Central Puget Sound Regional Growth Centers Status Update

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Puget Sound Regional Council.
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Executive Summary

The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) is the metropolitan planning organization for the central Puget Sound region. It is an association of cities, towns, counties, ports and state agencies that come together to develop policies and make decisions regarding regional issues. To achieve the benefits of focusing growth, PSRC is evaluating the performance of the 27 designated Regional Growth Centers (RGC) identified in VISION 2040. RGCs are fairly small areas of concentrated housing and employment that serve a regional purpose, and are often cultural and civic hubs. Part of the regional growth strategy is to strengthen and revitalize these centers. The purpose of this report is to evaluate the performance of the RGCs by answering the following research questions:

*What planning and investment strategies, programs, regulations have been used in Puget Sound Regional Council’s designated Regional Growth Centers?*

*Are there any replicable best practices and lessons learned can be discerned from this information?*

By assessing how well the various municipalities have done in focusing growth in their RGCs, the information gathered will allow PSRC to determine the best replicable practices. This was accomplished by creating a survey, fieldwork tool, and photo essay tool, which are consistent with the seven key areas of VISION 2040: center plan concept, environment, land use, housing, economy, public services, and transportation. The survey was sent to all 27 RGCs, and fieldwork was conducted in 16 RGCs, due to time considerations. The fieldwork and photo essay tools identify tangible characteristics to look for in each RGC, and were used during visits of 16 centers to directly observe the features of the center and to photograph those features to create a comprehensive photo essay. The survey provides important goals, policies and strategies used in the centers that are not able to be observed. The response rate of the survey was good and only four centers failed to return the survey. However, the quality of the returned surveys ranged from very detailed and comprehensive to questions being skipped altogether.

Survey Results

*Center Plan Concept*

Cities throughout the region have Comprehensive Plans that frequently include certain elements or chapters on their RGCs. In addition, PSRC requires centers to adopt subarea plans specific to the RGC. All but two of the centers have some type of subarea plan that has policies and future plans for the center, although another two are still under development. Most center plans address a local vision for the center, environment, land use, housing, economic development, public facilities, transportation, and the center’s relationship to the Comprehensive Plan. The center plan should also address the center’s relationship to countywide planning policies, to other nearby centers, and to sustainability, but around a third of the center plans fail to address these components. Over half of the center plans also do not address VISION 2040, because it was adopted in 2008 so the plans still need to be updated.
Environment

As a whole centers are doing a good job of protecting critical areas and planning with the natural environment in mind. Most centers have water quality policies and stormwater management guidelines beyond what is mandated by state law, which are often incentives for green building or low impact development. Most centers also have mode split goals, VMT reduction targets, and transit supportive polices in place to reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

Land Use

There are many aspects to land use, and the survey focused on five key areas: boundaries, encouraging dense developments, growth targets, issues, and relationships with nearby neighborhoods. The boundaries of the center often contain a mix of uses, such as downtowns, mixed-use neighborhoods, regional shopping cores, and concentrated jobs. Mechanisms used to encourage compact development in the centers were mostly incentive zoning, increasing FAR or building heights, planned actions, and design guidelines. Almost all centers have growth targets for the city and center, because these are areas where future growth should be targeted. Key land use issues were also addressed, and the most common issues are an oversupply of parking, lack of market demand, fragmented parcel ownership, and super-blocks. Finally, centers were asked to address their relationship to other areas of growth within the jurisdictions, although in most cities the RGC is the main area to focus growth.

Housing

Centers encourage housing through a variety of methods. The most common technique is to offer a multi-family tax exemption to encourage multi-family developments in the center. This can also be used to encourage affordable housing, and the City of Seattle only offers the tax exemption when 20% of the units are affordable. The next most common method is reducing density or height restrictions in the center or offering density/FAR bonuses for the provision of market rate or affordable housing.

Economic Development

The most common economic sectors in the RGCs are government and education (usually higher-education), healthcare, retail, services, and general office. Centers are compact areas of jobs, and cities have Economic Development departments to support job creation in centers. Other common associations that support businesses in the RGCs are chambers of commerce, economic development alliances, downtown business associations, and small business development centers.

Public Facilities and Services

Centers are typically places that have abundant public facilities and services. If park and ride facilities are included, all 27 centers have at least one public facility or service. Downtowns and mixed-use centers typically feature more public facilities and services than office parks and malls. Public facilities like parks, transit facilities, post offices, conference centers and social service agencies are the most common in RGCs.
Transportation

The most common transportation issues affecting centers were barriers to travel (such as highways bisecting centers, lack of a complete grid, and super blocks) and lack of bicycle facilities. All RGCs have policies that address pedestrian friendly design and most have polices that address transit friendly design. The centers also have various forms of parking management, such as on-street, short term, structured, shared or below grade parking.

Public Investment and Best Practices

The most common public investments have been in roads, transit, public buildings, and parks, plazas, and open space. Downtown Bremerton, Burien, Downtown Everett, Kent, Northgate and Downtown Puyallup are centers that have seen significant public investment within their boundaries.

Common best practices listed included the importance of public engagement when developing a vision or plan for centers, public investments and partnerships, and the importance of staying the course and following through with the vision established in center plans.

Findings

Integration of VISION 2040 into Planning Documents

One of the findings from center planning documents is that many still address VISION 2020, and over half do not address VISION 2040. There are new expectations and guidelines set out in VISION 2040 and the Growth Center Subarea Planning Checklist. Almost all of the centers have very strong and in-depth subarea plans, and amending them to include any missing aspects from VISION 2040 would be beneficial. The subarea plans also address a unique vision to each center, which can form as the foundation for creating improvements and incorporating VISION 2040 expectations.

Sustainable Practices

The environment is one of the key policy areas in VISION 2040, and is part of its central theme of people, prosperity, and planet. Sustainable design practices are crucial for the region to preserve and restore the natural environment and improve water quality. Many centers offer incentives for green building and low impact development, which greatly decrease the impact of buildings and pavement in the region. Common low impact development practices seen around the centers are rain gardens or bioswales, pervious pavements, preserving vegetation, or green roofs.

Parks and Open Spaces

Parks and open spaces are important amenities for people who live and work in centers, and many centers are built up and lack many green spaces. Parks and plazas are urban refuges for the community to enjoy and congregate. Some centers have made major investments in their parks and open spaces by taking advantage of waterfront areas or developing parks and gathering areas near public buildings.
Parks contain many pedestrian amenities and can even showcase local art. These developments add vitality to the center and create an attractive place to live and visit.

Shift from Jobs to Mixed-Use

The centers are focused areas of employment, while population and housing units contribute to a much smaller portion of most centers. Centers should concentrate on encouraging housing within their borders, so that the people of the region are able to live closer to their places of work and reduce commute times and associated problems that arise from traffic congestion.

Encouraging mixed-use is done in a wide variety of ways, most often through incentives rather than regulations. Increasing public amenities and pedestrian friendly design creates a more desirable area to live in. Often the fieldwork showed that a key amenity missing in the center’s residential areas are sidewalks and bike paths connected to the core of the RGC. Most centers still need to make investments to improve connectivity, which would also make the center a more attractive place to live.

Boundaries and Land Use

The centers vary greatly in shape, size and activities within each center. The Growth Center Subarea Planning Checklist suggests a roughly uniform shape of about 1 mile (640 acres). Many centers are elongated and have residential neighborhoods that are not well connected to the downtown or core area. There are nine centers that are between 1 square mile and 1.5 square miles, and two that are even larger than 1.5 square miles. Another key issue with center designations is the absence of one clear idea of what a center should look like, since there are downtowns, mixed-use neighborhoods, malls and office parks. Often cities choose to create wider center boundaries to include disconnected residential areas rather than create a more compact center and use incentives and guidelines to encourage residential developments closer to the center’s main amenities and employment areas.

