

CHAPTER 1

**REGIONAL GROWTH MANAGEMENT**  
**PLANNING**  
**INTRODUCTION**

## **I. About King County**

King County has some of the most beautiful scenery in the country, some of the most productive farmlands, and one of the most vibrant economies. The 2016 King County Comprehensive Plan ~~2012~~ establishes a vision that preserves this incredible diversity while continuing to acknowledge that citizens want options as to where they live, work and play. The plan guides growth and development throughout the unincorporated areas of the county and establishes King County's position on major issues such as transportation, annexations, regional water supply and environmental protection.

### **King County Geography**

King County, covering 2,130 square miles, is the size of the state of Delaware, but much more geographically diverse. It extends from Puget Sound in the west to 8,000-foot Mt. Daniel at the Cascade crest to the east. King County's various landforms include saltwater coastline, river floodplains, plateaus, slopes and mountains, punctuated with lakes and salmon streams. Lake Washington, covering 35 square miles, and Lake Sammamish with 8 square miles are the two largest bodies of fresh water. Vashon-Maury Island in Puget Sound and Mercer Island in Lake Washington provide different island environments. ~~The north-south trending shapes of the lakes and hills make east-west travel more difficult than north-south travel. Four major river basins with salmon-bearing streams are separated by steep-sided plateaus whose slopes are subject to landslides and erosion.~~

### **King County Jurisdictions**

In 1994, when King County's first comprehensive plan under the Growth Management Act was adopted, the county had 34 cities with 1,116,000 people. ~~More than 493,000 people lived in unincorporated King County—31% of the county total population.~~ More than a third of annual new residential development was occurring in

unincorporated areas. Since December 1994, five new cities have incorporated and numerous annexations have occurred, shifting more than 220,000 people into city limits. As of ~~2011~~2015, there are 39 cities ranging in size from Seattle with more than ~~608,000~~ 660,000 people to Skykomish and Beaux Arts with fewer than 350 each. King County's 39 cities now cover ~~404~~ 418 square miles, or ~~192~~20% of the county's total land area. ~~The incorporated population has increased by a total of 540,000 since 1994, primarily due to new cities and large annexations, but also due to growth within existing boundaries. And, Unincorporated King County, the territory outside any city, now has about 253,000 people, or 13% of the county's population, on 81% of its land area. The unincorporated population has decreased by 239,000 since the 1994 Comprehensive Plan was initially adopted, chiefly through the incorporation of new cities.~~

### **King County Demographics**

In ~~2011~~2015, with more than ~~1,942,000~~ 2,050,000 people, King County is the largest county in Washington State and the ~~14th~~ 13th largest in the nation. ~~As a populous, large county with a major central city, King County constitutes the majority of the "Seattle-Bellevue-Everett" metropolitan area of more than 2.7 million persons.~~ King County exhibits growing diversity: more than one-third of ~~our~~ the population ~~are~~ is now persons-of-color. As of 2010, 65% of the population is non-Hispanic white, 15% Asian or Pacific Islander, 7.7% African-American, 1% Native American and 8.9% Latino (2010 census data). ~~King County's population has grown by about 330,000 residents, or 21%, since 1994; a modest rate compared with Sunbelt metro areas and nearby Puget Sound counties. However, given the large population already here, the growth numbers are significant. The population increase since 1994 equals the total existing population of the cities of Bellevue, Renton and Kent together. King County is forecasted to grow by an additional 320,000 persons (16%) to about 2,263,000 by 2030.~~

The number of housing units in King County is growing faster than its population. The 2010 Census counted more than 851,000 houses, apartment and condominium units, and mobile homes; and housing has increased by 159,000 units (23%) since 1994. Household size has stabilized after declining in the 1970s and 1980s and is now estimated at 2.39 persons per household – the same as in 2000. A slight decline in household size is anticipated in coming years to about ~~2.30~~ 2.26 in ~~2022~~2031.

### **King County Economy**

King County is truly the economic engine of Washington State ~~and the Pacific Northwest, and King County's economy is larger than that of several U.S. states. Nearly~~ with more than 1.2 million workers ~~are~~ employed within the borders of King County, at nearly ~~70,000~~ 80,000 business firms, excluding sole proprietorships. King County's ~~\$61.5~~ \$87 billion payroll is ~~50.3%~~ 52% of Washington State's ~~\$122.3~~ \$167 billion payroll and ~~72.6%~~ three-fourths of the four-county region's ~~\$84.7 billion~~ payroll.

King County has a cyclical economy, with booms and recessions; ~~typically on a ten-year cycle. During the 1990s, the number of jobs grew by 26% to almost 1.2 million. Since since 2000, the region we have~~ has had two major recessions, a boom, and ~~a weak~~ recovery. The result is that as of 2010 the number of jobs ~~is~~ was the same

as it was in 2000: about 1.1 million. Since 2010, job growth has been substantial. Manufacturing employment remains important, but ~~aerospace, the largest sector, lost 11,100 jobs between 2001 and 2006~~ growth has been in the trade, business services and information sectors. ~~It has remained stable since then.~~ The economy has diversified from ~~the its~~ traditional aerospace and resource bases to high tech, services and trade, both local and international. ~~County unemployment rates fell steadily in 2006 and 2007 from the relative highs experienced in the five previous years, but increased after 2008 and have remained stubbornly high.~~ Given the county's complement of healthy, innovative businesses and its industrial diversification, its future unemployment rates should be lower than in the state and the nation.

## ~~II. Growth Management Planning in King County~~

## II. King County Planning Framework

Prompted by residents concerned about sprawl, King County adopted its first comprehensive land use plan in 1964. Two decades later, the 1985 comprehensive land use plan was the first to identify an urban growth boundary line to limit urban growth to areas with the infrastructure needed for facilities and services. It also established policies to ~~preserve~~ protect the Rural Area, conserve the natural environment and designate resource lands for long-term agriculture and forest production.

~~King County's comprehensive land use planning dates back to 1964. Its first comprehensive plan under the State Growth Management Act (GMA) was adopted in 1994. The GMA, passed in successive session of the Washington State Legislature in 1990 and 1991, seeks to further protect and enhance the quality of life in King County and the Pacific Northwest. The GMA Growth Management Act directs the state's most populous and fastest growing counties and their cities to prepare comprehensive land use plans that anticipate growth over a 20 year horizon and provide for it in a managed manner. In the Puget Sound region, the GMA also requires development of multi county planning policies (MPPs) by the counties of King, Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish as well as the development of countywide planning policies (CPPs) by King County and its 39 cities. Each of these plans has recently undergone major revision informing the 2012 update to the King County Comprehensive Plan.~~

There is a hierarchy of growth management planning in the county with consistency between the levels. Some issues, such as the establishment of the Urban Growth Area (UGA), are best decided at the countywide level, while others, such as the amount of commercial space needed in a neighborhood, are best determined at the subarea plan level. At a broader scale, the Growth Management Act requires development of Multicounty Planning Policies by the counties of King, Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish as well as the development of Countywide Planning Policies by King County and its 39 cities. These documents are to be used solely for establishing a countywide framework from which county and city comprehensive plans are developed and adopted.

**A. Public Participation in Planning**

At the core of King County's planning is the goal of providing a high quality of life by actively soliciting public participation to help shape its plans, including strategic, comprehensive, functional, and subarea plans, and use these planning processes to strengthen communities.

**RP-101** King County shall strive to provide a high quality of life for all of its residents by working with cities, special purpose districts and residents to develop attractive, safe and accessible urban communities, retain rural character and rural neighborhoods, support economic development, promote equity and social justice, maintain preserve resource and open space lands, preserve the natural environment, and to protect significant cultural and historic resources.

**RP-102** King County shall actively solicit public participation from a wide variety of sources in its planning processes, including the development, amendment and implementation of its plans.

**RP-103** King County shall seek comment from tribes during its planning processes.

**B. Multi-County Planning**

In April 2008, the general assembly of the Puget Sound Regional Council adopted VISION 2040—containing ~~the a numeric Regional Growth Strategy and the Multicounty Planning Policies~~—as an update to the earlier Vision 2020 regional plan. The policies-Multicounty Planning policies address those issues that benefit from greater consistency across jurisdictions and those that are of a countywide or regional nature.

VISION 2040 is a regional strategy to accommodate the population and job growth expected by 2040 in the four-county Puget Sound region. As an integrated, long-range vision for maintaining a healthy region, promoting economic vitality, a healthy environment and well-being of people and communities, VISION 2040 provides clear direction to regional, county, and local governments on topics such as setting priorities for transportation investment, stimulating economic development, planning for open space, making city and town centers more suitable for transit and walking, and improving transportation safety and mobility. VISION 2040 promotes a triple-bottom line approach to decision-making that seeks to promote social, economic and environmental benefits in all projects, programs and plans.

**RP-~~204~~104** King County's planning should include multi-county, countywide, and subarea levels of planning. Working with residents, special purpose districts and cities as planning partners, the county shall strive to balance the differing needs identified across or within plans at these geographic levels.

**C. Countywide Planning**

State law requires that planning be coordinated on a countywide level, and that the county itself adopt a comprehensive plan to regulate those areas for which it has direct responsibility. The Countywide Planning Policies are required by the state Growth Management Act and provide a countywide framework to coordinate local comprehensive plans and implement VISION 2040. King County and all cities and towns of King County are responsible for ensuring that their respective comprehensive plans are consistent with and implement the Countywide Planning Policies.

