

Policies Addressing Potential Annexation Areas (PAAs) And Annexation

GMCC Recommendation

Yellow and Struck-out Text indicates new/deleted language

6/27/13

COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICY ON URBAN GROWTH AREAS, PROMOTION OF CONTIGUOUS AND ORDERLY DEVELOPMENT AND PROVISION OF URBAN SERVICES TO SUCH DEVELOPMENT

Background - Requirements of Growth Management Act

The Washington State Growth Management Act has as planning goals the encouragement of development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner [RCW 36.70A.020(1)], the reduction of sprawl (*i.e.*, the inappropriate or premature conversion of undeveloped land into low-density development) [RCW 36.70A.020(2)], and the provision of adequate public facilities and services necessary to support urban 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)] as planning goals.

The Growth Management Act further requires (1) that the County designate an "urban growth area" (UGA) or areas within which urban growth shall be encouraged and outside of which growth shall occur only if it is not "urban" in character; (2) that each municipality in the County be included within an UGA; (3) that an UGA include territory outside of existing municipal boundaries only if such territory is characterized by urban growth or is adjacent to territory that is already characterized by urban growth. [RCW 36.70A.110(1); for definition of "urban growth" see RCW 36.70A.030(17).]

The designated UGAs shall be of adequate size and appropriate permissible densities so as to accommodate the urban growth that is projected by the State Office of Financial Management to occur in the County for the succeeding 20-year period. While each UGA shall permit urban densities, it shall also include greenbelt and open space areas [RCW 36.70A.110(2)].

As to the timing and sequencing of urban growth and development over the 20-year planning period, urban growth shall occur *first* in areas already characterized by urban growth that have existing public facility and service capacities to service such development, *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 [RCW 36.70A.110(3)]. Urban government services shall be provided primarily by cities, and it is not appropriate that urban governmental services be extended to or

expanded in rural areas except in those limited circumstances shown to be necessary to protect basic public health and safety and environment and when such services are financially supportable at rural densities and do not permit urban development [RCW 36.70A.110(4)].

The Growth Management Act Amendments expressly require that countywide planning policies address the implementation of UGA designations [RCW 36.70A.210(3)(a)], the promotion of contiguous and orderly development, the provision of urban services to such development [RCW 36.70A.210(3)(b)], and the coordination of joint county and municipal planning within UGAs [RCW 36.70A.210(3)(f)].

VISION 2040 Multicounty Planning Policies (MPPs)

VISION 2040 calls for a more efficient, sustainable, and strategic use of the region's land. It identifies urban lands as a critical component to accommodate population and employment growth in a sustainable way. VISION 2040 calls for directing development to the region's existing urban lands, especially in centers and compact communities, and limiting growth on rural lands. The Regional Growth Strategy found in VISION 2040 allocates 93 percent of the region's future population growth and 97 percent of its employment growth into the existing urban growth area. Cities are divided into four distinct groups: Metropolitan Cities, Core Cities, Large Cities, and Small Cities. An additional geography is Unincorporated Urban Growth Areas. VISION 2040 recognizes that unincorporated urban lands are often similar in character to cities they are adjacent to, calling for them to be affiliated with adjacent cities for joint planning purposes and future annexation.

VISION 2040 recognizes that compact development creates vibrant, livable, and healthy urban communities that offer economic opportunities for all, provide housing and transportation choices, and use our resources wisely. The Multicounty Planning Policies support the effective use of urban land and include provisions that address brownfield and contaminated site clean-up, the development of compact communities and centers with pedestrian-friendly, transit-oriented locations and a mix of residences, jobs, retail, and other amenities, and the siting of facilities and major public amenities in compact urban communities and centers.