Management of Parking

About half of the centers have an oversupply of parking as a key land use issue. Most centers outside of Seattle do not charge for parking, but some cities are considering charging for on-street parking, which creates revenue for the city and causes some drivers to choose alternative modes of travel. Keeping on-street parking short-term and limited to usually two hours in centers also creates more accessibility to shops and creates a safety buffer between the sidewalk and street for pedestrians. This pushes long-term parking to the periphery or to park and rides. There are a few centers with shared parking policies or incentives for structured or below grade parking, which allows shops to be more accessible because there are not expansive surface lots surrounding them. Centers with large amounts of surface parking surrounding buildings feel disconnected and hostile to pedestrians.

Coping with Barriers to Travel

One common theme among the centers is their accessibility by major interstates and highways. One issue that affects many RGCs is a major interstate or highway that bisects the center, causing a barrier to travel. Other barriers listed in surveys were large parking lots, lack of a complete road network, and
congestion. Centers are struggling to find innovative ways to fix these problems, and have indicated they
do not have the money to either expand or complete their grid. Centers often need to make major
public investments to cope with barriers to travel. As these projects are often transportation
improvements, working with the regional transportation agencies, the state or federal government is a
common way to increase funding.

Public Facilities and Investment

Many municipalities with growth centers have invested heavily in public facilities and services within
center boundaries. From fieldwork observations, centers that invested in public facilities like libraries,
parks, community centers, major transit hubs, and museums seemed the most vibrant. These centers
seem to attract activity and investment. Other public facilities and services like city hall buildings, post
offices, courthouses, and police stations are essential to urban living environments, but do not seem to
create as much activity as community gathering areas.

Lack of Market Demand

Many centers noted a lack of market demand as an issue in their center. Recently, centers have had to
put plans on hold and reduce investments into their centers. This issue contributes to several areas in
the center, such as slowed economic development, a greater need for housing that is affordable,
possible reductions in public services, and needs for improved transit so people do not have to rely on
single occupancy vehicles to get around the region. Centers try to encourage density and compact
development through incentives and design guidelines, but the economic downturn slowed the creation
of these new developments. A few surveys indicated that public investment in the center has been
substantial and that it is up to the private sector to follow suit.

Public Engagement

The most common response about best practices was the importance of public engagement as vital to
their success when developing a Comprehensive Plan, Subarea Plan, or establishing a clear vision for the
center. Often the vision for the RGC is a huge departure from the current landform; this makes actively
seeking the public’s involvement helpful to the process of establishing a future vision for the area.

Complex Land Use Issues

Fragmented parcel ownership, lack of market demand, and oversupply of parking are the most common
land use issue affecting RGCs. These issues can make the transformative and large scale projects that are
envisioned for most centers extremely hard to carry out. Fragmented parcel ownership makes land
acquisition time consuming and costly. Lack of market demand also makes land acquisition risky as
private investment will not necessarily follow public investment. An oversupply of parking makes
centers feel disconnected and car centric. These land use issues make it important that municipalities
only take on projects that have a high likelihood of success. This may make ambitious redevelopment
plans of centers take longer, but one project could threaten the success of future good projects.
Chapter 1: VISION 2040, Growth Center Subarea Planning Checklist, 2002 Growth Centers Data Report, and Research Design

Background
The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) is the metropolitan planning organization for the central Puget Sound region, which includes King, Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish counties. It is an association of cities, towns, counties, ports and state agencies that come together to develop policies and make decisions about regional issues. “PSRC’s mission is to ensure a thriving central Puget Sound now and into the future through planning for regional transportation, growth management and economic development.”

PSRC has 27 designated Regional Growth Centers (RGC), which are fairly small areas of concentrated housing and employment. These centers were designated because they are often cultural, civic and government hubs and serve a regional purpose, as opposed to smaller centers which have a more local focus. Part of the growth strategy in the region is to strengthen and revitalize the centers. VISION 2040, a report created by PSRC, provides a vision and strategy for the region as a whole. It is meant to give the centers guidance and direction on key issues faced as these centers plan for future growth.

VISION 2040
VISION 2040 is the central Puget Sound region’s strategy for addressing future population and employment growth while maintaining a healthy region through the year 2040. The final report was adopted in April 2008. The four parts of the report are a framework for a sustainable environment, a Regional Growth Strategy, multicounty planning policies to guide growth, and implementation actions with measures to track progress. The central theme is the concept of people, prosperity and planet. VISION 2040 shows how our people, economic prosperity, and relationship to the environment are inexorably linked. The following quote conveys the region’s vision:

“Our vision for the future advances the ideals of our people, our prosperity, and our planet. As we work toward achieving the region’s vision, we must protect the environment, support and create vibrant, livable, and healthy communities, offer economic opportunities for all, provide safe and efficient mobility, and use our resources wisely and efficiently. Land use, economic, and transportation decisions will be integrated in a manner that supports a healthy environment, addresses global climate change, achieves social equity, and is attentive to the needs of future generations.”

The third part of VISION 2040 includes multicounty planning policies, and includes overarching goals, in six major policy areas. The policy areas and their goals are cited from VISION 2040:

Environment. The region will care for the natural environment by protecting and restoring natural systems, conserving habitat, improving water quality, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants, and addressing potential climate change impacts.
Development Patterns. The region will focus growth within already urbanized areas to create walkable, compact, and transit-oriented communities that maintain unique local character. Centers will continue to be a focus of development.

Housing. The region will preserve, improve, and expand its housing stock to provide a range of affordable, healthy, and safe housing choices to every resident. The regional will continue to promote fair and equal access to housing for all people.

Economy. The region will have a prospering and sustainable regional economy by supporting businesses and job creation, investing in all people, sustaining environmental quality, and creating great central places, diverse communities, and high quality of life.

Transportation. The region will have a safe, cleaner, integrated, sustainable, and highly efficient multimodal transportation system that supports the regional growth strategy, promotes economic and environmental vitality, and contributes to better public health.

Public Services. The region will support development with adequate public facilities and services in a coordinated, efficient, and cost-effective manner that supports local and regional growth planning objectives.

Growth Center Subarea Planning Checklist
The checklist for Regional Growth Center Subarea Plans (2010) contains the main expectations for center plans, and is meant to assist jurisdictions in developing, updating or amending their plans. It follows the same topics addressed in VISION 2040, and is sectioned into a center plan concept or vision, environment, land use, housing, economy, public services, and transportation. The checklist has bullet points of the key issues in each area, and PSRC has many other documents that address the expectations for Regional Growth Centers. This document provided the basis for the survey that was sent to each of the RGCs (see Appendix I).

2002 Growth Centers Data Report
In 2002, PSRC came out with a data report on the 21 Regional Growth Centers and 8 Manufacturing/Industrial Centers at that time. The 2002 report is compatible with VISION 2020, and now the expectations of Regional Growth Centers should meet those set out in VISION 2040 and the Growth Center Subarea Planning Checklist. The 2002 report used the ten guidelines from that time to create a survey for all Regional Growth Centers and Manufacturing/Industrial Centers. The ten guidelines were:

1. Encourage a mix of complementary land uses, particularly uses that generate pedestrian activity and transit ridership
2. Encourage compact growth by addressing planned density
3. Link neighborhoods, connect streets, sidewalks and trails
4. Integrate activity areas with surrounding neighborhoods
5. Locate public and semipublic uses near high capacity transit stations in designated urban centers and activity centers
6. Design for pedestrians and bicyclists
7. Provide usable open spaces for the public
8. Manage the supply of parking
9. Promote the benefits of on-street parking
10. Reduce and mitigate the effects of parking

These ten guidelines now only appear in the “Transportation” section of the Growth Center Subarea Planning Checklist, as the checklist has become much longer and more comprehensive. The number of centers in the region has also changed since this report. The RGCs that have been added since the 2002 report are Auburn, Burien, Overlake (Redmond), South Lake Union (Seattle), Silverdale (Kitsap County), and Totem Lake (Kirkland). In 2002 Overlake was a Manufacturing/Industrial Center and was later changed to a Regional Growth Center.