The Growth Management Planning Council (~~GMPC~~) is the formal body charged with developing the Countywide Planning Policies and then sending a recommendation to the King County Council for its review and approval. The Growth Management Planning Council is a representative body consisting of elected officials from King County, Seattle, the Sound Cities Association, and the City of Bellevue.<sup>1</sup>

The Countywide Planning Policies were first adopted by King County and ratified by the cities within the county in 1992. In response to VISION 2040, the county and the cities within the county approved a major overhaul and update to the Countywide Planning Policies (~~CPPs~~) in 2013. These revised ~~CPPs~~ Countywide Planning Policies implement the regional and countywide vision by providing a countywide framework to plan for new development, including housing, commercial, institutional and other non-residential uses, and for job growth. The ~~CPPs~~ Countywide Planning Policies provide broad direction to individual jurisdiction comprehensive plans including the King County Comprehensive Plan. The goals of the policies include: promoting a compact and centers-focused growth pattern that uses land and infrastructure efficiently, protecting the Rural Area and Resource Lands, providing affordable housing throughout the county and coordinating protection and restoration of the natural environment in King County.<sup>2</sup>

**U-447RP-105 King County should work the Growth Management Planning Council to adopt Countywide Planning Policies that support annual ratifications to allocated housing and employment growth targets for cities and the county.**

**RP-202106 Except Four-to-One proposals, King County shall not expand the Urban Growth Area (UGA) prior to the Growth Management Planning Council taking action on the proposed expansion of the Urban Growth Area.**

---

<sup>1</sup> As amended by Ordinance 17687.

<sup>2</sup> As amended by Ordinance 17687.

- RP-203107 ~~The county~~ King County shall not forward to the Growth Management Planning Council, for its recommendation, any proposed expansion of the Urban Growth Area unless the proposal was either:
- a. Included in the scoping motion or an area zoning study of the proposal was included in the public review draft of proposed King County Comprehensive Plan updates; or
  - b. Subjected to the hearing examiner process for site specific map amendments as contemplated by the King County Code.

RP-204108 King County shall implement the Countywide Planning Policies through its comprehensive plan and through Potential Annexation Area, preannexation and other interlocal agreements with its cities.

#### **D. Sub-Regional Planning and Partnerships**

King County engages with partners in subareas of the county in sub-regional planning programs and partnerships that are related to the Comprehensive Plan. These activities are guided by the policies in the Comprehensive Plan as well as the other components of the overall King County Planning Framework noted in this chapter. Some key activities are noted below.

- RP-109 King County shall establish and/or participate in regional and subregional partnerships to advance the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan such as:
- a. The King County Cities Climate Collaboration (the "K4C") to confront climate change.
  - b. The Growing Transit Communities Program to advance transit-oriented development around transit stations and hubs, and
  - c. The Eastside Rail Corridor to support a multi-use vision for the corridor.

These programs are described in greater detail, and where appropriate additional policies added, in the relevant subsequent chapters of the Comprehensive Plan.

#### **E. Comprehensive Planning**

The ~~2012~~ 2016 update is the ~~fourth~~ fifth major review of the King County Comprehensive Plan. In accordance with ~~GMA~~ Growth Management Act, it is designed to manage growth so that development is directed to designated urban areas and away from the Rural Area and Natural Resource Lands. The ~~GMA~~ Growth Management Act also requires King County to designate and protect critical areas and commercially significant forestry, agriculture, and mining areas. The ~~GMA~~ Growth Management Act requires a comprehensive plan to adhere to a set of fourteen goals and to include the following elements: land use, housing, capital facilities, utilities, rural, shorelines, and transportation. The King County Comprehensive Plan provides a legal framework for managing growth and making decisions about land use in unincorporated King County. Public

and private agencies, property owners, developers, community groups and King County staff use the Comprehensive Plan in several ways.

The Comprehensive Plan provides guidance to county officials for decisions on proposals such as zoning changes and developments. It also gives the public direction on the county's position on proposed changes in land use or zoning, environmental regulations, or broader policy issues. The Plan also serves as a framework for other plans and regulations such as subarea plans and the King County Code that govern the location and density of land uses in unincorporated King County. The Plan provides a basis for decisions about public spending on facilities and services. Finally, the Plan presents other agencies, such as cities and special purpose districts, with King County's position on large-scale matters such as annexation, use of resource lands, environmental protection and others.

**RP-404110** King County's planning should strengthen communities by addressing all the elements, resources and needs that make a community whole, including: economic growth and the built environment, environmental sustainability, regional and local mobility, health and human potential, and justice and safety.

**RP-406111** King County shall integrate mandated responses to the listings under the Endangered Species Act into future planning and economic development efforts and resource management programs to achieve, where consistent with the Endangered Species Act, a balance between environmental, social and economic goals and objectives. King County shall collaborate with others to conserve species and their habitats in order prevent future listings under the Endangered Species Act.

**RP-406112** King County shall incorporate approaches to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for the impacts of climate change into its land use and transportation planning, economic development efforts, and natural resource management ~~the most promising actions to respond to climate change, especially those actions that will reduce emissions of greenhouse gasses.~~

**RP-408113** The Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map is adopted as part of this plan. It depicts the Urban Growth Area, Urban Growth Area Boundary, Rural Area, Natural Resource Lands and other land uses. The Land Use Map at the end of this chapter generally represents the official Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map.

**Property Rights:** The Growth Management Act requires cities and counties to balance a variety of goals in the implementation of growth management. One of the goals of Growth Management Act is to provide for the protection of private property rights in relation to the comprehensive planning process of the county. In support of this goal, King County undertakes a review process designed to assess its regulatory and administrative actions to avoid unconstitutional takings of private property.

**RP-440114** King County shall to continue its process of reviewing county regulatory and administrative actions so as to avoid unconstitutional takings of private property.

**F. Subarea Planning**

Subarea plans, previously called community plans and basin plans, focus the policy direction of the comprehensive plan to a smaller geographic area. Smaller-scale subarea plans, known as area zoning studies, address issues of concern at the neighborhood level, per King County Code,<sup>3</sup> are focused on adoption or amendment of zoning maps on an area wide basis rather than the broad range of topics that are addressed in a full subarea plan. Examples of subarea plans and area zoning studies include the Duwamish Coalition Project, White Center Action Plan, Vashon Town Plan, Fall City Subarea Plan, the East Redmond subarea plan, and planning efforts within a watershed or basin. Development of subarea plans are guided by the following policy as well as other applicable policies of the comprehensive plan and provisions in the King County Code.<sup>4</sup>

**RP-205115** Subarea plans, including area zoning studies, provide detailed land use plans for local geographic areas. Subarea plans implement and shall be elements of the King County Comprehensive Plan and shall be consistent with the plan's policies, development regulations and Land Use Map. The subarea plans should be consistent with functional plans' facility and service standards. The subarea plans may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Identification of policies in the comprehensive plan that apply to the subarea;
- b. Review and update of applicable community plan policies;
- c. Specific land uses and implementing zoning, consistent with the comprehensive plan;
- d. Identification of the boundaries of Unincorporated Activity Centers and Rural Towns;
- e. Recommendations for the establishment of new Unincorporated Activity Centers, Community and Neighborhood Business Centers, if appropriate;
- f. Recommendations for additional Open Space designations and park sites;
- g. Recommendations for capital improvements, the means and schedule for providing them and amendments to functional plans to support planned land uses;
- h. Resolution of land use and service issues in Potential Annexation Areas;
- i. Identification of new issues that need resolution at a countywide level;
- j. Identification of all necessary implementing measures needed to carry out the plan;

---

<sup>3</sup> Per King County Code 20.08.030-Area Zoning

<sup>4</sup> Per King County Code 20.08.060-Subarea plan

- k. **Specific land uses and zoning that encourage healthy, livable communities by promoting physical activity of walking and bicycling; and**
- l. **Identification of locations and conditions for special overlay districts.**

The passage of Ordinance 17319 and 173415 in 2011 replaced the Unincorporated Urban Area Councils with the Community Service Area geography. As described more fully in Chapter 11: Community Plans, this geography will be used as the guiding structure for subarea planning starting in 2015.

To the extent practicable, subarea plans in unincorporated King County should be developed in close coordination between the community and county staff that may have a lead or partial role in implementing the plans to ensure clearer expectations on how and whether community recommendations in a subarea plan are feasible for implementation and within what type of timeframe. ~~A~~ This type of coordination, supported by the financial analysis noted in the following policy, is critical to all subarea and functional plans in order to evaluate the resources required and the time frame necessary for full implementation. Plan alternatives and costs should be clearly understood and plans should be financially achievable.

**I-200RP-116** **King County should identify the financial costs and public benefits of proposed subarea and functional plans prior to adoption to ensure that implementation can be appropriately prioritized.**

In addition to subarea plans and areawide zoning studies, King County's land use planning also includes Site Specific Land Use Amendments<sup>5</sup> and Zone Reclassifications<sup>6</sup> – these are site specific processes that involve County staff review and recommendations, a public hearing and recommendation by a Hearing Examiner and a decision by County Council. These must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan or proposed with amendments during the plan update process.

## **G. Functional Planning**

Functional plans are detailed plans for facilities and services and also include action plans and programs for other governmental activities. Some functional plans are operational or programmatic and guide daily management decisions. Others include specific details of facility design and location. Plans that guide specific siting of facilities must be consistent with the comprehensive plan. Functional plans are prepared by King County, independent special purpose districts or other public and private agencies. Examples of functional plans in King County include: the Strategic Climate Action Plan, Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan, Parks and Open Space Plan, Regional Wastewater Services Plan, Strategic Plan for Road Services, and Strategic Plan for Public Transportation.

---

<sup>5</sup> Per King County Code 20.08.170-Site Specific Land Use Amendments

<sup>6</sup> Per King County Code 20.08.160-Reclassification

Capital improvements are important components of functional plans. Capital facilities and spending on improvements and new facilities are closely linked to availability of funds. Functional plans must identify costs and services of needed facilities and distinguish between improvements needed for new growth versus those needed to support existing public health and welfare needs.

