

## II. Purpose, Vision and Planning Principles

### Plan Purpose

The Skyway-West Hill Action Plan (SWAP) is intended to be an ongoing process to formally and informally reach out to all community members and groups to get wide agreement on the most important issues facing the community today and into the future. It also seeks to focus resources and efforts on implementing the select projects and measures which can address the priorities identified by the broad community.

The SWAP supplements the 1994 West Hill Community Plan with updated information, issues and priorities to focus needed action and implementation. The SWAP and Community Plan will both provide guidance to King County government in its rule and policy-making authority. Such guidance includes developing zoning regulations and incentives that do things such as promote economic revitalization, preserve desired community character, and ensure affordable housing is available. In addition, guidance is provided on which priority programs and services should be funded in the community (such as fixing sidewalks, adding lights in the park, adding east west transit routes, participating in grant projects for youth sports leagues, etc.).

### How We Got to the SWAP

For generations, the intention of Skyway-West Hill’s residents and organizations has been to create a community that is culturally vibrant, intellectually curious, innovative, and beautiful. In 1994, our community was stagnating and our air quality was dangerously polluted. But Skyway-West Hill had a plan — to reinvest in the urban core and address land use issues. By linking land use, transportation, green spaces and people, we aimed our efforts into creating attractive, livable neighborhoods instead of sprawl. Over the past 40 years our community has grown, but it still lacks a vibrant economy. We need to clean our environment and create support for our community to work, live, play and thrive. Today we want to create walkable neighborhoods, a public transit system, a robust connected business district, and access to sustainable food cultures. These are features that communities around the world would want to emulate. We want our residents to have equitable access to opportunities to advance their well-being and achieve their full potential.

The Community Plan and SWAP attempt to address some of our community’s most pressing challenges, including income disparities, high unemployment, a low high-school graduation rate, and environmental concerns. Practical, measured and strategic, the plan recognizes that our community — now and in the future — will be a more racially, ethnically and age-diverse community, that various parts of neighborhoods are different, and one size does not fit all.

### SWAP Public Outreach

The SWAP was a 17-month process which included targeted outreach to portions of the community which traditionally are not involved in community planning but are still invested and impacted by planning policies, development trends and civic services and programs. Under the leadership of a local community development organization, Skyway Solutions, and with the assistance of King County government planning staff, the following community outreach efforts were conducted:

- Collected 1,748 completed surveys from residents and stakeholders.
- Surveys were translated in Vietnamese, Somali, and Spanish.

- SWAP Steering Group (over 28 community volunteers have provided hands on guidance efforts and direction).
- Five Open House Community Events held between January 2015 and May 2015.
- One survey was mailed as an insert in the new 'a Voice' Newsletter, and was delivered to 9,640 residents.
- Distribution of over 5,000 information flyers, plus a planning notice which was placed in the 'Skylines' Newsletter and reached homeowners in the Skyway Water district.
- SkySol monthly e-newsletter providing SWAP updates to community members.
- Creation of an interactive website with virtual open houses ([www.buildskywaywesthill.org](http://www.buildskywaywesthill.org)).
- Creation of an interactive SWAP petition, with over 200 petitions collected to-date.

## Vision

The Skyway-West Hill Action Plan (SWAP) developed a vision statement which captures the community's priorities and the overall direction it wishes to grow.

### **Skyway West Hill Action Plan Vision Statement:**

*The Skyway-West Hill neighborhood and community business center will grow into a vibrant, walkable, ethnically diverse and civically engaged community that involves the collective voice, wisdom and expertise of its residents and business-owners in ongoing civic decision-making.*

## Guiding Principles of the SWAP Planning Process

- Honor, affirm and supplement existing official plans and documents developed within the community which include the [1994 West Hill Community Plan](#), the [2009 Community Agenda for Revitalization](#), the [2008 Skyway Park Community Vision](#), and the [Community Center Visioning Process \(2012\)](#), all of the plans are available at [www.buildskywaywesthill.org](http://www.buildskywaywesthill.org)
- Always reach out to the entire community to be involved in shaping their future.
- Avoid typical problems of “gentrification displacement” that can easily occur during community/neighborhood redevelopment.
- Keep the priority and purpose of community redevelopment and growth on creating a safe, affordable, inclusive and healthy community that preserves a culturally and economic diverse community.
- Seek to protect the overall character of the community as single-family residential in nature, but be open to allowing a healthy mix of multi-family and other housing types in appropriate designated and scattered areas to promote housing affordability and choice.
- Empower and educate local residents, businesses and youth to share-in and capitalize on the opportunities brought with new community development and redevelopment.
- Recognition that the community as a whole must:
  - Take control of its own future;

- Work together on their common goals;
- Be inclusive and open to all cultures and ages; and
- Be an active and on-going participant in community improvement efforts.

