

# INTRODUCTION, CITY VISION AND PLANNING FRAMEWORK

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## Introduction

The City Council adopted the SeaTac Comprehensive Plan (Plan) in December of 1994, has amended it annually through 2013, and completed this major update in [2015](#)[2024](#). This Plan provides a comprehensive and cohesive guide for the City of SeaTac through [2035](#)[2044](#).

## What is a Comprehensive Plan

SeaTac, as well as other jurisdictions in Washington, conducts its planning for the City under the Growth Management Act (GMA), adopted by the Legislature in 1990 and 1991. This law requires the City to have a comprehensive plan, a document that sets the vision for the future of a city. Since the GMA was adopted, planning has evolved from primarily addressing physical aspects of city development (e.g., land use, utilities and transportation facilities) to recognize the need to address emerging issues like human induced climate change and the connection between land use and public health. SeaTac’s Plan contains broad statements of community goals and policies, as well as specific steps for achieving them. It also contains a future land use map which guides the ultimate physical development of the city. This Plan anticipates change and provides specific guidance for future legislative and administrative actions. The plan reflects community involvement, technical analyses, and the judgment of decisionmakers.

SeaTac Planning History  
The City of SeaTac incorporated in February 1990. Prior to that, SeaTac was part of unincorporated King County and was addressed in County planning studies. Soon after incorporation, the City Council adopted three existing documents as its interim Comprehensive Plan. The interim plan was later modified and updated several times. While considerable planning accomplishments were achieved in the first few years of existence, the base of this document, the 1994 City of SeaTac Comprehensive Plan was the first complete plan to be prepared and adopted by the SeaTac City Council.

## Subarea Plans

The Plan is supported by three subarea plans. Subarea plans are similar to comprehensive plans in that they contain a future land use map, statements of community goals and policies, and steps for achieving them, specific to a particular area of the city, or “subarea.” These subarea plans fit within the vision articulated by the Plan, add detail for the given subarea, and are considered to be elements of the Plan.

The City of SeaTac has adopted ~~three~~ subarea plans as elements of its Plan [for the City’s three urban villages](#):

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1. The City Center Plan, ~~(originally~~ adopted in December 1999, and currently undergoing the second phase of a two-phase update process,) adds detail for the City Center subarea;
2. The South 154th St. Station Area Action Plan (adopted in December 2006) applies to the part of SeaTac within approximately one quarter mile of the Tukwila International Boulevard light rail station; and
3. The Angle Lake District Station Area Plan (adopted in July 2015) applies to the area near the Angle Lake Link light rail station in the vicinity of S 200th Street and 28th Avenue S.



See Map 2.1,  
the

Comprehensive  
Plan Land Use  
Map. to view  
the subareas.