RP-~~206~~117

**Functional plans for facilities and services should:**

- a. **Be consistent with the comprehensive plan and subarea and neighborhood plans;**
- b. **Define required service levels that are appropriate for the Urban Growth Area, Rural Area and Natural Resource Lands;**
- c. **Provide standards for location, design and operation of public facilities and services;**
- d. **Specify adequate, stable and equitable methods of pay for public facilities and services;**
- e. **Be the basis for scheduling needed facilities and services through capital improvement programs; and**
- f. **Plan for maintenance of existing facilities.**

RP-~~207~~118

**Existing functional plans that have not been adopted as part of this comprehensive plan shall remain in effect and continue as official county policy until reviewed and revised to be consistent with the comprehensive plan, or until repealed or replaced. In case of conflict or inconsistency between applicable policies in existing community and functional plans and the comprehensive plan, the comprehensive plan shall govern.**

RP-~~208~~119

**King County shall prepare functional plans to identify countywide facility and service needs and define ways to fund these consistent with the King County Comprehensive Plan. Independent special purpose districts and other public agencies also prepare functional plans that should be considered by King County.**

## **H. Comprehensive Plan Review and Amendment**

The ~~GMA~~Growth Management Act allows local comprehensive plan amendments to be considered once each year. In King County, those annual amendments allow technical changes only, except for once every four years. Then, during the "Four-Year Cycle review process," substantive changes to policies, land use designations and the Urban Growth Area boundary can be proposed and adopted. These provisions are detailed in King County 20.18. Additional information and policies are found in Chapter 12.

As part of its review of the Comprehensive Plan, King County, together with its cities, published the 2007 King County Buildable Lands Report and updated it in 2014. ~~Ratified in 2008~~2015, the Report fulfills the requirements of the ~~GMA~~Growth Management Act for the county and its cities to, every ~~five~~ eight years.

evaluate whether there is sufficient suitable land to accommodate the projected county-wide population. The Buildable Lands evaluation represents a mid-course check on achievement of ~~GMA~~ Growth Management Act goals. The focus of the evaluation is on the designated urban areas of King County and growth targets for those areas as established in the ~~CPPs~~ Countywide Planning Policies. Based on data from ~~2006~~<sup>4</sup> through 2011~~05~~, the ~~2014~~<sup>7</sup> Buildable Lands Report evaluated the actual housing constructed, densities of new residential development, and the amount of actual land developed for commercial and industrial uses within the ~~UGA~~ Urban Growth Area. Based on that data, it projected that there is a sufficient amount of land within the ~~UGA~~ Urban Growth Area to accommodate housing, commercial and industrial uses through 2031~~22~~ and beyond. Additional discussion and policies can be found in Chapter 12: Implementation, Amendment and Review.

~~In accordance with King County Code 2.10, King County has a Performance Management and Accountability System, shown in the diagram below. This system is enabled through the development of critical planning documents (including the King County Strategic Plan; agency, department and office strategic plans; business plans; functional plans; and the budget). The King County Council maintains a role in enabling the growth management planning hierarchy by adopting the ,7 Comprehensive Plan updates, and subarea plans into ordinance. In this manner, the county's growth management and strategic planning hierarchies are mutually reinforcing.~~

**Docket Request Process:** Another key element of the Comprehensive Plan Review and Amendment Process is the Docket Request Process. As required by the ~~GMA~~ Growth Management Act, King County maintains a docket for recording comments on the King County Comprehensive Plan and associated development regulations – the process and requirements are detailed in the King County Code at 20.18.140. The County reviews all requests, communicates with docket submitters, and makes recommendations to the County Council by the first day of December. The docket report includes an executive recommendation for each item (view the current Docket Report).

## **I. Managing Performance**

As part of a growing national movement at all levels of government, King County is embracing performance measurement and management. Performance measurement is measuring and reporting performance data while performance management is using performance information to inform management decisions. Successful organizations rely on performance management to inform leadership about how well they are reaching their goals and where improvements can be made. With adoption of the ~~KCSP~~ King County Strategic Plan (*discussed below*), King County committed to the development of a unified and meaningful measurement framework to manage performance at all levels of government.

---

<sup>4</sup>~~The county council adopts and forwards the CPPs for city ratification.~~

As part of its development, ~~GP-107 ensures~~ the policies in the Plan ensure that appropriate monitoring of the Countywide Planning Policies and ~~KCCP Comprehensive Plan~~ will contribute to this measurement framework. King County is doing performance management for several important reasons:

- Ensure county goals are being met;
- Improve county services, where necessary;
- Increase transparency with the public;
- Increase use of data for more informed public discussion and decision-making;
- Increase accountability at all levels of government; and
- The King County Strategic Plan calls for increased attention to effective performance measurement.

~~GP-107~~**RP-120** **King County will measure and assess agency performance and the achievement of Countywide Planning Policies and Comprehensive Plan goals.**

~~RP-100~~**RP-121** **Using best management practices, King County shall develop assessment and review tools to ensure that health, equity, social and environmental justice impacts are considered in the development, implementation and funding of county projects and programs.**

Additional information and provisions related to monitoring can be found in Chapter 12: Implementation, Amendment and Evaluation.

## **J. King County Strategic Plan**

In 2010, the King County Council adopted the “King County Strategic Plan, 2010-2014: Working Together for One King County” (KCSPP). The ~~KCSPP~~ Strategic Plan serves as the framework for countywide priority setting, business planning, budget development, resource allocation and leadership and managerial accountability. ~~The King County Strategic Plan is the new guiding document for decision-making in the county, with~~ and has a five-year planning horizon. The ~~KCSPP~~ Strategic Plan represents a significant countywide effort that obligates all departments and agencies to work together as a single county government.

The 2015 update to the Strategic Plan, adopted by Motion 14317, contains guiding principles and goals that address topics in the Growth Management Act and other locally-defined priorities. These new goals are as follows:

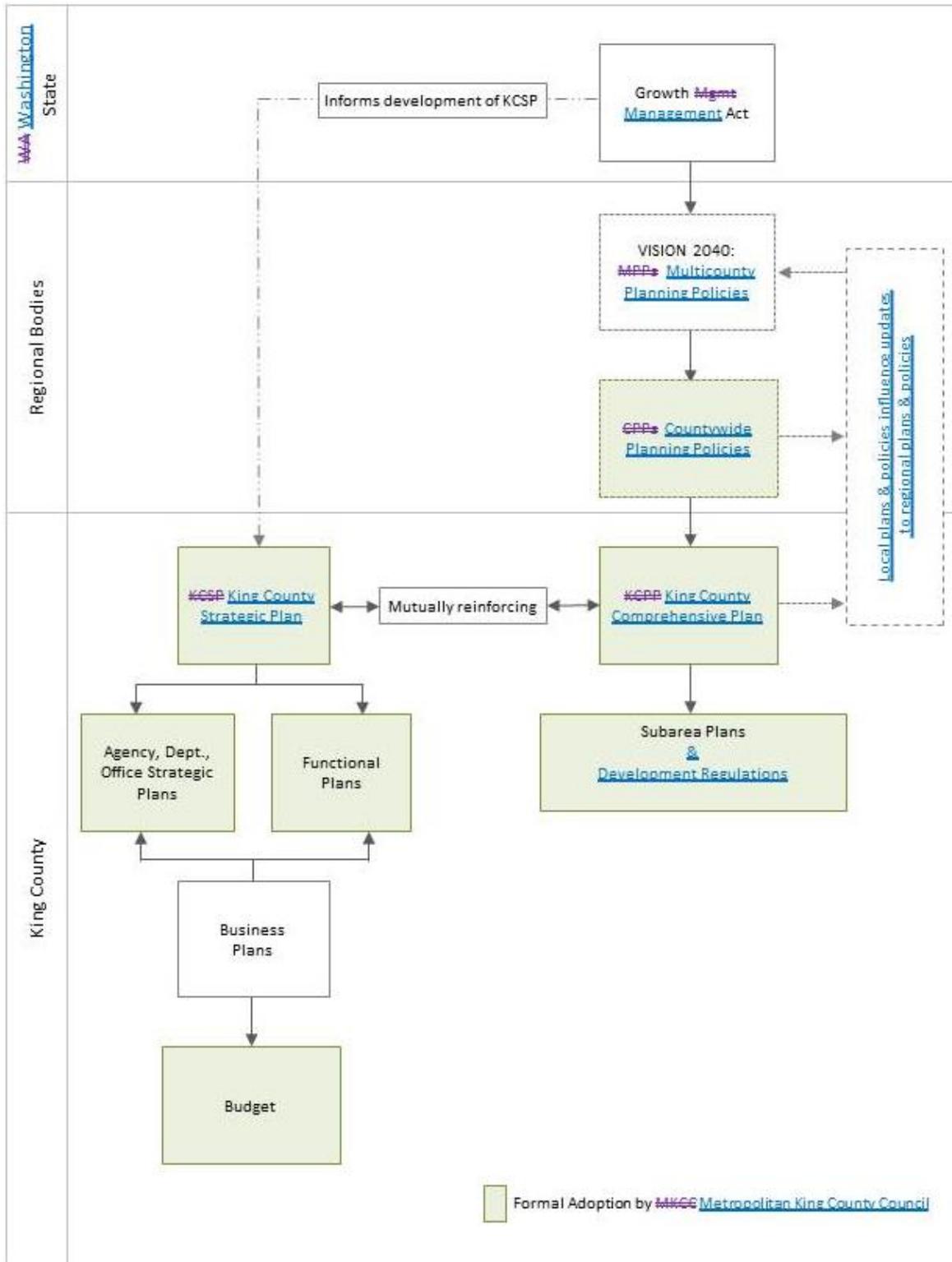
- *Mobility:* Deliver a seamless network of transportation options to get people where they need to go, when they need to get there.
- *Safety and Justice:* Provide for a safe and just community through proactive law enforcement and an accessible and fair justice system, while implementing alternatives to divert people from the criminal

justice system

- *Health and Human Services:* Improve the health and well-being of all people in the community
- *Economic Vitality:* Increase access to family wage job opportunities throughout the county
- *Accessible, Affordable Housing:* Increase access to quality housing that is affordable to all
- *Healthy Environment:* Preserve open space and rural character while addressing climate change
- *Efficient, Accountable Regional and Local Government:* Ensure that County government operates efficiently and effectively and is accountable to the public

These planning processes and structures respond to Growth Management Act, Multicounty Planning Policy, Countywide Planning Policy requirements and goals and reflect local circumstances and priorities. This complex framework is illustrated in the following graphic.

