

**PIERCE COUNTY
LEGAL AND REGULATORY**

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Introduction

Pierce County uses its legal and regulatory authority to adopt and implement policies, programs, and ordinances that help mitigate the potential harmful effects of natural hazards. These ordinances establish development regulations for different types of land developments. Below is a detailed summary of Pierce County legal and regulatory capabilities.

GMA and Pierce County

Pierce County is in compliance with the GMA through its adoption of the various required issues. As discussed in Sub-Section 3.1, those issues that are directly relevant to mitigation include the adoption of a Comprehensive Plan, the Designation of Resource Lands and Critical Areas, Urban Growth Areas, Siting Essential Facilities, and County-Wide Planning Policies.

Pierce County has designated resource lands and critical areas and adopted regulations for them, has designated urban growth areas and adopted regulations for them, has designated essential facilities and adopted regulations for siting them, has developed a Comprehensive Plan and adopted regulations corresponding to the elements of the plan, and has developed county-wide planning policies.

These legal and regulatory powers allow the County to accomplish a wide range of mitigation.

Comprehensive Plan

The County has an adopted Comprehensive Plan enacted under Title 19 A of the Pierce County Code which was adopted by the Pierce County Council on November 29, 1994. The Comprehensive Plan includes each of the following elements, as required by RCW 36.70A.070:

- Land Use Element
- Housing Element
- Capital Facilities Element
- Utilities Element
- Rural Element
- Transportation Element.
- Siting Essential Facilities Element

The Plan also includes the following elements, labeled as “optional” in RCW 36.70A.080:

- Economic Development Element
- Community Plans Element
- Environmental and Critical Areas Element

Each element presents part of the picture for guiding Pierce County's growth.

Because mitigation is any action taken to reduce the risk to lives and property, a broad range of activities are considered to be mitigation and can be identified and further pursued in achieving mitigation goals. Each element therefore contains objectives relating to natural hazard mitigation. Below are those objectives within each element that pertain to mitigation. In order that mitigation actions achieve a greater level of coordination and success, the County has identified this broad range of comprehensive plan objectives.

Land Use

Urban Growth Areas

The County has identified its Urban Growth Areas and developed development regulation for them under Title 19A.30.010 of the Pierce County Code (PCC). These regulations were adopted by the Pierce County Council on November 24, 1994. Pierce County Planning and Land Services is responsible for ensuring compliance with this regulation.

Employment Centers

Objective 9. Provide large planned Employment Center development sites, properly zoned and serviced with infrastructure.

- Define building heights in Employment Centers in consideration of anticipated land uses, surrounding land uses, safety and emergency measures, transportation networks, and efficient use of land. (PCC 19A.30.030 LU-EC 9.L)

Mixed Use Districts

Objective 10. Encourage a re-orientation of historically commercial strips to a less congested, transit compatible district of mixed uses and intensities.

- Define building heights in Mixed Use Districts in consideration of anticipated land uses, surrounding land uses, safety and emergency measures, transportation networks, and efficient use of land. (PCC 19A.30.040 LU-MU 10.I)

High Density Residential District

Objective 11. High density multi-family housing should be designed and located along or close to major arterials and transit routes in High Density Residential Districts that link housing areas with Employment Centers, Mixed Use Districts, Community Centers, Activity Centers and Major Urban Centers.

- (A)ctive and passive recreational open spaces should be developed within the High Density Residential Districts. (PCC 19A.30.050 LU-HD 11.I)

Resource Lands - Agriculture.

Agricultural lands are distinct from rural lands and include lands that have been designated as having long-term commercial agricultural significance. In November 1991, Pierce County, on an interim basis, classified and designated agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance, which were located outside the Urban Growth Areas. While the expression of planning goals in the GMA is linked to "natural resource industries," including productive timber and fisheries, a

separate policy for Agricultural Lands has been proposed because of their unique importance in Pierce County and their relationship to Urban Growth Area boundaries and policies.

Objective 15. Define agricultural lands and the purpose behind agricultural land conservation.

- The purposes of agricultural land conservation in Pierce County are:
 - Ensuring that agricultural lands are treated sensitively to their location and the presence of urban growth pressures;
 - Maintaining open space or providing a visual green belt;
 - Retaining natural systems and natural processes;
 - Maintaining regional, state and national agricultural reserves.
- Achieve agricultural conservation through:
 - Creating agricultural zoning districts;
 - Purchasing development rights;
 - Transferring development rights within the County, including designating receiving zones for agricultural development rights and jurisdictions by designating receiving areas by local agreement;
 - Leasing development rights for a term of years;
 - Adopting anti-nuisance laws to protect agricultural activities from being defined as a public nuisance;
 - Making preferential tax treatment available...[PCC 19A.30.070.A LU-Ag 15.2(a,c,d,h), 3(a-f)].

Objective 16. Establish an Agricultural Overlay for agricultural lands within the Cascade Corridor-Puyallup Valley Area.

- The Agricultural Overlay provides additional regulatory requirements and provisions for the purpose of supporting the continued agricultural activities within the designated area. The uses allowed in the Overlay and the associated development standards are in addition to the underlying land use designation.
- A voluntary Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program shall be developed, during, 1997, to preserve agricultural lands within the Agricultural Overlay.
- Achieve agricultural conservation through:
 - Developing a voluntary transfer of development rights program within the Agricultural Overlay, including designating receiving zones within the Urban Growth Areas of the County for development rights.
 - Making preferential tax treatment available. [PCC 19A.30.070.B LU-Ag 16.1, 6, 7(1, 3)]

Objective 17. Allow limited development on agricultural lands.

- Allow limited development, related to agriculture, based upon stated criteria related to the predominant agricultural uses.
 - Mechanisms such as clustering, buffer strips, and other innovative methods should be used.
- Residential uses allowed near designated commercial agriculture, mining, or forestry areas should be developed in a manner which minimizes potential conflicts and reduces unnecessary conversion of farm, mining, and forested land. [PCC 19A.30.070.C LU-Ag 17.1(a), 2]

Objective 19. Protect agricultural operations from incompatible uses.

- Extend the agricultural policies to locations within or adjacent to agricultural conservation areas in order to:
 - Protect such areas from encroachment by incompatible uses;
- Minimize the conflict of incompatible uses in areas adjacent to Resource Lands by using measures including, but not limited to:
 - Setbacks and buffer strips; and
 - Public education concerning resource activities. [PCC 19A.30.070.E LU-Ag 19.1(a), 2(a-b)]

Objective 20. Address the conversion of agricultural land.

- Identify agricultural lands that are most susceptible to conversion by:
 - Identifying agricultural lands which are most sensitive to urban growth pressures and which, therefore, require the most immediate attention;
 - Utilizing agricultural lands classifications established by the Washington Department of Community Development; and
 - Consulting with and involving owners of agricultural lands.
- Ensure that prime agricultural lands are conserved and protected by the enactment of appropriate land use controls, or by including the land in an Urban Growth Area of a municipality that has delineated standards and criteria relating to preserving the agricultural lands. [PCC 19A.30.070.F LU-Ag 20.1(a-c), 2]

Objective 21. Increase the viability of farming as a land use within the County by establishment of, or changes to, policies, regulations and programs that support farming as a commercial enterprise.

- A right-to-farm ordinance shall be developed to ensure that agricultural uses in the Agricultural Overlay and designated Agricultural Lands are treated sensitively to the location of and pressures from surrounding urban development or incompatible rural development. The ordinance shall include, at a minimum, the following components:
 - Adoption of regulations requiring development occurring in proximity to agricultural uses in the Agricultural Overlay or designated Agricultural Lands to avoid or mitigate negative impacts on drainage or irrigation.
- Coordinate agricultural land conservation policies with other jurisdictions, tribes, special districts and their respective programs.
 - Coordinate agricultural land conservation policies with other County-Wide Planning Policies through:
 - Correlating agricultural land conservation policies with Urban Growth Area policies....
 - Ensuring that public facility and service extensions, even if not directly serving the agricultural lands, do not stimulate the conversion of agricultural land or make its conservation and protection more difficult; and
 - Joint jurisdictional planning of agricultural land. [PCC 19A.30.070.G LU-Ag 21.1(f), 2(a.1-3)]

Resource Lands - Forestry

Objective 23. Define forest resource lands and the purpose behind forest land conservation.

- Conserve Forest Resource Lands designated under Washington Forest Practices Rezone of 1990 and the 1991 Pierce County Forest Land Rezone by maintaining 80-acre minimum lot sizes.
- Conserve and protect designated Forest Resource Lands by utilizing a number of mechanisms, including but not limited to:
 - Cluster development;
 - Purchasing development rights;
 - Transfer of development rights;
 - Leasing development rights for a term of years;
 - Adopting anti-nuisance laws to protect forestry activities from being defined as a public nuisance;
 - Making preferential tax treatment available;
 - Protect related development such as mills;
 - Buffering; and/or
 - Establishing mechanisms so that property owners realize economic value that would have accrued from conversion. [PCC 19A.30.080.A LU-FL 23.1, 2(a-i)]

Objective 24. Allow limited development on designated Forest Resource Lands.

- Residential uses allowed near designated Forest Resource Lands should be developed in a manner which minimizes potential conflicts. Mechanisms such as clustering, buffering, and other innovative methods should be used. (PCC 19A.30.080.B LU-FL 24.1)

Objective 25. Encourage the provision of an effective stewardship of the environment to conserve and protect Forest Resource Lands.

- Manage Forest Resource Lands utilizing management practices in such areas, including but not limited to watersheds, habitats, soils, and ecosystems. (PCC 19A.30.080.C LU-FL 25.1)

Objective 26. Protect forest resource lands from incompatible uses.

- Minimize the conflict of incompatible uses in areas adjacent to Forest Resource Lands by using measures, including, but not limited to:
 - Protecting such areas from encroachment by incompatible uses;
 - Buffering; and
 - Clustering. [PCC 19A.30.080.D LU-FL 26.1(a-c)]

Objective 27. Address the conversion of Forest Resource Lands.

- Establish criteria for zoning changes and Comprehensive Plan amendments.
- Identify Forest Resource Lands that are most susceptible to conversion by:
 - Identifying Forest Resource Lands which are most sensitive to urban growth pressures and which, therefore, require the most immediate attention;
 - Utilizing Forest Resource Lands classifications established by the Washington Department of Community Development; and

- Consulting with and involving owners of Forest Resource Lands. [PCC 19A.30.080.E LU-FL 27.1, 2(a-c)]

Objective 28. Coordinate forested land conservation policies with other jurisdictions, tribes, special districts, state agencies, and their respective programs.

- Encourage and recognize the multiple uses and values of resource lands, beyond providing for forestry products. Other values can include recreation, open space, watershed management, and wildlife habitat. (PCC 19A.30.080.F LU-FL 28.1)

Residential

Location Criteria

Objective 33. Living areas will be located in consideration of the following:

- Living areas should be buffered from resource lands. (PCC 19A.30.080.A LU-Re 33.8)

Objective 34. Provide for a variety of residential densities in an Urban Growth Area based on:

- ..., critical area protection and capability, applicable mitigation activities, and utilizing performance standards such as buffers, as well as innovative building and development techniques.
- Where urban lands have development constraints, dwelling units should be clustered on the unconstrained portions of the site. Where clustering cannot provide adequate protection of critical areas, a density of less than four homes per acre is appropriate. (PCC 19A.30.080.B LU-Re 34.4)

Objective 37. Encourage cluster development of residential lands so open space, views, watersheds, and critical areas are permanently protected or provide lands reserved for future urban development. (PCC 19A.30.080.E LU-Re 37)

Master Planned Communities

Objective 42. Master Planned Communities (MPC) developments are encouraged within an Urban Growth Area as a way to achieve well-designed, compact urban development with a balance of uses, more efficient use of public facilities, and greater open space.

- MPC developments should consider including the following:
 - Measures to protect critical areas and conserve resource lands. [PCC 19A.30.130 LU-MPC 42.C(7)]

Industry

Together with the Economic Development Element, the Land Use- Industry policies have been coordinated with other pertinent elements throughout the planning processes.

Location Criteria

Objective 51. Employment Centers will be located in consideration of the following:

- Employment Centers should be located outside of floodplains, wetlands, riparian areas, or other critical areas, and constructed to protect major aquifers providing drinking water for the community. If dependent upon water for its existence an industry may locate on the above provided the impacts are mitigated.

- Resource-based Employment Centers should be adequately distanced from incompatible uses. (PCC 19A.30.150.A LU-In 51.4, 15)

Recreation

Areas suitable for open space corridors within and between Urban Growth Areas are...required to be identified. According to the GMA, one of the identified uses of open space lands is recreation. (PCC 19A.30.160)

Location Criteria

Objective 54. Pierce County recreation areas will be located in consideration of the following:

- Outdoor non-athletic recreational uses should be located at sites or areas within a park site that are easily accessible, and on land offering significant environmental features for park and open space use including unique saltwater features, estuaries and mudflats, freshwater bodies, rivers and streams, wetlands, prairies and open spaces, bluffs and steep hillsides, mountain terrains, woodlands, wildlife habitats and other examples of important physical features that exist in the County. (PCC 19A.30.160.A LU-Rc 54.5)

General

Objective 55. Promote the establishment of a mechanism to prioritize the development of new parks within Pierce County.

