

**WAC 468-63-060 Growth and transportation efficiency centers.**

**(1) Purpose and process.**

**(a) Purpose and objective of the growth and transportation efficiency center (GTEC) program.** The state's goal for the GTEC program is to provide greater access to employment and residential centers while increasing the proportion of people not driving alone during peak periods on the state highway system. Counties, cities and towns may designate existing or new activity centers as GTECs in order to establish a transportation demand management (TDM) program in the designated area. The purpose of the rules pertaining to GTECs is to provide a consistent framework for local jurisdictions to exercise their authority to implement a GTEC via comprehensive plans, development regulations, and transportation investments that support population growth and economic development, transportation-efficient land uses, and transportation demand management strategies.

The state intends for GTECs to be developed in a collaborative planning process that builds upon the information in local and regional CTR plans as well as other existing plans and programs such as the local comprehensive plan, unified development codes, the transportation improvement program, economic development plans. The state intends for the development of the GTEC program plan to be informed by and coordinated with the development of local and regional CTR plans.

The state intends to focus state program resources provided for GTECs in those urban areas that can provide the greatest current or future benefits for highway system efficiency.

**(b) Jurisdictional coordination.** The state encourages jurisdictions to discuss interjurisdictional issues and evaluate the possibility of creating a cross-boundary GTEC. While these rules refer to the actions of a single city or county in designating a GTEC, nothing in these sections shall prohibit jurisdictions from cooperating to designate GTECs that cross jurisdictional boundaries. Jurisdictions designating a cross-boundary GTEC shall adopt consistent ordinances and enter into a cooperational partnership to implement the GTEC program.

**(c) Consistency for employers.** Major employers that are affected by the base CTR program, when located within a designated GTEC, shall only be required to fulfill one set of requirements, if the GTEC program and base CTR program requirements vary. Jurisdictions that allow major employers to follow the requirements of the GTEC, rather than the base CTR program, shall ensure that major employer worksites are measured in a manner that allows accountability for the worksite and is consistent with the measurement guidelines established by WSDOT and available on the agency's web site.

**(d) Designation and certification.** RCW 70.94.537(2) requires WSDOT to establish methods for RTPOs to evaluate and certify that designated GTECs meet the minimum requirements and are therefore eligible for funding.

**(i) Minimum land use and transportation criteria.** RCW 70.94.537(2) requires WSDOT to establish guidance criteria for GTECs. Minimum land use and transportation criteria for GTECs shall be developed by the RTPO in collaboration with local jurisdictions, transit agencies, major employers, and other affected parties as part of the regional CTR plan. The regional CTR plan may include a map that depicts which areas of the region meet the criteria.

The state's intent is to constrain funding resources to those areas that have the greatest potential to reduce single-occupant vehicle commute trips on the state highway system in the future. The state

will use the RTPPO certification of the GTEC's potential system benefits as part of its funding prioritization process.

(ii) Eligibility and designation process. To be eligible for certification as a designated "growth and transportation efficiency center," the jurisdiction must submit a GTEC certification application to the applicable RTPPO that:

(A) Describes how the GTEC meets the minimum land use and transportation criteria established by the RTPPO as part of the regional CTR plan;

(B) Includes a copy of the GTEC program plan and the required elements identified in this rule;

(C) Identifies when and how the GTEC program plan will be incorporated into future updates or amendments of the applicable local comprehensive plan; and

(D) Includes letters of support for the GTEC program plan from partners that are expected to contribute resources to the plan or intend to work with the local jurisdiction to develop future strategies and funding resources for the GTEC.

(iii) Schedule. For GTEC programs to be eligible for state CTR program funds, the CTR board must receive GTEC certification reports, or local jurisdiction requests for appeal, for new or updated GTEC programs by October 1, 2007, and by April 1 every two years thereafter.

These rules do not constrain the ability of local jurisdictions to designate a GTEC at any time, or for RTPPOs to certify new or updated GTECs at any time.

