy Board meeting, Department of Commerce staff will provide information about available state climate planning grants.

### DISCUSSION

Legislation enacted in 2023 ([HB 1181](#)) adds a climate goal to the Growth Management Act (GMA) and requires all comprehensive plans in the central Puget Sound to have a resilience sub-element and most local plans to also have a greenhouse gas emissions reduction sub-element by 2029. Climate elements must maximize economic, environmental, and social co-benefits and prioritize environmental justice in order to avoid worsening environmental health disparities. The greenhouse gas emissions sub-element must include goals and policies to reduce emissions and vehicle miles traveled. Commerce has developed [initial guidance and planning resources](#) to address climate change in comprehensive plans.

Commerce's climate lead, Sarah Fox, will be available to talk about the approximately **\$30 million** available in statewide climate planning grants for the 2023-2025 biennium with an expectation that additional resources will be appropriated through the current periodic update. The current application window closes on **October 31, 2023**.

Each fully planning city and county is eligible for funding based on applicability. The following climate planning related activities are eligible for funding:

- Adopting comprehensive plan policy and development regulation amendments to implement HB 1181 as applicable.
- Other planning activities related to implementing HB 1181: A jurisdiction could propose both to adopt a climate element and conduct an implementation activity related to the adopted plan. Implementation activities must be climate planning related and not capital or infrastructure projects. Examples of implementation activities include (but not limited to): development of EV infrastructure plan; municipal building decarbonization plan; urban heat resilience strategy; or native & climate-resilient planting plans for municipal projects.

#### Grant Materials

- [Climate grant instructions \(PDF\)](#)
- [Grant application on Smartsheets](#)

For more information, please contact Sarah Fox, Commerce Climate Program Manager, at [GMSClimate@commerce.wa.gov](mailto:GMSClimate@commerce.wa.gov) or Paul Inghram, Director of Growth Management, at [pinghram@psrc.org](mailto:pinghram@psrc.org).



## Puget Sound Regional Council

### **DISCUSSION ITEM**

August 31, 2023

**To:** Growth Management Policy Board  
**From:** Paul Inghram, Director of Growth Management  
**Subject:** Findings from Affordable Housing Developer Outreach

### **IN BRIEF**

In 2021, House Bill 1220 amended the Growth Management Act to require local governments to fully document barriers and strategies to address housing needs at all income levels. PSRC staff reached out to affordable housing developers to assist jurisdictions in documenting challenges and opportunities identified by developers. At their September meeting, PSRC staff will provide an overview of the findings from affordable housing developer outreach and will be asked for feedback on how to support local governments in this work.

### **DISCUSSION**

House Bill 1220 brought changes to the housing element under the Growth Management Act and created new responsibilities for jurisdictions. Cities and counties are now required to do more to promote affordable housing development by identifying barriers to housing availability, such as gaps in funding sources, development regulations, or incentives. In an effort to streamline developer outreach and identify some overall themes within the region, PSRC conducted outreach to local affordable housing developers via a survey and focus group interviews.

PSRC developed a questionnaire focused on barriers and opportunities to develop affordable housing in communities. The target audience for the questionnaire was affordable housing developers, attainable/market rate housing developers, and other relevant stakeholders in housing development. PSRC worked with subregional housing organizations to review the questionnaire and distribute it to their networks and completed additional outreach to ensure geographic distribution of responses.



PSRC received completed surveys from 27 different organizations to create a high-level analysis of the barriers that currently exist in the housing market. Respondents were also invited to participate in one of two focus groups. The goal of these interviews was to gain a deeper understanding of the barriers to affordable housing development and to hear where developers wanted to provide feedback beyond the survey. Ten housing developers participated in the focus groups.

The outreach from both the questionnaire and the focus groups provided PSRC with valuable insights and highlighted some major factors that impact the availability and success of affordable housing across the region. Key feedback from participants focused on zoning, mandatory standards, such as ground floor commercial requirements, fee flexibility and permit reform, clear and efficient communication, public opposition, and other factors influencing the cost and complexity of developing housing. The complete write-up is available as Attachment A and is also available [online](#).

This research was done with the goal of creating a resource to help jurisdictions address new GMA requirements to address barriers to affordable housing and support their comprehensive plan updates. PSRC staff welcomes feedback from the board on how to share findings from this work, as well as any input on what resources would be helpful for local jurisdictions in their plan updates.