Figure: Planning Hierarchy Relationship to Growth Management Planning



## ~~III. Moving Toward a Sustainable King County~~

### III. King County Planning Objectives

The Comprehensive Plan is ~~been~~ based on the principles of creating sustainable neighborhoods, preserving open space, farmland, and rural communities, directing development toward existing communities, and providing a variety of transportation choices. These ~~principles~~ planning objectives are consistent with the Washington State Growth Management Act and guide funding decisions, creation and operation of programs and projects, and how the county interacts with local, state and federal agencies. The impact of implementing these principles has been to:

- create higher urban densities by directing 96% of the growth into the urban cores of the region (Urban Growth Area),
- preserve irreplaceable resource lands, park and critical areas,
- improve mobility by making transit service more accessible,
- sustain a vibrant economy,
- improve water quality and manage stormwater runoff,
- improve air quality and particulate emissions, and
- reduce per-capita greenhouse gas emissions. through the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (King County operates one of the nation's largest hybrid transit fleets, and
- ~~reduce fuel consumption.~~

~~In 2008, the county included three framework policies to form the broad foundation for more detailed and substantive implementing policies in the topical chapters of the Comprehensive Plan. Those framework policies addressed: 1) health, equity, social and environmental justice; 2) climate change; and 3) measurement and monitoring. They represented a commitment to adapt growth management strategies to take advantage of new and emerging ideas that have an expansive reach throughout the county. In this 2012 update, the three framework policies, new in 2008, are incorporated to the existing guiding principles of the county's Comprehensive Plan.~~

### Planning Objectives

#### **A. Creating Sustainable Neighborhoods**

Neighborhoods are the backbone of any community. Creating sustainable neighborhoods may mean using incentives, programs or regulations to help create new neighborhoods, and support existing neighborhoods. Encouraging mixed land use and making access to jobs, shopping, and schools easier establishes the cohesiveness of a neighborhood. Having opportunities for physical activity and providing for people, if they

choose, to age in place and remain in their neighborhood as their lifestyle changes or they face changing physical capabilities establishes the stability of a neighborhood. In essence all of these factors contribute to creating a sustainable neighborhood.

Sustainability of a neighborhood also relates to the impact the neighborhood has on the environment. Incorporation of sustainable development practices into the design, construction and maintenance of the neighborhood can reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce pollution, reduce the use of natural resources, reduce energy and other maintenance costs, and enhance property values.

**GP-401RP-201** In its policies and regulations, King County shall strive to promote sustainable neighborhoods and communities, and seek to ensure that all county activities provide social, environmental and economic benefits.

## **B. Preserving and Maintaining Open Space and Natural Resource Lands**

The people of King County have long recognized that open space lands are essential to what makes this county unique. Since the inception of the ~~CPPs~~ Countywide Planning Policies, preserving open space, including enhancing working resource lands like farmlands and forests, has been a priority of the county and its 39 cities. It is a cornerstone of the ~~GMA~~ Growth Management Act.

The ~~GMA~~ Growth Management Act requires the county and its cities to form linkages between and within population centers with lands useful for recreation, trails, wildlife habitat and connection of critical areas. To fulfill that mandate, King County operates a regional open space system consisting of parks, trails, natural areas, working resource lands, and flood hazard management lands. These open spaces provide multiple benefits and functions, including visual variety and relief from developed areas, protecting environmental and ecological processes, providing wildlife habitat, and fostering opportunities for outdoor recreation. However, preserving open space requires careful planning and management to ensure compatibility and long-term viability of these benefits and functions.

**GP-402RP-202** King County shall pursue ~~economically feasible~~ opportunities to preserve and maintain remaining high-priority forest, agriculture, and other open space lands.

## **C. Directing Development Toward Existing Communities**

Beginning in the 1940s, a sprawling pattern of low-density development emerged in King County. This sprawl resulted in the accelerated conversion of forests and farms to subdivisions and made it increasingly expensive to provide water, schools, sewer, streets, and other services. In addition, zoning codes tended to separate the differing types of land uses, with jobs and stores in one location, homes in another, and schools and parks in yet another.

The separate land uses were served by a roadway system of wide streets, with infrequent crosswalks, designed to accommodate cars, but not people. This pattern did not support using transit, bicycling, or walking to meet daily transportation needs, thus leading to an overburdening of the roadway system and a loss of regional and personal mobility. Low-density patterns that emerged en masse relied on driving alone for many trips, contributing to persistent air pollution problems and increasingly significant greenhouse gas emissions.

Reducing sprawl by focusing development into existing urban areas is one of the statutory goals of the state's Growth Management Act. To achieve that goal, steering growth to already developed communities (both within urban areas and, at much smaller scales in rural areas, in a system of central places) with existing infrastructure and services can result in (1) ~~preserving-protecting rural lands-areas~~, (2) conserving natural resources, and (3) more economical and just provision of services and facilities.

This broader approach does not mean that all new urban development will be high-density. In many cases, existing moderate-density locations, especially single-family neighborhoods, will not significantly change. Rather, King County will work to better integrate the locations where people work, shop, live, and recreate in a manner that uses resources – public and private – more efficiently.

**GP-403RP-203** King County shall continue to support the reduction of sprawl by focusing growth and future development in the existing urban growth area, consistent with adopted growth targets.

#### **D. Providing a Variety of Transportation Choices**

Transportation is critically important to King County and the surrounding region, facilitating access to jobs, education, services, recreation, and housing. King County plays a central role in the region's transportation sector, supporting a variety of motorized and nonmotorized travel modes, involving ground, air, and marine transportation. The county has direct responsibility for (1) the unincorporated area road network, (2) transit services and facilities throughout the county, (3) operation of the King County International Airport (KCIA) and (4) operation of passenger-only ferry service to Vashon Island and West Seattle ~~on behalf of the King County Ferry District~~. King County's services and facilities affect not only the local bus passenger but the jumbo airliner loaded with cargo and bound for destinations overseas.

The ability to access to various transportation modes has a profound effect on quality of life for this county's residents and the vitality of its economy. The county's transportation system must be designed, operated and maintained in a manner that (1) provides access to multimodal mobility options for a wide range of users, including historically disadvantaged populations, (2) contributes to safe communities, ~~and~~ (3) ~~respects~~ reduces impacts the county's natural resources and environment, and (4) fosters a vibrant community.

~~GP-104RP-204~~ King County shall continue to promote an efficient multimodal transportation system that provides residents with a range of transportation choices that respond to ~~both~~ community needs and reduces impacts on the natural environmental ~~concerns~~.

## **E. Addressing Health, Disparities and Equity, and Social and Environmental Justice**

Despite broad economic and social gains in society and in this country in recent history, major differences exist and continue to persist for significant segments of ~~our~~ the population—particularly for communities of color and poor people—across the continuum of measures of social and economic health and well-being ~~and quality of life~~. In some cases, inequities are even getting worse. King County is not immune to the national trends and statistics, despite its location in the relatively prosperous Puget Sound area. In the United States and in King County, children and adults who live at the bottom of the social and economic ladder face life threatening and debilitating conditions, and lack access to opportunities, far more often than those in the middle, who in turn are more at risk than those at the top.

Promoting economic opportunity for areas with fewer assets is a key goal that is found in provision throughout the Growth Management Act. In 2010, King County adopted Ordinance 16948 which defined and established the "Fair and Just" principle in the County's Strategic Plan. This transformed the work on equity and social justice from an initiative to an integrated effort that intentionally applies this principle to all work in order to achieve equitable opportunities for all people and communities. A key component of this Ordinance was defining the "Determinants of Equity," which are the social, economic, geographic, political and physical environment conditions in which people in the county are born, grow, live, work and age that lead to just and thriving society. Access to the determinants of equity is necessary to have equity for all people regardless of race, class, gender or language spoken. Inequities are created when barriers exist that prevent individuals and communities from accessing these conditions and reaching their full potential.