- The County should only assume direct responsibility for the development, operation and maintenance of facilities that have regional benefits. In facility terms, sites identified as Resource Conservancies, Resource Activity, Special Use Facility and Linear Park/Trails on the Park and Recreation Facilities Inventory are the Regional Facilities for which Pierce County will be responsible. Resource Conservancies, Resource Activity, Special Use Facility and Linear Park Trails should be added to the inventory to accommodate new and future demands.
- The County should provide technical assistance to local jurisdictions and the citizens of Pierce County for the development, operation and maintenance of Local Parks and facilities. Such assistance may include technical planning, help in the formation of local recreation service areas, service districts, city/county service area agreements (joint ventures) and self-help agreements with user organizations.
- On a County-wide basis, Pierce County Parks and Recreation should locate, design and construct new Resource Conservancy, Resource Activity, Special Use Facility and Linear Park Trail recreation facilities and programs which maximize existing public investments in the park system while providing opportunities:
 - For joint private/public creation of park, recreation facilities and programs which meet the existing and future needs of the citizens of Pierce County;
 - For employing innovative methods of financing within the scope of State and Local Laws while maintaining an established level of service;
 - For civic and community groups, school districts, county, state and federal agencies to jointly develop, use and operate park and recreation facilities. [PCC 19A.30.160.B.1 LU-Rc 55.a, c, d(1-3)]

Objective 56. Encourage cooperation between Pierce County, other County agencies, and school districts for community use of schools and play fields. (PCC 19A.30.160.B.2 LU-Rc 56)

Objective 56a. Encourage and support community plans that articulate a park, recreation, and open space vision for the community.

- Pierce County Parks and Recreation Services Department should be directly involved in community planning initiatives that identify park, recreation, and open space community plan needs.
- Pierce County Parks and Recreation Services Department should include a section in the Park, Recreation, and Open Space Plan that describes the relationship between the County’s Comprehensive Plan, Community Plans, and the Park, Recreation, & Open Space Plan that addresses the following:
 - Implementation of the community plans’ regional facility and land park, recreation, and open space objectives, principles, and standards through the County Parks and Recreation Services Department Capital Facilities Planning;
 - Identification of Level-Of-Service (LOS) standards for local community and neighborhood scale park recreation and open space needs;
 - Community plan identification of regional level projects and priorities that the County Parks and Recreation Services Department should pursue. [PCC 19A.30.160.B.3 LU-Rc 56a.a, b(1-3)]

Open Space

The GMA requires that the designation, proposed general distribution and location, and extent of open space and recreational lands be identified in local comprehensive plans. Identification of areas suitable for open space corridors within and between Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) is also required. These open space areas provide diverse functions including: protecting environmentally sensitive lands, which are often ill-suited for commercial and residential development; separating incompatible land uses; ...and creating corridors for wildlife migration and non-motorized transportation routes...(PCC 19A.30.170)

In Pierce County, the term “open space” is broadly defined as a landscape that is primarily unimproved. Open spaces may be comprised of a variety of components including: ecologically significant areas, zoned open space, wetlands, stream and/or wildlife corridors, lakes, beaches, tidal marshes, flood plains, geologically hazardous areas or unusual features, wooded areas, farmlands, golf courses, trails, nature preserves, greenbelts, utility corridors and other vacant rights-of-way, cultural, historical and view sites, as well as parcels providing access to and/or linkage with other open space areas.

The objective of the open space policies contained within this plan is to identify areas most suitable for designation as open space in Pierce County and outline a number of techniques that can be used to promote the acquisition, preservation, and conservation of these designated open spaces. Several natural features are critical for integration into an open space network including fish and wildlife habitat, wetlands, marine areas, tidal marshes, estuaries, streams, and wooded areas. Open space areas and corridors, based upon these natural features, are depicted on the Open Space/Greenbelt Map. These open space corridors serve as buffers within and between urban growth areas. The map is not intended to have regulatory effect but rather provide general guidance for open space preservation efforts. The Open Space/Greenbelt Map may be refined in

the future based on more detailed analysis through community planning, watershed basin planning, and other open space planning efforts. (PCC 19A.30.170)

Designation of an Open Space Network

Objective 57. Establish an open space network linking open space areas via greenbelt corridors throughout Pierce County.

- Pierce County shall designate an Open Space/Greenbelt Map which identifies the general location of open space areas and corridors in Pierce County.
- The Open Space/Greenbelt Map is based upon the high priority open space categories as set forth in Title 19D, Open Space Priorities.
- The Open Space/Greenbelts Map should be refined based on the development of more detailed open space information obtained through community plans, open space plans, watershed basin plans, fish and wildlife habitat plans, or similar planning efforts
- Incorporate landscaped greenbelt areas into the open space network.
 - Establish and maintain greenbelts within the Plan area that provide multi-use functions such as buffers between incompatible uses, separation between communities and rural/urban areas, ..., and passive open space recreation areas.
 - Encourage the planting of native vegetation within greenbelt areas ...
 - Trails shall be made of pervious pavement or materials.
 - Greenbelt areas should integrate or bridge critical areas, such as wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat areas, or designated open space areas, when possible. [PCC 19A.30.170.A LU-OS 57.1(a, b), 3(a-e)]

Open Space Acquisition, Preservation and Conservation

Objective 58. Utilize a number of techniques and innovative measures to acquire and conserve open space.

- Consider the use of overlays, special zoning districts (e.g., agricultural zoning or sensitive resource zones), design standards, low impact development strategies, and large-lot zoning to preserve high priority open space areas.
- Provide incentives for open space preservation by allowing innovative measures such as cluster zoning, transfer of development rights, and zero-lot-lines.
- Consider the use of real estate excise taxes (Chapter 82.46 RCW) to acquire open space lands, including the following authorized taxing sources:
 - A 1/4 of one percent tax for capital facilities (RCW 82.46.010);
 - Second 1/4 of one percent tax for capital facilities (RCW 82.46.035); or
 - "Tree tax" of up to 1 percent for acquisition and maintenance of conservation areas. (RCW 82.46.070)
- Utilize Conservation Futures Program funding (Chapters 2.96 and 2.97 PCC) to acquire open space lands.
- Provide increased opportunities for current-use or preferential tax assessment (Chapter 84.34 RCW) for open space lands by promoting public enrollment in the program.
- Pursue public acquisition of open space lands through actions such as:
 - Fee-simple purchase;
 - Less than fee-simple purchase (i.e., purchase of development rights, conservation easements);
 - Voluntary donations with tax incentives;

- Land transfers or exchanges;
- Limited development techniques (develop a portion of the site for economic return and leave remainder as open space).
- Promote private (land trusts) acquisition of open space lands.
- Consider pursuing a number of funding mechanisms to acquire open space lands, including but not limited to:
 - Property tax levies;
 - General obligation bonds and limited general obligation bonds;
 - Intergovernmental funds (e.g., State grants);
 - User fees;
 - Foundation monies.
- Examine the potential of County surplus lands for open space purposes and consider transferring these lands to a local land trust. [PCC 19A.30.170.B LU-OS 58.1-3(a-c), 4-6(a-e), 7-8(a-e), 9]

Objective 59. County programs that provide for the acquisition and/or preservation of open space shall have established priorities.

- Priorities for the preservation of open space shall be in conformance with the policies established in Title 19D.170, Pierce County Open Space Priorities.
- These priorities shall be coordinated with any subsequent updates of the Parks and Recreation Plan for the County.
- At a minimum, the priorities will be used for the following programs and regulations:
 - Conservation Futures Program (open space acquisition);
 - Current Use Assessment Program-Public Benefit Rating System (tax incentive);
 - Development Regulations-Zoning (density bonus incentive). [PCC 19A.30.170.C LU-OS 59.1-3(a-c)]

Objective 60. Ensure that Pierce County open space properties, open space passive recreation parks, conservation easements, and conservation futures covenants are managed and maintained to provide long-term stewardship of the open space function and value.

- Pierce County shall identify a function within an existing County department or create a new County department that will provide the following:
 - Management of Pierce County open space properties, open space passive recreation parks, conservation easements, and conservation futures covenants;
 - Coordinate with County departments to ensure that day-to-day decisions consider the open space policies of the Comprehensive Plan;
 - Coordinate with the Cities and Towns of Pierce County to establish an interconnected network of open space;
 - Develop and administer open space management plans for the Pierce County open space properties, open space passive recreation parks, conservation easements, and conservation futures covenants;
 - Serve as a central clearinghouse for information on open space;
 - Organize and coordinate volunteer efforts that help maintain the Pierce County open space properties, open space passive recreation parks, conservation easements, and conservation futures covenants; and

- Complete an inventory of existing publicly owned properties, and evaluate them for their value as open space. Privately held properties, such as those held by land trusts, should be considered in the inventory.
- Publicly owned or acquired open space properties should be transferred to a local land trust for long-term management and stewardship.
 - Pierce County should work closely with local and National land trusts and with other private and non-profit organizations interested in open space in the management of Pierce County open space properties.
 - Pierce County should review its land holdings to determine if any parcels fall within the adopted open space/greenbelt network that might be suitable for transfer to a local land trust.
- Ensure that publicly owned and/or purchased open space sites are protected and maintained in perpetuity.
 - Place a conservation easement on any open space lands prior to transfer to a land trust;
 - Place conservation easements or covenants on existing and acquired publicly owned open space sites that restrict future uses to passive open space recreation activities. Conservation easements should be worded to maintain open space use and function of a parcel in perpetuity;
 - Require any proceeds from sales of publicly owned open space sites be used to purchase an equivalent or greater amount of land for passive open space recreation use and/or land which provides an equivalent or greater ecological function and value.
- Stewardship and management plans should be prepared for any publicly owned or publicly purchased open space parcel.
 - At a minimum, stewardship and management plans should address long-term maintenance, public access, restoration, and permitted uses within the open space site. [PCC 19A.30.170.D LU-OS 60.1(a-g), 2(a-b), 3(a-c), 4(b)]

Objective 61. Recognize that open space is an integral part of an area's infrastructure and that it should be provided concurrent with development, and with minimum percentages of public open space required per development.

- Require that new residential developments set aside a percentage of total land area as open space in perpetuity.
 - Ensure that the designated area best serves the purpose of open space (e.g., the area should match areas on the Open Space/Greenbelts Map) and can be linked to adjacent open space areas to provide greenbelts.
 - Where linkages and greenbelts occur, ensure that public easements are provided.
 - Where land is not suitable for open space purposes, require the acquisition (or contribution towards acquisition) of nearby open space lands. These nearby lands should be identified on the Open Space/Greenbelts Map.
- Design standards for development within designated open space/greenbelt areas should be implemented through the community planning, basin planning, or other similar planning efforts. At a minimum, the following should apply:
 - Open space in urban areas should remain substantially undeveloped ... (retention and replanting of native vegetation).

- Open spaces should be located contiguous to other open space areas, creating the potential for open space corridors. [PCC 19A.30.170.E LU-OS 61.1(a-c), 2(a-b)]

Public and Community Facilities

LU-PF Objective 62. Public and community facilities will be located in consideration of the following criteria.

- Community facilities should ... avoid geologically hazardous areas.
- Community facilities should be located outside of floodplains, wetlands, riparian areas, or other critical areas...
- Community and public facilities which are associated with infrastructure corridors should be located with regard to such factors...geological and hydrological conditions...
- Community and public facilities should be located to prevent any significant adverse environmental impacts. (PCC 19A.30.180.A LU-PF 62.9-11)

Objective 66. The Comprehensive Plan and development regulations will be used to ensure compatibility with other land uses when siting essential public facilities.

- Caution will be used when locating capital facilities in critical areas. (PCC 19A.30.180.E LU-PF 66.2)

Surface Water

Objective 80. Prevent the loss of life, the creation of public health or safety problems and the loss or damage of public and private property.

- Protection of existing facilities should take preference over the protection of undeveloped lands.
- Land use and related regulations and zoning should reflect the natural constraints of the streams floodplains, meander zones and riparian habitat zones. (PCC 19A.30.220.A LU-Sw 80.1-2)

Objective 81. Establish and adopt a systematic and comprehensive approach to solving existing surface water problems and preventing future problems.

- Strategies for surface water management should balance engineering, economic, environmental and social factors in relationship to stated comprehensive planning goals and objectives.
- Nonstructural measures should be preferred over structural measures.
- Integrate watershed plans, including interagency plans, into the Comprehensive Plan. Implement the recommendations of the Lower Puyallup Watershed Action Plan as adopted by the County Council.
 - Cooperate in identifying priority watersheds...
- Public understanding of the various capabilities and limitations associated with stormwater management should be improved through a variety of educational efforts.
- The Pierce County Storm Drainage and Surface Water Management Plan should be evaluated at regular intervals to maintain consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and other related programs affecting the environment.