### **Next Steps**

PSRC will circulate the published document to jurisdictional partners, respondents, and representatives.

### **Lead Staff**

For additional information, please contact Liz Underwood-Bultmann at [lunderwood-bultmann@psrc.org](mailto:lunderwood-bultmann@psrc.org) or Paul Inghram at [pinghram@psrc.org](mailto:pinghram@psrc.org).

Attachment A: Affordable Housing Developer Outreach 2023



Puget Sound Regional Council

VISION 2050 Planning Resources

## Findings From Affordable Housing Developer Outreach

JULY 2023



Housing access, affordability, and choice are challenges for every jurisdiction in the central Puget Sound region. In recognition of the housing crisis, the Washington State Legislature passed House Bill 1220 in 2021 to amend housing element requirements under the Growth Management Act and create new planning responsibilities for jurisdictions. Cities and counties are now required to do more to promote affordable housing development by identifying barriers to housing availability, such as gaps in funding sources, development regulations, or other limitations (RCW 36.70A.070(2)(d)). The Department of Commerce housing guidance specifically recommends outreach to affordable housing developers to understand preferred zoning characteristics as well as barriers and strategies to address affordable housing needs.

In an effort to streamline developer outreach and identify overall themes within the region, PSRC conducted outreach to local affordable housing developers via a survey and focus group interviews. PSRC received completed surveys from 27 different organizations to create a high-level review of barriers to affordable housing and organized focus group interviews with ten of the survey respondents. Jurisdictions may use this information to help identify barriers to housing during their comprehensive plan updates as required by the Growth Management Act. This research is intended to be used as a guide so jurisdictions can quickly reference key themes present throughout the region and identify which are most relevant to their locality. This paper provides responses from the perspective of affordable housing developers and may not address other barriers that may also be present.

### Developer Questionnaire

PSRC developed a questionnaire focused on barriers and opportunities to develop affordable housing in communities. The target audience for the questionnaire was affordable housing developers, attainable/market rate housing developers, and other relevant stakeholders in housing development. PSRC staff worked with subregional housing groups to review the questionnaire and distribute it to their networks. The questionnaire was open for two weeks, and additional outreach was completed to ensure geographic distribution of responses. Figures 1 and 2 show the development type and typical geographic scope for survey respondents.

“Homebuilders respond to demand for housing, we do not create it. We cannot meet this demand without working in partnership with cities.”  
— Survey Response

The list below is comprised of agencies/firms who completed the questionnaire and indicated an interest in further collaborating with local planning staff as needed.

- ASIA PACIFIC CULTURAL CENTER
- Babbit Construction Company, LLC
- DASH/CIRC
- Devco Residential Group
- Ferguson Architecture
- GMD Development
- GS Consulting
- Habitat for Humanity - Tacoma / Pierce County
- Homeownership Center NW
- Homestead Community Land Trust
- King County Housing Authority
- Legacy Group Capital
- Louis Rudolph Homes
- Multi-Service Center
- Northwest Cooperative Development Center/  
ROC Northwest
- Panza dba Quixote Communities
- Soundbuilt Homes
- Southport Financial Services
- Together We Grow (TWG)
- Village Life, Inc.
- William Towey

### **Developer Focus Group**

PSRC organized focus group interviews over two days with a total of ten participants. They were run as informal conversations, guided by the main themes identified within the questionnaire. Participants were able to expand upon what they had said in the questionnaire and provide new takeaways and information that shaped additional themes.