Research Question
To achieve the benefits of focusing growth, PSRC is in the process of evaluating the performance of the existing designated RGCs identified in VISION 2040. The purpose of this 2011 Regional Growth Centers Status Update is to help update the 2002 Growth Centers Data Report by answering the following research questions:

What planning and investment strategies, programs, regulations have been used in Puget Sound Regional Council’s designated Regional Growth Centers?

Are there any replicable best practices and lessons learned can be discerned from this information?

By assessing how well the various municipalities have done in focusing well-planned growth in their Regional Growth Centers, the information gathered will allow PSRC to determine what the best replicable practices are going forward. Knowing the best investment and planning strategies for Regional Growth Centers will allow PSRC to guide municipalities over the next 30 years as they try to reach the goals set out in VISION 2040.

Research Design
By reviewing VISION 2040, the Growth Centers Subarea Planning Checklist, and the 2002 Growth Centers Report, a survey for all 27 Regional Growth Centers was established (see Appendix I). The survey focuses on the seven key areas of the Subarea Planning Checklist: center plan, environment, land use, housing, economy, public services, and transportation.

The survey was sent to contacts from each center chosen by PSRC, and they were given one month to complete the survey. These results will have valuable information to answer the research question of what planning and investment strategies, programs, and regulations are being used in the centers, as well as best practices and lessons learned.

Next, fieldwork and photo essay tools were established, which are consistent with the survey. The tools identify tangible characteristics to look for in each Regional Growth Center. These tools were used during visits of 16 growth centers to directly observe the features of the center, and to photograph those features to create a comprehensive photo essay. The photo essays consist of 10 photos per
center, and should be able to stand alone without any words to tell a story and relate back to the research question.

Site visits were conducted for 16 of the 27 centers because of time considerations. PSRC staff will visit those centers not visited by for this report at a later date. The 16 centers visited were Auburn, Downtown Bremerton, Burien, Downtown Everett, Federal Way, Kent, Lynnwood, Overlake (Redmond), Downtown Puyallup, Renton, SeaTac, Silverdale (Kitsap County), South Hill (Puyallup), Tacoma Mall, Totem Lake (Kirkland), and Tukwila. These centers and their accompanying photo essays are discussed in further detail in Chapter 2.
Chapter 2: Regional Growth Center Profiles – Characteristics and Photo Essays of 16 Centers

There are 27 Regional Growth Centers in the central Puget Sound area. Seventeen are located in King County, two in Kitsap County, five in Pierce County and two in Snohomish County. Broadly speaking, these centers can be characterized into generic typologies including: three office parks, four mixed-use neighborhoods (all located in Seattle), six malls, and 14 downtowns. Table 1 shows the names, county, generic typology, population, and survey status of each RGC. The 16 centers highlighted are the sites visited in the fieldwork, and that will be discussed in depth in this chapter. The response rate of the survey was good and only four centers failed to return the survey. However, the quality of the returned surveys varied greatly, and some surveys provided more in-depth responses than others.

Table 1 Designated Regional Growth Centers (2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Growth Centers</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Generic Typology</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>Returned Survey?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Auburn</td>
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<td>Downtown</td>
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### Regional Growth Centers

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Regional Growth Centers</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Generic Typology</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>Returned Survey?</th>
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</tr>
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<td>Downtown Everett</td>
<td>Snohomish</td>
<td>Downtown</td>
<td>5,538</td>
<td>11,903</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynnwood</td>
<td>Snohomish</td>
<td>Mall</td>
<td>1,316</td>
<td>11,490</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals: 27</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>167,642</strong></td>
<td><strong>492,277</strong></td>
<td><strong>23</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The cities that the centers are located in are also divided into Metropolitan Cities and Core Cities. Each county contains at least one Metropolitan City which is the civic, cultural and economic hub. There are five Metropolitan Cities, which are Bellevue, Bremerton, Everett, Seattle, and Tacoma. The Core Cities are major cities in each of the counties, and play a large role in accommodating future growth in the region. The 14 Core Cities are Auburn, Bothell, Burien, Federal Way, Kent, Kirkland, Lakewood, Lynnwood, Puyallup, Redmond, Renton, SeaTac, Silverdale, and Tukwila.

Map 1 is a map of all Regional Growth Centers and Manufacturing/Industrial Centers (MIC). The red dots indicate the RGCs visited in the fieldwork. Using the surveys, fieldwork and photos the main characteristics of each center visited are described in this chapter.

Throughout the report, additional data will be shown on each of the centers, such as:

- Population: the number of people living in the center
- Covered Employment: the number of people working in the center
- % Pop: percent of total activity units that is population
- Housing Units: the number of occupied households in the center
- Housing Units Per Job: the number of housing units divided by employment
- Acres: the center’s total number of acres
- Activity Unit Totals: activity units (AU) are PSRC’s unit of measurement and equal population plus employment
- Activity Unit Density: activity unit totals divided by acres
- Activity Unit Density as % of City Activity Unit Density: the relative density of the center compared to the density of the entire city
Map 1 Regional Growth Centers and Manufacturing/Industrial Centers
### Map 2 Summary Characteristics and To Scale Maps of the Regional Growth Centers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Auburn</th>
<th>Bellevue</th>
<th>Burien</th>
<th>Federal Way</th>
<th>Kent</th>
<th>Totem Lake</th>
<th>Downtown Redmond</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acres 234</td>
<td>Acres 410</td>
<td>Acres 353</td>
<td>Acres 200</td>
<td>Acres 292</td>
<td>Acres 860</td>
<td>Acres 433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pop. 1,352</td>
<td>Pop. 5,404</td>
<td>Pop. 2,951</td>
<td>Pop. 256</td>
<td>Pop. 901</td>
<td>Pop. 5,720</td>
<td>Pop. 2,287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emp. 2,796</td>
<td>Emp. 3,211</td>
<td>Emp. 3,266</td>
<td>Emp. 2,733</td>
<td>Emp. 4,851</td>
<td>Emp. 11,927</td>
<td>Emp. 8,627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUs 4,148</td>
<td>AUs 39,615</td>
<td>AUs 6,237</td>
<td>AUs 2,999</td>
<td>AUs 5,252</td>
<td>AUs 17,047</td>
<td>AUs 10,914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU Density 17.7</td>
<td>AU Density 96.6</td>
<td>AU Density 17.7</td>
<td>AU Density 15.0</td>
<td>AU Density 18.0</td>
<td>AU Density 19.8</td>
<td>AU Density 25.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Redmond Overlake</th>
<th>Renton</th>
<th>Sea-Tac</th>
<th>Sea-First/Cap Hill</th>
<th>Sea-Northgate</th>
<th>Sea-South Lake Un.</th>
<th>Sea-Queen Anne</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acres 519</td>
<td>Acres 806</td>
<td>Acres 886</td>
<td>Acres 915</td>
<td>Acres 409</td>
<td>Acres 859</td>
<td>Acres 297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pop. 589</td>
<td>Pop. 4,014</td>
<td>Pop. 10,157</td>
<td>Pop. 5,857</td>
<td>Pop. 5,144</td>
<td>Pop. 6,475</td>
<td>Pop. 6,475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emp. 42,770</td>
<td>Emp. 13,501</td>
<td>Emp. 8,208</td>
<td>Emp. 39,628</td>
<td>Emp. 20,071</td>
<td>Emp. 13,037</td>
<td>Emp. 13,037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUs 43,759</td>
<td>AUs 17,615</td>
<td>AUs 18,345</td>
<td>AUs 76,523</td>
<td>AUs 16,358</td>
<td>AUs 23,215</td>
<td>AUs 19,512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU Density 84.3</td>
<td>AU Density 29.1</td>
<td>AU Density 20.7</td>
<td>AU Density 83.7</td>
<td>AU Density 40.0</td>
<td>AU Density 64.7</td>
<td>AU Density 65.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seattle-CBD</th>
<th>Sea-U. Community</th>
<th>Tukwila</th>
<th>Bremerton</th>
<th>Silverdale</th>
<th>Lakewood</th>
<th>Puyallup Downtown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acres 950</td>
<td>Acres 767</td>
<td>Acres 847</td>
<td>Acres 126</td>
<td>Acres 1,002</td>
<td>Acres 538</td>
<td>Acres 215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pop. 28,397</td>
<td>Pop. 21,888</td>
<td>Pop. 18</td>
<td>Pop. 1,908</td>
<td>Pop. 3,062</td>
<td>Pop. 2,661</td>
<td>Pop. 1,364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emp. 132,172</td>
<td>Emp. 54,880</td>
<td>Emp. 17,868</td>
<td>Emp. 1,971</td>
<td>Emp. 8,346</td>
<td>Emp. 5,883</td>
<td>Emp. 1,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUs 160,589</td>
<td>AUs 70.9</td>
<td>AUs 17,866</td>
<td>AUs 8,879</td>
<td>AUs 11,408</td>
<td>AUs 8,546</td>
<td>AUs 3,184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU Density 169.0</td>
<td>AU Density 70.9</td>
<td>AU Density 21.1</td>
<td>AU Density 30.8</td>
<td>AU Density 11.4</td>
<td>AU Density 15.9</td>
<td>AU Density 24.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Puyallup South Hill</th>
<th>Tacoma Downtown</th>
<th>Tacoma Mall</th>
<th>Canyon Park</th>
<th>Everett</th>
<th>Lynnwood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acres 845</td>
<td>Acres 1,026</td>
<td>Acres 496</td>
<td>Acres 719</td>
<td>Acres 472</td>
<td>Acres 764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pop. 2,742</td>
<td>Pop. 8,116</td>
<td>Pop. 3,549</td>
<td>Pop. 619</td>
<td>Pop. 5,538</td>
<td>Pop. 1,316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emp. 5,823</td>
<td>Emp. 31,577</td>
<td>Emp. 7,724</td>
<td>Emp. 8,078</td>
<td>Emp. 11,903</td>
<td>Emp. 1,916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUs 8,565</td>
<td>AUs 39,713</td>
<td>AUs 11,274</td>
<td>AUs 8,751</td>
<td>AUs 17,641</td>
<td>AUs 13,806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU Density 10.3</td>
<td>AU Density 38.7</td>
<td>AU Density 22.7</td>
<td>AU Density 12.2</td>
<td>AU Density 36.9</td>
<td>AU Density 16.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Auburn Profile
Auburn is a downtown and is located in the south end of King County. The Auburn center was not included in the 2002 centers report because it was regionally designated in 2003. The center is located near both highways 167 and 18 and is served by Sound Transit Commuter Rail. The most noticeable new developments in the center are primarily public facilities in the transit center and City Hall. The RGC is a historic downtown with many older buildings.

Table 2 Selected Data from Auburn (2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Covered Employment</th>
<th>% Pop</th>
<th>Housing Units</th>
<th>Housing Units Per Job</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>AU_Totals</th>
<th>AU_Density (Pop+Emp)</th>
<th>AU Density as % of City AU Density</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,352</td>
<td>2,796</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>2/10</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>4,148</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>317%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Auburn did not return a completed survey, so the findings in this section come primarily from the City’s planning documents and observations in the fieldwork.

Center Plan
The City released the Downtown Plan that sees the center as the central gathering place for the community. The City also has design standards for development including streets, buildings, and landscaping. The Downtown Plan was implemented in 2001. The plan was prompted by the need to do station area planning in response to the Sound Transit commuter rail system. The plan includes strategies for intensification of development and promotes urban design and pedestrian orientation. The Downtown Plan is also consistent with countywide planning policies.

The City also has a redevelopment plan called the “Auburn Junction.” The Auburn Junction is supposed to be implemented in four phases; it is a mixed-use development that includes housing, retail, restaurants, office space and a theater.

From conceptual drawings, the center is supposed to be pedestrian oriented and it is located primarily next to the Sound Transit Sounder Train Station.

Environment
There are few natural environmental features in the RGC, as the center is built up or paved over in most places, but there is a ballfield on the western edge of the growth center.

Land Use
The RGC is on the small side of growth centers at 234 acres, and the center has a good mix of residential (635 housing units) and commercial. The center is divided by railroad tracks, and the east side feels more urban in character compared to the west side, which lacks the amount of amenities and sidewalks seen in the eastern side.

1 (Krauss, 2004)
With the transit center the City has tried to encourage redevelopment in the center and more specifically transit oriented development by eliminating building height restrictions, lowering parking requirements near the transit center, and waiving traffic impact fees.

Fieldwork Observations: The City is encouraging more mixed-use development with the “Auburn Junction” that will surround the rail station. The project is 4 city blocks (each block is approximately 1.4 acres) next to the transit station and a large plaza; the 4 blocks make up the 4 different phases of the Auburn Junction. King County records show that the City owns most of the parcels that make up phases 1 and 2. These blocks are mostly vacant right now are being used as overflow parking. The blocks where the last two phases are to come are primarily bank owned from foreclosures and have semi-completed construction on them².

Conceptual plans for the Auburn Junction are posted on one of the vacant lots. It appears the city is pushing for a very pedestrian oriented, mixed-use, town center to enhance the historic downtown. The City owns all the land necessary land to start phase 1, but recent foreclosures and abandoned construction at the sites of phases 3 and 4 indicate the market may be too weak at this time for such an ambitious project.

**Housing**

The housing stock in the center is almost all single-family homes. Homes are older and considered to be affordable when compared to the rest of King County. As of 2009 there were 635 housing units in the center. According to the Auburn Comprehensive Plan, most of the housing growth in the city is occurring in recently annexed portions of the City.

Fieldwork Observations: Housing in the center is primarily well-established single-family areas, but the city is encouraging mixed-use and TOD style developments. At this time there is very little that is new, mixed-use development in the center. Conceptual plans for the Auburn Junction show mixed-use buildings with retail, housing, and office space all in the same area, but it is unclear when these plans will come to fruition.

**Economy**

The most visible economic sector in the center is healthcare, with the Auburn Regional Medical Center and a number of supporting medical office buildings that surround it. There are also a number of banks restaurants, and a grocery store. Auburn City Hall and Justice Center are also located in the center.

**Public Services**

The center is home to City Hall, the Auburn Police Station, Auburn Justice Center, and a Sound Transit Park and Ride with a large pedestrian plaza. All of these facilities are easily accessible by car, public transportation, and walking.

