

**SNOHOMISH COUNTY TOMORROW'S
LONG-TERM GOALS**

October 1990

SNOHOMISH COUNTY TOMORROW ASSEMBLY

RESOLUTION

APPROVING GOAL STATEMENT FOR GROWTH MANAGEMENT IN SNOHOMISH COUNTY

Whereas, the county, the cities and the towns of Snohomish County and the Tulalip Tribes have established a joint planning program called Snohomish County Tomorrow to provide an overall vision and framework for effective growth management,

Whereas, participating governments adopted resolutions in the fall of 1989 agreeing to work on a long term growth strategy, and

Whereas, the councils of the participating governments appointed representatives to a Snohomish County Tomorrow Steering Committee to prepare goals which will meet the growth management needs of local governments and the requirements of new state planning laws, and

Whereas, the Steering Committee has prepared, discussed, and reached consensus on a number of goal statements for the environment, natural resources, land use, parks, open space, housing, transportation, infrastructure, economic development, cultural resources, education, growth patterns and governmental roles, and

Whereas, the Steering Committee has recommended to the participating cities, towns the county and the Tulalip Tribes, all of whom are represented in the Snohomish County Tomorrow Assembly, to adopt these goals as guidelines for future planning efforts.

Now, therefore, be it resolved:

1. The Snohomish County Tomorrow Assembly adopts the goal statements attached as the regional vision and framework for growth management for the county, cities, towns and the Tulalip Tribes in Snohomish County.
2. These goals will be utilized in the development of new comprehensive plans which will be developed by participating jurisdictions to manage growth in Snohomish County to meet the requirements of state law.

October 1990

GOAL

FORESTRY AND AGRICULTURAL LANDS

Forestry, which is the production of timber products and pulp, and agriculture, the raising of crops and livestock, provide Snohomish County with the following: aesthetic and spiritual values, buffering qualities, historical continuity, sustainable economic contribution, and environmental enhancement (clean water and air, wildlife habitat).

Most people from Snohomish County take pride in the county's forestry and agricultural character. Whether living in the urban or rural areas, citizens think of forests and farms as an essential part of the county. These lands are important components of our definition of "quality of life."

In order to ensure that forestry and agriculture are welcome contributors to Snohomish County's future, our goals are to:

1. Preserve and manage lands currently designated on comprehensive plans or zones as forestry or agricultural land;
2. Conserve additional forest and agricultural lands by identifying and designating those lands not currently protected.

GOAL

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

We recognize that this county is noted for the quality of its environment and natural landscape. Our stewardship responsibilities require that we protect the earth and its resources, including land, water, air, and all forms of life. These natural features generally determine the suitability of land to accommodate development. Careful management of land use activities should be used to minimize the adverse impacts of growth and development. the county and the cities should develop uniform environmental protection and mitigation standards in order to:

1. Minimize air and water pollution;
2. Minimize runoff and reduce erosion;
3. Preserve habitat types to maintain biological diversity;
4. Preserve scenic vistas; and
5. Allow only safe disposal of wastes.

GOAL

RURAL LAND USE

We will preserve and promote the character of rural areas located between and beyond designated urban areas in order to:

1. Reduce the demand for urban services which could only be provided at great cost;
2. Preserve large land areas for open space in the long-term future; and
3. provide wildlife, fish and plant habitat.

This goal recognizes that some rural area adjacent to cities may ultimately be required for future growth. Only low residential densities with limited commercial services should be allowed in rural areas.

GOAL

URBAN LAND USE

Urban land in the county is an important resource, which should be judiciously and effectively used to accommodate future growth. Growth should be concentrated within designated urban growth centers in order to:

1. Preserve the special values of Snohomish County its natural resources, open spaces and rural character;
2. Ensure more effective growth management and comprehensive land use planning; and
3. Minimize the costs of providing urban services such as housing, employment and transportation.

The residents of rural, as well as urban areas, should share the costs of growth because Snohomish County's diversity of lifestyles will be supported by concentrating growth in compact, urban areas. In order to enhance the quality of life in urban areas, greater emphasis should be placed on the quality of design of all types of new development. In addition, urban growth boundaries in unincorporated areas should be designated and encouraged to annex to adjacent cities or towns.