### Functional Plans

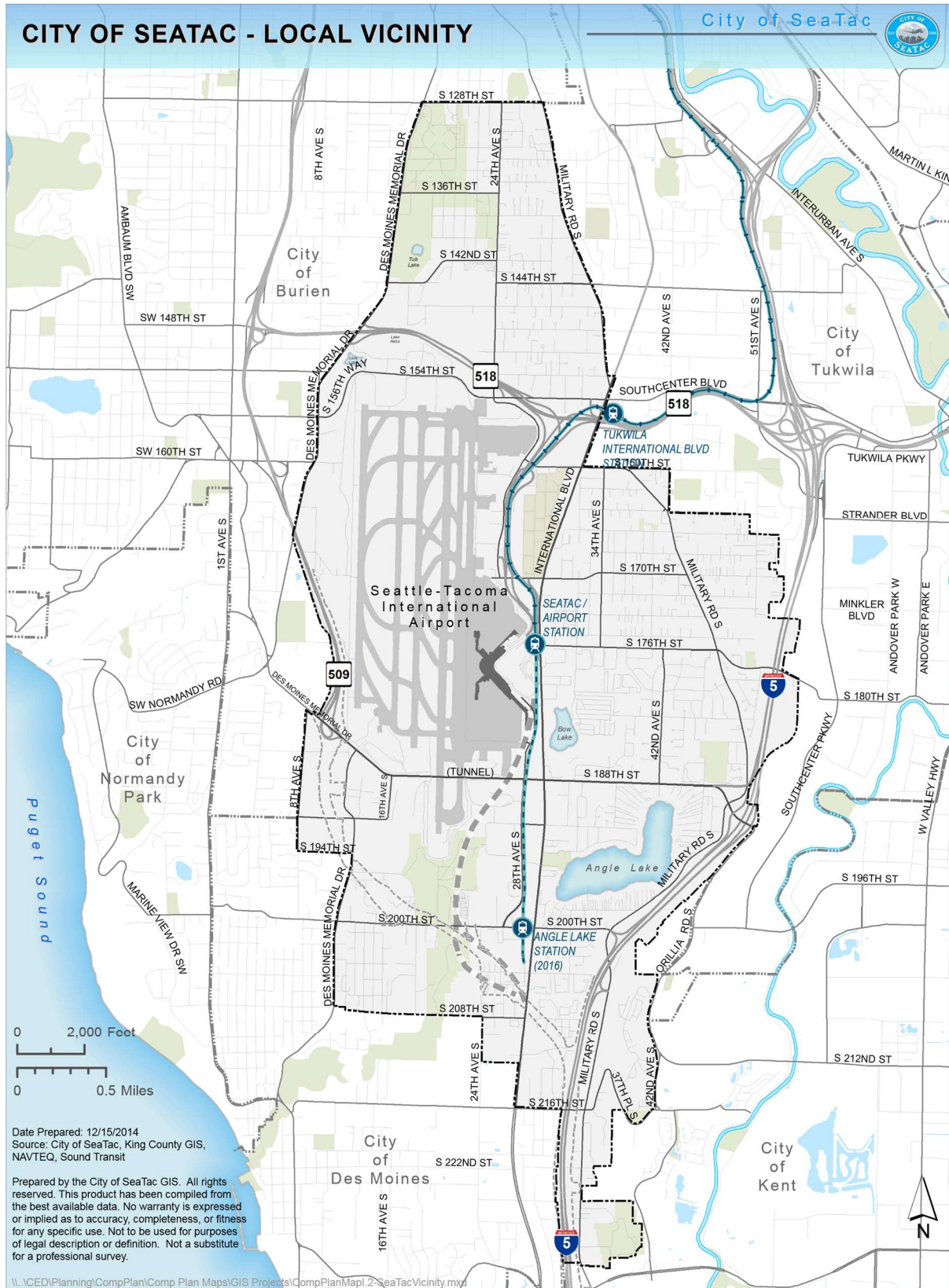
SeaTac has two functional plans that are also considered part of the Comprehensive Plan, the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) and Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plans. The TMP and PROS Plan serve as background reports for the Transportation Element and Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element. They build on the policies set forth in the Elements they support while establishing more specific objectives and strategies for how SeaTac’s transportation and parks, recreation and open space systems will be developed, managed, and maintained.

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Map 1.1. Regional Vicinity

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Map 1.2. SeaTac Vicinity

## Introduction

## Comprehensive Plan Development

SeaTac residents, businesses, City boards and commissions, and City staff have helped develop and amend this Plan. The Planning Commission oversees this process and recommends the Plan to the City Council. The Commission is a group of residents and business leaders appointed by the City Council to make recommendations to the Council about growth and development issues. It gives direction and assistance to City staff in preparing and amending the Plan.

~~The~~ Over the years, the SeaTac community has been regularly involved in the planning process. The City has hosted numerous public forums, hearings, and surveys to obtain meaningful comments on draft goals and policies. The results have provided direction to this Plan.

The 2024 periodic update process, called Envision SeaTac 2044, focused on updating the Plan to incorporate the following key project themes:

- **Wellbeing and Access to Opportunity:** Increase access to opportunity and wellbeing.
- **Growing Urban Villages Near Light Rail:** Focus growth in urban villages near light rail with a variety of options for living, working, and recreating.
- **Healthy, Equitable, Connected, and Complete Neighborhoods:** Strengthen all neighborhoods and ensure they are well-served by supportive infrastructure and amenities.
- **Multimodal Transportation:** Provide connected, efficient, multimodal transportation networks.
- **Housing for All:** Increase housing types and affordable options.
- **Economic Vitality:** Increase economic opportunities that empower residents and support the business community.
- **Resilient Built and Natural Environments:** Enhance the resiliency of SeaTac's built and natural environments.

The Envision SeaTac 2044 project also had goals related to addressing social equity within the planning process, including:

- **Equitable Community Engagement:** Ensuring representative, inclusive, equitable community engagement throughout the project.
- **Equitable Policy Development:** Incorporating an equity framework into the policy development process including a focus on:
 
  - Increasing access to opportunity and wellbeing, and
  - Creating healthy, equitable, connected, complete neighborhoods citywide.
- **Creation of SeaTac Equity Index:** Developing an equity analysis tool to better understand demographic and geographic relationships and opportunities related to equity throughout the city.

