

KCCCP 85



KING COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

King County, Washington



King County Executive

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July 1, 1985

Dear King County Residents:

We are pleased to present the King County Comprehensive Plan, adopted unanimously by the King County Council on April 8, 1985 and signed into law by the King County Executive on April 15, 1985. The Comprehensive Plan is the product of the tireless efforts of hundreds of King County residents and public officials. Together, we have forged unanimous agreement on fundamental principles of responsible growth management, an important and difficult accomplishment.

The Comprehensive Plan will profoundly affect our future as the basis for land use decisions in unincorporated King County, guiding decisions on zoning, community plans, capital improvements, and King County's relationship with the cities on land use issues. The Plan provides a strong, clear policy framework for managing growth while encouraging economic development, conserving King County's farmlands and forests, protecting the environment, sustaining quality rural and urban communities, and preserving open space.

On behalf of King County, we offer our sincere thanks to all the public and private groups, elected officials, and individuals who helped shape this important document. We respectfully urge you to continue sharing your viewpoints and expertise to assure equitable, effective, and timely implementation of the Plan.

Sincerely,


RANDY REVELLE
King County Executive


GARY GRANT, Chairman
King County Council


CYNTHIA SULLIVAN, Chair
Planning and Community Development Committee

AUDREY GRUGER, Councilmember
District 1

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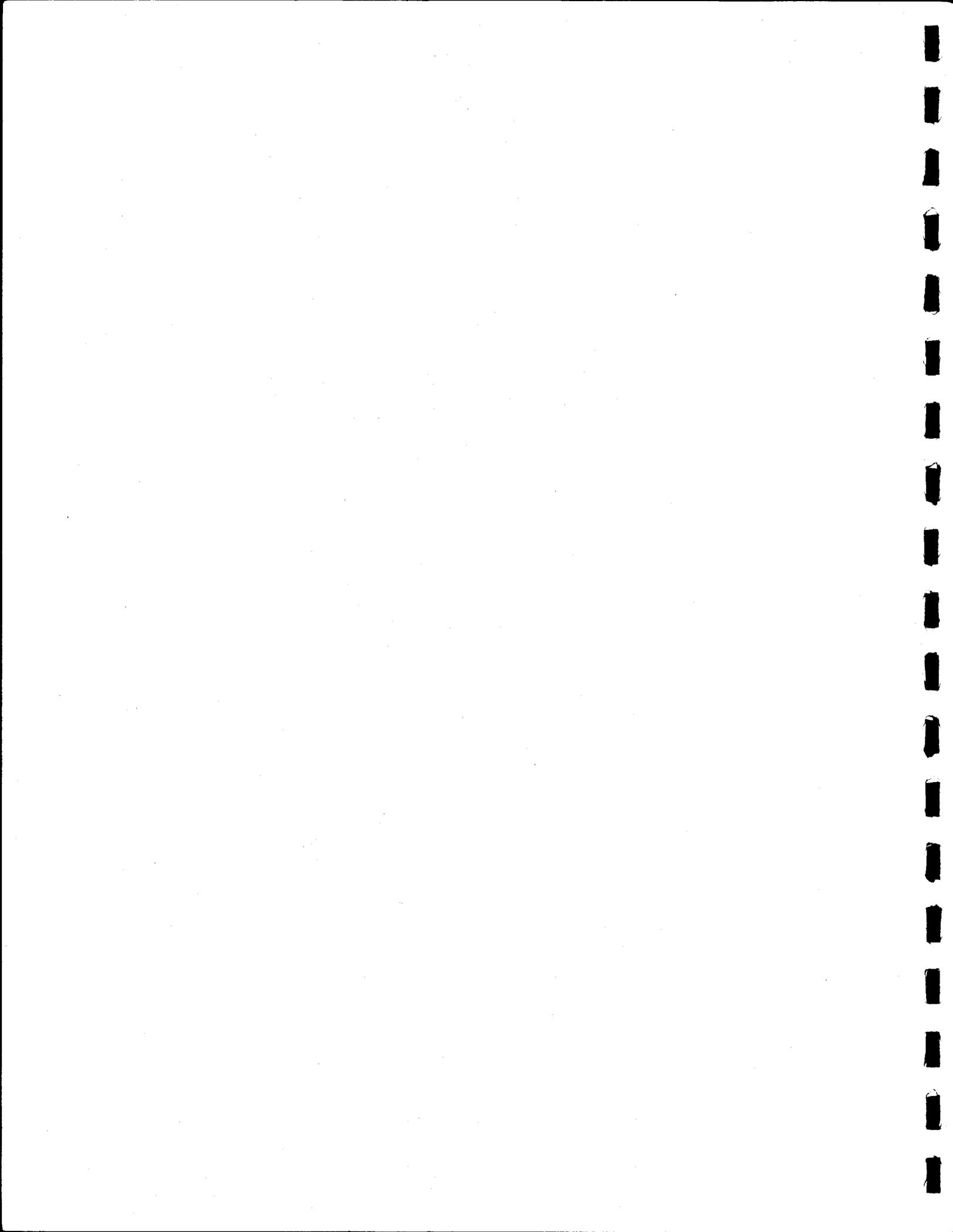
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March 21, 1985

INTRODUCED BY: Sullivan
PROPOSED NO. 84-245

ORDINANCE NO 7178

AN ORDINANCE relating to comprehensive planning; adopting the King County Comprehensive Plan--1985 as the countywide comprehensive land use plan for King County; amending Ordinance 3669, Section 4, and Ordinance 263, Article 2, Section 3, and KCC 20.12.030; amending Ordinance 4305, Section 2, and Ordinance 4472, Section 1 and KCC 20.12.050; amending Ordinance 3813, Section 1, and Ordinance 1096, Sections 1 and 2, and KCC 20.12.090; amending Ordinance 2555, Section 1, and KCC 20.12.150; amending Ordinance 4035, Sections 1 through 3, and Ordinance 2707, Section 1, and KCC 20.12.160; amending Ordinance 3064, Section 1, and KCC 20.54.010; adding new sections to KCC 20.12; repealing Ordinance 5319 in its entirety, Ordinance 4686 in its entirety, Ordinance 4305, Section 1, Ordinance 263, Article 2, Section 1, and KCC 20.12.010; repealing Ordinance 1285 in its entirety; repealing Ordinance 1435 in its entirety; repealing Ordinance 2429 in its entirety; repealing Ordinance 1683, Section 1, and KCC 20.12.100; repealing Ordinance 1838, Section 1, and KCC 20.12.110; repealing Ordinance 1839, Section 1, and KCC 20.12.120; repealing Ordinance 1840, Section 1, and KCC 20.12.130; repealing Ordinance 2991, Section 1, and KCC 20.12.140; repealing Ordinance 3345, Section 1, and KCC 20.12.220; repealing Ordinance 3384, Section 1, and KCC 20.12.230; repealing Ordinance 3649, Section 1, and KCC 20.12.260; repealing Ordinance 4688, Section 2, and KCC 20.12.280; repealing Ordinance 4688, Section 3, and KCC 20.12.290; repealing Ordinance 5136 in its entirety, and KCC 20.12.310;

PREAMBLE:

For the purpose of effective comprehensive land use planning and regulation, the King County Council makes the following legislative findings:

1. Unincorporated King County has experienced and will continue to experience population and employment growth, resulting in competing demands for public facilities and services and land uses, and requires county-wide land use planning and regulations.
2. Since adoption of the 1964 Comprehensive Plan, King County has adopted over 30 plan amendments, including policies on open space, environmental protection, housing, energy, and transportation, as well as many community plans and plan revisions.
3. Since 1978, the King County Council and County Executive have been working, through the growth management program, to update the 1964 Comprehensive Plan and its amendments, to explore the planning issues facing King County, and to make King County's land use policies internally consistent and capable of effective implementation. The result of that effort is the King County Comprehensive Plan--1985.
4. King County, with the assistance of the Executive Task Force on Growth Management, and the King County Council Advisory Committee on the King County Comprehensive Plan--1985, the incorporated cities and towns and other public agencies, and many members of the general public, has studied and considered alternative policies for the overall growth and development of King County, and has considered the environmental impacts of the King County Comprehensive Plan--1985 and its initial implementing measures (these measures will be considered and adopted separately from the plan). King County has prepared and distributed an environmental impact statement for the King County Comprehensive Plan--1985 and its initial implementation.
5. The King County Comprehensive Plan--1985 and its initial implementation provide for the coordination and regulation of public and private development and bear a substantial relationship to, and are necessary for, the public health, safety, and general welfare of King County and its residents.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE KING COUNTY COUNCIL

SECTION 1. Ordinance 5319 in its entirety, Ordinance 4686 in its entirety, and Ordinance 4305, Section 1, and Ordinance 263, Article 2, Section 1, and KCC 20.12.010 are each hereby repealed, and the following is substituted: Comprehensive Plan Adopted. Under the provisions of Article 990 of the King County Charter the King County Comprehensive Plan--1985, attached to this ordinance, is adopted and declared to be the comprehensive plan for King County until amended, repealed or superceded. The comprehensive plan shall be the principal planning document for the orderly physical development of the county and shall be used to guide community plans, functional plans, provision of public facilities and services, review of proposed incorporations and annexations, official controls, and land development decisions.

SECTION 2. Relationship of comprehensive plan to previously adopted plans, policies and land use regulations. King County recognizes the need for time to implement the comprehensive plan, and the need for specifying which prevails if the adopted comprehensive plan conflicts with any previously adopted plans, policies and land use regulations, until any conflicting portions of those plans, policies and regulations are amended to conform to the comprehensive plan. When adopted, the King County Comprehensive Plan--1985 shall relate to previously adopted plans, policies and land use regulations as follows:

A. Previously adopted community plans and area zoning shall continue in effect until revised to be consistent with the comprehensive plan, and until such revisions are adopted shall govern in accordance with the provisions of subsection C.

B. Pending or proposed community plans, community plan revisions, amendments to the Sewerage General Plan and its local service areas, and amendments to adopted land use regulations, which are adopted on or after the effective date of this ordinance, shall conform to all applicable policies of the comprehensive plan.

C. Unclassified use permits and zone reclassifications, which are pending or proposed on or after the effective date of this ordinance, shall conform to the comprehensive plan and applicable adopted community plans as follows:

1. For aspects of proposals where both the comprehensive plan and a previously adopted community plan have applicable policies or plan map designations which do not conflict, both the comprehensive plan and community plan shall govern.

2. For aspects of proposals where both the comprehensive plan and a previously adopted community plan have applicable policies or plan map designations which conflict, the community plan shall govern until revised to conform to the comprehensive plan.

3. For aspects of proposals where either the comprehensive plan or a previously adopted community plan, but not both, has applicable policies or plan map designations, the plan with the applicable policies or designations shall govern.

D. Proposed subdivisions, and short subdivisions, conditional uses for which significant adverse environmental impacts have not been identified, may rely on existing zoning to govern proposed uses and densities; subdivisions, short subdivisions and conditional uses also may rely on specific facility improvement standards adopted by ordinance (including but not limited to street improvement, sewage disposal, and water supply standards) which conflict with the comprehensive plan, but shall be conditioned to conform to all applicable comprehensive plan policies on environmental protection, open space, design, site planning, and adequacy of on-site and off-site public facilities and services, in cases where specific standards have not been adopted.

E. Permit applications for proposed buildings and grading, and applications for variances, when categorically exempt from the procedural requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act, may rely on existing zoning and specific facility improvement standards adopted by ordinance.

F. Nothing in this section shall limit the county's authority to approve, deny or condition proposals in accordance with the State Environmental Policy Act.

SECTION 3. Ordinance 3669, Section 4, and Ordinance 263, Article 2, Section 3, and KCC 20.12.030 are each amended to read as follows:

Amplification of elements. A. The comprehensive plan may thereafter be progressively amplified and augmented in scope by expanding and increasing the general provisions and proposals for all or any one of the elements set forth herein and by adding provisions and proposals for the optional elements set forth in Section 20.12.040. The comprehensive plan may also be amplified, augmented and implemented by progressively developing community plans. The community plan goals, guidelines, policies and area zoning shall be consistent with the comprehensive plan.

B. The comprehensive plan map and policies shall be reviewed and evaluated five years from the effective date of this ordinance and every five years thereafter, to determine whether the plan's key concepts are being implemented effectively, to reflect new community goals, and to respond to changing conditions. The review and evaluation shall be in the form of a report from the county executive to the council, with public input, findings and recommendations.

D. The comprehensive plan map may be amended through either the community plan process or in response to individual public or private proposals through the processes set forth in this chapter.

SECTION 4. Ordinance 4305, Section 2, Ordinance 4472, Section 1, and KCC 20.12.050 are each amended to read as follows:

A. The purposes of having a specific plan amendment process are:

1. To insure that the comprehensive plan and community plans are modified as the result of an area-wide or comprehensive planning process based on sound planning principles and involving citizens and elected officials rather than a piece-meal, lot-by-lot basis;

2. To insure consistency between the comprehensive plan and, adopted community plans; and to ensure that individual zone classifications, subdivisions and other development permits, and public projects conform to the comprehensive plan and community plans;

3. To insure that plans are updated to meet changing circumstances;

4. To allow for more frequent changes in plans to address unanticipated changes, policy conflicts, or new issues not addressed in an original plan.

B. Community plans are designed to guide private development and public projects within a community planning area for approximately six years from date of adoption. Determination of the need for revision shall be based on how growth and development have occurred compared with projections and past levels of activity for the planning area and on how the plan addresses issues of current concern to area residents and the county.

C. The comprehensive plan is designed to guide community plans, private development and public projects over a long-term period. It will be reviewed and evaluated every five years, pursuant to KCC 20.12.030.

SECTION 5. Ordinance 4305, Section 3, Ordinance 4472, Section 2, and KCC 20.12.060 are each amended to read as follows:

Plan amendments - Council procedure. The council may determine that it is in the public interest to consider revising the comprehensive plan before its five-year review and evaluation, or a community plan before its expected six-year revision by finding that one or more of the circumstances applicable to the comprehensive plan or a community plan set forth in Section 20.12.070 is present. The council shall make such a finding by adopting a motion containing the finding, after adequate public notification. For the purpose of this section, "adequate public notification" means legal notice in a newspaper of general circulation within the community planning area or areas affected for two weeks prior to adoption of the motion, plus written notification to appropriate community groups and other interested parties within the affected community planning area or areas. Adequate public notification as defined herein shall not be construed to require mailing of written notice to all property owners within the community planning area or areas affected.

SECTION 6. Ordinance 3813, Section 1, and Ordinance 1096, Sections 1 and 2, and KCC 20.12.090 are each amended to read as follows:

Park development policies. "King County Park Development Policies," attached to Ordinance 3813 are adopted and serve as a general basis for a park and recreation facility development, except that the comprehensive plan shall prevail where conflicts, if any, occur.

SECTION 7. Ordinance 1285, in its entirety, is hereby repealed. Ordinance 1435, in its entirety, is hereby repealed. Ordinance 2429, in its entirety, is hereby repealed.

SECTION 8. Ordinance 1683, Section 1, and KCC 20.12.100 are each hereby repealed.

SECTION 9. Ordinance 1838, Section 1, and KCC 20.12.110 are each hereby repealed.

SECTION 10. Ordinance 1839, Section 1, and KCC 20.12.120 are each hereby repealed.

SECTION 11. Ordinance 1840, Section 1, and KCC 20.12.130 are each hereby repealed.

SECTION 12. Ordinance 2991, Section 1, and KCC 20.12.140 are each hereby repealed.

SECTION 13. Ordinance 2555, Section 1, and KCC 20.12.150 are each amended to read as follows:

Housing report. The policy statements of the housing report attached to Ordinance 2555 are adopted and constitute official county policy for King County programs which affect housing supply, condition, occupancy, cost, design, mix and location.

SECTION 14. Ordinance 4035, Sections 1, 2 and 3, and Ordinance 2707, Section 1, and KCC 20.12.160 are each amended to read as follows:

Sewerage general plan. The "King County Sewerage General Plan" attached to Ordinance 4035, is adopted as a functional plan, implementing the King County comprehensive plan.

As a functional plan, the sewerage general plan shall implement the comprehensive plan, which shall prevail where conflicts, if any, may occur. Boundary changes and expansions of local service areas shall conform to the criteria set forth in the comprehensive plan, which shall replace those set forth in sections 6.2(A) and 6.5 of the "King County Sewerage General Plan."

SECTION 15. Ordinance 3345, Section 1, and KCC 20.12.220 are each hereby repealed.

SECTION 16. Ordinance 3384, Section 1, and KCC 20.12.230 are each hereby repealed.

SECTION 17. Ordinance 3649, Section 1, and KCC 20.12.260 are each hereby repealed.

SECTION 18. Ordinance 4688, Section 2, and KCC 20.12.280 are each hereby repealed.

SECTION 19. Ordinance 4688, Section 3, and KCC 20.12.290 are each hereby repealed.

SECTION 20. Ordinance 5136, in its entirety, and KCC 20.12.310 are each hereby repealed.

SECTION 21. Ordinance 3064, Section 1, and KCC 20.54.010 are each amended to read as follows:

Findings and declaration of purpose.

A. The council finds that:

1. King County presently contains approximately fifty-five thousand acres of land which are being actively farmed.
2. King County's land in active agricultural use has declined by an average of three thousand five hundred acres per year since 1945.
3. The existence of agricultural lands in an urban county such as King County also provides citizens of King County opportunities to pursue livelihoods dependent upon this specialized land resource.

4. The existence of land in agricultural uses in an urban county such as King County provides unique open space and educational benefits and contributes to the quality of the life enjoyed by the citizens of the county.

5. King County's agricultural lands are a unique land resource which serve as an essential factor contributing to the viability of the agricultural industry in King County as well as provide open space benefits for the citizens of the county.

6. The continued viability of agriculture in King County is dependent upon combined agricultural land protection programs and agricultural support programs.

7. For certain areas within King County, an agricultural land protection program based upon both land-use regulations and compensation to property owners is the most effective means of protecting existing agricultural lands and private property rights.

8. The council declares that the purpose of this chapter is to protect specific agricultural lands in unincorporated King County by applying the open space and development policies of the King County comprehensive plan.

B. The council further finds that:

1. The policies of the King County comprehensive plan, support the protection of existing agricultural lands in King County.

C. The council further finds, based upon a study completed by King County, that:

1. The input, market, and production sectors of the agricultural industry in King County currently provide approximately six thousand two hundred full-time jobs, one thousand four hundred part-time jobs, and seventeen thousand seasonal jobs annually.

2. The production sector of the agricultural industry in King County currently provides gross receipts in excess of forty million dollars annually.

3. Sewer and water local improvement district assessments on agricultural land are frequently detrimental to the operation of farms in King County.

4. There is a limited amount of land which is well-suited for horticultural or livestock-related agricultural uses and this land suitability is determined by specific factors which include, but are not limited to, soil capability, parcel size and the level of utility assessments.

5. More than sixty-five percent of Class II and Class III agricultural capability soils, approximately ninety percent of the lands in King County which are under the State Current Use Taxation Program, and approximately eighty percent of the lands currently in active farming, are located in four specific areas of the county: Snoqualmie Valley/Patterson Creek, Sammamish Valley/Bear Creek, Lower Green River Valley, and the Enumclaw Plateau/Green Valley.

6. Horticultural farming is the primary type of agricultural activity in the Sammamish Valley/Bear Creek area and the Lower Green River Valley area and viable horticultural farm operation in these areas utilize land parcels which have an average size of approximately ten acres. Livestock operations are the primary type of agricultural activity in the Snoqualmie Valley/Patterson Creek area and the Enumclaw/Green Valley area and viable livestock operations in these areas utilize land parcels which are forty acres or larger.

7. King County contains sufficient land to accommodate existing and projected commercial, residential and industrial development as well as to maintain existing agricultural land uses. In 1990, if all undeveloped land containing Class II and Class III soils remains undeveloped and urban development occurs at currently projected rates, more than one hundred forty-five thousand acres of land zoned for urban uses will remain available for development.

SECTION 22. Severability. Should any section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this ordinance be declared unconstitutional or invalid for any reason, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portion of this ordinance.

INTRODUCED AND READ for the first time this 23rd day of April, 1984.

PASSED this 8th day of April, 1985.

**KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

ATTEST:

Gary Grant
Chairman

Dorothy M. Owens
Clerk of the Council

APPROVED this 15th day of April, 1985.

Randy Revelle
King County Executive

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

I. PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY

A. Background

The King County Comprehensive Plan--1985 is the comprehensive land use plan for King County, and contains policies to direct County decisions affecting growth and land development.

The land area of King County is 2134 square miles, or 1,365,760 acres, of which approximately 50 percent (or 680,000 acres) is federal forest or commercial forest land and unavailable for development in the foreseeable future. Over 220 square miles of land are occupied by King County's 29 incorporated cities and rural towns. About 80 percent of this area, or over 180 square miles, is taken up by 6 cities: Seattle, Bellevue, Auburn, Kent, Renton and Redmond. King County's 1984 population was approximately 1,326,600 persons, of whom 538,308 lived in the unincorporated area and 788,292 lived in the cities.

King County adopted its first comprehensive plan in 1964. That plan anticipated growth but did not foresee many of the problems which have arisen since that time: energy shortages, congested highways, air pollution, disappearing farmlands and rising costs for housing and public services.

The County's planning system has also become more complex since 1964. Community planning was initiated to benefit from increased citizens' interest in planning, and to apply general policies to local areas. In addition, several functional plans were prepared to address concerns such as flood control and shorelines management or to deal with technical requirements for transportation and utilities. Also, the comprehensive plan itself was amended in a patchwork fashion. Not all adopted policies are included or referenced in the original document.

The undefined relationships among functional plans, community plans, and the comprehensive plan provided little direction for settling conflicts and increased the risk of inconsistency. Property owners, planners, developers and other citizens also claimed the plan did not adequately address two other needs: coordinating development with public improvements and keeping costs of facilities as low as possible.

In response, the County Executive and the County Council established the Growth Management Program in 1978 to reexamine and revise the comprehensive plan. This study led to a decision to develop a new plan rather than to continue amending the 1964 document. The King County Comprehensive Plan--1985 is based on policy direction from King County Council Motion 4152 and from the King County Executive, as well as the views and comments of County residents, cities and other public agencies, developers, businesses and other interest groups expressed throughout the preparation and review of this document.

This Comprehensive Plan must address the population and employment growth expected for King County. The County's population increased 9.5% between 1970 and 1980. Forecasts project the population will increase 9.3% between 1980 and 1990, then increase 19.1% between 1990 and 2000. King County's 2000 forecast population of 1,638,920 will be almost 30% greater than the 1980 population of 1,269,749. Three-fourths of that population growth is forecast to occur in unincorporated King County. If there are no major annexations or incorporations, by the year 2000 almost half of all King County residents will live in unincorporated King County. This plan needs to prepare for the future by guiding and accommodating the expected growth.

B. Purpose

The purpose of a comprehensive land use plan is to translate community values and goals into a framework for decisions on growth, land use, and public facilities and services. It expresses a long-range vision of how citizens want their community to look and function in the future, and gives guidance for achieving that vision.

C. Authority

King County adopts a comprehensive land use plan and implementing measures under the authority of the King County Charter (Articles 2 and 3). King County's approach to land use planning and regulation is similar to that provided for in the Washington State Planning Enabling Act (RCW 36.70), but as a Home Rule County operating under a charter, King County relies directly on the Washington State Constitution for authority to plan and regulate land use. (See Chapter Three, Planning and Implementation.)

The County's land use authority is exercised in the unincorporated territory of King County; the incorporated cities and towns have independent authority over land use within their boundaries, although the County, cities and towns may cooperate voluntarily on planning issues of mutual interest. This intergovernmental cooperation is crucial to implementing the King County Comprehensive Plan.

II. GOALS

King County's elected officials have provided strong guidance for the Comprehensive Plan, specifically through goal statements adopted in King County Council Motion 4152 adopted in 1979, and in written policy direction from the King County Executive prior to plan preparation.

The goals of the King County Comprehensive Plan--1985 are:

1. Guide population and employment growth to protect public health and safety, and maintain a quality environment in King County.
2. Protect King County's natural beauty, open space, environmentally sensitive features, attractive man-made environment, and historic features by guiding the overall pattern of growth and the development of specific sites.
3. Indicate clearly where growth can best be accommodated and is desired and encourage development in those areas through incentives and land use regulations.

4. Enable local governments -- including King County, cities, and other agencies -- to provide adequate and affordable public facilities and services, or to enable private provision of improvements, and to allocate their costs equitably.
5. Encourage affordable housing and diversity in housing types, and lifestyle choices ranging from urban to rural.
6. Encourage economic development that provides diverse and continuing employment opportunities for King County residents.
7. Encourage energy conservation.
8. Conserve natural resource lands for long-term agriculture, forestry and mining.
9. Provide a framework for effective cooperation among King County residents and their government, cities and other public agencies, and the private sector in addressing the many issues of managing growth responsibly.
10. Provide clear policy direction for land use regulations that are predictable and will enable development proposals to be reviewed efficiently.

These goals are elaborated through the plan concept and more detailed land use policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

III. KING COUNTY PLANNING SYSTEM

King County has a three-part planning system. First, the King County Comprehensive Plan is the County's long-range, county-wide comprehensive land use plan. The plan consists of goals, land use policies and the Comprehensive Plan Map. Second are community plans that develop detailed land use and capital improvement plans for local subareas of King County based on the policies adopted in the Comprehensive Plan. Third are functional plans, which provide detailed programs for providing public facilities and governmental services to support the policies of the Comprehensive Plan and community plans. Functional plans are prepared by King County, special districts and other agencies such as Metro.

This three-part planning system is supported by up-to-date information on population and development that is analyzed and published every year by King County. Using this information and analysis, King County can monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and impacts of the Comprehensive Plan and its implementing measures.

King County implements the Comprehensive Plan, community plans and functional plans through zoning, decisions on individual land development proposals, approval of special district plans, annexations, and public spending for facilities and services.

The relationships among the different types of plans, land use regulations and facilities and services, are set forth in more detail in Chapter Three, Planning and Implementation.

IV. HOW TO USE THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A. How this Document is Used

The King County Comprehensive Plan provides a legally recognized framework for making decisions about land use in King County. It is intended to aid a broad range of public and private users, including community groups, builders, developers, King County officials and other government agencies. The plan helps these various users in several ways.

First, the plan is the framework for plans and regulations that govern the location and intensity of land uses throughout unincorporated King County. The plan's policies provide the basis for more detailed community plans and functional plans, and for evaluating proposed changes in zoning, and other developments such as subdivisions. It thus provides County officials with direction for developing detailed plans and reviewing development proposals. It also indicates to the public how likely King County would be to approve changes in plans, zoning or other regulations that apply to a community or specific parcel.

Second, the Comprehensive Plan provides the framework for decisions about public facilities and services (such as where facilities should be located to support planned growth). It is intended that special districts use the plan in preparing their functional plans for delivering services.

Third, it is intended that cities and other public agencies use the Comprehensive Plan as they develop plans and make project decisions. The cities, in cooperation with King County, will use the plan in developing their own comprehensive plans, growth policies, and proposals to annex County territory. Federal, state and regional agencies also will use the plan in making project decisions.

The Comprehensive Plan is a broad policy document intended to guide more specific land use decisions in the future. Regulations, such as zoning and building codes or road construction standards, are detailed rules applied uniformly, with little discretion. Therefore, although the Comprehensive Plan is adopted by ordinance and carries legal weight when applied to specific land use decisions, it uses the word "should" rather than the nondiscretionary "shall" found in regulations.

B. How this Document is Organized

The King County Comprehensive Plan--1985 consists of goals, a plan concept, a Comprehensive Plan Map, and specific land use policies. The plan concept establishes the overall direction for the physical development of King County, consistent with the goals set forth in this chapter. The plan map shows the locations of the major land use designations described in the plan concept (for example, Urban and Rural Areas). The specific policies explain relationships among the Comprehensive Plan, other plans and land use regulations, and address land uses (for example, residential, commercial and industrial). The text further explains the policies and is intended to be considered along with them when making decisions.

Users of the Comprehensive Plan should refer to the plan concept (Chapter Two) as well as the chapter addressing a particular concern when evaluating a proposed action for consistency with the plan's policies. When decisions involve annexations by cities or special service districts, Chapter Three (Planning and Implementation) also should be consulted.

Chapter Two

PLAN CONCEPT

The plan concept is a vision of how King County should grow and develop while protecting its high quality of life and sharing equitably the public and private costs and benefits of growth. Residential, commercial and industrial growth should occur in a pattern that protects public health and safety, while enhancing King County's varied community character, natural beauty, and environmental quality.

The Comprehensive Plan's plan concept guides King County's efforts to achieve these ends by indicating clearly where new housing, shopping, and economic development should be encouraged and where open space, rural areas, farmlands, and forests should be protected. The plan provides a framework in which King County, the cities, special purpose districts, and other public agencies, as well as the private sector, can cooperate effectively and responsibly in managing growth and development, as well as establishing a predictable and orderly process for accommodating change.

The text and general land use policies in Chapter Two explain the plan concept and provide a framework for the subsequent, more detailed chapters of the plan. The text and policies describe the geographic pattern of growth and land uses envisioned for King County, as well as the County's approach to providing facilities and services needed to support that growth pattern.

This chapter also contains the Comprehensive Plan Map. The map applies the major land use designations of the plan concept as defined in this chapter to King County.

I. GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

The plan concept is a vision of how King County should look in the future -- the pattern of growth and development that will recognize the variety of natural and man-made features and conditions throughout King County, the desire of its residents to have different types of living and working environments, and the need for adequate public facilities and services. The following major land use designations (and subcategories) define this pattern and are shown on the Comprehensive Plan Map:

- **URBAN AREAS**, where most new housing and jobs will locate, and where most public spending for facilities, services and open space will be focused, to assure liveability and efficiency.
 - Urban Activity Centers, where most commercial/industrial growth will locate. (Some commercial development also will locate in Community and Neighborhood Centers to serve nearby residents. These smaller centers are shown on community plan maps.)

- TRANSITIONAL AREAS, where development densities and services will remain low, either until urban facilities and services needed for urban densities can be assured, and additional land is needed to accommodate growth, or until a long-term Rural Area designation is applied, by a community plan or plan revision.
- OPEN SPACE, which will consist of valuable scenic, recreational, and environmentally sensitive lands throughout King County.
- RURAL AREAS, where development densities and service levels will remain low so that their primarily undeveloped and pastoral character, small farms, and wood lots may continue.
 - Rural Activity Centers, where appropriately scaled commercial/industrial growth and higher density housing will locate.
- RESOURCE LANDS, where incentives and land use regulations will promote long-term agriculture, forestry, and extraction of mineral resources.

Economic development is intended to be distributed equitably throughout the County so that each community contains local jobs and industry. Most commercial/industrial development is intended to be concentrated in Urban Activity Centers and in both incorporated and unincorporated Rural Towns, including their adopted annexation areas.

The text and policies below describe these land use designations in more detail. Section III, King County Comprehensive Plan Map, shows the specific locations of plan concept land use designations. The plan concept also includes policies on land use and public facilities and services which are not expressed as plan map designations.

A. Urban Areas

Urban King County is characterized by great diversity, including a wide variety of high and low residential densities, availability of services, and community character. This diversity is a valuable part of King County's quality of life. Urban Areas include incorporated cities and contain most of the County's population and economic base. Urban Areas also contain regionally important educational, cultural, and recreational resources, major parks, and natural open space. Most of King County's past growth has occurred in or contributed to establishing its Urban Areas and most future growth is expected and encouraged there.

The plan encourages residential and employment growth within Urban Areas in a pattern that protects environmental quality and aesthetic features, encourages community diversity, provides economic opportunities for King County's growing population, controls public costs by using facilities efficiently, and conserves energy by having jobs, shopping, services and housing near each other. This pattern will consist of commercial/industrial areas that serve surrounding communities, ranging from regional to neighborhood in scale, and a variety of high- and low-density residential areas.

Most commercial/industrial development is intended to be concentrated in Urban Activity Centers. These Urban Activity Centers will be the primary locations of employment opportunities, shopping and services, and commercial or cultural recreational activities. Planned concentrations of commercial/industrial development in Urban Activity Centers will provide an attractive environment for business and enable efficient provision of public services to support economic growth while controlling the impacts of intensive land uses. (New Urban Activity Centers may be proposed as Comprehensive Plan Map amendments: see Chapter Three, Planning and Implementation.)

Smaller concentrations of retail and commercial activities will develop as Community and Neighborhood Centers. Community Centers are relatively small business districts that provide goods and services to several neighborhoods. Neighborhood Centers will be very small, conveniently located business areas that provide residents with stores and some services for everyday needs within walking distance or a short drive of their homes.

Housing types and densities in urban residential communities will vary widely, depending on natural features, environmental and service constraints, and local character. Multifamily and higher density single family development will be located on dry, buildable land where all required facilities and services can be provided efficiently. Lower density housing will be located on relatively constrained lands (for example, areas with little flat ground) and areas already mostly developed at a low density. Overall density in Urban Areas will ultimately be high enough to support an efficient transit system and other urban public services, and provide affordable housing choices.

THE URBAN AREA DESIGNATIONS SHOWN ON THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAP ARE BASED ON THE FOLLOWING FACTORS:

1. Natural features and land characteristics are capable of supporting urban development without significant environmental degradation.
2. Public facilities and services (such as transportation, sewers, fire and police protection) are in place, or can be provided at reasonable cost, to accommodate urban growth.
3. Opportunities exist for a local balance of housing, jobs and shopping, for convenient transportation and energy efficiency.
4. King County and the cities have made firm commitments to urban development and urban services in the area.