GOAL

PARKS AND RECREATION

Our park systems should provide a variety of opportunities for exercise, relaxation and social interaction. The goal is to encourage and support the development and use of existing parks and recreation facilities and to acquire appropriate, suitably located land so that our park systems will be enhanced for current and future citizens of the county. A range of approaches to acquiring and developing parks and recreation properties is encouraged and includes such measures as establishing public/private partnerships, mitigation fees, bond issues, and dedication.

GOAL

OPEN SPACE

The preservation of open space and protection of wetlands, woodlands and other environmentally sensitive lands are critical to the ecological health of the county and the physical and psychological well-being of its citizens. To preserve, protect, manage and acquire critical open space lands, before they are lost or destroyed, immediate action is necessary. A range of approaches should be used such as a real estate excise tax, public/private partnerships, impact mitigation fees, bond issues, dedications, conservation easements, fee and less than fee simple purchase.

GOAL

HOUSING

A variety of housing types is essential to meet the needs of all county residents, including those who require emergency, transitional, low-income and special needs housing. Public-private partnerships should be encouraged to ensure a wide range of housing opportunities for a growing and diverse population. Mechanisms to help people with a range of incomes to purchase their own housing should also be encouraged.

Further, the siting and development of housing has a major impact on quality of life. Therefore, we will strive to create safe, well-designed and maintained neighborhoods and communities, and redevelop aging, underutilized housing to:

1. Co-locate jobs and housing so as to minimize travel distance;
2. Strengthen the sense of neighborhood and community; and
3. Minimize the outward sprawl of suburban expansion into rural and natural lands.

In concentrating housing in urban areas, there is a need for public support for a variety of housing types and densities.

GOAL

TRANSPORTATION

To support growth management, protect our quality of life and efficiently transport people and goods within Snohomish County and across the Puget Sound region, we recognize the need for a transportation system of many modes. This system, which should be produced with local, regional, state and federal participation and coordination, should achieve these goals:

1. Move people safely and quickly;
2. Reinforce local governments' land use planning, through incentive strategies such as siting employment near residences, and increasing the availability and use of high occupancy vehicles and HOV lanes.
3. Reduce reliance on cars and trucks by building public recognition and use of different methods of transportation, such as buses, trains, commuter vanpools, bicycles and ferries, and through disincentive strategies such as raising parking fees;
4. Minimize the societal, environmental and economic impacts of transportation;
5. Optimize the use of and maintain existing roads, ports and other transportation corridors to minimize the construction of new ones; and
6. Consider the impacts of transportation facilities on local communities

GOAL

INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure, which consists of facilities and services such as roads, schools, parks, open space, libraries, cultural facilities, water, sewer, electricity, police and health facilities, is the "nerve system" of Snohomish County's quality of life. Snohomish County Tomorrow, therefore, recognizes an urgency in supporting lands use and transportation planning with adequate infrastructure.

Because the enormous cost of new infrastructure must be equitably borne by both current taxpayers and new construction, and because taxpayers and developers are willing to pay only what they perceive to be their fair share, land use and transportation plans need to be realistic and achievable. Therefore, development should be allowed if pre-established minimum infrastructure levels are provided concurrently, i.e., by the time the development is ready for occupancy. Development should not be allowed when infrastructure is not provided concurrently.

To serve the public interest for the next 20-30 years and to comply with a myriad of federal, state, regional and local government regulations, infrastructure levels of service should be cooperatively defined, planned and financed by the multiple actors involved in their provision.

The holding capacity of a community or region should be used to determine the level and rate of development and infrastructure. Holding capacity determinants include: (1) life support infrastructures such as sewer capacity, water supply, electrical power and transportation systems; (2) ecological life support systems such as air and water sheds, the water table and plant and wildlife systems; and (3) quality of life infrastructure social system capacity including maximum acceptable population densities, adequate parks, libraries, open space, civic/cultural facilities, schools and educational opportunities, and low levels of crime, health, and social problems.

GOAL

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

We recognize that economic development activities are vital to the county because they produce many benefits including increased employment, an expanded tax base, greater disposable income and additional tax revenues. They can also impose potential adverse impacts, including traffic congestion, increased demands for housing and social and health services, and pressure to develop rural, forest, agricultural and environmentally sensitive lands and open spaces.

