

# **YAKIMA COUNTY-WIDE PLANNING POLICY**

*A Policy Framework to Guide the Development of  
Comprehensive Plans Under the  
Washington State Growth Management Act*

**Originally adopted June 1993**

**Revised and adopted October 2003**





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# INTRODUCTION

## Countywide Planning Policies - A Policy Framework For Comprehensive Planning

The passage of the Growth Management Act (GMA) (ESHB 2929) by the Washington State Legislature in 1990 fundamentally changed the way comprehensive land use planning is carried out in the state. The GMA requires that cities and counties update their comprehensive land use plans consistent with statewide goals and minimum requirements as established by the statute, and coordinate their planning efforts with each other.

To assure that this principle is carried out, the 1991 Legislature passed companion legislation (ReESHB 1025) requiring counties and cities to coordinate the independent development of local comprehensive plans through a set of mutually developed county-wide planning policies. These written policy statements are to address eight subject areas:

- The designation of urban growth areas;
- Promotion of contiguous and orderly development and provision of urban services to such development;
- The siting of public capital facilities of a countywide or statewide nature;
- Countywide transportation facilities and strategies;
- The need for affordable housing for all segments of the population;
- Joint city and county planning within urban growth areas;
- County-wide economic development and employment; and
- Analysis of fiscal impact.

Optional subject areas may also be addressed. The *Yakima County-wide Planning Policy* also contains a section on:

- Coordination with special purpose districts, adjacent counties and state, tribal and federal governments.

## Policy Development

### 1993 Plan

In 1991, hundreds of local citizens took part in *Vision Yakima 2010/Focus 2010*, two separate but similar visioning projects to develop a *preferred* future for the Yakima Valley based on the community's beliefs and values. In the Upper Valley, issue committees were formed in the areas of: Economic Development, Education & Employment Training, Environment, Growth Planning, Health Care, Housing, Humanity & Family, Quality of Life and Rural & Agriculture. In the Lower Valley, six issue topics were addressed: Urban Growth & Land Use, Government Services & Facilities, Housing, Transportation, Economic Development & Employment, and Environment & Resource Protection. Committees met separately over several months and submitted reports that

were edited only for style and format. Though each committee had a different assignment, there were dramatic similarities in the beliefs and values that drove their recommendations. Public forums were held to present the citizen reports. In recognition of this citizen-based effort, the Board of Yakima County Commissioners and city councils of the six upper valley communities approved the Upper Valley *Vision Yakima 2010* report as a foundation for more detailed comprehensive plans and implementation programs.

Much of the visioning effort bears direct relationship to the policy areas covered in this ***County-wide Planning Policy***. Accordingly, each policy section is headed by selected quotations from the visioning reports that relate to the particular policy area. In addition, a summary of applicable statewide planning goals and a discussion of the general philosophy underlying the development of each Countywide planning policy is provided.

A County-wide Planning Policy Committee of elected officials and staff from Yakima County, each of the cities and towns and the Yakama Nation was formed to oversee development of the planning policies. An initial draft was reviewed by the Committee in the fall of 1992. A second draft with Committee changes was circulated to agencies and organizations charged with implementing the community vision. A third draft was reviewed by city council and planning commission members. Additional changes were made, resulting in a public hearing draft. Hearings were held and further minor changes were recommended by the County-wide Planning Policy Committee. After approval by a majority of cities and towns, the Board of Yakima County Commissioners adopted the ***County-wide Planning Policy*** as required by the GMA.

#### The 2002-03 Update to the County-wide Planning Policy

The 1993 County-wide Planning Policy was updated during 2002-03. The entire policy document was reviewed. This review responded to state mandates that jurisdictions update their comprehensive plans every five years. That review cycle was later amended by the state to every seven years. The Vision For a Better Tomorrow, an upper Valley visioning effort, building from the previous vision effort, also provided a contest for CWPP review.

Following review and discussion, amendments were made to Section A to address urban growth area issues and Section C, to accommodate the siting of secure community transition facilities. In addition, language throughout the document was updated to change Yakima Indian Nation to Yakama Nation.

The ***County-wide Planning Policy*** represents a composite framework, not a series of individual stand-alone concepts. Ideas represented here are intended to balance each other to create an overall direction for development of individual comprehensive plans. These policies establish the foundation for determining consistency of individual plans with each other and with the tenets of the Growth Management Act and will, like the planning documents they are intended to guide, evolve over time.

## Guiding Principles - Coordination and Cooperation

The GMA is founded on the principle that it is in the best interest of the citizens of the State to foster coordination and cooperation among units of local and state governments. Cities and counties must engage in a collaborative planning process under the requirements of the Act. Specifically, the Act states that *"The Legislature finds that uncoordinated and unplanned growth ... pose a threat to the environment, sustainable economic development, and the health, safety, and high quality of life enjoyed by residents of the State. It is in the public interest that citizens, communities, local governments, and the private sector cooperate and coordinate with one another in comprehensive land use planning"*.

The Legislature established "growth planning hearing boards" to which the state, a county, a city or a person with standing may request a review of whether a city or county has failed to timely adopt a county-wide planning policy, comprehensive plan, or development regulation or whether the county-wide planning policy, comprehensive plan, or development regulation is in compliance with the Act. Therefore, state government involvement in the local planning process will result if cities and the county do not achieve consensus. In order to avoid state involvement in the development of local land use plans, the following principle is declared:

- A. Local governments within Yakima County do hereby agree to strive toward the principle that all local planning differences should be discussed and settled locally. Appeals or requests for review shall be referred to the Eastern Washington Growth Planning Hearings Board only when the local resolution process has been exhausted.

