

***Countywide Planning Policies
for
Spokane County***

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Countywide Planning Policies for Spokane County

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Countywide Planning Policies for Spokane County

Statement of Principles

The Growth Management Act (GMA) mandates that each county develop Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) which shall serve as “...written policy statements used solely for establishing a countywide framework from which county and city comprehensive plans are developed and adopted...” The policies are intended to guide interaction between the cities, towns and county government and ensure consistency between individual jurisdictions’ comprehensive plans.

Spokane County and the constituent cities within hold the following topics as fundamental for the preservation and growth of the county and its cities:

Citizen Participation

A cornerstone of the GMA is citizen participation. That concept is first articulated in the GMA planning goals, specifically RCW 36.70A.020(11), which states that jurisdictions shall “...encourage the involvement of citizens in the planning process.” Opportunities for public involvement will be provided throughout the Comprehensive Plan Update to encourage early and continuous public participation.

Spokane County’s Public Participation Program Guidelines form the framework for achieving early and continuous participation and an interactive dialogue between local decision-makers, staff, and the public. These guidelines, as well as those from each constituent city and town, apply throughout the local planning process leading to adoption of the comprehensive plan, development regulations to implement the plan, and amendments to both.

The Growth Management Steering Committee of Elected Officials plays a key role in the regional coordination of the periodic Urban Growth Area Update providing a coordinated public review of the Countywide Planning Policies, to provide for oversight of regional planning activities and making recommendation for amendment by the Board of County Commissioners.

[Spokane County Public Participation Program Guidelines, BoCC Resolution 2022-0470 July 19, 2022]

Neighborhood Character

Spokane County has well-established neighborhoods, each with its unique identity and character. For most citizens, neighborhood character is one of the primary ingredients in their perceived quality of life. Growth in the region should be planned as to minimally disrupt quality of life outcomes while still allowing for neighborhoods to change and adapt. Planned growth will allow communities to take advantage of new investment opportunities and opportunities available from growth.

Aquifer Protection

Much of Spokane County’s developed area is dependent upon the Spokane Valley/Rathdrum Prairie aquifer for its drinking water supply. Protection of that aquifer is vital for the economic, environmental, and physical health of the area. Aquifer protection is identified in several specific policies, and numerous other policies support and strengthen that philosophy.

Environmental Justice

The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, rules, and policies. Environmental justice includes addressing disproportionate environmental and health impacts in all laws, rules, and policies with environmental impacts by prioritizing vulnerable populations and overburdened communities, the equitable distribution of resources and benefits, and eliminating harm (RCW 70A.02.010).

Environmental Sustainability

Through local action and policy making local governments are equipped with ensuring Spokane County's environmental assets are protected for future generations. As community members we are responsible for maintaining clean air, water, and forests to guarantee equitable access to places for relaxation and recreation. To ensure prolonged environmental health, local governments should promote good stewardship of their natural environment and work collaboratively to protect critical areas.

Urban Growth Areas

The designation, review, and update of Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) is a significant tool in the CPPs for managing growth. Within UGAs, lands will be developed with an urban character and supported by urban services and facilities, while lands outside will remain rural or retain the character they have today. Rural lands adjacent to incorporated city limits and UGAs are expected to remain rural until a UGA modification process has been undertaken under RCW 36.70A.110.

Economic Vitality

The economic vitality of Spokane County is brought about by a collaborative effort of the public and private sectors. A healthy economy maintains jobs, creates job opportunities, and provides for a full and sustainable range of development for the residential and economic segments of the community. A jobs-based economy brings together the environmental and the economic implications of managed growth and seeks a balance to preserve a high quality of life and secure a sustainable community for future generations.

Fairchild Air Force Base and the Spokane International Airport

Fairchild Air Force Base is a critical national security asset and installation. Spokane County and its constituent jurisdictions commit to protecting the current and future missions of Fairchild AFB from encroachment by incompatible development and avoid social, political, and economic pressure that could affect the base's ability to operate its National Defense Mission. This commitment recognizes the land use plans and zoning codes adopted by agencies under the 2012 JLUS process. Future amendments to land use plans and zoning codes will continue to ensure base compatibility as required under RCW 36.70A.530 and consistent with the interagency 2012 JLUS agreement. The western departure end of the FAFB runway shall have land use designation and zoning consistent with the 2007 Department of Defense AICUZ.

Policy Topic 1 Urban Growth Areas

Overview of Growth Management Act Requirements

The Growth Management Act (GMA) encourages development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner. The GMA takes a phased approach to growth where growth should first be located in areas already characterized by urban growth that have adequate existing public facility and service capacities; second in areas already characterized by urban growth that will be served adequately 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; and third in the remaining portions of the urban growth areas. Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) are one of the primary tools to meet the goals of the GMA.

