



"THE MARITIME CITY"

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**DRAFT Agenda
Planning & Building Committee**

Due to public health concerns, this meeting will be accessible to listen by using the information below:

Link: <https://zoom.us/j/91496340021>

Call-in: (253)215-8782

Meeting ID: 914 9634 0021

Monday, May 3, 2021

3:00 P.M. – 4:30 P.M.

3:00 p.m. - Call to order, roll call

Approval of Minutes: April 5, 2021



Agenda Items:

I. Residential Growth Target Discussion – Councilmembers and Staff

II. Comprehensive Plan Amendments and Annexation Analysis Updates - Carl de Simas, Senior Planner

III. Council Comments - Councilmembers

Other Business

Next Meeting Monday, June 7, 2021

Adjournment



"THE MARITIME CITY"

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
PLANNING DIVISION

**Minutes
Planning & Building Committee**

**Monday, April 5, 2021
3:00 P.M. – 4:30 P.M.**

3:00 p.m. - Call to order, roll call Councilmember Markley, Councilmember Franich, Community Development Director; Katrina Knutson, Senior Planner; Carl deSimas, Planning Technician; Michelle Thomas, City Administrator; Bob Larson, Gary Glein Downtown Waterfront Alliance & Building Official/Fire Marshal; Paul Rice, Mayor Kit Kuhn

Approval of Minutes: March 1, 2021 Motion Franich/Markley all in favor minutes approved as written 

Agenda Items:

I. Downtown Waterfront Alliance Parking Analysis – Gary Glein presentation & committee discussion 

II. Growth Target Allocation Update – Carl de Simas, Senior Planner monthly update and discussion. No meeting and Towns meeting sine last Planning & Building Committee meeting next meeting is April 7, 2021

III. SSHAP Update – Carl de Simas, Senior Planner update and discussion

IV. Council Comments – Councilmember discussion – Himes Variance process & criteria

Other Business

Next Meeting Monday, May 3, 2021

Adjournment Motion Franich/Markley all in favor meeting adjourned at 4:31 PM

PROJECT MEMO



To:	Jessica Gwilt and Dan Cardwell, Pierce County	Date:	July 27, 2020
from:	Brittany Port and Wayne Carlson, AHBL Seattle - (206) 267-2425	Project No.:	2180871.31
		Project Name:	Pierce County Buildable Lands
Subject:	Pierce County Population Allocation/2044 Target-Setting Procedures		

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memo is to summarize our review and understanding of the County's population allocation process and outline the upcoming tasks that will be completed to establish and allocate housing and employment targets.

ALLOCATION METHODOLOGY

In 2008, Pierce County evaluated its population allocation/target-setting process as required by the Growth Management Act. The process which the County has used for its prior target-setting exercises, was developed by reviewing PSRC's best practices document "Growth Management by the Numbers" and aimed to create a more transparent process. The methodology used in the County's 2011 adopted targets relied on data from the Office of Financial Management (OFM) and the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC). PSRC has recently issued draft target setting guidelines. Because the OFM 2022 County Population Forecasts will not be released until April, 2022, or later, **PSRC has recommended that counties rely on its [Regional Macroeconomic Forecast \(RMF\)](#) for their 2044 target setting.**

The process that will be used to set the 2044 targets is adapted from the document "Pierce County Buildable Lands Program Proposed Population Allocation" with a few modifications from the PSRC draft guidance, and summarized below:

1. Adopt PSRC Regional Macroeconomic Forecast (RMF), Assign Pierce County Growth Share and Compare to OFM Forecast

PSRC's VISION 2050 Regional Macroeconomic Forecast will be used to determine the four-county (Pierce, King, Kitsap and Snohomish) control total for the purpose of applying the VISION 2050 Pierce County growth percentage. VISION 2050 requires that the 20-year population allocations be consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS). The RMF projections for all four counties in the PSRC region are added together and the desired distribution of regional growth in the RGS is expressed as a percentage of the total growth share.

For the County's 2044 Target Setting, **the target year will be 2044** which is the 20-year planning horizon that will be used in the periodic comprehensive plan updates for Pierce County and its cities during the next 8-year periodic update schedule that is due June, 2024.

The [OFM population estimates](#) for the four counties will be used as the base year to determine the 2020-2044 growth share for each county as a percentage of the four-county total, which is assigned in VISION 2050. The table below illustrates the growth share of the RMF four-county total for the year 2044:



Table 1: VISION 2050 Regional Growth Strategy Population Growth Share of RMF 2020-2044

County	OFM 2020 Estimated Population (April 1, 2020)	2020-2044 Growth Share Percentage (VISION 2050 Preferred Alternative)	2020-2044 Growth Share of PSRC 2044 Regional Macroeconomic Forecast (RMF)	2044 Population
King County	2,260,800	50%	630,437	2,891,237
Kitsap County	272,200	5%	63,044	335,244
Pierce County	900,700	21%	264,784	1,165,484
Snohomish County	830,500	24%	302,610	1,133,110
Total	4,264,200	100%	1,260,874	5,525,074

The RMF forecast for the four-county region for 2044 is 5,525,074. Subtracting out the base year population for each county, the growth in population projected to occur is 1,260,874. Pierce County is assigned 21% of the growth share in VISION 2050. The County's 2044 control total will be 1,165,484, for a total growth of 264,784.

[OFM's population projections](#) for the year 2044 are as follows. In previous target setting efforts, the County has adopted the medium range projection. As compared to the County's share of the RMF, the medium range OFM projection for Pierce County is about 49,248 less, and the four-county control total is about 219,200 less.

Table 2: OFM 2044 Population Range for Puget Sound Region (2017 OFM Projection Series)

County	Low	Medium	High
King County	2,494,133	2,767,079	3,234,868
Kitsap County	256,224	331,802	440,117
Pierce County	944,339	1,116,236	1,252,901
Snohomish County	928,488	1,090,757	1,326,529
Total	4,623,184	5,305,874	6,254,415

It should be noted that the preferred alternative in VISION 2050 assigns a share of the region's growth to Pierce County to occur by the year 2050. For the purposes of target-setting, the **percentage share of growth assigned to Pierce County** is applied to the RMF four-county total discussed above. The total population growth share for Pierce County between 2017-2050 in VISION 2050 is 364,000. This deviates from the growth share of the RMF identified above. The County's population growth may occur at different rates during this time period. To acknowledge that this growth will need to be accounted for by 2050, variances can be made to the 2020-2044 population growth share as long as it is within the 2017-2050 population growth.

2. Disaggregate Projected Population Growth into Regional Geographies

In the Regional Growth Strategy, the Puget Sound Region has been divided into nine types of geographies based on their size, function, and access to high-capacity transit:

- Metropolitan Cities
- Core Cities



- High Capacity Transit Communities
- Cities and Towns
- Urban Unincorporated Areas
- Rural Areas
- Natural Resources Lands
- Major Military Installations
- Indian Reservation Lands

As indicated in the Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies, the Regional Growth Strategy and VISION 2050 provides guidance for the distribution of the County's population growth share. The Regional Growth Strategy provides specific guidance for the distribution of future population and employment into the above "regional geographies," with a percentage of the region's growth assigned to each geography. For Pierce County's target-setting, the County will look at the first five geographies.

Pierce County's 2020-2044 population growth share will be disaggregated to its cities and unincorporated communities based on the percentages assigned to the regional geographies in VISION 2050.

Table 3: 2044 Population Growth Allocation by PSRC VISION 2050 Regional Geographies

VISION 2050 Regional Geography Category	Draft PRSC Vision 2050 Growth Percentage (Preferred Alternative):	2020-2044 Pierce County Population Growth Share by Draft PRSC VISION 2050 Growth Allocation Percentage
Metropolitan Cities	38%	100,618
Core Cities	23%	60,900
High Capacity Transit Communities	21%	55,605
Cities & Towns	7%	18,535
Urban Unincorporated Areas	8%	21,183
Rural	3%	7,944
Total	100%	264,784

It should be noted that the draft version of VISION 2050, which is in the process of being adopted, introduced a change to the regional geographies set forth in VISION 2040. This change included a focus on concentrating growth into communities with access to high capacity transit and defining regional geographies based on access to transit. A new regional geography called "High Capacity Transit Communities" has been included and 21% of the region's growth has been assigned to the 34 cities and unincorporated communities in this geography. The small cities geography, which was previously further broken down into sub-geographies, (cities inside the contiguous urban growth area, small residential towns, and free-standing cities and towns) has been eliminated and communities in these categories have largely moved into the "Cities and Towns" geography with a few moved into the "High Capacity Transit Communities" geography. The larger cities geography was also eliminated. Two communities were



affected by this change: University Place, which is now included in the “Core Cities” geography; and Fife which is now included in the “High Capacity Transit Communities” geography.

Another change worth noting is that several of Pierce County’s unincorporated urban growth areas have been designated as “High Capacity Transit Communities”, including Parkland-Spanaway-Midland, Mid-County (part) and the South Hill Planned Incorporation Area. These areas were previously identified as unincorporated urban growth areas and were assigned 18% of the County’s growth under the VISION 2040 Preferred Alternative.

3. Each Regional Geography Meets Independently to Disaggregate the Geography’s Population Allocation into Individual Cities and Unincorporated Areas

Each regional geography is comprised of cities and unincorporated communities in Pierce County. **Subcommittees comprised of representatives from each regional geography (that would like to participate in the process) will be formed to disaggregate each regional geography’s population into the individual cities and unincorporated areas.** The total population allocation as described above will serve as the upper limit for each regional geography’s total growth target.

Table 4: VISION 2050 Regional Geographies and Population Growth Share Allocations

VISION 2050 Regional Geography Category	Locale	2020-2044 Pierce County Population Growth Share by Draft PRSC VISION 2050 Growth Allocation Percentage
Metropolitan Cities	Tacoma	100,618
Core Cities	Auburn, Lakewood, Puyallup, and University Place	60,900
High Capacity Transit Communities	DuPont, Fife, Fircrest, Parkland-Spanaway-Midland PAA, Pierce Mid-County (part), South Hill Planned Incorporation Area (PIA), and Sumner	55,605
Cities & Towns	Bonney Lake, Buckley, Carbonado, Eatonville, Edgewood, Gig Harbor, Milton, Orting, Pacific, Roy, Ruston, South Prairie, Steilacoom, and Wilkeson	18,535
Urban Unincorporated Areas	Unincorporated Pierce County	21,183
Rural Areas	Pierce County Rural	7,944

Each regional geography will meet to discuss allocating their respective geographies growth share allocation. This will form the preliminary work of target-setting. AHBL staff will facilitate these discussions and work towards consensus building in preliminary population growth targets.

Additional information that will be provided to steer the initial discussions will be each community’s growth trends (non-policy adjusted population trends) that were provided to the Growth Management Coordinating Committee (GMCC) in 2019, the capacity of land available for housing growth identified in the 2014 Buildable Lands Report and average household size. The individual cities/communities should allocate the growth based on local Comprehensive



Plan policies, zoned residential capacity, infrastructure availability, unabsorbed portions of 2030 targets, development trends, pipeline/vested projects, etc.

It is important to note that the Countywide Planning Policies acknowledge that the growth targets mandated under the Growth Management Act serve as the **minimum** amount of population growth each community must plan for. In order to more closely align with the Regional Growth Strategy some communities may need to “bend the trend” to address discrepancies with recent growth trends and policy direction. It is recognized that much of the development pattern that is being realized is due to vested projects and projects in the pipeline. Jurisdictions will be encouraged to take reasonable measures to meet local growth targets and the Regional Growth Strategy over the next 20 years.

The 2020 OFM population estimates for each community are included below.

Table 5: 2020 OFM Population Estimates

Pierce County Jurisdictions	OFM 2020 Estimated Population (April 1, 2020)
Auburn	9,980
Bonney Lake	21,390
Buckley	5,080
Carbonado	685
DuPont	9,525
Eatonville	3,010
Edgewood	12,070
Fife	10,200
Fircrest	6,790
Gig Harbor	11,240
Lakewood	60,030
Milton	6,805
Orting	8,635
Roy	30
Puyallup	42,700
Roy	820
Ruston	1,040
South Prairie	500
Steilacoom	6,505
Sumner	10,360
Tacoma	213,300
University Place	33,310
Wilkeson	495
Unincorporated Pierce County*	426,200

*OFM Population Estimates dataset does not include estimates for unincorporated Pierce County. This total is derived from subtracting the incorporated areas from the total Pierce County population estimate.



4. Convert 20-year Population Target for each Regional Geography to Housing Units

Once each regional geography's population growth has been disaggregated to the individual cities and unincorporated communities, the 20-year population targets will be converted to housing units. Conversion factors include group quarters, person per households, and vacancy rate. **More information will be added to this section as the approach and assumptions for the housing unit conversions are finalized.**

All assumptions listed below will be specific to each jurisdiction. The population associated with group quarters is the first subtraction in the population to housing unit conversion. It is difficult to predict future group quarters population. For this exercise it is assumed the percent of total county population in group quarters will not change in the future. A person per household (pphh) figure for each community will be applied from the most recent census. It is likely that due to anticipated changes to future demographics, household sizes will decrease during the next 20 years and a reduction in the household size will be applied through analytical support by PSRC and the County. In addition, certain communities will be seeing an increase in accessory dwelling units and multi-family housing over the next 20 years, which may result in a decreased household size. A natural vacancy rate will also be applied to represent a balanced housing market. This will be developed by reviewing published material related this assumption as well as historical census data.