The King County Comprehensive Plan--1985 Technical Appendix contains detailed criteria and data explaining the specific locations of Urban Area boundaries.

The Comprehensive Plan directly affects land use planning decisions only in unincorporated King County. The cities, however, contain most of the County's economic base and a substantial part of its urban population, and provide urban services to adjacent unincorporated areas. In addition, many public services vital to urban growth are provided to unincorporated areas by independent special purpose districts. The significant role of the cities and districts therefore must be recognized in County decision-making and through joint planning efforts to achieve the pattern of growth and land uses envisioned in the plan concept.

The following policies provide guidance for growth in Urban Areas and are the basis for subsequent chapters of the Comprehensive Plan.

PC-101 King County should encourage most population and employment growth to locate in Urban Areas, especially in cities.

Cities are preferred focal points for growth, by virtue of their comparatively high existing service levels and superior abilities to raise revenue and provide new facilities and services. Since cities typically have much less vacant land than nearby unincorporated areas, growth in cities will occur primarily through territorial expansion, and through limited redevelopment and infill.

PC-102 Residential development in Urban Areas should include a full range of single family and multifamily housing types. The overall density of Urban Areas should be high enough to support efficient urban services and provide affordable housing choices, with a variety of high, medium and low densities based on landform, environmental suitability, and availability or planned availability of facilities and services.

Chapter Five, Residential Development, contains more detailed policies on housing location and density, and on limits to the use of environmentally sensitive lands.

Urban Activity Centers, and Community and Neighborhood Centers

Urban Areas will contain commercial/industrial concentrations of regional importance, as well as smaller, primarily retail developments to serve surrounding community and neighborhood residents. King County will designate centers for commercial and industrial uses based on existing development patterns and availability or planned availability of public facilities and services. Urban Activity Centers will be designated through future public planning efforts, or in response to proposals made to King County.

The designated Urban Activity Centers shown on the Comprehensive Plan Map (and new centers added through subsequent amendments) will be the primary location for employment growth in King County. These centers will be major concentrations of commercial and industrial uses that can eventually serve as transit destinations.

PC-103 King County should encourage development of Urban Activity Centers to meet the needs of the region's economy and to provide employment, shopping, services, and leisure-time amenities in diverse locations in all Urban Areas.

Smaller, primarily retail, commercial developments serving nearby residents are not shown on the Comprehensive Plan Map, but are an important part of the plan concept. Community plans will be the primary method of designating Community and Neighborhood Centers for such development.

PC-104 Community Centers in Urban Areas should be designed to meet shopping and service needs of the surrounding community. Community Centers should remain relatively small to be compatible with surrounding residential areas and able to be supported by area-wide service levels.

PC-105 Neighborhood Centers in Urban Areas should be designed to provide everyday shopping and services to a relatively small, nearby population. Neighborhood Centers should remain small to be compatible with surrounding residential areas, and should be located at frequent enough intervals for convenient access.

Chapter Six, Commercial and Industrial Development, contains more detailed policies on designating Urban Activity Centers, Community Centers, and Neighborhood Centers, and on commercial and industrial land uses.

B. Transitional Areas

The Transitional Area designation is applied to lands that are physically suitable for either urban or rural development and which currently have very low service and development levels, as well as some farms and forests. Areas identified as Rural on the Comprehensive Plan Map are not included as Transitional Areas. King County will plan for Transitional Areas, through community plans, to undergo either a transition to urban land uses in the future including remaining as Transitional on an interim basis, or be identified as appropriate for a long-term rural status.

The purpose of the Transitional Area designation and its implementing measures is to reserve large parcels of land for future urban development through interim low densities and clustering, while preserving appropriate areas for a rural lifestyle within the Transitional Area. The designation will help phase growth with the provision of public facilities and services, by limiting growth in these areas until urban facilities and services can be provided.

TRANSITIONAL AREA DESIGNATIONS SHOWN ON THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAP MEET SOME OR ALL OF THE FOLLOWING FACTORS:

1. The area is currently rural or developed at very low densities.
2. Natural features and land characteristics are capable of supporting urban development, when appropriate services are available, without significant environmental degradation.
3. There are no major physical barriers to providing urban services in the future at reasonable cost.
4. The area is outside the Local Service Areas as established by the Sewerage General Plan and subsequently amended by community plans.
5. The area contains significant amounts of vacant land in large parcels which allow the options of either future urbanization or long-term rural densities.

PC-106 Community plans should define the appropriate locations for long-term rural and urban uses in Transitional Areas, identify locations where existing low density residential patterns should continue, and identify future urban locations that should remain Transitional on an interim basis.

PC-107 Portions of Transitional Areas which are predominantly undeveloped but are expected to be urban in the future should be limited to interim very low-density residential development and other existing uses until adequate facilities and services can be made available to support urban residential, commercial and industrial uses. These interim land uses should be supported by low levels of public services that are planned and designed to provide for future urban development.

Policies PC-106 and PC-107 will be implemented with interim land use regulations and facility improvement standards designed to keep demand for public services low and maintain the future urban or rural development choices for these lands.

As parts of Transitional Areas develop and become ripe for redesignation as Urban Areas, neighborhoods which have already developed at low densities will offer a semi-rural lifestyle choice that contributes to community diversity and character. Requirements for facilities and services must be tailored to the needs of these low-density developments.

PC-108 Services for those portions of Transitional Areas where low density residential development is provided for by a community plan should be designed only to serve those low-density areas. Urban level service should not be introduced into or extended through those areas when other reasonable design options exist.

PC-109 In those portions of the Transitional Area where community plans have been adopted prior to the adoption of this Comprehensive Plan, the plan designations and area zoning used in those community plans should remain in effect until revised to more closely conform to this Comprehensive Plan.

The interim regulations used in Transitional Areas will limit development to residences at rural densities, and encourage clustering to preserve large parcels for eventual urban uses where ultimate Urban designations have been decided by community plans. Facility standards will address both present and future uses (for example, road standards will allow streets appropriate for very low densities within rights-of-way large enough for upgrading when needed).

PC-110 In order to prevent premature expansion of urban services into Transitional Areas and to encourage efficient use of land in existing Urban Areas, redesignation of Transitional Areas to Urban should only occur when necessary to achieve an adequate supply of land, based on county-wide needs.

PC-111 King County, through the community planning process, should assure that portions of Transitional Areas which are designated for future urban uses are not allowed to develop at densities and in subdivision patterns which would preclude future urban densities, except where existing development patterns and character make higher densities impractical.

C. Open Space

Open space is essential to a desirable community. It provides visual variety and beauty to complement developed areas; it protects environmental quality; and it provides opportunities for outdoor recreation. King County's varied topography forms the basis for an Open Space system of unusual beauty. Hilltops and shorelines offer views of lakes, mountains, and Puget Sound. Undeveloped ravines, steep slopes, river corridors, and wetlands form natural greenbelts and shelter wildlife. Open space contributes significantly to the quality of life in King County. Open Space designations will include parks and natural areas in both public and private ownership.

OPEN SPACE DESIGNATIONS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF LAND:

1. Lands strategically located to provide scenic amenity and community identity within and between areas of urban development.

2. Lands physically suitable for recreation.
3. Environmentally sensitive areas protected by regulation, including wetlands, floodways, and steep slopes.

The following policies set forth the rationale for designating and protecting Open Space.

PC-112 King County should maintain a system of permanent Open Space to preserve the region's beauty and provide for continuing enjoyment of its natural features, and to meet the outdoor recreation needs of a growing population.

PC-113 King County's Open Space system should meet the following needs:

- a. Preserve physical and/or visual buffers within and between areas of urban and rural development;
- b. Provide for visual enjoyment and outdoor recreation; and
- c. Preserve natural areas and environmental features with significant educational, scientific, wildlife habitat, historic, or scenic values.

Chapter Four, Environment and Open Space, contains detailed policies on lands included in the Open Space system.

D. Rural Areas

Areas in King County, such as the Hobart Plateau, Vashon Island, the Snoqualmie Valley and Enumclaw Plateau, contain very low-density rural residential development, farms, forests, mining areas, small remote towns, and regionally important recreation areas. Designating and conserving these Rural Areas will maintain rural community character as a valued part of King County's diversity, provide choice in living environments, maintain a link to King County's heritage, allow small-scale farming and forestry, and buffer valuable Resource Lands (agriculture, timber, and mining) from incompatible uses. A clear indication of which lands will remain rural also fosters better use of limited funds for facilities and services by allowing King County to establish distinctly rural facility and service standards, and to focus most growth and services in Urban Areas.

Rural Activity Centers (incorporated and unincorporated) are a significant part of King County's diversity and heritage. Rural Activity Centers contribute to variety in development patterns and housing choices, and provide retail shopping and other services to nearby residents. Rural King County also contains several small Rural Neighborhood Centers, which provide limited local convenience shopping.

THE RURAL AREA DESIGNATIONS SHOWN ON THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAP INCLUDE AREAS THAT ARE CURRENTLY RURAL AND MEET ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

1. Good opportunities exist for small-scale farming and forestry (large-scale farms and forest lands are designated as Resource Lands).
2. A Rural Area designation will help buffer nearby Resource Lands from conflicting urban uses.

3. There are major physical barriers to providing urban services at reasonable cost.
4. Significant environmental constraints make the area generally unsuitable for intensive urban development.

The King County Comprehensive Plan--1985 Technical Appendix contains detailed criteria and data explaining the specific locations of Rural Area boundaries.

The following policies provide a framework for more detailed guidance of land use in Rural Areas.

PC-114 King County should preserve long-term Rural Areas with low residential densities and appropriate public improvements and services to provide for a rural lifestyle and protect rural character.

PC-115 The primary land use in Rural Areas beyond the planned expansion areas of Rural Activity Centers should be very low-density residential development. Rural Areas also may accommodate resource-based economic uses compatible with rural character and a rural level of public facilities and services, such as farming, forestry, extractive industries, recreation, and tourism.

Low overall densities in Rural Areas will be achieved through very large minimum lot sizes, or limited clustering at the same average densities when facilities and services permit (for example, soil conditions allow on-site sewage disposal on smaller lots). Rural Areas will contain diverse housing opportunities, through a mix of large lots, clustering, existing smaller lots, and higher densities in and adjacent to Rural Activity Centers as services permit.

Rural Activity Centers

PC-116 King County should work with the Rural Activity Centers to establish realistic areas for expansion of these towns by annexation and to ensure provision of necessary services for these expansion areas. Residential development at suburban or urban densities in these areas should be permitted if consistent with the plans for these towns, to the extent that services are or can be made available. Densities in these expansion areas may decrease adjacent to Rural Areas to provide a transition between Rural Activity Centers and Rural Areas.

PC-117 Commercial and industrial development in Rural Areas should locate in existing Rural Activity Centers, to provide employment, shopping, services and housing opportunities that will reinforce these towns as rural centers, at a scale compatible with surrounding roads, utilities, and rural character. Rural Activity Centers also should contain higher density housing. King County should work with Rural Activity Centers to plan for growth consistent with long-term protection of surrounding Rural Areas and Resource Lands.

PC-118 Limited convenience shopping and services for Rural Area residents should be provided by existing Rural Neighborhood Centers, which should remain small.

Policies PC-117 and PC-118 are based on the premise that Urban Areas are the preferred locations for significant new economic growth in King County. Existing Rural Activity Centers (incorporated and unincorporated) and Rural Neighborhood Centers are sufficient to accommodate growth contemplated by Policy PC-116 through reasonable expansion. Only if these circumstances change would new Rural Activity Centers or Rural Neighborhood Centers be appropriate, and then only if existing Resource Lands and Rural Areas could be maintained. (Chapter Three, Planning and Implementation, discusses procedures for changing the plan concept's land use designation boundaries through amendments to the Comprehensive Plan Map.)

E. Resource Lands

King County is fortunate to have a variety of lands rich in natural resources -- farmlands, forests, and deposits of gravel, coal, and other minerals. These natural resources are an important part of the regional economy, providing jobs, tax revenue, and valuable products and materials for local use and export. Farmlands and forests also provide aesthetic, recreational, and environmental benefits to the public, while contributing to the diverse character of King County. The Resource Lands designation is based on these important benefits, and indicates where King County land use plans and regulations will emphasize conserving these lands for productive use by resource industries.

RESOURCE LAND DESIGNATIONS ARE BASED ON THE FOLLOWING FACTORS:

1. The area has high natural resource value (good soils for farming or forestry, or good mineral deposits).
2. The land is in undivided parcels large enough to make resource management feasible.
3. The area is actively farmed or being managed for forestry or mineral extraction.
4. There is little or no conflict with adjacent land uses.

The King County Comprehensive Plan--1985 Technical Appendix contains detailed criteria and data explaining the specific locations of Resource Land boundaries.

The following policies state King County's intent to protect Resource Lands for long-term use by resource industries.

PC-119 King County should provide for long-term conservation of Resource Lands for productive agriculture, forestry, and mineral extraction.

PC-120 King County's land use regulations should encourage continued farming, logging, and mining of Resource Lands.

Chapter Seven, Resource Lands, contains more detailed policies to guide the protection of Resource Lands, as well as the location and operation of resource industries to prevent or minimize land use conflicts and environmental degradation.

II. FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Facilities and services will play a key role in achieving the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and the purposes of the plan concept, by supporting the growth and development pattern described above. King County, the cities and independent special service districts all have responsibilities for providing public services. Adequate facilities and services are especially important to attract and accommodate growth in Urban Areas while maintaining community quality. Facility and service spending and adequacy standards will be tailored to meet the different needs of Urban and Rural Areas and to protect their character.

A. Adequate Facilities and Services for Urban and Rural Areas

There are two main challenges to providing adequate facilities and services for growth and development in King County. First, King County must define what "adequate" means and distinguish between the different public service needs of Urban, Transitional and Rural Areas, and Resource Lands (the major differences will be between Urban and Rural Areas). Second, King County contains much more land than can be provided adequate facilities and services at an affordable cost in the near future. This requires the County to make the most effective use of improvements by concentrating spending in those geographic areas where the improvement will make the greatest contribution to the goals of the Comprehensive Plan, and by encouraging the special purpose districts to similarly focus their facility expenditures in these areas. Provision of public facilities by private developers in locations where public expenditures may be lagging is also appropriate.

- PC-201 Public facilities and services provided by all agencies in King County, whether directly or by private developer extensions or contributions, should be provided at levels that support existing and planned land uses.
- PC-202 The existing and scheduled availability and adequacy of planned facilities and services should be a major consideration in land use plans. Review of individual development proposals should include verification of the availability of all facilities and services essential to public health and safety in time to meet the needs generated by the proposal.
- PC-203 In cooperation with cities and other service providers, King County should set service level standards as the basis for defining the adequacy of facilities and services, consistent with the plan concept's growth and development pattern. These standards should:
- a. Distinguish between the public facility and service needs of Urban and Rural Areas;
 - b. Specify which facilities and services are essential to protect public health, safety and welfare, and which are needed to enhance community quality;
 - c. Specify which facilities and services must be provided or assured as development occurs, and which may follow as needs arise;
 - d. Be clearly defined (measurable when possible); and

- e. **Encourage allocation of facility and service costs efficiently and equitably between regional and local taxpayers and ratepayers, and between existing communities and new development.**

King County's service standards will encourage equitable sharing of costs by specifying, when possible, how facilities and services will be paid for (for example, developer installation vs. generally funded public works); specific state laws will often control funding (for example, how independent service districts set rates).

B. Focusing Provision of Facilities and Services in Urban Areas

Facilities and services are necessary for urban growth and essential for achieving high-quality, attractive communities. Since most growth will be encouraged in Urban Areas, and since the low densities to be maintained in Rural Areas require a minimum of public improvements, King County is committed to using its limited public resources to concentrate on providing public services in Urban Areas. The County also can set different spending priorities within Urban Areas, to maximize the impact of public spending and to attract certain kinds of growth to specific locations (for example, making an intersection improvement where such an improvement would remove a major impediment to achieving planned higher residential densities or meeting economic development needs).

- PC-204 King County should concentrate facilities and services in Urban Areas to make them attractive places to live and work and to achieve economies in public spending.**
- PC-205 Within Urban Areas, King County may establish geographic target areas in unincorporated King County that will have high priority for public facility and service improvements. These target areas should be established, following study and public review, in locations where public facility and service improvements would most effectively advance King County's economic development, energy efficiency, or affordable housing objectives. These target areas will shift over time as improvements are installed and adopted service level standards are attained.**
- PC-206 Urban Area lands without specific plans and zoning for urban uses and with limited facilities and services should remain in very low-density residential development and resource uses. These low-density land uses should be supported by a low level of public services, consistent with the need to provide for future urban growth.**

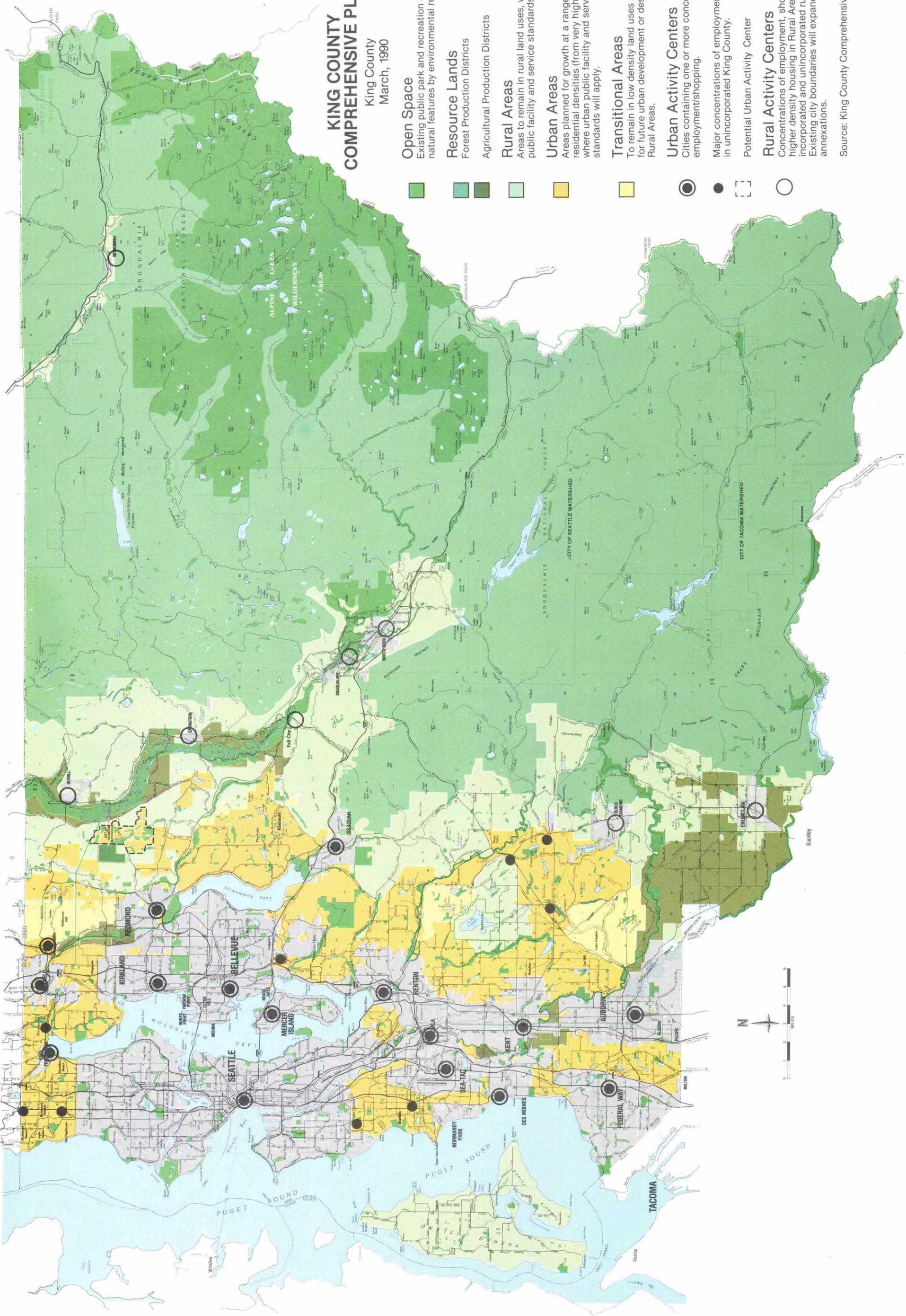
Chapter Eight, Facilities and Services, contains more detailed policies on facility and service spending priorities, standards, and development requirements.

III. KING COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAP

Figure PC-1 is a small-scale reproduction of the official Comprehensive Plan Map. The official plan map, on file with the Department of Planning and Community Development and with the Clerk of the Council, is at a scale large enough to permit specific location of the boundaries between the land use designations described in the plan concept.

The official plan map will be amended from time to time to carry out the plan's policies. The boundaries between Urban Areas, Rural Areas and Resource Lands are intended to be long-term and unchanging, but are subject to minor refinements by community plans and the area zoning process. Other designations, however, will change as King County grows: new Urban Activity Centers may be established; Transitional Areas will be redesignated as either Urban or Rural Areas through community plans; and Open Space designations will be added as lands are included in the Open Space system.

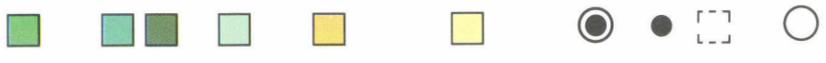
Chapter Three, Planning and Implementation, contains policies and text on plan map amendments and how the Comprehensive Plan Map relates to community plans.



KING COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

King County
March, 1990

- Open Space**
Existing public park and recreation areas, and natural features by environmental regulations.
- Resource Lands**
Forest Production Districts
Agricultural Production Districts
- Rural Areas**
Areas to remain in rural land uses, where rural public facility and service standards apply.
- Urban Areas**
Areas planned for growth at a range of residential densities (from very high to very low), where urban public facility and service standards will apply.
- Transitional Areas**
To remain in low density land uses as a reserve for future urban development or designation as Rural Areas.
- Urban Activity Centers**
Cities containing one or more concentrations of employment/shopping.
- Major concentrations of employment/shopping in unincorporated King County.
- Potential Urban Activity Center
- Rural Activity Centers**
Concentrations of employment, shopping and higher density housing in Rural Areas, including incorporated and unincorporated rural towns. Existing city boundaries will expand through annexations.



Source: King County Comprehensive Plan Map

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

The King County Comprehensive Plan provides direction for the physical development of King County. This direction is implemented through regulation of public and private land uses, provision of facilities and services, and encouragement of activities and development proposals that result in the desired land development pattern.

I. PLANNING IN KING COUNTY

A. Legal Authority and Administrative Structure

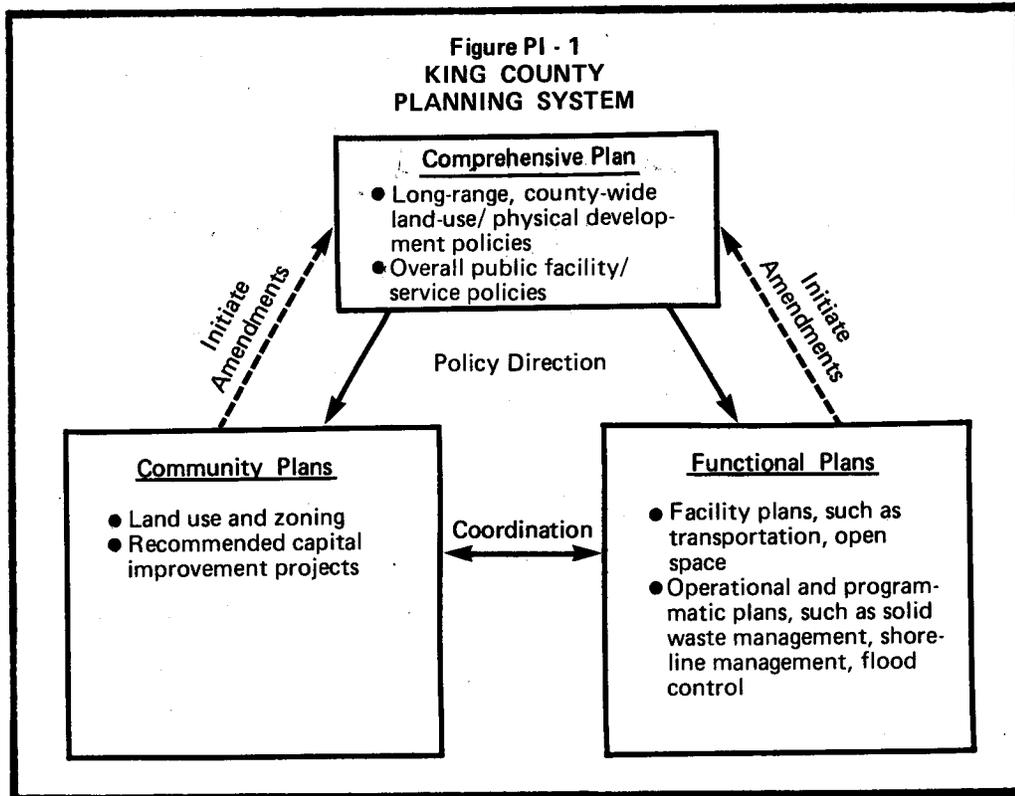
Incorporated cities or towns and counties in the state of Washington regulate land use as an exercise of the police power (Article XI, Section II, Washington State Constitution). The "police power" is the power of government, within constitutional limits, to regulate private conduct to protect public health, safety and welfare. As a Home Rule County operating under a charter, King County relies directly on the Washington State Constitution for its authority to plan and regulate land use. King County's land use planning and regulation process is generally similar to that provided for in the Planning Enabling Act (RCW 36.70). Other local governments rely on the Planning Commission Act (RCW 35.63), the Optional Municipal Code (RCW 35A.63) or the Planning Enabling Act for specific authority to prepare land use plans and zoning ordinances.

Article 2, Section 220.20 of the King County Charter gives the County Council responsibility for making policy and exercising all legislative powers, including adopting by ordinance "comprehensive plans including improvement plans for the present and future development of the county." Article 3, Section 320.20 gives the County Executive responsibility for exercising executive and administrative powers, including preparing "comprehensive plans including capital improvement plans."

Specific responsibility for preparing and implementing the Comprehensive Plan is assigned by ordinance to the King County Department of Planning and Community Development. Within the Department, the Planning Division prepares plans while the Building and Land Development Division administers and enforces land use regulations, including zoning, subdivision and construction codes.

Individual requests for zone changes, subdivisions, planned unit developments, unclassified use permits and certain appeals of administrative land use decisions are reviewed by the Zoning and Subdivision Examiner. The Examiner holds public hearings and makes recommendations to the Council for approval or denial of proposed zone changes, subdivisions and unclassified use permits. The Building and Land Development Division provides background information for these hearings by preparing staff reports, environmental analysis when required, and Executive Department recommendations.

Figure PI-1 illustrates the responsibilities of the various branches and agencies of King County government responsible for adopting, revising and implementing the comprehensive plan.



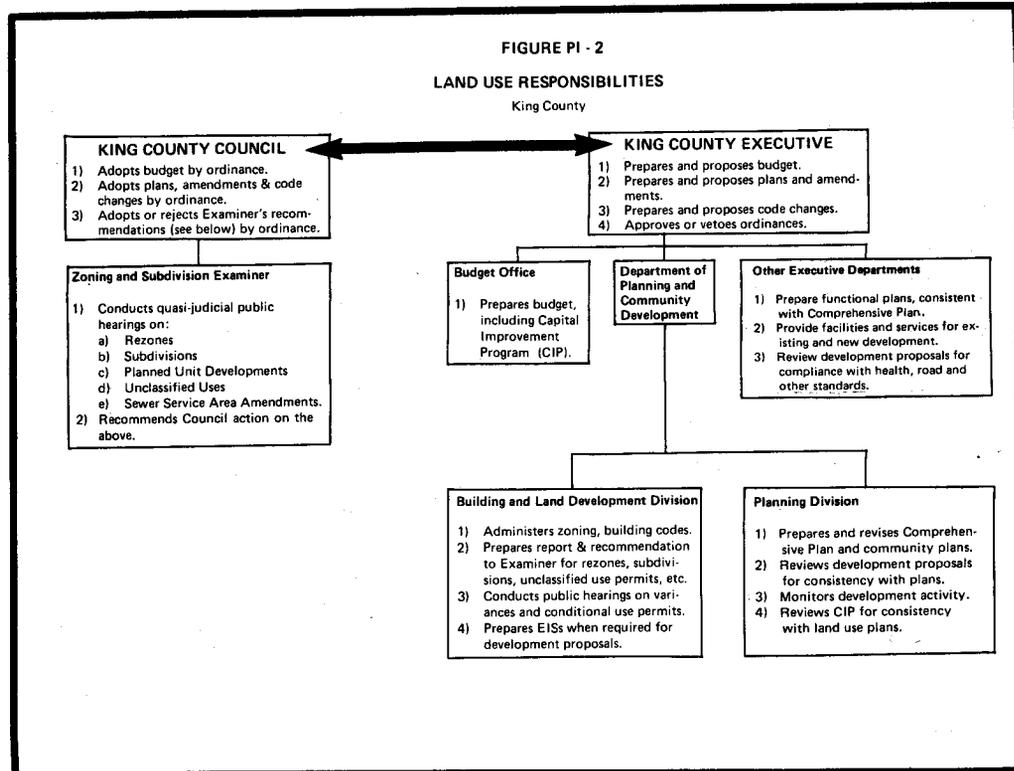
B. Role of the King County Comprehensive Plan, Community Plans, and Functional Plans

King County has a three-part planning system. First, the Comprehensive Plan is the long-range, county-wide land use plan. Second, under the direction of the Comprehensive Plan, community plans establish detailed land use plans and capital improvement recommendations for local subareas of King County. Third, also consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, functional plans are prepared by King County, special service districts, or other public agencies such as Metro. Functional plans address location, design and operation of public facilities and services (such as surface water control and sewage disposal), and action plans and programs for other governmental activities (such as housing assistance and economic development).

This three-part planning system is supported by up-to-date information on population and development, provided through the Land Development Information System (LDIS) and analyzed every year in an Annual Growth Report prepared by King County. The Annual

Growth Report presents data on where development is occurring in King County, including the amount of building construction and land subdivision activity, how much land is planned and zoned for different types of growth, and the rate of land development. This information, combined with other data, allows evaluation of how well the Comprehensive Plan's policies are being implemented and whether or not the plan's policies or plan map should be amended.

Figure PI-2 illustrates the relationships among the Comprehensive Plan, functional plans and community plans.



The Comprehensive Plan consists of written policies and the Comprehensive Plan Map. The policies contain criteria for location, design and intensity of land uses. The policies form the basis for preparing community plans, functional plans, and the text of zoning and other land use regulations, and for applying them to specific locations.

The plan map designates Urban Areas, Transitional Areas, Open Space, Rural Areas, Urban Activity Centers, Rural Activity Centers and Resource Lands. Figure PC-1 at the end of Chapter Two is a small-scale reproduction of the official Comprehensive Plan Map, which is on file with the Department of Planning and Community Development and with the Clerk of the Council. The plan map does not indicate specific land uses or zoning within the designated Urban and Rural Areas or Urban Activity Centers; specific land uses are established by community plans and the accompanying area-wide zoning consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's policies.

A comprehensive plan typically expresses a long-range perspective about a community, and may either include a specific duration (for example, 20 years) or be a long-term plan without a specific time limit. The King County Comprehensive Plan--1985 is a long-term plan, based on relatively unchanging factors such as land form and environmental features to define boundaries between Urban Areas, Rural Areas and Resource Lands. Within this long-term framework, however, certain elements of the Comprehensive Plan will change over time; community plans will be revised on a regular basis, and functional plans for facilities and services will include continually updated capital spending programs. Data on past trends and emerging needs are used to guide community plan and functional plan revisions, and to help assess the effectiveness of the Comprehensive Plan's policies.

PI-101 King County plans and decisions affecting land use should be consistent with the King County Comprehensive Plan, including community plans, functional plans and land use regulations.

PI-102 The King County Comprehensive Plan provides a general policy framework for community plans, functional plans, and land use regulations. This framework:

- a. Designates specific locations as Urban Areas, Transitional Areas, Rural Areas, Resource Lands and Open Space;
- b. Designates Urban Activity Centers and Rural Activity Centers;
- c. Provides policy direction for more detailed local community plans, functional plans, and the capital improvement programs of King County;
- d. Provides policies governing the content and application of official controls, including zoning, subdivision and other land use regulations;
- e. Provides criteria for Comprehensive Plan Map amendments;
- f. Provides criteria for reviewing land use issues and public or private project proposals;
- g. Establishes criteria for provision of public facilities and services by King County and other agencies;
- h. Provides criteria for reviewing plans and projects of other public agencies (state, federal, or local); and
- i. Provides criteria for reviewing proposed municipal annexations, incorporations, and special purpose district comprehensive plans and boundary changes.

PI-103 The following concepts of the Comprehensive Plan are particularly important and should be pursued in all other planning and other actions of King County government:

- a. The development of strong and intensive Urban Activity Centers in Urban Areas and commercial and industrial uses in Rural Activity Centers, based on evaluation of local business needs and county-wide economic development needs;

- b. The provision of Community and Neighborhood Centers where they can efficiently serve urban residential areas;
- c. Densities in Urban Areas that are high enough to encourage transit usage, reduce automobile dependency, and reduce the per-dwelling-unit costs of land and services;
- d. Densities in Rural Areas that are low enough to protect rural character and avoid the need for expensive facilities and services such as public sewers, surface water management, extensive arterial networks, and urban-level fire protection;
- e. Provision of public open space, in both Urban and Rural Areas;
- f. Service levels in Urban Areas that will support high density development; in Rural Areas, that support rural residential densities; and in Transitional Areas, that will support very low densities until redesignation for either urban or rural uses occurs; and
- g. Long-term protection of Resource Lands.