GTEC program plans may be updated annually to reflect changing conditions and new information. However, substantial changes to the program plan, including reductions in targets, densities, and investments, may be made no more than once every biennium. RTPPOs may require local jurisdictions to update GTEC program plans as part of the regional CTR plan update. Substantially modified GTEC program plans shall be resubmitted to the RTPPO for recertification.

(iv) Certification. RCW 70.94.528 (1)(b) requires designated GTECs to be certified by the applicable RTPPO to be eligible for state funding. The RTPPO shall evaluate the jurisdiction's GTEC certification application to determine if the proposed GTEC meets the requirements outlined in this rule. The RTPPO shall, in partnership with the local jurisdiction and WSDOT, evaluate how achievement of the GTEC goal would affect the performance of the state highway system and the regional transportation system.

Within sixty days following receipt of the jurisdiction's application, the RTPPO shall issue a certification report to the jurisdiction that either certifies or declines to certify the GTEC. The certification report shall state the rationale for the decision and describe in quantitative terms how the GTEC addresses state and regional highway deficiencies, and what benefits for the transportation system the GTEC is projected to provide. The RTPPO shall provide a copy of the certification report and the GTEC program plan report to the CTR board.

(v) Appeal. RCW 70.94.528 (1)(b) allows jurisdictions denied certification of a designated GTEC by an RTPPO to appeal the decision to the CTR board. If the RTPPO declines to certify a GTEC when requested by the local jurisdiction, the local jurisdiction may appeal the decision to the CTR board within sixty days following receipt of the RTPPO's certification report. The CTR board will hear the appeal within sixty days of a jurisdiction request.

If the CTR board concurs with the RTPO decision, the jurisdiction's GTEC will not be eligible for state funding. The local jurisdiction may then choose to implement the GTEC (while ineligible for state funding) or revise its application and request RTPO certification during the next biennial budget cycle. If the CTR board overrules the RTPO and certifies the GTEC, then the jurisdiction's GTEC will be eligible for state funding if it is designated within one hundred twenty days following receipt of the notice of the state GTEC funding allocation.

(vi) **Adoption.** The jurisdiction shall "designate" the GTEC by adopting the GTEC program plan via official resolution or ordinance within one hundred twenty days following receipt of the notice of the state GTEC funding allocation. If the jurisdiction does not designate the GTEC program plan within this deadline, then it will not be eligible for any state or regional funding intended for GTEC programs for the current biennium.

(vii) **Funding.** State funding for GTECs shall be allocated by the CTR board, based on the board's funding policy developed pursuant to RCW 70.94.544.

(2) **GTEC program plan.**

(a) **Program development process.** RCW 70.94.528 (1)(a) requires the GTEC program plan to be developed in consultation with local transit agencies, the applicable RTPO, major employers, and other interested parties.

(i) **Collaboration.** The local jurisdiction shall invite, as appropriate, representatives of major employers, property managers, local transit agencies, the applicable RTPO, business associations and economic development organizations, nonprofit transportation and land use advocacy organizations, pedestrian and bicycle advocacy organizations, public health agencies, tribal governments, and residents, employees and businesses that will be affected by the GTEC to participate in the development of the GTEC program plan. The local jurisdiction and its invitees shall discuss the findings of the gap analysis portion of the plan and collaboratively develop the program's goals, targets, and program strategies.

(ii) **Informal review.** The local jurisdiction shall give collaborating entities and those entities affected by the GTEC designation an opportunity to review the draft program plan before it is released to the public and submitted for certification to the RTPO.

(iii) **Public outreach.** The local jurisdiction shall follow, at a minimum, a comparable process to the local requirements and procedures established for purposes of public outreach for comprehensive plan development, adoption, or amendment, including public notices and public meetings and hearings.

(b) **Required elements.** RCW 70.94.528 (1)(c) requires the TDM program elements in the GTEC to be consistent with the rules established by WSDOT.