Once the population growth targets have been converted to housing units, there will be an opportunity for each community to revisit the population growth allocations and adjust as needed.

5. Pierce County Council Adoption of New Population Targets

Once growth targets have been set, they will be added to the current estimated population to establish the new population/housing targets. The process to adopt the new population/housing targets will generally be as follows:

- AHBL staff will prepare a final table of population/housing targets that have been generally agreed upon by the regional geography sub-committees for Pierce County staff review.
- Pierce County staff will review the proposed population/housing targets.
- The Pierce County Regional Council will issue a recommendation to the Pierce County Council to adopt the new population/housing targets.
- Pierce County Council adopts the 2044 population/housing targets for the County and its jurisdictions as required by the Countywide Planning Policies and Growth Management Act.

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PROJECT MEMO



To:	Jessica Gwilt and Dan Cardwell, Pierce County	Date:	April 15, 2021
from:	Brittany Port, AHBL Seattle - (206) 267-2425	Project No.:	2180871.31
		Project Name:	Pierce County Buildable Lands
Subject:	Pierce County Growth Target Progress		

BACKGROUND

AHBL has been working with sub-committees of the Pierce County Growth Management Coordinating Committee (GMCC) organized to align with the “regional geographies” as specified in VISION 2050. These subcommittees include representatives from the following communities in Pierce County.:

Metropolitan Cities

- Tacoma – Shirley Shultz, Development Services

Core Cities

- Auburn – Jeff Dixon, Planning Services Manager
- Lakewood – David Bugher, Long Range & Strategic Planning Manager
- Puyallup – Katie Baker, Planning Manager
- University Place – David Swindale, Planning & Development Services Director; Kevin Briske, Principal Planner

High Capacity Transit Communities

- DuPont – Barb Kincaid, Community Development Director
- Fife – Chris Larson, Senior Planner
- Fircrest – Angelie Stahlnecker, Planning & Building Administrator
- Sumner – Ryan Windish, Community Development Director
- Mid-County Community Plan Area – Jessica Gwilt, Senior Planner
- Parkland-Spanaway-Midland Community Plan Area - Jessica Gwilt, Senior Planner
- South Hill Community Plan Area - Jessica Gwilt, Senior Planner

Cities and Towns



- Bonney Lake – Jason Sullivan, Planning and Building Supervisor
- Buckley – Evan Lewis, Associate Planner
- Carbonado – Emily Terrell, Principal Planner
- Eatonville – Abbi Gribi, Town Administrator
- Edgewood – Darren Groth, Community and Economic Development Director
- Gig Harbor – Carl De Simas, Senior Planner
- Milton – Brittany Port, Contract Senior Planner
- Orting – Emily Adams, City Planner
- Roy – Not participating
- Ruston – Not participating
- South Prairie – Emily Terrell, Principal Planner
- Steilacoom- Doug Fortner, Town Planner
- Wilkeson – Emily Terrell, Principal Planner

Urban Unincorporated Areas

- Pierce County Urban Unincorporated Areas- Jessica Gwilt, Senior Planner

Rural

- Pierce County Rural- Jessica Gwilt, Senior Planner

MEETINGS

To date, AHBL has convened several meetings with each regional geography to discuss their housing and population growth targets and identify preliminary growth targets for each community that fit within each regional geography's population allocation for 2044.

Metropolitan Cities

- **September 3, 2020** – AHBL held a preliminary growth target meeting with the City of Tacoma. The purpose of this meeting was to orient the City to the growth target setting process and provide data and resources for the City to identify its growth target for population and housing. AHBL explained to the City that as the only community in the Metropolitan Cities regional geography, they would be responsible for the entire allocation. The City indicated that they were comfortable with their growth target being consistent with the population allocation for Metropolitan Cities under VISION 2050.

Core Cities



- **August 20, 2020** – AHBL held a preliminary growth target meeting with the Core Cities regional geography. The purpose of this meeting was to orient each group to the growth target setting process and provide data and resources for each community to identify their growth targets for population and housing.
- After the initial growth target setting meetings, representatives sent AHBL preliminary population growth targets to plug into the spreadsheet. AHBL had an individual call with the City of Lakewood.
- **November 13, 2020** – AHBL held a follow up meeting with the Core Cities regional geography to discuss progress on the population and housing growth targets for the group. The communities provided AHBL at this meeting (if they had not prior) their proposed growth targets.
 - In attendance: David Swindale (University Place), Kevin Briske (University Place), Jeff Dixon (Auburn), Katie Baker (Puyallup), Kendall Wals (Puyallup), Tiffany Speir (Lakewood), Dave Bugher (Lakewood)
- **December 7, 2020** – At the request of Pierce County, AHBL prepared a memorandum summarizing the progress Core Cities had made towards allocating their population and discussing possible options for the County to explore to address the groups excess population which had not yet been allocated.
- The Office of the Pierce County Executive met with representatives from each of the Core Cities to address their growth targets.
- AHBL received documentation from the cities of Lakewood and University Place regarding their growth target requests. AHBL had an individual call with the City of Puyallup to discuss their growth targets. The City of Puyallup will be providing documentation to support their request.
- An additional meeting with the Core Cities regional geography and the Pierce County Executive's Office was held on April 7, 2021. PSRC was also in attendance to discuss next steps.

High Capacity Transit Communities

- **August 17, 2020** – AHBL held a preliminary growth target meeting with the High Capacity Transit Communities regional geography. The purpose of this meeting was to orient each group to the growth target setting process and provide data and resources for each community to identify their growth targets for population and housing.
 - In attendance: Jessica Gwilt (Pierce County), Angelie Stahlnecker (Fircrest), Chris Larson (Fife), Steve Friddle (Fife), Ryan Windish (Sumner), Jeff Wilson (DuPont)
- After the initial growth target setting meetings, representatives sent AHBL preliminary population growth targets to plug into the spreadsheet. AHBL had an individual call with the City of Fife. AHBL corresponded with via email and received preliminary growth targets from the cities of Fife, DuPont, Fircrest and Sumner. It was decided that Pierce County would allocate any remaining population to the three community plan areas designated as High Capacity Transit Communities.
- **November 10, 2020** – AHBL held a follow up meeting with the High Capacity Transit Communities regional geography to discuss progress on the population and housing growth targets for the group.
 - In attendance: Dan Cardell (Pierce County), Angelie Stahlnecker (Fircrest), Chris Larson (Fife), Ryan Windish (Sumner), Barbara Kincaid (DuPont)
- Following the November 3, 2020 meeting, AHBL had a call with the City of Sumner and the City of Fircrest to review their population and housing growth targets.



- **March 3, 2021** – AHBL convened the High Capacity Transit Communities to review the draft growth targets that had been provided and discuss next steps towards getting the groups targets to fit into the regional geography's population allocation.
 - In attendance: Dan Cardell (Pierce County), Jessica Gwilt (Pierce County) Angelie Stahlnecker (Fircrest), Chris Larson (Fife), Barbara Kincaid (DuPont)
- **March 9, 2021** – AHBL provided an update to the GMCC on the groups growth target process.

Cities and Towns

- **August 17, 2020** – AHBL held a preliminary growth target meeting with the Cities and Towns regional geography. The purpose of this meeting was to orient each group to the growth target setting process and provide data and resources for each community to identify their growth targets for population and housing.
 - In attendance: Abby Gribi (Eatonville), Carl de Simas (Gig Harbor), Darren Groth (Edgewood), Emily Adams (Orting), Evan Lewis (Buckley), Leticia Wallgren (Buckley), Jason Sullivan (Bonney Lake), Emily Terrell (Carbonado, South Prairie, and Wilkeson)
- After the initial growth target setting meetings, representatives sent AHBL preliminary population growth targets to plug into the spreadsheet. AHBL had individual calls with the City of Buckley and the Town of Steilacoom. AHBL corresponded with via email and received preliminary growth targets from the cities of Bonney Lake, Buckley, Edgewood, Orting and Steilacoom.
- **November 12, 2020** – AHBL held a follow up meeting with the Cities and Towns regional geography to discuss progress on the population and housing growth targets for the group.
 - In attendance: Carl De Simas (Gig Harbor), Darren Groth (Edgewood), Doug Fortner (Steilacoom), Emily Adams (Orting), Emily Terrell (Carbonado, South Prairie, Wilkeson), Jason Sullivan (Bonney Lake), Evan Lewis (Buckley), Leticia Wallgren (Buckley)
- **February 5, 2021** – AHBL convened the Cities and Towns regional geography to review the draft growth targets that had been provided and discuss next steps towards getting the groups targets to fit into the regional geography's population allocation. The group at this meeting requested to see how the growth targets would be impacted if a reduction was made of the existing housing unit population based on a projected decrease in persons per household.
 - In attendance: Carl De Simas (Gig Harbor), Darren Groth (Edgewood), Doug Fortner (Steilacoom), Jason Sullivan (Bonney Lake), Evan Lewis (Buckley), Dan Cardwell (Pierce County)
- Following the February 5, 2021 meeting with Cities and Towns, AHBL had a call with the City of Gig Harbor to review their population and housing growth targets.
- **February 17, 2021** – AHBL provided the group an updated table of the draft growth targets with an adjustment made for existing housing unit population to be reduced based on a projected decrease in persons per household. AHBL provided a new spreadsheet to the group with a request that each community review their projected persons per household number and housing growth numbers and provide feedback.
- **March 9, 2021** – AHBL provided an update to the GMCC on the groups growth target process.
- **April 7, 2021** – AHBL held an additional meeting with the Cities and Towns regional geography to go over the revised growth targets calculated by adjusting the base year population for decreases in persons per household that



are projected to occur over the next 24 years. This allows for a reduction in the existing housing unit population that in some communities allows for a larger growth target. The group discussed that each community would provide AHBL with a final draft population and housing growth target by May 19th when the group would reconvene before AHBL and the County prepare a draft ordinance and findings report.

- o In attendance: Carl de Simas (Gig Harbor), Darren Groth (Edgewood), Emily Adams (Orting), Evan Lewis (Buckley), Jason Sullivan (Bonney Lake), Paul Inghram (PSRC), Liz Underwood-Bultmann (PSRC), Dan Cardwell (Pierce County)

NEXT STEPS

AHBL will be meeting with the Cities and Towns regional geography a final time to discuss their population and housing growth targets on May 19, 2021. AHBL will be assembling documentation to support findings for each regional geography's growth targets. For regional geographies that do not align with VISION 2050, AHBL will be coordinating with the communities in each group to provide documentation to support their draft growth target requests.

AHBL has assembled data to support discussion around employment growth targets. We anticipate convening each regional geography to discuss their employment growth targets the week of April 26th, and likely an additional meeting in May.

AHBL will be preparing a draft ordinance and findings report to support the County's growth targets and address consistency with VISION 2050. A draft of this report is due to the Department of Commerce on June 30, 2021.

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STAFF MEMORANDUM

May 3, 2021

FROM: Carl de Simas, Senior Planner
TO: Planning and Building Committee
CC: Mayor Kit Kuhn
Bob Larson, City Administrator
Katrina Knutson, AICP, Community Development Director
RE: 2044 Population Growth Targets

The City has been coordinating with Pierce County and their consultant, AHBL, to arrive at population growth targets for the 2044. The targets would then be used to inform the City's next Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update due in 2024. Please see the attached "Project Memo" prepared by AHBL, dated April 15, 2021 for a summary of this process so far.

Puget Sound Regional Council's (PSRC) Executive Board recommended adoption of VISION 2050 last year and final action by the General Assembly on this recommendation was taken October 29, 2020. VISION 2050 establishes a Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) to guide growth within the Central Puget Sound Region. As part of the RGS, the region is divided into different classifications referred to as "regional geographies." The regional geographies are used to further the development patterns envisioned in VISION 2050 and growth targets are assigned to each of these regional geographies within each county. Each county in coordination with cities are then responsible for establishing growth targets for individual

jurisdictions that, when taken together, do not exceed the growth target established for that specific regional geography.

The table below provides a look at the population growth allocated to each regional geography per the Vision 2050 RGS. The City of Gig Harbor is assigned to the Cities and Towns category. Other cities within this category are: Bonney Lake, Buckley, Carbonado, Eatonville, Edgewood, Milton, Orting, Pacific, Roy, Ruston, South Prairie, Steilacoom, and Wilkeson.

VISION 2050 Regional Geography Category	Draft PRSC Vision 2050 Growth Percentage (Preferred Alternative):	2020-2044 Pierce County Population Growth Share by Draft PRSC VISION 2050 Growth Allocation Percentage
Metropolitan Cities	38%	100,618
Core Cities	23%	60,900
High Capacity Transit Communities	21%	55,605
Cities & Towns	7%	18,535
Urban Unincorporated Areas	8%	21,183
Rural	3%	7,944
Total	100%	264,784

Discussions continue within each regional geography to determine how the allocated population growth will be distributed amongst the jurisdictions. Pierce County is conducting this work through a grant from the Department of Commerce. AHBL is tasked with preparing a draft ordinance and findings report to support the County's growth targets and addressing consistency with Vision 2050. In accordance with the requirements of the grant, the **DRAFT** ordinance and report must be provided to Commerce by June 30, 2021. To that end, the Cities and Towns group will be meeting again on May 19th to agree on final draft population allocation figures. The draft figures may be updated after June 30th, taking into account the findings of the upcoming Building Lands Report, which will include capacity and inventory analysis.