VISION 2040 recognizes that centers provide easy access to jobs, services, shopping, and entertainment. With their mix of uses and pedestrian-friendly design, they can rely less on forms of transportation that contribute to air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. VISION 2040 identifies 27 regional growth centers. These places play an important role as locations of the region's most significant business, governmental, and cultural facilities. The 18 cities that have one or more regional growth centers are expected to accommodate a significant portion of the region's residential growth (53 percent) and employment growth (71 percent).

VISION 2040 calls for local jurisdictions with regional growth centers to adopt housing and employment targets for each center. Eight regional manufacturing/industrial centers have also been designated. These are locations for more intensive commercial and industrial activity. Both regional growth centers and regional manufacturing/industrial centers are focal points for economic development and transportation infrastructure investments. Subregional centers, including downtowns in suburban cities and other neighborhood centers, also play an important role in VISION 2040's *Regional Growth Strategy*. These, too, are strategic locations for

concentrating jobs, housing, shopping, and recreational opportunities. VISION 2040 calls for each of the region's cities to develop one or more central places as compact mixed-use hubs for concentrating residences, jobs, shops, and community facilities.

Urban services addressed in VISION 2040 include wastewater and stormwater systems, solid waste, energy, telecommunications, emergency services, and water supply. An overarching goal of VISION 2040 is to provide sufficient and efficient public services and facilities in a manner that is healthy, safe, and economically viable. Conservation is a major theme throughout VISION 2040. The Multicounty Planning Policies address increasing recycling and reducing waste and encouraging more efficient use of water, low-impact development techniques, and renewable and alternative energy. The Multicounty Planning Policies also address siting of public facilities and the appropriateness and scale of particular public services.

VISION 2040 calls for jurisdictions to invest in facilities and amenities that serve centers and restrict urban facilities in rural and resource areas. The Multicounty Planning Policies also discourage schools and other institutions serving urban residents from locating outside the urban growth area.

Principles of Understanding Between Pierce County and the Municipalities in Pierce County

While following the goals and regulations of the Growth Management Act, Pierce County and the municipalities in Pierce County will strive to protect the individual identities and spirit of each of our cities and of the rural areas and unincorporated communities.

Further agreements will be necessary to carry out the framework of joint planning adopted herein. These agreements will be between the County and each city and between the various cities.

The services provided within our communities by special purpose districts are of vital importance to our citizens. Consistent with the adopted regional strategy, these districts will be part of future individual and group negotiations under the framework adopted by the County and municipal governments.

While the Growth Management Act defines sewer service as an urban service, Pierce County currently is a major provider of both sewer transmission and treatment services. The County and municipalities recognize that it is appropriate for the County and municipalities to continue to provide sewer transmission and treatment services.

The County recognizes that unincorporated lands within UGAs are often potential annexation areas for cities. **Although annexation is preferred, these are also areas where incorporation of new cities can could occur.** The County will work with existing municipalities and emerging communities to make such transitions efficiently. **The identification of "potential annexation areas" (PAAs) is intended to serve as the foundation for future strategies to annex areas within the urban growth area.** A potential annexation area refers to an unincorporated area within the designated urban growth area in which a city or town has identified as being appropriate for annexation at some point in the future. A potential annexation area designation does not obligate a jurisdiction to annex an area

within a defined time line. It is the County's authority, in consultation with cities and towns, to adopt the urban growth area(s), and identify individual potential annexation areas. In order to promote logical, orderly, and systematic annexations of the urban growth area(s), the County in partnership with cities and towns should establish joint planning agreements and annexation plans prior to expanding or adding to existing PAAs. Creation of new PAAs prior to the annexation of existing PAAs may directly impact Pierce County government and its service obligations and may undermine the transition of existing unincorporated lands into cities and towns.

The County encourages cities and towns to annex land within its respective PAAs. The County recognizes cities and towns may not have a financial incentive to annex areas that will require more expenditures than the revenue produced through property or sales tax. Jurisdictions need to be creative in identifying potential financial incentives, in addition to establishing partnerships to overcome the financial obstacles. As a means to allocate resources, the County should prioritize the PAAs, with the highest being unincorporated "islands" between cities and towns. Pierce County shall support future annexations for areas in which a joint planning agreement exists between the County and appropriate city or town.