The planning process should flow smoothly and logically beginning with the manner in which data is collected to the way in which land use plans and development regulations are crafted. The County and cities are utilizing a planning technical committee to develop consistent methods of data collection, land use plan formatting, and development regulations. Common format and consistent definitions will reduce complexity and better enable communication and understanding between citizens and elected and appointed officials. To this end, the following principle is declared:

- B. In order to enhance coordinated planning, Yakima County and the cities agree to develop a common system for data collection and analysis and consistent terms for comprehensive land use categories. *[Note: It is recognized that the planning process required by the GMA is presently underway in all Yakima County jurisdictions and that full implementation of this policy may not occur until after initial comprehensive plans are adopted.]*

It should be recognized that the countywide planning policy is a new process in Yakima County. At no other time has a similar document been prepared, adopted and implemented. Without a history to evaluate the impact and utility of this document, the policy should be dynamic and periodically monitored for applicability and effectiveness.

## **The Growth Planning Roles and Responsibilities of Yakima County, the Cities and the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments**

Yakima County, the cities and the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments are all involved in planning activities related to their statutory authority and responsibility. The following further clarifies the role and land use planning authority of each type of governmental unit.

***Yakima County*** is the regional government within the county boundaries providing various services within unincorporated and incorporated areas. Yakima County will:

- Be responsible for the development, adoption and implementation of comprehensive plans and development regulations and the processing of land use permits within the unincorporated portions of the County.
- Develop and maintain informational databases to support the regional geographic information system.
- Perform responsibilities as identified in the most recent GMA regional strategy.
- Enter into separate urban growth management agreements with each city to address joint issues identified in the countywide planning policy and other matters agreed to be of mutual interest.
- Define and implement procedures that assure opportunities for early and continuous public involvement throughout short and long range planning projects.
- Coordinate with other agencies as appropriate in multi-jurisdictional planning activities.

***Cities*** within Yakima County provide a variety of services primarily to residents within their respective municipal boundaries. Cities will:

- Provide urban governmental services as identified in the GMA (Chapter 36.70A RCW) and adopted urban growth management agreements.
- Be responsible for the development, adoption and implementation of comprehensive plans and development regulations and the processing of land use permits within the incorporated city and within unincorporated portions of urban growth areas as may be agreed upon through interlocal agreements.
- Within their capabilities, develop and maintain informational databases to support the regional geographic information system.
- Perform responsibilities identified in the most recent GMA regional strategy.
- Enter into separate interlocal agreements with Yakima County to address joint issues identified in the countywide planning policy and other matters agreed to be of mutual interest.
- Define and implement procedures that assure opportunities for early and continuous public involvement throughout short and long range planning projects.
- Coordinate with other agencies as appropriate in multi-jurisdictional planning activities.

***The Yakima Valley Conference of Governments*** was established by interlocal agreement to assure coordination, consensus, consistency and compliance over issues of common concern to its membership. The Yakima Valley Conference of Governments will:

- Serve as the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) for the region.
- Perform responsibilities as identified in the most recent GMA regional strategy.
- Develop and maintain informational databases to support the regional geographic information system.
- Define and implement procedures that assure opportunities for early and continuous public involvement through short and long range planning projects.
- Coordinate with other agencies as appropriate in multi-jurisdictional planning activities.

# YAKIMA COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICY

## A. URBAN GROWTH AREAS

*"We need to [e]ncourage the increased centralization and density of growth to mitigate the effects of unplanned, undefined growth in the regional area." (U.V. Vision, p.37).*

*"Designated urban growth areas (UGAs) will clearly define where urban level development ought to occur as distinguished from rural level development or no development at all." (L.V. Vision, p. 7).*

### A.1. STATEWIDE URBAN GROWTH AREA GOAL

The basic premise for designating urban growth areas is to encourage the location of urban density residential, commercial and industrial developments in areas where services can be most economically provided. The benefits of directing growth to designated urban areas include:

- \* *Higher density residential development within walking distance of jobs, transit, schools, and parks.*
- \* *Limiting urban expansion into rural, agricultural and forested areas.*
- \* *Promotion of in-fill or redevelopment of existing urban areas.*
- \* *Preservation of open space, critical areas and lands designated for resource protection.*
- \* *Accommodation of employment growth in a concentrated pattern.*
- \* *More economical provision and maintenance of streets, sewers and water lines and other public facilities.*
- \* *Promotion of attractive residential neighborhoods and commercial districts which provide a sense of community.*

The GMA states that *"Urban growth should be located first in areas already characterized by urban growth that have existing public facility and service capacity to serve such development, and second in areas already characterized by urban growth that will be served by a combination of both existing public facilities and services and any additional needed public facilities and services that are provided by either public or private sources. Further, it is appropriate that urban government services be provided by cities, and urban government services should not be provided in rural areas."* [RCW 36.70A.110(3)]

### A.2. COUNTYWIDE URBAN GROWTH AREA POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Designating urban growth areas alone will not assure that development follows a desired growth pattern. The potential remains for leapfrogging and scattered development patterns within a designated UGA unless policies are developed to guide decisions regarding the location and timing of development.

The policies in this section are concerned with encouraging growth in UGAs and discouraging urban growth outside of these areas. Also, development within UGAs should occur in a logical fashion outward from the edge of developed land in conjunction with service and infrastructure provision.