Figure 1 Questionnaire Respondents – Geographic Scope of Development

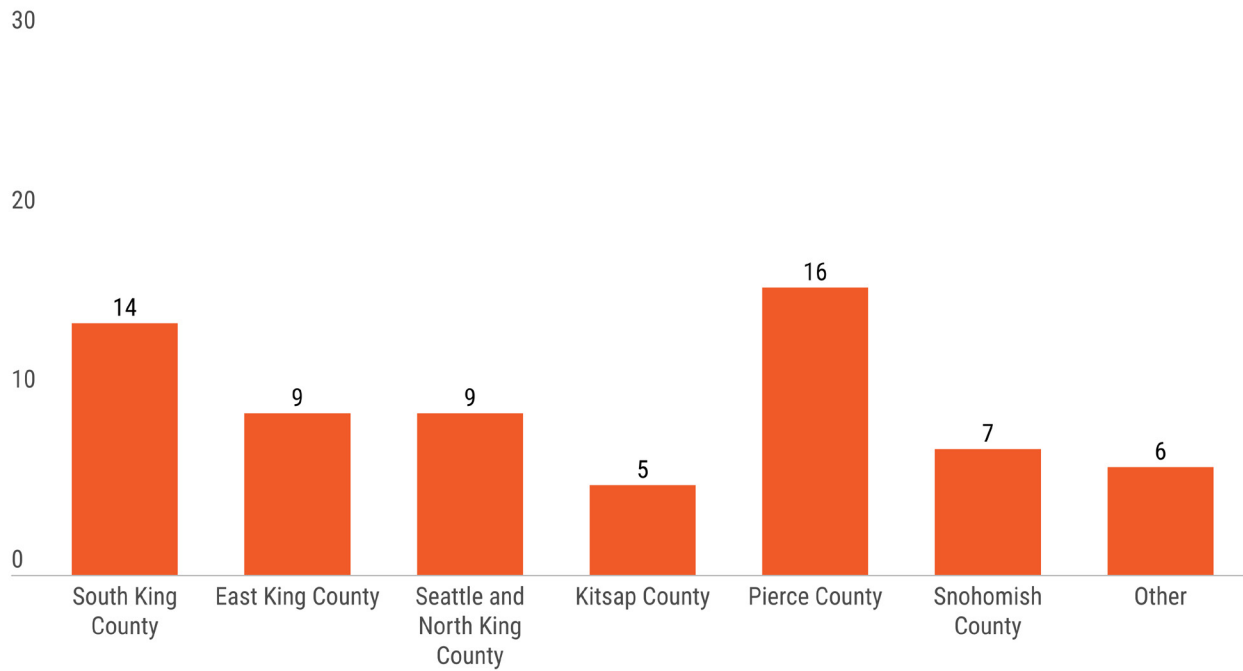
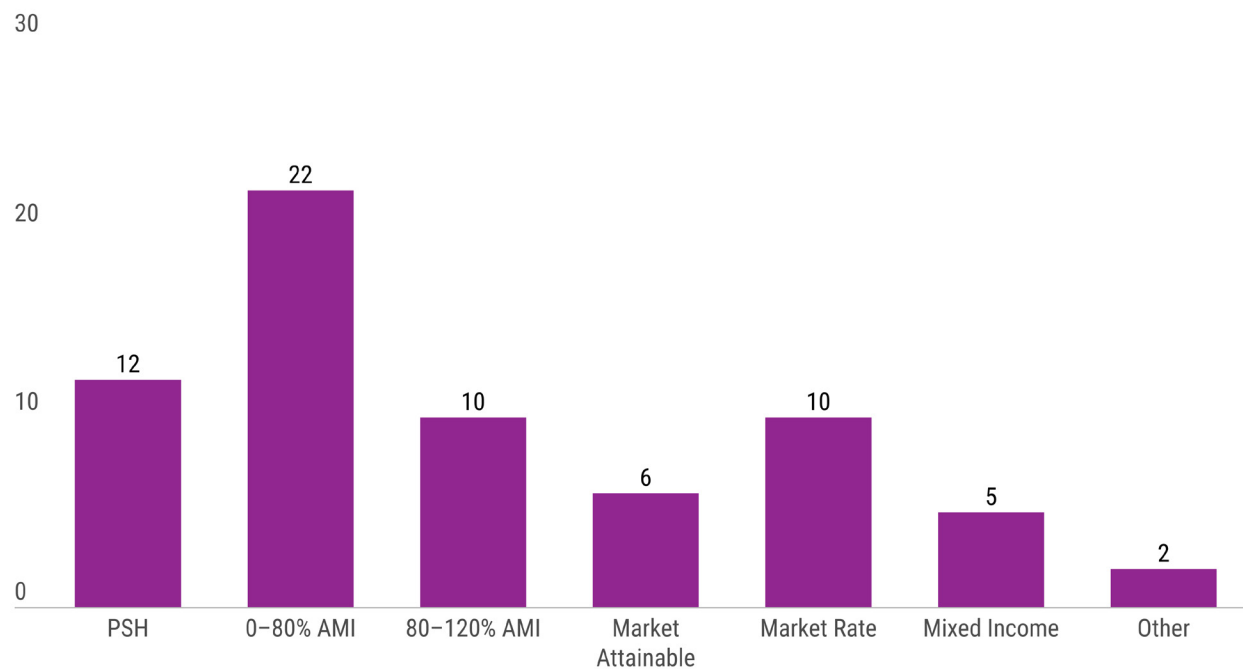