The City's total population assumption utilized in the previous growth target round was 10,500 people at 2030. Based on a 2008 base year population of 6,910, the total projected population growth was set at 3,590 people. The City's average annual growth rate between 2000 and 2020 was 2.8% with much of the growth taking place between 2014 and 2020 at an annual average

rate of 5.9%. The resulting total population for 2020 is approximately 11,240; a total population increase of 4,617 people was observed during that span (compared to 3,590 people targeted). If the City were to maintain an average annual growth rate of 2.8% from 2020 to 2044, the City's 2044 population would be approximately 21,800; an increase of approximately 10,560 people. Provided that the growth allocation for the Cities and Towns Regional Geography is only 18,535 people, shared between 14 jurisdictions, this rate is unrealistic. The City needs to decide upon a growth rate that is consistent with the RGS, yet is supportable and within the City's capacity to meet (i.e. land, utilities, etc.).

The City's estimated housing unit total for 2020 is 5,302 units. Based on the baseline population for 2020 of 11,240 people, the persons per household in 2020 would be approximately 2.12. The City's person per household assumption utilized in the previous growth target setting process was 1.8 persons per household. Staff recommends increasing this number for the next planning period due to the spike in housing over the past 10-years, particularly in the single-family residential market, which is increasingly occupied by families with their children. Staff believes that persons per household will increase over the next planning period as Gig Harbor's population continues to trend younger. Staff recommends increasing the City's persons per household assumption by .08 to 2.20 for this planning period. The increase in persons per household effectively means more of the City's assumed population will be accommodated in fewer dwelling units.

As noted above, the previous average annual growth rate was 2.8% for the entire planning period, with a 5.9% rate for years after the great recession. Staff believes these growth rates are too aggressive for use going forward given the economic anomaly and impact to City services. To this end, staff recommends the range presented below which provides a realistic view of growth within the City limits up to 2044.

2020 Population, Actual	Avg. Annual Growth Rate (Assumed)	2044 Total Population	Increase over Base Year
11,240	1.3%	14,840	3,600
11,240	1.4%	15,140	3,900

2020 Population, Actual	Avg. Annual Growth Rate (Assumed)	2044 Total Population	Increase over Base Year
11,240	1.5%	15,340	4,100
11,240	1.6%	15,640	4,400
11,240	1.7%	15,940	4,700

In the City's current permit pipeline are approximately 500 units that are likely to be constructed in the planning period. At a rate of 2.20 persons per household, this development would consist of 1,100 persons (absorbed into total 2044 population, not in addition to).

First, staff asserts that growth will not be as prolific as we've seen over the past decade. The rationale for the figures provided above is the City will continue to grow over the next decade and certainly over the next 24 years, likely first with pipeline projects in the City's permitting system and then with other undeveloped properties. The City will receive draft residential capacity numbers when the Buildable Lands Report is released and additional target related analysis will occur after to inform this process (i.e. population associated with vacant and underutilized parcels). Another rationale for reduced annual growth rate over previous effort are evidenced by the code revisions effectuated by Council in 2018 where densities in most zones were reduced and lot sizes increased. However, the City could see an uptick in multi-family residential or mixed-use development proposals consistent with affordable housing initiatives and regulations from the State.

Today, staff seeks a recommendation from the Planning and Building Committee on an assumed average annual growth rate for the 2024-2044 planning period. Based on the findings included above Staff will continue to study the issue as more information becomes available and share those findings with the Committee in the coming months.

VISION 2050 PLANNING RESOURCES

Guidance for Growth Targets to Implement VISION 2050



March 2021

American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Information

Individuals requiring reasonable accommodations may request written materials in alternate formats, sign language interpreters, physical accessibility accommodations, or other reasonable accommodations by contacting the ADA Coordinator, **Thu Le**, at **206.464.6175**, with two weeks' advance notice. Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may contact the ADA Coordinator, Thu Le, through TTY Relay 711.

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King County, Kitsap County, Pierce County, Snohomish County

Cities and Tribes

Algona, Arlington, Auburn, Bainbridge Island, Beaux Arts Village, Bellevue, Black Diamond, Bonney Lake, Bothell, Bremerton, Buckley, Burien, Carnation, Clyde Hill, Covington, Darrington, Des Moines, DuPont, Duvall, Eatonville, Edgewood, Edmonds, Enumclaw, Everett, Federal Way, Fife, Fircrest, Gig Harbor, Granite Falls, Hunts Point, Issaquah, Kenmore, Kent, Kirkland, Lake Forest Park, Lake Stevens, Lakewood, Lynnwood, Maple Valley, Marysville, Medina, Mercer Island, Mill Creek, Milton, Monroe, Mountlake Terrace, Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, Mukilteo, Newcastle, Normandy Park, North Bend, Orting, Pacific, Port Orchard, Poulsbo, Puyallup, Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Redmond, Renton, Roy, Ruston, Sammamish, SeaTac, Seattle, Shoreline, Skykomish, Snohomish, Snoqualmie, Stanwood, Steilacoom, Sultan, Sumner, Tacoma, The Suquamish Tribe, Tukwila, Tulalip Tribes, University Place, Wilkeson, Woodinville, Woodway, Yarrow Point

Statutory Members

Port of Bremerton, Port of Everett, Port of Seattle, Port of Tacoma, Washington State Department of Transportation, Washington Transportation Commission

Associate Members

Alderwood Water & Wastewater District, Cascade Water Alliance, Port of Edmonds, Island County, Puget Sound Partnership, Snoqualmie Tribe, Thurston Regional Planning Council, University of Washington, Washington State University

Transit Agencies

Community Transit, Everett Transit, Kitsap Transit, Metro King County, Pierce Transit, Sound Transit

Contents

Introduction	1
Part I: Data Assumptions and Methodology	2
Planning Horizon	2
County Control Totals	4
Office of Financial Management 2022 GMA Population Projections	5
Employment Targets	5
Housing Targets	6
Part II Growth and Policy Factors	7
Translating County Control Totals to Regional Geographies	7
General Planning Considerations	10
Front and Back-Loaded Growth	11
Jobs-Housing Balance	11
Access to Opportunity and Housing Affordability	13
Centers and High Capacity Transit Station Areas	13
Urban Unincorporated Areas	17
Growth on Tribal Reservation Lands and Major Military Installations	18
Reconciliation Processes	19
Review and Implementation	19
Other Regional & County Resources	21
Appendix A: Best Practice Methodology for Housing Targets	22
Appendix B: Growth Target Statutory and Policy References	23

Figures

Figure 1 Regional Growth Strategy – Population Growth 2017–2044 (Illustrative)	3
Figure 2 Regional Growth Strategy – Employment Growth 2017–2044 (Illustrative)	3
Figure 3 Regional Growth Strategy County Population and Employment Control Totals 2017–2044 (Illustrative)	5
Figure 4 Regional Growth Strategy 2020–50 Housing Unit by Regional Geography	7
Figure 5 VISION 2050 Regional Geographies	9
Figure 6 Regional Growth Strategy Jobs-Housing Balance	12
Figure 7 Regional Jobs-Housing Ratios (2019)	13
Figure 8 Displacement Risk and Access to Opportunity in Seattle’s Growth Framework	13
Figure 9 Distribution of Land Area in Current and Planned High-Capacity	14
Figure 10 Distribution of Centers/HCT Geography Land Area by Mode Type	15
Figure 11 Regional Centers Typology	16
Figure 12 Minimum Growth Goals for Designated Regional Centers	17

Introduction

Under the Growth Management Act, counties, in consultation with cities, are responsible for adopting 20-year growth targets. These growth targets are a key input to local comprehensive plans, ensuring that each county is accommodating population and employment growth. Jurisdictions use growth targets to inform land use, transportation, and capital facilities in their comprehensive plans.

VISION 2050's Regional Growth Strategy provides regional guidance for the distribution of population and employment growth within the four-county central Puget Sound region to support regional goals, such as aligning growth with investments in infrastructure, supporting regional mobility, reducing environmental impacts, and supporting job growth and economic development. Recognizing that communities will grow in different ways, the Regional Growth Strategy defines a role for different types of places in accommodating the region's population and employment growth. VISION 2050 calls for a consistent process to develop growth targets, including translating population to housing units.

VISION 2050 directs PSRC to work with its member jurisdictions to provide guidance and support the countywide efforts to set housing and employment targets and targets for regional centers:

RGS-Action-3 Growth Targets: PSRC, together with its member jurisdictions, will provide guidance and participate with countywide processes that set or modify local housing and employment targets. This effort will include consideration of the timing of Regional Growth Strategy implementation in relation to anticipated completion of regional transit investments and corresponding market responses. PSRC will also provide guidance on growth targets for designated regional centers and improving jobs-housing balance, and coordinate with member jurisdictions regarding buildable lands reporting.

This document provides guidance on both common data/methodology questions and policy items related to VISION 2050 implementation. Identifying common data practices across the counties ensures that collectively we are implementing the Regional Growth Strategy, allows for more regionally consistent targets, and clarifies the process for jurisdictions, particularly those that cross county lines.

Objectives for the guidance:

- Effectively implement the VISION 2050 Regional Growth Strategy
- Provide best practices and coordination on common methodology issues to support a more consistent approach to growth targets across the region
- Support data and policy-informed countywide decisions about growth targets for individual jurisdictions

Terminology

The Growth Management Act and some of the countywide planning policies use both the term “targets” and “allocations” to refer to the countywide process for the numeric distribution of growth among local jurisdictions for planning purposes. Following VISION 2050, this guidance uses the term “allocation” to refer to the Regional Growth Strategy and “growth target” to refer to the countywide processes to assign growth to individual jurisdictions and communities.

There are several policy areas to draw from in developing this guidance. The Growth Management Act, Washington Administrative Code, and decisions of the Growth Management Hearings Board provide parameters to guide the development of growth targets. The “numeric guidance” of the Regional Growth Strategy refers to the percent shares of forecast regional population and employment growth for 2017–2050 allocated across counties and their regional geographies. Narrative in VISION 2050 provides background and regional context for local and county review of growth numbers and the objectives for each regional geography.

VISION 2050 also includes policies, actions and guidance on aligning local plans with the Regional Growth Strategy. While VISION 2050 provides a broad regional framework, it recognizes that communities are unique and different approaches may be appropriate based on local circumstances. MPP-RGS-3 notes the need for flexibility in establishing and modifying growth targets within countywide planning policies, provided that growth targets support the Regional Growth Strategy. Recommendations provided in the guidance are intended to support implementation of VISION 2050 and to recognize that tailored approaches may be appropriate to account for local circumstances.

PART I: DATA ASSUMPTIONS AND METHODOLOGY

This section identifies common data and methodology questions in establishing growth targets in countywide planning policies.

Planning Horizon

While the VISION 2050 planning horizon extends through the year 2050, it does not require local jurisdictions to set growth targets for 2050. Local jurisdictions will continue to plan under the 20-year planning horizon established under the Growth Management Act. All jurisdictions in the central Puget Sound have the same June 2024 deadline for state-required periodic updates to comprehensive plans and, therefore, should have the same planning horizon extending 20 years.

Recommendation for Planning Horizon: Align targets to a 2044 planning horizon. Comprehensive plans must plan for 20 years of growth, and 2044 horizon sets a common year, consistent with deadlines established under state law. Counties should choose a base year based on the most recent data available [2020 data recommended, where possible].

The legislature has extended the deadline in previous planning cycles, creating confusion among growth target horizon years. Any future changes to comprehensive plan horizons should be coordinated among the counties.

The following table provides an estimate of the Regional Growth Strategy allocations for the 2017-2044 period. The estimates were developed from 2044 growth, household, and group quarter assumptions in the regional macroeconomic forecast.

Growth Management Hearings Board

The Hearings Board has addressed growth targets in several cases, and provides some additional insight on their role:

“RCW 36.70A.110 imposes a consistent and ongoing duty for all GMA jurisdictions to accommodate the ensuing growth periodically projected by OFM and allocated [by the counties]. Simply put, so long as the state and region continue to grow, counties and cities must continue to plan for, manage, and accommodate the projected and allocated growth.” [Kaleas, 05-3-0007c, FDO, at 11-12.]

“[A]ccommodating the growth allocated to meet a one-time projected 20-year target does not extinguish a city’s GMA obligations [per .110].” [Camwest III, 05-3-0041, FDO, at 14.]