To help achieve these equity goals, the Puget Sound Regional Council's guidance was used as a starting point to define the meaning of equity for the Envision SeaTac 2044 project.

- **The region's vision for equity (PSRC):** *All people have the means to attain the resources and opportunities that improve their quality of life and enable them to reach full potential. Differences in life outcomes cannot be predicted by race, class, or any other identity. Communities of color, historically marginalized communities, and those affected by poverty are engaged in decision-making processes, planning, and policy-making.*

## Introduction

## Comprehensive Plan Implementation and Amendments

The planning process does not end with Plan adoption. Instead, the process changes from preparing the Plan document to implementing its goals and policies. The Plan may also need revisions as the conditions and needs of the City change. The Growth Management Act allows for cities “to establish procedures whereby proposed amendments or revisions of the comprehensive plan are considered by the governing body of the city no more frequently than once every year.” The City has decided to consider amendments to the Plan every two years, (alternate years from the biennial budget.)

## Interjurisdictional Coordination

The City of SeaTac’s Comprehensive Plan is required by the Growth Management Act to be consistent with the Puget Sound Regional Council’s (PSRC’s) Vision 20540 Multicounty Planning Policies and King County’s Countywide Planning Policies. It must also be coordinated with the comprehensive plans adopted by neighboring jurisdictions. The communication among cities in King County has been impressive, starting with the seminal comprehensive planning work in the early 1990s and continuing today. As part of City and Regional growth management planning efforts, SeaTac’s elected officials have been active members of regional groups, such as the King County Sound Cities Association and Regional Transit-Oriented Development Advisory Committee. City of SeaTac staff has also participated in numerous growth management related committees and work groups, including the GMPC Liaison Group and its Urban Centers Designation/Population and Employment Allocation Subcommittee, PSRC’s Multicounty Planning Policy Committee, King County’s Planning Directors Committee, King County’s Affordable Housing Technical Forum, King County’s Data Resources Technical Forum, and PSRC’s Regional Technical Committee.

## Organization of the Comprehensive Plan

This Plan is split into two volumes. Volume 1 contains the City’s vision statement, Plan Introduction and Framework Policies, and Plan Elements [that include goals, policies and implementation strategies related to the following: relating to land use, housing and human services, transportation, capital facilities, utilities, community image, economic vitality, environmental management, and parks, recreation, and open space](#)

- [Land Use](#)
- [Urban Center](#)
- [Neighborhoods](#)
- [Housing and Human Services](#)
- [Economic Vitality](#)
- [Transportation](#)
- [Parks, Recreation, and Open Space](#)
- [Environment](#)
- [Utilities](#)
- [Capital Facilities](#)

Volume 2 contains background information pertaining to [each of the Plan elements, some of which refer to additional functional and/or strategic plans for more detailed background information for the element.](#) [The](#)

## Introduction

[Introduction Background Report in Volume 2 contains a Community Profile of SeaTac, providing a summary of the demographics of the City today.](#)

## Vision Statement

The City of SeaTac's vision is based upon the creative imagination, dreams, and common values of the City's residents and businesses.

The City hereby pledges its commitment to achieve the following vision for the future of the SeaTac community.

*[The City of SeaTac is envisioned to be economically strong, environmentally sensitive, visually pleasing, and people-oriented with a socially diverse but cohesive population and employment mix. These attributes create a positive identity and image for the community and contribute to a city of the future that works.](#)*

*[The essence of a growing, prosperous, and vibrant City of SeaTac is found not in its built or natural environment alone but in the collective spirit of those who live and who work within the SeaTac community.](#)*

*[The built aspects of this community—its residential and commercial structures, transportation network, park and recreation facilities, utility systems and other public and private facilities, as well as the natural environmental setting—are not considered as ends in themselves, but as means for enhancing the quality of life and enriching the human spirit.](#)*

**[The City of SeaTac will be a people-oriented, multicultural place with well-connected, complete neighborhoods. Economically vibrant, environmentally sensitive, visually pleasing, socially diverse, SeaTac will convey a positive identity and strong sense of place, as a livable, equitable, and sustainable city of the future.](#)**