The state intends for GTECs to be developed in a collaborative planning process that builds upon the information in local and regional CTR plans as well as other existing plans and programs, such as the local comprehensive plan, unified development codes, the transportation improvement program, and economic development plans. The state intends for the GTEC program plan to be a focused planning element that is coordinated with the local and regional CTR plan.

The GTEC program plan shall describe local conditions and use projections of future growth to define the scope of the problem that the GTEC goals and strategies are designed to address.

The GTEC program plan shall contain the following elements:

(i) Executive summary. The GTEC program plan shall include an executive summary of the jurisdiction's vision for the GTEC, how the GTEC relates to the base CTR program, how the plan's success will affect transportation access to and within the center, and states:

(A) The GTEC program goals and targets;

(B) The GTEC target population;

(C) Proposed program strategies, including policy and service changes needed to execute the plan and proposed land use strategies to support the plan; and

(D) Key funding and service partnerships.

(ii) Background information. The GTEC program plan shall include:

(A) A description of the geographic boundaries of the GTEC;

(B) Documentation that the GTEC is located within the jurisdiction's urban growth area; and

(C) A brief description of the jurisdiction's vision for the GTEC, including information from the local comprehensive plan, other transportation plans and programs, and funded transportation improvements.

(iii) Evaluation of land use and transportation context. Jurisdictions shall evaluate the significance of local conditions, characteristics and trends to determine which factors are most critical to the success of the plan. The RTPO, local transit agencies, state agencies and other appropriate entities shall assist this process by providing data and plans and discussing issues with jurisdictions.

The local jurisdiction shall evaluate existing conditions and characteristics and projected future conditions and characteristics. The jurisdiction may choose to evaluate, but is not limited to, the following issues:

(A) Existing conditions and characteristics. These may include, but are not limited to:

(I) Existing land uses, including the general location and extent of housing, commerce, industry, recreation, open spaces, public utilities, public facilities, and other land uses, and population densities and building intensities, with particular attention to mix of land uses and proximity of residential and employment locations.

(II) Existing transportation network, including:

- Major origins and destinations of trips, including traffic impacts of activity to, from and within a GTEC to state-owned transportation facilities, if adequate information is available from WSDOT to support this evaluation;

- Transit service network and level of service including unused capacity and facilities, service deficiencies and needs, if adequate information is available from transit agencies to support this evaluation;

- Available capacity and performance of other HOV systems serving the GTEC, if adequate information is available from transit agencies and WSDOT to support this evaluation;

- Public and private parking capacity, pricing, and development standards (minimums, maximums, and incentives to reduce parking);

- Significance of the use of and deficiencies in the street, sidewalk, and trail/bicycle path network for bicyclists and pedestrians and deficiencies in end of trip facilities (e.g., bike parking, storage and shower/locker facilities) necessary to support bicyclists and pedestrians;

- Estimated commute mode share in the GTEC for transit, ride-share, bike and walk for all employers;

- Number and size of CTR-affected employers and commute mode share by CTR employees; and
- Local and regional transportation demand management strategies available to businesses in the GTEC, including incentives and programs that promote nondrive-alone travel.

(III) Local and regional economic development plans.

(B) Projected future conditions and characteristics. Jurisdictions shall use existing data, plans and programs to describe anticipated changes in the future. Jurisdictions shall use projections of future growth to evaluate how it will affect transportation access and economic development in the GTEC. Factors may include, but are not limited to:

(I) Projected population and employment growth for at least ten and twenty years;

(II) Projected changes in land use types and intensities for at least ten and twenty years;

(III) Forecasts of traffic, delay, mode share, and parking needs for at least ten years to provide information on the location, timing, and capacity needs of future growth, as well as to describe the costs to accommodate growth under the status quo (for example, describing the projected parking costs, delay, and other costs that will be incurred from future growth); and

(IV) Identification of jurisdiction plans, policies and capital programs for the provision of infrastructure, services and amenities to support planned growth and reduce single-occupant-vehicle trips, including additional transit routes, HOV capacity, pricing strategies and nonmotorized facilities and amenities.