Figure 2 Questionnaire Respondents – Incomes/Populations Served



## What We Heard

The responses provide valuable insight and highlight factors that impact the availability and success of affordable housing across the region. Key takeaways include:

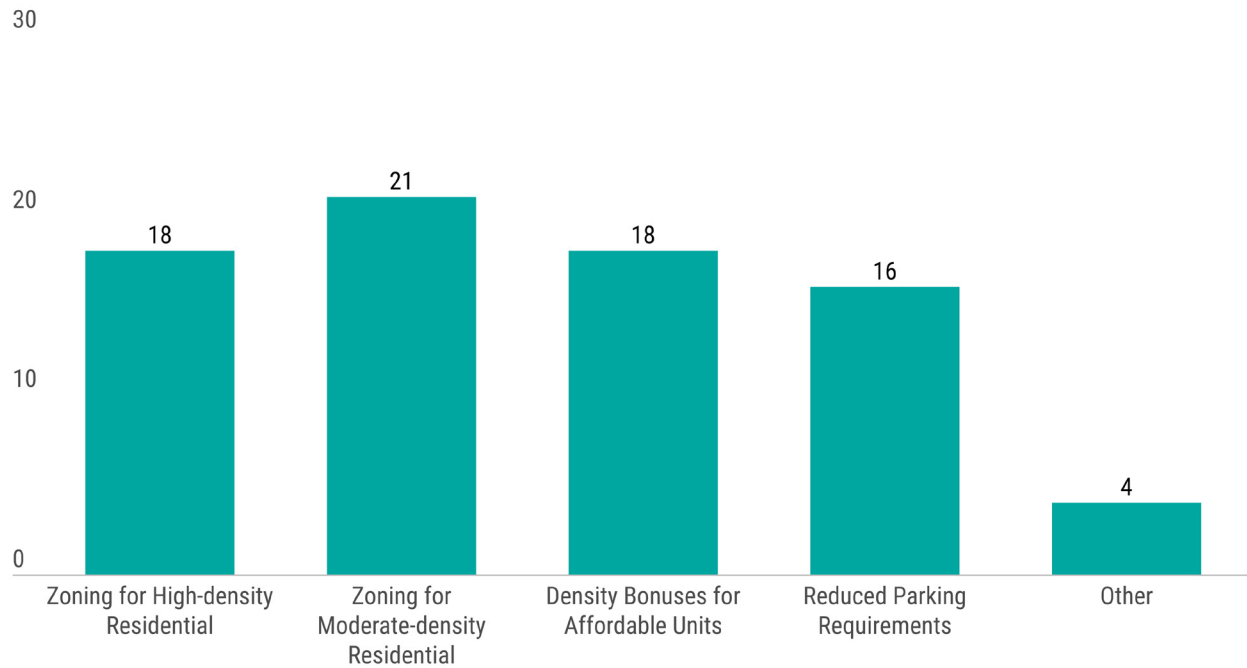
- Zoning** was consistently listed as the biggest barrier to developing more affordable housing. Respondents noted that they did not believe land was being used as efficiently as possible and there was not enough urban land available for residential development. With this, affordable housing developers said there is an overabundance of single-family zoning, making it increasingly difficult to create more affordable housing opportunities. Respondents emphasized the value of allowing development by right and avoiding time-consuming rezones and comprehensive plan amendments. As such, changes in zoning and density could help expand opportunities for affordable housing. The survey asked which zoning characteristics developers look for in building new units. Specifically, respondents noted they look for moderate density residential zoning, followed closely by high density residential zoning, density bonuses, and parking reductions.
- Mandatory standards** such as requirements for ground floor commercial space, open space, and parking minimums are well-intentioned but can be costly and provide additional barriers. Developers noted that ground floor commercial spaces can sit empty in some markets, which can drive up project costs. Stakeholders discussed that while some of these regulations—particularly commercial and open space requirements—were good additions in theory, in reality, they didn't always improve projects or add value to residents. Respondents observed that the number and size of required parking stalls limit the viability of some projects. Developers cited that some local governments provide more flexibility on how to meet community amenities and parking requirements, which can make projects more viable.
- Fee flexibility and permit reform** can be transformative in development projects as the time and cost associated with permitting processes and fees can be burdensome. Local jurisdictions can encourage development by being flexible with fee abatement/exemption where it's possible. Waiving or decreasing fees such as permitting or impact fees, in addition to expedited permitting processes, can decrease project costs, allowing more projects to pencil in a cost constrained environment. One respondent stated that permit fees and delays can increase project costs by 30-40%. Other impacts were also present; respondents cited the cost of utility hookup and impact fees and costs associated with design review.
- Clear and efficient communication is a key part of success.** Challenging communication with cities and counties regarding zoning/land-use, development requirements, and general project needs can prove to be a significant barrier in project success. Participants noted that there is often a lack of communication between departments, and important information can be missed, confused, be delayed in its delivery. Participants discussed having success with cities that appointed a project expeditor who acts as the single point of contact and ensured that information was consistent and efficient for all parties.