Given the Comprehensive Plan's role as an expression of King County's goals and as a framework for further planning and land use regulation, it is important that all segments of the community have a chance to participate in its implementation and amendment. This is especially true for a large, diverse jurisdiction like King County.

PI-104 Citizen participation should be an integral part of all King County planning and land use regulatory processes.

Community plans, as detailed land use plans for local geographic areas, are the main link between the plan concept of the Comprehensive Plan and site-specific land use designations and zoning. (See Figure PI-3 at the end of this chapter for a map of community planning areas.) The wide range of local conditions, including existing population, level of public services and natural features all must be considered in determining a community's capacity for growth. Some communities are predominantly urban or suburban, while others will remain mostly rural. Such diversity is fostered by the policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

PI-105 Community plans should provide detailed land use plans for local geographic areas. Community plans amplify, augment, and implement the Comprehensive Plan for King County and shall be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's policies and plan map. Where a proposed community plan would be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan's policies and map, an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan should be initiated. The community plans should be consistent with functional plans' facility and service standards. The community plans should perform the following tasks:

- a. Identify county-wide concepts and policies in the Comprehensive Plan that apply to each community plan area;
- b. Plan specific residential densities, and apply implementing zoning, consistent with the plan concept's designations for Urban, Transitional, Resource Lands, and Rural Areas;

- c. Designate Community and Neighborhood Centers within Urban Areas and apply appropriate zoning;
- d. Within Transitional Areas, determine the location of Rural Areas and Urban Areas (including lands which may remain designated as Transitional Areas until reexamined in the next scheduled revisions, as a means of phasing growth);
- e. Specify and expand the boundaries of Urban Activity Centers and Rural Activity Centers and areas for development adjacent to incorporated Rural Activity Centers;
- f. Redesignate Forest Production Districts as Rural Areas if appropriate;
- g. Within Urban Activity Centers, unincorporated Rural Activity Centers, and adjacent to incorporated towns specify new commercial/industrial sites, and apply implementing zoning;
- h. Recommend establishment of new Urban Activity Centers if appropriate;
- i. Recommend additional Open Space designations and park sites, and acquisition programs for them;
- j. Recommend capital improvements, and the means and schedule for providing them, and amendments to functional plans (for example, the Sewerage General Plan), to support planned land uses;
- k. Identify new issues that need county-wide resolution, including possible Comprehensive Plan amendments;
- l. Identify all necessary implementing measures needed to effectuate the plan; and
- m. In Transitional Areas designate large parcel development if appropriate, and convert the large parcel development area to Urban.

Community plans are prepared in cooperation with local community residents and businesses, to benefit from their knowledge of unique local conditions and needs, and to assure the plans address local concerns. Community plans are prepared to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The preparation is based on defined Comprehensive Plan objectives considering the county-wide concepts and policies. In general, community plans provide further definitions of the Comprehensive Plan policies, prepare for anticipated growth, preserve unique features, and propose workable approaches for implementing the community plan policies in an efficient and timely manner.

PI-106 The community planning process (including revisions to plans) should include the following elements:

- a. A well-defined scope, including geographic area and range of issues;
- b. Public review of plan alternatives; and

- c. **Public review of the recommended plan alternative and implementation (including area zoning).**

Functional plans are detailed plans for facilities and services, and action plans and programs for other governmental activities. Some functional plans are operational or programmatic, which means they guide daily management decisions. Others include specific details of facility design and location. Functional plans are prepared by King County, independent special districts, or other public agencies.

PI-107 Functional plans for facilities and services should:

- a. **Define required service levels for Urban, Transitional and Rural Areas;**
- b. **Provide standards for location, design and operation of public facilities and services;**
- c. **Specify adequate, stable and equitable methods of paying for public facilities and services;**
- d. **Be the basis for scheduling needed facilities and services through capital improvement programs;**
- e. **Plan for maintenance of existing facilities;**
- f. **Be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan; and**
- g. **Propose specific amendments to the Comprehensive Plan when needs for change have been identified in the functional plan process.**

Functional plans embody significant decisions affecting both the quality and costs of public facilities, and as such are subject to public scrutiny, as well as review by affected jurisdictions and service providers.

PI-108 Functional plans should be developed through public processes inviting review and comment from affected King County citizens and agencies.

C. Comprehensive Plan Amendments

The King County Comprehensive Plan addresses long-range and countywide issues that are beyond the scope of decisions on community plans or individual development proposals. The plan serves as a vital guide to the future, and provides a framework for managing change. Therefore, it is important that amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, whether to its policies or plan map, retain this broad perspective.

PI-109 All proposed Comprehensive Plan policy and Comprehensive Plan Map amendments should include the following elements:

- a. **A detailed statement of what is proposed to be changed and why;**
- b. **A statement of anticipated impacts of the change, including geographic area affected and issues presented;**

- c. A demonstration of why existing Comprehensive Plan guidance should not continue in effect, or why existing criteria no longer apply;
- d. A statement of how functional plans support the change;
- e. Public review of the recommended change, necessary implementation (including area zoning if appropriate), and alternatives.

PI-110 Proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan's policies or Comprehensive Plan Map should be accompanied by any land use regulatory changes required for implementation, so regulations will be consistent with the plan.

Details for implementing these policies will be outlined in the King County Code, including a uniform process for amending the Plan that sets forth the type and level of information required for each type of amendment (policy or map), public notice and participation, and methods for cumulative impact analysis of separate private development proposals.

Some plan map designations are expected to change over time, to respond to continuing growth or to reflect specific recommendations of related functional plans, such as an economic development plan, open space plan, or mineral resources inventory. Other plan map designations, such as Rural Areas, will not change unless there are significant changes in circumstances or public goals that warrant reevaluation of the original designations.

PI-111 The Comprehensive Plan Map should be subject to the following amendments, when consistent with applicable Comprehensive Plan policies and functional plans:

- a. New Urban Activity Centers and Rural Activity Centers, either at King County's initiative or in response to private development proposals;
- b. Expansion of Urban and Rural Areas by redesignation of Transitional Areas, through a community planning process;
- c. Location of Mining Sites; and
- d. New Open Space designations.

Criteria for Urban Activity Centers are set forth in Chapter Six, Commercial and Industrial Development. Chapter Seven, Resource Lands, addresses Mining Sites. The types of land suitable for designation as Open Space are described in Chapter Four, Environment and Open Space.

PI-112 The Urban Area, Rural Area, Rural Activity Center locations, and Resource Lands designations for Forest Production and Agricultural Production Districts on the Comprehensive Plan Map are intended to be long-term and unchanging, and except as otherwise provided in this chapter, these designations should be reevaluated only when:

- a. There are major changes in circumstances and in the public's values regarding the need to preserve Rural Areas and Resource Lands, and the proposed amendment serves a valid public purpose; or

- b. **New information demonstrates that the technical criteria were erroneously applied when original designations were made.**

It is possible that in the future a conversion of some forest lands to other land use designations will be necessary and appropriate due to changed circumstances and needs, although the Forest Production Districts' boundaries have been drawn to avoid such conflicts (see Chapter Seven, Resource Lands). Such redesignations of Resource Lands to Rural Areas would need to be carefully evaluated to prevent curtailment of remaining forestry operations, and to ensure compatibility with adjacent land uses and public facility and service availability.

PI-113 Redesignation of portions of Forest Production Districts as Rural Areas is not desirable, but may be considered, through a community plan amendment process, if all of the following criteria are met:

- a. **The parcel proposed for redesignation is either large enough to prevent adverse impacts on adjacent Resource Lands and resource management activities, or is contiguous to lands not within a Resource Lands designation;**
- b. **The proponent demonstrates that federal or state regulations, local ordinances, tax programs or long-term economic conditions, or surrounding land uses preclude normal silvacultural practices;**
- c. **Adequate off-site and on-site facilities and services to support rural residential densities are or can be made available at the time of development without adversely affecting adjacent Resource Lands or resource management practices; and**
- d. **The size, density and site design of development will be compatible with continuing resource management on adjacent parcels.**

The policies above address the types of plan amendments contemplated within the land use policy framework of the King County Comprehensive Plan--1985. Unforeseen events and trends, however, may require more basic changes in planning approaches to ensure public goals are met. To continue being effective, therefore, the plan must be examined on a regular basis.

PI-114 The Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed and evaluated every five years, to determine whether key concepts are being achieved effectively, to reflect new community goals, or to respond to changing conditions.

PI-115 Community plans should be reviewed and evaluated every six years, to determine whether key concepts are being achieved effectively, to reflect new community goals, or to respond to changing conditions. Based on this analysis, any major problems or needs would be considered during the 5-year Comprehensive Plan review.

II. LAND USE REGULATION

Land use regulation is a primary way to carry out the Comprehensive Plan. This section describes Washington State laws that affect land use in King County, and how land use regulations relate to the Comprehensive Plan, community plans and functional plans.

A. Washington State Law

The following Washington State laws govern or have major influence on land use in King County:

- **Planning Enabling Act (RCW 36.70).** Establishes the approach to planning and zoning required for most counties and serves as a general model for home rule jurisdictions such as King County.
- **State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) (RCW 43.21c).** Requires review of major public and private projects for their environmental impacts.
- **Subdivision Act (RCW 58.17).** Establishes minimum procedures for legally creating separate lots or parcels.
- **Shoreline Management Act (RCW 90.58).** Declares state interest in maintaining shorelines and water bodies, requires local governments to establish Master Programs and provides for state review of local permit decisions.
- **County Services Act (RCW 36.94).** Allows counties to control where sewer and water services will be provided in unincorporated areas by adopting general plans.

In addition to those listed above, state laws governing building construction (RCW 19.27), public health (RCW 43.20), sewer and water districts (RCW Titles 56 and 57), air pollution (RCW 70.94), noise control (RCW 70.107), flood control (RCW Title 86), and incorporation or territorial annexations by cities and special districts (RCW 36.93) affect land use planning and development activity.

B. King County Regulation

King County regulates land development and construction based on the Comprehensive Plan through zoning and a variety of technical processes resulting in permits and approvals for specific projects. Regulation is costly, complex, and affects every resident of King County. To ensure County regulation is effective and warrants a high degree of public trust and confidence, regulations must be equitable, reasonable, and responsibly administered.

PI-201 King County's regulation of land use:

- a. Should protect public health, safety and general welfare;
- b. Should maintain environmental quality;
- c. Should protect consumers from fraudulent practices in land use, land sales, and development; and

- d. Shall implement and be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and other adopted land use goals, policies, and plans.

PI-202 In substance and content, King County's land use regulations should:

- a. Be clear, straight forward, and internally consistent;
- b. Be enforceable and provide appropriate penalties;
- c. Be reasonable in cost to King County residents and developers in relation to the objectives being accomplished;
- d. Encourage creativity and diversity in meeting County goals and policies; and
- e. Be coordinated with cities, special districts, and other public agencies to promote compatible development standards throughout King County.

PI-203 In preparing and administering its land use regulations, King County should:

- a. Protect public health and safety when reconciling different requirements;
- b. Promote predictability by standardizing criteria and procedures for decision making and by applying them consistently and equitably to comparable properties, land uses, and development proposals;
- c. Minimize processing time and costs to developers, the County, and the public, commensurate with the objectives of various permits and approvals;
- d. Charge permit fees which cover the actual costs of administering and enforcing regulations, and which do not subsidize general government services;
- e. Provide effective public notice and reasonable opportunities for the public (especially those directly affected) to be heard and to influence decisions;
- f. Avoid intruding on activities involving speech, petition, expression, assembly, association, and economic competition, except when essential to protect public health and safety (and then the restriction should be no broader than necessary);
- g. Treat all members of the public equally and base regulatory decisions wholly on the applicable criteria and code requirements;
- h. Inform development permit applicants of applicable King County standards in an understandable and timely fashion;
- i. Make development requirements readily accessible to the public through up-to-date codes, technical assistance materials, and other relevant documents; and

- j. Provide for relief from regulations when they would deprive a property of uses allowed to similar properties with the same zoning, and when such relief would neither endanger public health and safety nor conflict with land use policies.

Zoning

Zoning is the designation of land by local government for specific uses and densities. Zoning includes building height and setback requirements, lot sizes and separation of incompatible uses. Zoning also may require public improvements and place other conditions on development. Boundaries between different zones may follow property lines, natural features or other dividing lines such as roads.

- PI-204 The zoning code text and official zoning maps should be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, community plans, and functional plans. Conflicts should be resolved by amending the relevant parts of the code or zoning map. Specific provisions in the zoning code text and maps are recognized as controlling in case of conflict.

Subdivisions and Other Development Approvals

Subdivision is the separation of a parcel of land into smaller lots for transfer of ownership. ("Short" subdivision is the division of a parcel into four or fewer lots.) Other development approvals include commercial or industrial construction permits, planned unit developments and substantial development permits under the Washington State Shoreline Management Act. Review of subdivision and other development proposals is a key point in the development process for making sure facilities and services to support potential development are adequate, and for evaluating environmental impacts. Subdivision of land involves detailed site planning and installing public facilities such as roads and utility lines.

It is during the subdivision or development approval process that King County and private developers coordinate the greatest number of separate requirements (for example, zoned lot sizes, drainage, and road improvement standards). This process also addresses potential site problems such as poor access or hazardous environmental features, and circumstances unique to a specific site that cannot be anticipated by general zoning code requirements.

- PI-205 Subdivision, short subdivision and other development approvals should be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, community plans, and functional plans. Specific provisions in the subdivision code and adopted improvement standards are recognized as controlling where they have not yet been amended for consistency with plans.

Large Parcel Developments

Within Urban Areas or Transitional Areas, coordinated development of large land ownerships (that is, several hundred acres) may offer the public and the owners special opportunities to realize major benefits. A process to encourage such coordinated development would entail combining review of community plan map changes, zoning and land subdivision as well as the provision of related services and facilities. Possible public benefits of coordinated development of large parcels include private help in constructing major capital improvements and preserving open space. Benefits to the developer include economies of scale, consolidated public review and assurance of consistency with County land use policies during subsequent project phases.

PI-206 Large parcel developments should be encouraged within Urban Areas or Transitional Areas to help achieve the plan concept. The review process should provide for consolidating smaller parcels, combined hearings and approvals where possible, and continuity during the entire term of project phasing. A large parcel development should be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's plan concept and applicable policies in Urban and Transitional Areas, and include the following features:

- a. A single legal entity with control of the site and clear responsibility for fulfillment of all requirements;
- b. The various physical components of an urban community, either within the development itself, or when combined with nearby Urban Activity Centers or residential areas;
- c. For a project that includes residential development, a full range of housing densities, types and prices, including below-market-rate housing for low, moderate and medium-income groups;
- d. For a project that includes commercial/industrial development, features such as open space to buffer residential areas, pedestrian-oriented, compact retail areas with pedestrian/bicycle links to nearby residential areas, and street improvements that separate adverse traffic impacts from residential areas;
- e. Parks and permanently reserved Open Space to meet all on-site needs, and a consideration of community needs where the resource is of sufficient quality; and
- f. Development-related on-site and off-site improvements necessary to assure adequate public facilities and services for the development and to minimize adverse impacts on existing communities.

Building Construction

Building construction in King County is governed by the Uniform Building Code, Uniform Fire Code and other construction codes adopted as required by state law (RCW 19.27). Normally, issues involving facilities, services and land use policy will be resolved during the planning, zoning, and subdivision review processes, so the Comprehensive Plan will usually only be a direct consideration in processing construction permits by means of the State Environmental Policy Act (discussed below).

State Environmental Policy Act

Sometimes general code provisions do not adequately address impacts of proposed projects. In these cases, the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) may allow or require discretionary approval conditions in addition to those required by code, or even require denial of some projects.

PI-207 **Developments requiring detailed environmental review and discretionary decisions under SEPA should be reviewed for consistency with the policies of the Comprehensive Plan and applicable community and functional plans, as well as compliance with zoning and building code requirements.**

Other Regulations

In addition to zoning, subdivision and building construction regulations, land uses are subject to other ordinances or administrative rules. These include sanitation standards (adopted both by ordinance and Board of Public Health rules), surface water runoff controls, and Shoreline Management regulations. Some of these regulations (for example, Shoreline Management) also must comply with detailed requirements of state law.

III. REGIONAL PLANNING AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Regional planning and intergovernmental cooperation are both complex and essential in King County because of the many independent jurisdictions involved. Incorporated cities, due to their revenue sources and organizational structure, are ideal locations for growth. The Comprehensive Plan directs physical planning and development in unincorporated areas, for which King County has jurisdiction. Cities and towns make land use plans and development decisions for incorporated areas. Effective planning, however, must consider impacts beyond jurisdictional boundaries.

PI-301 **King County, its cities, special districts and other public agencies should work together to address major planning issues, to pool and distribute data and forecasts, and to solve problems affecting more than one jurisdiction, recognizing the requirements, rights, and procedures set forth in applicable Washington State law.**

A. Municipal Incorporations and Annexations

Incorporation and annexation decisions normally are made by a municipality and/or a majority of property owners in the affected area. A Boundary Review Board, appointed by the Governor, is required to review, approve, deny or modify proposed incorporations or annexations when an affected jurisdiction or an area's voters or property owners petition it (RCW 36.92.100).

King County will provide or assure urban services at a feasible level for unincorporated Urban Areas, but cannot match the services provided by cities. It is intended that communities seeking higher service levels annex or incorporate as new cities.

- PI-302 King County should work with the cities to focus growth within their boundaries and should support annexations when consistent with the King County Comprehensive Plan. King County should support incorporations when formation of cities is appropriate to assure adequate facilities and services for growth consistent with the Plan.
- PI-303 King County should play an active role in municipal annexations, supporting them when consistent with land use plans, and opposing them when inconsistent.
- PI-304 King County and its cities should work together to identify future annexation areas. Interlocal agreements should be used to ensure consistent land use policies and public improvement standards within agreed-upon annexation areas. This process should provide extensive opportunities for participation by affected residents, landowners and affected governmental agencies.
- PI-305 In identified future annexation areas, cities should be able to extend services prior to annexation.

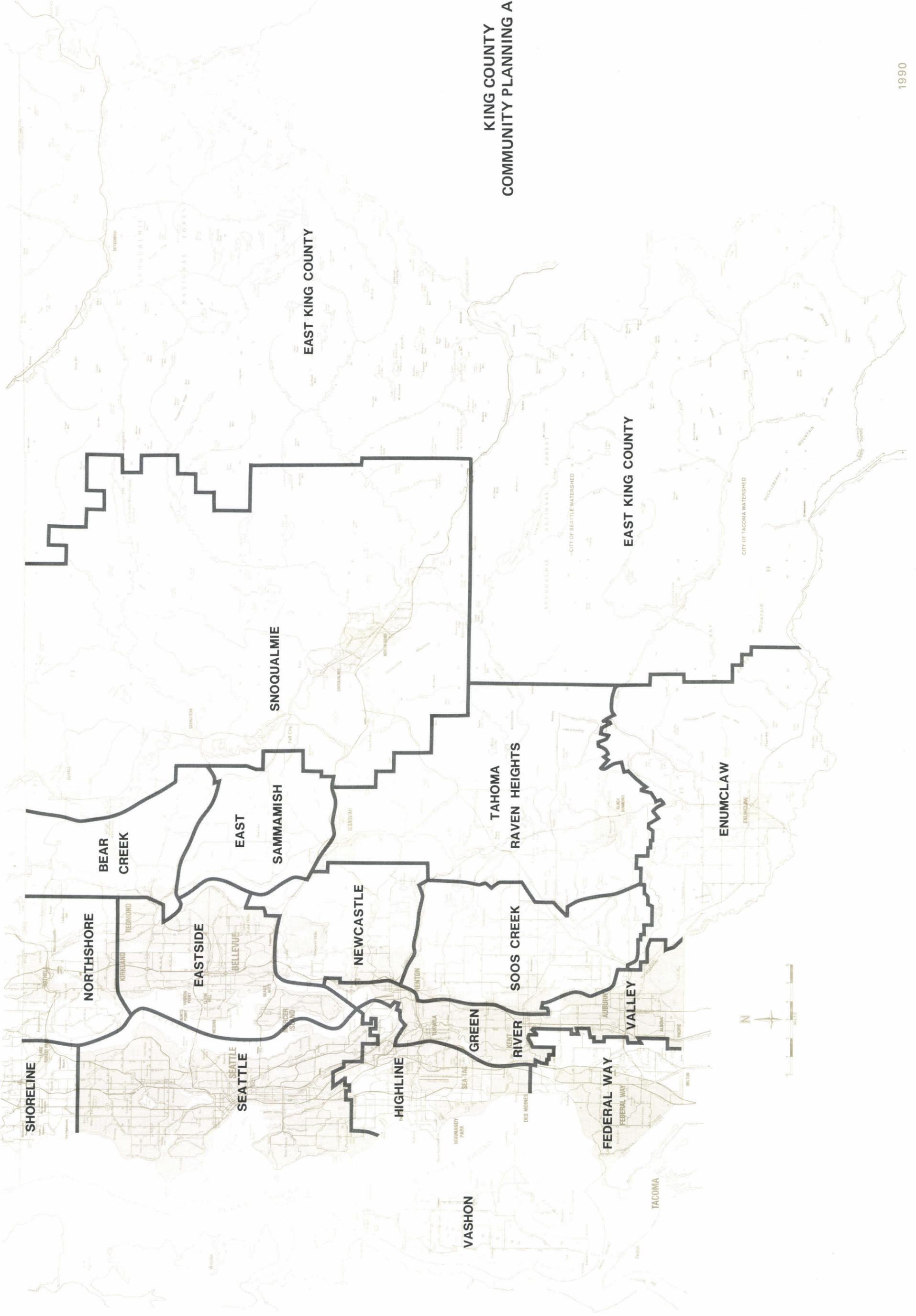
B. Special Service Districts

Citizens in unincorporated King County receive essential services from numerous special service districts. These districts provide public schools, sewer and water service, and fire protection. Prior to the phenomenon of suburban growth, cities and towns provided most public facilities and services; unincorporated areas were predominantly rural. When the suburbs grew, special service districts were formed to provide urban services outside incorporated cities and towns. Each district specializes in one or two services -- water or sewer, for example.

Service districts plus King County provide public facilities and services to unincorporated urban communities. The involvement of so many independent government agencies in providing unincorporated areas with urban services, which traditionally were supplied by a consolidated city government, requires continuing coordination. Special district boundary changes also must be coordinated with those of cities, as parts of unincorporated King County incorporate or annex to existing cities.

- PI-306 Special service district annexations should support land uses planned by the Comprehensive Plan and community plans. Special service district annexations should be coordinated with municipal annexations and incorporations. Installed facilities should assure adequate and reliable service consistent with possible city and district change-overs in jurisdiction, giving preference to city standards for such facilities where they are more stringent than district standards.
- PI-307 Special service districts providing the same or related services should be encouraged to consolidate and to achieve logical and shared boundaries (for example, sewer and water districts, and water and fire districts).

- PI-308** King County should review, in accordance with state law, special service district comprehensive plans and capital improvement programs to ensure consistency with land use plans.
- PI-309** Resource Lands should not be annexed by cities or special districts unless continued management for resource industries would be enhanced by the services provided.



**KING COUNTY
COMMUNITY PLANNING AREAS**



Chapter Four

ENVIRONMENT AND OPEN SPACE

The beauty of King County's natural environment is prized by local residents and enjoyed by visitors. Lakes, rivers, mountains and glacial valleys have helped shape the region's pattern of development, and are highly valued for their aesthetic quality and recreational opportunities. This chapter establishes policies to protect the quality of King County's natural environment through land use plans, regulations, and incentive programs, and to encourage the retention of open space.

I. GENERAL POLICIES

A fundamental goal of the King County Comprehensive Plan is to protect King County's natural beauty and environmental quality. It is also a fundamental goal of King County to develop and maintain a dynamic open space system for the enjoyment and benefit of all. These goals require consideration of all aspects of natural features -- including physical constraints to development, important ecological functions, and aesthetic qualities -- and a broad variety of implementation techniques, including development regulations, incentives for developers, and acquisition programs. Development patterns that avoid hazardous natural features prevent environmental problems, while preserving open space. For example, steep slopes and floodplains that are hazardous when developed provide flood-water storage, scenic corridors and greenbelts when retained in a natural state or used for resource management such as forestry or agriculture. Development patterns and practices that preserve or enhance natural features such as rivers and wetlands add to community quality as well as protecting water quality and wildlife.

- E-101** King County should protect and enhance environmental quality through land use plans, surface water management programs and park master plans, development approvals, incentive programs, and cooperative work with citizens, land owners, and public and private agencies responsible for environmental protection.
- E-102** King County should preserve and enhance natural beauty by encouraging community development patterns and site planning that maintain and enhance natural landforms, and by identifying and preserving open space.
- E-103** King County should prevent development on lands where development would pose hazards to life, property, important ecological functions or environmental quality. Due to severe natural limitations, the following natural features should remain undeveloped:

- a. Floodways of 100-year floodplains;
- b. Slopes with a grade of 40 percent or more;
- c. Severe landslide hazard areas (Class III);
- d. Wetlands rated as Unique/Outstanding or Significant; and
- e. Coal mine hazard areas.

The natural features described in Policy E-103 are one component of the designated Open Space mapped on the Comprehensive Plan Map (Figure PC-1). These features are described, classified and mapped in the Sensitive Areas Map Folio and the Inventory of King County Wetlands. (Maps of coal mine hazards areas are incomplete, due to inaccurate record keeping during much of the mining periods in King County's early history.) These reports, along with all other available data, are the basis for specific land use regulations for environmentally sensitive areas.

Other lands designated as Open Space include parks or natural areas preserved for their scenic beauty or recreation potential (see Figure E-1 for Open Space lands). In Urban Areas, especially those planned for intensive development, open space is particularly critical. In Rural Areas, low density residential development and nearby Resource Lands provide greenery and scenic beauty, resulting in less need for public parks and additional open space.

E-104 Greenbelts, scenic natural areas and parks should be preserved in each community in both Urban and Rural Areas through acquisition, regulation and incentives to land owners, to enhance visual quality and meet recreation needs. Public and private parks and recreation areas should complement, and may include, environmentally sensitive features.

Environmental quality and natural beauty benefit all residents of the region, and can only be preserved through cooperation among all jurisdictions with land use authority, as well as citizens and property owners.

E-105 King County should work with cities, adjacent counties, state and federal agencies, land owners and other citizens to promote and protect all aspects of environmental quality and preserve open space.

Section III of this chapter addresses water and land environments. Specific air quality controls are not addressed by the King County Comprehensive Plan, since federal, state and regional government agencies have direct responsibility for maintaining air quality. The development pattern encouraged by the plan concept, however, will help protect air quality by preserving forests and open space, and by reducing auto travel, which is a major source of air pollution.

II. PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Active and passive parks, natural areas including wetlands, river valleys, fish-bearing streams, creeks, rivers, lakes and other forms of open space are essential and unique features of King County which provide multiple public benefits for all the residents of this area. Public and private parks and other forms of open space are important factors for quality of life, and must be provided as King County grows.

This section contains policies to support park and recreation and open space initiatives in areas which have already experienced urbanization and to preserve park, recreation and other open space lands in areas which will experience continued or new growth in the future. The policies will be implemented by a Parks and Open Space Functional Plan.

A. Parks and Open Space Lands

A wide variety of lands can meet the park and open space needs of the residents of King County, from flat, dry ground to environmentally sensitive lands that must remain undeveloped to prevent severe hazards or environmental degradation. Resource Lands -- forest and farm lands -- and Rural Areas also provide scenic and recreational values, although the primary reason for keeping these lands relatively undeveloped is for their productive resource value, or to provide rural living opportunities.

- E-201** A wide variety of lands should be preserved for park and open space purposes, including:
- a. Natural areas and natural features with outstanding scenic or recreational value;
 - b. Lands that may provide public access to creeks, rivers, lakes and Puget Sound;
 - c. Lands that define, through their natural features, the boundaries of urban and rural communities, including parks, trails, rivers, wetlands, and scenic corridors;
 - d. Lands that visually or physically connect natural areas, or provide important linkages for recreation, and plant communities and wildlife habitat; and
 - e. Lands valuable for active and passive recreation, such as athletic fields, trails, fishing, swimming or picnic areas on a regional or community-sized scale.
- E-202** Lands preserved for public parks or open space should provide multiple open space benefits whenever possible. Multiple benefits include but are not limited to, active or passive recreation opportunities, scenic vistas, fish or wildlife habitat, many of which can be provided by natural surface water drainage systems, including wetlands.

Identifying lands for preservation as Open Space will be an ongoing process that requires public involvement in determining which areas to preserve and which methods to use. Since Open Space lands must meet regional as well as local needs, parcels must be identified through both county-wide and local planning processes.

- E-203** Lands of regional significance should be identified for preservation as parks or open space through a process involving King County residents, land owners, cities and other government agencies, and conservation and sports groups.

Open Space lands include parks for local use and active sports, as well as scenic corridors and natural areas. Communities have distinct preferences for how best to meet local open space needs; community plans are an appropriate way to identify lands of local importance.

- E-204** Local residents should have a significant role in determining priorities for meeting the local open space needs of their community.

B. Methods of Preserving Parks and Open Space

This section contains overall policies to guide preservation and acquisition of parks and open space.

Methods of preserving each parcel designated as Open Space will be based on site characteristics, and the reasons the parcel is to be preserved. Regulations to prevent environmental hazards will keep some lands as Open Space; others can be preserved through incentives, trades, development dedications, easements, and purchase. Using a variety of protective measures will increase King County's ability to maintain a significant amount of parks and natural areas. Incentives for preserving Open Space not protected by regulation include density bonuses, current use taxation, and federal tax breaks to encourage donations of land or easements. New techniques, such as "transfer of development rights" (TDRs), also may provide methods for preserving Open Space.

- E-205** A variety of measures should be used to preserve parcels designated as parks and open space, including regulations, incentives, trades and purchase of lands or easements. Transfer of development rights (TDRs) may be another appropriate tool.

King County will not normally purchase environmentally sensitive areas. In some cases, however, public access may be desired; for example, a trail may be desirable along a steep slope to capture an excellent view. Public access rights can be acquired either through incentives, or purchase of land or easements.

- E-206** King County should obtain full or partial ownership of environmentally sensitive areas protected by regulations when public access is desired, or when an ownership interest is found to be necessary to protect the sensitive area.

- E-207** Park and open space preservation methods that result in low public maintenance costs should be used whenever effective. Preservation of privately-owned open space parcels, or parcels retained in undivided ownership by a group of homeowners, should be encouraged.

- E-208 Residential development techniques which result in the creation of private open space -- held and maintained in common by the residents of the development -- should be encouraged through incentives as one important means to fulfill the County's open space objectives. Such open space can serve to protect valuable natural features, provide natural screening, and/or provide for active recreation. Such private open space can provide significant "public" benefit to the extent it helps preserve natural features, provides neighborhood greenbelts visible to all and reduces the pressure on the County to provide publicly funded neighborhood parks.
- E-209 Regional and community parks should be acquired and developed with public funds, dedications from large residential and commercial developments based on their service impacts and donations.
- E-210 Neighborhood park sites or fees-in-lieu of land should be dedicated as part of the residential development approval process in Urban Areas.
- E-211 Park sites should be acquired when identified in the Parks and Open Space Functional Plan or when they meet adopted park and recreation standards.
- E-212 Major recreational facilities that generate large amounts of traffic (for example, swimming pools) should be located on sites with direct arterial access, preferably grouped with other traffic generators and/or within Urban Activity Centers, Community Centers, Neighborhood Centers or Rural Activity Centers.

III. ENVIRONMENT

King County's wide variety of natural features includes lands that can accommodate extensive development, as well as lands where development must be carefully planned or prevented to maintain environmental quality.

This section describes the natural features requiring special consideration in land use decisions, and establishes policies to reduce hazards and prevent adverse environmental impacts.

A. General Approach

The overall approach to environmental protection established by the King County Comprehensive Plan encourages growth and development patterns that are compatible with natural features; alteration of natural features is discouraged. Land use designations that reflect natural constraints realistically indicate development potential and allow public agencies to accurately plan for service provision.

- E-301 Land use plans and zoning should reflect natural constraints.

Chapter Five, Residential Development, outlines density considerations for constrained areas. Site planning and development patterns for constrained areas are discussed later in this section.

King County maintains inventories and maps of sensitive areas for use in planning, so that appropriate zoning can be applied. In some cases, however, serious environmental constraints will be discovered at the development review stage, and measures to protect them will need to be applied.

E-302 When environmentally sensitive features are discovered through technical review of a development proposal, the need to protect the sensitive features should be factored into site planning. Development plans should ensure that structures locate on unconstrained portions of the site, and that clustering, if approved, is compatible with surrounding land uses. These considerations may result in a reduction in density from that otherwise allowed by the zoning.

King County's natural features support many types of wildlife habitat. Habitats are valuable for propagating and sheltering wildlife populations, and for science, education and recreation.

E-303 Wildlife should be maintained through preservation and enhancement of wildlife habitat. Habitat for species which have been identified as endangered or threatened should not be reduced, and should be preserved through acquisition, incentives and other techniques.