At the same time, annexations and incorporations have direct and significant impacts on the revenue of county government, and therefore, may affect the ability of the County to fulfill its role as a provider of certain regional services. The municipalities will work closely with the County to develop appropriate revenue sharing and contractual services arrangements that facilitate the goals of GMA.

The Countywide Planning Policies are intended to be the consistent "theme" of growth management planning among the County and municipalities. The policies also spell out processes and mechanisms designed to foster open communication and feedback among the jurisdictions. The County and the cities and towns will adhere to the processes and mechanisms provided in the policies.

Growth Targets

The Regional Growth Strategy set forth in VISION 2040 provides guidance for the distribution of future population and employment growth through the year 2040 within the Central Puget Sound Region. This strategy in combination with the Office of Financial Management's population forecasts provide a framework for establishing growth targets consistent with the requirements of the Growth Management Act. Consistent with VISION 2040, these growth targets are the *minimum* number of residents, housing units, or jobs a given jurisdiction is planning to accommodate within the appropriate planning horizon and are informational tools integrated into local land use plans to assist in formulating future residential and employment land needs. These targets are to be developed through a collaborative countywide process that ensures all jurisdictions are accommodating a fair share of growth.

Achievement of the future envisioned by VISION 2040 will be challenging. Jurisdictions in some regional geographies will likely be planning for growth targets that are above or below the policy direction set by the Regional Growth Strategy because they are on a front- or back-loaded growth trajectory toward 2040. In other regional geographies, recent growth has been at such significant odds with the policy direction set by the Regional Growth Strategy (such as recent

growth in unincorporated urban Pierce County from 2000 to 2007 has already accounted for more than half of the 40-year growth allocation), that the 2040 goal will likely be exceeded. In such cases, jurisdictions are asked to set growth targets as close to VISION 2040 as reasonably possible in an effort to “bend the trend” of future growth to more closely conform to the Regional Growth Strategy. If a jurisdiction’s adopted target is lower or higher than expected from a straight-line application of the Regional Growth Strategy, certification by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) will be based on the actions and measures taken or proposed to be put in place to bend the trend, not just on an assessment of the adopted targets.

It is recognized that some of the urban growth areas in existence prior to the adoption of VISION 2040 may contain more potential housing and employment capacity based upon zoning, allowed density, land division patterns, and other factors than is needed to accommodate the growth target of the associated geography. In many cases, these urban growth areas have been in existence for a decade or more, contain existing development patterns which are urban in character, and are served by sanitary sewer and other urban infrastructure. These areas are largely expected to remain within the urban growth area consistent with their urban character. Expansion of these urban growth area boundaries that do not comply with provisions in the Amendments and Transition section of these policies is acknowledged to be inconsistent with CPPs and is strongly discouraged.

Centers

Centers are to be areas of concentrated employment and/or housing within UGAs which serve as the hubs of transit and transportation systems. Centers and connecting corridors are integral to creating compact urban development that conserves resources and creates additional transportation, housing, and shopping choices. Centers are an important part of the regional strategy (VISION 2040) for urban growth and are required to be addressed in the Countywide Planning Policies. Centers will become focal points for growth within the county's UGA and will be areas where public investment is directed.

Centers are to:

- be priority locations for accommodating growth;
- strengthen existing development patterns;
- promote housing opportunities close to employment;
- support development of an extensive multimodal transportation system which reduces dependency on automobiles;
- reduce congestion and improve air quality; and
- maximize the benefit of public investment in infrastructure and services.

VISION 2040, the adopted regional growth strategy, identifies several centers as an integral feature for accommodating residential and employment growth. The strategy describes Regional Growth Centers, and other centers that may be designated through countywide processes or locally.