Figure 1 Regional Growth Strategy — Population Growth 2017–2044 (Illustrative)

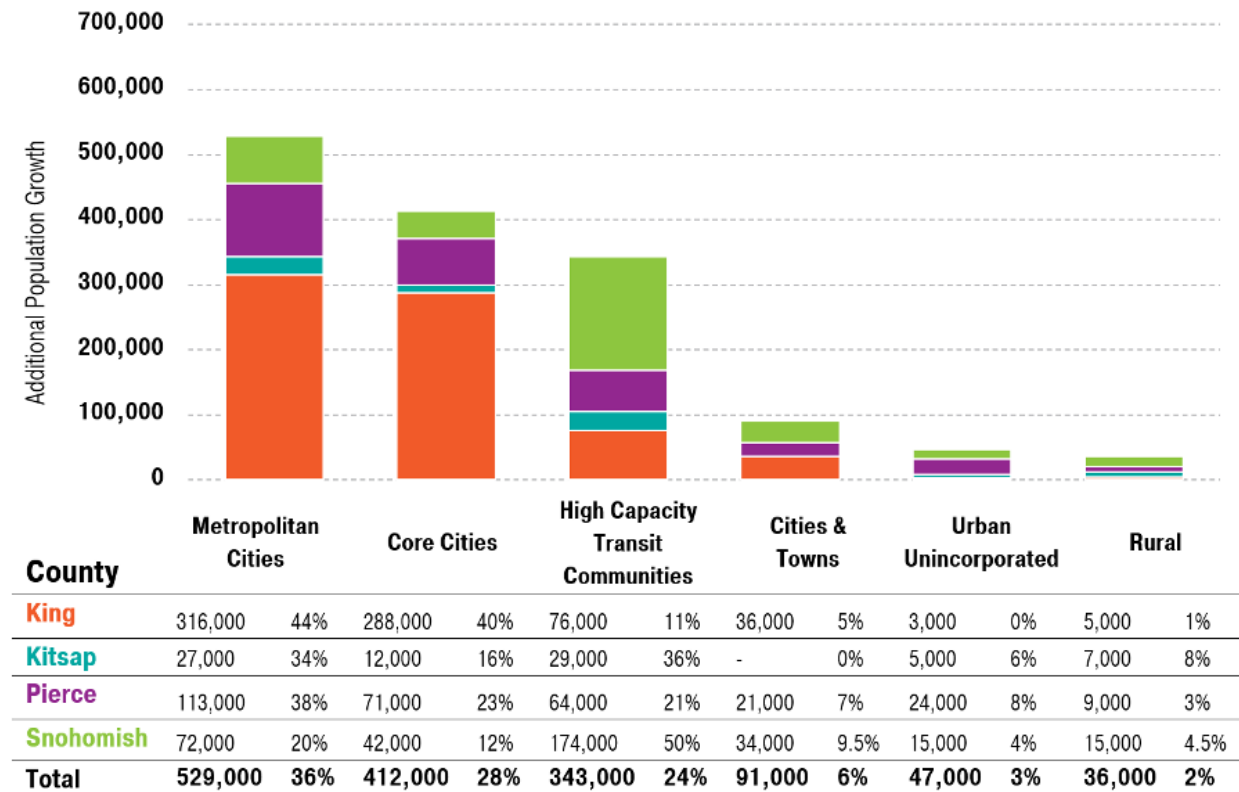
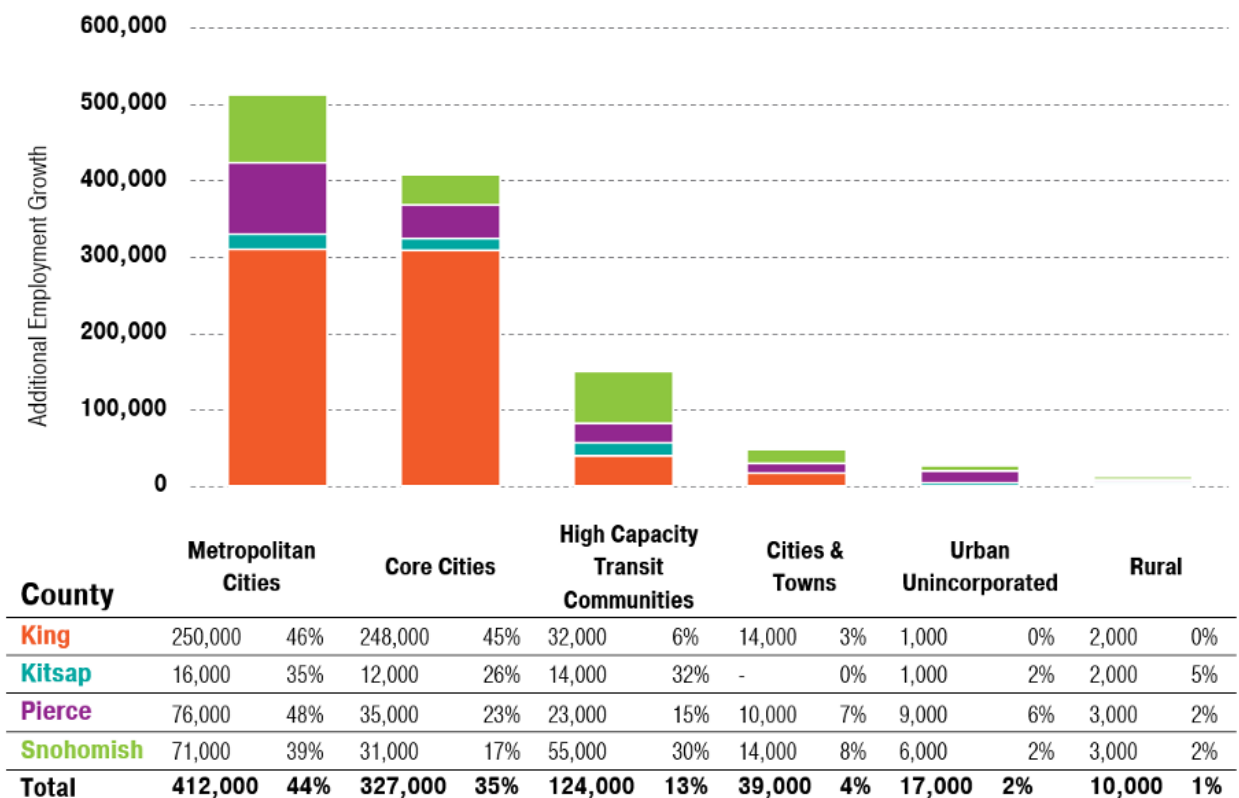


Figure 2 Regional Growth Strategy — Employment Growth 2017–2044 (Illustrative)



County Control Totals

The first step in developing growth targets is identifying the total amount of growth expected for the county. The county population total is critical for allocating growth to individual cities and unincorporated areas. RCW 43.62.035 directs the Office of Financial Management (OFM) to provide a range of high, medium and low twenty-year population forecasts for each county in the state, with the medium forecast being most likely. Counties and cities must plan for a total countywide population that falls within the OFM range.

The Washington Administrative Code (WAC 365-196-310(4)) provides guidance about selecting the overall county population projection. Among other factors, it states the process to select a countywide total should include:

“Consideration of other population forecast data, trends, and implications. In selecting population forecasts, counties and cities may consider the following:

- Population forecasts from outside agencies, such as regional or metropolitan planning agencies, and service providers.”

The Regional Growth Strategy includes county-level growth allocations based on the regional macroeconomic forecast and expected county-level distribution based on the Office of Financial Management GMA projections. PSRC’s macroeconomic forecast includes the region’s households, persons, jobs, and other economic and demographic variables through the year 2050. PSRC’s 2018 macroeconomic forecast for total regional population growth is generally consistent with preliminary state-level projections for 2050 that were released in 2017, though it estimates slightly higher population in the region in both 2040 and 2050. OFM does not produce a long-range employment forecast for GMA planning purposes.

The overall Regional Growth Strategy is based on improving regional job-housing balance and included shifts in planned employment to balance population growth in each county. Given this regional distribution of jobs and population was central to development of the Regional Growth Strategy, it is critical to coordinate regionally on the overall county assumptions for population and employment.

Recommendation for County Control Totals: To promote jobs-housing balance and regional consistency, aim to be consistent with overall county controls in VISION 2050. If needed, deviations from the total population or employment county control totals should support an improved jobs-housing balance and be coordinated among the counties. This could include planning for additional population growth in King County or additional employment growth in Pierce, Snohomish, or Kitsap counties. If a county chooses to deviate from the county control totals in VISION 2050, the supporting materials for the growth targets should outline the rationale for using the regional macroeconomic forecast as a guide and rationale for any deviations consistent with the overall objectives of the Regional Growth Strategy.

Figure 3 Regional Growth Strategy County Population and Employment Control Totals 2017–2044 (Illustrative)

	POPULATION		EMPLOYMENT	
	Total	% Share	Total	% Share
King	724,000	50%	547,000	59%
Kitsap	80,000	5%	45,000	5%
Pierce	302,000	21%	157,000	17%
Snohomish	353,000	24%	180,000	19%
Region	1,458,000	100%	930,000	100%

Office of Financial Management 2022 GMA Population Projections

OFM is next scheduled to release updated GMA projections in late 2022. Given the local planning schedule in the central Puget Sound where periodic updates are due to be completed by June 2024, this provides limited opportunity to make changes and coordinate regionally on changes to population allocations.

The OFM GMA projections have historically been sensitive to economic shifts, and the global pandemic and subsequent economic downturn create significant uncertainties in near-term growth. Due to the late timing of the 2022 release, changing county control totals after the OFM release would likely disrupt the local comprehensive planning process. Regardless of whether the 2022 projection changes, the totals identified in the regional macroeconomic forecast are very likely to remain within the low-to-high projection range.

Recommendation for 2022 OFM Population Projections: Counties should proceed with developing growth targets in 2020/2021, based on the macroeconomic forecast in VISION 2050. When the Office of Financial Management releases updated population forecasts in 2022, ensure the county control total used to develop population targets remains within the OFM range. The need for coordinated growth in the central Puget Sound places a high priority on consistency with the Regional Growth Strategy while remaining within the parameters of state law. If the 2022 projections suggest adjusting the county control totals, any such changes should be coordinated through all four counties working together. PSRC’s Land Use Technical Advisory Committee will provide a forum for discussion and coordination if significant changes to the OFM projections or future updates to PSRC’s macroeconomic forecast warrant revisiting of county control totals. Consideration of changes due to the 2022 OFM projection should occur through countywide planning forums before making adjustments to targets for individual communities.

Employment Targets

Each county in the region establishes employment targets consistent with the direction of VISION 2050 (MPP-RGS-2). Employment targets help cities and counties plan for employment based-uses and plan to improve jobs-housing balance across the region, a key objective of VISION 2050.

The Washington Administrative Code (WAC 365-196-310(4)) provides the following guidance on employment forecasts:

“Selection of a county-wide employment forecast. Counties, in consultation with cities, should adopt a twenty-year county-wide employment forecast to be allocated among urban growth areas, cities, and the rural area. The following should be considered in this process:

- (A) The county-wide population forecast, and the resulting ratio of forecast jobs to persons. This ratio should be compared to past levels locally and other regions, and to desired policy objectives; and
- (B) Economic trends and forecasts produced by outside agencies or private sources.”

Recommendation for Employment Targets: Use a county control total for employment that is consistent with the VISION 2050 county allocations to ensure regional consistency and promote jobs/housing balance. If needed, deviation from the VISION 2050 county totals should support an improved regional jobs/housing balance and VISION 2050 policy objectives and should be coordinated among the counties.

Previous rounds of growth targets were informed by PSRC’s Small Area Forecast, which did not include projections of construction/resource jobs. PSRC’s current Macroeconomic Forecast includes forecasts of total employment, including construction/resource jobs, which makes an adjustment for construction/resource jobs no longer necessary. Counties are encouraged to adopt employment targets that include construction/resource jobs.

Other data resources:

- [Current local employment estimates and trends](#)
- [PSRC 2018 Macroeconomic Forecast, including forecast for industry sectors](#)

Housing Targets

VISION 2050 states that counties should establish local housing targets based on population projections (MPP-RGS-2). Translating population to housing is a critical step in recognizing and planning for regional housing needs and ensuring that local land use plans are sufficient to accommodate the projected population target.

Recommendations for Housing Targets:

- Counties are encouraged to use the methodology developed by LUTAC to translate population to housing targets [see Appendix A]. The methodology considers countywide housing need as a first step, uses consistent household size appropriate for each county and regional geography, and creates a common set of assumptions to develop housing targets.
- The Regional Growth Strategy is for total population inclusive of group quarter population. For purposes of translating population targets into housing units, housing targets should focus on household population excluding group quarter population, per the methodology provided in Appendix A. The most recent group quarters information can be used with an adjustment for anticipated growth.
- Some counties adopt both population and housing targets for jurisdictions. Where both sets of targets are available, jurisdictions are strongly encouraged to use adopted housing targets in countywide planning policies to ensure that the housing needs identified at the countywide level are fully addressed in local targets and plans.
- Counties may consider establishing more detailed affordable housing targets aimed at proactively planning for below-market units. If adopted, affordable housing targets should be consistent with overall countywide and local housing targets.