“Clarity is important.  
Speed is second.”  
— Survey Response

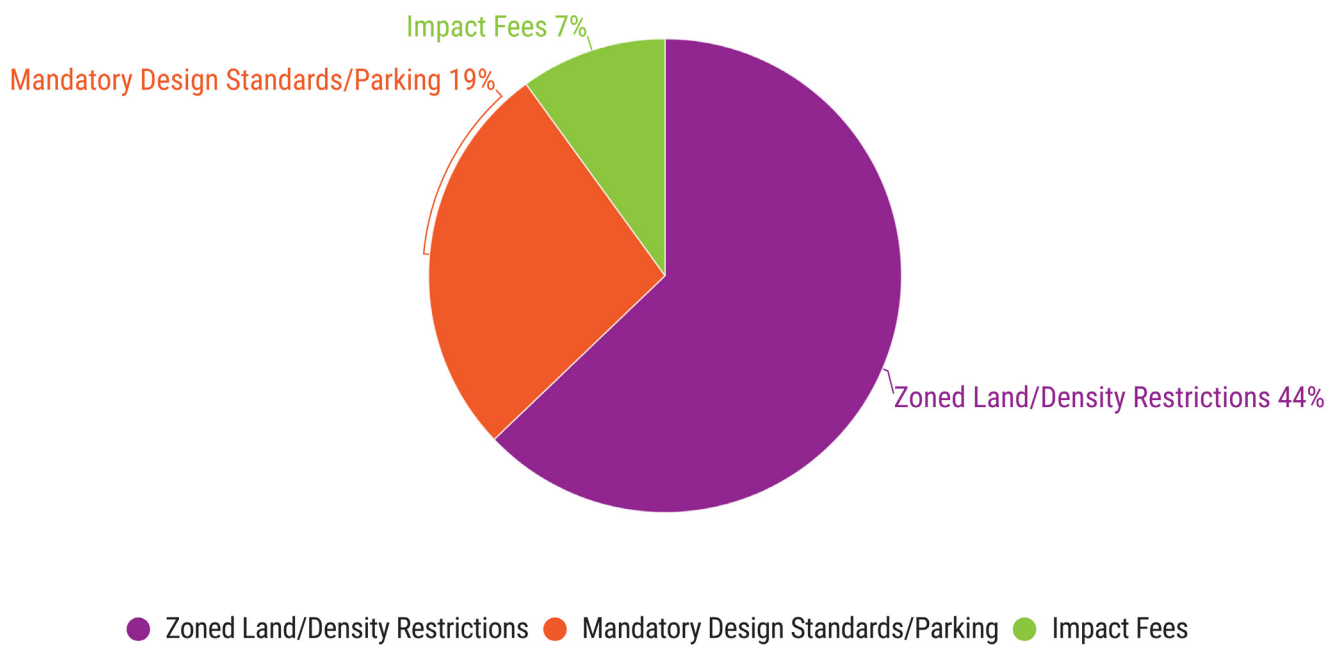
- **Public opposition can be a powerful barrier** Public opinion in projects can play a large role in the success and finalization of zoning changes, temporary housing, and housing for houseless communities. When there is significant public opposition, projects can be hit with delays and political pushback.
- **Creativity is essential** in mitigating potential and real barriers allowing for more innovative solutions. Rigid regulations and code can create barriers in cost, time, and process for developers. By collaborating, jurisdictions and developers can find ways to be flexible, adapt the code, and find compromises to narrow down project priorities. For example, Tacoma adopted an approach used in Oakland, California, and created a Live/Work and Work/Live code so commercial business and residential uses can exist in the same space. This means that residential ground floor units can be transformed into commercial space if market demand changes over time. Other ideas, such as making the ground floor look commercial but really allowing it to simply house resident services was a collaborative approach from a developer and jurisdiction. This allowed them to bypass commercial space requirements by finding a solution that met the needs of the city while saving time and costs.
- **Multiple factors influence the cost and development of housing** While this outreach asked housing developers to identify steps local governments can take to remove barriers to affordable housing, respondents also noted other factors that shape the cost and availability of housing. These included labor shortages in skilled trades, restrictions on funding available for affordable housing, and limited funds overall to develop affordable housing. Respondents also discussed the limited local funding options for public improvements, shifting the burden to fund amenities, utilities, and other infrastructure improvements that provide broader public benefits to new developments.