- Adopt and enforce ordinances controlling runoff from new development and redevelopment.
 - Pierce County is encouraged to either adopt the Department of Ecology's technical manual or one substantially equivalent to address stormwater control.
- Reduce and eventually eliminate harm to water quality from stormwater pollutant discharges. Do this through use of on-site best management practices, control of development density and location, preservation of stream corridors and buffers, and development and maintenance of a system of stormwater retention and detention facilities. [PCC 19A.30.220.B LU-Sw 81.1-3(a), 4-7(a), 8]

Objective 82. Stormwater management in Pierce County should occur in the context of the varied uses associated with the natural drainage systems within the County.

- Stormwater management measures should preserve to the fullest extent possible opportunities for other uses.
- Structural flood control measures should not obstruct fish passage.
- Structural flood control measures should preserve or enhance existing flow characteristics for fisheries and other uses of the riparian zone.
- Flood control activities should not result in a net loss of, or damage to fish and wildlife resources, but wherever possible develop or improve the diversity of habitat.
- Changes in land use should try to restore the land's natural character to the natural state wherever possible.
- Concentrate land uses in existing urban areas to prevent sprawling development which would negatively impact water quality in rural areas. (PCC 19A.30.220.A LU-Sw 82.1-6)

Objective 83. Prevent the degradation of the quality of both surface water and the water entering the region's aquifers.

- The use of a natural drainage system is preferred over the use of pipelines or enclosed detention systems.
 - The preservation of natural wetlands, floodplains and streams is to be actively pursued.
- The County will apply for a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit and will strive to be in compliance with the requirements for the preservation of water quality.
 - Use regionally consistent requirements for industrial and commercial discharge pretreatment.
 - Encourage potential new indirect dischargers to locate in areas with appropriate sewer service. [PCC 19A.30.220.D LU-Sw 83.1(a), 2(a-b)]

Objective 84. Coordinate with public and private sectors to ensure compatibility of stormwater management measures.

- Planning, design and construction of stormwater management measures should include opportunity for comment by the general public and interested agencies.
- Efforts should be made to work with the cities and towns toward standardization of regulations that impact stormwater management.

- Coordinate water quality monitoring and database management interlocally and with state agencies, using common protocols. [PCC 19A.30.220.E LU-Sw 84.1-2(a)]

Rural

Land Uses Generally

Objective 1. encourage diverse economic opportunities and uses compatible with and supportive of a rural way of life.

- Land uses in the rural area shall be limited according to the intensity of use...and size and scale of the use.
 - Performance standards shall be developed to address impervious cover requirements and landscaping/screening requirements for all commercial, industrial, and civic uses allowed in the rural area...
 - Preferable land uses in rural areas should be related to farms, forestry, nursery sales, other open space activities, and residential uses. [PCC 19A.40.010 RUR 1.A(1), B]

Rural Densities

Objective 2. Encourage a range of low-intensity rural development to maintain rural character. Strive to create a development pattern in rural areas that uses land more efficiently than traditional development by doing the following.

- Encourage cluster development to achieve some or all of the following benefits:
 - minimizing the loss of or other adverse impacts on the County's most productive or commercially viable agricultural, forestry, mineral and other important resource lands;
 - Preserving open space and rural character;
 - Providing greater compatibility with adjacent development and land uses in rural areas by providing larger buffer strips and open spaces.
- Tax relief should be made available for property designated as open space.
 - An owner of open space desiring current use classification under Chapter 84.34 RCW may file for such current use classification as provided for in Chapter 2.114 of the Pierce County Code.
- The Rural 20 designation allows a basic density of 1 dwelling unit per 20 acres. However, density incentives shall be provided. ... Clustering of dwelling units is encouraged to maximize buffers and open space. Open Space shall be located in the area adjacent to Designated Forest Land.
- The Rural 40 designation allows a basic density of 1 dwelling unit per 40 acres. However, density incentives shall be provided. ... Clustering of dwelling units is encouraged to maximize buffers and open space. [PCC 19A.40.020 RUR 2.B.2(b, c, e), 4(a), 6-7]

Conservation of Rural Resources

Objective 3. Conserve rural resources.

- Preserve the land and water required by natural resource based activities, including the protection of critical areas, natural wildlife...and other open spaces...
- Minimize conversion of agricultural and forestry land by providing cluster development and buffer strips between these designated lands and residential developments.
- Minimize the amount of impervious surface in development.
 - Site development standards should include proportionality provisions for limiting paved parking, widths, and lengths of paved access roads and driveways, and site coverage in general, allowing shared access roads and using porous construction material for roads where feasible.
- Minimize the use of constructed drainage facilities and encourage alternative perpetually maintained methods of surface water management such as grass covered swales, on-site retention areas, retaining vegetative cover, etc.
- Provide incentives, such as tax reduction, to landowners who voluntarily provide public benefits such as protecting wildlife corridors, historic and cultural sites, and scenic amenities. [PCC 19A.40.030 RUR 3.A-B, D.11, E, G]

Rural Centers

Objective 6. The most intensive uses of rural land allowed in rural areas should be directed into Rural Centers.

- Establish standards to guide the location, expansion and development of Rural Activity Centers.
 - Rural Activity Centers should not be expanded into areas of natural hazards. (PCC 19A.40.060 RUR 6.F.4)

Economic Development

Existing Business

Objective 1. Strengthen existing business and industry and assist new business to locate in the County adding to the diversity of economic opportunity and employment.

- Within six months of adoption of the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan, the County should develop a public/private partnership to cooperatively produce and maintain a semi-annual Pierce County Performance Index. The report should review the status of the economy, recent trends, factors influencing the trends, and the effect of government policy on the economy. The performance measures should rank Pierce County against the State, the region, and comparable locations, both in the United States and internationally. Provide information and technical assistance to aid expansion of existing business.
- Protect existing viable business activities from incompatible neighboring uses.
- Strive to make existing land uses compatible with the Comprehensive Plan. Allow the expansion of nonconforming uses which do not detract from the intent of the Comprehensive Plan, according to specific criteria.
- Create and encourage partnerships between government and business to deal with business issues at all levels and sizes.
 - Develop coordinated programs that provide a variety of assistance to small businesses.

- Develop an inventory of available business assistance programs and publish in a form useful to businesses of all sizes.
- Instill an attitude of advocacy among staff to assist businesses with government regulation.
- Require that County regulations concerning commerce take into account their cumulative financial impact on businesses of all types.
- Encourage and assist the development of adequate child day-care facilities.
- Make environmental management, research and technology a business opportunity. [PCC 19A.50.020 ECD 1A-E.(1-4,6-7)]

Business Development - Economic Diversity

Objective 2 pursue an active and aggressive recruitment program to induce a variety of commercial and industrial enterprises to settle in the County.

- Create and encourage partnerships between government and business to deal with business recruitment issues at all levels and sizes.
 - Develop opportunities that make use of the Port of Tacoma Harbor facilities as one of our most significant county-wide economic development assets.
 - Strive for a natural and business environment that is an incentive for new business creation and recruitment.
- Support private sector forces which act to diversify the economy.
 - Develop and implement a targeted industry program ...
Encourage programs that strengthen the natural resource industries, including forestry, mining, fishing, agriculture, and aquaculture.
 - Encourage development of resource-based industries that add value to natural resources. [PCC 19A.50.030 ECD 2.A.1-2, B.1(f,h)]

Employment Centers

Objective 3. Encourage the growth of readily-available large planned Employment Center development sites, properly zoned and serviced with infrastructure.

- Planned Employment Centers can be located in areas where critical areas may exist provided that critical areas are protected and buffered from development activities.
- Develop an inventory of areas where economic development is now occurring and where development opportunities could occur in the future. (PCC 19A.50.040 ECD 3.F, J)

Infrastructure

Objective 5. Through tiering, the Transportation Improvement Program and the Capital Facilities Plan, assure that adequate infrastructure is provided to accommodate economic growth.

- Develop a mechanism to coordinate the providers of water, sewer, power, natural gas, telecommunications, cable television, transportation systems, and other infrastructure.
- Develop a mechanism to coordinate infrastructure provision among jurisdictions.
- Target areas of high growth for future infrastructure improvements.
- The Capital Facilities Plan should give priority to providing public facilities and services designated as commercial and industrial lands and identified in the Land Use Element and Objective 3 of this Element.

- When prioritizing infrastructure projects for funding in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Capital Facilities Plan (CFP), the County shall give projects located inside the Urban Growth Area higher consideration than those in the rural area, recognizing that the TIP and CFP need to include rural area projects which focus on rehabilitation, restoration, and safety improvements within the rural area as well as the need to leverage grant programs targeted at enhancing the transportation system within the rural area. When the TIP and CFP are presented to Council, information on the selection of rural area projects shall be included. (PCC 19A.50.060 ECD 5.A-C, F, I)

Environment

Objective 8. Achieve and maintain a high environmental quality of life in order to maintain and develop a robust, thriving economy and keep Pierce County a preferred place to live, work, and play.

- Take leadership in launching a cooperative and coordinated surface and groundwater management plan.
- Conserve agriculture and open space through a number of available techniques, including purchase of development rights, cluster or low density zoning, transfer of development rights programs, acquisition, and/or other measures. (PCC 19A.50.090 ECD 8.C-D)

Regulatory Framework

Objective 9. Pierce County should develop regulations which are consistent, enforceable, fair, predictable, and timely.

- Develop an expanded notification system to provide timely information relating to changing environmental regulations.
- Provide for a master environmental impact statement policy for areas identified for potential commercial or industrial development.
- Pierce County shall continue to evaluate local environmental regulations to enhance their consistency, predictability, timeliness, and effectiveness.
 - This shall include administrative policy reviews.
 - This shall include the continued refinement of cost-effective mitigation. (PCC 19A.50.100 ECD 9.A-C.1-2)

Coordination

Objective 10. Coordinate economic development efforts so that a clear and consistent economic policy is followed.

- Provide for a Geographical Information System (GIS) that integrates federal, state, city, and county information and allows for information sharing and planning.
- Maintain current commercial and industrial site survey information such as available and projected public services, surrounding land uses, transportation capabilities, critical areas, and other relevant economic information. (PCC 19A.50.110 ECD 10.B, E)

Environmental and Critical Areas

PART I. ENVIRONMENT AND CRITICAL AREAS

Performance Goals

Objective 2. Achieve the following performance goals, intended to provide a measure of Pierce County's environmental health:

- Achieve "no net loss" of wetland areas and important fish and wildlife habitat. (PCC 19A.60.020 ENV 2B)

Coordination Among Governmental Entities

Objective 3. Coordinate with other governmental entities (e.g., state and federal agencies, local municipalities, tribal governments) to protect critical areas and address environmental issues.

- Pierce County shall take the lead on establishing an ESA Coordinating Committee which shall work in conjunction with the Growth Management Coordinating Committee (GMCC) and affected agencies and tribes to develop the criteria for intergovernmental agreements within Pierce County that, based upon best available science, address the following:
 - Create common development standards which apply to riparian and associated areas including:
 - Allowable impervious surface coverage;
 - Buffer width and allowable uses within buffers...
 - Develop common standards for Shoreline Master Programs, and accompanying Shoreline Management Use Regulations and Critical Areas Regulations which maintain consistency between jurisdictions...[PCC 19A.60.030 ENV 3B.2(b-c), 4]

Water Quality

Objective 5. Prioritize and protect important aquifers and surface waters to ensure that water quality and quantity are maintained or improved.

- Manage and plan water resources on a watershed basis.
 - Complete a groundwater resource inventory for Pierce County, including an analysis of groundwater quantity and quality.
 - Manage watersheds supplying water to Pierce County residents to maintain base flows of surface waters, maintain groundwater levels, control flooding....
- Develop performance standards and regulate uses for activities which can adversely impact water quality or quantity in aquifers, watersheds, and surface waters, consistent with state and federal laws and regulations.
 - Protect water quality and quantity in waters supporting fish hatcheries and runs of native fish species.
 - Mining, dredging, or the removal of gravel, fill or similar materials from streams, ground water recharge areas, or other surface water areas shall be strictly controlled to prevent adverse alterations to flow characteristics,

- siltation and the pollution or disruption of fish passage, spawning beds, or juvenile rearing areas.
 - Channelizing, riprapping, diking, or other stream bank stabilization methods which detrimentally increase stream flow or adversely alters the stream's existing characteristics in any other way shall not be permitted.
 - Culverts and/or other roadway or driveway under crossings should not be installed in such a manner so as to impede or alter substantially the flow of existing water bodies and fish passage.
 - Vegetation removal adjacent to riparian areas, resulting from development or other activities, should be strictly controlled with adequate buffers maintained to support the healthy functioning of the hyporheic zone.
 - Eliminate the illegal removal of surface water which decreases the quantity or flow rates.
 - Encourage innovative design of building structures and infrastructure to minimize impact on surface water and drainage.
- Establish performance standards to address stormwater runoff...
 - Enhance existing stormwater and erosion control standards utilizing best available technology and flexible approaches, including use of biofiltration systems where appropriate. Local factors such as densities and soil types should be examined when determining appropriate standards and technologies.
 - Evaluate and pursue alternatives to roadside spraying by Pierce County.
 - New developments should be designed to minimize areas of impervious ground cover.
 - Consistent with stormwater NPDES requirements...allowing for operation and maintenance of new and existing stormwater systems. [PCC 19A.60.050 ENV 5B.2-3, C.6(a-d, f-g), E.1-4(a-f), E.5-6]

Terrestrial and Aquatic Ecosystems

Objective 6. Maintain and where necessary improve terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems so that they maintain viable, reproducing populations of plants and animals.