² (King County Parcel Viewer, 2011)
Transportation

The Auburn RGC is transit oriented in that it is centered on the Auburn Transit Station; all areas of the center are within a half-mile of the station³.

The center has a good network of sidewalks and is easy to navigate on foot. There are some places on the west side of the center that lack sidewalks, but on the whole the area is friendly to pedestrians. Part of the ease has to do with the lack of car traffic in the area.

Fieldwork Observations: The center is pedestrian friendly; there are sidewalks and pedestrian scale lighting in many places. The transit center also features a pedestrian overpass allowing riders to park on either side of the train tracks.

Investments

The City invested $2 million in parking at the transit station to help support local businesses. A $31.5 million FAST Corridor project at 3rd St SW separated rail traffic from vehicle traffic by constructing an overpass⁴.

Best Practices

The city has taken a very active role in the future of the growth center by implementing policies, investing in transportation projects like the transit station and the FAST Corridor, and acquiring land which will make the Auburn Junction possible. The Auburn Junction project can be a boon for the City if it is completed, but there are not many details on the project and it is unclear how involved the public was in forming the vision for the urban center.

³ (Krauss, 2004)
⁴ (Auburn, 2006)
Auburn Photo Essay

Photo 1 Downtown Auburn Main Street with On-Street Parking and Pedestrian Grade Lighting

Photo 2 Auburn Transit Station with Commuter Rail and Pedestrian Overpass
Photo 3 Auburn Professional Plaza – Office Building

Photo 4 Auburn Regional Medical Plaza – Medical Office Building
Photo 5 Newer Sidewalk on the West Side of the Train Tracks, Ends at a Residential Street

Photo 6 Well-Established Residential Street with Speed Humps
Photo 7 Auburn Justice Center on the Eastern Edge of Downtown

Photo 8 Mixed-Use Parking Garage with Commercial Space at Auburn Transit Station
Photo 9 Downtown Auburn Pedestrian Grade Street Lights

Photo 10 Aerial View of Downtown Auburn (3 of the 4 blocks to be included in the Auburn Junction)
Downtown Bremerton Profile

The Bremerton RGC is located in Kitsap County, and is a downtown. The center has a port and is accessible by ferry from Seattle (approximately a one hour ride each way). The downtown area surrounding the ferry and transit station is very pedestrian friendly. It has a historic downtown, and many galleries located there give the center an artsy feel. The City of Bremerton is built next to a navy base, but the base is not located in the center boundaries.

Bremerton is by far the smallest center in acres (the next largest center is 200 acres, nearly twice as large), and it is second smallest in covered employment. It is closer to the median in terms of population and housing. Its activity unit totals are third smallest, but the activity unit density is eleventh largest since it is in such a small area. The City of Bremerton is the largest city in Kitsap County; it just has very focused boundaries for the center within the city.

Table 3 Selected Data from Bremerton (2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Covered Employment</th>
<th>% Pop</th>
<th>Housing Units</th>
<th>Housing Units Per Job</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>AU_Total</th>
<th>AU_Density (Pop+Emp)</th>
<th>AU Density as % of City AU Density</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,908</td>
<td>1,971</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>1,001</td>
<td>5/10</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>3,879</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>755%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Center Plan

The center has a City of Bremerton Comprehensive Plan and a Downtown Regional Center Subarea Plan, which address topics such as a local vision, natural environment, land use, housing, economy, public facilities and services, transportation, sustainability, the center’s relationship to the overall comprehensive plan, and the relationship to VISION 2040.

Environment

Bremerton has developed a nice pedestrian park along the waterfront that was observed in the fieldwork. The subarea plan discusses protection of waterfront assets and finding ways to connect users to the Puget Sound. The plan also has vision principles to promote green development and low impact development, as well as incentives in the land use regulations and specific capital projects that address water quality.

There are sustainable design strategies in that plan that address air quality in the center, along with encouraging employers to participate in a Transportation Demand Management program to reduce the number of people who drive single occupancy vehicles to work.

Land Use

The boundaries of the center include the historic downtown area because it has the infrastructure to support and accommodate current and future growth. It borders the Puget Sound and naval base, and was historically the retail center of Kitsap County.
To encourage compact development and increased building heights, the subarea plan has a bonus amenity program. The center faces some land use challenges such as super-blocks, a lack of market demand, and vacant buildings and storefronts.

There are multiple categories of centers within the Bremerton Comprehensive Plan (2004), and the other districts within the jurisdiction are (1) Regional Center, (6) Neighborhood Centers, (3) District Centers, (1) Employment Center, and the SKIA Manufacturing Industrial Center which was annexed and added in 2008.

Fieldwork Observations: The downtown area is very compact with a range of retail, food services, theater, art galleries and housing. It is a concentrated area of jobs and housing, and there are some new developments of housing and commercial uses near the waterfront. The north portion of the center is primarily single-family homes.

**Housing**

There are many types of housing in the center, such as apartments, condos, townhomes and single-family housing. Bremerton adopted an incentive based amenity program that encourages housing and also uses the state multi-family tax exemption program within the center to promote affordable housing options.

**Economy**

The major employers in Bremerton are government (City, Kitsap County and the Navy) along with some general office and banking jobs. The City supports the Kitsap Economic Development Alliance which promotes businesses in the county, and there is a chamber of commerce and a downtown business association as well.

**Public Services**

There are several public facilities located in the center, including city hall, social service agencies, fire and police stations, educational facilities, medical facilities, library, museum, theaters, post office, hotels, conference center, and the ferry and bus terminal. Most of the city and county offices are located in the Norm Dicks Government Center, which opened in 2004. The City has made investments in the development of public spaces such as a boardwalk and parks, the main street, and a parking garage.

**Transportation**

Bremerton’s subarea plan addresses urban design and the desire for building orientation to be pedestrian friendly, along with laying out a complete street plan and identifying the capital facilities needs. The City has a current project to reconstruct the public infrastructure within the downtown in order to implement the strategies addressed in the subarea plan. Some transportation challenges the center faces are roads with outdated designs and a lack of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
The center is also reevaluating its parking program, which is free for two hours of on-street parking at this time. However, there are two city-owned parking garages downtown and a third being constructed, so the City may switch to paid on-street parking. Parking in Downtown Bremerton is a challenge due to the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and the Washington State Ferry Terminal.

Fieldwork Observations: The downtown area was very accessible and pedestrian friendly, with a lot of facilities near the transit center and ferry terminal. The main street has many street trees, crosswalks, benches, trash receptacles and some bike racks, along with unique characteristics of statues and a waterfront park.

**Major Investments**

Many of the large investments in the center have been near the waterfront, and can be seen in the Bremerton Photo Essay. These include Harborside Conference Center, Norm Dicks Government Center, Harborside Waterfront Condominiums, "The 400" Condominiums, Harborside Fountain Park, WSDOT Ferry Tunnel, Harborside Memorial Plaza, Kitsap Credit Union Corporate Headquarters (which includes Bryman College), Tim Ryan Office Building, Park Avenue Street Improvements (ongoing), Harborside Plaza Parking Garage / Development pads (ongoing).