### **A.3. URBAN GROWTH AREA POLICY STATEMENTS**

**The following countywide policies are related to the process and criteria for establishing and amending urban growth areas in Yakima County:**

- A.3.1. Areas designated for urban growth should be determined by preferred development patterns and the capacity and willingness of the community to provide urban governmental services.
- A.3.2. All cities and towns will be within a designated urban growth area. Urban growth areas may include areas not contained within an incorporated city. [RCW 36.70A.110]
- A.3.3. All urban growth areas will be reflected in County and respective city comprehensive plans.
- A.3.4. Urban growth will occur within urban growth areas only and not be permitted outside of an adopted urban growth area except for new fully contained communities. [RCW 36.70A.350]
- A.3.5. The baseline for twenty-year Countywide population forecasts shall be the official decennial Growth Management Act Population Projections from the State of Washington's Office of Financial Management plus unrecorded annexations. The process for allocating forecasted population will be cooperatively reviewed.
- A.3.6. Sufficient area must be included in the urban growth areas to accommodate a minimum 20-year population forecast and to allow for market choice and location preferences. [RCW 36.70A.110 (2)]
- A.3.7. When determining land requirements for urban growth areas, allowance will be made for greenbelt and open space areas and for protection of wildlife habitat and other environmentally sensitive areas. [RCW 36.70A.110(2)]
- A.3.8. The County and cities will cooperatively determine the amount of undeveloped buildable urban land needed. The inventory of the undeveloped buildable urban land supply shall be maintained in a Regional GIS database.
- A.3.9. The County and cities will establish a common method to monitor urban development to evaluate the rate of growth and maintain an inventory of the amount of buildable land remaining.

- A.3.10. The local jurisdiction may initiate an amendment to an existing urban growth area through the normal comprehensive plan amendment process, however in no case will amendments be processed more than once a year. [RCW 36.70A.130 (2)]
- A.3.11. Prior to amending an urban growth area the County and respective local jurisdiction will determine the capital improvement requirements of the amendment to ascertain that urban governmental services will be available within the forecast period.
- A.3.12. Annexations will not occur outside established urban growth areas. [RCW 35.13.005]. Annexations will occur within urban growth areas according to the provisions of adopted interlocal agreements, if any.

## **B. CONTIGUOUS AND ORDERLY DEVELOPMENT AND THE PROVISION OF SERVICES IN URBAN GROWTH AREAS**

*"As a means of achieving well planned, orderly growth and development, we believe that future growth in the Lower Valley should be managed by limiting and encouraging urban and industrial development to designated urban and rural settlement areas while promoting the continued development of agriculture, agricultural processing and related service industries. Designated urban growth areas (UGAs) will clearly define where urban level development ought to occur as distinguished from rural level development or no development at all." (L.V. Vision, p. 7).*

*"As the economic base of the region expands and diversifies the orderly flow of materials and labor must be accommodated. Additional access to developable properties will be needed to make such properties competitive. Certain streets and roads will require upgrading in order to handle the anticipated increase in truck, automobile, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic. Enhanced public transit availability will be required to effect the movement of the workforce and consumers in an efficient and orderly manner." (U.V. Vision, p. 39).*

### **B.1. STATEWIDE GOAL(S) RELATING TO CONTIGUOUS AND ORDERLY DEVELOPMENT AND THE PROVISION OF SERVICES IN UGA'S**

A basic goal of the GMA is to reduce sprawling, low-density development, and to avoid the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land. While only a percentage of the land is available for urban development at any one time, it is important that land supply and densities within an UGA be sufficient to ensure a climate appropriate to a competitive development market. To help ensure this the GMA requires that ". . . those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards. [RCW 36.70A.020(12)]

### **B.2. COUNTYWIDE POLICY DEVELOPMENT RELATING TO CONTIGUOUS AND ORDERLY DEVELOPMENT AND THE PROVISION OF SERVICES WITHIN UGA'S**

Upon designation of urban growth areas the County and cities will need to develop consistent implementation measures to ensure that development occurs in an orderly and contiguous manner. The intent of the following policies is to minimize differences in urban development regulations and standards between the County and the cities and to facilitate the economical provision of urban services to development.

### **B.3. POLICIES TO PROMOTE CONTIGUOUS AND ORDERLY DEVELOPMENT AND PROVIDING URBAN SERVICES TO SUCH DEVELOPMENT**

**The following policies relate to phasing growth and development with service and infrastructure provision:**

- B.3.1. Urban growth should be located first in areas already characterized by urban growth that have existing public facilities and service capacities to serve such development, and second in areas already characterized by urban growth that will be served by a combination of both existing public facilities and services and any additional needed public facilities and services that are provided by either public or private sources. Further, it is appropriate that urban government services be provided by cities, and urban government services should not be provided in rural areas. [RCW 36.70A.110 (3)]
- B.3.2. Urban growth management interlocal agreements will identify services to be provided in an urban growth area, the responsible service purveyors and the terms under which the services are to be provided.
- B.3.3. Infill development, higher density zoning and small lot sizes should be encouraged where services have already been provided and sufficient capacity exists and in areas planned for urban services within the next 20 years.
- B.3.4. The capital facilities, utilities and transportation elements of each local government's comprehensive plan will specify the general location and phasing of major infrastructure improvements and anticipated revenue sources. [RCW 36.70A.070(3)(c)(d)]. These plan elements will be developed in consultation with special purpose districts and other utility providers.
- B.3.5. New urban development should utilize available/planned urban services. [RCW 36.70A.110(3)]
- B.3.6. Formation of new water or sewer districts should be discouraged within designated urban growth areas.