- Conduct watershed analyses within each defined watershed that is influenced by Pierce County regulation or management.
 - Watershed analyses shall adhere to state and federal technical strategies and assessment methodologies.
 - Implement the recommendations of the Lower Puyallup Watershed Action Plan as adopted by the County Council.
- Establish a Pierce County ecosystem restoration strategy coordinated with federal, state, and private efforts and based upon each watershed's analysis results.
 - Establish restoration project guidelines.
 - Devise restoration strategies which reflect both short and long-term solutions, and which individually consider hillslope, riparian, and stream channel restoration needs and approaches.
 - Establish the elements necessary to implement and administer a 20-year Pierce County watershed restoration program effort.

- Facilitate the intergovernmental relationships and agreements that will be necessary to fulfilling Pierce County's ecosystem restoration effort and obligations. [PCC 19A.60.060.A ENV 6.1(a,f), 2(a-c), 3]

Fish and Wildlife

Objective 8. Provide for the maintenance and protection of habitat areas for fish and wildlife.

- Identify and map all areas, including both private and public lands, where critical fish (including shellfish) and wildlife habitat areas exist in Pierce County...
- Prioritize the relative values of habitat areas and place regulatory emphasis on the critical habitat areas.
- Evaluate existing regulations and policies to determine whether they adequately protect critical fish and wildlife habitat areas...
 - Evaluate the Pierce County shoreline master program and shoreline management use regulations to determine whether the habitat needs of fish, other aquatic life, and wildlife are met...
 - Designate appropriate shoreline environments for critical areas ...
- Pursue the public acquisition of critical fish and wildlife habitat areas.
 - Develop a comprehensive inventory of existing habitat areas critical to fish and wildlife and set priorities for acquisition.
 - Utilize a number of approaches for obtaining lands, including voter approved bond issues, grant funding, donations from individuals, foundations, and other institutions, and other acquisition strategies.
- Establish educational programs for private land owners to foster maintenance and enhancement of habitat areas.
 - Provide County staff to develop education programs and to work cooperatively with land owners to assist in the identification and enhancement of habitat areas. (PCC 19A.60.070 ENV 8.A, B, D.4(a), E.1-2, F.1)

Hazardous Areas

Objective 9. Avoid the endangerment of lives, property, and resources in hazardous areas, including areas subject to geologic and flood hazards.

- Identify and map all hazardous areas including geologic and flood hazards.
- Establish land use practices in hazardous areas so that development does not cause or exacerbate natural processes which endanger the lives, property, and resources of the citizens of Pierce County.
 - Ensure that property owners in hazardous areas are educated and notified about the presence of hazardous areas and the threat which they pose.
 - Require notification statements to be placed on the face of all title documents and plats of properties containing hazardous areas.
 - Develop public outreach programs which educate the citizenry about the threats posed by hazardous areas and about measures which they can take to avoid the hazards.

- Provide the public with on-line access to County mapping of hazardous areas. Take steps to ensure that the mapping information is readily understandable to the public.
 - On a Pierce County Planning and Land Services web site, include detailed information on the location of and dangers of hazardous areas, and measures that could be used to avoid hazards.
 - Hazardous areas should be utilized as open space whenever possible. Consider incentives for maintaining hazardous areas as open space by allowing increased densities on less-sensitive areas of the site.
 - Solid waste facilities should be carefully sited to avoid hazardous areas.
 - Mixed municipal solid waste landfills should not be located in geologically hazardous areas or within the 500-year floodplain. (WAC 173-304 and 173-351 and Pierce County Solid Waste Management Plan)
 - Baling and compaction stations and source separation facilities should not be located in hazardous areas.
 - Waste-to-energy facilities should not be located in hazardous areas.
- Develop and adopt in cooperation with the Federal Emergency Management Agency an evacuation plan and lahar warning system for volcanic hazard areas. [PCC 19A.60.080 ENV 9.A-B.1(a-d), B.2-3(a-c), C]

Geologic Hazards

- Establish land use practices in geologically hazardous areas so that development does not cause or exacerbate natural processes which endanger the lives, property, and resources of the citizens of Pierce County.
 - Discourage high-intensity land use activities in volcanic hazard areas.
 - Establish lower densities and low-intensity land uses in volcanic hazard areas which discourage conversion of land to urban uses.
 - Direct sewer lines, utilities, and public facilities away from volcanic hazard areas, wherever feasible.
 - Require stringent design standards for sewer lines and utilities within seismic hazard areas.
 - In areas with landslide and erosion hazards, encourage the use of cluster developments, directing building site development to areas away from the hazards and setting the hazard areas aside as open space.
 - Community facilities (except parks and recreational facilities) should be located on level or gradable land and avoid geologically hazardous areas.
 - Create regulations which prohibit the utilization of bonus density provisions on properties or portions of properties located in Case II volcanic hazard areas.
- Utilize the best available data and methodologies to identify, evaluate, and delineate hazardous areas.
 - Utilize mapping based on soil, geologic, topographic, and hydrologic data to identify landslide and erosion hazard areas.
- Direct critical facility development away from areas subject to catastrophic, life threatening geologic hazards where the hazards cannot be mitigated.
 - Prohibit the construction of critical facilities (e.g., hospitals, toxic material storage sites) in volcanic hazard areas.

- Where the effects of hazards can be mitigated, require appropriate standards for site development and for the design of structures in areas subject to geologic hazards.
 - Require geotechnical studies and mitigation for:
 - All development activities in landslide and erosion hazard areas, with the amount of information required based on the severity of the landslide or erosion hazard at the proposed development site.
 - Mitigation should include requirements for buffers, setbacks, or other measures which maintain slope stability.
 - In addition to Uniform Building Code standards for design of structures in seismic hazard areas, establish the following standards:
 - Building setbacks should be established to maintain open transportation corridors.
 - Establish special seismic requirements for sites storing hazardous materials.
 - Evaluate existing performance standards for developments in landslide and erosion hazard areas, and revise as needed to incorporate best available technologies and development practices.
 - Require temporary and permanent erosion control measures in erosion hazard areas, with appropriate consideration of erosion impacts upon lakes, streams, and Puget Sound.
 - Require independent review of geotechnical reports for projects in seismic, mine, and volcanic hazard areas, rather than in-house technical review.
- Ensure that public facilities are structurally secure in the event of an earthquake.
 - Inventory public and critical facilities which do not meet current seismic construction standards.
 - Establish a program to retrofit public and critical facilities which do not meet current seismic construction standards. [PCC 19A.60.080 ENV 9D.1(a)-D.7, E.2, F.1, G.1(b.1), G.2(a-b), G.3-G.5, H.1-2]

Flood Hazards

- Establish land use practices in flood hazard areas so that development does not cause or exacerbate natural processes which endanger the lives, property, and resources of the citizens of Pierce County.
 - Encourage low intensity land use activities including agricultural and recreational land uses in floodplain areas and discourage other land uses in these areas.
 - Establish lower densities and low-intensity land uses in floodplain areas which discourage conversion of land to urban uses.
- Direct critical facility development away from areas subject to catastrophic, life threatening flood hazards where the hazards cannot be mitigated.
 - Prohibit the construction of critical facilities (e.g., hospitals, toxic material storage sites) in flood hazard areas.
- Where the effects of hazards can be mitigated, require appropriate standards for site development and for the design of structures in areas subject to flood hazards.
 - Require compensatory storage and a "no net loss" approach to maintaining flood water storage capacity in flood hazard areas.
 - Require flood-proofing of renovated and new structures in flood hazard areas.

- Maintain existing flood control structures on Pierce County rivers and streams (including dams, dikes, levees, etc.
- Require best management practices for maintaining natural river channel configurations during dredging and gravel removal.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of existing requirements for on-site stormwater retention and detention and revise where flooding issues are not adequately addressed.
- Pursue the public acquisition of flood hazard areas through the use of innovative programs and various alternatives available for public acquisition (e.g., purchase of development rights).
- Establish a county-wide National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System to develop new programs to mitigate flood hazards and reduce insurance rates. [PCC 19A.60.080 ENV 9.I.1(a), J.1, K.1-5, L-M]

Wetlands

Objective 10. Provide for the long-term protection and "no net loss" of wetlands.

- Identify and map all wetland areas, including both private and public lands where regulated wetlands exist in Pierce County.
- Provide for innovative and equitable wetland management methods which protect public health, safety or welfare.
 - Work areas, living areas, and community facilities (except parks and recreational facilities) should be located outside of wetlands as provided in Chapter 17.12 PCC.
- Provide for the management of wetland sites in a manner that is not punitive to users of legally altered wetland sites.
- Improve communication and coordination among county, city, state, federal agencies and the public with regard to wetland protection.
- Protect the natural ability of wetlands to improve the quality of surface water runoff, hold and gradually release stormwater, function as primary producers of plant matter, provide habitat for fish and wildlife, provide recreational opportunities, and provide historical and cultural values.
 - Wetlands should be protected from incompatible uses and from pollutants generated by urban growth.
- Protect the ability of wetlands to function naturally and to provide landscape diversity through the development of incentive programs (e.g., tax incentives, cluster housing).
- Provide educational opportunities that increase public understanding of the values of wetlands and measures which County residents can take to maintain wetlands on their properties.
- Pursue the public acquisition of important wetland areas in Pierce County.
- Review and where necessary amend the Pierce County Wetland Management Regulations (Chapter 17.12 PCC) to provide wetland protection in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan.
- The County prefers that wetland impacts be avoided. When impacts cannot be avoided, development of wetlands may occur with appropriate mitigation which considers the

regional needs for wetland functions and which equals or exceeds established wetlands replacement ratios, consistent with Chapter 17.12 PCC.

- Mitigation and/or wetland replacement should occur in the same watershed and preferably within the same sub-basin. (PCC 19A.60.090 ENV 10A-B.1, C-E.1,F-J.1)

Best Available Science and Adaptive Management

Objective 13. Strive for the best available solutions to environmental issues.

- Apply best available science to address listed species recovery issues and develop an adaptive management strategy to determine how well the objectives of listed species recovery and critical habitat restoration are being achieved.
 - Develop complementary, coordinated, integrated, and flexible approaches for the collection, analysis, and sharing of monitoring information (e.g., GIS data). (PCC 19A.60.120 ENV 13.B.3)

Environmental Regulations and Permitting Process

Objective 15. Reduce duplication of environmental regulations and streamline permitting processes.

- Actively participate in local, state and federal efforts to eliminate overlapping rules and regulations. (PCC 19A.60.140.A ENV 15.1)

Preservation of Historic and Cultural Heritage

Objective 1. Protect, conserve and enhance the historic and cultural heritage of Pierce County. (PCC 19A.60.200.A HIST 1)

Housing

Education and Awareness Programs

Objective 1. Promote education and awareness addressing compatibility between various dwelling types and community standards.

- Educate homeowners on how to repair and maintain their homes to enhance livability and prevent deterioration of housing. (PCC 19A.70.010 HS 1.E)

Solutions to Housing Issues

Objective 2. Encourage creative solutions to housing issues through quality design which is functional as well as livable.

- Develop model communities to demonstrate variety of nontraditional dwelling types, construction methods, and densities by encouraging design that is compatible with existing neighborhood design.
- Provide for open space and recreational facilities associated with residential developments.

- Design and build developments in a manner which protects critical areas.
- Multi-family developments should be designed to provide residents a safe, friendly living environment.
 - Buildings, open space, and circulation should be organized to provide opportunities for residents to experience or express a sense of territory around a housing unit.
 - Residential buildings should be sited to create usable open space. (PCC 19A.70.020 HS 2.B-C, F-G.1, 4)

Housing Costs

Objective 3. Minimize the cost of housing by promoting innovative programs and techniques.

- Consider the economic implications of private and public regulations and practices so that the broader public benefit they serve is achieved with the least additional cost to housing.
 - Review regulations of building practices that may compromise human health, structural integrity or longevity. When appropriate, amend or lobby at state and federal level for modification. (PCC 19A.70.030.A HS 3.a)

Transportation

Intergovernmental Coordination Efforts

This Transportation Element sets forth policy which directs active coordination of planning, construction, and operation of transportation facilities and programs with adjacent counties, local jurisdictions, the PSRC, Washington State Department of Transportation, Pierce Transit, and other public and private entities. Pierce County coordinates with other governmental entities in a wide variety of activities. For example, regional coordination is primarily conducted through the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC- see subsection F. below). In this forum, Pierce County participates in the regional planning policymaking process. Pierce County also works with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and other state transportation agencies on the planning, programming, funding, and implementation for both state and local transportation projects. State and federal laws require all major transportation improvements in the region to be consistent with the regional transportation plan, *Vision 2020*. This Transportation Element is consistent with the goals of *Vision 2020*. (PCC 19A.80.010E)

State Goals.