PSRC's Regional Housing Needs Assessment includes a translation of the Regional Growth Strategy into housing units. This translation (see Figure 4) uses the methodology provided in Appendix A. The Regional Housing Needs Assessment finds that the region underbuilt housing over the last decade, relative to population growth. The recommended method to translate population to housing accounts for the current backlog because it is based on total population and household size by the end of the planning period. While the methodology accounts for the current backlog over the long term, the region is currently experiencing a housing affordability crisis, and jurisdictions should take short-term action to encourage housing development and plan to address the affordability gaps at all levels while also being consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy.

Figure 4 Regional Growth Strategy 2020-50 Housing Unit by Regional Geography (Illustrative)

	METROPOLITAN CITIES	CORE CITIES	HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT COMMUNITIES	CITIES & TOWNS	URBAN UNINCORP.	RURAL	TOTAL
King	194,200	158,000	42,400	18,400	1,600	3,400	418,000
Kitsap	14,200	6,700	15,300	-	2,800	3,500	42,600
Pierce	63,900	41,200	32,100	10,600	9,100	3,900	160,800
Snohomish	42,400	22,400	91,900	16,300	6,900	6,700	186,500
Total	314,700	228,300	181,700	45,300	20,400	17,500	807,900

PART II: GROWTH AND POLICY FACTORS

This section outlines additional technical and policy-related factors to allocate growth to individual jurisdictions.

Translating County Control Totals to Regional Geographies

VISION 2050 provides guidance on shares and roles of different regional geographies.

- **Metropolitan and Core Cities** include cities that have designated regional growth centers. Most are also connected to the region's high-capacity transit system or will see new investments in the future. These two groups of cities are and will be the most intensely urban places in the region. It would be consistent with the spirit of the Regional Growth Strategy for the region's Metropolitan Cities to accommodate an even larger share of forecast regional growth in the countywide growth targets, while aiming for a better balance of jobs and housing.
- **High Capacity Transit Communities** are cities and unincorporated areas that are connected to the regional high-capacity transit system. These urban unincorporated areas are also planned for annexation or incorporation. Historical growth targets may not be as useful a guide for these jurisdictions compared to some cities. In many cases, transit investments represent new, future opportunities to accommodate growth.

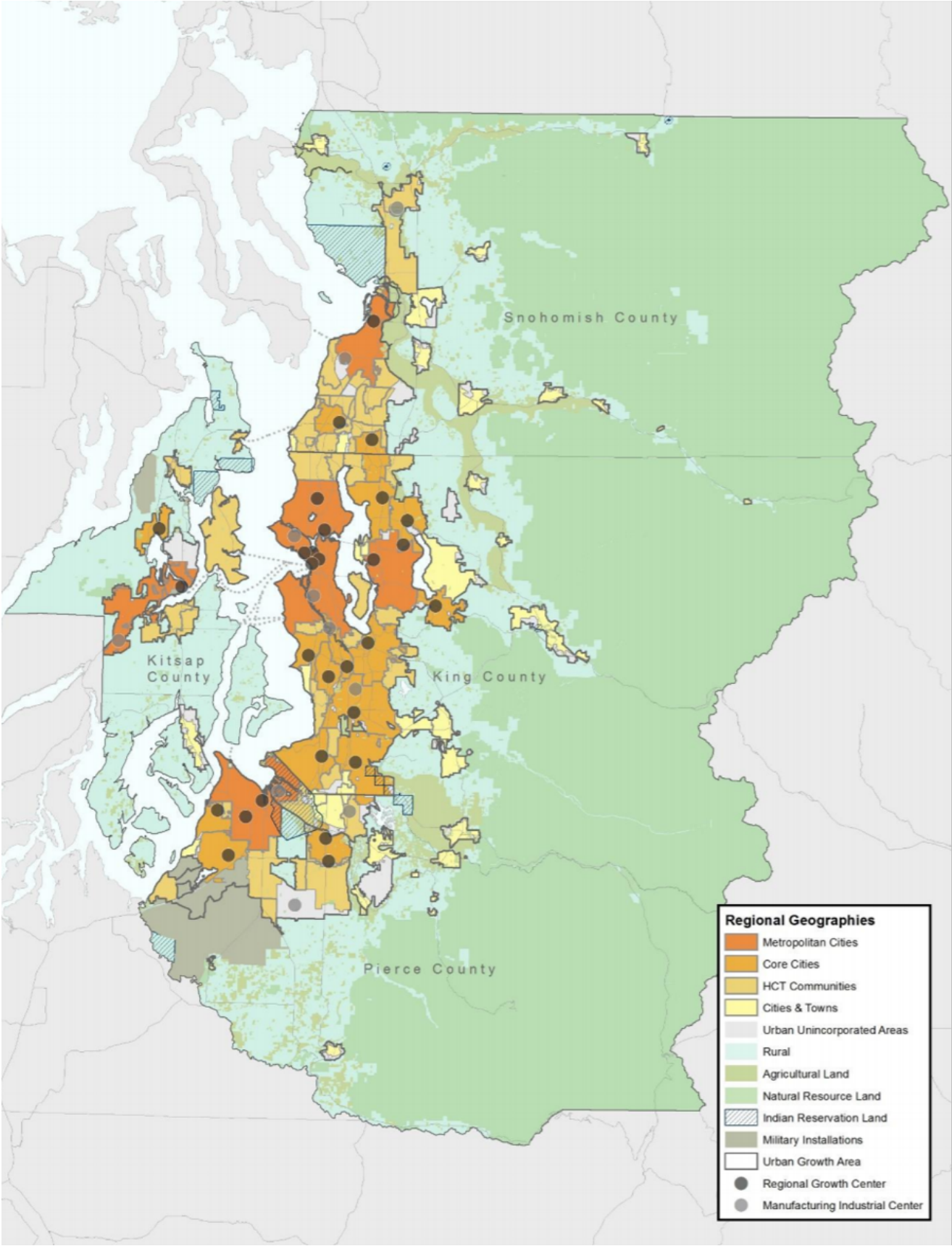
- **Cities and Towns** are cities and towns with smaller downtown and local centers, which may be served by local transit.
- **Urban Unincorporated Areas** capture a wide variety of urban lands, both lightly and heavily developed. These areas may be served by local transit and may include areas identified as potential annexation or incorporation areas.
- **Rural Areas and Natural Resources Lands** describe the different types of unincorporated areas outside the urban growth area and include very low-density housing, working landscapes, and open space. VISION 2050 calls for reduced rural population growth rates in all counties. Counties are encouraged to plan for even lower growth—where possible—than contained in the Regional Growth Strategy.

Compared to historical trends, Metropolitan, Core, and High Capacity Transit Communities are planned for higher levels of growth in the Regional Growth Strategy. Other geographies are planned for more modest levels of growth. In several of these geographies, additional capacity for housing and jobs may be necessary to accommodate growth in this planning period.

Recommendation for Regional Geographies: Achieve substantial consistency with shares identified for each regional geography identified in VISION 2050. Deviations from the regional geography shares should be reasonably expected to be achieved through backloaded growth beyond the planning period to 2050. Counties are encouraged to identify opportunities to implement the guidance in VISION 2050 that Metropolitan cities could plan for higher levels of growth and Rural areas could plan for lower levels of growth than specified by the Regional Growth Strategy.



Figure 5 VISION 2050 Regional Geographies



General Planning Considerations

As targets are determined for individual cities and unincorporated areas within a single regional geography, there are several factors and questions that may be considered. For reference, the Washington Administrative Code WAC 365-196-310 (4)(a)(iii) – (vii) identifies several of these factors:

- **Existing growth targets and progress.** Has a jurisdiction grown more or less than expected during the previous round of growth targets? Jurisdictions that have been able to accommodate growth may continue these trends into the future.
- **Historic and recent development trends.** Where has growth been occurring in the county? Have trends shifted since the last round of growth targets were set?
- **Vested development projects.** Are known projects in the pipeline that should be considered?
- **Zoned development capacity.** Where is there existing capacity for new urban growth in the county? While many areas are being planned for additional growth in VISION 2050 that have not yet zoned for additional capacity, existing capacity could be a factor to consider in establishing growth targets. Relative distribution of capacity can inform targets but isn't a fixed constraint — cities are expected to continue to accommodate growth over time. Changing circumstances, such as major infrastructure investments, may necessitate a new and expanded role for jurisdictions in accommodating growth.
- **Availability and capacity of transportation and other infrastructure.** Where is existing and planned infrastructure to accommodate new growth? The WAC cautions that ability to pay for urban infrastructure should be a consideration in how much growth to expect. Some jurisdictions have known limitations of future water availability or sewer service – these factors should inform establishing reasonable targets for growth. On the other hand, major regional investments in light rail present new opportunities for some communities to accommodate growth.
- **“Fair share” distribution.** Are jurisdictions sharing the responsibility to accommodate future growth? The GMA framework supports interjurisdictional cooperation and recognizes a shared responsibility across each county for accommodating new growth.
- **Location within the county.**
 - **Employment distribution.** Employers and industries generally cluster together and seek access to infrastructure and transportation facilities, including ports or other distribution networks. Do growth targets support known employment distribution patterns?
 - **Transportation and distance from job centers.** Will the distribution of growth targets help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reducing vehicle miles traveled between residential areas and job centers? In addition to the Regional Growth Strategy, VISION 2050 supports regional and state goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Transportation is a main contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, and the location of job centers and existing commute patterns should inform the distribution of growth.
 - **Environment.** Are some areas more appropriate for growth in the context of other environmental factors? Environmental features play a role in distributing growth within individual jurisdictions but could also shape the total amount of planned growth.

Front and Back-Loaded Growth

VISION 2050 provides a planning horizon six years beyond the recommended 2044 growth targets. A first step may be to consider a 2044 target level based on assuming a straight-line path to 2050. In some instances, it may be appropriate to account for higher or lower shares for regional geographies within a county than allocated in the Regional Growth Strategy in targets (referred to as “front-loaded” or “back-loaded” growth) to acknowledge that growth often is not linear and may be expected to accelerate or slow over time. VISION 2050 assumes that the region will ultimately achieve the growth allocations in the Regional Growth Strategy by 2050, even with assumptions for slightly higher or lower growth allocation through 2044.

Some factors which are especially relevant in front-loading or back-loading growth include:

- Major transit or other infrastructure investments. Some Sound Transit projects will be completed in the next few years while others will not be complete until 2041. This could shift market response to early or late in the planning period. Other major transportation or utility infrastructure may shape development patterns. For example, planned upgrades or known limitations of water or sewer utility may shift when growth is expected to occur.
- The timing of major planned developments. Major planned developments permitted under development agreements come online in larger and more predictable phases than typical housing and employment development.
- Current development patterns. In some geographies, the Regional Growth Strategy assumes a notably different development trajectory than current trends. For example, Core Cities across all counties have more ambitious goals for growth than current trends. Except for King County, Metropolitan cities are also expected to ramp up growth over time. Given the timing of transit investments, some of that growth may take place later in the planning period.

Recent updates to the Buildable Lands statute (RCW 36.70A.215) require an analysis of growth targets to understand when growth targets and assumptions are not being achieved. In the context of backloading, that statute notes, “It is not appropriate to make a finding that assumed growth contained in the countywide planning policies and the county or city comprehensive plan will occur at the end of the current comprehensive planning twenty-year planning cycle without rationale.” To facilitate review, counties should recognize and document any rationale for front or back-loading growth as part of targets documentation, including why it is reasonable to expect that regional geographies can achieve the Regional Growth Strategy shares by 2050.

Jobs-Housing Balance

VISION 2050 emphasizes the importance of improving the balance of jobs and housing to support regional mobility, access to living-wage jobs, and affordable housing. Without adequate housing near jobs, people find themselves living further away and making longer commutes. This can be exacerbated when housing is available, but unaffordable to the workers employed in the area.

