



Community Planning

Objective:

Shape a built environment that allows communities to flourish

Strategy:

Support community infrastructure and land use-planning that is responsive to the needs of residents, businesses, services, schools, and cities with potential annexation areas.

Why is this strategy important?

Community infrastructure and land use planning are foundational elements for quality of life, as they bear on environmental, social, health and economic characteristics of communities. Infrastructure investment and land use planning foster and afford communities mobility, access, recreation, aesthetic values, safety, jobs and economic development. The STAR Community Rating System provides a holistic and inclusive perspective on infrastructure and planning by including goals and objectives that address built environment, climate/energy, education/art/community, economy/jobs, equity/empowerment, health/safety and natural systems. Additionally, STAR includes a standard approach for measuring equitable access to foundational community assets within and between neighborhoods.

The STAR Community Rating System is the nation's first voluntary, self-reporting framework for evaluating the sustainability of U.S. communities. STAR uniquely combines:

- A framework for community sustainability that includes social, economic, and environmental qualities
- A rating system that drives continuous improvement, and
- An online system for gathering, organizing, analyzing, and presenting information needed to meet sustainability goals.

King County is participating as one of 30 communities in the US and Canada to pilot this new program, and will have a STAR Pilot Rating by the end of 2013.

What can you do?

Contributing to infrastructure and land use planning is easier when familiar with the policy documents, agencies involved, and the planning processes.

Information on land use planning that occurs across the four counties (Pierce, Kitsap, King, and Snohomish) in our area is available from the Puget Sound Regional Council.

Information on comprehensive planning that takes place among the cities of King County is in the Countywide Planning Policies documents.

King County's Comprehensive Plan is the guiding policy document for all land use and development regulations in unincorporated King County, and for regional services throughout the County including transit, sewers, parks, trails and open space.

King County tracks infrastructure planning and reports are available for both status and geography.

Moving forward

The nationally-recognized STAR framework provides a holistic, topically-inclusive, and broadly-applicable tool for assessing, rating, and improving sustainability attributes of communities. The early work with STAR will focus on assessment to identify the status and trends in community conditions, understand variations across neighborhoods, and how these conditions compare with 'peer' communities nationally. Following this assessment phase, King County will consider its role in affecting change, and what contributions might be forthcoming from cities, special district and other civic organizations.

Related Links

[Star Community Framework](#)