Each jurisdiction must propose a UGA within which urban growth shall be encouraged. The Board of County Commissioners has the final responsibility for designating UGAs. ‘Urban growth’ is defined as *“...growth that makes intensive use of land for buildings, structures and other 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”* [RCW 36.70A.030(14)].

UGAs will include sufficient land and densities to permit the urban growth that is projected to occur in the county for the next 20 years. Each city and town in the county is included within a UGA. Growth outside of the UGAs can occur only if not urban in character. UGA designations are a required element of Spokane County’s comprehensive plan. UGAs must be adopted concurrently with the County’s comprehensive plan.

Overview of Countywide Planning Policies

The Countywide Planning Policies provide direction, process, and a framework to analyze, propose, modify, and adopt or amend UGAs. UGAs must accommodate growth and may include greenbelts and other open space. Each jurisdiction must also protect sensitive environmental and wildlife habitat areas.

The Steering Committee will recommend standards for defining UGAs and distribution of future growth in UGAs

Policies

1. Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) are areas within which urban growth shall be encouraged and outside of which growth can occur only if it is not urban in nature.
2. UGAs shall include areas and densities sufficient in area and location to permit the urban growth that is projected to occur in Spokane County for the succeeding 20-year period [RCW 36.70A.110]
3. Within UGAs, it is most appropriate that urban government services be provided by cities and towns. Urban government services should not be provided in rural areas [RCW 6.70A.110(3&4)].
4. Urban Growth Areas may be established independent of incorporated areas. Within these independent Urban Growth Areas (UGAs), urban governmental services may be provided by Spokane County and its constituent cities.
5. All existing Spokane County cities, including cities in rural areas, are considered Urban Growth Areas.

6. Location of UGA growth may be planned based on emerging development patterns.
7. The location of critical areas and natural resource lands shall be a prime consideration in delineating UGAs.
 - a. Natural resource lands of long-term commercial significance shall not be included within UGAs unless or until the city or county in which they reside has enacted a program authorizing transfer or purchase of development rights.
 - b. Spokane County and each city or town will recommend land capacity by that particular jurisdiction's ability to accommodate growth within current city limits.
 - c. Jurisdictions shall use as primary criteria the availability and capacity of urban governmental services, and public facilities.
8. In the event of incorporation of a new city or town, the population allocation should be evaluated and re-allocated as needed.
9. In determining how much additional population can be accommodated within an UGA, jurisdictions should first encourage new development in areas where all urban governmental services and public facilities currently exist and secondly encourage new development in areas where all urban governmental services and public facilities can be provided economically.
 - a. Each jurisdiction shall submit UGA growth projections and a land quantity analysis to support all proposed UGA boundary expansion to the Steering Committee at the time a jurisdiction is considering amendment of its Comprehensive Plan.
10. The Steering Committee shall analyze each proposed UGA through the use of a multi- jurisdictional planning team and make recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners for UGA revision.
11. Jurisdictions may propose new commercial/industrial land uses within UGAs based on methodologies or criteria established by the Steering Committee.
 - a. The Spokane County Comprehensive Plan will address expansion of existing commercial/industrial land uses which may be located outside of current UGA boundaries.
12. Each jurisdiction's comprehensive plan shall, at a minimum, demonstrate the ability to provide necessary domestic water, sanitary sewer, and transportation improvements concurrent with development.
13. Comprehensive plans for communities adjacent or in proximity to these airports and flight patterns shall contain land use, development, and redevelopment policies which provide protection for the continued viability of Fairchild Air Force Base, Spokane International Airport, Felts Field, Deer Park Airport, and other general aviation airports within Spokane County.
14. Jurisdictions should work together to protect natural resource lands outside of UGAs and protect critical areas and open space within UGAs.

15. Designated rural lands shall have low densities which can be sustained by minimal infrastructure improvements such as septic systems, individual wells, and rural roads, without altering the rural character, or creating the necessity for urban level of services.
16. Clustering of rural development may be permitted as a tool for the preservation of rural open space as long as rural character of the area is maintained.

Urban Growth Area Revisions

Mandated Review of County-wide UGA

1. The Urban Growth Area boundaries shall be reviewed to accommodate the succeeding twenty years of projected growth, as required by RCW 36.70A.130.
 - a. The County Commissioners shall initiate the review process approximately three years prior to the required review deadline.
 - b. This process shall re-evaluate population allocation, land quantity analysis and urban service delivery.
 - c. Any jurisdiction through its representative on the Steering Committee of Elected Officials may request that the Board of County Commissioners initiate a review of the Urban Growth Area boundaries prior to the scheduled time.