**Best Practices (as described in the survey)**

“We had a very positive public planning process to develop the plan. The plan is a positive example of having 'action items' in it that helps the city determine its public investment and capital project needs and helps ensures that it is a document that gets utilized rather than a plan that 'sits on the shelf.'”
Bremerton Photo Essay

Photo 1 Port of Bremerton – View from Ferry Ride of Housing and Norm Dicks Government Center

Photo 2 Downtown Bremerton Main Street
Photo 3 Norm Dicks Government Center – City and County Offices

Photo 4 Bremerton Transit Center by Naval Shipyard and Downtown
Photo 5 Kitsap Credit Union – Corporate Headquarters

Photo 6 Kitsap Conference Center
Photo 7 Downtown Road Diet, Street Parking and Pedestrian Friendly Design

Photo 8 New Development in Downtown Bremerton
Photo 9 Residential Street in the Center North of Downtown

Photo 10 Bremerton Waterfront Condos and Park
Burien Profile

Burien is located in King County, and is designated as a downtown. The Burien center was not included in the 2002 centers report because it was regionally designated after 2002. It is next to two highways, SR 509 and SR 518, and is only a few minute drive away from Sea-Tac Airport and RGC. The center has a mix of housing, retail, restaurants and many car dealerships. The main downtown area of Burien has a new Metro transit center, library and city hall building, mixed-use developments, and a nice town square with a rain garden and various sculptures. This was the most vibrant area of the center and there were many people out around the town square and main street.

The following data for Burien is near the average figures compared to other centers. Its area, employment and activity unit totals are on the smaller end for RGCs, but very similar to the other King County centers classified as downtowns.

Table 4 Selected Data from Burien (2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Covered Employment</th>
<th>% Pop</th>
<th>Housing Units</th>
<th>Housing Units Per Job</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>AU_Totals</th>
<th>AU_Density (Pop+Emp)</th>
<th>AU Density as % of City AU Density</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2,951</td>
<td>3,286</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>1,704</td>
<td>5/10</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>6,237</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>193%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Center Plan

The City of Burien has several plans and manuals, so it created a Downtown Burien Handbook which contains all documents that contribute to the vision of Burien\(^5\). The handbook is meant to facilitate development in the downtown. There is a Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Regulations, Design Standards, Design Manual, Streetscape Design Plan, Gateway Design Report, Town Square, and the Downtown Burien Master Plan. These documents address a vision for the center, land use, housing, public facilities and services, transportation, sustainability, and the center’s relationship to relevant countywide planning policies.

Environment

There are no critical areas within the center, and so the center plans do not contain regulations on protecting environmentally sensitive areas. To address water quality, the City has a surface water design manual for surface and stormwater management guidelines, and it provides bonuses to encourage green roofs.

The City does not have extensive programs or policies to address reductions in air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, but the land use strategy is to allow for mixed-use developments with flexible design standards to encourage larger scale development in close proximity to a transit oriented development near the core of the center.

\(^5\) (Downtown Burien Handbook)
Fieldwork Observations: There is the one new park with a rain garden in the town square, but there is a noticeable lack of parks and environmental features in the center.

**Land Use**

The boundaries of the center are meant to be within walking distance of the new Metro transit center. The center contains a wide variety of housing and commercial activities. There is a range of single-use zoning in the center from multi-family homes to multistory mixed-use development to auto-oriented uses. The key land use issues in Burien include a lack of market demand and fragmented parcel ownership.

From 2007, the buildable lands work approximates that the center will accommodate about 25% of the identified housing and 20% of the employment capacity in the City.

There are several mechanisms to encourage dense, compact, mixed-use development:

- SEPA exemption for townsquare, BMC 14.10.040[2]
- Flexible building heights (measured by stories as opposed to strict height calculations), BMC 19.15.025
- Parking demand study to determine required parking as opposed to prescriptive ratios
- Incentive zoning in BMC 19.15.025
- Design guidelines in downtown zone, BMC 19.47 and BMC 19.49
- Fee-in-lieu of parking program, BMC 19.20.040[3.b], via Ordinance 531

The City of Burien only has one RGC, but another area that anticipates significant growth is the Northeast Redevelopment Area (NERA). It is within about one mile of the center boundaries, but is separated by SR 509. It is planned as an airport compatible area that will promote the establishment of businesses to compliment the airport and create family wage jobs.

Fieldwork Observations: The downtown area is very compact and walkable, and contains new mixed-use development and public facilities. Called the Burien Town Square, it is a very nice area and near the new transit station which was under construction. The retail section of the development seems fairly empty, but the shops along the main street are pretty full without many vacancies. Surrounding the downtown are commercial and residential areas. Near the intersection of the two highways, along the east boundary of the center is a very car-oriented area with many car dealerships and some auto repair shops.

**Housing**

Fieldwork Observations: Burien has several types of housing in the center, such as apartments, condos, townhomes and single-family homes. Most are older developments.

The new mixed-use development in the town square has a certain amount of affordable housing, and more housing anticipated to be constructed will be affordable. Compared to other centers in the region, Burien has a significant supply of affordable and market rate housing.
**Economy**

The main employers located in Burien are services and retail, and include Burien Toyota, Group Health, Safeway, and the City of Burien.

There are a couple of organizations that support businesses and job creation. One is the Burien Wellness Cluster, which is composed of members from the community’s medical and wellness service providers. The program works to attract and produce skilled medical professionals for careers in Burien\(^6\). Discover Burien is another association that promotes Burien through events, supports the concerns of commercial business areas, recruits new businesses, and recommends appropriate uses and design standards for the commercial area development\(^7\).

**Public Services**

There are many public facilities located within the center, such as the city hall, library, Metro transit station, post office, county offices, social service agencies, medical facilities, and shopping. The Burien Town Square project is a new development that includes city hall, the library and mixed-use development. The City has also worked on right-of-way improvements on the main street (SW 152\(^{nd}\) Street).

**Transportation**

Programs in the center to address pedestrian and transit friendly design include building orientation, curb bulbs, signal prioritization and bus shelters. There is also a wide variety of parking available in the center, such as on-street long- or short-term parking. Transportation issues addressed in the survey include roads with outdated designs and a lack of bicycle facilities.

Fieldwork Observations: Downtown Burien is very pedestrian friendly and walkable from the transit station to the main street, town square and additional facilities like grocery and retail stores. The area has several new buildings, including the new transit station. Some of the established residential areas away from the main street were not as pedestrian friendly and lacked sidewalks. A large part of one of the main roads along the west boundary, Ambaum Blvd SW, was under construction for improvements.

**Major Investments**

The major investments made recently are reconstruction of SW 152\(^{nd}\) Street and 1\(^{st}\) Avenue South, and construction of a city hall/library, a street grid for the town square development, the town square park, a 500 stall parking garage, a 124 unit 19,000 square foot commercial mixed-use building, and reconfiguration of a commercial strip mall to bring the site into better compliance with urban design standards.

---

\(^6\) (Burien Wellness)
\(^7\) (Discover Burien, 2008-2011)
Best Practices (as described in the survey)

“Create a vision through an open and extensive public process. Encourage decision makers ‘to stay the course’ established by that process. Often times there is a desire to construct whatever the market is currently demanding. Markets fluctuate and consistency is a desireable trait that is desired by developers.”
Burien Photo Essay

Photo 1 Downtown Burien Town Square and Mixed-Use Development

Photo 2 Burien Library and City Hall Building
Photo 3 Main Street Bus Stop and Pedestrian Friendly Design

Photo 4 Pedestrian Friendly Design Downtown
Photo 5 Residential Street Missing Sidewalks

Photo 6 Sidewalk and Street Trees along Residential Street
Photo 7 Burien Transit Center – Under Construction

Photo 8 Strip Mall in Eastern Part of the Center
Photo 9 Burien Bus Shelter on a Main Road

Photo 10 New Mixed-Use Development Downtown by Town Square
**Downtown Everett Profile**

Everett is the biggest city in Snohomish County and the home of the Port of Everett. The center is designated a downtown and it is adjacent to the Port of Everett.