*[There will be expanded access to opportunities for all people living, working, and doing business in the community, as well as those who come to visit. The strength of SeaTac's collective spirit will be found in those who call SeaTac home and within the entrepreneurs working hard to support thriving businesses and start new ones.](#)*

*[As an international hub of hospitality, visitors traveling through Sea-Tac International Airport will enjoy premier destination opportunities. Residents and visitors alike will enjoy great parks and recreation activities.](#)*

*[SeaTac's transportation network, park and recreation facilities, utility systems, and other public and private facilities, as well as the natural environmental setting—will be designed and maintained to enhance the quality of life and enrich the human spirit of this strong community.](#)*

### **By 2044:**

- **[Urban villages along the International Boulevard corridor, will anchor SeaTac's Urban Center and provide vibrant, higher density business and residential districts adjacent to the light rail stations, where most job and housing growth will be concentrated, and there are a variety of amenities and activities for residents, workers, and visitors to enjoy.](#)**



## Introduction

- Neighborhood villages will emerge and expand at central locations outside of the Urban Center as important community hubs where people can easily walk to access healthy foods, shops, work, schools, parks, and daily services.
- Corner stores will provide new opportunities for entrepreneurship and local businesses, while providing access to daily goods and services in walking distance of people's homes.
- Flexible, warehouse, industrial districts will provide new jobs and economic opportunities that support the international airport and other regional commerce activities.

The City of SeaTac will be known as a place where all are welcome to grow and thrive.

## Framework

This section addresses general policies which are not specific to a particular element of the Plan.

## The City Serves the SeaTac Community

### Goal 1.1

**As a public entity, serve the good of the SeaTac community.**

#### Policy 1.1A

**Actively promote inclusive and meaningful community engagement and implement an effective public awareness and notification process that encourages community involvement in all Comprehensive Plan, subarea, transportation, and park plans, as well as other planning or public projects the City undertakes.**

For the City to identify the needs and interests of a community, community members must be engaged in the planning process. The City should continue to provide a variety of opportunities (e.g., public meetings, surveys, neighborhood events, use of community liaisons, representative committees) for community members to voice their concerns and comments about the state of their city. Community meetings are a particularly valuable venue for staff to hear community concerns first-hand, initiate discussion among neighbors, and generate confidence among community members that issues and concerns will be heeded. In a culturally and linguistically diverse city, providing forums and outreach materials in multiple languages and specifically reaching out to community leaders are key strategies to engage all population segments.

#### Policy 1.1B

**Support a culture of dialogue and partnership among community members, agencies, organizations, officials, and City departments.**

#### Policy 1.1C

**Serve as a model employer and public agency by providing an example to the larger community through equitable, healthy, and environmentally sound practices and the highest standard of service possible to the public.**



See the Utilities Capital Facilities Element for ways the City is implementing environmentally sound practices.

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~~The~~ While endeavoring to achieve the highest standard of services to the public, ~~the~~ City can further its stance on sustainability and lead implementation efforts through socially equitable hiring and contractual practices, purchasing eco-friendly supplies that are sourced from “fair trade” companies, providing healthy food options in City Hall, reducing energy use within public buildings, and promoting non-motorized and eco-friendly travel for City staff.

**Policy 1.1D**

**When preparing City policies and regulations, take into account the good of the community as a whole, while treating property owners fairly, and allowing some reasonable economic use for all properties.**

To ensure that the City is accomplishing what its policies intended and to respond to changing needs, develop a monitoring program with measurable outcomes. Use the ongoing evaluations to inform the two-year updates and mandated eight-year periodic updates to the Plan.

**Policy 1.1E**

**Where possible, evaluate the effectiveness of policies, regulations, and other implementation actions in achieving SeaTac’s goals and vision and update the Plan as needed.**

See the Introduction Background Report for more information on GMA and regional consistency.