**Figure 3 Desirable Zoning Characteristics**



**Figure 4 Most Cited Local Barriers to Affordable Housing**



## Identifying Barriers

While there are many aspects of affordable housing development that are out of the hands of local government, there are steps cities and counties can take to facilitate development and make the process cheaper and easier. Zoning more land for moderate and high-density development, waiving impact fees and other development costs, expediting the permitting process, and streamlining the design review process were all strategies identified in the survey and focus groups. Jurisdictions have provided flexibility on achieving community goals like open space and ground floor commercial amenities, which can also make projects more viable. Building parking is a significant cost, and reducing or eliminating parking requirements, including the number and size of required stalls, can help make projects pencil out. City and county staff can also help to create a collaborative environment to develop new affordable housing. Reducing time and adding predictability in the permit process provides real cost savings to affordable housing developers.

The findings from this research seek to serve as a starting point for jurisdictions working to meet the new GMA requirements. It can be used as a guiding document for further outreach and research or can serve as the basis for identifying local themes amongst jurisdictions within the Puget Sound region. The guidance provided in the document identifies takeaways relevant to the entire region.

PSRC adopted the Regional Housing Strategy in 2022 to guide the implementation of housing policies outlined in VISION 2050. PSRC supports jurisdictions in their efforts to adopt best housing practices and establish coordinated local housing and affordable housing targets by providing data, guidance, and technical assistance. Please visit [PSRC's Housing webpage](#) for more housing information and tools.

## Project Team

- **Laura Benjamin-LaPitz**, Principal Planner
- **Ananda Gordon-Peabody**, Housing/Planning Intern
- **Liz Underwood-Bultmann**, Principal Planner
- **Paul Inghram**, Director of Growth Management

“Another bigger picture issue is the perception that developers are causing need for housing. The fact that we need more housing shows that the economy is strong and that companies are expanding and want workers to be here. But the public perception is that it's all the developers fault.”

— Focus Group Response







## Puget Sound Regional Council

### DISCUSSION ITEM

August 30, 2023

**To:** Growth Management Policy Board  
**From:** Paul Inghram, Director of Growth Management  
**Subject:** **Equity Advisory Committee Report**

### IN BRIEF

Equity is a key policy area in [VISION 2050](#), the region's long-range plan for growth. A new action in the draft VISION 2050 plan (RC-Action-3) directs PSRC to develop a regional equity strategy, which is intended to make equity central to PSRC's work and to support the 2024 local comprehensive plan updates. During the upcoming Growth Management Board meeting, staff will share the progress the Equity Advisory Committee has made co-creating various resources within the Regional Equity Strategy. Staff will also share the progress on designing a pilot to focus on equity in PSRC's transportation project selection process.

### DISCUSSION

PSRC staff and the [Equity Advisory Committee](#) (EAC) have made progress on regional equity work, including co-creating elements of the [Regional Equity Strategy](#), which will provide guidance to help members work in a coordinated manner towards the region's goal of providing an exceptional quality of life and opportunity for all.

Additionally, since January of 2023, the Equity Advisory Committee (EAC) has worked with PSRC staff to review PSRC's current project selection process as it relates to equity, to ultimately develop an equity pilot program to distribute approximately \$6 million of PSRC's 2025-2026 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funds. The EAC will also develop recommendations for potential further equity improvements in future PSRC project selection processes.