Table 5 Selected Data from Everett (2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Covered Employment</th>
<th>% Pop</th>
<th>Housing Units</th>
<th>Housing Units Per Job</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>AU_Totals</th>
<th>AU_Density (Pop+Emp)</th>
<th>AU Density as % of City AU Density</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>472</td>
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</table>

**Center Plan**

The Everett Downtown Plan was adopted July 2006 as a subarea plan to the Everett Comprehensive Plan. The plan includes a market analysis of the Downtown area. The plan also identifies a number of transportation and capital improvements for the downtown. A planned action SEIS was adopted for the Downtown area in 2009.

Plans for the center address a local vision for the center, land use, housing, the economy, public facilities, and services, transportation, and the center’s relationship to the Comprehensive Plan.

**Environment**

The downtown area is completely developed and there are no designated critical areas. The Downtown Plan includes FAR bonus incentives for the development of green buildings.

The Downtown Plan also promotes a mixed-use development to allow employees to live near work, reducing the demand for travel and the consequent air pollution.

The transportation element of the comprehensive plan has an aggressive mode split goal for the downtown center. The downtown area features compact mixed-use development, and is served by Everett Transit, Sound Transit, Community Transit, and Skagit Transit.

**Land Use**

Issues affecting land use in the center include a lack of market demand, particularly for office space, fragmented parcel ownership, and an oversupply of parking.

Projections of growth in the downtown area anticipate an 8.6% growth in population and 6% growth in employment. The Downtown Plan indicates that “the 2025 market capacity (pre-recession) was for up to 1,900 additional housing units (40% of which could be owner occupied condos), up to 300,000 square feet of additional retail, 400,000 to 800,000 additional square feet of office space, and up to 100 hotel rooms.”
Downtown has mechanisms for encouraging compact development, such as minimum FAR requirements, permitting relatively high building heights, and low residential off-street parking with no non-residential off street parking required.

The City expects significant redevelopment of the housing stock in the downtown area, in part because of the multi-family housing property tax exemption.

Fieldwork Observations: The Everett RGC is the biggest and most urban feeling center from the fieldwork. The center has super-blocks like many centers but feels walkable because the large number of activity units. Most buildings in the center have ground floor amenities with office space or residences above. The city is the 6th largest in the state and has high intensity development with large office buildings. There is a good mix of housing and public and private services.

**Housing**

The City feels that the downtown area needs more market rate housing as most of the housing built in the downtown area between 1980 and 2000 was subsidized low-income housing. To promote more affordable housing, the City has enacted a multi-family housing property housing tax exemption for both market rate (8 years) and affordable housing (12 years).

Fieldwork Observations: The center has a good mix of housing with established single-family neighborhoods on the west and south sides of the center and condos and apartments mixed throughout the downtown area.

**Economy**

The largest employers in downtown are the City of Everett and Snohomish County; other employers include financial institutions, medical services, a private college, professional services, title companies, small retailers, restaurants, non-profit and social service agencies.

Both the City’s Economic Development Department, the Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Council work to promote downtown businesses.

Fieldwork Observations: The most active area in the center seems to be around the Comcast Arena and the Snohomish County Courthouse, Jail and Administrative buildings. The Port of Everett is also quite active but it is located just outside the center boundary.

**Public Services**

Downtown Everett is full of public services as it is the home to Snohomish County offices and the City Hall. Other public facilities include social service agencies, schools, hospitals, a library, a transit center, a museum, theaters, the Comcast Arena, a post office, hotels, and local shopping centers.
**Transportation**

The City has taken many steps to improve pedestrian- and transit friendly design. There is an abundance of sidewalks, plazas, and large boulevards that make the center friendly to pedestrians. There have also been major investments in Sound Transit, Community Transit (including Swift Bus Rapid Transit), Everett Transit, and Skagit Transit. Other recent street improvements include bike lanes to encourage more access by non-motorized modes as the street system is at its realistic capacity. Residential neighborhoods surrounding the downtown feature sidewalks and the City’s land use codes require pedestrian friendly design.

The City is managing parking in the center by setting very low requirements for on-street parking.

Fieldwork Observations: The center is easily accessible to both I-5 and SR 2. The Everett Transit Station is serviced by Sound Transit busses and commuter rail, Community Transit (including rapid ride), Everett Transit, and Skagit Transit. The transit center also features and pedestrian overpass making it accessible to driver and pedestrians from both sides of the railroad tracks.

**Major Investments**

The biggest investments have been in public transportation projects including Sound Transit, Community Transit (Swift Bus Rapid Transit), Everett Transit, and Skagit Transit. The City has also invested in projects like the Everett Events Center, the Hewitt Avenue Streetscape project, Colby Avenue streetscape, Hoyt Avenue streetscape, Everett Performing Arts Center, a parking garage, expansion of the Everett Public Library, municipal court, and has surplused City property for redevelopment with a private hotel and conference center.

The City has also invested in housing projects in downtown for lower incomes.

The County has invested in expanding their office space, parking, and jail facilities in the downtown.

**Best Practices (as described in the survey)**

“The City benefited from very widespread public participation during the downtown planning process. The plan received widespread support and the consultant team did a very good job of addressing most public feedback in some manner in the plan. An emerging cultural arts scene and historic preservation of significant buildings and concentrations of buildings were recurrent themes, in balance with new development. Better building maintenance and enforcement of existing property maintenance codes were also important topics during the planning process. The public sector has invested mightily in the downtown, and with better development standards, better maintenance, and better enforcement of maintenance codes.”
Downtown Everett Photo Essay

Photo 1 Snohomish County Offices in Downtown Everett

Photo 2 Snohomish County Offices and Community Gathering Area
Photo 5 Community Transit Bus Shelter – Swift Rapid Transit

Photo 6 Bike Lockers at Everett Transit Station
Photo 7 Everett Station with Offices and Cafe

Photo 8 Everett Transit Station
Photo 9 Residential Street south of the Downtown Core

Photo 10 Downtown Mixed-Use Development
Federal Way Profile
The Federal Way center is located in King County and is designated a downtown, although it more closely resembles a mall as the center is centered on The Commons regional shopping center and does not contain many public facilities. The center is small in size and contains very few housing units when compared to other RGCs.

Table 6 Selected Data from Federal Way (2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Covered Employment</th>
<th>% Pop</th>
<th>Housing Units</th>
<th>Housing Units Per Job</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>AU_Totals</th>
<th>AU_Density (Pop+Emp)</th>
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<td>200</td>
<td>2,989</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>181%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The findings in this section come from the City’s planning documents and observations in the fieldwork, as Federal Way did not return a completed survey.

Center Plan
The Federal Way Center is designated a downtown, but the center’s development and feel is very much a mall and it is a regional shopping destination.

The City Center Subarea Plan was adapted in 1995, and is due for a major update in 2014. The City Center has a chapter dedicated to it in the comprehensive plan that addresses many of the problems facing the area. The City Center area contains the RGC and additional area to the North and West of highway 99. In total, the City Center Subarea Plan covers 414 acres while the RGC is just 200 acres.

The City has gone through the process of developing a new vision for the City Center area, which contains the RGC:

“The concept is to redevelop the City Center and create a compact urban community and vibrant center of activity. The crux of the strategy is to promote a compact urban center with connections between where we live, work, and recreate, and create an urban environment that is amenable to walking, bicycling, and transit. The concept, a result of the citizen participation process called CityShape (held in 1992-93), implements the community’s goals.”

Environment
There were no natural features observed.