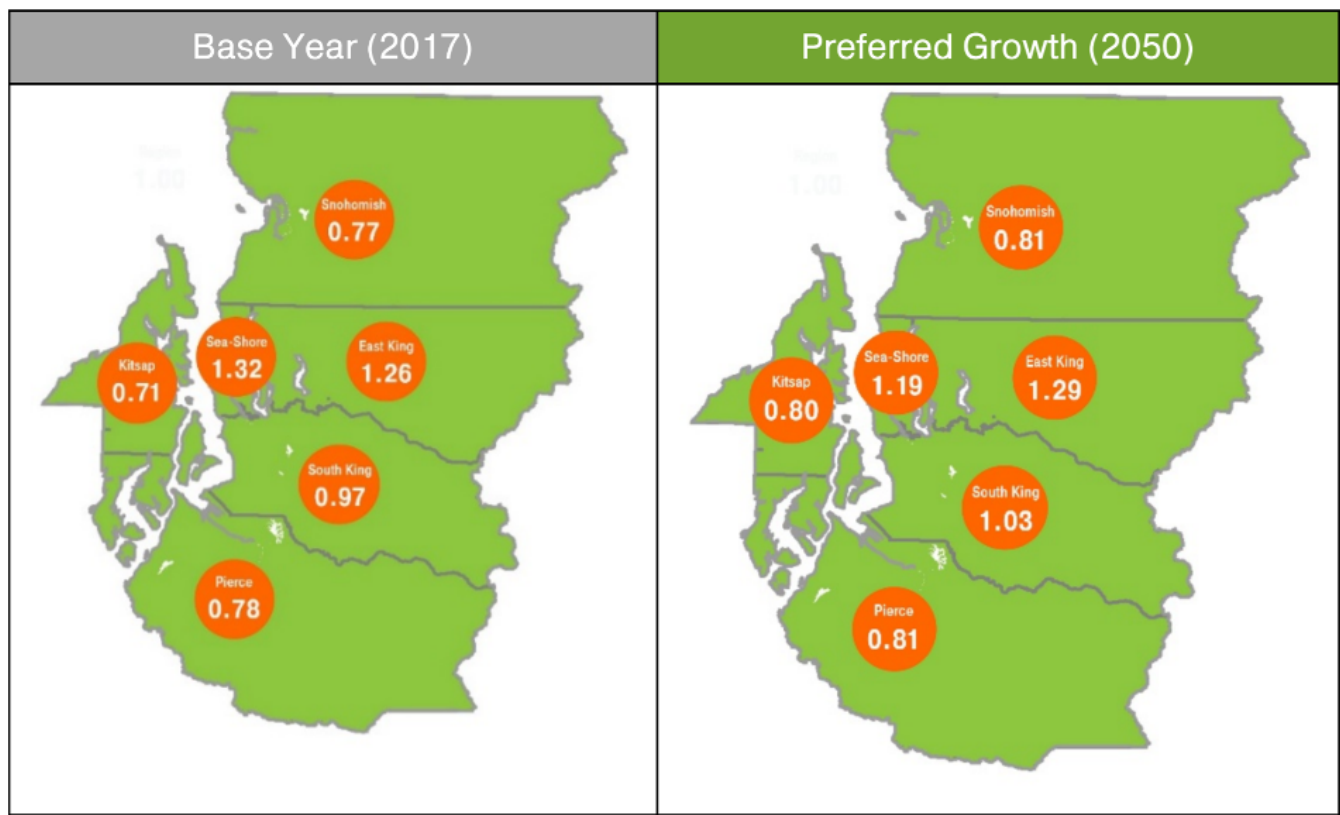
In establishing growth targets, counties, in consultation with cities, should consider jobs-housing balance across larger subareas when establishing growth targets. VISION 2050 includes an action specifically on jobs-housing balance in the growth targets:

RGS-Action-8 Plan for Jobs-Housing Balance: Countywide planning organizations will consider data on jobs-housing balance, especially recent and projected employment growth within Metropolitan and Core cities, to set housing growth targets that substantially improve jobs-housing balance consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy. Metropolitan and Core cities experiencing high job growth will take measures to provide additional housing capacity for a range of housing types and affordability levels to meet the needs of those workers as well as the needs of existing residents who may be at risk of displacement.

The VISION 2050 action focuses on housing growth near job centers to address risk of displacement. Jobs-housing balance should be a countywide consideration in developing targets. The countywide process should also consider subareas and individual jurisdictions with long-term imbalance of jobs and housing in establishing targets.

Jobs-housing ratios in the [VISION 2050 Final Supplemental EIS](#) estimate long-term imbalances of jobs and housing across King County subareas, which could be improved with more proactive local planning.

Figure 6 Regional Growth Strategy Jobs-Housing Balance



The maps provided above are based on an index of jobs and housing by subarea, compared to a regional average.

Figure 7 Regional Jobs-Housing Ratios (2019)

COUNTY	EMPLOYMENT	HOUSING	JOBS-HOUSING RATIO
King County	1,529,000	956,000	1.60
East King	432,000	251,000	1.72
Sea-Shore	702,000	400,000	1.75
South King	396,000	305,000	1.30
Kitsap County	111,000	114,000	0.98
Pierce County	377,000	353,000	1.07
Snohomish County	323,000	317,000	1.02
Region	2,341,000	1,740,000	1.35

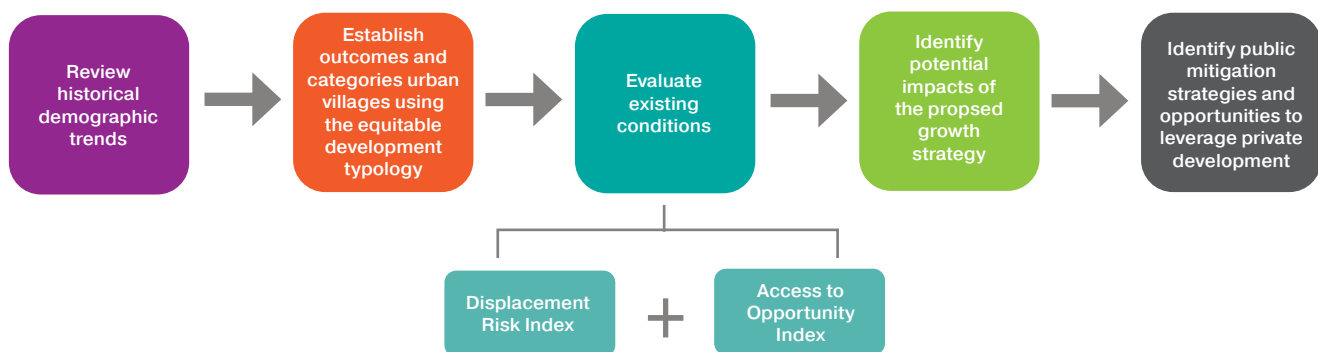
Access to Opportunity and Housing Affordability

VISION 2050 supports equitable growth that minimizes displacement and expands access to opportunity. Regional resources are available to support consideration of housing affordability and social equity in establishing growth targets:

- [Opportunity Mapping](#)
- [Displacement Risk Mapping](#)
- [Regional Housing Needs Assessment](#)

At the city level, [Seattle](#) has used displacement risk and access to opportunity to shape how much growth is allocated to individual centers and subareas. These data resources can also be used to consider how growth is allocated among jurisdictions within each regional geography.

Figure 8 Displacement Risk and Access to Opportunity in Seattle's Growth Framework



Source: Seattle 2035 Growth and Equity: Analyzing Impacts on Displacement and Opportunity Related to Seattle's Growth Strategy

The Regional Housing Needs Assessment will provide additional data and perspective on future housing need, providing further detail besides the total number of units needed in the region. This project may be able to inform how growth targets are translated to local planning

Centers and High Capacity Transit Station Areas

Both regional centers and investments in high-capacity transit represent critical opportunities to accommodate new growth. VISION 2050 and the [Regional Centers Framework](#) includes specific growth goals for both types of places.

Regional High-Capacity Transit Goal

VISION 2050 includes a goal of 65% of population growth and 75% of job growth to occur in centers and near high-capacity transit stations (MPP-RGS-8). Achieving this goal will help bring people and jobs closer together and provide people with greater transportation access to other jobs centers. That goal applies regionally and is based on assumptions that vary in each county.

VISION 2050 defines high-capacity transit station areas as parcels within a half-mile walk of existing/planned light rail and streetcar stations, commuter rail stations, and ferry terminals in the region's designated urban growth areas (UGA), and within a quarter-mile walk of existing/planned bus rapid transit stations in the UGA.

King County has significantly more current and planned high-capacity transit investments than other counties, but each has a role to play in encouraging new growth near transit.

Figure 9 Distribution of Land Area in Current and Planned High-Capacity

	ACRES IN CENTERS AND TRANSIT STATION AREAS	SHARE OF REGION
King	51,615	71%
Kitsap	2,791	4%
Pierce	10,735	15%
Snohomish	7,708	11%
Region	72,849	100%

Source: PSRC VISION 2050 Alternatives Background Paper analysis

Recommendation for HCT Goal: While the goal in VISION is region-wide, counties should seek to implement the centers and high-capacity goal through the growth targets. Counties should consider the distribution and relative share of high-capacity transit areas within each jurisdiction when developing targets.

Transit Timing, Mode, Access and Market Response

Different modes and transit investments elicit varying levels of market response. Research has identified that fixed transit investments more readily catalyze the real estate market and help attract housing and job growth. Modes such as light rail are likely to promote and support high levels of development and provide high quality service for residents. Higher-cost transit systems (such as light rail) require higher densities to encourage the kind of frequent use to support the overall system.

The [Regional Centers Market Study](#) (2016) identified several important factors related to significant growth in centers. These factors are similar for both designated regional growth centers and other mixed-use areas served by transit and indicate that some centers and transit station areas are better situated to accommodate future growth than others. Factors include:

- Large firms are more likely to locate in large and well-developed urban centers.
- Service sector-oriented centers grow faster. Industries and firms oriented around large, global markets tend to drive growth in centers.

- Transportation accessibility to regional concentrations of jobs facilitates urban center growth. Location in the region and accessibility, particularly by transit, to other centers is an important factor for both employment and population growth in centers.
- Employment growth leads population growth in centers.
- Sufficient zoning capacity reduces barriers to residential and job development. Limited zoned development capacity can be a barrier to employment and population growth.
- More walkable centers will likely experience faster employment and residential growth.

Recommendation for Transit Characteristics: Counties should consider transit service characteristics, location, and urban form in allocating growth between jurisdictions served by high-capacity transit. Targets should take into account multiple dimensions of transit access and timing, which may vary among cities and unincorporated areas within each regional geography.

The following graphic shows where growth is distributed among high capacity transit areas. To avoid double-counting, transit types are arranged as a hierarchy from left to right. For example, if a location is served by both light rail and bus rapid transit, it is counted in the light rail data in the chart below. Some portions of regional growth centers are not served by any type of high capacity transit and are categorized below as “remaining RGC areas.”

Figure 10 Distribution of Centers/HCT Geography Land Area by Mode Type

	ALL LIGHT RAIL	REMAINING COMMUTER RAIL	REMAINING FERRY	REMAINING BRT	REMAINING RGC AREA	TOTAL TOD AREAS
King	27%	1%	0%	65%	6%	100%
Kitsap	0%	0%	38%	32%	30%	100%
Pierce	33%	10%	0%	38%	19%	100%
Snohomish	16%	4%	0%	66%	15%	100%
Region	26%	3%	2%	60%	10%	100%

Source: PSRC VISION 2050 Alternatives Background Paper

PSRC’s guidance on [Transit-Supportive Densities and Land Uses](#) (2015) also provides information on densities and transit modes that support development activity.

Regional growth centers and manufacturing/industrial centers

VISION 2050 calls for regional growth centers and manufacturing/industrial centers to accommodate a significant share of the region’s growth (MPP-RGS-9, RGS-10).

Recommendations for Regional Centers:

- Under the [Regional Centers Framework](#), there are tailored growth expectations for different types of centers. PSRC has completed the [typology of regional centers](#). Targets should be sufficient to enable jurisdictions to reach their regional center density goals; insufficient targets for cities with regional centers could jeopardize the regional center designation. Some regional centers already exceed the minimum density standard. These centers are still expected to accommodate a significant share of their jurisdiction’s growth.

Figure 11 Regional Centers Typology



Figure 12 Minimum Growth Goals for Designated Regional Centers

REGIONAL CENTER TYPE	MINIMUM PLANNING GOAL	OTHER NOTES
Urban Growth Center	45 activity units per acre	Minimum mix of at least 15% planned residential and employment activity in the center
Metro Growth Center	85 activity units per acre	Minimum mix of at least 15% planned residential and employment activity in the center
Industrial Growth Center	10,000 total jobs	-
Industrial Employment Center	20,000 total jobs	-

- Some jurisdictions have more than one designated regional center. These jurisdictions may warrant higher growth allocations than other cities within their regional geography.
- Unlike regional growth centers, designated MICs are not part of the criteria used to establish regional geographies in VISION 2050. However, these centers are planned for additional growth, and growth targets for jurisdictions with MICs should reflect appropriate levels of employment growth.

Countywide centers and local centers

The Regional Centers Framework provides a framework to designate new countywide centers that can successfully accommodate new growth. VISION 2050 also encourages growth in designated countywide centers (MPP-RGS- 11). Jurisdictions with countywide centers may warrant higher growth allocations to accommodate new growth in these areas.

Urban Unincorporated Areas

VISION 2050 encourages phasing and prioritizing growth in unincorporated areas planned for annexation or incorporation. VISION 2050 recognizes that urban unincorporated areas have different existing conditions and plans. Urban unincorporated areas are included in two different regional geographies:

- **High-Capacity Transit Communities.** Cities and unincorporated areas that are connected to regional high-capacity transit system. These urban unincorporated areas are also planned for annexation or incorporation.
- **Urban Unincorporated.** Urban areas that may be served by local transit but are either not yet planned for annexation or incorporation and/or not yet planned for high-capacity transit

VISION 2050 envisions that, over time, unincorporated area inside the urban growth area will be fully annexed to or incorporated as cities. Careful planning and phased development of the unincorporated portions of the urban growth area are vital to ensure that these areas assume appropriate urban densities and an urban form that supports the efficient provision of future transit and urban services and facilitates annexation or incorporation.

Recommendation for Urban Unincorporated Areas: Growth targets for urban unincorporated areas in both regional geographies should be informed by their annexation or incorporation status and opportunities to phase growth in these areas.

Growth on Tribal Reservation Lands and Major Military Installations

It may be appropriate in growth targets to acknowledge known growth forecasts and major planned developments on tribal reservation lands or military installations.