## **C. SITING PUBLIC FACILITIES OF A COUNTY-WIDE OR STATEWIDE NATURE**

*"New technologies will advance the areas of energy production and solid waste reduction. For example, in the year 2010 there will be integrated recycling, solid waste and solar facilities in areas of the Valley not in conflict with agricultural, residential or commercial uses." (L.V. Vision, p.39).*

### **C.1. STATEWIDE GOALS RELATING TO THE SITING OF PUBLIC FACILITIES OF A REGIONAL OR STATEWIDE NATURE**

The GMA requires local governments to inventory existing capital public facilities to identify location and to determine capacities to meet future demand for growth without decreasing levels of service and to include within their comprehensive plans a process for identifying and siting essential public facilities. The Washington State Office of Financial Management is responsible for identifying and maintaining a list of essential state public facilities that are required or likely to be built within the next six years as required by the GMA. Counties and cities are also required to coordinate the siting of countywide and statewide capital facilities to mitigate potential adverse impacts from the location and development of these facilities.

### **C.2. COUNTY-WIDE POLICIES RELATING TO THE SITING OF FACILITIES OF A COUNTY-WIDE OR STATE-WIDE NATURE**

The siting of essential public capital facilities such as landfills and jails is a difficult task at best. Although these facilities are necessary for the common good, they are seldom welcome into a community or neighborhood. Recognizing that public facilities of a statewide or countywide nature are an essential part of our society, policies for their siting and construction are necessary to ensure a reasonable approval process. Each jurisdiction will utilize an appropriate public process for siting essential public facilities, as outlined in their respective comprehensive plans, policies or regulations.

### **C.3.POLICIES FOR SITING PUBLIC CAPITAL FACILITIES OF A COUNTYWIDE OR STATEWIDE NATURE**

**The following policies relate to the identification of needed facilities:**

C.3.1. The County and the cities will inventory existing capital facilities and identify needed facility expansion and construction. [RCW 36.70A.070(3)(a)(b)]

C.3.2. From local inventory, analysis and collaboration with state agencies and utility providers, a list of Countywide and statewide public capital facilities needed to serve the Yakima County region will be developed. These include, but are not limited to, solid and hazardous waste handling facilities and disposal sites; major utility generation and transmission facilities; regional education institutions; airports; correctional facilities; in-patient facilities including hospitals and those for substance abuse, mental health, group homes and secure community transition facilities; and regional park and recreation facilities.

**The following policies relate to establishing a process and review criteria for the siting of facilities that are of a countywide or statewide nature:**

C.3.3. When a public facility of a countywide or statewide nature is proposed in the Yakima County region a Facility Analysis and Site Evaluation Advisory Committee including citizen members will be formed to evaluate the proposed public facility siting. At a minimum this evaluation shall consider:

- a. The potential impacts (positive or negative) of the proposed project on the economy, the environment and community character;
- b. The development of specific siting criteria for the proposed project;
- c. The identification, analysis and ranking of potential project sites;
- d. Measures to first minimize and second mitigate potential physical impacts including, but not limited to, those relating to land use, transportation, utilities, noise, odor and public safety;
- e. Measures to first minimize and second mitigate potential fiscal impacts.

C.3.4. Major public capital facilities that generate substantial travel demand should be located along or near major transportation corridors and public transportation routes.

C.3.5. Some public facilities may be more appropriately located outside of urban growth areas due to exceptional bulk or potentially dangerous or objectionable characteristics. Public facilities located beyond urban growth areas should be self-contained or be served by urban governmental services in a manner that will not promote sprawl. Utility and service considerations must be incorporated into site planning and development.

C.3.6. The multiple use of corridors for major utilities, trails and transportation right-of-way is encouraged.

## **D. COUNTY-WIDE TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES & STRATEGIES**

*"A key factor in the Lower Valley's future growth and development will be an upgraded transportation system to accommodate the safe, efficient movement of people and goods." (L.V. Vision, p. 25).*

*"We envision a comprehensive, multi-modal transportation system that is well planned, safe, efficient, cost effective and capable of supporting increased levels of traffic over time." (Ibid).*

*"As the economic base of the region expands and diversifies the orderly flow of materials and labor must be accommodated. Additional access to developable properties will be needed to make such properties competitive. Certain streets and roads will require upgrading in order to handle the anticipated increase in truck, automobile, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic. Enhanced Public Transit availability will be required to effect the movement of the workforce and consumers in an efficient and orderly manner." (U.V. Vision, p. 39).*

### **D.1. STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION GOALS**

The goal of the GMA is to encourage efficient multi-modal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans. To accomplish this goal the GMA establishes Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO's) and directs that they develop a regional transportation plan. The RTPO is empowered to certify that local government transportation elements are consistent with the regional transportation plan.

Local government transportation elements must be consistent with and support the land use element of the plan. The transportation element must include an analysis and determination of the level of service standards for all arterials and transit routes to judge the performance of the system. A multi-year financing plan is required and if funds fall short of meeting identified needs, a local government must either find a source of funds or reassess its land use assumptions to ensure that an adequate level of service will be met.

Once the transportation element and the comprehensive plan is adopted, local government must adopt ordinances which prohibit development approval if the development would cause the level of service on the transportation facility to decline below the adopted level of service. Such development may be approved, however, if transportation improvements or strategies to accommodate the impacts are made "concurrent" with the development. Concurrent means the system improvements or strategies are in place at the time of development, or a financial commitment is made to complete the improvement or strategies within six years.

### **D.2. COUNTYWIDE TRANSPORTATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

The Yakima Valley Conference of Governments serves as the lead agency for the RTPO for the Yakima County area and is responsible for development of a regional transportation plan. Cities and the County will each develop a transportation element to their comprehensive plans that emphasizes local transportation needs. In developing these transportation elements, specific linkages will be undertaken in order to integrate the local and regional plans.

