

Proposed Periodic Review Topics Summary

Comprehensive Plan Periodic Review and Update

Executive Summary

Pierce County is required by the Growth Management Act (GMA) to conduct a periodic review of its Comprehensive Plan and update it as necessary by December 2024. To identify areas of update staff audited the current Comprehensive Plan for consistency with GMA, the Puget Sound Regional Council's (PSRC) Vision 2050, and the Countywide Planning Policies. Additionally, staff representing most of Pierce County's departments recommended areas of update to support the work that they do to serve the community.

Summary of Required Updates

The list of required updates includes changes needed to eliminate policy gaps and inconsistencies that may have resulted from those amendments to GMA, Vision 2050, and the Countywide Planning Policies since 2015.

- **Regional Growth Strategy Review** that will require re-assessment of the County's growth plan based on new growth targets for population, housing, and employment. These changes will require the County to consider strategies to slow growth in certain areas of the County.
- **Capital and Public Facility Updates** to ensure consistency with state and regional requirements and with land use plans and growth target updates. Coordinating with County departments and other service providers will require additional effort.
- **Update Housing Element Narrative and Policies** to comply with changes in GMA including refined forecasting and additional planning for affordable housing, middle housing, and emergency housing. This is a major update because it requires a full overhaul of the element.
- **Transportation Element Revisions** to update technical documents, apply growth data and land use plans, and implement a multimodal level of service (LOS) standard. The new multimodal LOS will require significant measures to implement, potentially including a change to the County's concurrency system.
- **Update Parks and Open Space Policies** for consistency with Pierce County's PROS plan. Coordinating open space policy integration will require extensive interdepartmental cooperation.
- **Critical Areas Update** based on Best Available Science that will require a concurrent update to critical area regulations. While this does not require much policy change, the regulatory updates are required and will be widely debated.
- **Consider Climate Change Adaptation, Mitigation, and Resiliency Policies** including carbon sequestration and greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions.
- **Considerations of Equity** that prioritize access to opportunity, inclusive planning, and anti-displacement practices throughout the plan.

- **Enhanced Coordination Policies** to ensure that Pierce County plans are coordinated with adjacent jurisdictions, military installations, special purpose districts, and tribes.
- **Enhanced Focus on Health** to incorporate recreation, active transportation, and a consideration of health disparities into land use planning.

Summary of Recommended Updates

Recommended updates are not required, but staff identified them for potential inclusion in the Periodic Review. These are primarily clarifying and emphasis updates or those that reflect existing practices and procedures. All updates will still require engagement with staff, stakeholders, and the public.

- Update land use policies with **Centers and Corridors** clarifications, and adjustments to improve land use compatibility for **urban industrial** areas.
- Add capital facilities and utilities policies identifying strategies to **prevent failing water systems** and improve access to **broadband** service.
- Add policies that address the **design of transit facilities**.
- Better reflect current **economic development** practices, including policies to support **agri-tourism** and **small businesses**. Update **Manufacturing/Industrial Center** policies to integrate PSRC comments.
- Add policies to support **aging in place**.
- **Enhance trail policies** to reflect their role in mobility.
- Update **rural roads** policies to allow new lanes for travel between urban areas.

In addition to these specific updates, address climate change in all elements of the Comprehensive Plan and related updates as directed by Resolution 2022-77.

Community Plan Updates

Staff does not recommend updating community plans during the periodic review because no inconsistencies were found with GMA, Vision 2050, or the Countywide Planning Policies.

Next Steps

- Council is scheduled to review the list of proposed topics in June 2022.
- A public comment period is scheduled for September 2022.
- The September comment period will also include information about the proposed scope of the accompanying Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

For additional details see the Proposed Periodic Review Topics Report.