Triggers for Review of the UGA

2. Review of the Urban Growth Area shall be required when:
 - a. Population growth within the UGA (cities plus unincorporated UGA combined) equals or exceeds fifty percent of the additional population capacity estimated for the UGA at the start of a twenty-year planning period; or
 - b. Population growth within a city and its assigned, unincorporated UGA equals or exceeds fifty percent of the additional population capacity estimated for the city and its assigned UGA at the start of a twenty-year planning period; or
 - c. Population growth within all UGAs that have not been assigned to cities equals or exceeds fifty percent of the additional population capacity estimated for the unassigned UGAs at the start of a twenty-year planning period.
3. The start of the twenty-year planning period is defined as the adoption date of the comprehensive plan or the adoption date of a UGA update as required under RCW 36.70A.130(3).
4. The above review shall be consistent with the requirements of RCW.36.70A and the Countywide Planning Policies, and shall incorporate:
 - a. an updated population capacity and land quantity analysis using the most recent residential capacity estimates and assumptions; and
 - b. an evaluation of land use and capital facilities to determine land use and capital facility needs within the existing UGA and any proposed UGA expansion area.

5. Review of the Urban Growth Area to consider additional commercial or industrial land shall be required when:
 - a. Commercial or industrial land consumption within the UGA (cities plus unincorporated UGA combined) equals or exceeds fifty percent of the developable commercial or industrial land supply within the UGA at the start of the twenty-year planning period; or
 - b. Commercial or industrial land consumption within a city and its assigned, unincorporated UGA equals or exceeds fifty percent of the developable commercial or industrial land supply within the city and its assigned, unincorporated UGA at the start of the twenty-year planning period; or
 - c. Commercial or industrial land consumption within all UGAs that have not been assigned to cities equals or exceeds fifty percent of the developable commercial or industrial land supply within the unassigned UGAs at the start of the twenty-year planning period.
6. The above review shall be consistent with the requirements of RCW.36.70A and the Countywide Planning Policies, and shall incorporate:
 - a. the most recent commercial/industrial capacity estimates and assumptions; and
 - b. an evaluation of land use and capital facilities to determine land use and capital facility needs within the existing UGA and any proposed UGA expansion area.
7. Individual jurisdictions may consider UGA revisions as a part of their annual Comprehensive Plan Amendment process. Proposed amendments will be reviewed in the following sequence:
 - a. Conditionally approved amendments must be forwarded to the Steering Committee of Elected Officials. The Steering Committee shall consider the amendments at a public hearing and then forward a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners. The Steering Committee shall consider cumulative effects of all UGA proposals in making their recommendation.
 - b. The Steering Committee of Elected Officials will review Urban Growth Area changes resulting from adoption of subarea plans and/or Comprehensive Plan Amendments for all jurisdictions once a year.
 - c. The Board of Commissioners will consider the Steering Committee's UGA recommendations at a public hearing. The Board of County Commissioners shall consider cumulative effects of all UGA proposals in making their decision. Urban Growth Area revisions must be approved and adopted by the Board of County Commissioners.

Policy Topic 2 Joint Planning within Urban Growth Areas

Overview of GMA Requirements

The GMA requires the establishment of Urban Growth Areas and policies for joint county and city planning within UGAs. A goal of the GMA is to encourage citizen involvement in the planning process and to ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts. The Spokane County Comprehensive Plan defines Joint Planning Areas as *“areas designated as Urban Growth Areas assigned to a city or town for future urban development but located in the unincorporated county where a coordinated planning process between the cities, towns and the County will be conducted.”*

Overview of Countywide Planning Policies

The Countywide Planning Policies recognize the need for joint planning to propose or modify a UGA, and generally for planning issues that are interjurisdictional in nature.

Policies

1. The joint planning process should:
 - a. Include all jurisdictions adjacent to the Urban Growth Area and Special Purpose Districts that will have a role in current or future provision of governmental services.
 - b. Recognize that Urban Growth Areas adjacent to incorporated areas will be potential annexation areas for cities.
 - c. Ensure a smooth transition of services amongst existing municipalities and emerging communities.
 - d. Ensure the ability to expand urban governmental services and avoid land use barriers to expansion; and
 - e. Resolve issues regarding how zoning, subdivision, infrastructure, and other land use approvals and development standards in joint planning areas will be coordinated.
 - f. Promote collaboration for effective design standards for development within the unincorporated UGA.
2. Joint planning may be accomplished through a memorandum of understanding, pursuant to an interlocal agreement, or an agreement established by resolution of both jurisdictions.
 - a. The absence of such an agreement between the County and Cities should not preclude coordination or consultation between them.
 - b. UGAs that have a formal agreement associated with it will be considered assigned.