These areas plan differently than local governments and are not subject to the planning requirements of the Growth Management Act. However, VISION 2050 recognizes their important roles in the region and their influence on regional growth patterns.

Major Military Installations

Military installations play an important role in the central Puget Sound region's economy. Washington state has one of the highest concentrations of military personnel claiming residence, with the majority of personnel located at installations in the central Puget Sound region. Nine installations of various sizes are located in the region. Installations are not required to plan under the Growth Management Act, and the Regional Growth Strategy does not allocate forecasted regional employment growth to these areas, though existing levels of military employment are included in regional modeling.

OFM GMA population projections designate 'special populations' including military populations in their models to account for military personnel. The OFM projections assume that bases are unlikely to be downsized because of their strategic location and importance. PSRC's forecast similarly assumes existing levels of activity at military installations will continue in the future.

Installations serve as hubs for both employment and population, and it is important to work together on growth planning in and around bases.

Recommendation for Major Military Installations: Counties and cities should coordinate with military installations on growth planning issues, including any planned changes. While military installations are not formally part of the Growth Management Act framework and should not be assigned growth targets, supporting data and information presented with the growth targets can recognize existing activity or document major changes expected on bases.

Indian Reservation Lands

As sovereign nations, each tribe has its own form of government, constitution or charter, laws and planning processes and are not subject to state planning requirements or the Growth Management Act. Because of this, the Regional Growth Strategy does not include population and employment growth allocations for these sovereign lands.

Recommendation for Indian Reservation Lands: Counties and cities should coordinate with tribal nations on growth planning issues, including how much growth tribal nations are forecasting and tracking on reservations in order to coordinate their planning policies and achieve consistency in regional planning. Growth on rural reservation lands is not included in rural regional geography allocations when tracking population and employment growth. While reservation lands are not formally part of the Growth Management Act framework and should not be assigned growth targets, supporting data and information presented with the growth targets can recognize existing activity or document major changes expected on reservation lands. Counties should seek to be consistent with the overall goals for rural growth in VISION 2050 when permitting new development on fee-simple reservation lands outside the urban growth area. Tribal governments may also have input on off-reservation growth patterns, which may affect their off-reservation interests.

Reconciliation Processes

Counties, working with their cities, should strive to reach agreement on growth targets that are reasonable and achievable and where there is a commitment to plan for them in local comprehensive plan updates. A new action in VISION 2050 (RGS-Action-9) calls for countywide organizations to develop processes to reconcile any discrepancies between city and county adopted targets contained in local comprehensive plans, and that reconciliation processes should maintain consistency with the Regional Growth Strategy. Counties and cities can avoid the need for reconciliation by seeking agreement through the target-setting process, but any adjustments needed should be coordinated through the countywide process.

Snohomish County has long included a process for adjusting growth targets after comprehensive plan updates have been adopted to account for differences in growth target outcomes in local plans. Following the 2015 comprehensive plan update, Pierce County also adjusted the growth targets to account for misalignment between growth targets and capacity in some cities. Reconciliation may make sense when there are changes to transit investments or other circumstances unforeseen during growth target development.

A reconciliation process may require updates to the countywide planning policies to outline a process to adjust growth targets or to ensure that existing reconciliation processes are consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy.

Recommendation for Reconciliation: Countywide planning organizations should identify a reconciliation process to address potential discrepancies. Reconciliation should maintain consistency with growth allocations within each regional geography and with VISION 2050 and avoid shifts of planned growth to regional geographies that are accommodating lower levels of growth in the Regional Growth Strategy.

Counties should also develop a process to address annexations and other technical adjustments to growth targets over time. King County countywide planning policies include a policy [King CPP-DP-12] permitting the Growth Management Planning Council to “[a]djust targets administratively upon annexation of unincorporated Potential Annexation Areas by cities.” Such changes may be necessary to support long-term planning by cities and orderly updates to the growth targets. This may be another useful approach for other counties to consider.

Review and Implementation

Counties should consult this guidance, continue to engage with PSRC and other counties on methodology assumptions, and document their work and rationale for key decisions in the growth target process. PSRC provides a forum for coordination through the Land Use Technical Advisory Committee and the Regional Staff Committee. PSRC staff are available to provide data, technical assistance, and review throughout the target setting process.

PSRC will participate in the process and will formally review and comment on each update to growth targets prior to formal adoption. To facilitate this process, each county is asked to submit their draft growth targets along with a brief memo that explains consistency with the Regional Growth Strategy. PSRC will review countywide adoption of growth targets with recognition of good faith efforts to be consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy and VISION 2050 over the long-term. Targets should demonstrate how cities and counties are working towards the outcomes and objectives of the Regional Growth Strategy. In some cases, growth targets may not fully align with the precise shares in the Regional Growth Strategy. For example, there are jurisdictions where high-capacity transit is planned to be built and operational late in the planning period, and higher growth rates may not occur until the last decades of VISION 2050.

For cities, VISION 2050 includes guidance on using land use assumptions consistent with the countywide growth targets in comprehensive plans. As local comprehensive plans are updated, land use growth assumptions used in plans should be consistent with adopted countywide growth targets and support implementation of the Regional Growth Strategy. Growth targets will be for a slightly longer period of time than the local comprehensive plan, given targets will generally use 2019 or 2020 as the base year. Where data is available, cities and counties can document and deduct actual growth that has occurred prior to 2024 in their comprehensive plan land use assumptions. In many instances, however, timely data to deduct actual growth may not be available prior to beginning work analyzing and modeling the growth assumptions in the plan. Unless major projects come online during this 2020 – 2024 time period that can be documented and make a substantial difference in growth assumptions, cities and counties should consider applying the growth targets in their plans as they have been adopted through the countywide process.

In its review of comprehensive plans for certification, PSRC looks for substantial consistency of the plan's land use growth assumptions with countywide-adopted growth targets. In addition to assessing that the land use growth assumptions are consistent with the growth targets and implementing the Regional Growth Strategy, PSRC review and certification looks broadly at all actions and measures taken in local comprehensive plans to implement VISION 2050 and achieve the regional growth shares.

For jurisdictions with regional growth centers, manufacturing/industrial centers or high-capacity transit stations, additions to this guidance later in 2021 will provide additional recommendations for setting targets at the sub-jurisdiction scale. Counties and cities with regional centers will be expected to include center targets in their adopted comprehensive plans, due in 2024.



OTHER REGIONAL & COUNTY RESOURCES

There are several important data resources that have been referenced throughout this document.

Forecast products:

- [PSRC 2018 Macroeconomic Forecast](#)
- [OFM 2017 Population Projections](#) (medium series)

Population and employment data:

- [Census Bureau](#)
- [Office of Financial Management Population Estimates](#)
- [PSRC Employment Database](#)

Other resources:

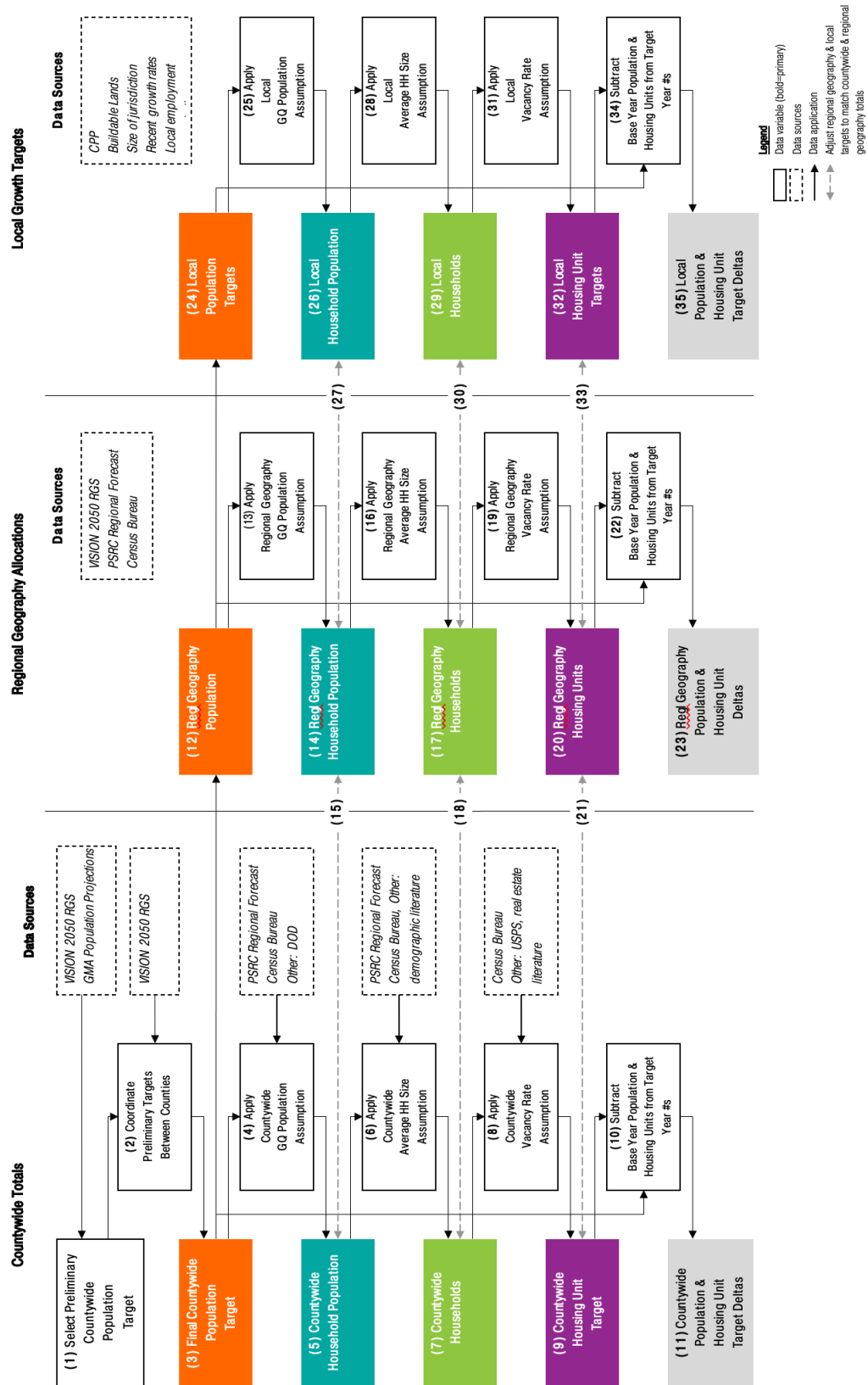
- [Opportunity Mapping](#)
- [Displacement Risk Mapping](#)
- [VISION 2050 Alternatives Background Paper](#) (provides information on transit investments, capacity and other factors)

County-developed Buildable Lands reports also provide valuable information about development capacity, trends, and past targets to assist this work.

PSRC staff are available to provide additional data support and technical assistance as needed.



APPENDIX A: BEST PRACTICE METHODOLOGY FOR HOUSING TARGETS



APPENDIX B: GROWTH TARGET STATUTORY AND POLICY REFERENCES

This appendix compiles relevant growth target statutes, rules, policy, and guidance from the Growth Management Act, Washington Administrative Code, and VISION 2050. Statutory language is provided as of February 2021 — please see links provided for the most current adopted language.

Revised Code of Washington — Population Projections

RCW 43.62.035 Determining population—Projections

The office of financial management shall determine the population of each county of the state annually as of April 1st of each year and on or before July 1st of each year shall file a certificate with the secretary of state showing its determination of the population for each county. The office of financial management also shall determine the percentage increase in population for each county over the preceding ten-year period, as of April 1st, and shall file a certificate with the secretary of state by July 1st showing its determination.

At least once every five years or upon the availability of decennial census data, whichever is later, the office of financial management shall prepare twenty-year growth management planning population projections required by RCW [36.70A.110](#) for each county that adopts a comprehensive plan under RCW [36.70A.040](#) and shall review these projections with such counties and the cities in those counties before final adoption. The county and its cities may provide to the office such information as they deem relevant to the office's projection, and the office shall consider and comment on such information before adoption. Each projection shall be expressed as a reasonable range developed within the standard state high and low projection. The middle range shall represent the office's estimate of the most likely population projection for the county. If any city or county believes that a projection will not accurately reflect actual population growth in a county, it may petition the office to revise the projection accordingly. The office shall complete the first set of ranges for every county by December 31, 1995.

A comprehensive plan adopted or amended before December 31, 1995, shall not be considered to be in noncompliance with the twenty-year growth management planning population projection if the projection used in the comprehensive plan is in compliance with the range later adopted under this section.

Revised Code of Washington — Urban Growth Areas and Growth Forecasts

[...] (2) Based upon the growth management population projection made for the county by the office of financial management, the county and each city within the county shall include areas and densities sufficient to permit the urban growth that is projected to occur in the county or city for the succeeding twenty-year period, except for those urban growth areas contained totally within a national historical reserve. As part of this planning process, each city within the county must include areas sufficient to accommodate the broad range of needs and uses that will accompany the projected urban growth including, as appropriate, medical, governmental, institutional, commercial, service, retail, and other nonresidential uses. [...]