### **D.3. TRANSPORTATION POLICY STATEMENTS**

**The following policies relate to the development of an integrated multi-modal transportation system within Yakima County:**

- D.3.1. The transportation plan element for each jurisdiction will be consistent with and support the land use element of its comprehensive plan. [RCW 36.70A.070(6)]
- D.3.2. Each transportation plan element will include the following sub-elements:
  - a. Land use assumptions used in estimating travel;
  - b. A statement of facilities and service needs, including:
    - i. An inventory of air, land and water transportation facilities and services to define existing capital facilities and travel levels as a basis for future planning;
    - ii. Level of service standards for arterials, collectors and transit routes, which will be regionally coordinated;
    - iii. Specific actions and requirements for bringing into compliance any facilities or services that are below an established level of service standard;
    - iv. Forecasts of traffic for at least ten years based on the adopted land use plans to provide information on the location, timing and capacity needs of future growth; and
    - v. Identification of system expansion needs and transportation system management needs to meet current and future demands. [RCW 36.70A.070(6)(a)(b)]
- D.3.3. Comprehensive plans for each jurisdiction will contain a multi-year financing plan which includes an analysis of the jurisdiction's ability to fund existing or future transportation improvements and identifies existing and new revenue sources, which may include impact fees. If identified funding falls short, the jurisdiction will reassess land use assumptions to assure that level of service standards will be met. [RCW 36.70A(6)(c)]
- D.3.4. Transportation improvements or strategies to accommodate the impacts resulting from new development will be implemented concurrent with new development. "Concurrent with new development" means that improvements or strategies are in place at the time of development, or that a financial commitment is in place to complete the improvements or strategies within six years. [RCW 36.70A.070(6)(e)]
- D.3.5. Local jurisdictions will coordinate transportation planning efforts through the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments, which is designated as the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO). This regional coordination will assure that an assessment of the impacts of each transportation plan and land use assumptions on the transportation systems of adjacent jurisdictions is conducted and conflicts prevented.

## **E. AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

*"We value communities that offer affordable housing choices to their residents; where there exists a partnership between the public and private sectors, and results in a diverse choice of housing affordable to all income ranges from the very low to the upper income; a community that offers affordable housing to special needs people, e.g., persons with mobility limitations, elderly, and developmentally disabled. We [envision a future in which] communities have addressed the need for housing of [their] permanent and transient agricultural labor force." (U.V. Visioning Report, p. 59).*

*"Shelter is one of man's most basic needs. The comfort and security of one's shelter contribute to a sense of personal well being and the well being of the community as a whole. To a large degree, the vitality of a community is reflected in its housing stock." (L.V. Visioning Report, p. 19).*

### **E.1. STATEWIDE HOUSING GOAL**

A goal of the GMA is to encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic sectors, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock. The GMA requires the comprehensive plans of local governments to include a housing element which, among other things, inventories and analyzes housing needs, identifies sufficient land for all types of housing stock and provides for the needs of all economic segments of the community.

### **E.2. COUNTYWIDE HOUSING POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

"Affordable housing" is a term which applies to the adequacy of the housing stock to fulfill the housing needs of all economic segments of the population. The underlying assumption is that the marketplace will guarantee adequate housing for those in the upper economic brackets, but that some combination of appropriately zoned land, regulatory incentives, financial subsidies, and innovative planning techniques will be necessary to make adequate provisions for the needs of middle and lower income persons.

Local residents have discussed housing problems through the countywide visioning effort. The results of this effort have been used as the basis for the following policy statement. The purpose of this policy directive is to provide a common ground and some universally acceptable parameters to help guide decision-makers through the complex topic of affordable housing.

### **E.3. AFFORDABLE HOUSING POLICY STATEMENTS**

**The following policies relate to the provision of affordable housing:**

E.3.1. The County and the cities will inventory the existing housing stock and correlate with the current population and economic condition, past trends, and twenty-year population and employment forecasts to determine short and long range affordable housing needs. [RCW 36.70A.070(2)]

E.3.2. Local housing inventories will be undertaken using common procedures so as to accurately

portray countywide conditions and needs.

- E.3.3. Each jurisdiction will identify specific policies and measurable implementation strategies to provide a mix of housing types and costs to achieve identified affordable housing goals. Affordable housing strategies should:
- a. Encourage preservation, rehabilitation and redevelopment of existing neighborhoods, as appropriate;
  - b. Provide for a range of housing types such as multi-family and manufactured housing on individual lots and in manufactured housing parks;
  - c. Promote housing design and siting compatible with surrounding neighborhoods;
  - d. Facilitate the development of affordable housing (particularly for low-income families and persons) in a dispersed pattern so as not to concentrate or geographically isolate these housing types; and
  - e. Consider public and private transportation requirements for new and redeveloped housing.
- E.3.4. Housing policies and programs will address the provision of diverse housing opportunities to accommodate the elderly, physically challenged, mentally impaired, migrant and settled-out agricultural workers, and other segments of the population that have special needs.
- E.3.5. Local governments, representatives of private sector interests and neighborhood groups will work cooperatively to identify and evaluate potential sites for affordable housing development and redevelopment.
- E.3.6. Public and private agencies with housing expertise should implement early and continuous cooperative education programs to provide general information on affordable housing issues and opportunities to the public including information intended to counteract discriminatory attitudes and behavior.
- E.3.7. Mechanisms to help people purchase their own housing will be encouraged. Such mechanisms may include low interest loan programs and "self-help" housing.
- E.3.8. Local comprehensive plan policies and development regulations will encourage and not exclude affordable housing. [RCW 36.70A.070(2)(c)(d)]
- E.3.9. Innovative strategies that provide incentives for the development of affordable housing should be explored.
- E.3.10. The County and the cities will locally monitor the performance of their respective housing plans and make adjustments and revisions as needed to achieve the goal of affordable housing, particularly for middle and lower income persons.