Policy Topic 3 Promotion of Contiguous and Orderly Development and Provision of Urban Services

Overview of GMA Requirements

Overview of Countywide Planning Policies

The Countywide Planning Policies address these general areas.

- The planning for utilities, open space corridors, critical areas, natural resource lands and water management.
- The provision of urban governmental services and public facilities.
- The distribution of future growth and population within the county.

Policies

1. Each jurisdiction's comprehensive plan shall include policies and levels of services to address how urban development will be managed to promote efficiency in the use of land and the provision of urban governmental services and public facilities.
2. Each jurisdiction shall include policies in its comprehensive plan to ensure sustainable growth beyond the 20-year planning horizon.
3. Each jurisdiction shall include policies in its comprehensive plan to provide open space corridors within the expanding urban landscape.
4. All jurisdictions shall coordinate plans that classify, designate and protect natural resource lands and critical areas.
5. Wellhead protection plans should be coordinated with water purveyors and implemented and updated as needed, by local jurisdictions. Each jurisdiction should encourage and pursue strategies within its jurisdiction for water resource management, which will sustain projected growth rates and protect the environment.
6. Each jurisdiction shall include provisions in its comprehensive plan for distribution of essential public facilities.
7. Each jurisdiction in its comprehensive plan should provide policies that support the compatible incorporation of utilities, greenbelts, and open space within common corridors.
8. The Steering Committee will recommend to the Board of County Commissioners the allocation of population to jurisdictions based, in part, on each jurisdiction's contribution to regional housing goals and the ability to serve special needs populations.
9. Each jurisdiction's comprehensive plan's policies should encourage construction in areas served by a fire protection district or within the corporate limits of a city providing its own fire department.

Policy Topic 4 Parks and Open Space

Overview of GMA Requirements

The GMA encourages the retention of open space and the development of parks and recreational opportunities. Within Urban Growth Areas, the GMA requires open space corridors to be identified and authorizes their purchase for use as greenbelts, parks or wildlife habitat. (RCW 36.70A.160).

Overview of Countywide Planning Policies

Included in the policies for Parks and Open Space are the following.

- Utilize open space corridors between major developments.
- Identify and protect large open space areas of regional significance.
- Develop parks and retain open space to support all land uses.
- Utilize utility corridors as open space and for recreational opportunities.
- Recognize conservation lands, waterways, school parks/playfields, bikeways, trails, and ski areas as recreation opportunities.

Policies

1. All jurisdictions shall identify and protect regional open space lands, natural areas and corridors of environmental, recreational and aesthetic significance to form a functionally and physically connected system which balances passive and active recreational uses.
 - a. The County in consultation with each jurisdiction shall identify potential parks and open space corridors within and between urban growth areas. (RCW 36.70A.160).
2. All jurisdictions shall identify implementation, management, preservation and conservation strategies, through both regulatory and non-regulatory techniques, to protect identified lands and corridors, to sustain their open space benefits and functions. Implementation and management strategies should include collaboration and coordination with land trusts and other land preservation organizations.

Policy Topic 5 Transportation

Overview of GMA Requirements

Regional transportation systems include major highways, transit systems, airports, and railroads, as well as bikeways, trails and pedestrian systems. The GMA encourages efficient multimodal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans.

Coordination is necessary between transportation planning and the land use element of each jurisdiction's comprehensive plan.

The Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC) has been established as the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) in Spokane County to conduct regional, cooperative transportation planning. SRTC has completed a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) including countywide transportation policies. The RTP has been approved by a regional transportation Board of Directors consisting of elected representatives of most area jurisdictions. The transportation chapter of the Spokane County Comprehensive Plan and the Comprehensive Plans for each of the cities must be consistent with the RTP as it is amended. The county and the cities will continue to support the RTPO on an on-going basis to coordinate transportation planning across Spokane County.

Overview of Countywide Planning Policies

The policies recognize the need to preserve corridors capable of providing for high-capacity transportation such as commuter lanes, rail or dedicated busways. Through their comprehensive plans, local jurisdictions will be responsible for planning for developments along these corridors that would support public transportation services.

The Countywide Planning Policies also recognize the need to preserve our existing regional transportation system. Where the roadway level of service (LOS) adopted in the local comprehensive plans cannot be maintained as a result of proposed new development, strategies shall be developed to address impacts across all applicable modes.