### **Planning Process in King County Government**

Under the Washington State Growth Management Act, King County government periodically produces planning documents which seek to anticipate and prepare for future growth, preserve environmental health, improve human health, promote sustainable economies and transportation systems, and increase overall quality of life for the residents of the County. Specifically, King County Government produces two main planning documents: the Strategic Plan and the Comprehensive Plan. A third type of plan is usually called a subarea plan (i.e. the 1994 West Hill Community Plan and the SWAP) which falls under the two main planning documents mentioned above, but provides much more actionable detail on the specific needs, issues and desires of the community.

#### King County Strategic Plan (KCSP)

The KCSP serves as the framework for countywide priority setting, business planning, budget development, resource allocation and leadership and managerial accountability. The KCSP embodies the priorities of the residents of King County. It guides decision-making in King County government and describes the results the county intends to achieve through its implementation. The KCSP recognizes the role of land use planning in shaping an environmentally sustainable, economically viable, and equitable future for the county. The Comprehensive Plan is shaped by the KCSP and supports the goals defined within the KCSP.

#### King County Strategic Plan Vision Statement:

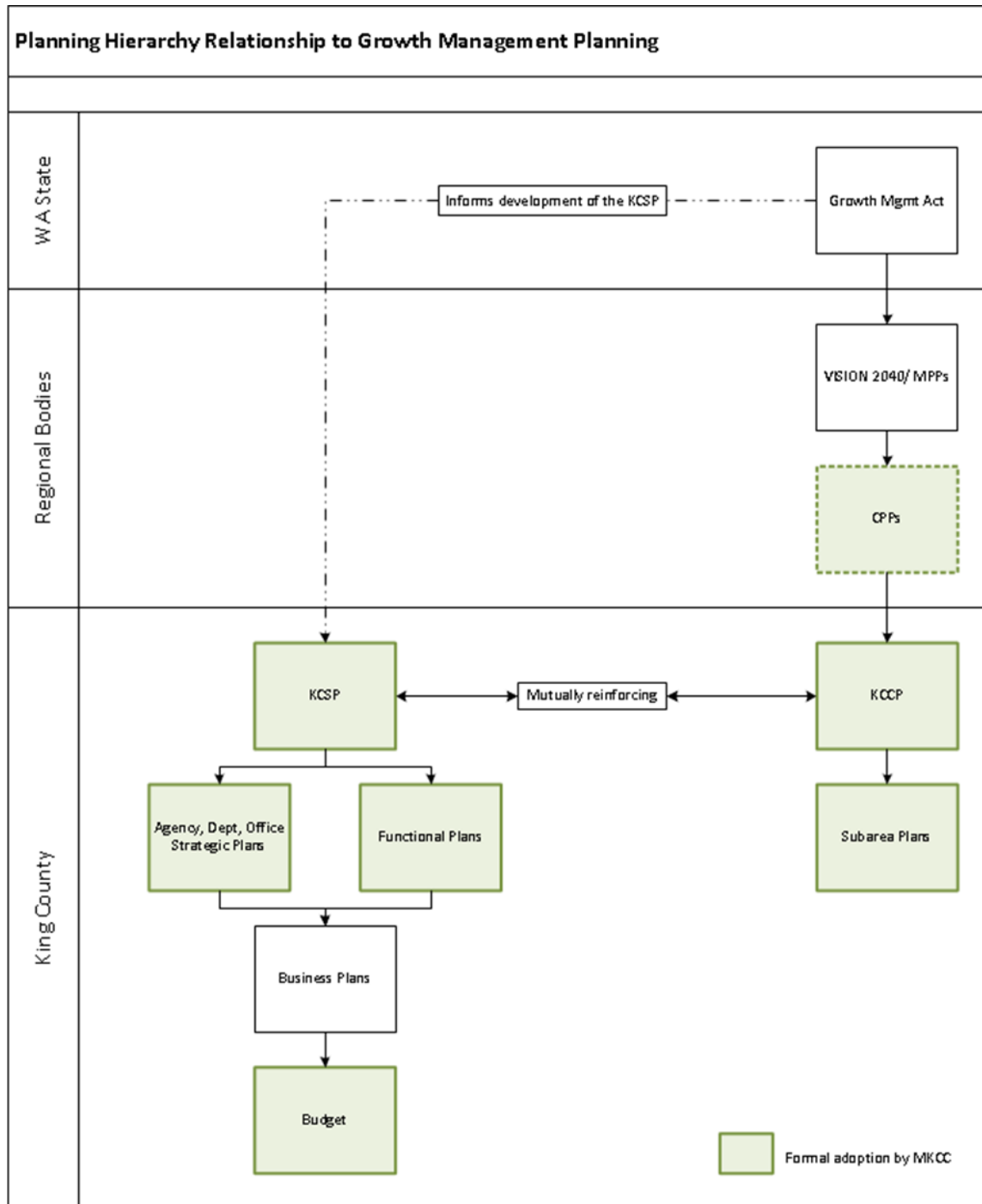
*King County: a diverse and dynamic community with a healthy economy and environment where people and businesses have the opportunity to thrive.*