Figure: Determinant of Equity

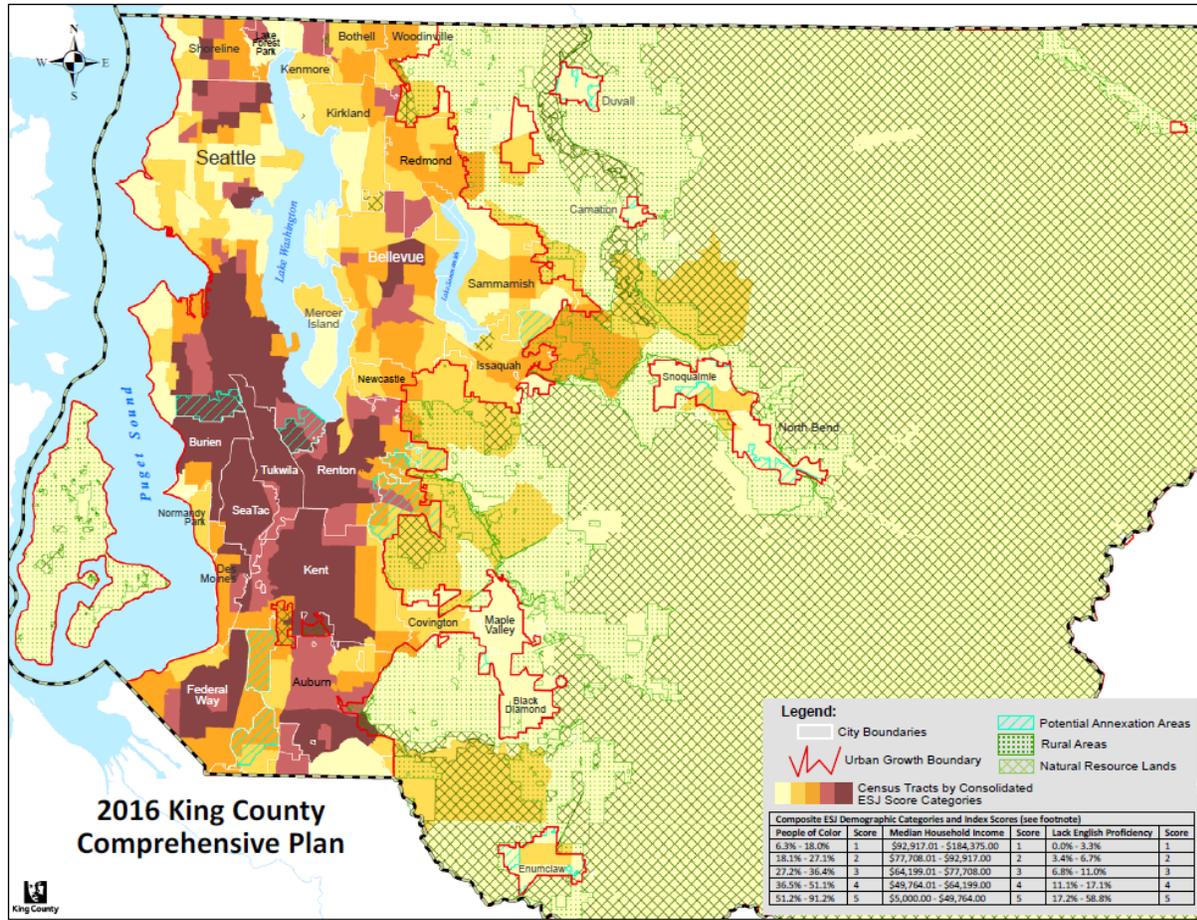


There is a clear relationship between the majority of the Determinants and the long-range planning role of the King County Comprehensive Plan. Land use patterns and transportation investments can play key roles in making communities more equitable and healthier. Well-planned neighborhoods have features like connected street networks, nearby shopping, walking paths, and transit service. Access to healthy food and the protection of agricultural lands affects the rate of obesity, food insecurity and malnutrition. These amenities reduce dependency on cars, increase opportunities to be physically active, decrease the likelihood to be overweight, and improve air quality, and create opportunities for resident to access jobs, services and other key destinations that provide a path towards a higher quality of life.

As noted previously, the Comprehensive Plan plays multiple roles related to land use planning – a countywide collaborative role in how growth is accommodated in the county and region, and a local land use regulatory role

for how growth occurs in unincorporated areas. This dual role is important to recognize given the geographic distribution of communities that are the focus of the County's Equity and Social Justice work. The following map is a composite of three demographic groups – People of Color, Households by Median Household Income, and Households that Lack English Speaking Proficiency.<sup>8</sup> The major geographies of the Growth Management Act (Incorporated Cities, Unincorporated Urban Areas, Rural Areas and Natural Resource Lands) are overlaid on the demographic data.

**Figure: Equity and Social Justice Priority Communities and Growth Management Act Geographies**



<sup>8</sup> Notes: Each category uses the Quintile classification method. A score is assigned to each Quintile class: 1 - 5. The total score for each classification is the 33.3% weighted total for categories People of Color, Median Household Income, & Lack of English proficiency. The weighted total is sorted using the Natural Breaks classification method. A lower score indicates less diversity, higher income, & higher English proficiency. A higher score indicates more diversity, lower income, and lower English proficiency. Data Source: 2010 Census & 2006 - 2010 5 Year American Community Survey. Note: Because the American Community Survey is a small sample, margins of error are high, and these data should be used with caution.

The map highlights a number of key items:

- The vast majority of the areas with a high concentration of these demographic groups are in cities inside the contiguous urban growth area; this means that addressing Equity and Social Justice through long-range planning relates to the County's role as a regional service provider. Where the county provides countywide services such as recreation, transit service, public health, and other services will be focused on cities in the contiguous urban growth area.
- The areas with a high concentration of these demographic groups that fall under direct County land use authority are in the unincorporated urban potential annexation areas. In particular, areas with a high concentration of these demographic groups are disproportionately represented in the North Highline and Skyway-West Hill potential annexation areas. A secondary area of concentration is in parts of the Fairwood and East Federal Way potential annexation areas. For these areas, the County's planning needs to be focused on both service provision and land use regulation as well as working with its city partners to get these areas annexed.
- While ESJ considerations will remain an important factor in planning across all geographies, the County's unincorporated Rural Area and Natural Resource Areas have much lower concentrations of these demographic groups.

~~Food is as essential to our health and well-being as air and water. For example, King County is experiencing a rise in the rate of obesity, and at the same time, an increase in food insecurity and malnutrition. Both can be caused by lack of access to adequate amounts of nutritious food, and both can lead to the same thing—a diminished quality of life that ends with premature death due to diet-related chronic disease. King County plays an important role in guiding and supporting system improvements that will result in King County residents eating local, healthy food. King County supports food systems that are ecologically and economically sustainable and that improve the health of the county's residents.~~

~~King County's groundbreaking Land Use, Transportation, Air Quality and Health Study (now known as HealthScape)—the first study of its kind for a local government—shows that low density, separated land uses, and poor street connectivity are associated with: (1) reduced transit ridership, walking, and physical activity; (2) increased auto use, air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and energy consumption; and (3) increased obesity, which increases the likelihood of cardio vascular disease, type II diabetes, and colorectal cancer. HealthScape literally draws the link between sprawl, poor health, and greenhouse gas emissions.~~

~~Using data generated in King County, this study specifically concluded the following:~~

- ~~People walk more in neighborhoods with a wide variety of retail services and easy access to those services. This improves health and reduces pollutants.~~
- ~~Transit use is highest where walking is most prevalent, and walking is most prevalent where transit is convenient and efficient.~~

- ~~● Residents of more walkable areas are less likely to be overweight or obese and more likely to report being physically active.~~
- ~~● Residents in the most interconnected parts of the county drive 25% fewer miles than those who live in the most sprawling areas of the county.~~

~~With obesity rates rising at alarming rates, King County can use the findings from this study to update policies and plans to incorporate health, air quality, and greenhouse gas emission reductions into land use and transportation planning.~~

~~Equity and social justice are traditionally linked to land use planning through the concept of environmental justice. Generally, environmental justice encompasses the presence of industrial or commercial land uses that carry substantial adverse impacts to low income and minority communities. But, environmental justice can also refer to lack of facilities and services and other amenities. The White Center Community Enhancement Initiative begun in 2005 is one example of a concerted community process that seeks to add infrastructure necessary for making a place safe, livable, and health promoting. Collectively, these factors are the foundation of prosperity for all people and communities. In White Center, this is being accomplished through improving sidewalks, pedestrian connections, and spurring economic development in the neighborhood's commercial core. Land use planning brings the principles of community participation and community visioning to the equity and social justice movement, thus setting the stage for infrastructure improvements and policies that underpin achieving equity and social justice.~~

King County will work to reduce inequities and address concerns of social justice by incorporating these values into the daily practice of developing policies and programs, making funding decisions and delivering services. Further, King County will identify and address the conditions at the root of disparities, engage communities to have a strong voice in shaping their future, and raise and sustain the visibility of equity and social justice. The goal is to start by tackling problems further upstream than is typically done to get at the fundamental cause of the ~~disparities~~ inequities in order to have a greater overall impact.

**~~GP-105RP-205~~ King County will seek to reduce health disparities-inequities and proactively address issues of equity, social and environmental justice when evaluating-implementing its land use policies, programs, and practices.**

## **F. Achieving Environmental Sustainability**

King County can influence environmental sustainability through its land use and transportation policies and plans, investments in capital projects and facilities, economic development initiatives, and day-to-day operations. To be effective, sustainability actions need to be taken at many scales – in coordination with neighboring local governments, across county departments, and through the day-to-day actions of individual employees.

The county's approach to mitigation of and adaption to the ~~affects~~effects of climate change have evolved over the last four years. Responding to climate change is an important element of the broader concept of environmental sustainability, which means meeting the needs of the current generation without compromising the capacity of the environment to support future generations, while anticipating effects of natural and human factors, such as climate change and population growth. ~~GP 106 encapsulates KCSP's Environmental Sustainability Goal.~~

~~GP 106~~RP-206 **King County will protect, restore and enhance its natural resources and environment, encourage sustainable agriculture and forestry, reduce climate pollution and prepare for the effects of climate change, including consider of the inequities and disparities that may be caused by climate change.**

### ~~G.~~ **Managing Performance**

~~As part of a growing national movement at all levels of government, King County is embracing performance measurement and management. Performance measurement is measuring and reporting performance data while performance management is using performance information to inform management decisions. Successful organizations rely on performance management to inform leadership about how well they are reaching their goals and where improvements can be made. With adoption of the KCSP, King County committed to the development of a unified and meaningful measurement framework to manage performance at all levels of government. As part of its development, GP 107 ensures that appropriate monitoring of the CPPs and KCCP will contribute to this measurement framework.~~

~~King County is doing performance management for several important reasons:~~

- ~~• Ensure county goals are being met;~~
- ~~• Improve county services, where necessary;~~
- ~~• Increase transparency with the public;~~
- ~~• Increase use of data for more informed public discussion and decision-making;~~
- ~~• Increase accountability at all levels of government; and~~
- ~~• The King County Strategic Plan calls for increased attention to effective performance measurement.~~

GP-107 (Moved to RP-120)

## ~~IV. King County Strategic Planning~~

~~In 2010, the King County Council adopted the "King County Strategic Plan, 2010-2014: Working Together for One King County" (KCSP). The KCSP serves as the framework for countywide priority~~

setting, business planning, budget development, resource allocation and leadership and managerial accountability.

