

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: February 14, 2013
TO: Michael Drollinger, Planning Commission Chair
Members of Renton Planning Commission
FROM: Erika Conkling, Senior Planner
SUBJECT: Comprehensive Plan Vision

ISSUE

What should be updated in the Comprehensive Plan Vision?

RECOMMENDATION

Most of the ideas in the Vision are still applicable and should be included. Public review should focus on confirming this approach, with opportunity for new ideas and themes to surface. The *Renton Business Plan* should be included by reference in the Vision Element.

BACKGROUND SUMMARY

Although not a required Element of the Comprehensive Plan, establishing a clear vision is essential to the process of comprehensive planning. The purpose of the vision is to capture the community's desires for the future. It will pass on the values that are important today as well as the community's highest aspirations. Themes established in the Vision will carry throughout all of the Comprehensive Plan Elements, helping to translate these ideals into the policies used to make City decisions. In this way, setting the vision is a key step to ensure early involvement in the planning process, a significant goal and requirement of the Growth Management Act.

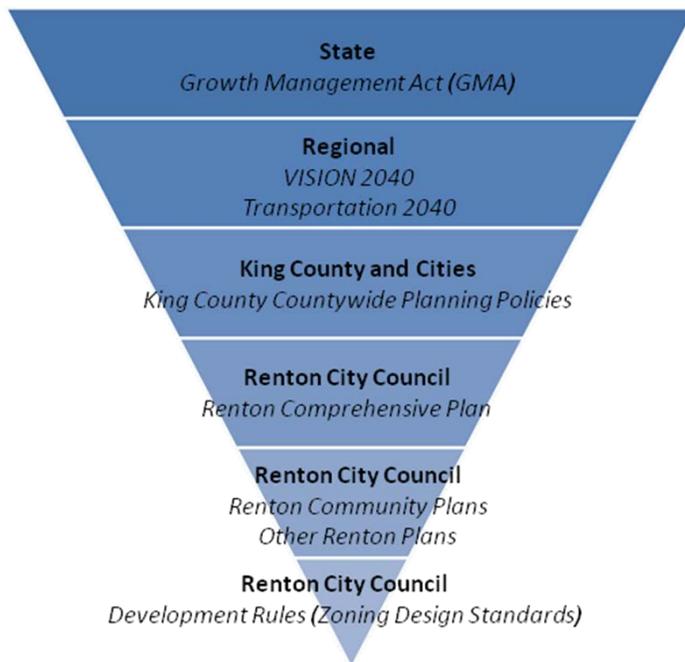
Major updates of Comprehensive Plans are required by the Growth Management Act to make certain that plans are up-to-date and on the right track in meeting community needs. Staff's assessment of Renton's current Comprehensive Plan is that while there are several areas that need to be updated, the policies of the Plan in general are working well. What this means is that the focus of the required Comprehensive Plan review will be to update inventories and existing conditions, ensure consistency with new policies at the state, regional, and county level, and streamline the Plan to make it more user friendly.

Renton's current Vision Element contains two parts, a summary of the *Renton Business Plan* and the community vision. Consistent with the overall approach to updating the

Comprehensive Plan, the Vision Element reviewed will begin with a public check-in, which will be conducted through a public workshop and survey. This should provide the opportunity to see if the public agrees with the ideas in the current vision and find out if there are other ideas that should be included.

The *Renton Business Plan* is an important document developed by Council that sets mid-term goals and priorities. It contains a vision and mission statement with key goals in a one-page format that provides an easy-to-understand way of sharing Council priorities with the public. Few city councils prepare a Business Plan, and this is a really unique way that Renton works toward transparency in representative democracy. In 2006, the Vision Element was amended to include the *Renton Business Plan*. Since that time, the Vision has been updated as Council has changed its business plan.

Such an important document should be integrated with the Comprehensive Plan and it belongs in the Vision Element. For comprehensive planning to be effective, however, the Comprehensive Plan vision should be supported by the *Renton Business Plan*.



Functional plans of the City, such as the *Renton Business Plan*, should be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and provide greater specificity or clarity on how the City is to achieve the goals and objectives from the Comprehensive Plan. It is appropriate for the *Renton Business Plan* to provide a set of priorities for Council action over a six-year time period that are drawn from the many community priorities expressed in the 20-year Comprehensive Plan and specifically the Vision Element.

After the *Renton Business Plan* in the Vision Element is the community vision which covers a number of diverse topics. Handling growth, maintaining diverse housing stock, improving neighborhoods, restoring and enhancing the environment, providing high levels of service, supporting redevelopment opportunities, and securing a strong employment base are all concepts covered in the current vision. This is an ambitious vision and the City continues to strive for its implementation.

To check-in on the current vision, staff prepared a short survey. Four sections cover topics such as managing growth, providing transportation options, caring for the environment, and quality of life. Participants select their level of agreement with the current statement of vision, with an option to provide comments at the end of each section. Each section assumes that the topic covered is a priority of the community, but for those who feel differently there is an option to state that the topic is not important. In addition to the survey, there will be a public workshop on February 28, 2013 to collect input and qualitative information on the Vision from the public. Based on this input, staff will return with a draft Vision Element in March.