## **F. JOINT PLANNING WITHIN UGA'S**

*"Cluster communities comprising the regional area should look to combine and assist in service areas such as criminal justice, fire protection, public transit, water/sewer, administration, and other services where such combinations implement efficient, cost effective delivery of services. Cooperation among and between the separate governmental entities of each cluster will be encouraged, and the citizens should hold elected and appointed officials accountable for carrying out such a vision."* (U.V. Vision, p. 49).

*"Individual communities will continue to provide the public services now available to citizens but a new spirit of coordination and cooperation among all levels of government, including federal, state, county, municipal, and tribal governments, will result in a more equitable, better balanced delivery of services. Residents of the Lower Valley will benefit from this improved level of coordination by less duplication of services, streamlined delivery, and cost efficiencies."* (L.V. Vision, p. 13).

### **F.1. STATEWIDE JOINT PLANNING GOALS**

Consistent with a goal of the GMA to ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts, the countywide planning policy must address coordination of planning efforts within urban growth areas. It is recognized that in many instances, land use activities may be affected by the plans and regulations of several jurisdictions including Yakima County, a city and special purpose districts. Coordinated planning is not only a requirement of local government; it will facilitate implementation of plans, lead to more efficient delivery of urban governmental services and will promote a sense of community through common, agreed upon development standards.

### **F.2. COUNTYWIDE JOINT PLANNING POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

The UGA is not only a line which distinguishes urban level growth from rural growth, it also carries implications about coordination of planning within the UGA. Because the UGA defines where the city is financially capable of providing urban services and may ultimately annex, land use decisions need to respect the desires of the community. Agreement on land use planning within the UGA is as important as designating the boundary itself.

### **F.3. JOINT PLANNING POLICY STATEMENTS**

**The following policies relate to coordinated planning for land use, capital facilities and infrastructure within urban growth areas:**

- F.3.1. The County and cities will work with special purpose districts and other agencies to establish a process for mutual consultation on proposed comprehensive land use plan policies for lands within urban growth areas. Actions of special purpose districts and other public service providers shall be consistent with comprehensive plans of the County and the cities. [RCW 56.08.020, RCW 57.16.010]

F.3.2. The use of interlocal agreements is encouraged as a means to formalize cooperative efforts to plan for and provide urban governmental services.

F.3.3. Joint financing ventures should be identified to provide services and facilities that will serve the population within the urban growth area.

**The following policy relates to the process for comprehensive plan amendments, zone changes and development review and approval within urban growth areas:**

F.3.4. While it is recognized that nothing in the county-wide planning policy will be construed as altering the land use planning authority of the County or the cities, adopted interlocal agreements shall specify the process by which affected local governments may review and comment on comprehensive plan amendments, zone changes and development applications processed by another jurisdiction within urban growth areas.

**The following policy relates to the establishment of common and consistent development and construction standards:**

F.3.5. Each interlocal agreement will require that common and consistent development and construction standards be applied throughout that urban growth area. These may include, but are not limited to standards for streets and roads, utilities and other infrastructure components.

## **G. COUNTY-WIDE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & EMPLOYMENT**

*"Indeed, we support future growth in the Lower Valley that is well planned and supportable by infrastructure and which minimizes conflicting or incompatible uses in proximity to one another."* (L.V. Vision, p. 7).

*"With economic diversification and expansion, we will see the development of desirable jobs and full employment. We envision an economic and educational climate that enables our citizens to find gainful employment within the Valley".* (Ibid).

*"The next 20 years will see a broadening of the Upper Yakima Valley's economy. High-tech industries and new businesses will complement and enhance the agricultural base."* (U.V. Vision, p. 92).

*"Adequate developable property will be made available through land use planning and appropriate zoning implementation. A diverse mixture of industrial, commercial, residential, recreational and agricultural land uses will be planned for to concentrate development within set community boundaries to encourage community revitalization and increased land use density where it is specifically planned."* (U.V. Vision, p. 43).

### **G.1. STATEWIDE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

The goals of the GMA encourage economic development throughout the state that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plans; promote economic opportunity for all citizens of the state, especially for unemployed and disadvantaged persons; and encourage growth in areas experiencing insufficient economic growth, all within the capacities of the state's natural resources, public services and public facilities.

### **G.2. COUNTYWIDE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

Countywide economic development policies should promote a regional economic development program consistent with local community preferences. The rural and urban economies within the county are inextricably connected, and economic development opportunities should strengthen linkages between population centers and outlying areas. A Countywide economic development plan will be built in partnership with local jurisdictions to ensure that economic development goals and objectives are community based.

### **G.3. COUNTYWIDE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY STATEMENTS**

The following policies relate to a general strategy to help ensure future economic vitality, broaden employment opportunities to meet the needs of projected future growth while maintaining a high-quality environment:

- G.3.1. Encourage economic growth within the capacities of the region's natural resources, public services and public facilities.
  - a. Identify current and potential physical and fiscal capacities for municipal and private water systems, wastewater treatment plants, roadways and other infrastructure systems.
  - b. Identify economic opportunities that strengthen and diversify the county's economy while maintaining the integrity of our natural environment.
  