The KCSP embodies the priorities of the residents of King County. It guides decision making in King County government and describes the results the county intends to achieve through its implementation. The KCSP recognizes the role of land use planning in shaping an environmentally sustainable, economically viable, and equitable future for the county. The Comprehensive Plan is shaped by the KCSP and supports the goals defined within the KCSP.

**GP-408RP-207** Planning in King County shall be consistent with the King County Strategic Plan by:

- a. Encouraging vibrant, economically thriving and sustainable communities;
- b. Enhancing the county's natural resources and the environment;
- c. Supporting safe communities; and
- d. Providing equitable opportunities for all individuals.

## **IV. Summary of the King County Comprehensive Plan**

The Comprehensive Plan contains twelve chapters that address all of the requirements of the Growth Management Act, Countywide Planning Policies and Multicounty Planning Policies. They are as follows:

### **Chapter 1: Regional Growth Management Planning**

The vision and goals of this plan are based on the 14 planning goals specified in the Washington State Growth Management Act, the Countywide Planning Policies, the region's VISION 2040 and the values voiced by the residents of King County. The official King County Land Use Map is included in this chapter.

### **Chapter 2: Urban Communities**

The Urban Communities chapter brings together several of the major elements necessary to make a community whole: housing, business centers, and human services. By merging these elements into one chapter, King County emphasizes the importance each plays as a part of a livable community. A major tenet of the GMA Growth Management Act is to target growth in the urban areas, so the policies in this chapter better facilitate urban development where infrastructure and facilities exist or can be readily provided. This chapter also draws the connection between urban living and public health.

### **Chapter 3: Rural Area and Natural Resource Lands**

Protecting rural lands and communities in King County is a major thrust of the Comprehensive Plan in compliance with both the GMA Growth Management Act and the King County Strategic Plan. This chapter delineates the county's approach to conserving rural and natural resource lands, supporting rural communities and their heritage, and supporting the agriculture, forestry, and mining economies. Integral to these efforts are

incentive tools such as the transfer of development rights program that ensure the protection of environmental quality and wildlife habitat, while respecting economic values and property rights.

#### **Chapter 4: Housing and Human Services**

The availability of adequate and affordable housing has become one of the most pressing issues facing King County today. Similarly, partnering with other organizations and jurisdictions to deliver human services is a critical component for creating sustainable communities and supporting environmental justice. In the 2016 update, the existing policies are consolidated into a new chapter.

#### **Chapter 45: Environment**

This chapter reflects the environment in King County that includes a rich and valuable array of land and water resources ranging from ~~marine and freshwater bodies, to highly urbanized areas~~ lowland lakes, rivers, and wetlands in highly urbanized areas, to saltwater shorelines, to nearly pristine landscapes in the foothills of the Cascades. The chapter establishes policies to ensure future protection of the environment and its contribution to the quality of life in King County. King County's programs for protecting its environment include some of the most progressive in the country. Together King County's environmental programs and the King County code implement the policies in this chapter and ensure that the environment is protected and restored, and that the environmental sustainability goal of the Strategic Plan is achieved.

King County seeks to ~~adapt to, and mitigate the effects of climate change including reductions in~~ combat climate change through actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and make the natural and built environment more resilient in the face of a changing climate. King County ~~policies and programs seeks to promote environmental management practices that~~ support habitats for native plant and animal species, including those listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, and the restoration of environments threatened by past development, degraded. The Environment Chapter includes policies guiding King County's actions to protect critical areas, improve water quality, and manage invasive species. Such practices include traditional treatment and habitat restoration projects, low impact development, incentive based approaches and education and technical assistance. ~~The chapter establishes policies to ensure future protection of the environment and its contribution to the quality of life in King County.~~ The county uses a combination of habitat restoration, incentives, education, technical assistance, and regulations to protect the natural environment. This chapter also reflects the role of the Puget Sound Partnership in coordinating environmental management, including providing leadership for a coordinated and comprehensive environmental monitoring program across Puget Sound.

#### **Chapter 56: Shorelines**

King County adopted its first Shoreline Master Program (~~SMP~~) in 1977. In November, 2010, King County approved an update to the ~~SMP~~ Shoreline Master Program. This update incorporated the shoreline policies in the Comprehensive Plan for the first time and was approved by the Department of Ecology in 2014. ~~Under the Shoreline Management Act, the SMP must be approved by the Washington Department of Ecology before it takes effect. King County is in the final process of obtaining that approval.~~

## **Chapter 67: Parks, Open Space and Cultural Resources**

Protecting and enhancing King County's environment and quality of life through the stewardship and enhancement of its open space system of parks, trails, natural areas and working resource lands along with its valued cultural resources continues to be the central focus of this chapter. Furthering the regional trail system will be guided by the Regional Trails Needs Project map and corresponding project list found in the chapter. The chapter acknowledges the broad and growing support for the county's backcountry trails.

## **Chapter 78: Transportation**

This chapter sets the policy framework that guides efficient provision of vital transportation infrastructure and services that support a vibrant economy, thriving communities, and the county's participation in critical regional transportation issues. The chapter reflects the goals of the King County Strategic Plan and the priorities established in the strategic plans for public transportation and road services. It also reflects the county's continuing transition to becoming a road service provider for a primarily rural road system, and speaks to the challenges of providing transportation services and infrastructure in a time of growing need and severely constrained financial resources.

The chapter promotes an integrated, multimodal transportation system that provides mobility options for a wide range of users, including historically disadvantaged populations. It also emphasizes safety, options for healthful transportation choices, and support for greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals. Additional policy focus is provided on maintaining and preserving existing services and infrastructure, implementing clear service priorities and guidelines, using transportation resources wisely and efficiently, and developing sustainable funding sources to support the level of services needed by communities.

## **Chapter 89: Services, Facilities and Utilities**

This chapter guides service provision in King County recognizing the different service levels within the Urban Growth Area and in the Rural Area. The Growth Management Act requires coordinated planning so that the services required by new residents and their homes and businesses are available as growth occurs. This chapter addresses a wide range of facilities and services provided by the county consistent with specific operational plans such as the Flood Hazard Management Plan and the ~~Energy~~ Strategic Climate Action Plan and recognizing that the county is both a regional and a local service provider. The chapter also clarifies County's intent regarding water supply planning.

## **Chapter 910: Economic Development**

This chapter supports the county's long-term commitment to a prosperous, diverse, and sustainable economy by promoting public programs and actions that create the foundation for a successful economy whether within the Urban Growth Area or in the Rural Area. A successful economy is one in which the private, nonprofit, and public sectors can thrive and create jobs compatible with the environment and community and land use expectations. King County understands that a successful and diverse economy contributes to a strong and stable

tax base and a high quality of life for all residents. This chapter recognizes businesses and the workforce as customers of an economic development system and supports actions and programs that promote the strength and health of both groups.

### **Chapter ~~10~~11: Community Service Area Planning**

King County's community plans (except for the Vashon Town, West Hill, and White Center Plans) are no longer in effect as separately adopted plans. In many cases, however, the plans contain valuable historical information about King County's communities and often provide background for the land uses in effect today. Policies from the community plans were retained as part of the Comprehensive Plan to recognize the unique characteristics of each community and to provide historical context.

### **Chapter ~~11~~12: Implementation, Amendments & Evaluation**

The comprehensive plan policies, development regulations and countywide planning policy framework have been adopted to achieve King County's and the region's growth management objectives. This chapter also describes the county's process for amending the Comprehensive Plan and outlines and distinguishes the annual cycle and the four-year-cycle amendments. This chapter further explains the relationship between planning and zoning.

## **V. Technical Appendices**

Integral to the vision and goals of the comprehensive plan are the detailed inventories, forecasts, finance plans and Urban Growth Area analysis required by the Growth Management Act. Four technical appendices (Volume 1) are adopted as part of the plan to implement these Growth Management Act requirements (RCW 36.70A.070, 36.70A.110, 36.70A.130). Technical Appendices A, B, C, and D were updated in 2008, 2012 and 2015.

### **Volume 1**

Technical Appendix A. Capital Facilities and Services

~~(includes Regional Trail Needs Report)~~

Technical Appendix B. Housing (to be released in March)

Technical Appendix C. Transportation Reports

Transportation Needs Report and Regional Trail Needs Report

Technical Appendix D. Growth Targets and the Urban Growth Area (to be released in March)

Additional important information also supports the plan vision and goals. Nine technical appendices (Volume2) were prepared to provide supporting documentation to the 1994 plan:

### **Volume 2 (1994)**

Technical Appendix D. Growth Targets and the Urban Growth Area

Technical Appendix E.	Washington State Laws
Technical Appendix F.	History of Planning in King County
Technical Appendix G.	Economic Development
Technical Appendix H.	Natural Resource Lands
Technical Appendix I.	Natural Environment
Technical Appendix J.	Potential Annexation Areas
Technical Appendix K.	King County Functional and Community Plans
Technical Appendix L.	Public Involvement Summary

Information that supported amendments subsequent to 1994 is included as follows:

**Volume 3**

Technical Appendix M.	Public Participation Summary 2000
-----------------------	-----------------------------------

**Volume 4**

Technical Appendix N.	Public Participation Summary 2004
-----------------------	-----------------------------------

**Volume 5**

Technical Appendix O.	Public Participation Summary 2008
-----------------------	-----------------------------------

**Volume 6**

Technical Appendix P.	Public Participation Summary 2012
Technical Appendix Q.	School Siting Task Force Report

## **VI. The Regulations**

The King County Comprehensive Plan is implemented through the adopted regulations. These include the King County Zoning Code and other code titles such as Water and Sewer Systems, Roads and Bridges, and Land Segregation. All development proposals in King County must meet the requirements of the code. Additional information and policies are found in Chapter 12.