Policies

1. Regional transportation planning shall be conducted in partnership with the SRTC and the Spokane Transit Authority (STA) to ensure that the regional transportation plan and local jurisdictions' land use plans are compatible.
2. Pursuant to RCW 47.80.030, the RTP has been developed in partnership with the Department of Transportation, Spokane Transit Authority, and the local governments in the region.
3. Comprehensive plans shall include, where applicable, the master plans of identified major transportation facilities to ensure that they are reasonably accommodated and compatible with surrounding land uses. Such facilities shall include, but not be limited to, airports, state highways, railroads, and major freight terminals.

4. Local jurisdictions shall develop and adopt land use plans that have been coordinated with the SRTC and the STA to ensure that they preserve and enhance the regional transportation system. These plans may include high-capacity transportation corridors and shall fulfill air quality conformity and the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 and the GMA.
5. Local jurisdictions shall designate within land use plans areas that can support public transportation services. These areas shall include existing as well as new development. Each jurisdiction's land use plan, the regional transportation plan and the Spokane Transit Authority's (STA) comprehensive plan and action plan shall support, complement and be consistent with each other.
6. Long term growth and change will necessitate the designation of specific transportation corridors to support high-capacity transportation.
7. The regional transportation plan and comprehensive plan of each jurisdiction shall include roads, air and rail service that accommodates the need for freight and goods movement. Plans should support the regional freight priority network as identified in the RTP. Future land uses requiring heavy freight movement should be encouraged to locate along these routes.
8. Jurisdictions should protect rail facilities to the extent possible to maintain existing rail lines for all rail uses.
9. Each jurisdiction should coordinate its housing and transportation strategies to support existing, or develop new, public multi-modal transportation systems, including levels of services, in partnership with the Spokane Transit Authority (STA).
10. Each jurisdiction should consider transportation demand management and/or other best practices for reducing vehicle miles travelled.
11. Each jurisdiction shall establish roadway standards, level of service standards and methodologies and functional road classification schemes to ensure consistency throughout the region and to support the use of alternative transportation modes.
12. Each jurisdiction shall use its adopted level of service standards to evaluate concurrence for long-range transportation planning, development review and programming of transportation investments.
13. The annual process to update and approve the Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) by the SRTC shall be used to identify regional transportation improvements and programming regional transportation revenues.
14. Transportation elements of comprehensive plans shall reflect the preservation and maintenance of transportation facilities as a high priority to avoid costly replacement and to meet public safety objectives in a cost-effective manner.
15. Each jurisdiction, SRTC, the Spokane Transit Authority (STA), and other transportation agencies shall identify significant regional and/or countywide land acquisition needs for transportation and establish a process for prioritizing and siting the location of transportation corridors and facilities.

16. The transportation element of each jurisdiction's comprehensive plan will include level of service standards for all locally owned arterial facilities and transit routes. Each jurisdiction should coordinate the level of service standards with all adjacent jurisdictions and appropriate agencies.

17.

Policy Topic 6 Siting of Capital Facilities of a Countywide or Statewide Nature

Overview of GMA Requirements

Public capital facilities of a county or statewide nature generally have characteristics which typically make them difficult to site. Such characteristics may include, for example, the number of jurisdictions served by the facility, the size of the facility or the facility's potential impacts such as noise, odor, traffic or pollution.

Overview of Countywide Planning Policies

The Countywide Planning Policies stress the necessity of active citizen involvement in siting decisions and the need to carefully consider transportation, site design and other service needs when evaluating potential locations for essential public facilities.

Policies

1. Locate essential public facilities based on the currently adopted Spokane County Regional Siting Process for Essential Public Facilities.
2. Each jurisdiction shall make provisions in its comprehensive plan for essential public facilities consistent with the Spokane County Regional Siting Process for Essential Public Facilities.
3. Each jurisdiction should identify in its comprehensive plan protective measures to prevent incompatible land uses from encroaching upon essential public facilities.

Policy Topic 7 Affordable Housing

Overview of GMA Requirements

The GMA stresses the importance of housing by requiring local governments to include it as an element in their comprehensive plans and requiring that affordable housing be addressed in Countywide Planning Policies. Goals within the GMA direct communities to plan for and accommodate housing affordable to all economic segments of the population, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and preservation of existing housing stock.

The housing element in each jurisdiction's comprehensive plan must, at a minimum, include the following.

- An inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs.
- A statement of goals, policies and objectives for the preservation, improvement and development of housing.
- Identification of sufficient land for housing
- Adequate provisions for existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community.