King County can help preserve wildlife by working with state and federal agencies and landowners to identify, locate and protect habitats of endangered or threatened species. Habitats can be protected through purchase, regulation, and incentives to encourage development practices such as clustering, retention of native vegetation, and protection of wetlands, ponds, streams and other water features. Wildlife can also be protected by designating wildlife habitats as Open Space.

B. Steep Slopes, Landslide and Erosion Hazards

Wooded steep slopes and ravines are distinctive natural features in King County that serve as greenbelts and harbor wildlife even in the most urbanized areas. Numerous hazards accompany development and road building on steep slopes, including soil erosion and sedimentation, landslides, slippage and excessive surface water runoff. Development on steep slopes can increase the cost of building roads and utilities, may result in public expense to repair and maintain public facilities damaged by erosion and landslides, and can result in the need for emergency relief and rescue operations.

Hazards associated with hillside development are a function of slope and soil conditions. On slopes greater than 15 percent, landslide and erosion hazards increase dramatically. Slopes over 40 percent are almost always hazardous for development and may slide or erode. Steep slopes combined with impermeable subsurface materials such as clay are subject to severe landslide hazards. Surface and groundwater seeping through permeable materials increases the risk. Sloping areas of certain soil types also can create severe erosion. Steep slopes in King County where severe landslide hazards and erosion hazards are likely to exist are shown in Figures E-2 to E-4 at the end of this section.

E-304 Land uses on steep slopes should be designed to prevent property damage and environmental degradation, and enhance greenbelt and wildlife habitat values.

- E-305 As slope increases, development intensity, site coverage and vegetation removal should decrease to mitigate problems of drainage, erosion, siltation and landslides. Slopes of 40 percent or more should be retained in a natural state, free of structures and roads.
- E-306 Severe landslide hazard areas should be free of development and roads.
- E-307 In areas subject to erosion hazards, native ground cover should be retained or replaced after construction, special construction practices should be used, and allowable site coverage may need to be reduced to prevent erosion and sedimentation. Limitations on the time when site work can be done may also be appropriate.

Policies E-304 to E-307 are implemented through land use designations that reflect the constraints of hillside development, and through site plan review to ensure structures are built in unconstrained areas. (Chapter Five, Residential Development, outlines appropriate land use designations for hillsides.) King County maintains maps of steep slopes, erosion and landslide hazard areas to aid in planning and development review; these maps are updated as new information is obtained.

C. Seismic Hazards

King County is an earthquake-prone region subject to ground shaking, subsidence, landslides and liquefaction. Of the four seismic risk zones recognized by the U.S. Geological Survey in the continental United States, the Puget Sound Basin is classified Zone 3. (Zone 4 has the most severe risk of frequent and damaging major earthquakes.)

Areas with low density organic soils or slopes greater than 15 percent are likely to experience greater damage from earthquakes. Areas in King County with severe potential for seismic damage are shown in Figure E-5 at the end of this section.

- E-308 In areas with severe seismic hazards, special building design and construction measures should be used to minimize the risk of structural damage, fire and injury to occupants, and to prevent post-seismic collapse.
- E-309 Prior to development in severe seismic hazard areas, builders should conduct special studies to evaluate seismic risks and should use appropriate measures to reduce the risks.

D. Coal Mine Hazards

King County has a long and varied history of underground and surface coal mining. The abandoned mine workings in some of these areas, including tunnels, drifts and air shafts may pose potential dangers to some non-mining development, especially from surface collapse and possible noxious or lethal gas leaks. In addition, stock piles of mine-spoil frequently are

found near former coal mine operations. Most of these stock piles are covered with vegetation and appear to be natural to those unfamiliar with their coal mine origins. However, their slopes may be unstable and they may emit small amounts of natural coal gasses. Areas of former coal mining activity, which may contain hazards for residential, commercial, or industrial structures, are indicated in Figure E-6 at the end of this section. Risk to life and property in areas with former sub-surface coal mines can be avoided by eliminating all significant hazards associated with the abandoned coal mine workings so that the site is as safe as a site which has not been previously mined. Permanent structural development will be regulated by conditions which assure that the site is safe from all significant hazards. Property owners are encouraged to work with the Office of Surface Mining Abandoned Mine Reclamation to eliminate hazards as quickly as funds allow.

- E-310** King County encourages the elimination of coal mine hazard areas, and will work with the Office of Surface Mining Abandoned Mine Reclamation to eliminate hazards and return land to productive uses. Land use plans and zoning should reflect the hazards to development in these areas. Residential, commercial, and industrial development may occur in coal mine hazard areas, provided the hazards are precisely located, and all significant hazards associated with abandoned coal mine workings have been eliminated so that the site is as safe as a site which has not been previously mined. Resource uses should be considered in these areas subject to the policies in Chapter 7, Resource Lands. The location of the coal mine hazards should be shown on any plat or site plan maps of the property, and such documents should be recorded.

Areas of former coal mining activity may present opportunities for future coal recovery or reprocessing of the mine spoils. Policies addressing mining are in Chapter 7, Resource Lands and Industries.

E. Water Quality

King County's lakes, streams, rivers, wetlands, aquifers and Puget Sound provide natural beauty, recreation, domestic water supply and other benefits. To retain these benefits, decisions affecting any element of the water environment must be based on consideration of the effects on other elements.

- E-311** Water quality should be protected and enhanced. Land use plans and land development should preserve the amenity and ecological functions of water features.
- E-312** Water resources should be managed for multiple uses -- including recreation, fish and wildlife, flood protection, erosion control, water supply, energy production, and open space. Use of water resources for one purpose should, to the fullest extent possible, preserve opportunities for other uses.

Policies E-311 and E-312 will be implemented through land use plans and development reviews, and will also guide King County's review of water and sewer purveyors' comprehensive plans and other government projects.

F. Drainage Systems

Surface water can be managed most effectively by considering potential problems and solutions for an entire watershed (drainage basin). A watershed frequently extends into two or more jurisdictions, so planning and implementation must be coordinated to be effective.

- E-313** Surface water management plans should consider entire watersheds, with responsibility shared between King County, other counties, and the incorporated cities within a watershed.

Policy E-313 is implemented through functional plans for King County waterbodies and watersheds, developed in cooperation with affected jurisdictions. (The surface water utility is discussed in Chapter Eight, Facilities and Services.)

Natural drainage systems have many important functions, including storing and regulating stormwater flow, purifying surface water, recharging groundwater, conveying water and supporting important biological activities. Alteration of natural drainage systems results in public costs and can result in environmental degradation, including flooding, erosion, sedimentation, and damage to water quality and habitats elsewhere in the system.

- E-314** Natural drainage systems should be maintained and enhanced to protect water quality, reduce public costs and prevent environmental degradation. Public improvements and private developments should not alter natural drainage systems without acceptable mitigating measures which eliminate the risk of flooding or negative impacts to water quality.

- E-315** Natural surface water storage sites that help regulate stream flows and recharge groundwater should be preserved and their water quality protected.

Various land uses can have significant effects on water quality. Sedimentation from ground disturbed by grading, new development, farming and logging can reduce river or stream channel capacity, fill small lakes and smother aquatic life and habitat. Surface water runoff from developed areas can carry pollutants such as oil, heavy metals, garden chemicals, and animal wastes into the water system; runoff from farms and forests can bring pollutants from fertilizers and pesticides.

The most direct and effective approach to protect water quality is to control the amount and quality of surface water runoff. New development can be designed to prevent significant runoff and water quality problems. In some developed areas, however, corrective measures are needed to address existing surface water problems.

- E-316** Water quality and natural drainage systems should be protected by controlling the quality and quantity of stormwater runoff.

- E-317** New development should not increase peak stormwater runoff. In critical drainage, erosion or flood hazard areas, new development should not increase total runoff quantity.

- E-318** Site plans and construction practices should be designed to minimize on-site erosion and sedimentation during and after construction.

- E-319** Stormwater runoff from new development next to steep hillsides or ravines should be routed so it does not cause gully erosion or landslides. Runoff also should be sufficiently diffused so that flows do not create erosion of ravines or steep hillsides.
- E-320** Resource industries should use management practices that prevent erosion and sedimentation, and prevent pollutants from entering ground or surface waters.

The policies above will guide King County's review of rules, regulations and programs of public agencies addressing water quality issues.

G. Rivers, Streams and Waterbodies

Rivers, streams, lakes and Puget Sound contribute significantly to King County's natural beauty, and provide for education and recreation, as well as clean water. Rivers, streams and waterbodies are critical elements of the natural drainage system. They store, purify and convey surface waters and provide wildlife habitat. Many are vital to fish valued by commercial and sports fisheries, such as salmon, steelhead, cutthroat trout, and Dolly Varden. (Wetlands, also a part of this natural drainage system, are addressed in more detail in Section H.)

Protecting the open space benefits of river and stream corridors, waterbodies and shorelines will maintain King County's quality of life while preventing floods, loss of fish, property damage, and public expense to repair damage and prevent further problems.

- E-321** Water quality, natural drainage, fish and wildlife habitat, and aesthetic functions of rivers, streams, lakes and Puget Sound should be protected.
- E-322** New development adjacent to rivers, streams, lakes and Puget Sound should preserve an undisturbed corridor wide enough to maintain natural functions.

Functional plans for watersheds (drainage basins), rivers, streams, and shorelines will guide implementation of Policies E-321 and E-322. These plans specify corridor treatment. Stream corridor width, for example, will vary as dictated by soil erosion, bank slopes, vegetation and the stream's adjacent wetlands.

- E-323** Natural stream channels should be preserved, protected and enhanced for their hydraulic, ecological and aesthetic functions through development regulations, land dedications, easements, incentives, acquisition, and other means.
- E-324** River and stream channels should not be placed in culverts unless absolutely necessary for property access. Bridges are preferred for river and stream crossings, and crossings should serve several properties, to reduce disruption to rivers, streams and their banks. When culverts are necessary, oversized culverts with gravel bottoms that maintain the channel's width and grade should be used.
- E-325** Degraded stream and river channels and banks should be rehabilitated by public programs and new development, to maintain water quality and prevent further erosion problems. Where conditions permit, the banks and channels should be restored to a natural state.

During periods without rain, rivers and streams are fed by water stored in wetlands and groundwater. Actions that significantly reduce storage or recharge, therefore, present threats to fish and other wildlife, and result in loss of recreation values.

E-326 Private development and public actions should maintain adequate flows in rivers and streams to protect fisheries and recreation resources.

Policy E-326 will guide King County's review of development actions and plans for domestic water supply, and King County's work with agencies and groups to protect fisheries. (Figure E-8 indicates known anadromous fish-bearing waters.)

King County's Shoreline Management Master Program (a functional plan developed in compliance with the Washington State Shoreline Management Act of 1971) also protects streams with a mean annual flow of 20 cubic feet or more per second, lakes 20 acres or more in size, the marine shoreline of Puget Sound and wetlands associated with these systems. All land uses or developments adjacent to these waterbodies are subject to the requirements of the Master Program. The program designates shorelines as Natural, Conservancy, Rural or Urban Environments to distinguish among permitted uses and levels of development, consistent with the overall purpose of preserving and enhancing the shorelines. (Figure E-9 is a map of designated Shoreline Environments.)

E-327 Development within designated Shoreline Environments should:

- a. Preserve the resources and ecology of the water and shorelines;
- b. Avoid natural hazards;
- c. Promote visual and physical access to the water; and
- d. Preserve navigation rights.

Policy E-327 is implemented through the detailed regulations of the Shoreline Management Master Program.

H. Wetlands

Wetlands are among the most valuable natural resources in King County. They include shallow or deep marshes, bogs, ponds, wet meadows and forests, shrub and scrub wetlands and other lands supporting a prevalence of vegetation adapted to saturated soils. Wetlands are mapped and their functions are described in the King County Wetlands Inventory. (Figure E-8 at the end of this section indicates general locations of known wetlands.)

Wetlands are productive biological systems, providing habitat for fish and wildlife. They may serve as outdoor classrooms for scientific study, and some are used for hiking, hunting, and fishing. Wetlands also protect water quality by trapping sediments and absorbing pollutants. In many cases, wetlands help recharge groundwater and maintain summer stream flows. They also control runoff and store flood waters, thereby reducing potential damage downstream.

E-328 Wetlands important for flood control, drainage, water quality, aquifer recharge, visual or cultural values or habitat functions should be preserved or enhanced.

King County has developed guidelines based on identified wetland values and functions and specific protection measures for each of three wetland ratings: 1) Unique/Outstanding; 2) Significant; and 3) Low Concern. Measures include protective buffers, limits on alteration and water quality controls.

E-329 New development adjacent to a Unique/Outstanding or Significant wetland should preserve or enhance the wetland and provide an undisturbed buffer around the wetland adequate to protect its natural functions. Encroachments into Significant wetlands may be allowed when no feasible alternative exists and enhancements are provided to replace the lost wetland's functions.

In some cases, wetlands can be modified to improve their storage capacity; such modification, however, must be consistent with maintaining the water quality in wetlands.

E-330 Water level fluctuations in wetlands used as storm water detention sites should be similar to the fluctuations under natural conditions, unless plants and animals in the wetland can adapt to new levels.

E-331 Public access to wetlands for scientific and recreational use is desirable when sensitive habitats are protected. Careful planning of access trails, for example, can allow public enjoyment of wetlands while preventing safety and environmental problems.

Policies E-328 through E-331 are specifically implemented through the King County Wetland Guidelines.

Some wetlands have been filled or drained. These areas often contain unstable soils that present hazards to development.

E-332 Development on existing or former wetlands should occur only after careful soils analysis shows that construction measures can successfully mitigate potential hazards of unstable soil and drainage problems.

I. Floodplains

Floodplains are lands adjacent to lakes, rivers and streams that are subject to periodic flooding. Floodplains naturally store flood water, protect water quality and are valuable for recreation, agriculture and wildlife habitat. Reduced flood storage capacity caused by development can increase flooding on adjacent and downstream lands.

E-333 The natural flood storage function of floodplains should be preserved. Non-structural methods should be emphasized in planning for flood prevention and damage reduction. New development or land modification in 100-year floodplains should be designed to maintain natural flood storage functions and minimize hazards.

- E-334** 100-year floodplains should be protected by restricting residential development to rural residential densities, locating roads and structures above the 100-year flood level, and requiring new development to replace existing flood storage capacity lost due to filling.

The concepts of "floodway" and "floodway fringe" have been developed to describe floodplains, and are the basis for regulations of such federal agencies as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as well as state and local laws. Most medium to large floodplains include a floodway and floodway fringe. The floodway is the river channel plus the adjacent area that contains deep and fast-flowing water during a 100-year flood; the floodway fringe is characterized by shallower, slower flows during floods.

- E-335** Due to the risks associated with deep and fast-flowing waters, no permanent structures should be located in the floodway. Land uses in a floodway should not divert water from the floodway, change flood elevation or obstruct natural flow. Development in the flood fringe must not reduce existing flood storage capacity.
- E-336** Along small streams for which the floodway has not been identified, the entire floodplain should be treated as a floodway, and no permanent structures, grading or filling should be allowed.

J. Aquifers

Groundwater is contained in aquifers -- subterranean layers of porous rock or earth. Most aquifers are replenished by rainwater, though some may contain water trapped during interglacial periods. Aquifers supply water for municipal and industrial use, for individual wells and for agricultural irrigation.

- E-337** Groundwater recharge areas should be identified and protected to ensure that groundwater resources are protected from potential pollution.

King County will develop and maintain information on groundwater through community plans and special studies. This information is essential to determine the need for functional plans and special measures such as reduction of impervious surfaces, siting of buildings and septic tanks, and control of toxic wastes to maintain groundwater quality.

Chapter Five

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Housing is the major use of urban land in King County, occupying well over half of its developed land. Policies to accommodate and guide the location and density of residential development are essential to achieve the goals of the King County Comprehensive Plan. Effective residential development regulations also are essential to protect public health and safety, and to promote a quality living environment.

The King County Comprehensive Plan--1985 assumes that most of King County's housing in the foreseeable future will continue to be financed and developed privately. King County, however, also recognizes the special housing needs of low-income, elderly, and handicapped citizens, and supports or participates in a variety of housing programs. The plan addresses the location and design of housing in relation to natural features, and facilities and services, consistent with Urban, Transitional and Rural Area land use designations. The Comprehensive Plan does not address government housing programs; a functional plan -- the Affordable Housing Policy Plan -- will address such programs in King County as well as other necessary policies to further the County's goal of affordable housing.

I. GENERAL POLICIES

The Comprehensive Plan calls for residential development patterns that make efficient use of land, public services, and private improvements, and provide a wide variety of affordable housing choices. King County's diverse population requires single family and multifamily housing at a variety of densities and prices in urban, suburban and rural living environments.

R-101 King County should encourage and promote a wide range of residential development types and densities in various parts of King County to meet the needs of a diverse population and provide affordable housing choices for all income levels.

Included in the most basic considerations for locating residential development are the natural characteristics and constraints of the land. Careless development in environmentally sensitive areas can result in injury, death, property damage, loss of valuable natural areas, or other avoidable public and private costs such as extensive flood-control programs and insurance subsidies. Federal and state laws -- as well as environmental, safety and fiscal concerns -- require that King County recognize natural constraints as an important factor in land use planning.

R-102 Residential densities should be based on the land's natural capacity for development. Floodplains, valuable wetlands, steep slopes, severe landslide hazard areas and coal mine hazard areas should not be designated for residential development unless acceptable mitigating measures are used.

More detailed policies on environmentally sensitive areas are found in Chapter Four, Environment and Open Space. Policies R-304 and R-305 below address clustering and computing densities for development of sites located partially within environmentally sensitive areas.

The plan calls for most growth to occur in Urban Areas, after being carefully planned and served by adequate public facilities and services.

R-103 King County should encourage most new residential development to occur in Urban Areas, in locations where facilities and services can be provided at the lowest public cost. Urban Areas should have a variety of housing types and prices, including mobile home parks, multifamily development, townhouses, and single family development.

R-104 King County should encourage residential densities and site design (for example, low-density clusters) in Transitional Areas which recognize existing limited services and protect future urban and rural development choices for the land.

The plan also calls for long-term low-density residential development in Rural Areas, and protection of Resource Lands for long-term use by resource industries.

R-105 Residential development in Rural Areas should occur as follows:

- a. In Rural Activity Centers, at a variety of densities and housing types; and
- b. Outside Rural Activity Centers, at low densities compatible with rural character and uses, small-scale farming and forestry, and rural service levels.

R-106 Residential uses should be permitted in Resource Lands only when clearly consistent with resource management and only at densities which will avoid conflicts between residences and resource management practices. Residences for owners/managers of the resource lands are permitted.

Chapter Seven, Resource Lands, contains detailed policies on residential uses in Resource Lands.

One of the plan's basic goals is to encourage affordable housing choices for King County residents (see Chapter One, Introduction). While government housing programs address this issue for limited segments of the population (for example, the handicapped or low-income elderly), most housing will continue to be financed and developed by the private sector. King County recognizes there is a relationship between its land use policies and regulations and the private sector's ability to provide affordable housing. The role of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide opportunities for diverse housing choices, allowing for affordable housing.

II. DENSITY, LOCATION AND USES

The density (number of housing units on a given area of land) and location of residential development heavily influence the cost of housing, the type and level of services required, and impacts on the natural environment. The Comprehensive Plan encourages different residential densities in King County's Urban, Transitional, and Rural Areas to address these considerations and to promote diversity of housing choices for King County residents. Community plans will be the primary means of distributing residential densities.

High quality, efficient public services, environmental quality, and plentiful housing and job opportunities are major objectives in Urban Areas. These objectives can be achieved to a large degree through higher residential densities and a compact growth pattern. Urban Areas, however, will have a wide variety of densities, based on local natural features and environmental constraints, different service levels and consumer preferences. In addition, some Urban Areas are already developed and have little vacant land to accommodate significant new growth.

The Transitional Area is that portion of the County where development will focus as the designated Urban Area builds out. Transitional Areas contain land physically suitable for either future urban development or rural uses but currently without urban levels of utilities and other facilities and services. They are currently developed at very low densities, and will be redesignated as Urban or Rural Areas by community plans.

Rural Areas are intended to remain in very low densities. Service levels will be consistent with rural densities and character, and in most cases will be lower than in Urban Areas. Existing small lots and Rural Activity Centers (including their appropriate expansion areas), however, will result in a range of densities in Rural Areas.

This section is divided into subsections on Urban, Transitional, and Rural Areas, followed by a table relating the densities described in the policies to the implementing zone classifications.

A. Urban Areas

In the past, residential densities have been much lower in unincorporated King County than inside cities. As western King County changed from a group of small rural communities to a mixture of cities and unincorporated suburbs requiring a full range of urban services, overuse of low residential densities resulted in increased per household costs for facilities and services such as roads and sewers. Low densities also contributed to higher housing costs, especially as shifts in population characteristics resulted in changes in housing market demand.

An important policy direction in the King County Comprehensive Plan--1985 is to encourage higher residential densities in Urban Areas where growth will occur, in order to control public costs, conserve energy and natural resources, reduce development pressure on Rural Areas and Resource Lands, and provide more affordable housing choices.

This does not imply, however, that uniformly high densities are desirable or feasible throughout Urban Areas. Conditions unique to a site or locality, such as steep slopes or long-term service constraints, may require lower densities within areas otherwise suitable for growth. In addition, some lands in Urban Areas have no environmental or long-term service constraints, but are already developed at relatively low densities of one to three units per acre. Continuation of low density is appropriate where lot patterns, age and condition of the housing stock, and a small amount of vacant land preclude significant new development.

The following density policies will be implemented primarily through community plans, to allow consideration of the capacity of different parts of the County's Urban Areas for various urban densities. A different mix of single family and multifamily zoning may be used in each community to achieve the density objective expressed in this policy.

R-201 King County should seek to achieve an average density of 7 to 8 dwelling units per acre for new development in the portions of the Urban Area that are undeveloped, are served or can be served with adequate services, and are free of physical constraints. Urban Areas with an existing established character of development at lower densities are not included in this policy.

It is important to use land efficiently in areas that meet or exceed the criteria set forth in Policy R-201. For example, 7 to 8 units per acre has been identified as an important threshold density for supporting high quality public transit at reasonable cost.

R-202 The average density goal of 7 to 8 dwelling units per acre for the Urban Area may be achieved by a mix of single family and multifamily development, or by an overall increase in density of new single family development. The community planning process should determine where specific densities are applied, based on local constraints.

Most growth and development occurs in undeveloped areas. In some developed areas, however, there may be opportunities for higher densities on smaller vacant parcels or through redevelopment. Community plans are the preferred method for evaluating these opportunities.

R-203 Parcels of vacant land within developed areas may be suitable for higher densities. Whether an area which is already developed is suitable for infill on small vacant parcels or redevelopment at a higher density should be determined through the community plan process, considering factors such as the age and condition of the housing stock, surrounding uses, adequacy of public facilities and services, and continued neighborhood economic and social vitality. The community plan process should determine those developed areas which should remain at existing densities, and those which are suitable for redevelopment to achieve the urban residential density goal of the Comprehensive Plan.

R-204 Where local communities with adopted Community Plans are predominantly developed at a density of three to five dwelling units per acre or less, and have relatively little land suitable for development (such as some portions of Federal Way), existing densities should continue.

R-205 On environmentally sensitive lands, such as steep slopes or floodplains, or where there are long-term barriers to adequate local roads and utilities (for example, where access is limited due to topography), average densities should range from two to three dwellings per acre down to one dwelling per 5 acres, or less, depending on the severity of the constraint to development.

Chapter Four, Environment and Open Space, contains more detailed policies on development in sensitive areas.

R-206 Urban Area lands not yet planned or serviced for urban densities should have a maximum average density of one unit per five acres. When conditions for on-site sewage disposal, availability of public water, and other public services permit, development should be clustered to retain larger tracts for future higher density development. Once these lands are planned for urban uses and densities, higher density zoning should be applied as adequate services are made available.

R-207 Portions of Urban Areas that directly abut Rural Areas, where there is no effective natural barrier (such as steep slopes) or major public open space, should be developed using low densities (one dwelling per acre or less) and site development techniques such as clustering, to provide a buffer between higher urban densities and low rural densities.

The long-term low-density residential developments in Urban Areas recognized by or resulting from Policies R-204 to R-207 will contribute to the diversity of housing choices in Urban Areas, protect environmental quality, and minimize conflicts between incompatible land uses at the boundaries between Urban and Rural Areas. Area-wide public services, such as police and fire protection, for these low-density pockets will usually meet urban service level standards, but on-site improvements such as utilities and local access streets will be tailored to the low densities of development being served.

In those portions of Urban Areas suitable for generally higher densities, residential densities must be related to adequate facilities. The following policy relates specific densities to street access.

R-208 Residential densities should be based on street access as follows:

- a. Residential development at three to eight units per acre should be convenient to a neighborhood collector street;
- b. Residential development at eight to twelve units per acre should be convenient to a collector arterial;
- c. Residential development at 12 to 18 units per acre should be convenient to a minor arterial; and
- d. Residential development at 18 to 30 units or more per acre should be convenient to a principal arterial, unless it is within Urban Activity Centers, Community Centers, or Neighborhood Centers where the area-wide pattern of roads and transit service provides adequate access.

For purposes of specifying street access, the term "convenient" means physical access which does not result in adverse impacts on adjacent and nearby local access streets. The guidelines in Policy R-208 do not apply to multifamily housing for the elderly, because it generates less traffic than comparable housing for the general population.

R-209 Multifamily housing for the elderly should be permitted at densities slightly higher than surrounding development, provided adequate pedestrian access, public transit and utilities are available.

See Chapter Eight, Facilities and Services, for additional policies relating residential development to transportation.

While housing is the main land use in residential neighborhoods within Urban Areas, some compatible public and private non-residential uses may enhance a desirable living environment or require a residential location.

R-210 Non-residential uses in Urban residential neighborhoods should be limited to those that:

- a. Do not result in heavy traffic, noise, smoke or other adverse impacts; and
- b. Provide convenient local services for nearby residents; or
- c. Require location in a residential area.

Compatible non-residential uses within Urban Area neighborhoods include day care, elementary schools, churches, small-scale non-commercial community recreation facilities, and home occupations. Neighborhood shopping, libraries, larger parks, high schools and golf courses are examples of activities that provide amenities for nearby residents but are best situated on or near arterials near or at the edges of neighborhoods. Policy R-210 does not restrict the introduction of residential uses into business districts. Chapter Six, Commercial and Industrial Development, contains detailed guidelines on mixed business-residential developments.

Some nonresidential uses requiring location in residential areas may have adverse impacts on surrounding areas unless carefully designed and located. These include group homes providing mental health services and some utility installations. "Group home" means a residence providing full-time supervision and social services such as counseling, therapy and vocational training for a small number of individuals (this definition excludes medical treatment and detoxification). Group homes are most effective if located in a residential setting.

R-211 Group homes should be allowed in residential areas through a discretionary permit process with public review that considers adequacy of public services, parking, appearance and relative concentration of group homes nearby.

B. Transitional Areas

Outlying lands that are not currently designated as Rural Areas or Resource Lands, but where existing development densities and service levels are very low, are designated Transitional Areas. In Transitional Areas, residential densities will be limited until urban services can be made available or a Rural Area designation is made. Chapter Two, Plan Concept, explains in more detail the relationships between the Urban, Rural and Transitional Area designations. Chapter Three, Planning and Implementation, sets forth the methods for redesignating Transitional Areas to Urban or Rural Areas, through amendments to community plans and the Comprehensive Plan Map. Chapter Eight, Facilities and Services, addresses utilities.

R-212 Lands in Transitional Areas should have a maximum average density of one dwelling unit per five acres. Where previously adopted community plans have specified an average density of one dwelling unit per 2.5 acres, this density may continue. When conditions for on-site sewage disposal, availability of public water, and other services permit, development should be clustered to retain larger tracts for future urban density development. Transitional Areas should be redesignated as Urban Areas and higher density zoning applied when adequate urban facilities and services are or can be made available in time to meet the need, or as Rural Areas where appropriate.

R-213 Portions of Transitional Areas that directly abut Rural Areas where there is no effective natural barrier (such as steep slopes) or major public open space should be developed using low densities (one dwelling per acre or less) and site development techniques such as clustering, to provide a buffer between higher urban densities and low rural densities.

Nonresidential uses in Transitional Areas can be appropriate, provided they are compatible with the existing limited service levels.

R-214 Nonresidential uses in Transitional Areas should be limited to those that:

- a. Do not result in heavy traffic, noise, smoke or other significant adverse impacts; and
- b. Do not require public services beyond those currently available in Transitional Areas; and
- c. Provide convenient local services for nearby residents; or
- d. Require location in a Transitional Area residential community (for example, some utility installations).

Due to the currently low density of development in Transitional Areas, small-scale agriculture, forestry, and cottage industries may be permitted in addition to those compatible with residential development in Urban Areas (see Policy R-210 above).

C. Rural Areas

In Rural Areas, the Comprehensive Plan calls for low densities to maintain rural character, to allow small-scale farming and forestry, to buffer Resource Lands from incompatible land uses, and to maintain rural service levels.

- R-215** In Rural Areas, the maximum overall density should be one unit per five acres. Community plans may propose areas where lower densities (one unit per ten acres) may be appropriate.
- R-216** Community plans may locate densities of one unit per 2.5 acres in Rural Areas where the following criteria are met:
- a. A density higher than one unit per five acres already exists;
 - b. Soil conditions are able to handle the cumulative long-term impacts of on-site sewage disposal without adverse impacts to ground and surface waters; and
 - c. Public water supply is available to serve the area.
- R-217** Clustered development in Rural Areas should be allowed at densities of one unit per 2.5 - 5 acres when:
- a. Community plans establish criteria to allow incremental increases in density based on public benefits;
 - b. The scale of the development (lot sizes, size of a cluster, density within a cluster, total number of lots, etc.) is limited, to preserve and enhance the rural character and uses in the area;
 - c. Permanent Open Space for rural uses such as pastures, woodlots, wildlife preserves, or public Open Spaces, is included;
 - d. Permanent Open Space to buffer rural uses and protect Resource Lands is included;
 - e. Public review of site plans is a part of the process;
 - f. Any proposed on-site sewage disposal system, including community systems, can be provided without cumulative adverse impacts to ground and surface water;
 - g. A public water supply is provided;
 - h. Resulting impacts on facilities and services due to the increased density would not require new off-site facilities and services beyond those required by development at densities otherwise allowed in rural areas; and
 - i. Development rights for land not utilized in building site lots be conveyed to King County.

See Policy R-306 in Section III for guidance on densities within clustered development in Rural Areas.

R-218 In Rural Areas, existing lots below five acres in size may still be developed, provided applicable standards for sewage disposal, water quality, roads and rural fire protection can be met.

Local conditions, such as very poor soils for on-site sewage disposal systems, may limit development to lower densities than allowed by Policies R-215 to R-218.

Policy R-215 envisions a low overall residential density in Rural Areas. A significant amount of residential development, however, will occur at higher densities on small lots legally created in Rural Areas prior to the plan's adoption, as recognized in R-218. Higher density development also will occur within and surrounding Rural Activity Centers.

R-219 Residential development within Rural Activity Centers and their planned expansion areas should have a range similar to that permitted in Urban Areas when adequate facilities and services exist or can be made available as needed.

Policy R-219 will be implemented through community plans and/or joint planning efforts with Rural Activity Centers, resulting in interlocal agreements which will ensure compatible land use policies and adequate facilities and services as Rural Activity Centers grow. Rural Activity Centers make an important contribution to diversity of housing choices for Rural Area residents and King County as a whole.

Policies R-201 to R-219 must be used in conjunction with applicable portions of Chapter Three, Planning and Implementation, Chapter Four, Environment and Open Space, and Chapter Eight, Facilities and Services.

While housing is the main land use in residential portions of Rural Areas, some compatible public and private non-residential uses are appropriate and contribute to rural residential character or provide services to rural residents, while remaining compatible with rural service levels.

R-220 Nonresidential uses in Rural Areas that are primarily residential should be limited to those that:

- a. Do not result in heavy traffic, noise, smoke or other significant adverse impacts; and
- b. Do not require public services beyond those appropriate in Rural Areas; and
- c. Provide convenient local services for nearby residents; or
- d. Require location in a Rural Area residential community (for example, some utility installations).

Compatible non-residential uses in Rural residential neighborhoods include, for example, day care centers, churches, home occupations, and small-scale cottage industries. Neighborhood shopping, gas stations, libraries and feed and grain stores are examples of activities that also provide services to nearby residents, but are best located within Rural Activity Centers or Rural Neighborhood Centers. Policy R-220 is not intended to preclude consideration of new commercial/recreational facilities, such as conference centers, ski resorts, or tourist attractions in Rural Areas. Chapter Six, Commercial and Industrial Development, contains policies addressing location of such facilities (Policy CI-110).

Some resource industries are also anticipated activities in Rural Areas. Forestry and farming are compatible with rural residential uses, and do not require a separate land use designation. The policies to guide mineral extraction operations in Chapter Seven, Resource Lands and Industries should be applied to mining activities in rural areas.

R-221 Farming and forestry are favored and permitted uses in Rural Areas. Agricultural and silvicultural management practices should not be construed as public nuisances when carried on in a reasonable manner and in compliance with any applicable public regulations, even though they may impact nearby rural residences.

D. Densities and Residential Zone Classifications

The density policies in this section are expressed as ranges, to recognize the variation in density that will occur as each individual site is developed.