## **VII. For More Information**

~~Copies of the plan are available in all King County libraries.~~ Please visit the website of the King County ~~Department of Development and Environmental Services~~ Department of Performance, Strategy and Budget at <http://www.kingcounty.gov/compplan> for current information on planning in King County and to view electronic versions of the plan and related documents.

As required by the GMA, King County maintains a docket for recording comments on the King County Comprehensive Plan and associated development regulations. Comments logged on the docket are reviewed by the county and made available for review by the public. The docket is also available on the King County Comprehensive Plan Website at <http://www.kingcounty.gov/compplan>. Select “Proposing a Change: The Amendment Process for the KCCP” for specific information on the docket and docketing process.

## CHAPTER 1

# REGIONAL GROWTH MANAGEMENT

## PLANNING

~~Passage of the Growth Management Act (GMA) in 1990 and 1991 sessions of the State Legislature was the first critical step in the development of rational policies to manage growth in Washington in a sustainable manner. For the first time in the state's history, all urban counties and their cities were required to develop and adopt comprehensive plans and regulations to implement these plans. To ensure consistent and compatible planning efforts, the Growth Management Act requires that comprehensive land use plans address specific issues including, but not limited to: land use, transportation, housing, facilities and services, utilities, natural environment, and economic development.~~

~~To achieve coordinated planning efforts, the GMA further requires that counties and cities develop a set of framework policies to guide development of each jurisdiction's comprehensive plan. In order to implement the GMA, King County is involved in planning on four different levels. These levels of planning encompass land areas ranging in size from small neighborhoods to multiple counties.~~

~~The GMA also provides for re-evaluation of the comprehensive plan to address emerging land use and regulatory issues. The GMA calls, as well, for jurisdictions to evaluate progress towards the implementation of respective comprehensive plans and countywide planning policies.~~

# ~~I. Growth Management Planning Objectives~~

## ~~Background~~

~~Prompted by residents concerned about sprawl, King County adopted its first comprehensive land use plan in 1964. Two decades later, the 1985 comprehensive land use plan was the first to identify an urban growth boundary line to limit urban growth to areas with the infrastructure needed for facilities and services. It also established policies to preserve the Rural Area, conserve the natural environment and designate resource lands for long-term agriculture and forest production.~~

~~Later, as King County's efforts to manage growth matured, it played a key role in the development of *Vision 2020*, a long-range growth management, economic and transportation strategy for the central Puget Sound region developed by the Puget Sound Regional Council. In 2008, VISION 2040 replaced *Vision 2020* as the long-range guide for the future of the four-county region.~~

~~The Growth Management Act (GMA), adopted by the state legislature in the 1990 and 1991 sessions, requires urban counties to develop comprehensive land use plans addressing growth. The county's first comprehensive plan under the GMA was adopted in 1994. The GMA also requires counties and cities to work together to develop framework policies to guide the comprehensive plan development. The Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) were first adopted by King County and ratified by the cities within the county in 1992, and have been periodically amended since then. In 2010, King County and the cities within the county embarked on a comprehensive update of the CPPs. King County adopted these updated CPPs in 2012, and they were subsequently ratified by the cities. The 2012 King County Countywide Planning Policies establish a vision for the future of King County—its cities, unincorporated urban areas, rural areas, and farms and forests. Under the CPP vision for the year 2030, King County will boast a diversified sound regional economy and high quality of life with a viable Rural Area, vibrant urban centers linked by a high-capacity transit system, bountiful agricultural areas and productive forest lands, and protected critical areas. King County's Comprehensive Plan builds on this vision for the unincorporated part of the county.<sup>9</sup>~~

## ~~Today's Objectives~~

~~The 2012 Comprehensive Plan update continues to be based on the mandates of the law, the goals voiced by residents during the 1994 comprehensive plan and repeated during the subsequent comprehensive plan update processes, and King County's new Strategic Plan adopted in 2010.~~

~~The policies in this Comprehensive Plan support the following objectives, which reflect the goals of the King County Strategic Plan, the GMA, VISION 2040, and the CPPs and are shaped by public opinion:~~

- ~~● *Preserve the high quality of life by balancing infrastructure needs with social, cultural, educational, recreational, civic, health and safety needs.*~~
- ~~● *Spend money wisely and deliver services efficiently by:*~~

---

<sup>9</sup> ~~As amended by Ordinance 17687.~~

- ~~○ Concentrating infrastructure investments and service delivery to support the regional development pattern in and near cities where a full range of local services are located or can be made available;~~
- ~~○ Solving service deficiencies within the county to meet existing service needs and phasing service improvements for the needs of future growth;~~
- ~~○ Looking to King County to provide countywide facilities and services; and~~
- ~~○ Relying primarily upon cities and special purpose districts as the providers of local facilities and services appropriate to serve those local needs, except where the county is the local service provider.~~
- ~~● Continue our economic prosperity by promoting a strong and diverse economy for King County residents through policies and programs that encourage new business opportunities, increase family wage jobs and create a predictable regulatory environment for businesses and residents.~~
- ~~● Increase the housing choices for all residents by permitting a wide variety of home styles and by increasing the housing opportunities for all residents in locations closer to jobs.~~
- ~~● Ensure that necessary transportation facilities and services are available to serve development at the time of occupancy and use by targeting road and transit investments where growth is desired and for equitable contributions to the transportation system by new development.~~
- ~~● Balance urban uses and environmental protection through careful site planning that maximizes developable land while respecting natural systems.~~
- ~~● Protect Rural, Resource and ecologically fragile areas for future generations by maintaining low residential densities in the Rural Area and in areas containing regionally and nationally important ecosystems for fish and wildlife and by recognizing that resource lands, such as farms and forests, provide economic, social and environmental benefits.~~

To help achieve these goals, this King County Comprehensive Plan 2012 Update:

- ~~● Links comprehensive land use planning to the King County Strategic Plan;~~
- ~~● Renews emphasis on continued growth, climate change, equity and social justice, and planning for healthy communities;~~
- ~~● Renews emphasis on restoration and protection of the quality of the natural environment for future generations;~~
- ~~● Calls for the county to continue to work with its residents and other jurisdictions to tackle issues and develop solutions consistent with community values; and~~
- ~~● Brings together the people, businesses, and agencies needed to guide growth and development in unincorporated King County toward the goal of a thriving, healthy and environmentally sound county.~~

~~The general policies in this section call on King County to strive to provide a high quality of life by actively soliciting public participation to help shape its plans, including strategic, comprehensive, functional, and subarea plans, and use these planning processes to strengthen communities.~~

RP-101 (Moved to RP-101)

RP-102 (Moved to RP-102)

RP-103 (Moved to RP-103)

RP-104 (Moved to RP-110)

RP-105 (Moved to RP-111)

RP-106 (Moved to RP-112)

RP-107 (Moved to U-101a)

RP-108 (Moved to RP-113)

RP 109 (Moved to RP-121)

~~The GMA requires cities and counties to balance a variety of goals in the implementation of growth management. One of the goals of GMA is to provide for the protection of private property rights in relation to the comprehensive planning process of the county. In support of this goal, King County undertakes a review process designed to assess its regulatory and administrative actions to avoid unconstitutional takings of private property.~~

RP-110 (Moved to RP-114)

## ~~II. Growth Management Planning Framework~~

~~There is a hierarchy of growth management planning in the county with consistency between the levels. Some issues, such as the establishment of the Urban Growth Area (UGA), are best decided at the countywide level, while others, such as the amount of commercial space needed in a neighborhood, are best determined at the subarea plan level. The county has been moving over time to become both a regional and a rural government, without responsibility for land use planning on a local level within the UGA. This transition has been gradual, depending on the desires of local communities and the ability of cities to provide services to newly annexed areas.~~

RP-201 (Moved to RP-104)

## ~~A. Multi-County Planning~~

~~The Growth Management Act states that multi-county planning must be done for the four-county region encompassing King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Kitsap Counties. This requirement has been fulfilled by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) through the creation of the Multi-county Planning Policies which are contained in VISION 2040. Multi-county planning will continue to be conducted under the auspices of the PSRC with participation by the four counties. The policies in VISION 2040 are designed to help the region achieve the growth strategy and address region-wide issues including environmental planning, economic development, and transportation planning. The policies provide guidance and direction to regional, county, and local governments on priorities for transportation investments, stimulating economic development, planning for open space, making city and town centers more suitable for transit, walking, and bicycling, and improving transportation safety and mobility.~~

## ~~B. Countywide Planning~~

~~Countywide planning is conducted by King County in cooperation with the cities to address a wide range of issues that affect the entire county. State law requires that planning be coordinated on a countywide level, and that the county itself adopt a comprehensive plan to regulate those areas for which it has direct responsibility. The Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) are required by the state Growth Management Act and provide a countywide framework to coordinate local comprehensive plans and implement VISION 2040. The Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC) is the formal body charged with developing the CPPs and then sending a recommendation to the King County Council for its review and approval. The Growth Management Planning Council is a representative body consisting of elected officials from King County, Seattle, the Sound Cities Association, and the City of Bellevue.<sup>10</sup>~~