- G.3.2. Local economic development plans should be consistent with the comprehensive land use and capital facilities plans, and should:
  - a. Evaluate existing and potential industrial and commercial land sites to determine short and long term potential for accommodating new and existing businesses;
  - b. Identify and target prime sites, determine costs and benefits of specific land development options and develop specific capital improvement strategies for the desired option;
  - c. Implement zoning and land use policies based upon infrastructure and financial capacities of each jurisdiction;
  - d. Identify changes in urban growth areas as necessary to accommodate the land and infrastructure needs of business and industry;
  - e. Support housing strategies and choices required for economic development.
  
- G.3.3. Coordination of efforts between the many diverse economic development organizations and other related agencies within Yakima County should be encouraged by:
  - a. Identifying linkages between economic development issues and strategies and other growth planning elements (i.e. housing, transportation, utilities and land use);
  - b. Defining roles and responsibilities for carrying out economic development goals, objectives and strategies.

## H. FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

*"Cluster communities comprising the regional area should look to combine and assist in service areas such as criminal justice, fire protection, public transit, water/sewer, administration, and other services where such combinations implement efficient, cost effective delivery of services"* (U.V. Vision, p. 49).

*"Cooperation among and between separate service/government entities of each cluster should be encouraged,..."* (Ibid).

### H.1. STATEWIDE FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS GOALS

The GMA requires that local governments, as part of the countywide planning policies, address the issue of fiscal impact analysis. The legislature did not define or give specific guidance on matters to be considered in analyzing fiscal impacts. Since the GMA devotes much of its text to the provision of cost-effective urban infrastructure, the ability to pay for needed capital facilities and the development of affordable housing, it is presumed that these areas should be the focus of the fiscal impact analysis.

### H.2. COUNTYWIDE POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Local plan development should provide for cooperation between the public and private sectors to insure coordination of capital improvements with emphasis on the efficient provision of service at adopted levels concurrent with the demand for such service.

Local government should consider the use of innovative financing strategies for capital improvements which minimize the financial cost to taxpayers and provide for the equitable assignment of costs between existing and new development.

Annexation is another area which may impact the fiscal resources of local government. Cost and revenue sharing are techniques that should be examined to help alleviate the fiscal impacts associated with annexation.

### H.3. FISCAL IMPACT POLICY STATEMENTS

**The following policies are related to the provision of cost-effective urban infrastructure:**

H.3.1. Each local government will prepare a capital facilities plan consisting of:

- a. An inventory of existing capital facilities owned by public entities, showing the locations and capacities of the capital facilities;
- b. A forecast of the future needs for such capital facilities;
- c. The proposed locations, capacities and costs of expanded or new capital facilities;
- d. At least a six-year plan that will finance such capital facilities within projected funding capacities and clearly identifies sources of public money for such purposes; and
- e. A requirement to reassess the land use element if probable funding falls short of meeting

existing needs and to ensure that the land use element, the capital facilities plan element and financing plan within the capital facilities plan element are coordinated and consistent.

- H.3.2. As part of the planning process, the County and the cities should coordinate with capital facilities providers and other interested parties to ensure that consideration is given to all capital service requirements and the means of financing capital improvements.
- H.3.3. The County and the cities should consider an impact fee process, as provided for in RCW 82.02.050-090, to insure that new development pays its fair share of the cost of improvements necessitated by growth and contributes to the overall financing of capital improvements.
- H.3.4. To minimize the potential economic impacts of annexation activities on the County and cities, consideration will be given to negotiating agreements for appropriate allocation of financial burdens resulting from the transition of land from county to city jurisdiction.

## **I. POLICIES PERTAINING TO COORDINATION WITH SPECIAL PURPOSE DISTRICTS, ADJACENT COUNTIES AND STATE, TRIBAL AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS**

Special purpose districts, adjacent counties, state agencies, Yakama Nation and the federal government are distinct entities that have unique authorities, responsibilities, interests and/or treaty rights affecting land use and other activities. Since the impacts of future growth and development in Yakima County will affect all governmental units, all agencies must be well informed and continuously involved in regional and local planning.

### **The following policies relate to coordination among jurisdictions:**

- I.1. The County and the cities will work with special purpose districts, adjacent counties, state, tribal and federal governments to formalize coordination and involvement in activities of mutual interest.
- I.2. Jurisdictions will be encouraged to coordinate plans among and between governments and agencies to make plans consistent and compatible for lands over which they have authority.
- I.3. Special districts, adjacent counties, state agencies, the tribal government and federal agencies will be invited to participate in comprehensive planning and development activities that may affect them, including the establishment and revision of urban growth areas; allocation of forecasted population; regional transportation, capital facility, housing and utility plans; and policies that may affect natural resources.
- I.4. Each of the governmental entities will be included in the normal public notice and comment procedures of other agencies and kept informed of matters of interest to them.

# APPENDIX

## PLANNING GOALS OF THE GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT (from RCW 36.70A.040)

The Washington State Legislature adopted the following goals to guide the development of comprehensive plans and development regulations of those counties and cities that are required or choose to plan under the Growth Management Act (Yakima County was one of the original counties required to plan under the Act). The following goals are not listed in order of priority:

1. **Urban Growth.** Encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.
2. **Reduce Sprawl.** Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development.
3. **Transportation.** Encourage efficient multimodal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans.
4. **Housing.** Encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock.
5. **Economic Development.** Encourage economic development throughout the state that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plans, promote economic opportunity for all citizens of this state, especially for unemployed and for disadvantaged persons, and encourage growth in areas experiencing insufficient economic growth, all within the capacities of the state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities.
6. **Property Rights.** Private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation having been made. The property rights of landowners shall be protected from arbitrary and discriminatory actions.
7. **Permits.** Applications for both state and local government permits should be processed in a timely and fair manner to ensure predictability.
8. **Natural Resource Industries.** Maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries, including productive timber, agricultural, and fisheries industries. Encourage the conservation of productive forest lands and productive agricultural lands, and discourage incompatible uses.
9. **Open Space and Recreation.** Encourage the retention of open space and development of recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks.
10. **Environment.** Protect the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air

and water quality, and the availability of water.