Regional Growth Centers once regionally designated are located either in Metropolitan Cities, or in Core Cities. VISION 2040 also identifies Manufacturing/Industrial Centers, which consist primarily of manufacturing and industrial uses. Pierce County has five Regional Growth Centers

and two Manufacturing/Industrial Centers that have been adopted into the regional growth strategy. Pierce County Regional Growth Centers are located in Tacoma, which is a Metropolitan City, and in Lakewood and Puyallup, which are Core Cities.

Regional Growth Centers in the Metropolitan City

Tacoma Central Business District

Tacoma Mall

Regional Growth Centers in Core Cities

Lakewood

Puyallup Downtown

Puyallup South Hill

Currently there are no designated Countywide Centers.

Manufacturing/Industrial Centers are areas where employee- or land-intensive uses will be located. These centers differ from Regional Growth Centers in that they consist of an extensive land base and the exclusion of non-manufacturing or manufacturing-supportive uses is an essential feature of their character. These areas are characterized by a significant amount of manufacturing, industrial, and advanced technology employment uses. Large retail and non-related office uses are discouraged. Other than caretakers' residences, housing is prohibited within Manufacturing/Industrial Centers. However, these centers should be linked to high density housing areas by an efficient multimodal transportation system. The efficiency of rail and overland freight to markets is the critical element for manufacturers and industries located in these centers.

The designated Manufacturing/Industrial Centers, within Pierce County are as follows:

Manufacturing/Industrial Centers

Frederickson

Port of Tacoma

Within Pierce County, a limited number of additional centers may be designated through amendment of the Countywide Planning Policies consistent with the process below.

Designated centers may vary substantially in the number of households and jobs they contain today. The intent of the Countywide Planning Policies is that Regional Growth Centers become attractive places to live and work, while supporting efficient public services such as transit and being responsive to the local market for jobs and housing.

The Countywide Planning Policies establish target levels for housing and employment needed to achieve the benefit of a center. Some centers will reach these levels over the next twenty years, while for others the criteria set a path for growth over a longer term, providing capacity to accommodate growth beyond the twenty year horizon.

County-Level Centers Designation Process

The County and any municipality in the County that is planning to include a Metropolitan City Center, Regional Growth Center, Countywide Center or Manufacturing / Industrial Center within its boundaries shall specifically define the area of such center within its comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan shall include policies aimed at focusing growth within the center and along corridors consistent with the applicable criteria contained within the Countywide Planning Policies. The County or municipality shall adopt regulations that reinforce the center's designation.

No more often than once every two years, the Pierce County Regional Council (PCRC) shall invite jurisdictions with centers already adopted in their comprehensive plan that seek to be designated as centers in the Countywide Planning Policies to submit a request for such designation. Said request shall be processed in accordance with established procedures for amending the Countywide Planning Policies.

Each jurisdiction seeking to have a center designated in the Countywide Planning Policies shall provide the PCRC with a report demonstrating that the proposed center meets the minimum criteria for designation together with a statement and map describing the center, its consistency with the applicable Countywide Planning Policies, and how adopted regulations will serve the center.

Transit services shall be defined in the broadest sense and shall include local and regional bus service, rail where appropriate, vanpool, carpool, and other transportation demand measures designed to reduce vehicle trips.

The minimum designation criteria to establish a candidate center by type are as follows:

Metropolitan City Center

Area: up to 1-1/2 square miles in size;
Capital Facilities: served by sanitary sewers;
Employment: a minimum of 25 employees per gross acre of non-residential lands with a minimum of 15,000 employees;
Population: a minimum of ten households per gross acre; and
Transit: serve as a focal point for regional and local transit services.

Regional Growth Center

Area: up to 1-1/2 square miles in size;
Capital Facilities: served by sanitary sewers;
Employment: a minimum of 2,000 employees;
Population: a minimum of seven households per gross acre; and
Transit: serve as a focal point for regional and local transit services.