Figure R-1 relates the Comprehensive Plan's land use designations and density policies to corresponding zoning categories, showing the zoning intended to implement the density ranges of the policies. Density policy ranges describe probable yields rather than limits, and are based on experience with conventional development practices. Clustering may yield higher densities than lot-by-lot platting within a given zone. Other techniques such as planned unit developments (PUDs) may increase density above plan density designations. Actual densities may slightly exceed plan density designations also in the cases of mobile home parks and multifamily housing for the elderly. Conversely, problems on individual sites such as natural constraints or inadequate facilities and services may reduce attainable density below that permitted by an otherwise applicable density policy or zone classification, unless the constraints can be adequately mitigated.

**Figure R-1
RESIDENTIAL DENSITY TABLE**

Plan Concept Designation *	Density Policy Number of dwellings per acre	Zoned Lot Area Per Dwelling** Square feet or acres
URBAN AREAS	Over 30	900
	18-30	1,400
(also Rural	12-18	2,400
Activity Centers	8-12	3,600
where services	6-8	5,000
are adequate)	4-6	7,200
	3-4	9,600
	2-3	15,000
	1	35,000
	1 unit per 5 acres	5 acres
TRANSITIONAL AREAS	1 unit per 5 acres	5 acres
RURAL AREAS	1 unit per 10 acres	10 acres
	1 unit per 5 acres	5 acres
	1 unit per 2.5 acres	2.5 acres
RESOURCE LANDS		
-Forest Lands	None	NA***
-Farm Lands	None	NA***
-Mineral Resource Lands	None	NA***
OPEN SPACE	None	NA****

* The official Comprehensive Plan Map applies these designations in King County.

** Lot averaging permitted in many cases subject to conditions.

*** See Chapter Seven, Resource Lands and Industries for policies governing residential uses in Resource Lands.

**** Lands included in the Open Space system will not be developed, although they will have an underlying zone classification. Lands included in the Open Space system through development dedications will be used to compute allowable densities on adjacent lands when part of a park or trail system.

III. DESIGN AND IMPROVEMENT STANDARDS

This section addresses residential development and site planning.

A. Design

The way residential communities look and function -- how well they are designed -- is a determinant of quality of life for the people living there. Careful site planning can contribute to aesthetic value, minimize site disturbance, conserve energy, and in some cases reduce total development costs.

General Approach

- R-301** Site characteristics that enhance residential development (trees, watercourses, historic features and similar assets) should be preserved through creative site planning such as clustering or lot averaging.
- R-302** When feasible, residential development should be planned to enhance usability and privacy of yards, preserve views, and consider solar access.

Successful application of these policies means encouraging careful site planning, and employing development standards that allow good design practices. (See Policy R-304 below; also see Chapter Eight, Facilities and Services, for residential street design policies.)

Density credits can also realize important public benefits. Development options like the planned unit development (PUD) process in Urban Areas can achieve higher densities than normally permitted by a zone classification in return for additional public amenities such as low income housing, preservation of designated historic features, or extra energy conservation measures. For example, additional density might be an appropriate incentive for development features which enhance the use of public transit or otherwise reduce transportation energy consumption.

- R-303** Density credits should be encouraged in Urban Areas and Rural Activity Centers with adequate facilities and services to achieve important public benefits such as innovative low cost housing, significant historic preservation, or energy conservation. Density credits should be available to single family detached housing developments, multifamily projects, or developments combining both attached and detached dwelling units.

Single Family Development

At any given density, lot-by-lot single family detached development will consume more land and energy, and will cost more to develop and maintain, than attached or multifamily housing. Therefore, King County and the development industry must be alert for opportunities to use energy- and cost-efficient development techniques for single family housing.

- R-304** Lot size averaging, lot clustering, flexible setback requirements, and mixing attached and detached housing should be encouraged when sites are served by public sewers and public water, or soil conditions for on-site sewage disposal make higher densities within clusters practical and safe. In clustered develop-

ment, standards for roads, utilities and other improvements should be determined considering the lot size and density within the cluster, as well as the average density for the entire parcel.

- R-305** Densities in clustered residential development on sites containing environmentally sensitive areas should be treated as follows:
- a. Environmentally sensitive areas that are unbuildable (for example, the floodway portion of a 100-year floodplain) should not be included in average density calculations;
 - b. Environmentally sensitive areas that are unbuildable, but are designated as part of a park or trail in the Open Space system, and are open to the public, should be included in average density calculations along with developable land;
 - c. Environmentally sensitive areas that are buildable (for example, wetlands of secondary importance to drainage and ecosystems) should be included in average density calculations; and
 - d. In all cases, allowed densities should be based on environmental impacts.

Chapter Four, Environment and Open Space, contains detailed policies concerning limits to development on environmentally sensitive areas. The park and recreation element of the Open Space Functional Plan will provide a basis for determining when these areas should be included in park or trail systems.

Clustering also may be appropriate in Rural Areas to enhance opportunities for small-scale farming and forestry, to provide buffering for nearby designated Resource Lands, and to allow variety in lot sizes, as long as overall density is not increased.

- R-306** Lot size averaging, lot clustering, and flexible setback requirements may be used in Rural Areas, provided the size of a cluster and density within a cluster are limited to be compatible with overall rural densities and rural-level services (for example, permanent on-site sewage disposal, adequate fire protection). Clustered development in Rural Areas should be sited to be compatible with rural character and the protection of Resource Lands.

The policies above apply equally to site-built and factory-built single family housing when sited on lots created through the subdivision or PUD processes. Factory-built homes, however, also may be sited in mobile home parks. Mobile home parks offer unique opportunities for alternative single family housing at somewhat higher densities than regular subdivisions. Residents of mobile home parks typically want more security but need less physical separation than residents of regular subdivisions, so mobile home parks can be more densely developed than typical single family subdivisions, and function well if carefully designed.

- R-307** Mobile home parks should provide a useful outdoor recreation area and a surrounding screen or buffer between other uses.

Multifamily Development

Multifamily residential development is important to King County's housing supply, because it uses land and energy efficiently and offers potentially low per-unit construction cost. (Multifamily development is defined as one building that contains two or more separate residences on one property, or a row of attached townhouses on one property.)

- R-308 Multifamily residential development should be designed to provide privacy, common and private open space, and a variety of unit styles and sizes.
- R-309 Common facilities in multifamily development such as open space, internal walkways, roads, parking, laundry rooms, garbage disposal areas and mailboxes should be located and designed to minimize noise and glare for nearby residents and to maintain their security and privacy.
- R-310 Multifamily development adjacent to single family or nonresidential development should have open space or landscaping for screening and buffering.

B. Public Improvement Standards

The following policies govern the content of King County land use regulations and functional plans that contain improvement standards, and the review of proposed rezones, residential subdivisions, short subdivisions, and construction permits. (See Chapter Eight, Facilities and Services, for detailed residential street classification and improvement policies.)

- R-311 Where the allowed average density is three units per acre or greater (Urban Areas and Rural Activity Centers), residential developments should include the following improvements:
 - a. Paved streets, curbs and sidewalks or paved walkways;
 - b. Adequate off-street parking;
 - c. Street lighting;
 - d. Adequate storm drainage control;
 - e. Public water supply; and
 - f. Sanitary sewers.

Policy R-311 applies to residential developments where the zoned minimum lot area per dwelling unit is 9,600 square feet or smaller. (Slightly different street improvement standards may apply to mobile home parks built at the same densities, due to the smaller size of mobile homes and the clearances needed to allow them to be placed on the site.) Policy R-312 governs development where the zoned average lot area per dwelling is 15,000 square feet to five acres.

R-312 In Urban Areas and Rural Activity Centers where the allowed average density is less than three units per acre, residential developments should include the following improvements:

- a. Paved streets;
- b. Curbs and storm sewers or other means of adequate storm drainage control;
- c. Public water supply; and
- d. Sanitary sewers or approved on-site alternative.

R-313 Residential development at an allowed average density of one unit per five acres on sites in Transitional Areas should include the following improvements:

- a. Paved streets with sufficient additional right-of-way to accommodate future urban-level facilities when needed;
- b. Adequate storm drainage control;
- c. Public water supply or private water system approved by the King County Public Health Department; and
- d. Sanitary sewers or approved on-site alternative.

R-314 In Rural Areas outside Rural Activity Centers, residential development should include the following improvements:

- a. Local access streets improved to a standard that allows year-round access for service and emergency vehicles, and controls dust and drainage;
- b. Public water supply or private water system approved by the King County Public Health Department; and
- c. On-site sewage disposal designed for long-term performance. Community systems may be considered for clustered development.

(In Rural Activity Centers, curbs and sidewalks will be provided according to standards established in community and functional plans. Also see Policies R-304 to R-306 above concerning standards for low-density clustered developments, and Chapter Eight, Facilities and Services, for policies on roads and utilities.)

Open space and parks at the neighborhood scale are important amenities for urban residential areas. The higher the density, the more essential they become to a desirable living environment. In addition to providing recreation, neighborhood parks can augment other public services cost-effectively. For example, a landscaped swale can provide both visual amenity and storm drainage control; a park can include a buffered site for a utility installation such as a water tank.

R-315 In Urban Areas, single family and multifamily residential development at one or more units per acre should provide sites or contribute its fair share toward meeting neighborhood-level park and outdoor recreation needs.

This policy can be fulfilled either by land dedications or fees-in-lieu of land. If the site of a proposed development is large enough, a park site dedication or private park site can be required as a condition of a rezone, subdivision or site plan approval. Privately owned recreation areas will meet this contribution requirement if a development is large enough to function as a neighborhood by itself. A dedicated park site will be included in total site area for calculating allowable density, consistent with Policies R-304 and R-305.

The parks and recreation portion of the Parks and Open Space Functional Plan will provide a basis for establishing requirements to implement Policy R-315.

Chapter Six

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Economic vitality is essential to King County's high quality of life. Continued economic development is necessary to maintain that vitality, providing employment to keep pace with a growing population, replacing jobs lost through changes in technology or markets, and assuring a stable tax base. The role of the Comprehensive Plan in economic development is to establish general criteria for the location of commercial and industrial growth, to ensure that public facilities and services are adequate to support that growth and to identify general design standards for commercial and industrial development. The Comprehensive Plan Map shows designated Urban Activity Centers and Rural Activity Centers where commercial and industrial development is desired. New Urban Activity Centers can be established through plan map amendments. Community plans locate sites within unincorporated Urban Activity Centers and Rural Activity Centers for commercial and industrial uses, and apply specific zoning.

A King County Economic Development Plan -- a separately adopted functional plan -- will further support economic growth, by identifying constraints on and opportunities for commercial and industrial development, and specifying actions and incentives King County can use to pursue those opportunities or eliminate constraints. The opportunities, needs and actions of the Economic Development Plan will provide further direction to community plans to implement the County economic development strategy. The Economic Development Plan will also provide a basis for determining whether or not additional industrial or commercial activities should be encouraged in some or all underutilized or undercapacity major transportation corridors, such as I-90.

The policies in this chapter address location, design and public improvement standards for most commercial and industrial development in unincorporated areas, and provide the basis for King County's work with cities on plans for commercial and industrial development. Home occupations and cottage industries are addressed in Chapter Five, Residential Development; policies addressing resource industries are in Chapter Seven, Resource Lands and Industries.

I. GENERAL POLICIES

A. Economic Development

A major goal of King County is to encourage economic development that provides for a strong economy and diverse employment opportunities for King County residents. As the costs and benefits of economic growth go beyond jurisdictional boundaries, planning for economic development must take a regional perspective. The Comprehensive Plan provides only an overview of the issue; a detailed Economic Development Plan is necessary to address specifics, and is being prepared as a functional plan.

- CI-101 King County should work cooperatively with the cities and the private sector to encourage economic development which will provide continuing employment and economic vitality, and be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's goals and plan concept.
- CI-102 King County, in cooperation with the cities, should make every feasible effort to make a supply of physically suitable and serviced sites potentially available to meet the needs of new and expanding businesses in appropriate locations.
- CI-103 King County land use plans should help diversify and strengthen the local economy.
- CI-104 Community plans should be coordinated with and contribute to county-wide economic development goals and should provide adequately for employment growth, consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's goals and plan concept.

The Economic Development Plan will identify economic development needs and opportunities that can be addressed through land use plans. King County also evaluates employment growth forecasts and the capacity for growth by subareas of the County through the Annual Growth Report.

- CI-105 King County should identify the type and level of public facilities and services appropriate to support the degree of economic development being planned.
- CI-106 Economic development plans should regularly assess the needs of the local economy and emphasize the expansion and increased productivity of existing industries as a means to strengthen the regional economy.
- CI-107 Techniques considered to implement King County's economic development goals should include incentives, land use regulations, expedited permit processing and capital improvement programming.

B. Commercial/Industrial Locations

The plan concept envisions groupings of commercial and industrial uses in centers throughout King County in cities and unincorporated areas, providing jobs, goods and services close to where people live. For Urban Areas, the plan concept envisions major concentrations of employment and trade, called Urban Activity Centers; and many small concentrations of retail stores in Neighborhood and Community Centers. In Rural Areas, commercial and industrial activities are concentrated in the Rural Activity Centers.

Centers of economic activity with a mix of stores and services, offices, and research and manufacturing industries serve both public and private interests. Compact groupings of uses encourage transit and pedestrian travel, and reduce conflicts with neighboring uses. For example, Metro has found that an employment density of about 50 jobs per acre in large concentrations is needed to support a high level of transit service cost-effectively. Most businesses prefer locations near similar and supporting businesses, as demonstrated by the existing major concentrations of commercial and industrial activity found in King County.

CI-108 King County should encourage a wide range of commercial and industrial development in Urban Activity Centers and Rural Activity Centers, and should provide for small-scale retail stores, offices and services in Community and Neighborhood Centers. Commercial and industrial development should occur primarily in compact centers.

The Comprehensive Plan Map, Figure PC-1 in Chapter Two, shows Urban Activity Centers and Rural Activity Centers in both incorporated and unincorporated areas; Community and Neighborhood Centers are mapped in community plans. Most commercial and industrial development is intended to occur in Urban Activity Centers, where the Comprehensive Plan also plans for the urban level facilities and services needed for employment growth, such as roads, utilities, police and fire service, and frequent transit service (see Policy PC-101). Commercial and industrial development is also desirable in Rural Activity Centers to provide local employment, goods and services for outlying areas; development there is expected to be less extensive than in Urban Areas, however, consistent with the relatively limited capacity of public facilities and services; less intense commercial and industrial development in Rural Activity Centers is also desirable to maintain compatibility with adjacent rural residential uses and resource industries (see Policy PC-117).

Natural features must be considered in locating commercial and industrial development, to ensure the soils and topography can support such development while protecting environmental quality. Areas with fragile environmental features or unstable soils that pose a hazard to buildings and roads are not suitable for commercial and industrial development.

CI-109 Locations for commercial and industrial development should be based on the land's natural capacity for development. Floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes, landslide and erosion hazard areas should not be designated for commercial or industrial development because they may pose a danger to development, or perform highly valuable ecological functions.

More detailed policies on environmentally sensitive areas are found in Chapter Four, Environment and Open Space.

Institutional or resource-based commercial/recreational facilities, such as conference centers or ski areas, may require locations outside of Urban Activity Centers and Rural Activity Centers; those that require open land, such as golf courses, or require particular site features such as water, views, or ski slopes, may need a remote location. Institutional and resource-based commercial/recreational facilities and resorts are especially desirable as part of the economic base in Rural Areas. Such facilities also may be appropriate in Forest Production Districts, when designed and managed to be compatible with forestry, and in Urban Areas, when conflicts with adjacent land uses can be adequately controlled.

CI-110 Institutional and resource-based commercial/recreational facilities such as golf courses and destination resorts should be encouraged in King County, in locations where impacts on the environment, adjacent land uses and resource management can be adequately controlled, and where adequate public facilities and services can be provided.

II. URBAN ACTIVITY CENTERS

Urban Activity Centers are major concentrations of commercial and industrial development in unincorporated King County, and similar concentrations within cities. In most cases these centers include large areas of land. Urban Activity Centers are intended to be the primary locations for commercial and industrial development in King County. This section addresses size, location, designation criteria, and design and improvement standards for Urban Activity Centers. Designated Urban Activity Centers in cities and unincorporated areas are indicated on the Comprehensive Plan Map, Figure PC-1 in Chapter Two.

A. Size and Function of Urban Activity Centers

Urban Activity Centers are intended to contain a variety of land uses, including retail and office development, commercial uses such as wholesale trade and distribution centers, and industrial uses such as research and development, manufacturing and warehousing. High-density housing is also desirable in Urban Activity Centers, including multifamily housing, and mixed use developments which combine housing and commercial uses in the same structure or on the same site. Providing for a variety of uses in Urban Activity Centers allows businesses to locate near supporting business, and enables employees to combine work and shopping trips. Including multifamily housing and retail activities in an Urban Activity Center adds vitality, keeping it a lively place in the evenings and on weekends.

The range of uses in each Urban Activity Center will vary depending on locational constraints and market conditions. One center, for example, may have a large concentration of research firms and business services, with fewer retail stores; another center may have a major office concentration and a shopping center, with few manufacturing activities.

- CI-201 Urban Activity Centers should have a mix of uses, including several or all of the following:**
- a. Retail stores and services;**
 - b. Small, medium and large scale professional offices and business parks;**
 - c. Multifamily housing and mixed-use developments;**

- d. Heavy commercial uses, such as wholesale trade; and
- e. Light to heavy manufacturing, and manufacturing parks.

The total size of each Urban Activity Center will vary based on regional and local considerations. Some Urban Activity Centers will be major concentrations of employment and trade, such as downtown Bellevue and Federal Way. Others may be relatively small -- for example, 80 to 100 acres -- with office and manufacturing square footage not much greater than the retail square footage.

Community plans will establish the size and mix of uses in Urban Activity Centers in unincorporated King County, based on regional and local economic development needs and opportunities, and the availability of public facilities and services, such as roads and fire protection. Urban Activity Centers attract considerable traffic, so size must be based on the existing capacity of roads, or the ability of road improvements to accommodate traffic. In addition, the relationship among Urban Activity Centers must be considered, to ensure growth will make use of existing public improvements before additional public expense is incurred, and to ensure land use plans encourage healthy and vital Urban Activity Centers with compact development patterns.

CI-202 The size of each Urban Activity Center and mix of uses within it should be established based on regional and local needs and constraints. Plans for each Urban Activity Center should:

- a. Provide for a reasonable share of the regional economic development needs identified by the King County Economic Development Plan;
- b. Provide the opportunity for a local balance of jobs and population, in conjunction with other nearby Urban Activity Centers;
- c. Be based on the long-term availability and cost of public facilities and services, to ensure adequate transportation, sewers, public water, police and fire service can be provided cost-effectively; and
- d. Complement land use plans for Urban Activity Centers nearby, to reduce public facility costs and encourage compact development patterns.

CI-203 Community plans should establish the size and mix of uses for Urban Activity Centers in unincorporated King County, once they are designated by the Comprehensive Plan.

Urban Activity Centers not originally designated in the Comprehensive Plan Map may be proposed as amendments, using criteria described in Policies CI-209 to CI-211, below. Proposals for new Urban Activity Centers may be initiated through the community planning process or by individual development proposals.

Urban Activity Centers will usually include retail shopping to serve the surrounding community or several communities. Shopping facilities will typically include one or more department stores and several smaller stores, restaurants and similar businesses. The greater the population of the area surrounding an Urban Activity Center, the greater the need for retail space. Allocation of excessive land to retail use, however, can result in low density development and vacant parcels in one or more Urban Activity Centers, an unattractive development pattern that does not work for pedestrians or transit and does not make full use of public investments in roads and utilities to the centers.

- CI-204** The amount of land designated for retail development in Urban Activity Centers should be based on the amount of residential development planned for the surrounding area, to provide for the existing and future shopping needs of surrounding communities, while encouraging compact development patterns.
- CI-205** Retail areas within most Urban Activity Centers should be designed to serve a surrounding community population of 40,000 to 150,000 persons. Retail space should be 10 to 30 acres in size, providing for up to 300,000 square feet of retail space.
- CI-206** Retail areas within Urban Activity Centers may be designed to serve a regional population of over 150,000 persons when compatible with plans for nearby Urban Activity Centers. Such retail areas should be 30 to 50 acres in size, providing for 300,000 or more square feet of retail space.

The size ranges outlined in Policies CI-205 and CI-206 reflect national studies of the relationship between market area population and retail space requirements, as well as the objective of encouraging compact development.

Within these ranges, the community planning process will be used to determine how much retail zoning is appropriate for a given area, based on consideration of local residents' interests, desired community character, and existing and future facility and service availability, as well as market opportunities.

A major factor affecting size and scale of retail development is transportation. Retail development of 600,000 square feet or more can present significant traffic congestion problems, unless there is reasonable freeway access, and significant use of transit rather than private automobiles.

- CI-207** Retail space in Urban Activity Centers should exceed 600,000 square feet only where the Urban Activity Center has reasonable freeway access (by means of collector or secondary arterials which can maintain an acceptable level of service on existing roads as well as new ones in conjunction with the retail uses) and where transit service can significantly reduce automobile travel.

Developments which combine commercial and residential uses in the same structure or on the same site can be relatively high-density residential concentrations when they are within Urban Activity Centers where facilities and services needed to support intensive development are planned.

- CI-208** Mixed use development in Urban Activity Centers may include residential densities of 48 units per acre. Density may exceed 48 units per acre in areas with frequent transit service.

Other multifamily housing within and adjacent to Urban Activity Centers is addressed in Chapter 5, Residential Development.

B. Designation and Location of Urban Activity Centers

King County will encourage most commercial and industrial development to locate in existing Urban Activity Centers, where public facilities and services are in place or needed improvements can be provided cost-effectively, and where continuing economic growth will provide nearby job opportunities for residents of Urban Areas. In some cases, new Urban Activity Centers may be needed to better achieve a local balance of jobs and population, or to meet regional economic development needs defined by the King County Economic Development Plan. Designation and location of new centers in Urban Areas must be planned to complement development in existing centers, to ensure each center retains its economic vitality and to ensure existing public investments in facilities and services are used to the extent possible before committing to public facilities and services for a new Urban Activity Center.

CI-209 Urban Activity Centers not originally designated in the Comprehensive Plan Map may be proposed as amendments, and the proposal should be subject to thorough public review from a county-wide perspective. King County should designate new Urban Activity Centers when adequate public facilities and services and private improvements can be provided cost-effectively, and:

- a. A new center is needed to provide nearby jobs, goods, and services to residents of Urban Areas, or because economic development cannot reasonably be accommodated in existing Urban Activity Centers; and
- b. Development of a new Urban Activity Center would not adversely affect provision of public facilities and services to existing incorporated or unincorporated Urban Activity Centers nearby.

Designation of a new Urban Activity Center would follow the amendment process outlined in Chapter Three, Planning and Implementation. Amendments may be initiated by development proposals, community plan studies, or in response to needs identified in the Economic Development Plan. Once a new Urban Activity Center location has been designated through a plan map amendment, its boundaries, mix of uses, and required public facilities and services would be specified through a community plan revision.

Urban Activity Centers must develop in locations where landforms are capable of accommodating the heavy construction and traffic associated with commercial and industrial development, while maintaining environmental quality. Policy CI-109 recognizes that businesses need sites with stable soils free from potential sliding, erosion or other problems. The location for a new Urban Activity Center must also be evaluated to ensure cost-effective public facilities and services can be provided, including a full range of utilities, police and fire protection, and transportation facilities enabling efficient movement of goods, employees and customers.

C-210 Locations designated as Urban Activity Centers should be in areas where public or private improvements and services can be provided cost-effectively in time to meet the need. The location should be served by high capacity arterials or a freeway interchange, and in an area that can be cost-effectively served by utilities, transit, and police and fire protection.

Chapter Eight, Facilities and Services, addresses transportation and utility standards.

Urban Activity Centers are intended to develop at frequent intervals, to reduce the distance from residences to employment, shopping, entertainment and services. Separation between Urban Activity Centers is desirable, however, to ensure each remains a distinct and attractive part of the community. Distance between Urban Activity Centers allows each to retain its distinct identity. Adequate separation between Urban Activity Centers also encourages development of a full range of retail uses in each center, to reduce the need for many separate shopping trips.

CI-211 Urban Activity Centers should be approximately three to six miles apart, allowing for short work and shopping trips while providing for distinct and separate centers.

C. Design of Urban Activity Centers

Design of Urban Activity Centers can contribute to their economic success and to the quality of Urban Areas. Plans for development of Urban Activity Centers are needed to encourage groupings of similar uses that are efficient for businesses, employees and shoppers, to minimize conflicts among uses within and adjacent to Urban Activity Centers, to provide for utilities and transportation, and to protect aesthetic values. Community plans will address allocation of land uses within designated Urban Activity Centers.

CI-212 Urban Activity Centers should be functional, vital and attractive environments for businesses, employees, and shoppers. Design of Urban Activity Centers should reflect the following principles:

- a. Centers should be compact to encourage transit and pedestrian travel. Multistory construction and other techniques to use land efficiently should be encouraged;
- b. Compatible uses should be grouped to reduce conflicts among uses and to increase convenience for businesses and users;
- c. Aesthetic quality and compatibility among land uses within and adjacent to Urban Activity Centers should be enhanced through landscaping, building orientation and setbacks, traffic control and other measures to reduce potential conflicts;
- d. Unsightly views, such as heavy machinery, service entrances, storage areas, loading docks and parking areas should be screened from the view of adjacent retail, commercial and residential areas and from arterials;
- e. Signs should be designed to reduce glare and other adverse visual impacts to nearby residents; and
- f. Routes for pedestrian, auto, transit and truck travel within Urban Activity Centers should be designed to provide safe, convenient access to each major destination.

Community quality will be enhanced if Urban Activity Centers vary in appearance, reflecting the character of the surrounding community, or preserving distinctive natural or historic features.

CI-213 Plans for Urban Activity Centers should include specific measures to promote good design, preserve distinctive features to the largest possible extent, and add variety to Urban Areas.

Community plans, for example, may specify ways to preserve historic buildings and established street-front character in retail areas, or to preserve the natural amenities of a stream or a stand of mature trees.

Commercial Uses

Commercial development occurs on a lot-by-lot basis as well as through large parcel development by a single owner or designer. Either type of development can be compatible with surrounding uses, and can be designed to increase transit use, encourage pedestrian travel within centers, and provide for efficient movement of automobiles, busses and trucks. Compact groupings of stores with features such as covered walkways, benches, attractive paving and other amenities are beneficial to businesses and shoppers. Such groupings are more easily served by transit, and encourage pedestrian travel.

Pedestrian travel is desirable to reduce traffic congestion within centers, as well as making centers lively parts of the community. Pedestrian routes can be protected by curbs and changes in elevation, and made attractive with texture, covered walkways, strips of landscaping, and street trees.

CI-214 Stores and services should be grouped to encourage pedestrian travel in retail areas; mixed retail/residential use should be encouraged. Other uses may be included within retail groupings when designed to encourage pedestrian travel.

CI-215 Retail developments should include landscaping and street trees to provide an attractive appearance, and should include safe, attractive pedestrian routes.

CI-216 New stores should be sited to minimize distances between buildings; arterial access points for individual stores should be combined. Individual stores surrounded by large parking lots with individual access to arterials should be discouraged.

Some retail stores and services are not appropriate in pedestrian-oriented areas. These include gas stations and drive-in restaurants, or stores with considerable outdoor storage, such as lumber yards, or boat, auto and machinery sales.

CI-217 Retail stores and services with features that disrupt pedestrian travel, such as large outdoor sales areas or drive-in trade, should be grouped together or with heavy commercial or industrial activities. Storage areas should be screened and paved areas should be landscaped to improve their appearance.

Heavy commercial activities such as wholesale trade, major business supply stores and warehouses generate significant truck traffic. These uses have needs similar to industrial uses, including direct access to arterials and freedom from disruption to truck, service vehicle, and equipment movement.

- CI-218 Heavy commercial uses should locate in conjunction with industrial uses or with retail uses requiring outdoor sales and storage.**

Office developments can be attractive working environments with amenities for workers that also benefit adjacent communities. Office developments include single office buildings or office parks and campus style developments that house activities such as finance, insurance, research, real estate, medical clinics, law offices and similar businesses. Although such businesses normally do not rely on pedestrian traffic, their location near retail activity is desirable because it generates business in retail areas, provides opportunities for shared parking, and can reduce use of automobiles for lunch hour and after-work shopping trips. Groupings of high-density office and retail uses also can support frequent transit service.

- CI-219 Office buildings should be grouped within Urban Activity Centers, and should be encouraged to develop at high employment densities, and to locate near retail stores and services. Mixed residential/office use should be encouraged as part of office development.**

- CI-220 Office park development should include extensive landscaping, open space, and other features that contribute to a quality working environment, while not detracting from the objective of high employment densities.**

Mixed use developments are desirable parts of Urban Activity Centers, providing convenient living environments and strengthening retail businesses. Careful design, however, is necessary to avoid conflicts between commercial and residential uses.

- CI-221 Mixed use developments should include retail or office activities oriented toward pedestrians and compatible with residential uses.**

- CI-222 Commercial uses within a mixed use development should be located and designed to preserve quiet and privacy for residents.**

- CI-223 Higher densities and reduced parking requirements should be offered as incentives for mixed use developments that provide additional amenities such as enclosed parking, usable public space and major landscaping, or have convenient and frequent transit access.**

- CI-224 Off-street parking for mixed use development should not disrupt pedestrian access to commercial uses. Parking in back of the development or enclosed within a building is encouraged.**

- CI-225 Permanent signs for mixed use developments should be designed to reduce glare and minimize visual and other adverse impacts to residents.**

Measures to ensure commercial uses are compatible with adjoining uses include screening, parking and storage areas. Parking lots near businesses in Urban Activity Centers, for example, are needed to allow free traffic movement on adjoining streets, but vast expanses of pavement are unsightly, discourage pedestrian travel, and increase drainage problems. Roof-top or underground parking is desirable, and will be encouraged.

- CI-226** Parking for commercial development should be landscaped to improve appearance and aid in drainage control, while still allowing visibility from arterials. Total parking area should be reduced where transit service is frequent or parking is shared. Rooftop and underground parking should be encouraged through incentives such as density bonuses or reduced parking requirements.

Industrial Uses

Groupings of similar or compatible industrial uses can improve the flow of shipping and employee traffic, as well as allowing firms to share facilities and services. Groupings also help reduce land use conflicts with less intensive uses. Light industries are those with relatively minor impacts, such as electronics research or assembly, medical research, printing, and light fabrication. These industries can be successfully grouped with offices and may be compatible adjacent to residential areas when developed in business park or campus-style settings. Heavy industries such as chemical processing, truck or machinery manufacturing, and similar uses may have impacts more difficult to control, such as heavy truck traffic, noise, vibration, light, glare and odors; these impacts can best be controlled when heavy industries are separated from residential and commercial uses.

- CI-227** Industrial development should be grouped with similar or compatible uses in Urban Activity Centers to limit land use conflicts, improve traffic flow and safety, and allow firms to share public facilities and services.
- CI-228** Individual separate industrial sites may be permitted in Urban Areas when adequate facilities and services can be provided, adverse impacts on adjacent land uses and the natural environment are mitigated, and when these sites are located to provide a suitable core for a future Urban Activity Center.

Some retail activities in industrial areas, such as restaurants and branch banks, are appropriate to serve employees, and can be compatible with industrial uses. Extensive retail development, however, presents auto and pedestrian traffic that does not safely mix with industrial traffic, especially industrial areas generating frequent truck traffic, shipping and loading.

- CI-229** Uses that generate significant non-industrial auto and pedestrian traffic during industrial working hours should be excluded from industrial areas, if such traffic would be incompatible with the industrial uses.

Industrial parks are desirable parts of Urban Activity Centers. Landscaping and comprehensive design can make them attractive working environments and provide a pleasing appearance compatible with adjacent, less intensive uses. Industrial parks are attractive locations for high-technology or research and development firms, as well as other industries. Even with extensive open space and landscaping, an industrial park can develop at employment densities that can support transit use; for example, by using two or three story buildings and combining office and industrial uses within the park. Incentives such as reduced parking requirements and other measures are appropriate to encourage high employment density in cases where transit, carpooling and/or shared parking are possible.

- CI-230** Industrial parks should be encouraged to develop as efficient and attractive working environments, with a mix of uses and at employee-per-acre ratios that encourage transit use.

Whether developed lot by lot or in an industrial park, industrial uses can be compatible with adjacent land uses when sufficient landscaping, buffering and other design techniques are used to prevent significant off-site impacts, and when circulation and access are adequate.

CI-231 Industrial development should be designed to be compatible with adjoining uses. Off-site impacts such as noise, odors, light and glare should be prevented through pollution control measures, setbacks, landscaping, and other techniques. Un-sightly views of parking, loading and storage areas should be screened from neighboring office, retail and residential uses.

Traffic from shipping and employees is typically the most significant impact from industrial development. Access and traffic controls are needed to minimize this impact, especially if most shipping is by truck.

CI-232 Industrial development should have direct access from arterials or freeways. Access points should be combined and limited in number to allow smooth traffic flow on arterials. Access through residential areas should be avoided.

More detailed policies on access and circulation are included in the transportation section of Chapter Eight, Facilities and Services.

D. Improvement Standards for Urban Activity Centers

Public improvements and services in an Urban Activity Center are essential to ensure an efficient business environment, to allow easy access for the community, and to make the center an attractive part of the community.

CI-233 Needed rights-of-way, on-site and off-site road improvements, and utilities should be assured before development proceeds within Urban Activity Centers. Construction of such facilities may be timed to serve the uses which require them.

Chapter Eight, Facilities and Services, addresses provision of on and off-site improvements.