~~The CPPs were first adopted by King County and ratified by the cities within the county in 1992. Starting in 2010, as part of a multi-year process, the GMPC undertook a major revision of CPPs. It forwarded these revised CPPs to the King County council in 2012. The council adopted an amended version of them in late 2012, which were then ratified by the cities in 2013. The CPPs describe an overall vision for the cities and unincorporated portions of King County, and provide general strategies and approaches to be used by local jurisdictions, acting individually and cooperatively, to achieve that vision. The policies address those issues that benefit from greater consistency across jurisdictions and those that are of a countywide or regional nature. The 2012 King County Countywide Planning Policies reflect the adoption of VISION 2040; revised population, housing, and employment growth targets; and the fact that previous policies were out of date after nearly 20 years of growth and development.<sup>11</sup>~~

---

<sup>10</sup>~~As amended by Ordinance 17687.~~

<sup>11</sup>~~As amended by Ordinance 17687.~~

~~King County and all cities and towns of King County are responsible for ensuring that their respective comprehensive plans are consistent with and implement the CPPs. As the regional government, King County provides leadership on issues of countywide importance.~~

~~King County, together with its cities, published the 2007 King County Buildable Lands Report. Ratified in 2008, the Report fulfills the requirements of the GMA for the county and its cities to, every five years, evaluate whether there is sufficient suitable land to accommodate the projected county wide population. The Buildable Lands evaluation represents a mid-course check on achievement of GMA goals. The focus of the evaluation is on the designated urban areas of King County and growth targets for those areas as established in the CPPs. Based on data from 2001 through 2011, the 2007 Buildable Lands Report evaluated the actual housing constructed, densities of new residential development, and the amount of actual land developed for commercial and industrial uses within the UGA. Based on that data, it projected that there is a sufficient amount of land within the UGA to accommodate housing, commercial and industrial uses through 2022 and beyond.~~

~~The King County Comprehensive Plan provides policy guidance for unincorporated King County. The comprehensive plan addresses all of the mandatory and several of the optional elements of the GMA. The Comprehensive Plan serves as a vital guide to the future and provides a framework for managing change.~~

RP-202 (Moved to RP-106)

RP-203 (Moved to RP-107)

RP-204 (Moved to RP-108)

## **C. Subarea Planning**

~~Subarea plans, previously called community plans and basin plans, focus the policy direction of the comprehensive plan to a smaller geographic area. Smaller scale subarea plans, known as area zoning studies, address issues of concern at the neighborhood level. Examples of subarea plans and area zoning studies include the Duwamish Coalition Project, White Center Action Plan, Vashon Town Plan, Fall City Subarea Plan, the East Redmond subarea plan, and planning efforts within a watershed or basin. Development of subarea plans are guided by the following policy as well as other applicable policies of the comprehensive plan.~~

RP-205 (Moved to RP-115)

## **D. Functional Planning**

~~Functional plans are detailed plans for facilities and services and also include action plans and programs for other governmental activities. Some functional plans are operational or programmatic and guide daily~~

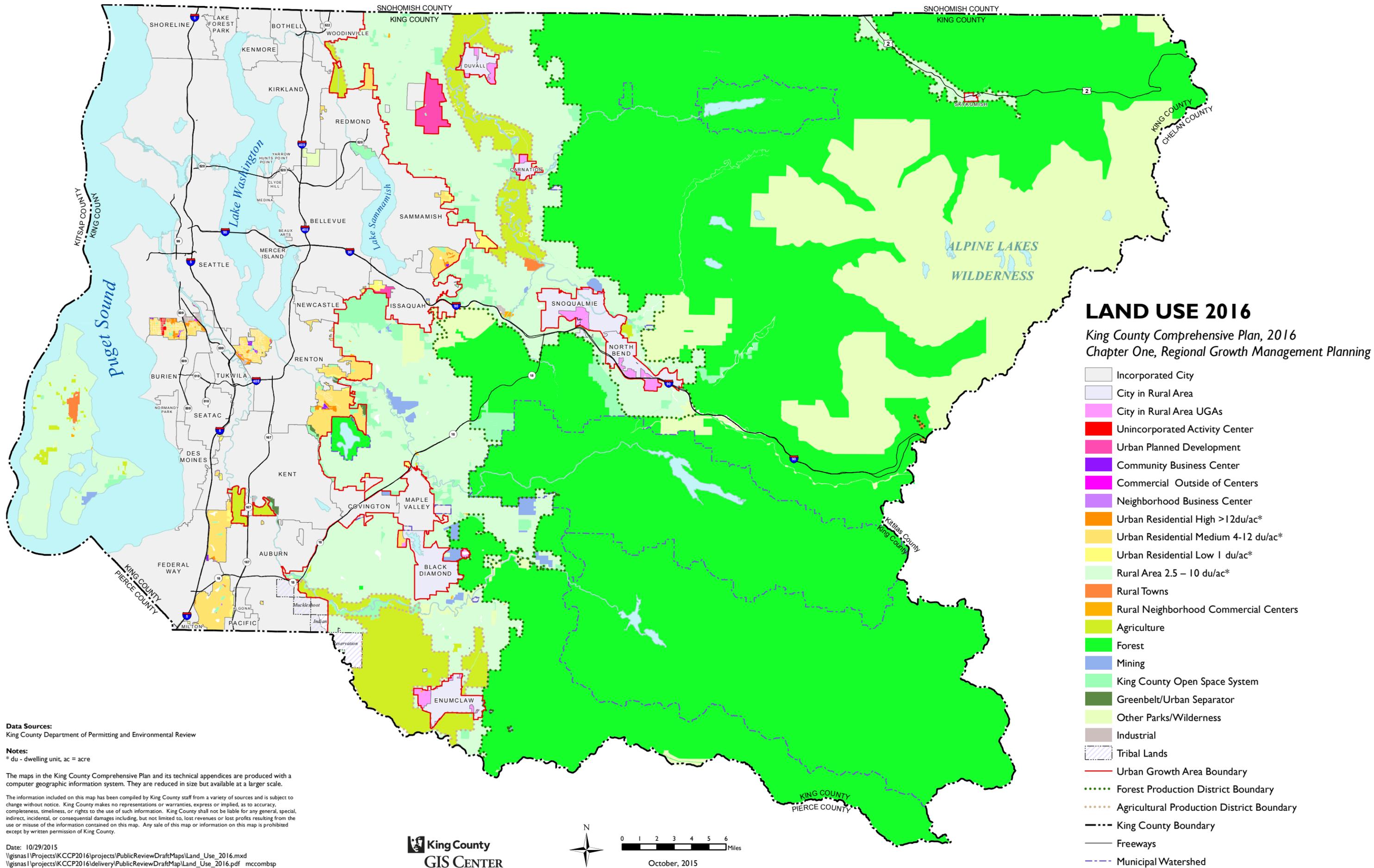
~~management decisions. Others include specific details of facility design and location. Plans that guide specific siting of facilities must be consistent with the comprehensive plan. Functional plans are prepared by King County, independent special purpose districts or other public and private agencies. Examples of functional plans in King County include: the Strategic Climate Action Plan, Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan, Parks and Open Space Plan, Regional Wastewater Services Plan, Strategic Plan for Road Services, and Strategic Plan for Public Transportation.~~

~~Capital improvements are important components of functional plans. Capital facilities and spending on improvements and new facilities are closely linked to availability of funds. Functional plans must identify costs and services of needed facilities and distinguish between improvements needed for new growth verses those needed to support existing public health and welfare needs.~~

**RP-206            (Moved to RP-117)**

**RP-207            (Moved to RP-118)**

**RP-208            (Moved to RP-119)**



# LAND USE 2016

King County Comprehensive Plan, 2016  
Chapter One, Regional Growth Management Planning

- Incorporated City
- City in Rural Area
- City in Rural Area UGAs
- Unincorporated Activity Center
- Urban Planned Development
- Community Business Center
- Commercial Outside of Centers
- Neighborhood Business Center
- Urban Residential High >12du/ac\*
- Urban Residential Medium 4-12 du/ac\*
- Urban Residential Low 1 du/ac\*
- Rural Area 2.5 – 10 du/ac\*
- Rural Towns
- Rural Neighborhood Commercial Centers
- Agriculture
- Forest
- Mining
- King County Open Space System
- Greenbelt/Urban Separator
- Other Parks/Wilderness
- Industrial
- Tribal Lands
- Urban Growth Area Boundary
- Forest Production District Boundary
- Agricultural Production District Boundary
- King County Boundary
- Freeways
- Municipal Watershed

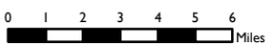
**Data Sources:**  
King County Department of Permitting and Environmental Review

**Notes:**  
\* du - dwelling unit, ac = acre

The maps in the King County Comprehensive Plan and its technical appendices are produced with a computer geographic information system. They are reduced in size but available at a larger scale.

The information included on this map has been compiled by King County staff from a variety of sources and is subject to change without notice. King County makes no representations or warranties, express or implied, as to accuracy, completeness, timeliness, or rights to the use of such information. King County shall not be liable for any general, special, indirect, incidental, or consequential damages including, but not limited to, lost revenues or lost profits resulting from the use or misuse of the information contained on this map. Any sale of this map or information on this map is prohibited except by written permission of King County.

Date: 10/29/2015  
\\gisnas1\Projects\KCCP2016\projects\PublicReviewDraftMaps\Land\_Use\_2016.mxd  
\\gisnas1\projects\KCCP2016\delivery\PublicReviewDraftMap\Land\_Use\_2016.pdf mccomb



October, 2015