Washington Administrative Code – Urban Growth Areas and Growth Forecasts

WAC 365-196-310 — [Urban growth areas](#)

[...] (4) Recommendations for meeting requirements.

- (a) Selecting and allocating county-wide growth forecasts. This process should involve at least the following:
 - (i) The total county-wide population is the sum of the population allocated to each city; the population allocated to any portion of the urban growth area associated with cities; the population allocated to any portion of the urban growth area not associated with a city; and the population growth that is expected outside of the urban growth area.

- (ii) RCW 43.62.035 directs the office of financial management to provide a reasonable range of high, medium and low twenty-year population forecasts for each county in the state, with the medium forecast being most likely. Counties and cities must plan for a total county-wide population that falls within the office of financial management range.
- (iii) Consideration of other population forecast data, trends, and implications. In selecting population forecasts, counties and cities may consider the following:
 - (A) Population forecasts from outside agencies, such as regional or metropolitan planning agencies, and service providers.
 - (B) Historical growth trends and factors which would cause those trends to change in the future.
 - (C) General implications, including:
 - (I) Public facilities and service implications. Counties and cities should carefully consider how to finance the necessary facilities and should establish a phasing plan to ensure that development occurs at urban densities; occurs in a contiguous and orderly manner; and is linked with provision of adequate public facilities. These considerations are particularly important when considering forecasts closer to the high end of the range. Jurisdictions considering a population forecast closer to the low end of the range should closely monitor development and population growth trends to ensure actual growth does not begin to exceed the planned capacity.
 - (II) Overall land supplies. Counties and cities facing immediate physical or other land supply limitations may consider these limitations in selecting a forecast. Counties and cities that identify potential longer term land supply limitations should consider the extent to which current forecast options would require increased densities or slower growth in the future.
 - (III) Implications of short term updates. The act requires that twenty-year growth forecasts and designated urban growth areas be updated at a minimum during the periodic review of comprehensive plans and development regulations (WAC 365-196-610). Counties and cities should consider the likely timing of future updates, and the opportunities this provides for adjustments.
 - (D) Counties and cities are not required to adopt forecasts for annual growth rates within the twenty-year period, but may choose to for planning purposes. If used, annual growth projections may assume a consistent rate throughout the planning period, or may assume faster or slower than average growth in certain periods, as long as they result in total growth consistent with the twenty-year forecasts selected.
 - (iv) Selection of a county-wide employment forecast. Counties, in consultation with cities, should adopt a twenty-year county-wide employment forecast to be allocated among urban growth areas, cities, and the rural area. The following should be considered in this process:
 - (A) The county-wide population forecast, and the resulting ratio of forecast jobs to persons. This ratio should be compared to past levels locally and other regions, and to desired policy objectives; and
 - (B) Economic trends and forecasts produced by outside agencies or private sources. [...]

Revised Code of Washington – Review and Evaluation Program

RCW 36.70A.215 – [Review and evaluation program](#)

The Growth Management Act Review and Evaluation Program (Buildable Lands) provides for a process to evaluate and address whether growth targets are being achieved. Provisions related to growth targets are provided below – please see the statute for additional context and requirements.

[...] (a) Determine whether a county and its cities are achieving urban densities within urban growth areas by comparing growth and development assumptions, targets, and objectives contained in the countywide planning policies and the county and city comprehensive plans with actual growth and development that has occurred in the county and its cities; and

(b) Identify reasonable measures, other than adjusting urban growth areas, that will be taken to comply with the requirements of this chapter. Reasonable measures are those actions necessary to reduce the differences between growth and development assumptions and targets contained in the countywide planning policies and the county and city comprehensive plans with actual development patterns. The reasonable measures process in subsection (3) of this section shall be used as part of the next comprehensive plan update to reconcile inconsistencies.

[...]

(d) Develop reasonable measures to use in reducing the differences between growth and development assumptions and targets contained in the countywide planning policies and county and city comprehensive plans, with the actual development patterns. The reasonable measures shall be adopted, if necessary, into the countywide planning policies and the county or city comprehensive plans and development regulations during the next scheduled update of the plans.

[...]

(c) Provide an analysis of county and/or city development assumptions, targets, and objectives contained in the countywide planning policies and the county and city comprehensive plans when growth targets and assumptions are not being achieved. It is not appropriate to make a finding that assumed growth contained in the countywide planning policies and the county or city comprehensive plan will occur at the end of the current comprehensive planning twenty-year planning cycle without rationale; [...]

VISION 2050 – Multicounty Planning Policies, Actions, and Guidance

The Regional Growth Strategy chapter in VISION 2050 details purpose, regional geographies, growth allocations, policies and guidance on targets. Please see VISION 2050 for the complete adopted language.

Regional Growth Strategy Goal: The region accommodates growth in urban areas, focused in designated centers and near transit stations, to create healthy, equitable, vibrant communities well-served by infrastructure and services. Rural and resource lands continue to be vital parts of the region that retain important cultural, economic, and rural lifestyle opportunities over the long term.

Guidance for Aligning Growth Targets

Prior to the next cycle of local comprehensive plan updates, counties and cities will work together to establish growth targets for each jurisdiction to accommodate projected growth. These targets set by countywide planning bodies support implementation of the Regional Growth Strategy and VISION 2050 objectives of housing production, better jobs-housing balance, and greater growth near the region's transit investments. This section provides guidance on regional review of growth target allocations in countywide planning policies and comprehensive plan certification.

- PSRC, in consultation with its members, will update its guidance and Plan Review Manual and provide technical assistance to counties and cities as they develop countywide growth targets and prepare comprehensive plan updates. Guidance will address housing, regional centers, goals for transit-oriented development, support for jobs-housing balance, and other aspects of VISION 2050. PSRC's guidance will recognize that different approaches may be appropriate based on local circumstances. PSRC will provide early information and outreach to local governments on plan review and certification, including land use growth assumptions in comprehensive plans.
- PSRC will review countywide adoption of growth targets with recognition of good faith efforts to be consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy and VISION 2050 over the long-term. Targets should demonstrate how cities and counties are working towards the outcomes and objectives of the Regional Growth Strategy. In some cases, countywide growth targets may not fully align with the precise shares in the Regional Growth Strategy. For example, there are jurisdictions where high-capacity transit is planned to be built and operational late in the planning period, and higher growth rates may not occur until the last decades of this plan.
- As local comprehensive plans are updated, land use growth assumptions used in plans should be consistent with adopted countywide growth targets and support implementation of the Regional Growth Strategy. Capacity is the amount of housing and jobs that could be allowed under adopted zoning. The Growth Management Act requires counties and cities, at a minimum, to provide capacity to accommodate 20-year projected growth targets. Capacity may be greater than land use growth assumptions used in comprehensive plans.
- In its review of comprehensive plans for certification, PSRC looks for substantial consistency of the plan's land use growth assumptions with adopted countywide growth targets. In addition to assessing that the land use growth assumptions are consistent with the growth targets and implementing the Regional Growth Strategy, PSRC review and certification looks broadly at all actions and measures taken in local comprehensive plans to implement VISION 2050 and achieve the regional growth shares. In developing comprehensive plan updates, jurisdictions will be asked to explain how the plan supports VISION 2050 and works to meet the Regional Growth Strategy over the long term.
- If adjustments to countywide growth targets are needed, they should be coordinated through the countywide process. Countywide planning groups should work to develop processes to reconcile any discrepancies between the countywide growth targets and land use growth assumptions in local comprehensive plans. Reconciliation processes should maintain consistency with the Regional Growth Strategy.

Regional Growth Strategy Adjustments to Support Targets

Cities and unincorporated areas are grouped into their respective regional geographies based on designated regional centers, planning for annexation and incorporation, and existing and planned high-capacity transit. PSRC recognizes that some of these qualities may change based on future planning. To reflect these changes, PSRC's Executive Board may make a technical amendment to the Regional Growth Strategy to potentially reclassify cities and unincorporated areas. Technical amendments are limited to those updates needed to support establishing Growth Management Act population and employment targets; other amendments to the Regional Growth Strategy are subject to approval by the General Assembly.

Regional Growth Strategy Policies

MPP-RGS-1 Implement the Regional Growth Strategy through regional policies and programs, countywide planning policies and growth targets, local plans, and development regulations.

MPP-RGS-2 Use consistent countywide targeting processes for allocating population and employment growth consistent with the regional vision, including establishing: (a) local employment targets, (b) local housing targets based on population projections, and (c) local growth targets for each designated regional growth center and manufacturing/industrial center.

MPP-RGS-3 Provide flexibility in establishing and modifying growth targets within countywide planning policies, provided growth targets support the Regional Growth Strategy.

MPP-RGS-4 Accommodate the region's growth first and foremost in the urban growth area. Ensure that development in rural areas is consistent with the regional vision and the goals of the Regional Open Space Conservation Plan.

MPP-RGS-5 Ensure long-term stability and sustainability of the urban growth area consistent with the regional vision.

MPP-RGS-6 Encourage efficient use of urban land by optimizing the development potential of existing urban lands and increasing density in the urban growth area in locations consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy.

MPP-RGS-7 Provide additional housing capacity in Metropolitan Cities in response to rapid employment growth, particularly through increased zoning for middle density housing. Metropolitan Cities must review housing needs and existing density in response to evidence of high displacement risk and/or rapid increase in employment.

MPP-RGS-8 Attract 65% of the region's residential growth and 75% of the region's employment growth to the regional growth centers and high-capacity transit station areas to realize the multiple public benefits of compact growth around high-capacity transit investments. As jurisdictions plan for growth targets, focus development near high-capacity transit to achieve the regional goal.

MPP-RGS-9 Focus a significant share of population and employment growth in designated regional growth centers.

MPP-RGS-10 Focus a significant share of employment growth in designated regional manufacturing/industrial centers.

MPP-RGS-11 Encourage growth in designated countywide centers.

MPP-RGS-12 Avoid increasing development capacity inconsistent with the Regional Growth Strategy in regional geographies not served by high-capacity transit.

MPP-RGS-13 Plan for commercial, retail, and community services that serve rural residents to locate in neighboring cities and existing activity areas to avoid the conversion of rural land into commercial uses.

MPP-RGS-14 Manage and reduce rural growth rates over time, consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy, to maintain rural landscapes and lifestyles and protect resource lands and the environment.

MPP-RGS-15 Support the establishment of regional funding sources to acquire conservation easements in rural areas.

MPP-RGS-16 Identify strategies, incentives, and approaches to facilitate the annexation or incorporation of unincorporated areas within urban growth areas into cities.

Regional Growth Strategy Actions

Regional Actions

RGS-Action-1 Urban Growth Area: PSRC will report on urban growth area changes, annexation activity, and countywide coordination practices in each county.

RGS-Action-2 Track and Evaluate Growth: PSRC will study, track, and evaluate growth and development occurring in the central Puget Sound region and in high-capacity transit station areas in terms of meeting the goals and objectives of the Regional Growth Strategy.

RGS-Action-3 Growth Targets: PSRC, together with its member jurisdictions, will provide guidance and participate with countywide processes that set or modify local housing and employment targets. This effort will include consideration of the timing of Regional Growth Strategy implementation in relation to anticipated completion of regional transit investments and corresponding market responses. PSRC will also provide guidance on growth targets for designated regional centers and improving jobs-housing balance, and coordinate with member jurisdictions regarding buildable lands reporting.

RGS-Action-4 Rural Growth: PSRC, together with its members and stakeholders, will explore and implement, as feasible, opportunities for local, regional and state-wide conservation programs to reduce development pressure in rural and resource areas to conserve valuable open space areas:

- Establishing a regional structure for Transfer and Purchase of Development Rights and open space markets.
- Publishing a toolkit of open space conservation and other rural protection strategies.
- Working to facilitate city and urban development consistent with VISION 2050 that reduces rural development pressure.

RGS-Action-5 Regional Conservation Fund: PSRC, in collaboration with its members and other partners, will explore and support the establishment of regional funding sources to acquire conservation easements in rural areas.

RGS-Action-6 Outreach: PSRC will work with members to address ways the region can help communities understand and support increased growth within the urban growth area. VISION 2050's success is dependent on cities and counties welcoming new growth.

Local Actions

RGS-Action-7 Regional Growth Strategy: As counties and cities update their comprehensive plans in 2024 to accommodate growth targets and implement the Regional Growth Strategy, support the implementation of a full range of strategies, including zoning and development standards, incentives, infrastructure investments, housing tools, and economic development, to achieve a development pattern that aligns with VISION 2050 and to reduce rural growth rates over time and focus growth in cities.

RGS-Action-8 Plan for Jobs-Housing Balance: Countywide planning groups will consider data on jobs-housing balance, especially recent and projected employment growth within Metropolitan and Core cities, to set housing growth targets that substantially improve jobs-housing balance consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy. Metropolitan and Core cities experiencing high job growth will take measures to provide additional housing capacity for a range of housing types and affordability levels to meet the needs of those workers as well as the needs of existing residents who may be at risk of displacement.

RGS-Action-9 Growth Targets: Countywide planning groups will work to develop processes to reconcile any discrepancies between city and county adopted targets contained in local comprehensive plans.