## Consistency and Coordination

**Goal 1.2**

**Ensure that SeaTac’s Comprehensive Plan is internally consistent and remains consistent with the State’s Growth Management Act and regional growth management plans and policies.**

**Policy 1.2A**

**Manage population and employment growth in a way that is compatible with SeaTac’s values and aspirations while supporting the Vision 20540 Regional Growth Strategy.**

**Policy 1.2B**

**Ensure that the Comprehensive Plan’s policies remain consistent with [Puget Sound Regional Council’s \(PSRC\)](#) Multicounty Planning Policies (Vision 20540 and Transportation 20540) and King County’s Countywide Planning Policies.**

**Policy 1.2C**

**Coordinate the SeaTac Comprehensive Plan with the Comprehensive Plans of adjacent cities.**

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**Policy 1.2D**

**Maintain internal consistency among Comprehensive Plan elements and with implementing development regulations.**

SeaTac’s Urban Center is a designated regional growth center. PSRC’s Vision 20 0 envisions regional growth centers as major focal points of higher density population and employment, served with efficient multimodal transportation infrastructure and services. These regionally designated places are the primary locations for the arts, civic activity, commerce, and recreation. The regional growth centers, with their concentration of people and jobs, form the backbone for the transportation network of the four-county region. Linking these centers with a highly efficient transportation system allows the region to take actions to reduce the rate of growth in vehicle miles traveled, especially by providing and expanding transportation choices.

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## RECOMMENDED IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

This section identifies the specific steps, or implementation strategies, that achieve this Element’s policies. It also identifies the group(s) with primary responsibility for carrying out each strategy and the expected time frame within which the strategy should be addressed. Policy summaries are included in the table for reference.

As the Primary Responsibility column indicates, many of the implementation strategies will be initially undertaken by a specified board or commission. In most cases, the City Council will analyze the specific board/commission recommendation and make the final decision about how to proceed.

The time frame categories are defined as follows:

- Short-Term one to five years
- Medium-Term six to 10 years
- Long-Term 11 to 20 years
- Ongoing the strategy will be implemented on a continual basis

The time frames are target dates set regularly when the City Council adopts amendments to the Comprehensive Plan.

The list of proposed implementation strategies is a minimum set of action steps and is not intended to limit the City from undertaking other strategies not included in this list.

This section identifies the specific steps, or implementation strategies, that achieve this Element’s policies. It also identifies the group(s) with primary responsibility for carrying out each strategy and the expected time frame within which the strategy should be addressed. Policy summaries are included in the table for reference.

As the Primary Responsibility column indicates, many of the implementation strategies will be initially undertaken by a specified board or commission. In most cases, the City Council will analyze the specific board/commission recommendation and make the final decision about how to proceed.

POLICIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	TIME FRAME
<b>1.1 SERVE THE GOOD OF THE SEATAC COMMUNITY.</b>			
1.1A Actively promote inclusive and meaningful community engagement and implement an effective public awareness and notification process that encourages community involvement in all Comprehensive Plan,	Implement an effective public awareness and notification process for all planning or public projects.	Planning Commission, Staff	Ongoing
	Continue to enhance the accessibility of the City’s digital communication opportunities, including multilingual options.	Staff City Council	Ongoing

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POLICIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	TIME FRAME
<p>subarea, transportation, and park plans, as well as other planning or public projects the City undertakes.</p>	<p>Host a variety of events and opportunities (e.g., public meetings, surveys, neighborhood events, use of community liaisons, representative committees) for community engagement during planning processes.</p>	<p>Staff</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Provide forums and outreach materials in multiple languages appropriate for SeaTac demographics.</p>	<p>Planning Commission, City Council</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Build relationships with community leaders. Continue funding the community liaison program to ensure all populations are included in City processes.</p>	<p>Staff, City Council</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Seek boards and commissions representative of SeaTac’s demographics.</p>	<p>Staff, Commissions, City Council</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p><b>1.1B</b> Support a culture of dialogue and partnership among community members, agencies, organizations, officials, and City departments.</p>	<p>Meet regularly with other departments to coordinate projects and planning across “silos.”</p>	<p>Staff</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Brief elected officials regularly on departmental work and upcoming projects.</p>	<p>Staff, City Council</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Maintain relationships with related organizations and agencies (e.g., PSRC, King County, nearby cities, nonprofits).</p>	<p>Staff</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>See community engagement measures in 1.1A to increase dialogue with community members.</p>		