CI-234 Individual commercial developments in Urban Activity Centers should provide the following minimum improvements:

- a. Paved streets and sidewalks;
- b. Adequate off-street parking for employees and business users;
- c. Landscaping for streets, sidewalks and parking areas to provide an attractive appearance;
- d. Adequate storm drainage control, including curbs, gutters and stormwater retention facilities;
- e. Public water supply;
- f. Public sanitary sewers; and
- g. Controlled traffic access to arterials and intersections.

CI-235 Industrial developments in Urban Activity Centers should provide the following minimum improvements:

- a. Paved streets, and improved walkways to parking areas, public transit, and any nearby retail areas;
- b. Adequate off-street parking for employees, landscaped to enhance appearance;
- c. On-site docking and loading facilities, and turning areas for shipping and receiving as needed;
- d. Curbs, gutters or other appropriate measures for drainage control;
- e. Public water supply; and
- f. Public sanitary sewers (except for very low-intensity uses such as warehouses).

Parks and plazas in Urban Activity Centers are important amenities. The more intensive the development, the more important these amenities become for achieving a desirable working and business environment.

CI-236 Commercial and industrial development in an Urban Activity Center should provide or contribute to parks or plazas to enhance the appearance of the Urban Activity Center and to provide amenities for employees and shoppers.

III. COMMUNITY CENTERS

Community centers are primarily retail developments designed to serve a nearby market area with a population of 15,000 to 40,000 persons. In general, community scale commercial developments are most desirable as part of Urban Activity Centers. The plan concept emphasizes development of major Urban Activity Centers with a full mix of uses, so they can become transit destinations, as well as many small, conveniently located Neighborhood Centers within walking distance of many residents. There are several separate community-scale commercial centers in King County, however, and in some cases, a new Community Center may be appropriate to serve populations not within convenient distance of shopping facilities in an Urban Activity Center, or to serve low-density residential areas where small Neighborhood Centers cannot thrive.

Some Community Centers may later be considered for designation as Urban Activity Centers. Any new Community Center must be located to prevent conflicts with Neighborhood Centers, Urban Activity Centers, and Community Centers.

A. Size and Function

CI-301 Community Centers should include primarily retail stores and offices designed to provide shopping and other services for nearby residents in Urban Areas. Industrial and heavy commercial uses should be excluded. Community Centers should include the following mix of uses:

- a. Retail stores and services;
- b. Small scale professional offices; and
- c. Multifamily housing and mixed use developments.

CI-302 Community Centers should be 10 to 20 acres, and should be designed to provide shopping and services for a nearby population of 15,000 to 40,000 persons, as well as including mixed office, retail and residential developments and related parking.

The size ranges outlined in Policies CI-301 and CI-302 reflect both national studies of market opportunities for a given market population and the objective of encouraging compact, pedestrian-oriented shopping areas. Within these general ranges, the community planning process will be used to determine the extent of retail zoning for a specific center, based on consideration of desired community character and facility constraints; as well as market opportunities.

Developments combining residential and commercial uses provide a convenient living environment and help make Community Centers lively places in the evening and on weekends. The scale of mixed use developments must be consistent with road and utility capacity and compatible with neighborhood character. In mixed use developments, dwellings above stores and offices are desirable.

CI-303 Mixed use developments in Community Centers may include residential densities up to 18 units per acre when convenient to a secondary arterial; densities of 18 to 30 units per acre are appropriate when convenient to a major arterial.

For purposes of specifying street access, the term "convenient" means physical access which does not result in adverse impacts on adjacent and nearby local access streets.

B. Location

CI-304 Community plans should designate new Community Centers in Urban Areas when projected commercial needs for an area cannot reasonably be met by smaller Neighborhood Centers or nearby Urban Activity Centers.

CI-305 Community Centers should be located three miles from any Urban Activity Center or other Community Center, and should be served by the intersection of two principal arterials. Community Centers may locate less than three miles from nearby Neighborhood Centers when it is demonstrated that the Neighborhood Centers will not be adversely affected.

C. Design of Community Centers

Design objectives for Community Centers include compatibility with adjacent residential uses, promoting pedestrian travel, and limiting the scale of development.

- CI-306 Retail uses within Community Centers should develop on one corner of a road intersection, to prevent traffic which disrupts arterial flow, and to encourage pedestrian travel between stores. Non-retail uses such as offices and multifamily development may be appropriate on the other corners if traffic impacts are mitigated.
- CI-307 Pedestrian travel to and within Community Centers should be encouraged by safe and attractive walkways and close grouping of stores.
- CI-308 Pedestrian-oriented commercial uses should be included on the ground floor of mixed use developments in Community Centers. Off-street parking for mixed-use development should be in the back or to one side of the development or enclosed within the building, to maximize pedestrian access from sidewalks.

Since Community Centers are visible and frequently used areas within urban communities, design features that enhance their appearance, and emphasize variety and distinctive features are highly desirable.

- CI-309 Plans for Community Centers should include measures to preserve attractive natural features, historic buildings, or established character, or to create a special character.
- CI-310 Landscaping should be used in Community Centers to present an attractive appearance and increase compatibility with adjoining uses.

D. Improvement Standards for Community Centers

Public improvements for Community Centers are intended to provide safe and attractive shopping areas with minimal environmental and traffic problems. The policies below will guide the content of land use regulations and functional plans, as well as review of construction permits.

- CI-311 Right-of-way, road improvements, and utilities needed in conjunction with development should be assured before construction proceeds in Community Centers.
- CI-312 Developments within Community Centers should provide the following improvements:
 - a. Paved streets and sidewalks;
 - b. Off street parking for employees and shoppers;
 - c. Landscaping for streets, sidewalks and parking areas, to present an attractive appearance;

- d. Adequate storm drainage control, including curbs, gutters and stormwater retention facilities;
- e. Public water supply;
- f. Sanitary sewers; and
- g. Controlled traffic access to arterials and intersections.

Parking for shoppers at Community Centers is essential, but relatively small parking areas are desirable to provide a pleasing appearance and prevent drainage problems.

CI-313 Off-street parking in Community Centers should be the smallest feasible area consistent with the need to accommodate shoppers, and should be landscaped to improve aesthetics and drainage.

IV. NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS

Neighborhood Centers are shopping areas offering goods and services to local residents in Urban Areas. Typical uses in these centers include a supermarket or small grocery store and drug store, variety or hardware store, barber and beauty shops, laundry and dry-cleaning, coffee shops, small medical/dental clinics and professional offices, and multifamily housing as part of mixed use developments. New Neighborhood Centers will be established by community plans.

A. Size and Function

Neighborhood Centers work best when they contain several stores, allowing shoppers to combine trips. Neighborhood Centers are intended to be very small, however, to maintain compatibility with adjacent residential areas, while offering convenient goods nearby.

CI-401 Neighborhood Centers should include primarily retail stores and offices designed to provide convenient shopping and other services for nearby residents in Urban Areas. Industrial and heavy commercial uses should be excluded. Neighborhood Centers should include the following mix of uses:

- a. Retail stores and services;
- b. Small scale professional offices; and
- c. Multifamily housing and mixed use developments.

CI-402 Neighborhood Centers should be three to six acres, and should be designed to provide shopping for a nearby population of 8,000 to 15,000.

The size ranges specified in Policy CI-402 reflect national studies of shopping needs for a given population, as well as the Comprehensive Plan's emphasis on encouraging relatively small but frequent shopping areas. Within these general ranges, the community planning process will be used to determine the size, number, and location of Neighborhood Centers,

based on consideration of desired community character and transportation and utility needs, as well as market potential.

Developments combining residential and commercial uses provide a convenient living environment within Neighborhood Centers. The scale of mixed use developments must be consistent with road and utility capacity and compatible with neighborhood character. In mixed use developments, dwellings above stores and offices are desirable.

CI-403 Mixed use developments in Neighborhood Centers may include residential densities up to 18 units per acre when convenient to a secondary arterial; densities of 18 to 30 units per acre are appropriate when convenient to a major arterial.

For purposes of specifying street access, the term "convenient" means physical access which does not result in adverse impacts on adjacent and nearby local access streets.

B. Location

To allow convenient access to Urban Area residents, Neighborhood Centers must be developed at frequent intervals. Neighborhood Centers require locations free from environmental constraints (see Policy CI-109), and need public utilities and roads that can handle shopping traffic. Sufficient separation between Neighborhood Centers is desirable, so that each has a sufficient population in the surrounding market area to support a full range of neighborhood retail stores and services. New Neighborhood Centers are designated by community plans (see Chapter Three, Planning and Implementation).

CI-404 Neighborhood Centers should be located one to three miles apart. Location should vary based on population density to ensure each serves a nearby Urban Area population of 8,000 to 15,000 persons.

CI-405 Neighborhood Centers should be served by the junction of at least secondary arterials. Existing or planned arterial capacity should be adequate to accommodate projected traffic, and intersections should be free from congestion problems resulting from topography or poor road design.

C. Design of Neighborhood Centers

Design objectives for Neighborhood Centers emphasize compatibility with adjacent residential uses and promoting pedestrian travel within the center.

CI-406 Retail uses within Neighborhood Centers should develop on one corner of a road intersection, to prevent traffic which disrupts arterial flow, to allow convenient pedestrian travel between stores, and to minimize conflicts with adjacent uses. Other uses, such as small offices or multifamily housing, should preferably be located in the same quadrant with the retail uses, but may locate on another quadrant if there is insufficient space.

CI-407 Pedestrian travel to and within Neighborhood Centers should be encouraged by safe and attractive walkways and close grouping of stores.

CI-408 Pedestrian-oriented commercial uses should be included on the ground floor of mixed use developments in Neighborhood Centers. Off-street parking for mixed-use development should be in the back or to one side of the development or enclosed within the building, to maximize pedestrian access from sidewalks.

Since Neighborhood Centers are visible and frequently used areas within urban communities, design features that enhance their appearance, and emphasize variety and distinctive features are highly desirable.

CI-409 Plans for Neighborhood Centers should include measures to preserve attractive natural features, historic buildings, or established character, or to create a special character.

CI-410 Landscaping should be used in Neighborhood Centers to present an attractive appearance and increase compatibility with adjoining uses.

D. Improvement Standards for Neighborhood Centers

Public improvements for Neighborhood Centers are intended to provide safe and attractive shopping areas with minimal environmental and traffic problems. The policies below will guide the content of land use regulations and functional plans, as well as review of construction permits.

CI-411 Needed right-of-way, road improvements, and utilities should be assured before development proceeds within Neighborhood Centers.

CI-412 Developments within Neighborhood Centers should provide the following improvements:

- a. Paved streets and sidewalks;
- b. Off street parking for employees and shoppers;
- c. Landscaping for streets, sidewalks and parking areas, to present an attractive appearance;
- d. Adequate storm drainage control, including curbs, gutters and stormwater retention facilities;
- e. Public water supply;
- f. Sanitary sewers; and
- g. Controlled traffic access to arterials and intersections.

Detailed transportation and utility requirements are addressed in Chapter Eight, Facilities and Services.

Parking for shoppers at Neighborhood Centers is essential, but relatively small parking areas are desirable to provide a pleasing appearance and prevent drainage problems.

- CI-413** Off-street parking in Neighborhood Centers should be the smallest feasible area consistent with the need to accommodate shoppers, and should be landscaped to improve aesthetics and drainage.

V. RURAL ACTIVITY CENTERS

The following policies apply to commercial and industrial development in unincorporated Rural Activity Centers, and also guide King County's work with the incorporated Rural Activity Centers on land use plans and development proposals.

A. Size and Function

Rural Activity Centers include incorporated cities in Rural Areas, and clusters of businesses and housing in unincorporated Rural Areas. King County does not directly influence land use within the incorporated Rural Activity Centers, but has an interest in working with these Activity Centers to encourage development that will meet the needs of rural residents and resource industries. Economic growth is needed in Rural Activity Centers, to maintain their vitality, and to provide goods and services and employment. Rural Activity Centers growth needs to be made compatible with the rural character of surrounding areas and protect Resource Lands to the maximum extent possible, and to maintain the valuable rural character of the towns. In addition, economic growth in Rural Activity Centers must be based on the capacity of public facilities and services in Rural Areas.

Rural Activity Centers provide goods and services to rural residents, as well as equipment and supplies needed in farming, forestry, mining, and recreation. Typical stores include groceries, hardware, small department stores, farm equipment supply and repair, ski and fishing supply shops; typical services include banks, hotels, restaurants, and medical dental clinics. Industrial uses in Rural Activity Centers can include those related to resource industries, as well as manufacturing, research, and other facilities not necessarily rural in character. A range of housing types in Rural Activity Centers is also desirable, to provide a variety in residential environments in Rural Areas.

- CI-501** Rural Activity Centers serve as the activity centers for Rural Areas and should include several or all of the following land uses:

- a. Retail stores and services intended to serve the surrounding Rural Area population and to provide supplies for resource industries;
- b. Residential development, including single family housing on small lots as well as multifamily housing and mixed use developments; and
- c. Other commercial and industrial uses, including commercial recreation facilities, resource based industries and light industry.

- CI-502** King County should work cooperatively with incorporated Rural Activity Centers to plan for commercial and industrial development. The amount of growth should be sufficient to ensure a sound economic base; be served by adequate facilities and services; be compatible with surrounding roads, utilities, and rural residential uses; and protect Resource Lands.

Policy CI-502 will be implemented through community plans and/or joint planning efforts with Rural Activity Centers, resulting in interlocal agreements which will ensure compatible land use policies and adequate facilities and services as Rural Activity Centers grow. Rural Activity Centers are and will continue to be a significant source of employment and services for Rural Area residents, as well as an important component in the diversity of King County's economic development opportunities.

Designated Rural Activity Centers are shown on the Comprehensive Plan Map, Figure PC-1 in Chapter Two.

B. Designation and Location

Economic development in Rural Areas is intended to occur in existing Rural Activity Centers, where growth is desirable to maintain economic vitality, and where existing public improvements and services can accommodate growth. Development in existing rather than new Rural Activity Centers presents fewer conflicts with rural residential uses and resource industries, and requires less expenditures for public improvements. For these reasons, the Comprehensive Plan encourages economic growth in existing Rural Activity Centers rather than designating new Rural Activity Centers. If conditions change, however, a new Rural Activity Center could be designated using the comprehensive plan amendment criteria and process outlined in Chapter Three, Planning and Implementation.

C. Design for Rural Activity Centers

Rural Activity Centers are compact, allowing pedestrian travel as well as automobile access to most commercial and industrial uses, although these uses are often mixed throughout the towns. New development in Rural Activity Centers can be designed to strengthen the desirable characteristics of the towns. New retail development, for example, is desirable adjacent to existing retail uses and the historic town center, rather than in a new shopping mall on the edge of town. New industrial uses are desirable where they do not disrupt pedestrian traffic in established retail areas of town, or present conflicts with residential uses.

CI-503 Location of new uses in Rural Activity Centers should be based on the following principles:

- a. Uses with similar needs and impacts should be grouped so access, utilities and other services can be shared;
- b. Compatibility between land uses within and adjacent to Rural Activity Centers should be enhanced through landscaping, building placement, traffic control and other measures to reduce conflicts; and
- c. Rural Activity Centers should be compact to encourage pedestrian travel; safe pedestrian routes should link retail stores and services.

The existing character and historic features found in Rural Activity Centers are valued by rural residents who live in the towns and urban residents who visit. New development can enhance the character and valuable features of Rural Activity Centers through careful design and location.

CI-504 Plans for Rural Activity Centers should include specific measures to preserve valuable existing features, amenities, and historic character.

D. Improvement Standards for Rural Activity Centers

Commercial and industrial development in Rural Activity Centers will need to provide public improvements to assure access, sanitation, and compatibility with adjacent uses.

CI-505 Commercial and industrial developments in Rural Activity Centers should provide the following minimum improvements as development occurs:

- a. **Paved streets and improved walkways;**
- b. **Off-street parking for employees and visitors;**
- c. **Landscaping for walkways, streets and parking areas, to provide an attractive appearance;**
- d. **Provisions for drainage control;**
- e. **Public water supply, or private supply adequate to meet applicable health and commercial fire flow standards;**
- f. **Adequate wastewater disposal; and**
- g. **Combined and controlled access to arterials and intersections to reduce congestion and assure smooth traffic flow.**

CI-506 Industrial development should include adequate on site loading and docking facilities, and turning areas for large vehicles and equipment as needed, to prevent traffic disruptions in Rural Activity Centers.

CI-507 Adequate roads, intersection improvements, right-of-way and utilities needed in conjunction with new development should be assured before construction proceeds in Rural Activity Centers.

Adequate improvements in Rural Activity Centers can be assured by having a plan in place for financing and constructing facilities and services before development occurs. Chapter Eight, Facilities and Services, includes detailed transportation and utility policies.

VI. RURAL NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS

Rural Neighborhood Centers are very small shopping areas offering goods and services to rural residents. Typical uses include a small gas station, and/or small grocery store.

A. Size and Function

Existing Rural Neighborhood Centers provide rural residents with convenience shopping and services. Due to the extremely low population densities planned for Rural Areas, and lack of adequate public services, new or expanded Rural Neighborhood Centers are not expected or encouraged.

CI-601 Rural Neighborhood Centers should maintain approximately their existing size.

In Rural Neighborhood Centers, mixed use developments may consist of one or a very small number of dwellings above a commercial use or business.

CI-602 In Rural Neighborhood Centers, density of mixed use development should be based on the capacity of sewage disposal systems, and capacity and adequacy of local rural roads.

B. Designation and Location

Rural Areas contain many existing neighborhood centers which will continue to provide convenient goods to nearby residents. New neighborhood centers should not be needed as existing centers are sufficient, and major economic development will be encouraged primarily in existing Rural Activity Centers. If conditions change and a new Rural Neighborhood Center is needed, the comprehensive plan amendment criteria and process outlined in Chapter Three, Planning and Implementation, would be used.

C. Design and Improvement Standards

New or expanded uses in Rural Neighborhood Centers, if feasible, will be governed by all applicable standards for adequate and safe arterial access, parking, utilities, and fire protection.

CI-603 In Rural Areas, developments within Rural Neighborhood Centers should provide the following improvements:

- a. Access to a collector arterial;
- b. Local access streets, if needed, improved to a standard that allows year-round access for service and emergency vehicles, and controls dust;
- c. Provisions for storm drainage control;
- d. Public water supply, or private water supply adequate to meet applicable health and commercial fire flow standards;
- e. On-site sewage disposal designed for long-term performance; and
- f. Adequate off-street parking.

Chapter Seven

RESOURCE LANDS AND INDUSTRIES

Natural resources in King County include forests and farmlands, mineral, rock, gravel and coal deposits, and potential coal, oil and gas resources. These resources support industries that are an important part of King County's economy, providing jobs and needed products for local use and export. Farms and forest lands can also provide non-economic resource values such as scenic views and wildlife habitat. Because of their economic, cultural and open space benefits, Resource Lands are a major element of the growth and development pattern envisioned in the plan concept. The Comprehensive Plan Map designates Resource Lands which are primarily committed to agriculture and forestry for commercial purposes.

This chapter establishes policies to guide planning and regulation to conserve valuable farmlands, forest lands and mineral resources, and to encourage and promote their productive management by resource industries. King County recognizes that healthy resource industries are essential to long-term conservation of Resource Lands. Chapter Four, Environment and Open Space, contains policies addressing other natural resources, such as fisheries and water quality, and describes the relationship between Resource Lands and Open Space.

I. GENERAL POLICIES

Resource industries are productive land uses to be encouraged throughout King County. In growing urban areas, however, many forces work against continued resource management and conservation of productive lands. Urban development adjacent or near productive lands increases land prices, and results in economic pressure to convert the land to urban uses. Nearby residents unfamiliar with the needs and practices of resource industries can also increase the cost and difficulty of doing business, through vandalism and careless damage to crops and machinery, forest fires, and objections to reasonable resource management activities. To be effective, a strategy to conserve productive lands and resource industries must establish land use policies and regulations which support resource industries' responsible management practices and limit the points of contact and potential conflict with incompatible uses. Encouraging efficient use of nonresource lands to reduce land consumption also will help protect Resource Lands.

Land use conflicts can be limited by designating the most productive lands as Resource Lands, to indicate that the preferred and encouraged land use is commercial resource management. Adjacent land uses can then be planned to prevent curtailment of long term farming, forestry and mining.

RL-101 King County should conserve farmlands, forest lands and mineral resources for productive use by designating Resource Lands where the principal and preferred land uses will be commercial resource management activities. Land uses adjacent to designated Resource Lands should be designed and sited to ensure compatibility with resource management.

Resource districts for forestry and agriculture are described and mapped in the following sections of this chapter. These districts are the designated Resource Lands mapped on the Comprehensive Plan Map (Figure PC-1). These districts will be changed only through the plan map amendment criteria and community planning processes outlined in Chapter Three, Planning and Implementation. Designated Mining Sites will be mapped following preparation of a Mineral Resources functional plan.

Although King County will focus conservation efforts on designated Resource Lands, many productive lands and current resource management activities will not meet criteria for designation, including small farms and woodlots, as well as larger scale commercial farms, forests and mines. These activities on isolated parcels are surrounded by other uses that tend to discourage long term resource management, and most will convert to other uses eventually. As interim uses, however, they continue to produce valuable materials, and provide employment and non-economic values such as open space and wildlife habitat.

Resource lands which are or will be surrounded by development represent a unique planning circumstance. King County can use incentives to encourage conservation of farmlands and forest lands if the owners wish to continue resource management. Valuable mineral and aggregate resources also may be located where surrounding development makes the resource more difficult to extract or process.

RL-102 Agriculture and forestry should be encouraged both within and outside of Agriculture and Forest Production Districts. Because of its significant impacts, mining should be encouraged primarily on designated Mining Sites, but may be permitted in other areas if adverse impacts can be adequately mitigated.

Resource Lands in King County include privately owned lands in unincorporated areas, as well as lands owned and managed by city, state and federal agencies. Resource conservation efforts, therefore, require a regional perspective and intergovernmental cooperation.

RL-103 King County should work with cities, other public agencies, and private land owners to conserve public and private Resource Lands, and to encourage continued resource management.

Resource management practices that protect the environment also maintain the long-term productivity of the resource. Sound resource management practices include measures to prevent problems associated with surface water runoff, operation of forestry, farming and mining equipment, and truck traffic moving products to market.

RL-104 Resource industries should use management practices that protect the environment and adjacent land uses, and maintain the long term productivity of the resource base.

Many resource management practices are regulated by federal and state laws (for example, the Surface Mining Reclamation Act). King County will not duplicate these laws, but will supplement federal and state laws where they do not adequately address specific local environmental or land use issues.

II. FORESTRY

This section contains policies to conserve forest lands for productive forestry, and to encourage forest practices that protect the environment.

King County forest lands are highly productive for the cultivation of softwoods, especially Douglas Fir and Western Hemlock. The forest industry will continue to be an important part of King County's economy, providing lumber, firewood, paper and other wood products for local use and export, and providing jobs especially important to the economy of King County and the state. Forest lands also offer opportunities for significant aesthetic and environmental benefits, including clean air, control of storm water runoff, open space, wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation.

Most of the lands managed for commercial forestry in King County are found in large contiguous blocks with few intervening uses. These lands can best be conserved by encouraging commercial forestry as the principal long-term land use in designated Forest Production Districts, by preventing intrusion of incompatible uses, and by managing adjacent land uses to ensure continued compatibility with forestry. The districts mapped in Figure RL-1 provide the most productive environment for forestry, as they contain lands with productive soils, relatively few land use conflicts, ownership patterns and public service levels conducive to long-term forestry. Outside the districts, forestry also will continue in Rural Areas, where it is recognized as an important part of rural character. Some lands are also managed for forestry on isolated parcels in Urban and Transitional Areas, where there are potentially more conflicts with adjacent uses. King County will focus on conserving forest lands within designated Forest Production Districts, where continued commercial forestry is most likely, but will also encourage and support forestry in other areas of King County.

A. Forest Production Districts

About one-half of the commercial forest land in King County is privately owned; the remainder is owned and managed by federal, state and local governments for timber production, outdoor recreation, municipal watersheds, wildlife habitat, aesthetics, open space, and other multiple uses.

Interest in converting both private and public forest land to urban uses increases as urban development occurs near forest areas, resulting in conflicts and rising land values. Increased population near forest areas brings greater risk of forest fires, vandalism to forestry and logging equipment, destruction of young trees, and increased residential traffic on narrow haul roads, presenting safety problems. Forest management in developed areas is also more costly, because of additional measures needed to ensure safety and prevent fire hazards.

Forest management is a long-term investment which produces little or no income until harvest time which occurs on a forty to sixty year cycle. Forest managers look to long-term land use and market trends, and other economic factors to determine the likelihood of producing income from another forest crop, and success will be more certain in areas where forest parcels are consolidated in large districts with few conflicting land uses.

To maintain consolidated areas of forestry with few intervening uses, King County, in cooperation with public and private forest land owners, has established Forest Production Districts based on the following factors:

1. Natural features including soils, topography, and climate are suited to commercial forest production;
2. The predominant land use is forestry;
3. The predominant parcel size is 80 acres or larger, allowing efficient forest management; and
4. Residential development is scarce adjacent to the district, and adjacent lot sizes enable siting of future dwellings to limit adverse impacts to forestry.

The King County Comprehensive Plan--1985 Technical Appendix contains more detailed information on these factors, including research by King County and input from the forest products industry.

The Forest Production Districts mapped in Figure RL-1 at the end of this chapter are also included as designated Resource Lands on the Comprehensive Plan Map, Figure PC-1. Boundaries follow a combination of natural features and survey lines. The districts are intended to be long-term designations, and will be changed only through amendments using the criteria and community plan process outlined in Chapter Three, Planning and Implementation.

RL-201 The primary land use within Forest Production Districts should be commercial forestry. Other resource industries such as extraction and agriculture should be permitted within Forest Production Districts when managed to be compatible with forest management. Residential development should be discouraged within forest production districts (individual residences on existing parcels of land, however, are permitted).

RL-202 Land uses adjacent to Forest Production Districts should be sited and designed to prevent conflicts with forestry. New residential development adjacent to Districts should be low density, and should be designed and sited to reduce potential conflicts between residences and adjacent forest lands.

Large forest parcels provide the best opportunities for efficient forestry. Zoning and subdivision regulations will establish requirements for the unique circumstances where a residential development would be necessary for the efficient operation of the forest resource, thereby reducing incompatible residential development.

The policies below are intended to allow very limited residential uses in designated Forest Production Districts, consistent with the objective of continuing forestry as the prime land use. Extensive and non-resource related residential development would only be permitted on forest lands if the Forest Production District designation were changed through a Community Plan amendment. See Chapter Three, Planning and Implementation, for policies addressing plan amendments.

RL-203 Lands within Forest Production Districts should remain in large parcels and ownership patterns conducive to forestry. Any residential development in a Forest Production District should be for specific forestry related purposes, and should only be permitted in unique circumstances which contribute to continued forest management practices.

Residences in Forest Production Districts are needed so forest managers can live on their land. Other specific cases when residential units are allowed will be listed in the Forestry zone. Residential structures within Forest Production Districts must be designed and sited to minimize problems for forestry operations, including provisions for fire prevention, and an on-site water supply that will not be affected by nearby forest practices such as clear-cutting or use of herbicides.

RL-204 Residences within Forest Production Districts should be designed and sited to maintain the productivity of the district. Design measures and site plan requirements should be used to provide for fire control and to prevent conflicts with forest management.

RL-205 A private dwelling in a Forest Production District should have an on-site domestic water supply which will not be adversely affected by nearby forest practices, such as clearcutting or use of herbicides.

In addition to economic value, forest lands have tremendous recreational value. Both public and private lands provide opportunities for fishing, hiking, hunting, and other forms of outdoor recreation. Some private forest landowners have open gate policies to permit public access. Although day use and interpretive centers can be compatible with long-term forestry, other types of recreation may interfere with forestry production. King County works with private and public forest owners to encourage recreation and other uses compatible with forestry; for example, through review and comment on public forestland management plans and public land trades.

RL-206 King County should encourage public and private forest managers to provide for recreation and other multiple uses within Forest Production Districts, compatible with productive forestry and other resource management goals.

Commercial/recreational or institutional developments such as conference centers, ski areas and associated hotels allow more people to enjoy the aesthetic benefits of forest lands, and are desirable when compatible with continued forestry on adjacent lands.

RL-207 A commercial/recreational or institutional development in a Forest Production District should be compatible with long term forestry and other resource management activities. A discretionary review process should be used to ensure that building siting, size, design and supporting public facilities limit impacts to surrounding forest management activities. Adjacent forest managers should be invited to identify potential conflicts and mitigating measures.

In addition to preventing land use conflicts within and adjacent to Forest Production Districts, King County can work with other public agencies and service providers to encourage forestry within districts.

RL-208 King County should encourage continuing forestry within Forest Production Districts by:

- a. Supporting land trades that result in consolidated forest ownerships;
- b. Locating utilities and roads to prevent disruption to forestry; and
- c. Working with forest managers to identify and develop other incentives for continued forestry.

RL-209 Establishment or expansion of special purpose taxing districts and local improvement districts in Forest Production Districts should be strongly discouraged unless they directly benefit forestry.

Tax incentives for forest lands are offered by the Washington State Timber Tax Program (R.C.W. 84.33) which significantly reduces annual property taxes in exchange for a tax on the harvest. Parcels too small to qualify for the state program may be considered for benefits of the open space current use tax program (R.C.W. 84.34) administered by King County.

B. Forestry Outside of Districts

Some commercial forests and productive forest lands are found outside Forest Production Districts. Although these lands are not designated for conservation as Resource Lands, existing timber stands will be harvested, and some may be replanted for commercial forestry. Forestry is a desirable activity anywhere in King County when conflicts with adjacent land uses can be avoided. In Rural Areas, forestry adds to rural character and local jobs. In Urban Areas, forestry provides greenery and wildlife habitat between harvests.

Continued forestry in Rural Areas will be encouraged through rural zoning that maintains low densities and treats forestry as a permitted use. In Urban Areas where continued forestry will be most difficult because of the type and amount of development being encouraged there, King County can provide additional incentives to conserve forest lands. For example, density bonuses may be an incentive for cluster developments that conserve a parcel of productive forest land. When opportunities for continued forestry are assured through plat restrictions or conservation easements, King County can plan adjacent land uses and facilities to reduce conflicts for forestry. Open space tax benefits are also appropriate in Urban and Rural Areas, as forest lands serve as greenbelts and provide other open space benefits.

RL-210 King County should offer incentives to encourage conservation of forest lands in Urban, Transitional and Rural Areas. When conservation of a forest parcel is assured, adjacent land uses, utilities and transportation should be designed to reduce conflicts with forestry.

C. Forest Practices

Forestry, as any industry, must be conducted in a manner that protects the environment and minimizes adverse impacts to adjacent land uses. Potential environmental problems can be avoided, for example, by designing and maintaining logging roads to prevent excessive soil erosion and stormwater runoff, and by maintaining streamside vegetation to protect water quality, fish and wildlife habitats. Impacts to adjacent land uses can be reduced, for example, by operating equipment and trucks to ensure safety.

King County works with state and federal agencies to encourage forest practices that protect the environment. Forest practices must comply with the Washington State Forest Practices Act (R.C.W. 76.09), and in designated Shoreline Environments must also comply with the requirements of King County's Shoreline Management Master Program administered by King County. These laws are designed to protect water quality, shorelines, fish and wildlife habitat, and the public's opportunity to enjoy these resources.

- RL-211** Forest land should be managed to maintain its productive qualities, to protect air and water quality, fisheries, and to minimize adverse impacts on adjacent lands uses.

III. AGRICULTURE

This section contains policies to conserve farmland and encourage continued agriculture, and to encourage agricultural practices that protect the environment.

Productive farmland is an irreplaceable and limited natural resource in King County; less than 50,000 acres remain in agriculture. King County residents have consistently supported efforts to preserve good farmland and active farms for the value of local crops, dairying and livestock, and for scenic and historic values. In 1979, voters approved a measure to buy farmland development rights, indicating a significant public commitment to preserve farmlands. Farming offers variety in the County's living and working environments. It is also the most appropriate land use in floodplains.

King County's best farm soils and most profitable commercial farms are usually found in contiguous blocks with few non-agricultural uses. These areas, mapped in Figure RL-2 as Agricultural Production Districts, present the fewest land use conflicts for agriculture, contain agricultural support activities, and provide the best environment for farming in King County. Some undeveloped parcels with good soils or active individual farms are also found outside of these districts, surrounded by nonresource land uses, but contributing to community diversity. King County will focus its strongest efforts to conserve lands within designated Agricultural Production Districts where continued agriculture is most likely, but will also encourage and support continued agriculture outside of districts where possible.

A. Agricultural Production Districts

Agriculture is most productive in large agricultural communities where neighbors support agriculture and where labor, farm supplies and market systems for farm products are available. Agriculture can conflict with urban development, unless both land uses are carefully managed, as urban residents may trespass, damage crops and animals, and may object to the noise of farm animals and machinery, or farm odors. By establishing Agricultural Production Districts, potential land use conflicts can be limited to the district boundaries, and adjacent land uses can be planned to reduce problems for agriculture.

King County has established Agricultural Production Districts to maintain contiguous farming communities, based on the following factors:

1. Soils are capable of productive agriculture (Class II and III soils);
2. Land is undeveloped or contains only farm-related structures;
3. Parcel sizes are predominantly 10 acres or larger; and
4. Much of the land is used for agriculture, or has been in agricultural use in the recent past.