(iv) Gap analysis. Using the information gathered in discussion of the existing and projected future conditions and characteristics, the local jurisdiction and its partners shall evaluate the degree to which existing and future services, policies, and programs will be sufficient to maintain or improve transportation access and increase the proportion of nondrive-alone travel as the area grows. This evaluation shall describe the gaps between what services, policies and programs will be available versus what may be needed to address the projected conditions. The jurisdiction's evaluation of its own policies, programs, and regulations shall include, but is not limited to an evaluation of land use and transportation regulations, including parking policies and ordinances, streetscape design standards, development requirements, concurrency policies, level of service standards, assessment of impact fees, and zoning, to determine the extent that they can reduce the need for drive-alone travel and attract and maintain a mix of complementary land uses, particularly uses that generate pedestrian activity and transit ridership.

(v) Description of program goals and measurements. The state's goal for the GTEC program is to provide greater access to employment and residential centers while increasing the proportion of people not driving alone during peak periods on the state highway system. The GTEC program plan's established goals and targets shall be more aggressive than the minimum goal for the urban growth area established by the jurisdiction, in accordance with RCW 70.94.528(1). The GTEC's established goals and targets shall be designed to maintain or improve transportation access and increase the proportion of nondrive-alone travel as the area grows. The goals and targets shall be designed to support achievement of local and regional goals for transportation and land use.

(A) Goals and targets. Jurisdictions shall have flexibility in establishing GTEC goals and targets, as long as the targets are certified by the RTPPO to be more aggressive than the minimum targets for the urban growth area established by the jurisdiction. The RTPPO shall certify that the GTEC program targets meet this standard if the GTEC program goal is to reduce, on a relative or absolute basis, more drive-alone trips or more vehicle miles traveled than the minimum base CTR program target in the urban growth area.

The GTEC targets shall be expressed in terms of changes from a base year value.

The RTPPO shall determine in the GTEC certification report if the GTEC program target meets the standard defined in RCW 70.94.528(1), and work with WSDOT to evaluate how attainment of the target will affect the performance of the state highway system.

(B) Performance measures. The GTEC program plan shall describe the methodology for measuring the program's performance. The program's performance shall be measured at least once every two years after the base year measurement in order to assess progress toward the established GTEC goals and targets. The program's measurement methodology shall be consistent with the GTEC guidelines established by WSDOT and listed on the agency's web site.

(vi) Description of program strategies. Using the gap analysis evaluation, the local jurisdiction and its partners shall identify what new or revised services, policies and programs may be needed in order to meet the GTEC's established goals and targets.

The local jurisdiction shall consult with appropriate representatives of local transit agencies, the applicable RTPPO, business associations and economic development organizations, nonprofit transportation and land use advocacy organizations, public health agencies, and residents, employees and businesses that will be affected by the GTEC so that they may provide their perception of what services, policies and programs are needed to meet the GTEC's established goals and targets. The state's intent is for the discussion to be an open, collaborative process, and for all of the parties to think about how they may be able to improve their own services, policies and programs, or develop stronger partnerships, in order to support the GTEC's established goals and targets.

The GTEC program plan shall identify the target population that will be the focus of the plan, as well as the services, policies and programs that will be needed in order to meet the GTEC's established goals and targets. These may include new services, policies and programs or improvements to existing services, policies and programs. The state recognizes that program strategies will vary across the state, depending on local conditions, needs, partnerships, and resources.

The GTEC program plan may include but is not limited to the following strategies:

- (A) Improvements to policies and regulations;
- (B) New services and facilities; and
- (C) New marketing and incentive programs.