Countywide Center

Area: up to one square mile in size;
Capital Facilities: served by sanitary sewers;
Employment: a minimum of 1,000 employees;
Population: a minimum of 6 households per gross acre; and

Transit: serve as a focal point for local transit services.

Manufacturing / Industrial Center

Capital Facilities: served by sanitary sewers;

Employment: a minimum of 7,500 jobs and/or 2,000 truck trips per day; and

Transportation: within one mile of a state or federal highway or national rail line.

The minimum criteria report and statement shall be reviewed by the Growth Management Coordinating Committee (GMCC) for consistency with Countywide Planning Policies, the Transportation Coordination Committee (TCC) for consistency with transportation improvements plans of WSDOT, and with Pierce Transit's comprehensive plan. The coordinating committees shall provide joint recommendation to the PCRC.

Once included in the Countywide Planning Policies, the jurisdiction where a center is located may go on to seek regional designation of the center from the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) in accordance with its established criteria and process.

In order to be designated a Regional Growth Center the center should meet the regional criteria and requirements including those in VISION 2040, the regional growth, economic and transportation strategy as may be amended and designated by the Puget Sound Regional Council.

After county-level designation occurs within the Countywide Planning Policies and until regional-level designation by the PSRC occurs the center shall be considered a "candidate" Regional Growth Center.

Each jurisdiction which designates a Regional Growth Center shall establish 20-year household and employment growth targets for that Center. The expected range of targets will reflect the diversity of the various centers and allow communities to effectively plan for needed services. The target ranges not only set a policy for the level of growth envisioned for each center, but also for the timing and funding of infrastructure improvements. Reaching the target ranges will require careful planning of public investment and providing incentives for private investments.

Two candidate regional centers have been included into the Countywide Planning Policies. One of the candidate centers is a Regional Growth Center and one candidate center is a Manufacturing/Industrial Center.

Candidate Regional Centers

University Place – Candidate Regional Growth Center

South Tacoma – Candidate Industrial/Manufacturing Center

Urban Growth Outside of Centers

A variety of urban land uses and areas of growth will occur outside of designated centers but within the UGA. Local land use plans will guide the location, scale, timing and design of development within UGAs. The UGA will be where the majority of future growth and development will be targeted. Development should be encouraged which complements the desired focus of growth into

centers and supports a multimodal transportation system. For example, policies which encourage infill and revitalization of communities would help to achieve the regional and statewide objectives of a compact and concentrated development pattern within urban areas. The Countywide Planning Policies provide guidance for development and the provision of urban services to support development within the UGA.

Satellite Cities and Towns

The cities and towns in the rural areas are a significant part of Pierce County's diversity and heritage. They have an important role as local trade and community centers. These cities and towns are the appropriate providers of local rural services for the community. They also contribute to the variety of development patterns and housing choices within the county. As municipalities, these cities and towns provide urban services and are located within the County's designated UGA. The urban services, residential densities and mix of land uses may differ from those of the large, contiguous portion of the UGA in Pierce County.

Countywide Planning Policy

UGA-1. The County shall designate a **the countywide urban growth area and potential annexation areas within it, and identify where appropriate municipal urban growth areas within the countywide urban growth area, based on** in consultations between the County and each municipality.

- 1.1 County referral of proposed urban growth area **and potential annexation area** designations to the Pierce County Regional Council (PCRC).
 - 1.1.1 The PCRC may refer the proposed designations to the Growth Management Coordinating Committee (GMCC), or its successor entity for technical advice and for a report.
 - 1.1.2 The PCRC may conduct public meetings to review the proposed designation and, at such meetings, may accept oral or written comments and communications from the public.
 - 1.1.3 At the conclusion of its review and analysis, the PCRC shall make a recommendation to the County and to the municipalities in the County.
- 1.2 Once adopted by the County, the urban growth area **and potential annexation area(s)** designations shall not be changed except in accordance with the Countywide Policy on "Amendments and Transition."
 - 1.2.1 A jurisdiction shall not be required to modify existing urban growth area boundaries **or potential annexation areas** in order to reduce the residential or employment capacity to conform to adopted growth targets reflecting VISION 2040's Regional Growth Strategy. Jurisdictions shall, however,

consider the adopted growth targets when updating their local comprehensive plans.