Overview of Countywide Planning Policies

Affordable housing applies to a wide range of housing types at varying costs which can meet the needs of a diverse community. Affordable housing mechanisms may include regulatory reform, zoning, mixed use developments, incentives for increased housing densities and other incentives to encourage a variety of housing types to meet the needs of a diverse population.

The affordable housing policies provide a framework by which each jurisdiction can help meet the overall housing needs of Spokane County in a fair, consistent and coordinated fashion. They direct each jurisdiction to accommodate a wide variety of development and housing types; they call for consistency in development regulations and standards within UGAs and they encourage reform of regulations which are unnecessary or costly barriers to the provision of affordable housing.

Policies

1. Each jurisdiction's comprehensive plan shall specify the strategies for attaining its affordable housing objectives. These strategies should include a diverse mix of housing types and prices, including low-income housing.
2. Each jurisdiction's comprehensive plan shall include policies and strategies to promote accessibility to service/activity centers, jobs and public transportation for special-needs populations.
3. All jurisdictions should establish consistent residential development regulations and standards within Urban Growth Areas.

4. Each jurisdiction's development policies, regulations and standards should provide for the opportunity to create affordable housing in its community, such policies may include regulatory tools, such as inclusionary zoning, performance/impact zoning, mixed-use development and incentives for increasing density to promote greater choice and affordable housing.
5. Each jurisdiction shall ensure that standards in existing or future development regulations facilitate rehabilitation, restoration and relocation of existing structures or new construction of affordable housing.
6. In conjunction with other policy topics, coordinate housing, transportation, and economic development strategies to ensure that sufficient land and densities for affordable housing are provided in locations readily accessible to employment centers.
7. Each jurisdiction's comprehensive plan and development regulations should recognize and incorporate the mandates of federal and state fair housing laws, particularly as they relate to siting and development of housing for special-needs populations.

Policy Topic 8 Economic Development

Overview of GMA Requirements

The GMA establishes overall goals for economic development throughout the state and requires the topic to be addressed as part of the Countywide Planning Policies.

Overview of Countywide Planning Policies

The Countywide Planning Policies establish overall direction for economic development efforts in the region and also provide guidance to individual jurisdictions as they develop their comprehensive plans. The policies call for greater cooperation between the private sector and government in measuring both the performance of the local economy and the relationship between economic development and preservation of the area's environment and quality of life. The policies stress the need to maintain downtowns as retail and cultural hubs. In addition, the policies indicate a need for a regional (Washington and Idaho) approach to the critical environmental issues of water and air quality and their potential influence on the region's economic development. Policies should reflect that rural economic development at appropriate intensity and scale is a valuable element of the county's economic well-being. Finally, the policies provide specific guidance regarding those topical areas to be addressed in the economic development element of each jurisdiction's comprehensive plan.

Policies

1. Include an economic development element in each jurisdiction's comprehensive plan that establishes local goals, policies, objectives, and provisions for economic growth and vitality and a high quality of life. The element shall include:
 - a. a summary of the local economy such as population, employment, payroll, sectors, businesses, sales, and other information as appropriate;
 - b. a summary of the strengths and weaknesses of the local economy defined as the commercial and industrial sectors and supporting factors such as land use, transportation, utilities, education, work force, housing, and natural / cultural resources; and
 - c. an identification of policies, programs, and projects to foster economic growth and development and to address future needs, such as Public Development Authorities.
 - d. commitment to provide urban services in areas where providers have identified service areas and that may be outside of that providers municipal boundary without undue burdens or requirements.
2. Jurisdictions shall adopt in their comprehensive plans economic development policies which will protect Fairchild Air Force Base as a key economic resource in the region.
3. Jurisdictions shall adopt in their comprehensive plans economic development policies which will recognize the environment as a regional economic asset.
4. Spokane County shall pursue options for regional planning, such as establishment of a regional planning relationship with adjacent counties and the State of Idaho.

5. Enhance the vibrancy and economic impact of downtowns (Central Business Districts) as centers for retail, business and cultural activity.
6. Recognize and support Rural Activity Centers – LAMIRDS – as areas of low-intensity rural economic activity.
7. Spokane County shall maintain commercial agricultural areas to protect the long- term viability of agriculture as an important element of the local economy.
8. Cities should include in their economic development elements policies that encourage and accommodate commercial and industrial opportunities that are needed by the projected urban growth.

Policy Topic 9 Fiscal Impacts

Overview of GMA Requirements

The GMA requires that Countywide Planning Policies

“...address an analysis of the fiscal impact.” The Act, however, does not clarify nor define the scope of the required financial analysis. The type of analysis is left to the discretion of the county, cities and towns, to be defined within their Countywide Planning Policies.