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POLICIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	TIME FRAME		
<p><b>1.1C</b>                      Serve as a model employer and public agency by providing an example to the larger community through equitable, healthy, and environmentally sound practices, <a href="#">and the highest standard of services possible to the public.</a></p>	Hire staff and contractors in socially equitable ways that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek to provide a fair proportion of contracts are given to minority and women-owned businesses.</li> <li>• Seek people representative of SeaTac’s demographics to sit on commissions, committees and as staff members.</li> <li>• Do not discriminate based on race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, religion, national origin, pregnancy, genetic information, marital status, disability, or status as a U.S. veteran.</li> <li>• When viable, seek businesses based in, or owned by residents of SeaTac</li> </ul>	Staff, City Council	Ongoing		
	Work with school districts to promote civic engagement and encourage a diverse body of people to enter into civic work.			Staff, City Council	Ongoing
	Where practical, purchase eco-friendly supplies that are sourced from “fair trade” companies.			Staff, City Council	Ongoing
	Provide healthy food options at City Hall vending machines and events.			Staff, City Council	Ongoing
	Reduce energy use within public buildings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor and evaluate energy use.</li> <li>• Create a plan for energy reduction.</li> <li>• Implement plan.</li> </ul>			Staff, City Council	Ongoing
<p><b>1.1C</b>                      Continued</p>	In all new public buildings, build to a minimum of LEED Gold and aspire to Living Building Challenge level of environmentally friendly practices.	Staff, City Council	Ongoing		
	Promote non-motorized and eco-friendly travel for City staff by providing transit passes, high quality bicycle storage, showers, and electric vehicle charging stations and by			Staff, City Council	Ongoing

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POLICIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	TIME FRAME
	locating and designing City facilities for multimodal access.		
	<a href="#">Continue efforts to provide the highest standard of services to SeaTac community members including residents, businesses, developers, workers, and visitors.</a>	<a href="#">Staff, City Council</a>	<a href="#">Ongoing</a>
<b>1.1D</b> When preparing City policies and regulations, take into account the good of the community as a whole, while treating property owners fairly, and allowing some reasonable economic use for all properties.	Clearly indicate public benefit in City plans to clarify rationale behind regulations and permit review processes.	Staff, City Council	Ongoing
	See permit review implementation strategies in the Economic Vitality Element.		
<b>1.1E</b> Where possible, evaluate the effectiveness of policies, regulations, and other implementation actions in achieving SeaTac’s goals and vision and update the Plan as needed.	Develop a monitoring program with measurable outcomes.	Staff, City Council	Short-Term
	Evaluate performance in each monitored area.	Staff, City Council	Short-Term and Ongoing
	Use the above evaluation to inform the Plan’s regular updates and mandated <a href="#">eighteen</a> -year periodic updates.	Staff, City Council	Short-Term and Ongoing
	Update regulations and other implementation strategies as needed to respond to evaluation.	Staff, City Council	Short-Term and Ongoing

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POLICIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	TIME FRAME
<b>1.2 ENSURE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL CONSISTENCY.</b>			
<p>1.2A Manage population and employment growth in a way that is compatible with SeaTac’s values and aspirations while</p>	<p>See community engagement strategies for Policy 1.1A and 1.1C for SeaTac’s values and aspirations. Inform community of regional growth strategies.</p>	<p>Staff, City Council</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Update Land Use, Transportation, Economic Vitality, and other Elements as needed to reflect community needs and interests within the regional framework.</p>	<p>Staff, City Council</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>See interjurisdictional and regional planning strategies in 1.2B below.</p>		
<p>1.2B Ensure that the Comprehensive Plan’s policies remain consistent with Puget Sound Regional Council’s (PSRC) Multicounty Planning Policies (Vision <a href="#">2040-2050</a> and Transportation <a href="#">20402050</a>) and King County’s Countywide Planning Policies.</p>	<p>Periodically use Department of Commerce Growth Management Services and Puget Sound Regional Council checklists to review the plan for consistency with State law and Multicounty Planning Policies.</p>	<p>Staff, Planning Commission, City Council</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>Dedicate staff time to remain involved in PSRC and countywide planning efforts.</p>	<p>Staff, City Council</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>1.2C Coordinate the SeaTac Comprehensive Plan with the Comprehensive Plans of adjacent cities.</p>	<p>Coordinate with neighboring cities, especially for planning transportation, environmental, and recreational facilities and systems.</p>	<p>Staff, City Council</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>1.2D Maintain internal consistency among</p>	<p>Periodically review the Plan and associated regulations for internal consistency.</p>	<p>Staff, City Council</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>



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POLICIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY	TIME FRAME
Comprehensive Plan elements and with implementing development regulations.	Reassess the Plan’s Land Use Element if the City determines that the anticipated funding for <a href="#">category 1 and 3 facility</a> capital <a href="#">facility</a> improvements <a href="#">identified in the City’s Capital Facilities Plan</a> will not be available.	Staff, City Council	Ongoing