11. **Citizen Participation and Coordination.** Encourage the involvement of citizens in the planning process and ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts.
12. **Public Facilities and Services.** Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards.
13. **Historic Preservation.** Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures, that have historical or archaeological significance.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Unless otherwise noted, the following terms used in the *County-wide Planning Policy* are defined by the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70.030) or Washington Administrative Code (WAC 365-195-210). Definitions are restated here for convenience of the reader.

1. "**Adequate public facilities**" means facilities which have the capacity to serve development without decreasing levels of service below locally established minimums.
2. "**Affordable housing**" is a term which applies to the adequacy of housing stocks to fulfill the housing needs of all economic segments of the population. Affordable housing for middle and lower income persons is targeted to those whose incomes are 120% of median income or less.
3. "**Available public facilities**" means that facilities or services are in place or that a financial commitment is in place to provide the facilities or services within a specified time.
4. "**Concurrency**" means that adequate public facilities are available when the impacts of development occur. This definition includes the two concepts of "adequate public facilities" and of "available public facilities" as defined above.
5. "**Financial commitment**" means that sources of public or private funds or combinations thereof have been identified which will be sufficient to finance public facilities necessary to support development and that there is reasonable assurance that such funds will be timely put to that end.
6. "**Interlocal agreements**" are authorized by state law and allow local governments (through written agreements) to cooperate with each other on a basis of mutual advantage to provide services and facilities in a manner that best meets the needs and development of local communities. [Paraphrase of RCW 39.34.010]
7. "**Level of Service**" means an established minimum capacity of public facilities or services that must be provided per unit of demand or other appropriate measure of need.
8. "**New fully contained community**" is a development proposed for location outside of the existing designated urban growth areas which is characterized by urban densities, uses and services and meets the criteria of RCW 36.70A.350.
9. "**Public facilities**" include streets, roads, highways, sidewalks, street and road lighting systems, traffic signals, domestic water systems, storm and sanitary sewer systems, parks and recreational facilities, and schools.
10. "**Public services**" include fire protection and suppression, law enforcement, public health, education, recreation, environmental protection, and other governmental services.

11. **"Rural lands"** means all lands which are not within an urban growth area and are not designated as natural resource lands having long term commercial significance for production of agricultural products, timber, or the extraction of minerals.
12. **"Transportation level of service standards"** mean a measure which describes the operational condition of the travel stream and acceptable adequacy requirements. Such standards may be expressed in terms such as speed and travel time, freedom to maneuver, traffic interruptions, comfort, convenience, geographic accessibility and safety.
13. **"Urban growth"** refers to growth that makes intensive use of land for the location of buildings, structures, and impermeable surfaces to such a degree as to be incompatible with the primary use of such land for the production of food, other agricultural products, or fiber, or the extraction of mineral resources. When allowed to spread over wide areas, urban growth typically requires urban governmental services. "Characterized by urban growth" refers to land having urban growth located on it, or to land located in relationship to an area with urban growth on it as to be appropriate for urban growth.
14. **"Urban growth area"** means those areas designated by a county pursuant to RCW 36.70A.110.
15. **"Urban governmental services"** include those governmental services historically and typically delivered by cities, and include storm and sanitary sewer systems, domestic water systems, street cleaning services, fire and police protection services, public transit services, and other public utilities associated with urban areas and normally not associated with nonurban areas.
16. **"Visioning"** means a process of citizen involvement to determine values and ideals for the future of a community and to transform those values and ideals into manageable and feasible community goals.

# COUNTY-WIDE PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

*(Representation as of January 2, 2002)*

<b><u>Jurisdiction</u></b>	<b><u>Elected Designee</u></b>	<b><u>Alternate(s):</u></b>
GRANDVIEW	Mike Bren	Jim Sewell
GRANGER	David Leach	Alice Koerner
HARRAH	Barbara Harrer	Pat Krueger
MABTON	David Conradt	Ildia Jackson
MOXEE	Greg LaBree	Bill Hordan
NACHES	Charles Ross	
SELAH	Bob Jones	Dennis Davison
SUNNYSIDE	Ed Prilucik	Pete Squires
TIETON	Jenny Korens	
TOPPENISH	Bill Rogers	Edna Brooks-Pittman, Clara Jimenez
UNION GAP	Lea Driskill	Bill Rathbone
WAPATO	Don Stellwagen	Dean DeMaintenon
YAKAMA NATION	(Did not participate in 2003 Update)	
YAKIMA	Mary Place	Dan Valoff
YAKIMA COUNTY	Ron Gamache	Jim Lewis, Jesse Palacios, Dick Anderwald
ZILLAH	Gary Fox	Gary Clark
<b><u>Others receiving Agenda materials:</u></b>		
YVCOG	Michael Buchanan, Don Skone,	
Other County	Doug Cochran, Lisa Freund, Ken Irwin, Ron Zirkle	
County Planning	Anne Knapp	
Chamber of Commerce	Gary Webster	
New Vision YCDA	Dave McFadden	