#### King County Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan provides guidance to county officials for decisions on proposals such as zoning changes, transportation, open space and growth and development. It gives the public direction on the county's position on proposed changes in land use or zoning, environmental regulations, or broader policy issues. The Plan also serves as a framework for other plans and regulations such as subarea plans and the King County Code that govern the location and density of land uses in unincorporated King County. The Plan provides a basis for decisions about public spending on facilities and services. Specifically, the Comprehensive Plan seeks to achieve the following goals which are very important to the health and prosperity of the Skyway-West Hill community:

- Creating Sustainable Neighborhoods
- Addressing Health Disparities and Equity, Social and Environmental Justice
- Providing a Variety of Transportation Choices

Figure 1: Planning Hierarchy in King County



### **King County Capital Facilities Planning**

The Growth Management Act requires the county to prepare a capital facility plan that includes an inventory of existing capital facilities owned by public entities, a forecast of the future needs for capital facilities, including the proposed locations and capacities of expanded or new facilities, and a six-year plan that will finance the expanded or new facilities.

King County prepares functional plans for the operational and programmatic provision of capital facilities. Functional plans are detailed plans for facilities and services and also include action plans and programs for other governmental activities. Capital improvements are important components of functional plans. Capital facilities and spending on improvements and new facilities are closely linked to availability of funds. Plans that guide specific siting of facilities must be consistent with the comprehensive plan. Functional plans must identify costs and services of needed facilities and distinguish between improvements needed for new growth versus those needed to support existing public health and welfare needs.

King County functional (capital) plans include:

- Strategic Climate Action Plan
- KC Parks and Open Space Plan
- KC Transportation Needs Report
- KC Six-year Transit Plan
- Surface Water Management Plan
- Regional Wastewater Services Plan
- Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan

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- RP-206      Functional plans for facilities and services should:
- a.      Be consistent with the comprehensive plan and subarea and neighborhood plans;
  - b.      Define required service levels for the Urban Growth Area, Rural Area and Resource Lands;
  - c.      Provide standards for location, design and operation of public facilities and services;
  - d.      Specify adequate, stable and equitable methods of pay for public facilities and services;
  - e.      Be the basis for scheduling needed facilities and services through capital improvement programs; and
  - f.      Plan for maintenance of existing facilities.

## Capital Facility Planning

King County and other service providers are required to prepare six-year capital facility plans that describe needs for the six-year facility and propose funding to meet those needs.

- F-210            The capital facility plans and capital improvement programs prepared by all other agencies that provide services to unincorporated areas of the county should be consistent with the King County Comprehensive Plan.
- F-211            To reduce overall public costs, noise, climate change impacts and disruption to the local area during construction, installation of new or maintenance of existing utility facilities should be timed and coordinated with other projects that utilize public rights-of-way and easements, where possible.
- F-212            King County’s capital facility plans should identify financing strategies to support its adopted 20-year growth target and land use plan.
- F-213            King County’s capital improvement program shall demonstrate that projected needs for facilities and services can be met within the Urban Growth Area and can be served in compliance with the concurrency requirements of the Growth Management Act or, if that is not possible, King County shall determine where and when deficits may occur and how needed facilities and services might be phased in and or financed to serve such deficit areas. Alternative phasing and financing strategies must be identified and determined to be infeasible prior to triggering a land use and zoning reassessment under Policy F-223.
- F-214            School districts that choose to have the county collect impact fees for them, and water and sewer utilities that provide their services to unincorporated King County, shall prepare capital facility plans consistent with requirements of the Growth Management Act and King County Code.
- F-215            Provision of an adequate supply of kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12) public schools and K-12 public school facilities is essential to avoid overcrowding and to enhance the educational opportunities for our children. King County shall adopt

regulations that are supportive of the permitting of K-12 public schools and K-12 facilities.