- **Transportation.** Encourage efficient multimodal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans. (RCW 36.70A.020(3)) (Ord. 97-87S2 §§ 2, 8 (part), 1997) (PCC 19A.80.030)

State Mandates.

- A transportation element that implements, and is consistent with, the land use element. (RCW 36.70A.070(6)) (Ord. 97-87S2 §§ 2, 8 (part), 1997) (PCC 19A.80.040)

County Mandates.

Multi-County Planning Policies.

- Maintain the existing transportation system in a safe and usable state. (RT-10) (PCC 19A.80.050.A.4)

County-Wide Planning Policies.

- Address environmental impacts of the transportation policies through programming capital improvements and transportation facilities designed to alleviate and mitigate impacts on land use;...and locating and constructing transportation improvements so as to discourage adverse impacts on ... other environmental features (Transportation Policy 11).
- The following development standards shall be the minimum required for urban developments and shall apply to all new development in urban growth areas...
- **Joint Land Use Study:** The Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) is a collaborative planning effort involving the military installations...
 - Local governments and the military should cooperate on the development of mitigation plans for military road closures that affect public use. (JLUS Circulation, Issue #4, Policy 3) (PCC 19A.80.050.B.11, 17, C.11)

Non-Motorized Transportation

Objective 2. ...(E)ncourage the provision of non-motorized facilities, including sidewalks, where it is appropriate to provide safe and convenient access between properties and facilities.

Design Standards

- **Environmental Design.** Nonmotorized facilities should be designed and located to minimize environmental impacts by:
 - Considering the clean water, wildlife habitat, and other functions of critical areas
 - Recognizing areas too fragile for nonmotorized project construction and use alternative construction methods, circumnavigate the area, or do not build the project. [PCC 19A.80.070 TRN 2.D.3(a-b)]

Roads

Objective 3. Provide an efficient road network as an additional transportation option in order to provide adequate mobility for all people, goods and services.

- **Road Adequacy Ordinance.** Encourage the private sector, local jurisdictions, the Washington State Department of Transportation and the community at large to work with the County to develop a road adequacy ordinance to support development of adequate transportation facilities throughout the County. This ordinance should define specific standards for:
 - Safety...
- **Threshold Levels.** Specific "threshold levels" will be established to determine which roadway design standards should apply to individual roads based on the projected ultimate usage of the roadway (i.e., daily traffic volumes and access needs) and its relationship to the County's overall transportation system.)
- **Access Control.** Encourage the consolidation of access to state highways, and major and

secondary arterials in order to complement the highway and arterial system, reduce interference with traffic flow on the arterials, reduce conflicts between nonmotorized modes of travel and motor vehicles, particularly on bicycling routes, and discourage through traffic on local access streets or private access/circulation roadways.

- **Transportation System Management (TSM).** Maximize the operating efficiency of the County's transportation system through the use of TSM strategies...
- **Service Standards for Roads.** Use screenline Service Standards to monitor the quantity of traffic between unincorporated subareas and the regional transportation system, other jurisdictions, or other unincorporated subareas.
 - Monitor and mitigate site-specific transportation impacts through the State Environmental Policy Act review process.
- **Road Improvement Districts.** Review Pierce County policies, standards, and practices related to the Road Improvement District (RID) program to ensure consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and to determine if RIDs are providing adequate financing for road improvements. Where problems are identified, the RID program should be revised to be consistent with the Plan and to ensure an efficient, cost effective program which provides a viable source of funding for road improvements. (PCC 19A.80.080 TRN 3.D.2, G, J-L.2, M)

Other Motorized Transportation

Objective 4. Coordinate other transportation facility and service plans with the Pierce County Transportation Plan.

- **Methods to Ensure Compatibility.** Support the use of the following methods, in addition to "airport overlay zones" to provide for compatibility between air facilities and surrounding land uses:
 - Specific criteria and guidelines regarding the location and safe operation of all new or expanded air facilities within the County...
- **Rail Service Preservation and Enhancement.** Encourage local communities, the Washington State Department of Transportation, railroads, labor groups and shippers to work together to:
 - Identify and preserve rail lines which currently provide transportation and economic benefits to Pierce County. (PCC 19A.80.090 TRN 4.D.4, F.2)

Implementation Strategies and Actions

Objective 5. Outline the strategies and actions necessary to finance and implement the transportation improvements planned to meet the County's transportation needs. (PCC 19A.80.100 TRN 5)

- **Utilities.** Coordinate the location of major utility and transportation corridors and the construction of roadway and utility improvement projects with utility companies/providers in order to minimize right-of-way disruptions caused by construction, minimize costs, and maintain pavement integrity. (PCC 19A.80.100 TRN 5.E)
- **Acquiring Rights-of-Way.** Reserve property for needed rights-of-way as quickly as possible. Methods to acquire and preserve right-of-way include, but are not limited to:
 - Requiring dedication of right-of-way as a condition for development;
 - Requesting donations of right-of-way to the County;

- Determining the allowable development density of a given property, based on the total property size (including the donated right-of-way portion), so that developers who donate rights-of-way are not penalized;
- Purchasing rights-of-way by the County;
- Purchasing development rights from property owners; and
- Requiring property owners to grant public easements. (PCC 19A.80.100 TRN 5.G.1-6)
- **Compatibility with Adjacent Land Uses.** Ensure planned transportation system improvements are compatible with adjacent land uses and minimize potential conflicts through guidelines to:
 - Use a variety of methods to control access to major arterials from adjacent developments;
 - Route major and secondary arterials around, rather than through, neighborhoods and communities so as to minimize traffic impacts on residential neighborhoods;
 - Prevent new residential areas from fronting on major or secondary arterials;
 - Provide landscaping and other types of buffers along major transportation facilities; and
 - Provide facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians to access public transit. (PCC 19A.80.100 TRN 5. J.1-5)
- **Allowable Land Use Changes.** Allow land use changes (such as master plan developments, rezones, plats and conditional use permits) only when these changes are accompanied by specific documentation or proposed plans showing how the transportation system can adequately support the needs of existing and proposed development. Pierce County will establish threshold levels for this policy so that small landowners will not be unfairly disadvantaged, and will tie implementation of this policy to impact mitigation planning that seeks to fairly allocate the costs of transportation improvements among and between the County and all affected parties. (PCC 19A.80.100 TRN 5.K)
- **Environmental Protection and Conservation.** Minimize negative environmental impacts created by County transportation facilities and activities by:
 - Appropriately designing, constructing, operating, and maintaining transportation facilities to minimize degradation of existing environmental conditions;
 - Aligning and locating transportation facilities away from environmentally sensitive areas to preclude direct environmental degradation caused by a facility and indirect environmental degradation created by development around facilities;
 - Mitigating unavoidable environmental impacts; and
 - Soliciting and incorporating the concerns and comments of interested parties regarding environmental issues into the planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of the county transportation system. [PCC 19A.80.100 TRN 5.L (1-4)]
- **Project Programming.** Incorporate Pierce County's priority process into specific planning and implementation documents such as the Capital Facilities Element, the Annual Road Program, the Six Year Road Program, the Regional Transportation Plan prepared by the Puget Sound Regional Council, the State Transportation Plan prepared by the Washington State Department of Transportation, plans of local jurisdictions in Pierce County, and the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan. (PCC 19A.80.100 TRN 5.S)

- **Updating Priorities.** Conduct a comprehensive evaluation and assessment of transportation priorities every six years. Updates are prepared annually and incorporated into the Capital Facilities Element, the Annual Road Program, the Six Year Road Program and the County budget. (PCC 19A.80.100 TRN 5.T)
- **Improvement Priorities.** Prioritize transportation improvements based on the following criteria:
 - FIRST: To maintain or upgrade existing transportation facilities to serve existing residents and business at acceptable levels of service;
 - SECOND: To upgrade or build new transportation facilities to encourage and support growth and economic development in the more urban areas of the County; and
 - THIRD: To upgrade or build new transportation facilities in the more rural areas of the County to serve large lot, low density residential development at appropriate service levels. [PCC 19A.80.100 TRN 5.V (1-3)]
- **Expenditure Priorities.** Prioritize transportation expenditures to provide for:
 - Adequate maintenance of the existing transportation system to prevent deterioration of capital facilities and to avoid the need for major reconstruction of roads and bridges;
 - Remedial actions to correct known safety hazards, repair physical deficiencies in the road system, and improve traffic operations through low cost improvements;
 - Replacement of bridges, roadways and other capital facilities which are near or past the end of their useful lives, or that may become structurally unsound in the near future;
 - Widening of existing roadways to alleviate existing capacity problems; and
 - Construction of new roadways to complete the roadway network, and to accommodate expected growth in travel demand. (PCC 19A.80.100 TRN 5.W)
- **Ranking Projects.** Use a consistent process to determine capital project priorities that includes the following steps:
 - Comprehensive identification and ranking of transportation problems throughout the County using the following criterion:
 - Environmental concerns
 - Identification and evaluation of the transportation improvements needed to address identified problems;
 - Development of specific transportation improvement recommendations which rank individual projects using the following set of criteria:
 - Safety
 - Supports the goal of a jobs-based economy by focusing improvements on priority employment centers
 - Transportation system completeness
 - Economic feasibility
 - Integration with other agencies' or other County plans
 - Environmental considerations
 - Impact of proposed improvement on economic development.
 - Implementation of recommendations based on a schedule and financing strategy. [PCC 19A.80.100 TRN 5.X.1(f), 2-3(a-d, f, l, p), 4]
- **Rider Information Package.** Encourage the Tacoma/Pierce County Visitors and

Convention Bureau and transportation service providers to coordinate with the County to develop a "rider information package" with respect to common passenger transportation. This information package may include maps, routes, schedules, and public information telephone numbers for passenger rail service, local transit agencies, air carriers, private ground transportation providers, and international, state and local ferry services. (PCC 19A.80.100 TRN 5.AA)

- **Special Needs Transportation.** Support the mobility of all riders including those persons who are elderly, young, low income, and all persons with disabilities by maximizing transportation system accessibility, affordability, and expanded service capacity through:
 - Design standards that reflect the infrastructure needs of persons who are elderly and all persons with disabilities;
 - Identifying and improving existing transportation facilities and developments that are not accessible or usable by persons who are elderly or by persons with disabilities; and
 - Encouraging greater coordination of public and private transportation operators to accommodate the special needs of persons who are elderly and all persons with disabilities. (PCC 19A.80.100 TRN 5.BB.1-3)

Utilities Element

General

Objective 2. Provide adequate utility capacity for future growth.

- Expand and improve utility facilities to provide adequate capacity for anticipated future growth.
 - Planning for public utilities should use a minimum 20-year planning horizon and identify new facilities, expansions and improvements that will be needed to support growth 20 years into the future. [PCC 19A.90.010.B UT-Gen 2.1(a)]

Objective 5. Encourage utility lines to be located underground wherever practicable, using sound engineering judgment, and in accordance with rules, regulations and tariffs applicable to the serving utility. (PCC 19A.90.010.E UT-Gen 5)

Objective 6. Protect the environment while providing for utility facilities.

- Site new utility facilities so as to avoid or mitigate environmental consequences.
- Locate new utility facilities away from, or in a manner compatible with, critical areas.
- Determine the capability of land and natural systems when providing such facilities and services as storm water drainage and flood prevention... (PCC 19A.90.010.F UT-Gen 6.1-3).

Objective 8. Utility facilities should be designed to be compatible with adjacent land uses.

- Siting of proposed public facilities should conform to land use policies and regulations. (PCC 19A.90.010.H UT-Gen 8.3)

Sewer Services and Wastewater Treatment

Objective 14. Provide sewer service in support of an Urban Growth Area.

- Pierce County should continue to plan for capacity and facilities needed to serve the projected population within an Urban Growth Area, continuing to build upon the long-term centralized regional approach.