Consequently, economic development activities should be implemented in a manner which supports our quality of life and growth management strategy. This can be achieved by:

1. Basing the level of economic development activity on our ability to manage the resulting growth;
2. Undertaking countywide and regional efforts to coordinate economic development activities;
3. Ensuring that the economic development element of local comprehensive plans and countywide and regional growth management are compatible;
4. Requiring that economic development proposals show how increased services and infrastructure support will be provided; and
5. Encouraging economic development activities to locate within designated urban areas.

Finally, we recognize that education and training, which produce a skilled workforce, are essential to the county's economic vitality.

GOAL

CIVIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cultural and civic resources, including museums, performance arts facilities, sports facilities, multi-purpose community centers, historic properties and archaeological sites, are important to the quality of life in Snohomish County.

Strengthened and expanded cultural and civic resources must be a priority to enhance the unique character and social and economic well-being of Snohomish County's communities and to meet the needs of residents and visitors. Interjurisdictional efforts and public/private partnerships should be encouraged to identify needs, set priorities and finance facilities.

Special consideration should be given to providing cultural and civic amenities in order to make living in urban areas as desirable as possible.

GOAL

EDUCATION

A strong, vibrant and innovative educational system is critical to the economic, social and intellectual future of Snohomish County. The spectrum of educational needs and opportunities includes pre-school, K-12, vocational programs, community colleges, 4-year programs and schools, and programs for special populations, continuing education and training. A high quality, well funded, comprehensive educational system enables our citizens to envision and reach their highest aspirations.

The following areas require immediate attention:

1. Enhancing programs and learning opportunities;
2. Improving and building facilities;
3. Minimizing legal and bureaucratic restrictions;
4. Creating more flexible taxing structures;
5. Expanding funding sources;
6. Addressing social problems to reduce pressures on schools;
7. Including school districts in land use planning to ensure adequate facilities to handle growth.

GOAL

GROWTH PATTERNS

Snohomish County's current growth patterns should be altered to encourage more growth in urban areas because current trends would result in: (1) rural areas taking one-third of all the additional people who will live here by 2002; and (2) rural, forestry, agricultural and environmentally sensitive lands and open spaces being consumed for residential development.

To preserve our rural areas, future growth should be directed into urban areas. In order to achieve this, urban growth boundaries shall be defined, as required by the State Growth Management Act. These boundaries must be defined as soon as possible.

As the urban growth boundaries are drawn, the minimum lot sizes of lands outside them should be increased. Also, a higher density of residential, commercial and industrial development in appropriate locations within urban areas must be phased in. To minimize potential adverse impacts on existing communities and neighborhoods while stimulating commercial revitalization, greater incentives for mixed use development within commercial areas should be provided.

For citizens to support higher densities, they need information about the costs of sprawl and the benefits of higher urban densities. The quality of life in urban areas must be enhanced. Therefore, the infrastructure, social services and amenities which are needed must also be provided, and a higher quality of development than we now see one which preserves the character of neighborhoods and creates safe, clean and attractive communities must be served.

GOAL

GOVERNMENTAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

To more clearly distinguish between the roles and responsibilities of the county, cities, Tribes, state and other governmental agencies in managing Snohomish County's future growth, and to ensure greater interjurisdictional cooperation and coordination in the provision of services, the following are needed:

1. Definitions for the level of services residents can expect in urban and rural areas.
2. Higher development standards for urban areas (which cities and the county will work together to uniformly implement) and for rural areas.
3. Urban growth boundaries, which should be defined as soon as possible.
4. Interlocal agreements, to provide a clear, consistent and predictable process by which the provision and costs of services in urban areas will be : (a) coordinated and shared by the county, cities and other government agencies, and (b) eventually transferred from the county to the cities.
5. Identification of those issues which are regional and county-wide and a strategy for enabling the county to bring the cities Tribes, state and other governmental agencies together to address them.
6. Recognition and understanding of the county's, cities' and Tribes' joint responsibility for formulating and implementing a coordinated county-wide growth management strategy.
7. Greater consistency in the activities of special purpose districts with the growth management strategy developed by the county and cities.