It is the goal of King County to work toward a model sustainable community to balance growth with natural resource protection while addressing climate change. Sustainable development seeks to achieve this goal by addressing the impacts of the built environment in which we live and work.

Traditional development practices can contribute significantly to the adverse impacts buildings and associated infrastructure have on our environment. These impacts include heavy consumption of energy and water, large-scale production of wastes, water pollution, degradation of habitats and other ecological resources, and contribution to greenhouse gas emissions. Implementing sustainable development involves incorporating green building practices into our policies through education, incentives and regulations to help reduce these negative impacts.

The elements of green building include: siting the project (to take advantage of existing services, to retain existing landscaping and natural features and to increase building energy performance); requiring energy efficiency (to reduce energy consumption, to increase occupants' comfort and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions); managing building construction and demolition materials efficiently to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to increase the life-cycle of the building); increasing water efficiency (to reduce water consumption and to reduce wastewater treatment); and implementing universal design to ensure for aging in place and to service diverse occupancy opportunities.

The incorporation of sustainable practices into the design, construction and operation of King County capital improvement projects can reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce pollution, reduce the use of natural resources, reduce energy and other operating costs, enhance asset value, optimize performance, promote cultural sustainability by preserving historic resources and create healthier and more appealing environments for the visiting public and for King County employees. The strategic energy management, efficiency and conservation program called for in F-312 will enable King County to monitor the effectiveness of sustainable development practices in improving energy efficiency. The Green Building and Sustainable Development Ordinance 16147, adopted in 2008, requires that county capital projects either apply for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification or integrate cost-effective sustainable development practices into infrastructure projects.

The LEED rating system is a nationally recognized system for rating the performance of buildings and to guide project design. The LEED rating system components include sustainable site design; water efficiency; energy and atmosphere; indoor environmental quality; materials and resources; innovation in design and regional priorities. For those projects that are not eligible for LEED certification, the county's Green Building Team, comprised of representatives from the various county department that have capital projects, developed a Sustainable Infrastructure Scorecard and guidelines to help such projects achieve measurable green building goals.

### Addressing Service Deficiencies

In the event that needed facilities and services are not available to support either existing development or growth, King County will work with other service providers, such as water, sewer or solid waste purveyors, to address the service deficiency.

- F-221 King County shall initiate a subarea planning process with any service provider that declares, through their capital facilities plan, an inability to accommodate projected service needs inside their service area.
- F-222 King County and its cities should coordinate planning for health and human service facilities and services. County investments in health and human service facilities should be targeted primarily to the designated Urban Centers and secondarily to other locations in the Urban Growth Area and Rural Towns.
- F-223 If a service deficiency is identified in a service provider's existing service area, King County and the applicable service provider shall remedy the deficiency through a joint planning process addressing capital improvement programs and long-term funding strategies. If financing and level of service remedies cannot solve the deficiency, King County shall not allow for expansion of the service provider's service area and shall consider regulations to mitigate the effect of the deficiency.

### Financing Strategies

King County, cities, and other service providers will work together to address the financing needs of facilities and services.

- F-224 King County shall work with the cities to create a financing partnership for areas of the Urban Growth Area that the cities will annex. This includes determining county/regional and city/municipal facilities and services and then committing to a shared financing strategy to build or provide these infrastructure improvements or services.
- F-225 King County should, in cooperation with other jurisdictions, develop funding strategies for governmental infrastructure that take into account economic development goals and consider the costs to, and benefits for, the jurisdictions and the region.



## **Art**

Projects and priorities identified in previous plans and community discussions include:

1. *Create a studio for musicians to record and perform.*
2. *Form art, dance and theater groups.*
3. *Promote and Develop neighborhood art lofts to attract additional creative people to the community.*
4. *Fund multi-generational community art projects throughout the year.*
5. *Honor the legacy and future of the community through murals, statues and mosaics.*

## **Innovation**

Projects and priorities identified in previous plans and community discussions include:

1. *Turn an empty building into a business incubator where new entrepreneurs share expenses and support each other.*
2. *Initiate a 'shop local' campaign and create a place for home-based businesses to visibly market their products or services.*
3. *Place kiosks or LED signs at critical intersections throughout West Hill to announce community events in multiple languages.*
4. *Establish Urban Farms and expand P-Patch gardens for use by local residents.*
5. *Establish a tool library, where residents can borrow tools and take classes to learn how to fix things.*