

## **Appendix I:**

# **Concurrency Review and Reassessment Process**

## Concurrency Review and Reassessment Process

“Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards.”

RCW 36.70A.020

Goal 12

Local Comprehensive Plans must contain documentation of future facility needs along with a proposed capital budget to provide those facilities over the next six and twenty years. Chapters 8 and 9 provide those financial plans. Where gaps occur between what was planned and what funding is actually available in a particular year, there must be a strategy for closing those gaps. The strategy is comprised of an annual assessment of infrastructure costs and revenues and methods to be used where gaps occur. Those methods can include additional demand management strategies, pursuing new revenues, reducing level-of-service standards, or changing the land use maps to reduce demands on services and infrastructure.

Each year, Snohomish County issues a Growth Monitoring Report that compares population and job trends with its planning assumptions and forecasts. The County issues a Statement of Assessment as part of its Capital Improvements Plan<sup>1</sup> indicating whether buildable lands, land use, traffic or utility plans need adjustment to meet concurrency requirements. The County’s Statement responds to the following criteria in reaching its findings:

1. Whether levels of service for public facilities necessary for development will be achieved by the currently adopted Capital Improvements Plan.
2. If there are potential funding shortfalls vs. the assumptions and forecasts in the CIP.
3. Where shortfalls are possible, if other “reasonable measures” can be invoked to ensure maintenance of level of service standards.

If such measures are not practicable, the County’s policy is to reassess its Plan to ensure that services are balanced with growth. This is “concurrency”. Options may involve finding additional revenue sources, reducing level of service standards or adjusting the land use plan to lessen the rate of growth. All of these must be addressed carefully because the goals are to provide the room for job and population growth; while ensuring a quality of life and quality of services.

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<sup>1</sup> Section IV and VI, Snohomish County 2016 – 2021 Capital Improvement Program, November 23, 2015

**ANNUAL REVIEW**

Arlington will process a similar Statement of Assessment each year *after* the County’s Growth Monitoring Report is issued and *before* the annual review of proposed Plan amendments (docketing) is concluded. The annual plan review will be conducted in concert with adoption of the City’s six-year Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) and before the City’s annual budget process. The format and content of the Assessment will follow that of the County’s.

This approach to measuring concurrency or the need for Plan adjustments is consistent with several Plan policies.

PL-4.8 The City should plan for a balanced mix of land uses based on land availability and the capacity to provide public services.

NEW Infrastructure capacity should be “concurrent” with new land development. Where concurrency cannot be assured, the GMA and capital facility plans should be reassessed and potentially amended accordingly.

**Policies:**

PT-2.1 A motorized and non-motorized transportation plan should be developed by the City to ensure adequate transportation routes are created **concurrent** with new development. Evaluate minimizing impervious surfaces and incorporating LID facilities into these plans where feasible.

**GT-3** Ensure **concurrency** by providing an effective roadway network with adequate capacity to meet the demand for travel within the City at the adopted Level of Service (LOS) standard.

**Policies:**

PT-3.1 The City should periodically review and revise, if necessary, existing levels of service and the **concurrency** management system as part of the Comprehensive Plan update.

NEW The Transportation Element and Capital Facility Elements will be reviewed annually for consistency with the adopted Transportation Plan; Water and Sewer Plans.

PT-12.2 New developments should be required to pay for improvements related to the development, including upgrading of existing facilities, on a proportionate share basis and according to calculated impacts to existing LOS.

PS-1.10 Serve new development within the urban growth area with sanitary sewer systems or fit it with dry sewers in anticipation of connection to the sewer system. Alternative technology to sewers should only be considered when it can be shown to produce treatment at standards that are equal to or better than the sewer system and where a long-term maintenance plan is in place.

### **EIGHT-YEAR UPDATE**

While there is an annual amendment process to review minor adjustments or citizen requests for changes to the Plan, a comprehensive update is completed every eight years. This update is mandated by the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.130(5)) and is a time to bring the comprehensive plan and implementing development regulations up to current standards. It is also an opportunity to reassess the vision and progress toward achieving the vision a community has determined for itself. Some general questions that should be raised include:

- Were our assumptions correct?
- Are we doing what we said we would do?
- Is it turning out as we had hoped?
- If not, why? What should be done to make the outcome better?
- What policy adjustments can be made if needed?
- Is our financial plan adequate to meet infrastructure expectations?
- Are levels of service standards consistent with our infrastructure needs and ability to pay for infrastructure?
- Do we need to make changes to the land use plan if we are falling behind in funding infrastructure?

Depending on the answers to those questions, more specific questions can be raised and discussed publicly. It is important to include the public in these questions and throughout the update process.

### **BASIC STEPS IN THE PERIODIC REVIEW**

As far as capital facilities and public services go, the basic requirements of the update process include:

- Update inventory
- Assess progress on implementation
- Update the forecast and identify any new needs
- Assess your findings
  - Are we keeping up with growth?
  - Are we falling behind in maintenance? Are we making progress on our other plans?
  - Can we provide our urban areas with the services needed?

- Are the assumptions used still valid?
  - Are the assumptions and timeframes of functional plans (sewer, water, stormwater, etc.) – especially those of other entities – consistent with the comprehensive plan?
- Update the implementation plan. This must be done in light of any new population figures, changes in growth patterns, annexations or new incorporations, or changes to the urban growth boundary.

If the jurisdiction has assumed any special purpose districts, if new special purpose districts have formed, or if the local situation has changed due to new information, policies, or changes in Level of Service standards, the factors must be updated and addressed in the revised CFP. The update must address any changes in statute since the previous update as well. Changes to the GMA, such as the provision to promote physical activity, may result in changes to the comprehensive plan and that may impact the capital facilities element.<sup>1</sup> The review and assessment may show that the jurisdiction is on track to achieve its vision, it may show a potential gap in one aspect of services, or it may highlight the need to improve the level of operation and maintenance to certain facilities. Or it may show that a certain geographic area has fallen below adopted LOS and strategies need to be developed to bring it back up to standard. The importance of the update is that it provides a process by which the review occurs, involving all stakeholders and special purpose districts as well as the public. It is an excellent opportunity to educate newly elected officials about the importance of long term planning for growth and the needed infrastructure to serve that growth. It is also a time to communicate with the public about the costs of the existing systems and what will be needed to implement the land use and related plans. These discussions can often lead to a willingness to accept higher densities or different growth patterns so that limited infrastructure funding can be maximized to serve a greater number of people at a lower cost.