- Amend the *Pierce County General Sewerage Plan* to serve as a county-wide sewerage plan for all basins. [PCC 19A.90.050. A UT-S 14.1,8(b)]

Objective 15. Promote reliable and cost-effective service

- Review the following previously adopted plans, correct deficiencies and inconsistencies which appear, and amend portions of such plans which are inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan:
 - *Comprehensive Sewerage General Plan for Pierce County, 1969*
 - *Chambers Creek Basin Water Quality Management Plan for 1974 for WRIA No. 12. Chapter IX.*
 - *Pierce County Sewerage General Plan Update (Chambers Creek-Clover Creek Basin Sewerage System), 1986*
 - *Pierce County General Sewerage Plan Update (Chambers Creek-Clover Creek Basin) 1991*
 - *Puyallup River Water Quality Management Plan as amended*
 - *Lake Tapps Facilities Plan, as appended*
 - *WRIA 15 Kitsap Basin Water Pollution Control and Abatement Plan, as amended, 1976*
 - *Pierce County Sludge Management Program, 1987*
- Maintain emergency response plans for wastewater treatment plants. [PCC 19A.90.050.B UT-S 15.5(a.1-6),5(b),7]

Solid Waste Management

Objective 16. Provide reliable and cost-effective service

- Review the following previously adopted plans, correct deficiencies and inconsistencies which appear, and amend portions of such plans which are inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan:
 - *Tacoma-Pierce County Solid Waste Management Plan*
 - *Pierce County Hazardous Waste Management Plan.* [PCC 19A.90.060.A UT-SW 16.3(a,b)]

Objective 18. Provide solid waste service in support of population densities.

Siting of proposed public/private facilities should conform to County and State land use policies and regulations. (PCC 19A.90.060.C UT-SW 18.1)

Domestic Water Systems

Objective 21. Promote reliable water service throughout Pierce County

- The Pierce County Coordinated Water System Plan must be updated to ensure that there is a balance between water supply service provision and demand.
 - Any update to the *Pierce County Coordinated Water System Plan (CWSP)* should contain a contingency plan for water supply emergencies. [PCC 19A.90.070.A UT-Wa 21.1(a)]

Objective 24. Coordinate water resource planning.

- Encourage the City of Tacoma, Pierce County, the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department and the Pierce County Regional Water Association to form an appropriate study group to review water resource planning issues.
- Require water system plans prepared by individual public water utilities to demonstrate

that water resource management planning has been coordinated with adjacent Group A purveyors.

- Review and approve water plans to ensure that they are compatible with land use planning.
- Explore the feasibility of a regional supply system. (PCC 19A.90.070.D UT-Wa 24.1-4)

Objective 25. Implement the satellite management program for new or failing water systems.

- Discourage the proliferation of small water systems except for cluster developments in rural areas.
 - New water systems should only be permitted when operated under a management system as approved under the *Pierce County Coordinated Water System Plan*. [PCC 19A.90.070.E UT-Wa 25(a)]

Objective 26. Protect the quality of groundwater used for domestic water supplies.

- Reduce the risk of salt water intrusion.
- Request the Tacoma Pierce County Health Department to start a program to prevent septic failures through public education and routine septic checks. (PCC 19A.90.070.F UT-Wa 26.1,5)

Objective 27. Review the following previously adopted plans, correct deficiencies and inconsistencies which appear, and amend portions of such plans which are inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan:

- *The Pierce County Coordinated Water System Plan, 1988*
- *Gig Harbor Groundwater Management Plan*
- *Clover Chambers Creek Groundwater Management Plan*. (PCC 19A.90.070.G UT-Wa 27.1-3)

Objective 28. Protect the quality of groundwater and minimize damage from flooding by implementing an effective surface water management program. (PCC 19A.90.070.H UT-Wa 28)

Capital Facilities

Public Facility Needs

Objective 1. Define types of public facilities, establish standards for levels of service for each type of public facility, and determine what capital improvements are needed in order to achieve and maintain the standards for existing and future populations, and to repair or replace existing public facilities.

- **Determining Public Facility Needs.** The County shall determine the quantity of capital improvements that is needed as follows:
 - There are four circumstances in which the standards for levels of service are not the exclusive determinant of need for a capital improvement:
 - Repair, remodeling, renovation, and replacement of obsolete or worn out facilities shall be determined by the County Council upon the recommendation of the County Executive.
 - Capital improvements needed to address health and safety issues, as determined by the County Council upon recommendation of the County Executive.

- New or expanded facilities that reduce or eliminate deficiencies in levels of service for existing demand or that support the creation of a jobs-based economy for Pierce County.
 - New public facilities, and improvements to existing public facilities, that eliminate public hazards if such hazards were not otherwise eliminated by facility improvements prioritized according to CFP 1.5.2.a. or b. (PCC 19A.100.010 E.2.a. or b.) above.
 - New or expanded facilities that provide the adopted levels of service for new development and redevelopment during the next six fiscal years, as updated by the annual review of this Capital Facilities Plan. The County may acquire land or right-of-way in advance of the need to develop a facility for new development. The location of facilities constructed pursuant to this Policy shall conform to the Land Use Element, and specific project locations shall serve projected growth areas within the allowable land use categories.
- All facilities scheduled for construction or improvement in accordance with this Policy shall be evaluated to identify any plans of State or local governments or districts that affect, or will be affected by, the proposed County capital improvement.
 - Project evaluation may also involve additional criteria that are unique to each type of public facility, as described in other elements of this Comprehensive Plan. [PCC 19A.100.010. CFP 1.E.2(a-d), 3,4]

Coordination and Consistency with Other Plans and Policies

Objective 4. Implement the Capital Facilities Plan in a manner that coordinates and is consistent with the plans and policies of other elements of the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan, County-Wide Planning Policies, and the Growth Management Act of the State of Washington. Where possible, the Capital Facilities Plan will also coordinate and be consistent with the plans and policies of other regional entities, adjacent counties, and municipalities.

- **Land Development.** Manage the land development process to insure that all development receives public facility levels of service equal to, or greater than the standards adopted in CFP 1.3 (PCC 19A.100.010 C.) by implementing the schedule of capital improvements contained in this Capital Facilities Plan, and by using the fiscal resources provided for in CFP Objective 2 (PCC 19A.100.020) and its supporting policies.
 - All Category A and Category C public facility capital improvements shall be consistent with the adopted land use map and the goals and policies of other elements of this Comprehensive Plan. The location of, and level of service provided by projects in the schedule of capital improvements shall maintain adopted standards for levels of service for existing and future development in a manner and location consistent with the Land Use Element of this Comprehensive Plan.
 - The County shall integrate its land use planning and decisions with its planning and decisions for public facility capital improvements by developing, adopting and using the programs listed in the "Implementation Programs" section of this Capital Facilities Plan.

- **County-Wide Planning Policies Implementation.** Implementation of the Capital Facilities Plan shall be consistent with the requirements of adopted County-Wide Planning Policies.
 - The County will prepare fiscal impact analyses required by County-Wide Planning Policies. (PCC 19A.100.040 CFP 4.A.1-2, B.1)

Implementation Programs

Objective 5. The following programs shall be implemented to ensure that the goals and policies established in the Capital Facilities Plan will be achieved or exceeded, and that the capital improvements will be constructed. Each implementation program will be adopted by ordinance, resolution or executive order, as appropriate...

- **Review of Applications for Development Permits.** The County shall amend its land development regulations to provide for a system of review of various development permit applications which, if granted, would impact the levels of service of Category A and Category B public facilities. Such system of review shall assure that no final development permit shall be issued which results in a reduction in the levels of service below the standards adopted in CFP 1.3.1 (PCC 19A.100.010 C.1.) for Category A public facilities. The land development regulations shall include, at a minimum, the provisions of CFP 3.3 (PCC 19A.100.030 C.) in determining whether a development permit can be issued.
 - The land development regulations shall also address the circumstances under which public facilities may be provided by applicants for development permits. Applicants for development permits may offer to provide public facilities at the applicant's own expense in order to insure sufficient capacity of Category A and Category B public facilities. Development permits may be issued subject to the provision of public facilities by the applicant subject to the following requirements:
 - The County and the applicant enter into an enforceable development agreement which shall provide, at a minimum, a schedule for construction of the public facilities and mechanisms for monitoring to insure that the public facilities are completed concurrent with the impacts of the development, or the development will not be allowed to proceed.
 - The public facilities to be provided by the applicant will achieve and maintain the adopted standard for levels of service concurrent with the impacts of development.
 - Depending on specific circumstances of an application, in the event that insufficient capacity is an issue in permitting, the applicant may elect to revise the application to decrease the impact, phase development to spread impacts out, or pay for facilities. [PCC 19A.100.050 CFP 5.A.1(a-b),2]
- **Impact Fees.** Impact fee ordinances shall be adopted by the County Council to help provide for identified needs for adequate public facilities.
 - In addition to existing impact fees for schools and parks, impact fees shall be utilized, if appropriate, for roads. (PCC 19A.100.050 CFP 5.B.4)
- **Annual Budget.** The annual budget shall include in its capital appropriations all projects in the schedule of capital improvements that are planned for expenditure during the subsequent fiscal year. (PCC 19A.100.050 CFP 5.C)

- **Update of Capital Facilities Plan.** The Capital Facilities Plan shall be reviewed and updated annually. The Plan shall be updated in conjunction with the budget process and the release of the official population estimates and projections by the Office of Financial Management of the State of Washington. The update shall include:
 - Updated population statistics, as available;
 - Update of inventory of public facilities;
 - Update of costs of public facilities;
 - Update of public facilities requirements analysis (actual levels of service compared to adopted standards);
 - Update of revenue forecasts;
 - Revise and develop capital improvements projects for the next six fiscal years;
 - County Capital improvement projects shall be identified with a numbering system that provides for the project to be tracked from year to year and that indicates cumulative prior expenditures as well as future allocations;
 - Update analysis of financial capacity;
 - Amendments to the CFP, including amendments to levels of service standards, capital projects, and the financing plan sources of revenue;
 - Revision to the Tiering Map. When public facilities included in this Element are provided by an entity other than Pierce County (e.g., school districts), the entities responsible for providing the facilities shall provide the information and analysis described in a-i., along with any recommendations, to Pierce County in time to allow County review before the annual CFP update. The County will cooperate with the other public facility providers, provide information on growth and development, and establish a joint planning process with providers of public facilities, such as school districts. However, the County Council ultimately sets the levels of service in the Plan, whether or not information analysis, and recommendations are received from the public facility providers. (PCC 19A.100.050 CFP 5.D.1, 3-11)

Community Plans

Community Autonomy

Objective 1. Foster the autonomy of communities. (PCC 19A.110.010 CO 1)

Community Character

Objective 2. Foster and retain community character.

- Adopt planning "standards" for the development of a community plan.
 - Community plans shall use the Comprehensive Plan policies to achieve environmental protection, create open space, provide affordable housing, and accomplish other Comprehensive Plan objectives. (PCC 19A.110.010 CO A.7)

New Community Plans

Objective 3. Support communities in the development of new community plans.

- New community plan areas should be established on the basis of the following priorities:

Public health, safety, or welfare. (PCC 19A.110.030 CO B.1)

Consistency with Plan

Objective 4. Ensure consistency between the Comprehensive Plan and community plans.

- Establish a process which integrates the goals and policies within the Comprehensive Plan into the existing community plans.
 - The priority for amending existing community plans to bring them into conformity with the Comprehensive Plan shall be in the following order:
 - Where there is a public health, safety, or welfare concern; and
 - Community plans which have significant inconsistencies with the Comprehensive Plan.
 - Only those portions of existing community plans in conflict with the Comprehensive Plan are required to be amended. Pending such amendments of inconsistent portions of a Community Plan, land use applications must be consistent with the Land Use Element of the County Comprehensive Plan.
 - Communities are encouraged to develop alternatives for bringing community plans into agreement with the Comprehensive Plan in a manner that protects property values, economic vitality, affordable housing, the natural environment, and character of the community. [PCC 19A.110.040 CO 4.A.1(a-b)2-3]

Essential Public Facilities

Siting Process

Objective 1. Establish a process for identifying and siting essential public facilities.

- The County shall identify essential public facilities subject to this Chapter after consideration of proposed lists and petitions provided in EPF 1.1 and 1.2 (PCC 19A.120.010 A. and B.). The County shall formally identify essential public facilities through the Plan amendment process.
 - The Washington State Office of Financial Management, Puget Sound Regional Council, and Pierce County Regional Council shall provide lists of essential public facilities to the County to be considered for adoption during the next Plan amendment cycle.
- Siting criteria for facilities identified as essential public facilities in the Comprehensive Plan shall be developed as amendments to the Development Regulations and shall agree with the objectives and policies stated in this element.
- The siting process for essential public facilities in the unincorporated County shall use the land use permit processes stated in the Pierce County Development Regulations. (PCC 19A.120.010 EPF 1.C.1, D, E)

Siting Criteria

Objective 4. Establish siting criteria for essential public facilities.

- Siting criteria shall provide for the uniform treatment of similar types of land uses.
- Siting criteria shall be based on the following impacts of the specific type of facility:

- Effect on agricultural, forested lands or mineral lands, critical areas, historic, archaeological and cultural sites. (PCC 19A.120.040 EPF 4.A, B.6)

County-Wide Planning Policies

County-Wide Planning Policies are written policy statements which are to be used solely for establishing a County-wide framework from which the County and municipal comprehensive plans are developed and adopted. The framework is intended to ensure that the County and municipal comprehensive plans are consistent, as required by the Washington statutes. During the period within which County and municipal comprehensive plans are developed, adopted, and implemented, the County and each municipality in the County, at their discretion, may utilize the County-Wide Planning Policies to serve as a guide for County or municipal land use and related decisions. This helps best assure that the principles embodied in the County-Wide Planning Policies are followed and promoted.

