IX. Economic Development

Jurisdictions should cooperatively create an environment which sustains the economic vitality of the region and which contributes to manageable economic growth. Jurisdictions shall recognize that King County is part of a larger regional economy, which is strongly linked by trade to the national and international economies. Infrastructure investments should be focused into Urban Centers and Manufacturing/Industrial Centers which are supported by transit. Countywide Policies shall be integrated with economic development.

FW-33  All jurisdictions shall contribute to the economic sustainability of the County in a manner which supports the Countywide land use pattern. This is to be accomplished by providing cost-efficient quality infrastructure and public services at an adopted level-of-service specific to the local situation, providing affordable housing, promoting excellence in education, and protecting the environment.

FW-34  All jurisdictions shall act to increase work training and job opportunities for all residents and communities.

FW-35  All jurisdictions shall support the development of a regional economic development strategy consistent with the Countywide land use pattern.

Definition of Economic Development

Economic Development is growth and change in the economy whereby the economic health of the region—its people, its business, its governments—is enhanced. An important component of achieving economic development is through the purposeful undertaking of public and private actions designed to achieve:

- the maintenance of a strong economic base;
- a diversification of the economy;
- improved job training and educational opportunities;
- the protection of the natural environment;
- the empowerment of economically disadvantaged citizens and neighborhoods,
- a partnership between the private and public sectors; and
- the maintenance and creation of higher (family) wage jobs.

This element of the Countywide Planning Policies is intended to provide a vision and policy direction for King County jurisdictions.

FW-36  The Growth Management Planning Council or its successor and jurisdictions shall develop monitoring and evaluation systems, including benchmarks, by which they can evaluate performance in achieving the goals of their comprehensive plans.

ED-1  The Growth Management Planning Council has adopted economic development policies which:
a. Establish the County’s role in the regional economy;
b. Maintain a strong economic base within King County;
c. Encourage diversification of the economy;
d. Maintain an adequate supply of land to support future economic development;
e. Identify geographic areas to target public resources promoting economic development;
f. Foster job training opportunities to maintain a highly educated work force;
g. Protect the natural environment as a key economic value in this region;
h. Consider the special needs of economically disadvantaged citizens and neighborhoods; and
i. Include the assistance of private sector.

ED-2 By July 1, 1995 regional planning shall produce a regional industrial siting policy based on a regional assessment of the need for industrial zoned land and the availability of transportation and other infrastructure to serve it.

ED-3 Jurisdictions’ comprehensive plans shall include economic development policies. These policies shall address the local economic concerns of each jurisdiction within the context of a regional economic development strategy.

ED-4 Each jurisdiction’s comprehensive plan shall include an economic development element which will include an estimate of the type and number of jobs to be accommodated in the jurisdiction during the next 20 years.

ED-5 The County shall work with Snohomish and Pierce Counties to develop a joint 20-year regional economic development strategy.

A. Strengthen, Expand, and Diversify the Economy

ED-6 Local jurisdictions’ plans shall include policies that actively support the retention and expansion of the economic base of the multi-County region. Local jurisdictions and the County shall work cooperatively on a regional basis and invite private sector participation to evaluate the trends, opportunities and weaknesses of the existing economy and to analyze the economic needs of key industries.

Local jurisdictions’ comprehensive plans shall include policies intended to foster:

a. The development and retention of those businesses and industries which export their goods and services outside the region. These businesses and industries are critical to the economic strength and diversification of the economy; and
b. A business climate which is supportive of business formation, expansion, and retention and recognizes the importance of small businesses in creating new jobs.

ED-7 Jurisdictions shall cooperate to establish economic diversification and development goals for the multi-County region. Jurisdictions shall, in process of comprehensive
planning, identify the contribution they will make to the regional diversification and development goals.

ED-8 Where appropriate, jurisdictions’ plans shall include policies intended to attract and retain industries, firms and jobs, within their locally determined or zoned manufacturing and industrial areas.

ED-9 Jurisdictions shall recognize businesses, facilities, and institutions within their boundaries that provide opportunities to maintain economic stability and realize economic growth for the entire region. These include major educational facilities, research institutions, health care facilities, high value added manufacturing facilities and port facilities among others. The County and local jurisdictions shall encourage these institutions, businesses and facilities to thrive while maintaining the environmental and other goals of the local comprehensive plans.

B. Environment

ED-10 Jurisdictions shall adopt economic development and other policies which will recognize and help protect the environment as a key economic value in the region. Local policies shall seek to achieve an appropriate balance between the needs for economic growth and the need for protecting the environment. Local governments are encouraged to look for ways to work cooperatively with businesses to help them comply with environmental regulations and to develop policies that result in environmental protection through regulatory processes that are understandable and efficient.