1.2.2 Growth targets are the minimum number of residents, housing units, or jobs a given jurisdiction is planning to accommodate within the appropriate planning horizon and are to be developed through a collaborative countywide process that ensures all jurisdictions are accommodating a fair share of growth. These targets are informational tools integrated into local land use plans to assist in formulating future residential and employment land needs.

UGA-2. The following specific factors and criteria shall dictate the size and boundaries of urban growth areas:

2.1 Size

2.1.1 Urban growth areas must be of sufficient size to accommodate the urban growth projected to occur over the succeeding 20-year planning period taking into account the following:

- a. land with natural constraints, such as critical areas (environmentally-sensitive land);
- b. agricultural land to be preserved;
- c. greenbelts and open space;
- d. New Fully Contained Communities pursuant to RCW § 36.70A.350;
- e. maintaining a supply of developable land sufficient to allow market forces to operate and precluding the possibility of a land monopoly but no more than is absolutely essential to achieve the above purpose;
- f. existing projects with development potential at various stages of the approval or permitting process (i.e., the "pipeline");
- g. land use patterns created by subdivisions, short plats or large lot divisions;
- h. build-out of existing development and areas which are currently only partially built out;
- i. follow existing parcel boundary lines (~~if a parcel is split and more than 50% is within the urban growth boundary, the entire parcel shall be considered part of the urban growth area as long as the increase does not exceed 2% of the municipality's total urban growth area.~~)

2.1.2. The County, and each municipality in the County, shall cooperatively develop and propose objective standards and criteria to disaggregate the State Office of Financial Management's Countywide growth forecasts and VISION 2040 Regional Growth Strategy forecasts for the allocation of projected population to the County and municipalities, taking into account the availability and concurrency of public facilities and services with the

impact of development, as well as the VISION 2040 Regional Growth Strategy.

- 2.1.3 The County shall use a consistent countywide targeting process for allocating population and employment growth consistent with the regional vision, including establishing:
 - a. local employment targets,
 - b. local housing targets based on population projections, and
 - c. local housing and employment targets for each designated regional growth center.

2.2 Boundaries

- 2.2.1 the following shall be considered in determining the location of urban growth area boundaries:
 - a. geographic, topographic, and manmade features;
 - b. public facility and service availability, limits and extensions;
 - c. jurisdictional boundaries including special improvement districts;
 - d. location of designated natural resource lands and critical areas;
 - e. avoidance of unserviceable islands of County land surrounded by other jurisdictional entities;
 - f. Destination 2030 urban/rural line and PSCAA burn ban line.

Phasing of Development within the Urban Growth Area

- 2.3 The County and each municipality in the County shall seek to direct growth as follows:
 - a. first to cities and towns, centers and urbanized areas with existing infrastructure capacity;
 - b. second to areas that are already urbanized such that infrastructure improvements can be easily extended; and
 - c. last to areas requiring major infrastructure improvements.
- 2.3.1 Capital facilities plans shall identify existing, planned, and future infrastructure needs within Urban Growth Areas.
- 2.3.2 The County and each municipality in the County should identify appropriate levels of service and concurrency standards that address schools, sewer, water, and parks.
- 2.3.3 The County and each municipality in the County shall identify appropriate levels of service and multimodal concurrency standards that address roads.
- 2.4 ~~Municipal urban growth area boundaries shall be determined as set forth above and with consideration for the following additional factors:~~
 - 2.4.1 ~~the VISION 2040 document, including Multicounty Planning Policies;~~

UGA-3. Potential annexation areas shall be designated through the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan in consultation with cities and towns.