(vii) Financial plan. The GTEC program plan shall include a sustainable financial plan that demonstrates how the jurisdiction plans to implement the GTEC program to meet its goals and targets. The plan shall describe resources from public and private sources that are reasonably expected to be made available to carry out the plan, and recommend any innovating financing techniques consistent with chapter 47.29 RCW, including public/private partnerships, to finance needed facilities, services, and programs. The plan shall specifically de-

scribe when and how the expected funding resources will fund the plan's strategies. The plan shall describe how locally derived funding resources will be leveraged as a match to state GTEC program funds allocated through the CTR board according to its funding policy. The plan shall describe the jurisdiction's contingency plan if anticipated funds do not become available to support the plan. Jurisdictions may consider using other state TDM funding resources, including the trip reduction performance program, the vanpool investment program, the ride-share tax credit, and the regional mobility grant program, in funding their GTEC programs.

(viii) Proposed organizational structure for implementing the program. The GTEC program plan shall identify the organization or organizations that are proposed to administer the GTEC program. The plan shall describe the roles of the local jurisdiction's partners by describing who will implement the various strategies identified in the plan and when the elements of the plan are expected to be implemented. If the jurisdiction will update its comprehensive plan to be consistent with the GTEC program plan, it shall describe which elements need updating and when the update will occur.

(ix) Documentation of public outreach. The GTEC program plan shall document the level and frequency of outreach and consultation with local transit agencies, the applicable RTPO, major employers, and other affected parties in the development of the GTEC program plan. The jurisdiction may choose to include letters of support from business associations, developers, employers and others as documentation of consultation. When submitting the plan to the RTPO for certification, the local jurisdiction shall include letters of support from those partners that are expected to contribute resources to the plan or intend to work with the local jurisdiction to develop future strategies and funding resources for the GTEC.

(x) Description of relationship to local CTR plan. Jurisdictions shall describe the relationship of the GTEC program plan to the base CTR program in the local CTR plan. The narrative shall include information about what the GTEC plan adds beyond the requirements and strategies in the base CTR program, and the expected benefits of the GTEC plan for the base CTR program.

**(3) Support for GTECs.**

(a) **Prioritization.** RCW 70.94.528 requires transit agencies, local governments, and RTPOs to identify certified GTECs as priority areas for new service and facility investments in their respective investment plans. Transit agencies, local governments, regional transportation planning organizations, and the state shall identify certified growth and transportation efficiency centers as priority areas for new service and facility investments in future updates of their investment plans, as required by RCW 70.94.528(1). Periodically, the CTR board shall evaluate the degree to which prioritization of GTECs has occurred.

(i) Transit development plan. The local transit agency shall examine and revise funding prioritization policies, recognizing funding constraints and competing priorities, in order to meet the state's intent to prioritize certified GTECs for investments in facilities, services, and amenities in its transit development plan.

(ii) City and county six-year comprehensive transportation programs. The city or county shall examine and revise funding prioritization policies, recognizing funding constraints and competing priorities, in order to meet the state's intent to prioritize certified

GTECs for investments in facilities, services, and amenities in its comprehensive transportation program.

(iii) Regional transportation plan. The RTPPO shall examine and revise funding prioritization policies, recognizing funding constraints and competing priorities, in order to meet the state's intent to prioritize certified GTECs for investments in facilities, services, and amenities in its regional transportation plan.

(iv) State plans. WSDOT, the department of community, trade, and economic development, the transportation improvement board and the public works trust fund shall examine funding prioritization policies, recognizing funding constraints and competing priorities, in order to meet the state's intent to prioritize certified GTECs for investments in facilities and services as part of state plans and programs.

(b) **Integration.** The GTEC program plan shall be incorporated into other plans and programs, including local comprehensive plans and transportation improvement programs, as they are updated after January 1, 2008.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 70.94.537. WSR 15-13-038, § 468-63-060, filed 6/9/15, effective 7/10/15; WSR 07-05-065, § 468-63-060, filed 2/20/07, effective 3/23/07.]