

State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

Both SEPA and NEPA intend to ensure that environmental values are considered during decision-making by state and local agencies. SEPA was adopted with four primary purposes, one of which is to stimulate the health and human welfare [RCW 33.21C.010].

State Growth Management Act (GMA) and Legislature Bills Passed

Growth management in Washington took on new meaning with the passage of the Growth Management Act (GMA) by the Washington Legislature in 1990. The GMA was enacted in response to rapid population growth and concerns with suburban sprawl, environmental protection, quality of life and related issues. GMA planning directs the efficient use of land through growth in centers, aligned with infrastructure and facilities, and encourages early and continuous community engagement throughout the planning process [RCW 36.70A.020]. Integration of health adds detail to the GMA intent and mandate.

Two bills passed by the State Legislature in 2005 (ESSB 5186 and 2SHB 1565) provide explicit policy direction to increase physical activity levels in Washington State by requiring an increase in the number of active community environments through urban planning and infrastructure development.

ESSB 5186 required jurisdictions to specifically employ land-use and transportation approaches to promoting physical activity under the Growth Management Act:

- Land Use Element: “Wherever possible, the Land Use Element should consider utilizing urban planning approaches that promote physical activity” [RCW 36.70A.070(1)]; and
- Transportation Element: “Include a pedestrian and bicycle component to include collaborative efforts to identify and designate planned improvements for pedestrian and bicycle facilities and corridors that address and encourage enhanced community access and promote healthy lifestyles” [RCW 36.70A.076(6)(a)(7)].

2SHB 1565 encourages a multimodal transportation approach. Specifically, the “Transportation Element required by RCW [36.70A.070](#) may include multimodal transportation improvements or strategies that are made concurrent with the development, in addition to improvements or strategies to accommodate the impacts of development authorized under RCW [36.70A.070](#)(6)(b).

Multi-county Planning Policies Vision 2040

VISION 2040 is an integrated, long-range vision for maintaining a healthy region—promoting the well-being of people and communities, economic vitality and a healthy environment. The concept of people, prosperity, and planet provides a central theme for VISION 2040. This concept signals that our regional leaders use an approach that considers social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits when making decisions.

Vision 2040 recognizes the important relationship between a healthy environment, both natural and built, and healthy people. As a result, goals of limiting pollution and reducing transportation’s impact on health are addressed in Vision 2040. Health and well-being of people is fundamental to maintaining and improving the Region’s sustainability and quality of life. Puget Sound Regional Council is directed by Vision 2040 to explore land use and planning practices that

promote and improve physical, social and mental health and well-being (MPP-DP-37, 43 to 47). Health is addressed in Vision 2040 under “Development Patterns—Orderly Development” with particular attention given to incorporation of health considerations in countrywide decision-making, healthy environment, physical activity and local food production.

Countywide Planning Policies on Health and Well-being

The [Countywide Planning Policies for Pierce County, Washington](#) direct the integration of health into local comprehensive plans. The adopted Health and Well-being element (CPP-HW-1 to 5) directs the County and municipalities to design communities to promote physical, social and mental well-being so that all people can promote healthy lives by:

- Improving the environment for walking and bicycling,
- Developing design guidelines for healthy buildings and facilities,
- Developing programs to expand access to healthy foods,
- Designing transportation systems to reduce injury,
- Coordinating facilities and services to promote health,
- Including health in public decision-making, and
- Considering the use of Health Impact Assessment to understand the health effects of public actions.