## **Regional Equity Strategy**

Based on feedback from PSRC boards and committees as well as various stakeholders from around the region, staff worked with the Equity Advisory Committee to co-create the Regional Equity Strategy. The strategy includes components such as:

### ***Capacity Building***

- Learning Opportunities
- Prioritizing Equity
- Inclusive Procurement
- Hiring and Retention

### ***Data and Research***

- Equity Tracker
- Legacy of Structural Racism Interactive Report
- Data & Analysis

### ***Community Engagement***

- Equity Advisory Committee
- Anti-Displacement Organizations Report
- Equitable Engagement Guidance

### ***Best Practices***

- Equity Planning Resources
- Racial Equity Impact Assessment

In anticipation of upcoming comprehensive plan updates, staff engaged with the EAC on the resources most relevant to this process: Equity Tracker, Legacy of Structural Racism Interactive Report, Anti-Displacement Organizations Report, Equitable Engagement Guidance, Equity Planning Resources, and Racial Equity Impact Assessment. Staff will share an update on the progress they have made co-creating these resources with the Equity Advisory Committee.

### **Equity Pilot**

PSRC conducts a project selection process to distribute federal transportation funds every two years. The process and the criteria used to evaluate every project is based on policies and outcomes detailed in VISION 2050 and the [Regional Transportation Plan](#). These include elements such as accessibility, multimodal mobility, safety, equity and climate, as well as financial and project readiness considerations.

In addition to substantial improvements to how equity was incorporated into the existing project selection process, as part of the 2022 *Policy Framework* approximately \$6 million of PSRC's FHWA funds were set aside for an Equity Pilot Program. The EAC has been asked to co-create this program, developing the parameters by which projects would be selected for funding, with an overarching focus on improving equity with transportation investments.

There are four phases for this program. Phase one was focused on education and included a series of meetings during the first quarter that helped EAC members understand the nuances of the project selection process. These meetings explored PSRC's current project selection process and how other Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) across the country have incorporated equity into their processes. The EAC also engaged in a simulation exercise where members evaluated transportation projects from 2022.

Phase two focused on designing the Pilot. During this phase, the EAC proposed ideas about the structure of the Equity Pilot Program. Additionally, from June to August, a few members of the EAC joined staff meetings to implement the suggestions shared by the committee and design the Equity Pilot. During phase three staff will release the pilot, conduct the pilot, and review which projects were recommended with the EAC.

The EAC will end the year with phase four, reviewing the outcomes of the pilot program, discussing what went well and sharing recommendations for the next full project selection process, based on the experience designing the Equity Pilot. In December, the board will review the EAC's recommendations for how project selection should be improved and then adopt the framework in January of 2024.

At their September meeting, GMPB members will have an opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback on the agency's equity work program.

For more information, please contact Charles Patton, Program Manager – Equity Policy and Initiatives, at [cpatton@psrc.org](mailto:cpatton@psrc.org) or Paul Inghram, Director of Growth Management, at [pingham@psrc.org](mailto:pingham@psrc.org).



## Puget Sound Regional Council

### **DISCUSSION ITEM**

August 31, 2023

**To:** Growth Management Policy Board  
**From:** Paul Inghram, Director of Growth Management  
**Subject:** **Puget Sound Data Trends**

### **IN BRIEF**

At the September 7 Growth Management Policy Board meeting, PSRC staff will provide a background report on the latest trends in the Puget Sound region.

### **DISCUSSION**

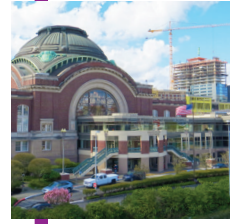
As part of the long-range performance-based planning process, PSRC has an ongoing effort to track a variety of regional, demographic, and transportation trends across the region. This presentation will look at several trends that highlight how our region is performing related to Climate, Safety, and Growth. Some of the data includes serious and fatal traffic collision trends, population and housing growth, job changes, and transit and airport usage in the region.

Following the presentation, PSRC staff will be available for questions and comments from board members. If you have any questions prior to the meeting, please contact Craig Helmann at [chelmann@psrc.org](mailto:chelmann@psrc.org).



Puget Sound Regional Council

# FROM PANDEMIC TO PROSPERITY: Downtowns Reimagined



**REGISTER TODAY!**

**Friday, September 29, 2023**



### Part 1

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Zoom & In-person  
Panels



### Part 2

1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

In Person Walking Tour,  
Downtown Seattle

Visit [the event page on psrc.org](https://psrc.org) for more information.

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted downtowns and urban cores in unforeseen ways that now provide opportunities to revitalize these places to better serve all people. Join national experts and community leaders to explore cutting edge data analysis, innovative techniques, and best practices to reimagine downtowns for our shared prosperity.

Free to attend | Online registration at [psrc.org](https://psrc.org)