Overview of Countywide Planning Policies

The purpose of fiscal impact analysis is to assess the relative costs of providing urban governmental services to areas consistent with the plans developed by each jurisdiction.

Policies

1. Each jurisdiction shall identify, within the capital facilities element of its comprehensive plan, capital resources that will be available to accommodate the additional development which is anticipated within Urban Growth Areas.

Glossary

Countywide Planning Policy Terms

Access management - the controlling or managing of access along arterial roadways for the purpose of improving average travel speeds and increasing the capacity of the road.

Accessory dwelling unit - a dwelling unit that is a building, part of a building, or structure which is subordinate to, and the use of which is incidental to, that of the main building, structure or use on the same lot.

Affordable housing - adequate, appropriate shelter costing no more (including basic utilities) than 30 percent of a household's gross monthly income.

Carrying capacity - the finite limits of the environment, our physical resources and government's ability to respond to growth.

Clustering - a development design technique that concentrates buildings on a portion of a site to allow the remaining land to be used for recreation, common open space, agricultural uses, preservation of environmentally sensitive features or preserved for future development.

Commercial agricultural - agriculture primarily devoted to the commercial production of horticultural, viticultural, floricultural, dairy, apiary, vegetable or animal products or of berries, grain, hay, straw, turf, seed, Christmas trees not subject to the excise tax imposed by RCW 84.33.100 through 84.33.140 or livestock.

Concurrent/concurrency - means that adequate public facilities are available within six years of when the service demands of development occur. This definition includes the two concepts of "adequate public facilities" and of "available public facilities" as defined above.

Critical areas - includes the following areas and ecosystems.

- Wetlands.
- Areas with a critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water.
- Fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas.
- Frequently flooded areas.
- Geologically hazardous areas.

De-facto drainageways – those areas not formally identified and/or categorized by the local jurisdiction or other authority, but whose topographic characteristics nonetheless allow water to concentrate and flow when acted upon by gravitational forces.

Designated drainageways – those areas identified and/or categorized by the local jurisdiction or other authority as paths into and along which water is concentrated and flows when acted upon by gravitational forces, usually during rainfall and runoff events.

Designated aquifer - aquifers designated by Spokane County in cooperation with the Department of Ecology (DOE) to be protected from business and residential pollution.

Equitable distribution - the allocation of population, essential public facilities, affordable housing, etc., by the Steering Committee, based upon each jurisdiction's ability to provide urban governmental services and public facilities and land availability. The term 'fair share' has the same meaning as equitable distribution.

Essential public facilities - includes those facilities that are typically difficult to site, such as airports, colleges, universities, correctional facilities, solid waste stations, major highways or freeways, in-patient substance abuse treatment facilities, mental health facilities and group homes.

Functional road classification - the division of highways, roads and streets into groups having similar characteristics of providing transportation mobility and/or land access.

Geographic Information System (GIS) - a computer system that stores and links nongraphic characteristics or geographically related data with graphic map features. A GIS system allows for a wide range of information processing and display operations, including the production of maps, analysis and modeling.

Growth Management Act (GMA) - a series of laws passed by the Washington State Legislature in 1990- 91 that require cities and counties to plan for and manage growth and development.

High-capacity transportation - includes high-occupancy vehicle lanes, rapid transit [light or heavy rail], busways, bus rapid transit, high performance transit, and commuter rail.

High-capacity transportation activity center - a concentrated area with an adequate mix and intensity of land uses and services to support high-capacity transportation.

Joint Planning Areas – areas designated as Urban Growth Areas assigned to a city or town for future urban development but located in the unincorporated county where a coordinated planning process between the cities, towns and the County will be conducted.”

Jurisdiction - the government of Spokane County and/or an incorporated city and/or town located within Spokane County.

Local Area of More Intense Rural Development (LAMIRD) - areas as defined by RCW 36.70A.070(5)(d) and WAC 365-196-425(6). Spokane County Code also refers to these as Rural Activity Centers or Limited Development Areas.

Level of service - an established minimum capacity of public facilities or services that must be provided per unit of demand or other appropriate measure of need.

Low-income housing - housing that is economically feasible for families whose income level is categorized as low within the standards set by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Master planned resort - means a self-contained and fully integrated planned unit development in a setting of significant natural amenities, with primary focus on destination resort facilities consisting of short-term visitor accommodations associated with a range of developed on-site indoor or outdoor recreational facilities.

Mixed-use development - the development in a compact urban form of a tract of land or building or structure with two or more different uses, such as, but not limited to, residential, office, manufacturing,

retail, public or entertainment.

