

NEW CHAPTER

**COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICY
ON HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**

Background - Growth Management Act

The Washington State Growth Management Act identifies as a planning goal to encourage development in urban areas and to reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development. The GMA also encourages multimodal transportation systems to encourage walking and other alternatives to the automobile. These transportation options provide for greater opportunity for walking and exercise that further promotes health and well-being. Compact communities can also encourage more efficient use of resources, reduced air pollution, and thereby reduce impacts on climate change. The GMA also sets forth a goal to protect the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality. These are also related to healthy living as well as climate change. VISION 2040 contains specific goals and policies addressing health and well-being, climate, change and air and water quality.

In 2005, the legislature amended the GMA to require communities to adopt and implement plans and strategies to promote an increase in physical activity among Washington State citizens. In response to this requirement, jurisdictions updated transportation elements to include a pedestrian and bicycle component, as well as identified planned improvements for those facilities and corridors. Other strategies for achieving improved public health include the adoption of "Complete Streets" policies, policies addressing the development and improvement of infrastructure supportive of community walkability, and improvements addressing the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians. Jurisdictions continue to adopt these mechanisms to enhance public health, consistent with the 2005 amendments to the GMA.

VISION 2040 Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs)

VISION 2040 acknowledges that the health and well-being of the region's people is fundamental to maintaining and improving the region's sustainability and quality of life. It recognizes that human health is affected by the health of the natural environment, the strength of our region's communities and social networks, the way we build our cities and transportation systems, and the aesthetics and functionality of those systems. VISION 2040 addresses numerous ways that human health can be impacted in the central Puget Sound region, such as exposure to air and water pollution, automobile-related injuries and deaths, chronic diseases related to physical inactivity, and lack of fresh and healthy foods. It further recognizes that attention to health as a consequence of planning and infrastructure decisions can improve quality of life, reduce health care costs, and lessen impacts from lost productivity.

VISION 2040 addresses many of the region's health concerns by providing strategies that will significantly reduce air and water pollution from transportation activities and other sources. A core concept of VISION 2040 is improving the safety of the transportation system for drivers, passengers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and others. Multicounty planning policies call for designing

transportation facilities to serve all users safely and efficiently. This includes building and improving sidewalks, bike lanes, trails and paths and adopting land use strategies to bring homes closer to jobs, shopping, services, and recreation activities. VISION 2040 also states that health considerations should be addressed in regional and local planning and decision-making processes. It encourages design guidelines in the construction of buildings and facilities and regional farming and food production.

Countywide Planning Policy

HW-1. The County, and each municipality in the County, will be designed to promote physical, social, and mental well-being so that all people can live healthier and more active lives by:

- 1.1 designing communities to provide an improved environment for walking and bicycling [MPP-DP-43]; and
- 1.2 developing and implementing design guidelines to encourage construction of healthy buildings and facilities to promote healthy people [MPP-DP-46]; and
- 1.3 developing and implementing community plans and programs, such as community gardens and farmer's markets, that provide support for agricultural, farmland, and aquatic uses that facilitate the production of fresh and minimally processed healthy foods, and encourage community access to those resources. [MPP-DP-47]

HW-2. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall incorporate provisions addressing health and well-being into appropriate regional, countywide, and local planning and decision-making processes. [MPP-DP-44]

HW-3. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall promote cooperation and coordination among transportation providers, local government, and developers to ensure that joint- and mixed-use developments are designed to promote and improve physical, mental, and social health and reduce the impacts of climate change on the natural and built environments. [MPP-DP-45]

HW-4. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall promote and develop transportation systems and options that minimize negative impacts to human health by:

- 4.1 improving the safety of the transportation system and, in the long term, achieve the state's goal of zero deaths and disabling injuries; and [MPP-T-7]
- 4.2 improve local street patterns-including their design and how they are used, for walking, bicycling, and transit use to enhance communities, connectivity, and physical activity, such as through the adoption of "Complete Streets" policies. [MPP-T-15]

HW-5. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall protect and enhance the environment and public health and safety when providing public services and facilities by: [MPP-PS-1]

- 5.1 coordinating, designing, and planning for public safety services and programs [MPP-PS-15];
- 5.2 consider use of health impact assessment tools when developing and evaluating planning projects to identify possible impacts of projects on community health [MPP-DP-43 through 47, DP Action 11, and MPP-T7]; and
- 5.3 encouraging health and human service facilities to locate near centers and transit for efficient accessibility to service delivery. [MPP-PS-16]