- 3.1 A city or town shall first identify a Potential Annexation Area(s) within its respective Comprehensive Plan
- 3.2 Potential Annexation Area boundaries shall be determined with consideration for the following additional factors:
 - 3.2.1 the VISION 2040 document, including Multicounty Planning Policies;

- 3.2.2 the carrying capacity of the land considering natural resources, agricultural land and environmentally-sensitive lands;
- 3.2.3 population, housing, and employment projections;
- 3.2.4 financial capabilities and urban services capacities;
- 3.2.5 consistency and compatibility with neighborhood, local and regional plans;
- 3.2.6 the existing land use and subdivision pattern;
- 3.2.7 property access and ownership.

3.3 Potential Annexation Areas should not overlap or leave unincorporated urban islands between cities and towns.

3.3.1 Future requests to establish a new potential annexation area shall not result in an overlap with an existing potential annexation area or create islands between cities and towns.

3.3.2 Cities and towns with existing potential annexation area overlaps should work towards resolving the existing overlaps.

3.4 The urban service areas and satellite urban growth areas as designated through the Pierce County Comprehensive as of June 30, 2013 shall be recognized as designated potential annexation areas.

3.5.1 Urban service area designations approved by the Pierce County Council through its 2013 Comprehensive Plan Amendment Cycle shall be recognized as a potential annexation area.

3.4.2 Boundaries of the Potential Annexation Areas should not split parcels. Efforts should be put forth to resolve split parcels prior to the initial designation of Potential Annexation Areas.

Annexation within the Urban Growth Area

UGA-4. Pierce County, in conjunction with its cities and towns shall establish a strategy for future annexations within the urban growth area.

4.1 Annexation is preferred over incorporation within the urban growth area.

4.2 The Potential Annexation Areas as identified in the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan shall be the foundation to an annexation strategy.

4.2.1 Cities and towns are allowed to annex territory only within their adopted potential annexation area as identified in the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan.

4.2.2 Annexation of an area should be phased to coincide with a city or town's ability to coordinate the provision of a full range of urban services to the areas proposed for annexation.

4.3 The County and its cities and towns should proactively coordinate the annexation of unincorporated areas within the urban growth area that are within each respective city or town's Potential Annexation Area.

4.3.1 The County and each city and town should work towards the establishment of annexation plans and joint planning agreements, with an exception for lands associated with Joint Base Lewis McChord and Camp Murray.

4.3.1.1 A joint planning agreement is to serve as a mechanism where the County or a city can prior to notice of annexation identify potential objections and resolutions.

4.3.1.2 An annexation plan should identify a potential schedule for annexation of areas with a city or town.

4.3.2 The County should explore and implement financial incentives for a city or town to annex areas associated with its respective Potential Annexation Area.

4.3.2.1 Financial incentives may include the establishment of a county level grant fund to assist in financial challenges a city or town may have in annexing an area.

4.3.2.2 Financial incentives may include the elimination or reduction in a fee associated with a County service to a city or town in exchange for annexing an area.

4.3.3 The County and cities and towns should explore potential partnerships in grant funding opportunities to overcome obstacles associated with annexing specific areas.

4.3.4 Cities and towns should recognize the financial impacts experienced by the County when annexation only encompasses commercial or greenfield areas and avoids existing residential development.

4.3.4.1 Cities and towns are encouraged to include a mix of existing commercial, residential, and greenfield areas, where appropriate, in future annexation proposals.

4.4 The County should prioritize the adopted Potential Annexation Areas for annexation.

4.4.1 The County's highest priority should be Potential Annexation Areas representing unincorporated "islands" between cities and towns; and,

4.4.2 The County shall support annexation for areas in which a joint planning agreement exists between the County and appropriate city or town.

Note: The policy numbers/citations for all policies that follow will need to be changed.