ED-11 In cooperation with water and electricity providers, local jurisdictions, including sewer and water districts, shall encourage programs for water and power conservation in public facilities and in the private sector.

C. Human Resources: Economically Disadvantaged Citizens and Neighborhoods, Job Training and Education

ED-12 Jurisdictions’ comprehensive plans shall address the historic disparity in income and employment opportunities for minorities, women and economically disadvantaged individuals. Jurisdictions shall develop strategies and support community-based actions to involve minorities, women and economically disadvantaged individuals in improving their economic future. The plans shall recognize their special needs and each jurisdiction should commit, based on their plans, resources in human services, community development, housing, economic development and the public infrastructure, to address the inequalities referred to above.

ED-13 Job training, retraining, and educational opportunities are critical to develop and maintain a highly skilled workforce. Jurisdictions shall cooperate in efforts to meet these training and educational needs on a Countywide basis by facilitating the
implementation of programs to meet the educational and training needs and to identify partnerships and funding opportunities where appropriate.

D. Direct Governmental Actions: Land Supply, Infrastructure and Permitting

ED-14 Jurisdictions shall cooperate on a Countywide basis to inventory, plan for, and monitor the land supply for commercial, industrial, institutional, resource and residential uses. Local jurisdictions shall, in coordination with evaluation and reporting requirements of state law, identify the amount, character and uses of land needed to achieve the jurisdictions’ job growth goals.

ED-15 Local comprehensive plans should include policies which foster a climate supportive of the siting needs of industrial users and that recognize the important role they play in creating high-wage jobs. Local plans are encouraged to include policies designed to ensure that industrial use of industrial-zone land is not unduly encroached upon or limited by non-supporting or incompatible uses.

Local policies and plans are encouraged to support the continued availability of land for those industrial and supporting or compatible activities dependent on critical infrastructure as identified in local comprehensive plans. Jurisdictions should consider zoning or other means to provide opportunities for those uses in areas where infrastructure facilities can be utilized to exploit the economic benefit of that infrastructure.

ED-16 Jurisdictions are encouraged to promote the siting of resource-based and agricultural-based industrial activities close to the location of the natural resource whether outside or inside the Urban Growth Boundary. Jurisdictions are encouraged to recognize forest land as a sustainable economic resource.

ED-17 Where jurisdictions, including water and sewer districts, have responsibility to provide infrastructure and/or services or to plan for them they shall include the goals of economic development as an important part of their decision making process.

ED-18 Jurisdictions shall cooperatively develop funding strategies for governmental infrastructure which take into account economic development goals, and consider the costs and benefits for the jurisdictions, and the region.

ED-19 Jurisdictions shall seek state legislative approval of state funding and regulatory strategies to fund environmental clean-up of industrial sites. Jurisdictions shall work together on a collaborative basis to develop alternative local, County and state financing and regulatory strategies to assist with the funding of environmental clean-up of industrial sites.

ED-20 Jurisdictions shall identify geographic areas that can be developed or redeveloped into Manufacturing/Industrial Areas, and coordinate with utility providers to build the nec-
essary infrastructure. Jurisdictions are encouraged to provide public incentives to promote basic employment associated with manufacturing.

ED-21 To maintain the economic vitality of King County, regulatory reform must occur with the implementation of Growth Management Act requirements. To carry out this goal, jurisdictions shall adopt permitting processes with defined milestones for prompt approval of projects that conform with the local jurisdiction’s development regulations. To carry out this policy the following actions shall be taken:

a. No later than January 1996, jurisdictions shall identify to the Growth Management Planning Council or its successor current permit process timeframes and barriers to speedy permit approval, including discussion of operational and cost considerations;
b. Eliminate redundant permit reviews and appeals;
c. Establish consistent mitigation requirements containing clear standards, and facilitating projects that meet these established standards;
d. Focus the scope of public appeal processes for a project to those issues that relate directly to specific impacts of the project; and
e. Adopt procedures to perform concurrent permit review whenever possible.

ED-22 Jurisdictions may prepare non-project environmental impact statements to address, in a comprehensive manner, the probable significant adverse impacts of future development.

ED-23 Jurisdictions are encouraged to establish a master utility permit process in conjunction with approval of land use permits such as short plats, subdivisions and master planned developments. Utilities may include both publicly and privately owned utilities for electricity, natural gas, water, sanitary sewer, surface water management and telecommunications. All utility extensions and required new construction may be reviewed as part of the master utility permit.

E. Private/Public Partnerships

ED-24 Jurisdictions shall foster the development and use of private/public partnerships to implement economic development policies, programs and projects.