The Agricultural Production Districts mapped in Figure RL-2 at the end of this chapter are also included on the Comprehensive Plan Map as designated Resource Lands. The King County Comprehensive Plan--1985 Technical Appendix provides detailed information on criteria for establishing districts. The districts are intended to be long term designations, and will be changed only through amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, using the criteria and process outlined in Chapter Three, Planning and Implementation.

RL-301 Agriculture should be the principal land use within Agricultural Production Districts. Permanent construction within agricultural districts should be limited to farm residences, farm buildings, and direct marketing farm stands, and should not disrupt agriculture within the district.

RL-302 Land uses adjacent to Agricultural Production Districts should be designed to minimize conflicts with agriculture. Residential developments should be low-density and should be clustered, screened and fenced to increase distance between housing and agriculture, and discourage trespass. Commercial and industrial developments adjacent to districts should minimize traffic, noise and pollution impacts on agriculture.

Large parcels are necessary in Agricultural Production Districts, to provide for efficient agriculture, and to strongly discourage non-agricultural residential development in districts. Residences for farmland owners and agricultural workers are permitted.

RL-303 Lands within Agricultural Production Districts should remain in large parcels and ownership patterns conducive to agriculture. In areas particularly suitable for livestock (such as dairying) any subdivision should create parcels of 35 acres or larger, or limited clusters of lots at an average density of one lot per 35 acres. In other agricultural areas, the minimum parcel size should be 10 acres, with clusters at an average density of one lot per 10 acres. However, until the farm bond program is completed, appraisals for land to be acquired under the program should be based on the zoning in effect at the time the Comprehensive Plan is adopted. When clustering is used in Agricultural Production Districts, the clusters should be arranged to protect large tracts for productive farming, minimize conflicts with continued agriculture and be consistent with public facility and service requirements.

RL-304 King County should provide incentives to encourage continued agriculture within Agricultural Production Districts, including managing adjacent land uses and public actions to minimize disruption of agricultural productivity.

Other appropriate incentives include open space taxation, exemptions from utility assessments, and purchase of development rights for agricultural lands.

Given the very limited amount of agricultural land in King County, public road and utility projects must be designed and routed to maintain maximum farm acreage within districts, and to prevent disruption to agriculture. Roads that have adequate shoulders and signs to protect farm equipment from faster vehicles, for example, reduce conflicts with agriculture. Utilities in Agricultural Production Districts are sometimes needed for the planned agricultural land uses, but associated costs and impacts of utilities designed for urban uses interfere with agriculture. Utility district annexation proposals, including water, wastewater, and drainage must therefore ensure that levies, assessments and services are consistent with preservation of long-term agriculture. (Chapter 8, Facilities and Services, contains policies requiring special district plans to be consistent with land use plans.)

RL-305 Public services and utilities within and adjacent to Agricultural Production Districts should be designed to prevent negative impacts on agriculture and to maintain total farmland acreage, as follows:

- a. Water lines and mains, sewer lines and interceptors, and other public facilities should avoid crossing Agricultural Production Districts unless their purpose is to provide service necessary for agriculture and they can be installed at times which minimize negative impacts on seasonal agricultural practices;
- b. Roads that cross Agricultural Production Districts should be aligned, designed and maintained to minimize negative impacts on agriculture and support farm traffic; and
- c. In rare cases when facilities meeting urban needs must intrude into Agricultural Production Districts, they should be built and located to prevent disruption of agricultural activity. If any land is removed from production, service providers should replace it elsewhere in the district, by improving soils, or by consolidating small adjacent parcels for inclusion in the district to the extent possible.

Parks and farms are not necessarily good neighbors, since park users can trespass and damage crops, animals, and farm equipment. Recreation near and within districts can be planned to prevent trespass. A park located across a river or ravine from an Agricultural Production District or a farm, for example, would have a pleasant view of farmland without encouraging trespass.

RL-306 Public parks should not normally be located within Agricultural Production Districts. Existing undeveloped park sites within districts should be developed for uses that are compatible with agriculture. Parks adjacent to districts should be designed to minimize trespass and prevent conflicts with agriculture.

Some of King County's most productive farmlands are adjacent to cities, and some have already been annexed. King County's farmland preservation efforts will be more effective if coordinated with city programs.

RL-307 King County should work with cities to conserve agriculture and farmland in Agricultural Production Districts. Land within Agricultural Production Districts should only be annexed to cities or incorporated when agricultural protection is assured, such as through an interlocal agreement.

B. Agriculture Outside of Districts

Some productive soils and active farms are found outside of the designated Agricultural Production Districts. Although these isolated farms are not designated for conservation as Resource Lands, King County can offer incentives for conservation and continued farming. Farms throughout King County are desirable for the scenic beauty they provide; they also contribute needed farm products. Many farms are in Rural Areas and those portions of Urban Areas where low-density land uses present fewer conflicts with agriculture. Continued farming on such parcels is encouraged through residential zoning that maintains large lots and low densities, and treats farming as a permitted use.

In Urban Areas where medium to high density land uses make farming on lands outside of districts difficult, King County can offer incentives to encourage farming. For example, density bonuses may be an incentive for cluster developments that conserve a parcel of productive farmland. When opportunities for continued farming are assured through plat restrictions or conservation easements, King County can plan adjacent land uses to reduce conflicts for farming. Open space tax benefits are also appropriate, since farms in Urban, Transitional and Rural Areas serve as greenbelts and provide other open space benefits.

RL-308 King County should offer incentives to conserve farmlands outside of Agricultural Production Districts. When permanent conservation of a parcel of farmland is assured, adjacent land uses, utilities and transportation should be designed to minimize conflicts with farming.

C. Agricultural Practices

Agricultural practices that maintain the productivity of the lands also protect environmental quality. Water quality and stream habitat can be protected through farming practices that prevent erosion, retain bank vegetation, avoid stream bank collapse, properly dispose of animal wastes, and prevent excessive surface water runoff. King County works with state and federal agencies to encourage farming practices that protect the environment.

RL-309 Agriculture should be managed to maintain water quality, protect fisheries and prevent erosion of valuable agricultural soils.

IV. MINING

This section contains policies to preserve opportunities for mining and to assure extractive industries maintain environmental quality and minimize impacts to adjacent land uses. A goal of King County is to facilitate the efficient utilization of valuable mineral, oil and gas deposits when consistent with maintaining environmental quality and minimizing impacts.

King County contains many valuable mineral resources, including deposits of coal, sand, rock, gravel, silica, peat, clay, metallic ores and potentially recoverable gas and oil. Land uses need to be planned to protect the accessibility of King County's valuable mineral deposits and at the same time protect existing land uses. Planning will need to differentiate between various extractive activities such as oil and gas exploration versus surface mining and tailor regulation of these activities appropriately. Mining and processing these deposits is an important part of King County's economy, currently providing jobs and producing materials used locally and nationally. Mining also has historic significance, as it provided the impetus for past development in many parts of King County. Some of these areas have not been completely mined or have spoil stockpiles that may present an opportunity for future mining.

King County can support environmentally responsible mineral resource extraction and processing through the Comprehensive Plan by clearly indicating those mineral resource lands where mining and processing activities are feasible with a minimum of adverse environmental impacts or conflicts with other existing uses, or where uniquely vital resources are located. This will be done through a Mineral Resources functional plan, to be developed and updated after public debate, in cooperation with affected residents, mineral owners,

landowners, the U.S. Department of the Interior, and the Washington State Department of Natural Resources. The functional plan will identify and designate as prospective mining sites those resources where mining opportunities will be conserved, based on the policies in this chapter and more detailed criteria to be developed in the functional plan.

The potential for mining without adverse impacts is greatest in relatively undeveloped areas, where opportunities for extraction on designated Mining Sites can be preserved by indicating that mining will be the preferred land use for these sites, and by establishing guidelines for adjacent land uses that will help reduce potential conflicts with mining. Protecting opportunities to extract mineral resources in designated mining sites requires separation from residential and agricultural uses as these uses and extractive industries can conflict in several ways. Mining and quarrying can create noise and dust from blasting, rock crushing, and heavy truck traffic; truck traffic mixed with residential automobile and pedestrian traffic can also present safety hazards. Because sites can take 20 to 40 years or longer to excavate, identifying and protecting opportunities for mining require a long-term planning horizon.

The functional plan will be updated periodically, to address newly identified resources, or significant market changes. In cases where mineral resources do not meet criteria for designation as Mining Sites, however, valuable deposits may still be extracted, but mining operations will be expected to take all necessary measures to ensure compatibility with adjacent land uses, as well as protecting environmental quality.

A. Designated Mining Sites

King County will identify and preserve opportunities to extract mineral deposits through a Mineral Resources functional plan, to be prepared with public review and input, including work with mining experts and residents in areas with known mineral resources. The functional plan will result in designation of Mining Sites to serve as notification to existing and future land owners that mining is the planned and preferred land use on these sites.

RL-401 King County should identify and preserve opportunities to extract mineral resources, following study and public review, by designating such resources as Mining Sites when:

- a. **The Mining Site contains a substantial or high quality deposit of rock, sand, gravel, coal, oil or gas or other mineral resource, recovery of which will have public benefits clearly outweighing the environmental and other costs; and**
- b. **Location, parcel size, site characteristics and existing land uses allow operation with limited conflicts with adjacent land uses and environmental quality can be protected when mitigating measures are applied; and**
- c. **Roads or rail facilities serving or proposed to serve the Mining Site can safely handle transport of mined products when operations begin.**

RL-402 Mining Site designations should be indicated in detailed community plan maps, to notify adjacent property owners and residents of prospective mining activities. When site-specific measures to mitigate adverse impacts have been assured and operators have approval to begin extraction, the designated Mining Site should be given a zone classification which permits extractive and related processing activities.

The size of each designated Mining Site will be based in part on the size and type of the deposit, the proposed extractive technique (surface, underground, open pit, auger or other), and in part on the amount of land required to ensure that adverse impacts are mitigated to meet all applicable standards.

RL-403 Designated Mining Sites should be large enough to allow the resource to be extracted and processed, and include enough land to confine operational impacts such as noise, reduced air quality, light and glare, and other adverse impacts to property owned or controlled by the mining operator.

RL-404 Permanent structures not related to or consistent with mining should be excluded from designated Mining Sites.

Although extractive operations can control most off-site impacts (see Section D, below), concerns about the traffic and aesthetic impacts of mining may effectively preclude mining adjacent to some land uses. In addition, the proximity of conflicting uses to Mining Sites can increase the cost and difficulty of mining, through vandalism to equipment, nuisance complaints, and safety problems. The most compatible land uses adjacent to designated mining sites are mining, industrial, open space, or forestry uses. Agricultural and mining uses can be incompatible, particularly when livestock are concerned, and therefore require careful evaluation before being sited adjacent to each other.

RL-405 The preferred land uses adjacent to designated Mining Sites are mining, open space, forestry, or industrial uses. Any new residential development adjacent to designated Mining Sites should be very low density and sited to help minimize potential conflicts between residences and mining.

B. Mining Outside of Designated Mining Sites

Not all rock and mineral resources will be in designated Mining Sites. Some resources may not meet the criteria for designation, or the exact location and value of the resource may be unknown, as is sometimes the case for oil and gas. Extractive operations outside of designated Mining Sites, however, will be expected to take all necessary measures to ensure compatibility with adjacent land uses, as well as protecting environmental quality.

RL-406 Mineral extraction may be permitted outside designated Mining Sites in locations where:

- a. Adverse impacts to adjacent land uses can be mitigated to assure compatibility and environmental quality can be protected when mitigating measures are applied; and
- b. Public need for use of the resource is shown which cannot be satisfied by mineral deposits in designated Mining Sites.

RL-407 Mineral extraction outside designated Mining Sites should be regulated through a permitting process which includes public notice and comment, specific duration of operations, and authority to condition permit extensions or renewals to address new circumstances and impacts.

C. Permitting Process Prior to Mineral Resources Functional Plan

- RL-408** Prior to completion of the Mineral Resources functional plan, proposals for extractive operations or activities will be permitted through the zone reclassification or unclassified use process when consistent with the purposes of Policies RL-401, RL-403, RL-405 or RL-406, RL-407; and RL-409 through RL-418.

D. Mining Practices

These policies will be used to review mining practices both in designated Mining Sites and other areas where mining is permitted.

Mining practices must be managed to protect water and air quality and minimize problems associated with surface water runoff, dust, and glare. Conflicts between mining and adjacent land uses can also be minimized by using distance or earth barriers to reduce off-site noise, and by operating equipment and trucks to ensure safety and reduce noise levels.

- RL-409** Extraction and processing of rock, sand, gravel and other mineral resources should be managed to avoid or mitigate adverse impacts to surrounding land uses and to protect water and air quality. Special operating procedures, landscaping, fences, buffers, berms, mufflers and other techniques or requirements should be used to minimize off-site impacts.
- RL-410** Truck traffic for mining operations should avoid neighborhood collector or local access streets. Where two or more arterials serve a mining operation, truck traffic should use routes which produces the lower peak traffic volumes and otherwise reduces hazards to residential or agricultural traffic on arterials. In Urban Areas, mining operations should have direct access to arterials.
- RL-411** Extractive operators should provide traffic controls at entrances and exits to the mining site as needed. Trucks and equipment should be operated in a manner that does not cause excessive harm to road surfaces, prevents debris from being deposited on roads, minimizes noise, and is safe for automobile, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic. Heavy truck traffic affecting residential areas should be scheduled for non-peak daylight hours. Operators should contribute to necessary off-site traffic control measures on a pro-rata basis in cooperation with King County.
- RL-412** Noise and vibration from extractive operations should be minimized. Surface blasting operations and underground blasts causing noticeable vibrations should be limited to daylight hours when adjacent to residential areas. Blasts should be scheduled for regular and predictable times, except in case of emergencies, and blast time information should be made available to area residents.
- RL-413** Heavy equipment, mines and pits should be screened from the view of nearby commercial and residential properties and public roads and trails, when possible.
- RL-414** King County should review extractive operations at regular intervals to ensure compliance with conditions of approval and applicable standards. If necessary to ensure adequate monitoring and inspection, King County may charge inspection or other mitigation charges and fees.

RL-415 Compliance with environmental, operational and safety standards, conditions and regulations shall be considered in the granting, renewal, and expansion of mining, extraction and processing.

RL-416 New or continuing extractive operations should mitigate negative impacts in the following areas:

- a. Air quality;
- b. Surface and groundwater quality and quantity;
- c. Noise levels;
- d. Vibration;
- e. Light and glare;
- f. Vehicular access and safety;
- g. Valuable environmental features, such as wetlands, fisheries, and critical wildlife habitats; and
- h. Others unique to a specific site.

Extractive sites are eventually depleted, abandoned, or the operations discontinued for long periods. Reclamation of abandoned, depleted or discontinued sites will allow land uses compatible with adjoining land uses, preventing the dangers associated with some types of abandoned mines, and improving the aesthetics. Mining of large deposits may be discontinued for long periods, although valuable resources remain. In these cases, restoration of the site to forestry is desirable, to allow future extraction.

RL-417 Mining sites or portions of mining sites should be reclaimed when they are abandoned, depleted, or when operations are discontinued for long periods. Applications for extractive use should include non-duplicative plans and bonds to assure the site will be reclaimed to allow post-mining uses consistent with land use plans for the site and the surrounding area. Innovative reclamation techniques which create lakes, ponds, wetlands, forests, and/or appropriate residential or industrial areas may contribute to a more desirable use of the discontinued mine site.

Opportunities for obtaining increased mineral deposits from abandoned mines can be realized through the reprocessing of spoil stockpiles left from the active mine. The mining of stockpiles is considered a surface mining operation, subject to all the standards applied through the use of the policies in this chapter. Mining of stockpiles is desired to occur at the earliest possible time, in order to reduce the conflicts with adjacent land uses as lands are converted to other uses.

Historically, underground mining had been the preferred mechanism for extracting coal and clay deposits. Today, most minerals are extracted via surface mining operations. King County recognizes that economic conditions may favor the increased use of underground mining in the future. In addition, current oil and gas explorations may result in applications for oil and gas extraction in the future.

RL-418 Underground mining and oil and gas extraction in King County should be permitted subject to the applicable policies and conditions in this chapter.

King County recognizes that state and federal regulations may apply to these operations, and will avoid duplication of these regulations if they adequately address local concerns, but King County specifically reserves the ability to address issues of local concern with regard to mining.

Chapter Eight

FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Adequate roads, sewage disposal, water supply, fire and police protection, parks, schools and other public facilities and services are necessary to protect the public health, safety and welfare of King County residents. Public planning for facilities and services can ensure that they are provided as communities grow, and can reduce public costs by encouraging maximum possible use of existing facilities and cost-effective service extensions.

The policies in this chapter set forth King County's approach to assuring adequate facilities and services, providing a basis for adopting technical standards for service levels and facility design, and for deciding when and where facilities and services should be provided. Other public agencies that provide services, such as cities, special purpose districts and Metro can use the Comprehensive Plan for their own planning, and to develop standards that can be integrated between the various service providers.

The Comprehensive Plan addresses facilities and services that are closely related to land use; it does not address important facilities and services, such as social services or the criminal justice system, that are not closely related to land use decisions. (Due to their close relationship with open space, park and recreation facilities are addressed in Chapter Four, Environment and Open Space.)

I. GENERAL POLICIES

Cooperation among King County, the cities, special districts and other public service providers, and land owners is crucial to providing adequate facilities and services for King County residents at reasonable cost. As a county-wide plan for growth, the King County Comprehensive Plan is intended to provide a unifying framework for facility and service planning by King County's many independent jurisdictions.

- F-101** Public facilities and services should be provided at levels necessary to support the growth and development planned for Urban, Transitional and Rural Areas. The facilities and services needed to support this growth and development are: transportation; sewage disposal; water; solid waste disposal; surface water management; police and fire protection; schools and libraries; parks and open space; and facilities for social and health services.
- F-102** The costs of adequate facilities and services should be kept as low as possible, cost-effective relative to the benefit received, and distributed equitably. Extension of services and construction of facilities to support planned growth should:
- a. Be paid for by those who benefit, to the extent possible;
 - b. Prevent substantially reduced service levels for residents of existing communities; and

- c. **Be timed to prevent problems before they require expensive remedial action; while avoiding the costs of premature excess capacity in facilities and services.**

A. Coordinating Facilities and Services with Growth

The Comprehensive Plan provides King County, the cities, special districts, and other public service providers a basis for identifying needs and setting spending priorities for facilities and services. The plan provides this basis in three ways: first, by establishing Urban Areas where most growth is intended to locate; second, by designating Transitional Areas, in portions of which facilities and services ultimately will be needed to support future urban development; and third, by designating Rural Areas where development levels and service needs will remain low. Consistent with the plan concept, Urban Areas have priority for public spending over Transitional and Rural Areas. Extension of services in advance of public expenditures in the Transitional Areas would depend on private funding. Within Urban Areas, public spending may be further prioritized and focused through capital improvements in specific locations (see Chapter Two, Plan Concept).

F-103 Public spending priorities for facilities and services within Urban and Transitional Areas should be as follows:

- a. **First, to maintain or upgrade existing facilities and services where necessary to serve existing development at applicable service level standards; and**
- b. **Second, to upgrade facilities and services within Urban Areas where possible to support planned growth at urban service level standards; and**
- c. **Third, to serve new development in Transitional Areas at appropriate service level standards for interim low densities.**

F-104 Public spending priorities for facilities and services within Rural Areas should be as follows:

- a. **First, to maintain or upgrade existing facilities and services where necessary to serve existing development at rural service level standards; and**
- b. **Second, to upgrade facilities and services to support planned rural growth at rural service level standards or planned growth of Rural Activity Centers.**

Policies F-103 and F-104 are implemented through functional plans and capital improvement programs developed by King County. They address public spending only, and do not limit private provision of facility improvements for urban development. Other public agencies, such as Metro and the special purpose districts, are encouraged to use the Comprehensive Plan as an aid in preparing their own plans and programs.

B. Assuring Adequate Facilities and Services

Adequate public facilities and services are essential to protect public health, safety and welfare, and to enhance community quality. Inadequate sewage disposal or roads, for example, would directly threaten public health or safety. Deficiencies in other services (police protection or parks, for instance) might not raise severe obstacles to any single new development, but could cause general threats to public health, safety, and welfare, and deterioration of community quality.

King County government has the responsibility and the authority to assure that adequate facilities and services are available or can be made available to support planned growth. Therefore, adequacy of existing and proposed public facilities and services must be considered when land use plans are prepared, when regulations are adopted and when individual land development proposals are reviewed. King County also carries out its responsibility for adequate facilities and services by developing revenue sources and capital improvement programs to provide facilities and services.

- F-105** All land use plans and plan revisions (for example, amendments to the Comprehensive Plan Map or community plans) should be based on realistic assessments of present and future service conditions and needs, including transportation; sewage disposal; water; solid waste disposal; surface water management; police and fire protection; schools and libraries; parks and open space; and facilities for social and health services.
- F-106** Individual developments should provide all on-site improvements needed to meet adopted service standards for roads, sewage disposal, water supply, surface water management, fire flow, public transit, neighborhood parks, and open space.
- F-107** When the off-site capacity of roads, public sewer systems, public water systems and fire protection systems is inadequate to meet adopted service standards, individual developments should be deferred until these services are assured of being brought up to standard by either the public entity involved or the developer, or some combination of funding sources. If the deficient services cannot be brought up to standard, the development should be denied.
- F-108** King County should provide the maximum possible funding for capital improvement program items to assure adequacy of those services in Urban Areas for which the County is responsible.

Policies F-105 to F-108 are to be implemented in several ways. First, funding for facilities and services will be a basic consideration in preparing all land use plans. Second, designating Transitional Areas will help coordinate growth with facilities and services as Urban Areas expand. Third, land use regulations will require, and review processes will verify, that essential services are available or will be available when needed by the proposal. Within Urban Areas, King County's public spending also may be focused on specific locations as an incentive for planned growth.

C. Facility and Service Standards

Facility and service standards apply to the public and private sectors. Many important facilities are provided by private developers at the time projects are built, such as streets and utility lines abutting or within residential subdivisions. Clear and reasonable standards for service levels (for example, allowable traffic congestion) and physical improvements (for example, road width and surfacing) are needed for King County to determine whether or not facilities and services are adequate to support growth.

F-109 King County, in cooperation with other service providers and private sector experts, should set service level standards as the basis for defining adequacy of facilities and services needed to support growth.

F-110 Physical standards for public facilities should:

- a. **Assure public health and safety;**
- b. **Reflect adopted service level standards;**
- c. **Be reasonable in cost and cost-effective relative to the benefit received;**
- d. **Have the minimum possible effect on the cost of housing, relative to the benefit received;**
- e. **Allocate public service costs equitably; and**
- f. **Protect the environment.**

The distinction between Urban and Rural Areas is an important feature of the Comprehensive Plan, because amounts of growth intended to locate in Urban and Rural Areas are very different. This difference requires setting urban and rural facility standards and service levels to protect public health, safety and welfare (for example, urban roads serving low-density development in relatively remote locations are not feasible or desirable). Transitional Areas may have either urban or rural levels of service for existing development, depending on the characteristics of each service.

F-111 Public facility and service standards should be defined in functional plans, based on the following:

- a. **Different needs of Urban and Rural Areas;**
- b. **Applicable federal and state laws;**
- c. **Nationally accepted standards;**
- d. **Cost effectiveness;**
- e. **Availability and stability of funding; and**
- f. **Residents' desires.**

D. Intergovernmental Cooperation in Providing Facilities and Services

Effective and efficient public services depend on rational organization of government as well as adequate revenue sources. Agencies providing services must be accountable to the people they serve and have the authority and resources to carry out their responsibilities. This is especially challenging in King County, with 29 cities and towns and dozens of special service districts.

- F-112 Government organization and jurisdictional boundaries for provision of public services should be based on:
- a. Accountability and responsiveness to service area residents;
 - b. Effectiveness and efficiency;
 - c. Equitable distribution of service costs; and
 - d. Authority and responsibility of local public agencies as provided in Washington State law.
- F-113 Cities and incorporated Rural Activity Centers are the preferred service providers within future annexation areas mutually agreed to through interlocal agreements with King County, within areas where no services exist.
- F-114 King County should work with the cities, towns, and service districts to develop a common set of standards for public improvements so that areas annexed by cities will have improvements that are compatible with city standards.

Policies F-112 to F-114 (in conjunction with policies in Chapter Three, Planning and Implementation) will be used to evaluate municipal and special district annexations, incorporations and service extension proposals, and proposed organizational and other changes affecting service delivery by King County government or other agencies (for example, creation of a new utility or benefit district to finance facilities and services). The evaluation process needs to include informing residents and property owners of how the proposed changes may affect the cost or quality of services.

E. Public Facility Location

The main factors in siting public facilities are access (especially if used by the general public), impacts on adjacent land uses, and cost-effectiveness.

- F-115 Public facilities should be located, designed, and operated to be compatible with neighboring uses.
- F-116 Utility structures such as telephone exchange buildings, telecommunications towers, transformer stations, sewage treatment plants, and solid waste facilities should adjoin non-residential uses wherever possible. They should be designed and operated to be compatible with neighboring uses.
- F-117 Utility facilities not directly related to delivering services to a residential area (such as management, collection of service charges, and storage or maintenance of materials and vehicles) should be located in Urban Activity Centers or Rural Activity Centers.

Large facilities used directly by the public (for example, government offices, swimming pools) can create traffic and other impacts similar to commercial development, and need to be treated similarly.

- F-118 Public facilities that serve large areas and are used directly by the general public should be located in or near Urban Activity Centers or Rural Activity Centers.**

Large facilities that must be located with respect to a specified service area or central regional facility (for example, Metro park-and-ride lots or solid waste transfer stations) may require additional location criteria (such as arterial access when on sites outside Urban Activity Centers) in applicable functional plans.

Sometimes public and/or private facilities can be grouped to create opportunities for joint parking or service areas, which are economical and can improve service to the public (for example, a school next to a park or library).

- F-119 Public and private community service providers should be encouraged to share or reuse facilities when appropriate, to reduce costs, conserve land, and provide convenience and amenity for the public. Reuse of surplus school sites and buildings should be encouraged when the proposed new uses are compatible with surrounding uses.**

F. Regional Facility Decisions

Regional facilities include airports, major arterials, sewage treatment plants, solid waste transfer stations and landfills, transit terminals and maintenance facilities, correction and penal institutions, large transmission pipelines, major power plants, and other facilities that serve the entire metropolitan area or are part of a county-wide service system.

- F-120 Proposed regional facilities under the jurisdiction of King County should be reviewed from a county-wide perspective through a process involving public hearings and formal action by elected officials.**
- F-121 Proposed regional facilities under federal or state jurisdiction (for example, power plants or major pipelines through King County) should be reviewed to ensure that the agencies involved consider King County's interests in their decisions. Protection of King County's environmental quality should be a primary consideration.**

II. TRANSPORTATION

Transportation systems are one of the most crucial and expensive public services King County government provides. The right mix of good roads and public transit is necessary for economic growth and desirable living conditions. Conflict between major transportation routes and nearby land uses can lead to air pollution, traffic congestion, and hazardous conditions for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians. Because roads and transit are expensive, planning and coordinating them to respond to existing and expected growth is essential to make the best use of public funds.

The policies in this section reflect the different transportation needs generated by development in Urban, Transitional and Rural Areas. They also establish a framework for functional plans for the highway and street system, transit, and major bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Functional plans will define required service levels for Urban and Rural Areas, and facility improvement standards (for example, minimum width and surfacing for local access streets) will be based on adopted service levels.

A. General Approach

The following policies address county-wide transportation issues and apply to all forms of transportation.

- F-201** King County should design its transportation facilities and services to minimize air, water and noise pollution, and disruption of natural surface water drainage. Safety and accident prevention also should be paramount concerns.
- F-202** Transportation facilities should not be located in environmentally sensitive areas unless it is unavoidable and their design and construction adequately mitigate adverse impacts. Transportation facilities also should not be located in a manner that would increase development pressure on environmentally sensitive areas or Resource Lands.

Policies F-201 and F-202 apply to all transportation facilities. They will apply most often to arterials built by public agencies, and to privately built streets and parking areas. (See Chapter Four, Environment and Open Space, for more policies on protecting sensitive areas.)

- F-203** Energy-efficient transportation facilities and services such as buses, vans, carpools, bikeways and high occupancy vehicle lanes should be encouraged in appropriate locations.
- F-204** Accessible and convenient transportation facilities and services should be made available to elderly and disabled citizens.

Policies F-203 and F-204 are implemented through public programs and capital spending, as well as through standards applied to privately built streets and other development.

Policies F-205 and F-206 below establish King County's general approach to funding transportation facilities.

- F-205** New regional and area-wide road and transit facilities should be funded primarily by public sources. However, developer contributions on a pro-rated basis reflecting actual development impacts may be required as part of any funding arrangement.
- F-206** The development review process should be used to secure rights-of-way and require reasonable on-site and off-site construction of local and neighborhood transportation facilities as a condition of approval when needed to adequately serve the development. Off-site improvement requirements should be pro-rated according to project impact. Residential density calculations should include dedicated arterial rights-of-way.

B. Highways and Streets

For planning and design highways and streets are divided into six classes based on function:

- Freeways
- Principal Arterials
- Minor Arterials
- Collector Arterials
- Neighborhood Collectors
- Local Access Streets (Commercial and Residential)

These classes are described in the transportation functional plan. Design standards are then determined by function (mobility vs. access to property) and by criteria such as traffic capacity and design speed. Standards also may vary for Urban, Transitional and Rural Areas; for example, an arterial's function may be the same in both Urban and Rural Areas, but design standards may vary due to the low traffic volumes and greater distances between destinations in Rural Areas. The arterial classifications correspond to those required under state statutes governing highways and transportation (Title 47 R.C.W.). Figure F-1 at the end of this section illustrates the major components of King County's road system.

Freeways and Arterials

Freeways are divided highways with limited access. They are usually federal interstates or part of the state highway system. Freeway routes can influence as well as support major land use decisions. Therefore, it is crucial that the Comprehensive Plan's land use policies be used in evaluating freeway proposals.

- F-207** Freeway construction priorities should emphasize completion of missing sections and interchanges of existing freeways, and provision for high-occupancy vehicle lanes and transit-related improvements, over new freeway construction.
- F-208** Pedestrian and vehicular access across freeway rights-of-way should be provided for local circulation.

Arterials are streets designed to carry relatively high speed, heavy traffic to and from destinations such as Urban Activity Centers and Rural Activity Centers. King County is responsible for providing and maintaining arterials throughout its unincorporated territory. Low-cost operational improvements and better management of the arterial system are usually more cost-effective in reducing travel time than new construction. Examples of such operational improvements are synchronizing signals, automating signals to adjust to non-rush hour traffic, providing carpool/transit lanes, restricting on-street parking at rush hour and designating one-way streets. (See also Policies F-102, F-103, F-104 and F-205 above on priorities for public spending.)

- F-209** New construction or major widening of arterials should occur only when operational improvements can no longer provide adequate safety or service.
- F-210** Arterial design standards should provide for transit-related improvements, such as bus stops.
- F-211** Access points to principal and minor arterials should be consolidated and limited to minimize congestion whenever possible. This concept should be applied to all types of residential, commercial and industrial development. Parcels with limited arterial frontage should have only one access point. Parcels with extensive frontage should have only a few controlled access points, spaced well apart.
- F-212** As part of the community planning and development approval processes, King County should:
 - a. Establish local and neighborhood circulation patterns;
 - b. Make minor changes in collector arterial routes when needed;
 - c. Require right-of-way dedication, road construction, and improvements associated with the development; and
 - d. Require individual developments to contribute their fair share toward construction of off-site arterial improvements from which they benefit, and to mitigate off-site traffic impacts of the development.

Mechanisms such as local improvement districts, impact mitigation payments, and latecomer charges on smaller developments may be used to accumulate incrementally the funds to build area-wide facilities that are needed as local communities develop. In some cases, however, off-site improvements related to project development may have to be built prior to project occupancy by the developers, or projects may have to be deferred or denied, consistent with Policies F-107 and F-206.

Local Access Streets

Commercial and industrial local access streets in Urban Activity Centers, Community Centers, Neighborhood Centers, and Rural Activity Centers provide convenient vehicle and pedestrian access to businesses for shoppers, employees and service vehicles. Although they sometimes carry a great deal of traffic, commercial local access streets may be shorter and narrower than arterials and may accommodate some on-street parking.

F-213 Commercial and industrial local access street patterns and design should:

- a. Avoid steep grades and difficult driveway approaches;
- b. Avoid too many intersections and connections with arterials;
- c. Provide safe intersections;
- d. Separate local traffic from through traffic;
- e. Allow safe, convenient pedestrian and bicycle travel;
- f. Support existing and planned future arterial patterns; and
- g. Separate truck traffic from shoppers and employees.

Policies F-214 and F-215 below specify the different design features needed for commercial and industrial local access streets.

F-214 Design of local access streets for commercial (office and retail) areas should include:

- a. Paved roadways, with curbs and gutters or other devices effective for drainage control;
- b. Wide sidewalks for pedestrian traffic, and curb cuts for bicycles and wheelchairs;
- c. Protruding sidewalks, pavement surface changes and other devices that heavily mark pedestrian street crossings; and
- d. Durable landscaping and street trees.

F-215 Design of local access streets for industrial areas should include:

- a. Paved roadways, with curbs and gutters or other devices effective for drainage control;
- b. Width, turning radii and sight distances designed to accommodate large tractor-trailer traffic, but not on-street parking; and
- c. Access points to individual sites far enough away from intersections to avoid traffic conflicts.

Residential local access streets provide safe access to housing and are often used for bicycle and pedestrian travel. Auto traffic is light and slow, and truck traffic consists of occasional delivery, service or emergency vehicles. Residential street location and construction requirements are determined prior to and during the development approval process.