Multijurisdictional planning team - an established group of planning professionals that represent each jurisdiction within Spokane County for the purpose of supporting the Spokane County Steering Committee in issues related to the Countywide Planning Policies.

Multimodal transportation - means a transportation system consisting of many travel choices or modes.

Municipality - an incorporated city, municipal corporation, or town.

Natural resource lands (resource lands) - lands not already characterized by urban growth which have long-term significance for the commercial production of food or other agricultural products, timber or the extraction of minerals.

New development - the improvement of vacant land with utilities, roads, storm drainage facilities and other features.

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.

New use - any change in land use by construction or expansion or a new or existing building or structure.

Open space corridors - lands within and between urban growth areas useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails and connection of critical areas.

Performance zoning - a zoning category that does not specifically prescribe a use but leaves the means for achieving the classification or goal through established standards.

Public Development Authority (PDA) – an organization created by the county or a municipality to plan and implement economic development programs.

Public facilities - include, but are not limited to, 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.

Public services - include fire protection and suppression, law enforcement, public health, education, recreation, environmental protection and other governmental services.

Regional - countywide activities involving the jurisdictions and, when applicable, the special purpose districts within Spokane County; may also include adjacent counties in Washington State and/or Idaho State as indicated in specific policies.

Regional arterials - roads and streets on the Federal Functional Classification System which are designated as Interstate, Principal or Minor arterials (regionally significant collector arterials may also be included).

Regional institutional facilities - includes all those facilities defined as essential public facilities above as well as major health care facilities and major industrial parks.

Regional transportation plan - means the transportation plan for the regionally designated transportation system which is produced by the Regional Transportation Planning Organization.

Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) - the voluntary organization conforming to RCW 47.80.020 consisting of local governments within a region containing one or more counties which have common transportation interests.

Revised Code of Washington (RCW) - legislation that has been passed by the State and documented in the form of a code.

Roadway standards - minimum standards for street development, including right-of-way, street width, bike lanes, curbs, sidewalks, landscaping, drainage, etc.

Rural Governmental Services – include those public services and public facilities historically and typically delivered at an intensity usually found in rural areas, and may include domestic water systems, fire and police protection services, transportation and public transit services, and other public utilities associated with rural development and normally not associated with urban areas. Rural services do not include storm or sanitary sewers, except as otherwise authorized by RCW 36.70A.110(4).

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.

Shall - indicates that an action specified in a policy statement is mandatory.

Should - indicates that an action specified in a policy statement is discretionary.

Single-room occupancy (SRO) - a type of housing that is commonly one room with cooking facilities and private or shared bathroom facilities. Examples of SRO units are found in residence hotels and apartments.

Special purpose district - a district created by act, petition or vote by the residents within a defined area for a specific purpose with the power to levy taxes.

Special-needs populations - groups of individuals who, by reason of age, physical, mental or other characteristics, require nontraditional living arrangements and, in some instances, are not able to operate a motorized vehicle.

Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC) - the regional transportation planning organization (RTPO)

Steering Committee of Elected Officials/Steering Committee - a body composed of elected officials from jurisdictions throughout Spokane County established by interlocal agreement, with the responsibility of developing and recommending to the Board of County Commissioners the Countywide Planning Policies.

Town houses - a series of single-family dwelling units attached to other single-family dwellings, each by a common wall.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) - the transfer of the right to develop or build from land in one zoning district to land in another district where such transfer is permitted.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) - a schedule of proposed transportation improvements within a specific time period.

Urban center/urban village - a neighborhood, community or town that has an adequate mix of land uses

and services to support local needs.

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.

Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) - are areas within which urban growth shall be encouraged and outside of which growth can occur only if it is not urban in nature. UGAs shall include areas and densities sufficient to permit the urban growth that is projected to occur in the county for the succeeding 20-year period.

Urban Reserve Areas - those lands which may be designated within the rural element of Spokane County's Comprehensive Plan having the potential for inclusion within an Urban Growth Area (UGA) as expansion of UGAs is deemed necessary to meet land availability requirements of future Washington State Office of Financial Management population projections. Selection of lands as Urban Reserve Areas shall utilize the criteria for UGAs found within the GMA (Chapter 36.70A RCW).

Utilities - means enterprises or facilities serving the public by means of an integrated system of collection, transmission, distribution, and processing facilities through more or less permanent physical connections between the plant of the serving entity and the premises of the customer. Included are systems for the delivery of natural gas, electricity, telecommunications services and water and for the disposal of sewage.

Wellhead protection areas - designated areas surrounding wells that supply water to a public water system that require protection from contaminants.

Will - has the same meaning as the term 'shall.'