Pierce County Code

To meet the objectives outlined in the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan, the County adopted development regulations in the County Code. Throughout the Code there are regulations that function as hazard mitigation measures that stem from the objectives outlined above. While not specifically expressed as hazard area regulations, they may function as such. Future revisions of this plan will review these regulations in the hopes of presenting them in a consolidated manner with regards to natural hazard mitigation. This action is addressed in both the **Mitigation Measures Section** and the **Plan Maintenance Section** of this plan.

The following identification will focus solely on the regulations contained in the Critical Areas and Resource Lands sections of the Code. Titles 18E and 19A.60 outline Critical Areas Regulations (CARs) and specifically addresses hazard areas. The CARs address the following critical areas: wetlands; geologically hazardous areas, which include erosion and landslide hazard areas, seismic hazard areas, mine hazard areas (MMH), and volcanic hazard areas; aquifer recharge areas; fish and wildlife habitat areas; and flood hazard areas. Below is a summary of the regulations contained in the CARs as they relate to the specific hazards outlined in this mitigation plan: earthquake, flood, landslide, severe storm, volcanic, tsunami, and wildland/urban interface fire. Other titles that are directly related to the hazards are discussed in the appropriate hazard section below.

Hazard Areas—Development Regulations¹

Title 19A.60.80 of the Pierce County Code (PCC) contains ENV 9 of the Comprehensive Plan: “Avoid the endangerment of lives, property and resources in hazardous areas, including areas subject to geologic and flood hazards.” The primary issue relating to hazard mitigation is the identification and development regulations of resource land and critical areas, previously established as including hazard areas. Through identification and regulation, ENV 9 can begin to be achieved.

The Code states that the County identifies and maps all hazardous areas including geologic and flood hazard. Based on this identification, the County establishes land use practices in hazardous areas so that development does not cause or exacerbate natural processes which endanger lives, property, and resources of the citizens of Pierce County.

County Code: Critical Areas (Title 18E)

The County identified critical areas and resource lands in September, 1991, and developed regulations for them under Title 18E of the Pierce County Code in October, 1991-March 1992.

The purpose of this Title is to protect environmentally sensitive critical areas of Pierce County from the impacts of development and protect development from the impacts of hazard areas by establishing minimum standards for development of sites which contain or are adjacent to identified critical areas and thus promote the public health, safety, and welfare by:

- Avoiding impacts to critical areas;
- Mitigating unavoidable impacts by regulating development;
- Protecting from impacts of development;
- Protecting the public against losses from:
 - Costs of public emergency rescue and relief operations where the causes are avoidable; and
 - Degradation of the natural environment and the expense associated with repair or replacement;
- Preventing adverse impacts on water availability, water quality, wetlands, and streams;
- Protecting unique, fragile, and valuable elements of the environment, including critical fish and wildlife habitat;
- Providing County officials with sufficient information to adequately protect critical areas and proposed development when approving, conditioning, or denying public or private development proposals;
- Providing the public with sufficient information and notice of potential risks associated with development in natural hazard critical areas; and
- Implementing the goals and requirements of the Growth Management Act of 1990, the State Environmental Policy Act, the Puget Sound Water Quality Management Plan, the Pierce County Charter, the Pierce County Interim Growth Management Policies, the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan, and all updates and amendments, functional plans, and other land use policies formally adopted by Pierce County. (18E.10.030.A-I)

Hazard areas and the development regulations that are related to these areas are discussed in a variety of sections within the Code. Title 18E establishes general requirements and regulations for the protection of critical areas. By regulating development within and adjacent to or abutting critical areas, the Title seeks to implement the following goals adopted by Ordinance Numbers 88-182, 89-162 and 91-47S:

- Encourage the retention of open space and development of recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks;

- Protect the environment and enhance the State's high quality of life, including air and water quality and the availability of water; and,
- Maintain and enhance the biological and physical functions and values of wetlands.

County Code: Subdivisions and Platting (Title 16)

Every subdivision shall comply with the provisions of RCW 58.17, this Title and all future amendments or applicable Federal, State or local laws. After final plat or short plat approval, any subsequent division of platted or short platted lots, parcels, tracts, sites or divisions, shall be allowed only if the procedures of this Title or the short plat ordinance are first followed, and these requirements shall be applicable to all plats approved prior to the effective date of this Title. (PC PALS).

Development regulations that are not located within Title 18E but which are applicable to development with all the hazard areas include the following:

County Code: Road and Bridge Design and Construction Standards (Title 17B)

This Title provides uniform technical requirements to govern road and bridge design, construction, and reconstruction; access from private property to any public or private road; and shared access facilities and alleyways located on private property.

County Code: Building and Fire Codes (Title 17C)²

Construction codes including: Uniform Building Code and Uniform Building Code Standards ; Uniform Mechanical Code; Uniform Fire Code and Uniform Fire Code Standards; and, Uniform Plumbing Code and Uniform Plumbing Code Standards. The Pierce County Building Code is thus enacted under title 17C of the Pierce County Code. Pierce County Planning and Land Services is the Department that regulates all issues related to the Building Code. PALS regulates all issues related to building codes. The Fire Protection Bureau regulates issues related to Fire Codes. The Building Code is referenced and discussed in more detail in the hazard section to which it correlates.

County Code: General Provisions (Title 18)

The purpose of this Title is to outline general provisions for development regulations regarding application filing, department review, public notice, time periods, code interpretations, and enforcement and penalties.

County Code: Zoning (Title 18A)

The major purpose of the Pierce County Development Regulations - Zoning is to implement the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan which is intended to prevent the harm posed by uncoordinated and unplanned growth. These development regulations are not intended to be the sole method of implementing the Comprehensive Plan. Other methods such as subdivision regulations, taxing strategies, capital facility expenditures, and other implementation techniques will also be employed.

County Code: Site Development (Title 18C)

These Regulations establish criteria for review and analysis of all development including, but not limited to, grading, formal subdivision, short subdivision, large lot division, commercial building, binding site plans, planned unit developments, planned development districts, mobile home parks, single family home construction, duplex construction, or other projects when so required by the Pierce County Hearing Examiner or County Council. All proposals for development, whether public or private, which are submitted to the County for review, must conform to these Regulations, which are to be used as the basis for review, design, and construction.

County Code: Environmental (Title 18D)

The purpose of this Chapter is to provide County regulations implementing the State Environmental Policy Act of 1971 (SEPA) which are consistent with the SEPA Rules.

County Code: Design Standards and Guidelines (Title 18J)

This Title shall be officially cited as Title 18J, Development Regulations - Design Standards and Guidelines, and may be commonly referred to as the Pierce County Design Standards and Guidelines.

County Code: Shoreline Regulations (Title 20)

This Title is designed to provide standards which will regulate and promote intensities and qualities of development consistent with the protection of the shoreline environment and its related resources and the policy of the Shoreline Management Act of 1971.

Geologic Hazard Areas

"Geologically hazardous areas" refer to areas that, because of their susceptibility to erosion, sliding, earthquake, or other geological events may pose a risk to siting commercial, residential, or industrial development consistent with public health or safety concerns. The PCC considers geologically hazardous areas to be the following: erosion and landslide hazard areas, seismic hazard areas, mine hazard areas (MMH), and volcanic hazard areas. Only those hazards that are identified in the Risk Assessment of this plan will be outlined with regards to development regulations.

Landslide Hazard

Chapters 18E.80 and 18E.110 address landslide hazard and erosion hazard area regulations, respectively. USGS, DOE, DNR, and PALS are responsible for identification of landslide and seismic hazard areas.

County Code: Landslide Hazard Areas (Title 18E.80)

This chapter establishes landslide hazard categories (active landslide areas and stable areas) and establishes review requirements and area standards. Regulations, specifically those found in the

various development regulations titles, correspond to these categorizations. The chapter emphasizes the use of soft-armoring.

The following statements describe the purpose of this Chapter:

- Protect human life and health.
- Regulate uses of land in order to avoid damage to structures and developed and damage to neighboring land and structures.
- Identify and map active landslide hazard areas.
- Minimize the ill effects on wetlands and critical fish and wildlife result from landslides.
- Establish a permit requirement and review procedures for development in areas with potential landslides. (PCC 18E.80.010.A-E)

Potential landslide areas are identified on the Landslide Hazard Areas Map, and are those areas where the suspected risk of slope instability and landslide is sufficient to require a geological assessment to assess the potential for active landslide activity.

County Code: Erosion Hazard Areas (Title 18E.110)

This chapter establishes three erosion hazard categories (riverine, active shoreline, and soil) and establishes geological assessment and geotechnical requirements (letter, verification, and report). Regulations, specifically those found in the various development regulations titles, correspond to these categorizations. The chapter emphasizes the use of soft-armoring.

The following describe the purpose of this Chapter:

- Protect human life and health;
- Regulate uses of land in order to avoid damage to structures and property being developed and damage to neighboring land and structures;
- Identify and map erosion hazard areas;
- Minimize impacts on wetlands and critical fish and wildlife species and their associated habitat that can result from erosion;
- Establish a permit requirement and review procedures for development proposals in areas with potential erosion hazards;
- Strike a balance between the need to maintain natural shoreline erosion/regression processes and the need to protect existing and proposed development (PCC 18E.110.010.A-F).

The Code categorizes erosion hazard areas as:

- Shoreline erosion hazard areas;
- Riverirne erosion hazard areas (the rivers subject to regulation as a channel migration zone listed in Chapter 18E.70, Flood Hazard Areas);
- Soil erosion hazard areas. [PCC 18E.110.020.B(a-c)]

Building Code: Landslide and Erosion³

Pierce County Code adopts the Washington State Building Code by reference for Landslides.

Seismic Hazard

Title 18E.90 addresses Seismic Hazard area regulations. USGS, DNR, and PALS are responsible or identification of seismic hazard areas.

County Code: Seismic Hazard Areas (18E.90)

The Chapter includes sections regarding review procedures, development standards, and buffer requirements. The Chapter calls for the identification of various types of geologically hazardous areas, and encourages lower density land uses in these areas. The purpose of this Chapter is to protect public health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens of Pierce County from the damaging effects of earthquakes. This Chapter provides standards to ensure life safety and minimize public and private losses that may occur within a seismic hazard area. (PCC 18E.90.010)

Seismic hazard areas are areas subject to severe risk of damage as a result of earthquake- induced landsliding, seismic ground shaking, dynamic settlement, fault rupture, soil liquefaction, or flooding caused by tsunamis and seiches. The regulations direct development away from these areas, and require geotechnical review of proposed building sites.

The Chapter outlines a fault rupture hazard area category and establishes a no build zone and buffer; updates mapping for liquefaction and dynamic settlement hazard areas; and creates standards for liquefaction and dynamic settlement hazard areas and fault rupture areas. [PCC 18E.90.020.B.1-2(a-b), 3(a-b), 4(a-b)]

Building Code: Seismic Hazard Areas⁴

Pierce County has adopted the Uniform Building Code, by reference, in conjunction with actions of the State Building Code Council, which assures concurrency with UBC standards. In 1975, the State adopted the 1973 Uniform Building Code as the minimum State standard and created the State Building Code Council. This code had been amended in 1973 to provide pony wall bracing in Seismic Zone 3 following the 1971 San Fernando Earthquake. Buildings constructed prior to 1975 may not be sufficiently braced to meet current code requirements and the regional seismic hazards. The code requires retrofitting of commercial buildings when there is a “change in use”, but not necessarily when an alteration or addition is made to an existing structure. “All building structures shall conform to the standards set forth in Title 17C, Construction and Infrastructure Standards-Building and Fire Codes” (PCC 18E.90.040.B.1).

Volcanic Hazard

Title 18E.60 addresses Volcanic Hazard area regulations. USGS, CVO, DNR, and PALS are responsible or identification of seismic hazard areas.

County Code: Volcanic Hazard Areas (Title 18E.60)

The chapter outlines travel time zones within a volcanic hazard area. The purpose of this Chapter is to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens of Pierce County by providing standards that minimize the loss of life that may occur as a result of volcanic events emanating from Mount Rainier (18E.60.10). The Chapter includes sections on the Volcanic Hazard Area Categories and the Travel Time Zones that apply to them. It also includes development review procedures and standards.

The best way to prevent damage from lahars is to prevent development in the hazard zone. Some of this is already done with restrictions on construction in flood hazard zones and land use controls under the Growth Management Act. To further reduce the potential impact within the volcanic hazard area, the Code places restrictions on the location of facilities. Facilities can be divided into four categories:

- Essential Facilities
- Hazardous Facilities
- Special Occupancy structures
- Covered Assemblies -

The regulations control the construction of all four types of facilities within the lahar hazard area. These regulations are updated to reflect the latest scientific knowledge on flow rates in the Puyallup basin.