F-216 Residential local access street patterns and design should:

- a. Avoid steep grades and difficult driveway approaches;

- b. Avoid too many intersections and connections with arterials;
- c. Provide safe intersections;
- d. Provide frequent but short cul-de-sacs to maintain a residential environment, yet provide adequate local circulation and emergency/service vehicle access;
- e. Separate neighborhood traffic from through traffic when possible;
- f. Provide safe, convenient pedestrian and bicycle access to nearby schools, parks and shopping;
- g. Support existing and planned future street patterns; and
- h. Emphasize east-west streets when other considerations permit, to provide good solar access for adjacent lots.

F-217 Residential street design should be based on function and total number of dwellings planned to be served, to:

- a. Provide the safest environment possible for children, bicyclists and pedestrians;
- b. Conserve energy and materials;
- c. Minimize storm-water runoff and site disturbance;
- d. Avoid unnecessary development costs and subsequent maintenance costs;
- e. Provide safe vehicular access and turning movements to and from abutting lots; and
- f. Discourage through traffic and reduce speed.

Accident prevention is a major concern in street design standards. At urban or suburban densities, sidewalks or improved walkways and clearly marked crossing points are essential for pedestrian safety.

In Urban Areas, Policies F-216 and F-217 will be implemented through residential local access street standards using these categories:

1. Subcollectors, which set the residential street pattern in larger subdivisions and connect neighborhood collectors or collector arterials.
2. Cul-de-sacs, which are permanent dead-end streets limited in length, usually with a circular turnaround at the end.
3. One-way loops, which are short two-ended streets that serve a limited number of dwellings.
4. Minor access streets, which serve fewer than ten dwellings.

F-218 For all residential streets, on-street parking areas should be viewed as a means of accommodating occasional "overflow" parking demand by visitors or service vehicles. Residents' parking needs should be accommodated off-street (and within buildings when possible), and in the case of multifamily development, as close as possible to the dwelling units served.

Addressing parking needs off-street is usually more cost-effective than accommodating extensive on-street parking through wider streets.

F-219 Rights-of-way for all local street classifications should be the minimum necessary to accommodate the roadway, transit-related improvements, sidewalks and utilities necessary for existing and planned development.

Low-density residential development in Rural Areas will have different residential street needs than in Urban Areas. Densities and travel demand in Rural Areas are very low and road maintenance is a proportionately greater per capita cost than in Urban Areas. In those Transitional Areas not yet planned for urban densities and uses but where urban growth may reasonably be expected in the future, current service needs may be similar to those in Rural Areas, but the street pattern, facility and service planning, and improvement requirements must take account of future urban growth.

F-220 Residential streets serving development in Transitional Areas should be improved to the standards necessary to serve currently permitted densities, with sufficient rights-of-way to accommodate eventual urban growth in appropriate locations.

F-221 Residential street width and improvement standards within Rural Areas should be the minimum necessary to provide safe access for long-term low-density development.

Residential streets in King County can be privately owned and maintained as well as County-owned and maintained. For private streets to give adequate service, however, owners of property served by private streets must understand and fulfill their maintenance obligations. Private streets are not appropriate to serve an indeterminate number of properties, since ongoing maintenance costs must be apportioned equitably among all benefited property owners.

F-222 Subcollector streets should be publicly owned. Cul-de-sacs and smaller local access streets may be privately owned when they are:

- a. Built to King County street standards;
- b. Open at all times for necessary public use;
- c. Not obstructions to, or part of, the present or future public neighborhood circulation pattern;
- d. Designed from the outset to serve a specified number of dwellings with no potential for additional lots being served later;
- e. Maintained by a capable and legally responsible home-owners' association or other legal entity made up of all benefited property owners.

- F-223** In Rural Areas, residential streets not providing neighborhood circulation and serving only a few dwellings (generally eight or fewer) should be privately owned and maintained.

C. Public Transit

The Municipality of Metropolitan Seattle (Metro) is King County's primary public transit agency. Metro provides scheduled bus and van service in King County, and vans for van-pooling and ride-matching services. Many smaller social service agencies and private carriers also offer limited transit services.

High-quality transit can be superior to the private automobile in public and private capital and operating costs, and in consumption of land, materials, and energy, if residential and employment densities are high enough to support significant transit use. Local and national studies have shown 7 to 8 dwellings per acre (area-wide) and 50 jobs per acre (in large concentrations) to be important threshold densities, above which it becomes possible to provide good transit service cost-effectively. The King County Comprehensive Plan calls for development patterns in Urban Areas that will support good transit, which in turn will provide better service to planned growth.

- F-224** Transit service should reinforce the objective of encouraging growth in Urban Areas.
- F-225** Transit investment in Rural Areas should emphasize local service for transit-dependent residents rather than commuter service to Urban and Transitional Areas. Commuter service to these areas for Rural Area residents should be provided primarily by park-and-ride lots, in Urban and Transitional Area locations convenient to Rural Areas.

Transit facilities include transit centers, bus stop shelters, bus pullouts, park-and-ride lots and exclusive bus or high-occupancy vehicle lanes in the highway and arterial system. Bus storage and maintenance installations also are transit facilities, but they have some industrial characteristics (amount of land needed, and other impacts).

- F-226** Transit centers (major transfer points) should be located in Urban Activity Centers.
- F-227** Transit centers should include safe and convenient bus, pedestrian and bicycle access that minimizes conflicts with other traffic.

Shelters for waiting passengers increase transit convenience, especially in bad weather. They are especially appropriate at high-use stops such as hospitals, retirement homes and major office or shopping areas.

- F-228** Bus stop shelters outside transit centers should be provided at route transfer points and at other bus stops as resources allow. Shelters also should be included in the design of business and industrial development located at scheduled bus stops.
- F-229** As existing streets are reconstructed and as new streets are built, bus pullouts should be incorporated into road design to improve traffic operation and safety.

Park-and-ride lots extend transit service to outlying, low-density areas. The additional expense of park-and-ride lots to service residents of low-density and rural areas is justifiable because it conserves energy and protects the more centrally located areas from additional auto traffic congestion and air pollution. Park-and-pool lots provide similar support for car pooling.

- F-230** Park-and-ride lots should be located in Urban and Transitional Areas on sites with convenient arterial access, close to the residential areas they serve.
- F-231** Joint use of parking areas as park-and-ride and park-and-pool lots should be encouraged at shopping centers, churches, major businesses, and public facilities.
- F-232** Park-and-ride lots should include adequate screening, buffering and measures to mitigate other off-site impacts such as increased vehicle traffic and surface water runoff.

The location of a development, whether residential or commercial, with respect to transit can affect its automobile traffic impacts, especially in relatively dense areas.

- F-233** If a development's access to good transit can be shown to result in lower traffic generation rates, such rates should be used in estimating its traffic impacts.

Policy F-233 provides an incentive to developments which use, and therefore support, public transit.

D. Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation

Ramps, curbs, covered pathways and barrier-free entrances to community centers and commercial areas make travel convenient for the bicyclist and pedestrian. Design and development of pedestrian and bicycle facilities also can address the special needs of the handicapped, the young, and the elderly.

- F-234** Pedestrian and bicycle travel should be encouraged as convenient, healthy and energy-efficient means of transportation and recreation. Safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access should be provided between residences and nearby schools, parks, business areas and transit routes. County standards for bicycle and pedestrian facilities should be applied consistently and equitably to all developments.
- F-235** Wheelchair and bicycle ramps should be incorporated into sidewalk and walkway design. Wheelchair accessibility should be included in trail system design when possible.

E. Airports and Aviation

King County's aviation facilities range from Sea-Tac International Airport to small helicopter pads, to isolated and sometimes unpaved landing strips.

All aviation facilities have unique problems concerning safety, health and scale of impacts. While a large increase in the number of airports is unlikely, the potential effects of even one new facility are sufficiently extensive that King County must address them.

- F-236 Metropolitan-scale commercial aviation facilities and other airports above the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) "General Utility" classification should locate on very large sites close to major population centers and be well served by highways and public transit. Adequate roads and transit must be available or provided concurrently with any airport development.**

Sea-Tac International Airport and Boeing Field/King County International Airport are the only locations currently identified in unincorporated King County that meet Policy F-236.

In implementing the policies in this section, it will be very important for King County to cooperate with the FAA, the State of Washington, the cities, and other Puget Sound-area counties, since even the smallest aviation facility may have regional impacts.

- F-237 Siting decisions on any new aviation facility in King County should be supported by a regional planning process that encompasses all counties in the Puget Sound area, involves affected agencies at all levels of government, and allows cumulative impacts to be analyzed. Siting decisions on any new aviation facility in King County (including small airfields in Rural Areas) should consider the proposal relative to other airfields and airports in the Puget Sound region (King, Pierce, Snohomish and Kitsap Counties).**

- F-238 General aviation facilities ("General Utility" FAA classification) should be located in or near existing or new Urban Activity Centers. Proposals for new general aviation facilities should be considered Comprehensive Plan Map amendments that would create new Urban Activity Centers. They should have adequate fire protection and other public facilities and services and have major arterial access from a nearby freeway. All required facilities and services must be provided concurrently with any airport development if they are not already in place.**

- F-239 Any new general aviation facility should conform to current FAA standards and the following criteria:**

- a. All adjacent land within one-half mile of the ends and longitudinal edges of each runway should be controlled through ownership or easement by the facility operator to reduce or eliminate hazard and nuisance to adjacent land uses; and
- b. Use of the site should not adversely affect any nearby valuable environmental features.

- F-240 Airport approach zones should be oriented to minimize hazard and nuisance to present and potential adjoining land uses. Whenever possible, the approach zones of airports and heliports should be over water, land uses such as greenbelts, plant nurseries or low-intensity industries such as warehousing.**

- F-241** Small airfields serving rural uses and needs should locate in or near Rural Activity Centers, where adequate roads, fire protection and other necessary facilities and services are available, and when adverse impacts on nearby Rural Areas and Resource Lands are mitigated. The proliferation of small airfields is discouraged, due to their cumulative impacts on air traffic and nearby uses.
- F-242** Landing fields, heliport landing pads, and seaplane moorages for a single aircraft in a residential or commercial area may locate on any site meeting current FAA standards, provided adverse impacts are mitigated, and provided they are approved through a discretionary review process with adequate notice to both the FAA and adjacent property owners.
- F-243** Landing fields serving more than one aircraft, including those associated with low-density residential development and resource uses, should be regulated the same as general aviation facilities, and analyzed for their cumulative impacts. The proliferation of small airfields is discouraged, due to their cumulative impacts on air traffic.

F. Other Transportation Services

Several other methods of travel are part of the transportation system in King County. The State Department of Transportation runs the Washington State Ferry System, which provides ferry service for Puget Sound. Private ship lines, railway, and trucking firms connect Seattle with the rest of the country and the world. AMTRAK, a public corporation, offers passenger rail service in King County. Airports provide passenger and freight service for King County.

Although these parts of the transportation system are regulated by state and federal agencies, passenger and freight terminals are major land uses which may need to be addressed by King County.

- F-244** Regional passenger and freight terminals should have enough screening and buffering to reduce their visual impact on surrounding land uses. Off-site impacts such as increased traffic congestion or air and noise pollution should be mitigated.
- F-245** Passenger and freight terminals should be located in Urban Activity Centers or Rural Towns, and should be treated like other heavy commercial or industrial developments.

III. UTILITIES

Utilities include all lines and facilities used to distribute, collect, transmit, control, or dispose of water, storm water and sanitary sewage, solid waste, electricity, petroleum products and information (telecommunications). Most King County utilities are operated by special-purpose districts and private companies, although the County provides some local sewage collection and manages solid waste disposal for all jurisdictions within its boundaries. The County's responsibility for utilities provided by other agencies ranges from managing their use of public rights-of-way to defining their geographic service areas (for example, through the Sewerage General Plan).

This section contains policies to guide King County in operating its own utilities, allocating public funds for utilities, approving or denying private development proposals, and reviewing and regulating utility services and facilities provided by other public agencies and the private sector. This section also provides a general framework for utility functional plans, including those prepared by other entities as well as King County. The cities, Metro and special purpose districts are encouraged to use the Comprehensive Plan in preparing their own plans and capital improvement programs.

Functional plans will define required service levels for Urban, Transitional and Rural Areas (for example, minimum water flows for fire protection). Where applicable, the County or appropriate city or special purpose district will provide facility improvement standards, specify current and potential funding methods, and schedule facility maintenance as well as construction through capital improvement programs.

A. General Approach

- F-301 Utility special district comprehensive plans and proposals should support and be consistent with land use plans.
- F-302 Utilities should be designed, located and constructed to avoid significant adverse environmental impacts and to protect valuable environmental features.
- F-303 Where utilities are inadequate to serve existing development in Urban Areas, necessary improvements should be provided. Utility capital improvement programs should give priority to improving systems with significant inadequacies.
- F-304 Utility providers, including cities and special districts, should plan eventually to serve urban uses and densities throughout all Urban Areas, as well as those portions of Transitional Areas where interim uses and service needs are at or near rural levels but community plans have determined that urban densities will be appropriate in the future.
- F-305 In Rural Areas and Resource Lands, standards and plans for utility service should be consistent with long-term low-density development and resource industries. Utility facilities that serve Urban Areas but must be located in Rural Areas (for example, a pipeline from a municipal watershed) should be designed and scaled to serve the Urban Areas primarily.
- F-306 Whenever possible, utilities should make joint use of utility rights-of-way. Underground utilities should be grouped together and easily accessible for maintenance, repair and additions.

- F-307** Above-ground utility installations should be designed and located to minimize unsightly views and environmental impacts. Power and telephone poles should be as far from right-of-way centerlines as possible.
- F-308** Power and telephone wires should be installed underground where feasible, particularly in newly developing and high-density areas.

B. Water Service

King County residents get water either from wells and springs or publically owned supply systems that draw on the rivers in eastern King County. Planning for water supply is particularly complex because many agencies share the same sources. Directing water from upstream areas limits downstream users; drawing on groundwater supplies may lower private wells or lake levels and stream flows. Facilities operated by cities, utility districts, private companies and community associations distribute water. The largest water system is operated by the City of Seattle, which also wholesales water to many utility districts. More than 1,000 other entities also distribute water, and numerous wells serve only one household.

King County has a compelling interest in a safe and adequate water supply to support existing development and expected growth. Federal and state laws, however, govern water quality standards, and cities and independent utility districts are responsible for engineering, building, and operating public water supply systems.

- F-309** Service level standards for water supplies should assure water quality, adequate domestic supplies and urban fire flow levels in Urban Areas, urban portions of Transitional Areas and in Rural Activity Centers. Rural Area service level standards must assure water quality and domestic supply, and fire flow consistent with low rural residential densities.

As growth occurs in unincorporated Urban and Transitional Areas, utility districts expand their system capacity, and in many cases annex new territory to meet the need for public water. Utility district water purveyors should use land use plans to gauge the amount and location of future service demands.

- F-310** Water districts should design system improvements and plan future annexations based on the following factors:
- a. In Urban Areas, appropriate portions of Transitional Areas, and Rural Activity Centers, adequate capacity to accommodate planned land use intensities;
 - b. In Rural Areas outside Rural Activity Centers, the planned area-wide low residential densities and rural uses; and
 - c. In all cases, coordination with cities and Rural Activity Centers which provide water service.

F-311 In Rural Areas outside Rural Activity Centers, a decision to provide municipal water to a local geographic area in a Rural Area through a utility district, as opposed to use of community systems or individual private wells, should be based on the following criteria:

- a. The area has been committed to district water service through previous County approval of a district comprehensive plan; or
- b. A developer extension to the water system will be paid for only by new development, and is economically feasible with no increase in planned densities; or
- c. Water quality problems that threaten public health exist which can best be solved by district service; or
- d. Water quantity problems exist which can best be solved by district service.

The location of certain farmlands with respect to nearby Urban Areas may necessitate locating utility district water facilities in farmlands. See Chapter Seven, Resource Lands, for policies governing land uses and municipal/district annexations in Resource Lands.

King County's water resources are limited, despite its rainy climate and many lakes and rivers, because so many water uses compete for this supply. A conservation program that reduces water use is essentially another source of supply. Conservation also has secondary benefits such as increasing the effective capacity of sewer lines and treatment plants.

F-312 King County should encourage water purveyors to include conservation measures in their plans, as well as development of new sources, to support planned land uses with reliable service at minimum cost, and to assure maximum net benefit in allocating water for fisheries, navigation, hydroelectric power, and recreation, as well as municipal and industrial uses.

Conservation programs would be initiated and carried out by service purveyors such as Metro and the utility districts.

F-313 Public watersheds should be managed primarily for the protection of drinking water, but should allow for multiple uses, including recreation, when such uses do not jeopardize drinking water quality standards.

Policy F-313 applies to both use of the water supply (for example, power generation, flood control, support of fisheries) and the watershed's land area (for example, recreation, forestry).

C. Sewage Treatment and Disposal

Adequate sewage treatment and disposal are essential to protect public health and safety, and to maintain high quality for all water resource users. King County's wastewater is treated by either public sewers or on-site systems. Public sewers convey wastewater to central plants operated by Metro and some sewer districts, where it is treated and released into Puget Sound; on-site systems treat and dispose of wastewater at or near its origin. The needs for sewer service, like other utilities, are different for Urban, Transitional and Rural Areas.

Public Sewers

Public sewers can accommodate dense development and great quantities of wastewater. They are large, complex, expensive systems that become cost-effective only at urban densities. Because of their expense, the presence or absence of public sewers is a major factor in the ability of local areas to accommodate growth. The "local service area" (LSA) for public sewers defined in the King County Sewerage General Plan indicates where urban uses and densities are planned to have sewers. As such, the Sewerage General Plan's LSA helps phase growth in Urban Areas and guides near-term planning by Metro and the sewer districts.

F-314 Public sewers are the preferred method for wastewater treatment for development in Urban Areas and Rural Activity Centers. All development within a local service area designated by the Sewerage General Plan should be served by public sewers, except as follows:

- a. Existing development within local service areas served by on-site systems should be required to use public sewers in the event of system failure;
- b. Portions of Urban Areas intended to remain at very low densities may be served by on-site systems if soil conditions will support their long-term use.

F-315 Sewer facilities should be located in and serve only properties within the local service area designated by the Sewerage General Plan.

Figure F-2 at the end of this section illustrates the Sewerage General Plan's designated local service areas.

F-316 Local service areas for sewers should be designated only in Urban Areas and Rural Activity Centers, including their agreed-on expansion areas. In designating or making boundary adjustments to a local service area, the following criteria should be applied:

- a. Detailed land use plans and zoning for urban uses and densities support the proposed addition;
- b. On-site wastewater disposal methods are not feasible for planned land uses and densities, or water quality is threatened by the presence or potential of health hazards resulting from inadequate wastewater disposal methods;
- c. Potential adverse impact of sewers on nearby Rural Areas, Resource Lands and environmentally sensitive areas will be mitigated;

- d. Sewers are technically and financially feasible within the proposed addition;
- e. The proposed additional area can be served by gravity sewer into the existing local service area (but the sewerage agency may use pressure lines if cost-effective); and
- f. There is sufficient treatment plant and interceptor capacity to serve all the existing local service area if developed to saturation, as well as the proposed additional area.

When the local service area boundary is expanded consistent with Policy F-316, the boundaries between Urban Areas and Transitional Areas also will be amended if coterminous. Some Urban Areas may be excluded from local service areas (for example, low-density residential areas or environmentally sensitive areas) or allowed to continue using on-site systems if water quality is protected. See Chapter Two, Plan Concept, for criteria for redesignation of Transitional Areas to Urban.

On-Site Wastewater Treatment

On-site wastewater management systems are generally less costly than public sewers and can effectively prevent pollution if properly installed, operated and maintained on sites with good soils. However, soil and site conditions limit their value in most of King County, so most on-site systems can be used only in very low-density developments.

F-317 On-site systems should be used to treat and dispose of wastewater from uses on Resource Lands and in Transitional and Rural Areas. In Rural Activity Centers, community on-site systems or decentralized treatment systems may be used, depending on planned development.

Approved treatment technologies include septic tanks, aerobic treatment and composting toilets. These can be combined with approved disposal methods, which include absorption drainfields and mound or fill systems. King County's responsibility is to regulate, monitor, and enforce proper on-site wastewater treatment system installation and use. System design, operation, and maintenance are usually handled privately. King County regulates on-site systems to conform with rules adopted by the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services and the King County Board of Health.

F-318 On-site wastewater treatment systems should be designed and located to protect water quality in lakes, streams, wells, and aquifers.

F-319 New on-site system technologies may be used, when at least as effective as septic tanks and when approved by State and Local Health Agencies.

On-site treatment systems can function properly for a long time if they are adequately designed, built on suitable soils and used properly. Failures have often occurred because on-site systems have been designed as a temporary measure until sewers could be extended.

F-320 On-site wastewater treatment systems in Rural Areas and Resource Lands should be designed, built, and operated as permanent methods of sewage disposal.

In developed areas, certain pollutants in lakes, streams, and groundwater indicate that nearby on-site systems are not working. Other indications may include lush growth over the drainfield or surfacing effluent.

- F-321** Operation and maintenance standards should be established for all areas served by on-site systems. Special programs, such as frequent inspections and proof of pumping out systems, should be established in areas with a high risk of system failure.
- F-322** On-site systems located outside a local service area designated by the Sewerage General Plan that create health or pollution problems should be repaired or replaced. Provision of public sewers to these areas should be considered an option only in Urban and Transitional Areas and Rural Activity Centers.
- F-323** King County should monitor evidence of existing or potential on-site wastewater system failures and use the data to correct problems and prevent future problems.

In some cases, on-site system failure rates or constraints might be severe enough to warrant special zones or districts with more stringent requirements for design or maintenance, or even public management. Another method of overcoming system limitations would be collective on-site systems, in which two or more property owners share a treatment device, drainfield or both, provided that adequate system management is assured.

- F-324** Collective on-site systems may be used only in the following circumstances in Rural Areas and Resource Lands:
- a. Existing development is experiencing area-wide system failures; and
 - b. Management of the collective system will be by an authorized public agency; and
 - c. The collective system does not make urban densities (for example, on nonconforming lots) feasible on sites with soils inadequate to support individual systems.
- F-325** Collective on-site systems may be used in Transitional Areas where clustering provides large undeveloped tracts that can be used for the collective system. The collection lines to each building site should be laid out for eventual inclusion in a public sewer system, when feasible. Management of the collective system must be by an authorized public agency.

D. Solid Waste

King County's system of solid waste management governs refuse at every stage, including storage, collection, transfer, resource recovery and disposal. Most solid waste is collected, taken to transfer stations for recycling or temporary storage, or taken directly to landfills.

Transfer stations and landfills are operated by King County, the City of Seattle, and private companies. Private companies collect garbage in most areas of the County. Since subscription to a garbage collection service is not required in unincorporated areas of King County, residents may take their own refuse directly to recycling centers, transfer stations or landfills.

Adequate solid waste management is essential to public health and environmental protection; state law delegates responsibility for adequate solid waste management to local governments. Solid-waste management follows the regional King County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan adopted by King County pursuant to R.C.W. 70.95. Also, the King County Health Department regulates all solid waste disposal by public or private agencies and by individuals.

- F-326** Solid waste should be handled and disposed of in ways that minimize land, air and water pollution, and protect public health.
- F-327** Management of solid waste should take a regional approach in planning for needs, facilities and services.

Most solid waste is buried at landfills. However, annual refuse tonnage in King County has increased with population growth, and the suitable landfill sites are limited. Also, much of the refuse is paper, wood, and metal, which could be reused rather than buried. Burning garbage to produce energy may be technically and economically feasible. In addition, rising prices for once unwanted materials are an incentive to recycle them. Voluntary recycling by individuals and businesses can be encouraged by locating recycling centers in or near transfer stations and in business areas.

- F-328** Recycling and energy recovery systems should be encouraged when they can meet environmental standards because they extend the life of landfills and regain useful materials.

Solid waste transfer stations and landfills are regional facilities, the location of which is governed by the general policies at the beginning of this chapter.

E. Surface Water Management

The management and control of stormwater has become more crucial as more of King County's land area is covered with impervious surfaces (streets, parking lots, buildings) due to urbanization. The purpose of surface water management is to minimize water quality degradation, flooding, erosion and attendant property damage in Urban and Transitional Areas. In King County, surface water management will be addressed through a public utility that develops functional plans, operates and maintains regional and area-wide facilities, and through improvement standards applied to individual private development projects. (See Chapter Four, Environment and Open Space, for detailed policies on protecting water resources.)

- F-329** Surface water management should use and protect natural drainage systems wherever possible.
- F-330** A watershed approach should be taken to surface water management, with responsibility shared between King County and incorporated cities within a watershed.
- F-331** Watershed basin plans should provide for multiple use -- including recreation, fish and wildlife enhancement, flood protection, erosion control and open space.

- F-332** Regional and area-wide stormwater facilities should be funded through an adequate and equitable set of user charges on contributing and benefiting properties. Stormwater facilities required of new development should be designed and built for low-cost, long-term maintenance.

F. Energy and Telecommunications

Private sector utilities and broadcasters provide most King County residents with energy (electric power and natural gas) and telecommunications (telephone, radio and television). Many large generation and transmission facilities (for example, large power lines and pipelines) are regional facilities subject to federal or state law. Local distribution, transmission, and reception facilities, however, are the responsibility of King County to regulate in order to safeguard public health and safety, and to control aesthetic impacts.

- F-333** Energy and telecommunications distribution and transmission facilities (for example, substations, pump stations, major power lines and pipelines, transmission/reception towers) should be located in industrial areas and Resource Lands when possible. They should be located in residential areas (either urban or rural) only when necessary.

- F-334** King County's siting decisions for energy and telecommunications facilities should be based on the following factors:

- a. Minimal health risk to residents of neighboring properties, whether from noise, fumes, radiation or other hazards;
- b. Minimal visual impacts, achieved with buffering through distance and/or landscaping;
- c. For power lines and transmission/reception towers, no adverse impact on aviation traffic patterns; and
- d. Convenient access to an arterial (may not be needed if the facility is automated).

Policy F-334 will be implemented through a discretionary permit process that allows careful consideration of community impacts as well as energy and telecommunications system needs.

IV. PUBLIC SAFETY

Public safety services include police and fire protection, emergency medical service and animal control. The King County Comprehensive Plan is concerned with these services as they relate to land use. Supporting facilities include police and fire stations, training and equipment maintenance facilities and shelters for impounded animals. Functional plans for public safety will involve several local governments (independent fire districts, and cities and towns contracting with King County for police services, as well as King County itself).

These functional plans will define required service levels for Urban, Transitional, Rural Areas, and Resource Lands, (for example, different fire-retardation construction standards related to water availability and emergency vehicle response time), provide facility improvement standards, specify funding methods, and schedule facility construction through capital improvement programs.

F-401 The preferable locations for public safety facilities such as police and fire stations are in Urban Activity Centers, Community Centers, Neighborhood Centers, and Rural Activity Centers. Police and fire stations also may locate outside centers on sites with arterial access, when such locations would result in better service. Facility design and location should be coordinated with nearby jurisdictions.

Policy F-401 recognizes that even where municipal, utility district and fire district boundaries are logical, cooperation is needed to maintain effective and efficient service. This policy also encourages standardizing and pooling resources to achieve economies of scale, for example, in purchasing and maintaining buildings and equipment.

F-402 Fire and police training facilities and centralized equipment maintenance facilities should locate in Urban Areas on sites large enough to buffer adjacent uses. They may locate in Rural Areas if no alternate location can be found.

F-403 Animal control shelters should locate in industrial or heavy commercial areas to reduce or eliminate noise and other impacts on adjacent uses.

V. SCHOOLS AND LIBRARIES

In King County, public schools are operated by local school districts and governed by state and federal statutes and regulations. State and federal governments also provide a significant portion of school funds, with the balance raised by local property taxes. State laws set standards for service levels and facility development (for example, site size and enrollment), and specify funding methods, and therefore perform much of the role of a functional plan for schools. Libraries complement school systems as well as provide King County residents with cultural and leisure opportunities. (See the policies in Chapter Five, Residential Development, on nonresidential uses in residential areas, along with those in the first section of this chapter for guidance on reuse of surplus school sites.)

F-501 King County should encourage growth to locate where it can make best use of existing schools.

F-502 Elementary schools in Urban and Transitional Areas should be centrally located in their service areas, and on or convenient to a neighborhood collector street.

F-503 Junior high schools in Urban and Transitional Areas should be centrally located in their service areas, and on or convenient to a neighborhood collector, collector or secondary arterial.

Since elementary and junior high schools are closely related to surrounding residential areas, it may be appropriate to designate and acquire sites as an area is developed. Site dedication can be required of larger developments, particularly when they have an impact on local service capacity. If a development is large enough to generate the need, a senior high school site also may be planned for and provided.

F-504 Senior high schools in Urban and Transitional Areas should be easily accessible to vehicular as well as pedestrian traffic because of the traffic generated by student drivers, school personnel and interscholastic events. A location on a secondary arterial is highly desirable. A central location within each service area also is desirable but less important than in the case of elementary or junior high schools.

F-505 Schools in Rural Areas should be located in Rural Activity Centers.

The service area of most schools in Rural Areas is large and relatively sparsely populated. Placing schools in Rural Activity Centers allows school facilities to be efficiently used for other community activities and permits rural residents to save energy by combining trips to schools with other purposes.

Colleges and universities usually draw students from a region-wide area and may have regional health or recreation facilities. The State of Washington also provides community colleges that offer both post-high school and adult education.

F-506 Colleges and universities should be on large sites easily accessible to the community and the area's population centers via major transportation routes.

Library services in unincorporated King County and the suburban cities are provided by the King County Library System.

F-507 Branch public libraries in Urban Areas should be located in Urban Activity Centers, Community Centers, or on sites with arterial access.

F-508 Library services for Transitional and Rural Areas should be provided by bookmobiles or by small branches in Rural Activity Centers.

Chapter Nine

HERITAGE SITES

A goal of the King County Comprehensive Plan--1985 is to preserve community diversity, including features that reflect King County's history. Preservation of heritage sites maintains aesthetic and cultural diversity and preserves continuity with the historic and prehistoric past. Heritage sites can be buildings, properties, districts, and structures of historical significance. They include historic residences and commercial buildings, sites of historic events, and other buildings, districts and landscapes with cultural, architectural, engineering, geographic or archeological interest and importance.

Identifying and evaluating historic resources and determining appropriate measures for protection, preservation or restoration is an ongoing process, involving the King County Landmarks Commission, local communities, the cities, and state and federal agencies that own or manage lands with historic features.

HS-101 King County should work with residents, property owners, community groups, cities and other public agencies to identify, evaluate and protect heritage sites.

Heritage sites in King County may be protected in a variety of ways. Structures, sites or districts are listed in King County's Historic Sites Survey and can be determined eligible for designation as King County or community landmarks, landmark sites or districts, following a systematic review process, to ensure King County plans and permit approvals protect significant historic features. The Historic Site Survey is continuously updated through an ongoing process of inventorying heritage sites. Sites are also nominated for inclusion in the National and State Registers of Historic Places to ensure they are recognized by federal and state preservation laws and programs.

The King County Historic Sites Survey includes designated landmarks, sites and districts which can be protected by King County regulations, including zoning and development conditions, as well as incentives to encourage preservation and adaptive use. For example, land use plans can encourage continued commercial use of historic commercial buildings, or preserve historic streets and bridges. Land use plans and development review can also encourage alternatives to demolition and replacement with more intensive uses. King County's Heritage Resource Protection Plan -- a separately adopted functional plan -- outlines historic themes, representative sites, and specific measures for encouraging historic preservation and interpretation.

HS-102 King County should encourage land uses that retain or enhance the historic or scenic setting of landmarks, landmark sites or districts.

HS-103 New development in and adjacent to landmark districts should enhance the historic features of the district and should be compatible with the scale of the district whenever possible.

HS-104 New development affecting historic landmarks, landmark sites, districts or archeological sites in King County should retain and enhance historic features to the greatest extent possible.

Policies HS-103 and HS-104 will be implemented through review of site plans and permit applications for sites and districts and adjacent areas.

Although most heritage sites are privately owned, government actions and programs can offer incentives to make owning and maintaining heritage sites economically feasible. Federal tax policies offer some incentives for preserving historic features. These incentives can be complemented by land use incentives, such as density bonuses for adaptive re-use, open space taxation benefits, gift programs and other incentives. State law also allows counties to develop alternative building code guidelines for the restoration or rehabilitation of historic structures.

HS-105 Incentives should be provided for preserving, restoring or adapting landmarks, landmark sites and districts in King County including tax benefits, zoning to allow economically attractive adaptive use, and some flexibility in building codes, consistent with public health and safety.

King County owns some heritage sites in park lands or other County lands. Additional heritage sites may be acquired when necessary to assure preservation or when desirable to provide public access. Coordination with park acquisition is desirable to provide multiple benefits.

HS-106 King County should acquire heritage sites through purchase, dedication, or other equitable means based on a systematic acquisition review process to be defined in a functional historic preservation plan only when:

- a. The site has outstanding heritage value of county-wide significance and no other methods of preservation are feasible; or
- b. The site is part of another public project such as a park or public building.

HS-107 Development of parks and trails should be coordinated with preservation, restoration and use of heritage sites.

King County government can make a valuable contribution to historic preservation by identifying, evaluating and determining access and preservation potential of County-owned heritage resources.

HS-108 King County should identify, assess and protect all County owned heritage resources, and should provide for public access when possible.

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