The regulations that correspond to the travel time zones include the following:

- Restriction of allowable uses, in particular for essential facilities and hazardous facilities;
- Range of capacities for "assemblies" based on time travel distance from the volcano.

Flood Hazard Areas

Flood Hazard

Title 18E.70 addresses flood hazard area regulations directly. Titles 11, 17A, 18E.30, 18E.90, 18E.110, and 20 also address the flood hazard. FEMA, DNR, DOE, Water Programs, and PALS are responsible for flood hazard area identification.

County Code: Flood Hazard Areas (Title 18E.70)

Classifications of frequently flooded areas include the 100-year floodplain designations of FEMA and the NFIP. This Chapter addresses land use regulation in the flood hazard areas of the county. All flood hazard areas (are) identified..., with accompanying Flood Insurance Rate Maps prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). All development in flood hazard is regulated according to Title 18C (has been recodified as 17A).

The regulations address the following:

- Floodways, which include some channel migration zones;

- Base elevations for coastal hazard areas; limits to development in flood fringe areas;
- Finished floor level requirements;
- Allowable development activities within flood hazard areas; and
- Calculations used to identify deep and fast flowing areas. (PCC 18E.70.010)

Under this Chapter, development is protected from the impacts of flood hazards by establishment of minimum standards for sites which contain or are adjacent to identified flood hazard areas. The standards contained in this Chapter are intended to minimize public and private losses due to flood conditions in flood hazard areas and provide special criteria necessary for regulated activities located within flood hazard areas in unincorporated Pierce County. The following statements describe the purpose of this Chapter:

- Protect human life and health;
- Minimize expenditure of public money and costly flood control projects;
- Minimize the need for rescue and relief efforts associated with flooding;
- Minimize prolonged business interruptions;
- Minimize damage to public infrastructure, facilities and utilities;
- Minimize damage to critical fish and wildlife habitat areas;
- Minimize net loss of ecological functions of floodplains;
- Ensure that potential buyers are notified that property is in a flood hazard area;
- Ensure that those who occupy flood hazard areas assume responsibility for their actions; and
- Qualify Pierce County for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program, thereby giving the citizens of Pierce County the opportunity to purchase flood insurance with particular emphasis to those in flood hazard areas. (PCC 18E.70.010.A-J)

County Code: Storm Drainage and Surfacewater Management (Title 11)

This Chapter creates a funding methodology which provides resources to:

- Plan, manage, design, construct, maintain, revise, and upgrade the storm drainage and surface water runoff systems within Pierce County's drainage basins as specified in and pursuant to Chapters 36.89 and 39.34 Revised Code of Washington, and Article 11, Section 11 of the Washington State Constitution, and
- Manage waters subject to flood conditions from rivers, streams, tidal or other bodies of water affecting Pierce county pursuant to Chapter 86.12 of the Revised Code of Washington. This authority is invoked to minimize property damage, promote and protect the public health, safety and welfare, minimize water quality degradation by preventing siltation, contamination and erosion of the County's waterways, protect aquifers, insure the safety of County roads and rights-of-way, assure compliance with federal and state storm drainage, surface water management, and water quality regulations and legislation, increase educational and recreational opportunities, encourage the preservation of natural drainage systems, and foster other beneficial public uses. (Ord. 95-128 § 1, 1995; Ord. 91-153S2 § 2 (part), 1991) (PCC 11.02.010).

County Code: Site Development and Stormwater Drainage (Title 17A)

Title 17A addresses stormwater management and regulations. Pierce County Planning and Land Services and Pierce County Public Works and Utilities are responsible ensuring compliance with this regulation.

These Regulations establish criteria for review and analysis of all development including but not limited to grading, formal subdivision, short subdivision, large lot division, commercial building, binding site plans, planned unit developments, planned development districts, mobile home parks, single family home construction, duplex construction, or other projects when so required by the Pierce County Hearing Examiner or County Council.

Title 17A.10.010 is established pursuant to the Clean Water Act (33 U.S. Code 1251 et seq.), the State Water Pollution Control Act (Chapter 90.48 RCW), and the Puget Sound Water Quality Act (Chapter 90.70 RCW). They work in conjunction with those regulations contained in the Pierce County Stormwater Management and Site Development Manual... (PCC 17A.10.010)

The regulations under the title are based on the premise that development should not impact adjacent and/or downstream property owners in a detrimental manner compared to the pre-development condition. (17A.10.030.A). The regulations establish criteria for review and analysis of development when so required by the Pierce County Hearing Examiner or County Council. (PCC 17A.10.040.A)

County Code: Wetland Areas (Title 18E.30)

The purpose of this Chapter is to avoid impacts arising from land development and other activities affecting wetlands, and to maintain and enhance the biological and physical functions and values of wetlands with respect to water quality maintenance, stormwater and floodwater storage and conveyance, fish and wildlife habitat, primary productivity, recreation, education, and historic and cultural preservation. In appropriate circumstances it may be necessary to minimize, rectify, reduce, or compensate for wetland impacts. When wetland impacts occur, mitigation will be required to achieve no net loss of wetlands in terms of acreage, function, and value. (PCC 18E.30.010)

County Code: Seismic Hazard Areas (Title 18E.90.20)

This Chapter identifies and categorizes seismic hazard areas. Under the general categorization, the Chapter identifies seismic hazard areas, in part, as “areas subject to sever risk of damage as a result of...flooding caused by tsunamis and seiches”... (PCC 18E.90.020.B.1)

County Code: Erosion Hazard Areas (Title 18E.110.20)

The Code categorizes erosion hazard areas. Riverine erosion hazard areas are subject to regulation as a channel migration zone listed in Chapter 18E.70, Flood Hazard Areas. [PCC 18E.110.020.B(a-c)]

County Code: Shoreline Regulations (Title 20)

Title 20 (PCC) addresses shoreline regulations. Pierce County Planning and Land Services is responsible for ensuring compliance with this regulation under the Pierce County Shoreline Master Program.

Shoreline Regulations are designed to provide standards which will regulate and promote intensities and qualities of development consistent with the protection of the shoreline environment and its related resources, and consistent with the policy of the Shoreline Management Act of 1971. To this end, shoreline areas are categorized through a classification called "Environments." This system is being used as a mechanism for applying appropriate land and water use policies and regulations to distinctively different shoreline areas. The application is a supplement to local planning and land use regulations.

These environments guide the use of all County shoreline areas by planning for development and development patterns which enhance the desired character of the specific environment rather than overtly precluding the presence of certain uses in designated environments. The environment system attempts to insure that different shoreline uses or types of development are designed and located so as to minimize conflicts between the proposed use and stated policies of the pertinent environment classification. It is a system that encourages uses which enhance the character of the environment and at the same time places reasonable standards and restrictions on developments which might disrupt the character of the environment. (PCC 20.06.010)

Building Code: Flood Hazard Areas⁵

Pierce County Code adopts the Washington State Building Code by reference for Floods. The Building Codes regulate the elevation height of structures within the floodplain.

Tsunami Hazard

Portions of Titles 18E.70, 18E.90, and 20 address tsunami hazard areas. FEMA, DNR, Water Programs, and PALS are responsible for identification of these areas.

County Code: Flood Hazard Areas (Title 18E.70)

The flood hazard regulations directly affect the tsunami hazard areas. The Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) for Pierce County show areas along the coast which can be affected by tidal flooding. These do not show the entire areas that can be damaged by a tsunami.

County Code: Seismic Hazard Areas (Title 18E.90)

The Chapter includes sections regarding review procedures, development standards, and buffer requirements. The Chapter calls for the identification of various types of geologically hazardous areas, and encourages lower density land uses in these areas. The Chapter identifies tsunami and seiche hazard areas as a part of the earthquake-induced hazard areas classification.

Seismic hazard areas as they relate to tsunamis and seiches are categorized as: Areas that are adjacent to Puget Sound marine waters, lakes, and ponds that are designated as "A" or "V" zones

as defined by FEMA and depicted on the FEMA maps or other maps adopted by Pierce County. (PCC 18E.90.020.B. 4)

County Code: Shoreline Area Regulations (Title 20)

Shoreline Regulations are designed to provide standards which will regulate and promote intensities and qualities of development consistent with the protection of the shoreline environment and its related resources, and consistent with the policy of the Shoreline Management Act of 1971. To this end, shoreline areas are categorized through a classification called "Environments." This system is being used as a mechanism for applying appropriate land and water use policies and regulations to distinctively different shoreline areas. The application is a supplement to local planning and land use regulations. These environments guide the use of all County shoreline areas by planning for development and development patterns which enhance the desired character of the specific environment rather than overtly precluding the presence of certain uses in designated environments. The environment system attempts to insure that different shoreline uses or types of development are designed and located so as to minimize conflicts between the proposed use and stated policies of the pertinent environment classification. It is a system that encourages uses which enhance the character of the environment and at the same time places reasonable standards and restrictions on developments which might disrupt the character of the environment. (PCC 20.06.010)

Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Hazard Areas

Wildland/Urban Fire Hazard

Title 18H addresses Forest Management. DNR, in conjunction with local fire officials, is responsible for the identification of WUI fire hazard areas.

County Code: Forest Practices (Title 18H)

Forest Practices provides regulations which set forth procedures and review criteria for approval of Class IV-Special conversion forest practices, Class IV-General forest practices, conversion option harvest plans (COHPs), and certain Class I forest practices, and establishes a process for implementing development moratoria on properties which have been harvested in violation of forest practice requirements.

County Land Use

In rural areas of Pierce County, zoning regulations now provide for residential densities of one dwelling unit per 10 acres (R10), unless at least 50 percent of the property is designated as open space, in which case two dwelling units per 10 acres is allowable. New lots cannot be less than one acre in size. Allowable densities drop closer to forested lands (R20), to maintain rural character and open space. These low densities may reduce the potential residential property loss; however, whether they reduce the risk of wildland/urban interface fires is dependent upon other factors, such as vegetation management and type of structure and property uses.

Building Code: WUI Fire⁶

Pierce County Code adopts the Washington State Building Code by reference for Wildland/Urban Interface Fires.

Storm Hazard Areas

Severe Storms Hazard

The NWS is responsible for identification of storm hazard areas. As storms can lead to flooding, regulations relating to these can be found in the flood hazard section.

County Code: Site Development and Stormwater Drainage (Title 17A)

Title 17A addresses stormwater management and regulations. PALS and Public Works & Utilities are responsible ensuring compliance with this regulation. The Title establishes a utility to regulate and manage storm drainage and surface runoff systems and waters subject to flood conditions rivers, streams, tidal and other bodies of water. See the flood hazard above for more information.

Building Code: Wind⁷

The state adopts the Uniform Building Code. The Code has specifications for building to wind hazards and snow loads. Current U.S. code approaches to wind loading are based on a single value of wind speed representing a 50-year recurrence interval. Mitigation for one type of storm may carry over to other types. Building codes covering the way a roof is constructed may protect from both wind and snow load.

County Acquisition Authority

Washington legislation empowers cities, towns, and counties to acquire property for public purpose by gift, grant, devise, bequest, exchange, purchase, lease or eminent domain.

The power of acquisition can be a useful tool for pursuing mitigation goals. Local governments may find the most effective method for completely “hazard-proofing” a particular piece of property or area is to acquire the property (either in fee or a lesser interest, such as an easement), thus removing the property from the private market and eliminating or reducing the possibility of inappropriate development occurring. Acquisition can be accomplished through the power of eminent domain and various other acquisition authorities that are identified in the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan.

Eminent Domain

Eminent domain or condemnation is the right of a government to appropriate private property for public use, with adequate compensation to the owner.

Every county in Washington has the ability to condemn land and property within the county for public use. This power is granted to the County Council whenever it deems it necessary for county purposes to acquire land, real estate, premises or other property, and is unable to agree with the owner for its purchase (RCW 8.08.010).

Other Acquisition Authorities

The Pierce County Comprehensive Plan and the Revised Code of Washington identifies some legal and regulatory authorities that speak to acquisition. Noted below are elements and objectives in the Comprehensive Plan that address acquisition.

Element	Objective
Land Use	LU-OS 58
	LU-OS 59
	LU-OS 61
Economic Development	ECD 8
Environment and Critical Areas	ENV 8
	ENV 10
Transportation	TRN 5

Endnotes

¹ All information relating to Title 18E is referenced to the Pierce County Directions Package. The Directions Package represents the County's proposed update to the Critical Area Ordinances. Currently (April, 2004) the Pierce County Council and Pierce County citizens are reviewing these updates. The Directions Package reorganizes the method by which hazards are addressed. This Plan understands that while there may be changes to the specifics of the proposed regulations, it assumes that the organization will remain (i.e. 18E.90 will remain the seismic hazard section). The Directions Package is located on the Pierce County Planning and Land Services website: <http://co.pierce.wa.us/pc/services/home/property/pals/landuse/esa.htm>.

² In the summer of 2004, the County will adopt the International Building Code (IBC).

³ *Ibid*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid*

⁶ *Ibid*

⁷ *Ibid*