Land Use
Most of the center is developed, and new development would mean displacing existing structures and parking lots. Buildings are scattered about the center with large “aprons” of parking surrounding them, and an oversupply of parking is a key land use issue in the center. Another issue is the prevalence of super-blocks, as blocks in the center are in excess of 1000 feet per side. A 2009 code amendment restricts the parameter of block to be no greater than 2,640 feet.
Building heights have been raised to a maximum of 200 feet to encourage denser developments.

Fieldwork Observations: Adjacent to the transit center is a large (4.14 acres), vacant lot that is owned by the City of Federal Way. It is unclear what the City hopes to do with this area, but City documents suggest that it is interested in breaking up the super-blocks that are found in the center and create a more pedestrian friendly area. The center also feels like a shopping center rather than a downtown.

**Housing**

Of all the RGCs, Federal Way has the second fewest number of housing units at 124.

In 2003, the City adopted a 10-year exemption from property taxes for multi-family development within the City Center to encourage housing.

Fieldwork Observations: There is very little housing in the Federal Way RGC; the only notable housing development was “Senior City.” Senior City is an affordable senior housing development with 61 units adjacent to the transit center. Federal Way has many residential areas, but they are located outside of the center boundaries.

**Economy**

The center’s economy is primarily retail and services. The Commons Mall is the signature development of the area, with other big box retailers, strip malls and hotels surrounding the mall.

**Public Services**

The main public facilities in the center are the park and ride and transit center. Other non-public facilities included a theater, hotels, and regional shopping.

**Transportation**

There is a park and ride and transit center that is serviced by King County Metro RapidRide and Pierce Transit.

The City Center chapter of the comprehensive plan sites the fact that large block and congestion cause drivers to use the parking lots to travel from place to place in the center.

A 1992 inventory of city sidewalks revealed a deficiency in pedestrian facilities:

“Sidewalks connecting storefronts to public walkways are lacking. The few sidewalks that did exist where narrow devoid of trees and interrupted by numerous curb cuts. Crossing wide busy streets such as South 320th Street and SR-99 can also be intimidating.

There are few places to sit and enjoy pleasant weather, meet friends or have lunch outside. The current pedestrian environment is unfriendly and unappealing. The division that exists between pedestrians and

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8 [Comprehensive Plan Chapter 7 - City Center]
auto areas is not conductive to establishing the active street life desired in a City Center.\(^9\)

Fieldwork Observations: Overall the center is very car oriented, and not inviting to bicyclist or pedestrians. Most destinations are surrounded by large parking lots, and buildings lack pedestrian connections and public right of ways. The Federal Way RGC is not a pleasant place for pedestrians, and the City has acknowledged this much. Goals for the City Center include:

“CCG3 Connect the City to a convenient regional transit system. Provide service between center and nearby areas by an efficient and transit-oriented and multi modal transportation system.

CCG9 Create an environment oriented to pedestrians and bicyclist.\(^{10}\)

These planning goals show that the City is trying to make the center less auto-oriented, but the area is extremely built out and redevelopment could be a challenge for the foreseeable future.

**Major Investments**

In 2007 the City purchased 4.14 acres of vacant property in the center for $4 million. The large lot may be the first attempt in acquiring land and breaking up super-blocks to create a more human scale center.

**Best Practices**

Documents suggest the revisioning of the City Center and took place in early to mid-1990s, the vision calls for creating a pedestrian friendly center with mixed-uses and high intensity development. Policies and goals are in place to encourage this kind of development, yet the center is still very auto-oriented. It would appear the City has been very good at developing policies and a new urban vision that is in line with VISION 2040, but has been unsuccessful in attracting new investment that would make that vision become reality.

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\(^9\) (Comprehensive Plan Chapter 7 - City Center)
\(^{10}\) (Comprehensive Plan Chapter 7 - City Center)
Federal Way Photo Essay

Photo 1 The Commons Mall and Parking

Photo 2 Strip Malls and Large Parking Lots
Photo 3 Federal Way Transit Center with RapidRide

Photo 4 Federal Way Transit Center with the Commons in the Background
Photo 5 RapidRide Transit and Large vacant City-Owned Lot

Photo 6 The Commons Mall and Surrounding Lots and Malls
Photo 7 “Senior City” Housing (affordable senior housing)

Photo 8 Large Empty Lot owned by the City of Federal Way
Photo 9 Hotel near I-5

Photo 10 Federal Way Park and Ride
Map 3 New Grid and Plan at Federal Way "City Center"
**Kent Profile**

Kent is a downtown RGC located in south King County and right off of SR 167. It has an older, historic downtown area, and right next to downtown is a transit center and Kent Station, which is a mix of retail and restaurant chains and the Green River Community College. Also nearby is the Maleng Regional Justice Center, which serves King County and provides many government jobs in the center. There are well established residential areas surrounding the downtown.

Kent is one of the smaller, more compact centers. In each area of population, employment, housing, acreage and activity unit totals, Kent is fourth to sixth smallest when compared to the rest of the centers.

Table 7 Selected Data from Kent (2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Covered Employment</th>
<th>% Pop</th>
<th>Housing Units</th>
<th>Housing Units Per Job</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>AU_Totals</th>
<th>AU_Density (Pop+Emp)</th>
<th>AU Density as % of City AU Density</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>1/10</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>5,252</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>230%</td>
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</table>

**Center Plan**

There are several planning documents for the center which address a local vision for the center, the natural environment, land use, housing, economy, public facilities and services, transportation, sustainability, and the center’s relationship to the overall comprehensive plan, to relevant countywide planning policies, and to other nearby regional centers. These documents are: 1997 Downtown Market Analysis (Property Counselors) with 2003 update; Downtown Strategic Action Plan (4/19/2005); Comprehensive Plan (5/4/2006) Land Use Element, Transportation Element (6/2008), Framework Policies, Economic Development Element, Community Design Element, Capital Facilities Element (9/2/2008, 5/4/2010, and annual 6-year CIP updates), Park & Open Space Element (5-4-2010); Transportation Master Plan Policy TR-1.7 (6/2008); Kent Station Planned Action Ordinance #3608 (7/16/2002).

**Environment**

The City has many policies and programs that address the environment. There is a Critical Areas Ordinance to protect environmentally sensitive areas, and policies that address water quality include:

- Transportation Element/Transportation Master Plan Goal TR-11 and associated policies
- Drainage Master Plan (9/2008)
- BMP (Best Management Practices) Information Sheets
- NPDES program
In addition, the following policies address air quality in the center:

- Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element/Transportation Master Plan (6/08) Goal TR-7 and associated policies, Policy TR-7.5 (mode split), Goal TR-8 and associated policies (transit), Policy TR-11.4
- Street design standards
- Commute Trip Reduction Program
- Traffic System Management Program
- Multi-family Tax Exemption
- Parking Reductions and City-owned and Shared Parking
- Kent Station Planned Action Ordinance #3608 (7/16/02)
- Traffic Impact Fee reduction for downtown
- Downtown Commercial Enterprise (DCE) zoning with liberal development standards

Fieldwork Observations: Some of the environmental features in the center included some fields, skate park, baseball field, and a portion of the Interurban Trail.

**Land Use**

The boundaries for the center were made to include the historic downtown and districts identified in the Downtown Strategic Action Plan. In the survey, the center said a land use issue faced is fragmented parcel ownership.

The targeted employment for Kent is per King County planning policies, which is 15,000 jobs within ½ mile of the transit station, a minimum of 50 employees per gross acre and a minimum 15 housing units per gross acre. The capacity estimate to 2031 for the center is 48.6 employees per gross acre and 11.7 housing units per gross acre. The downtown’s percentage of city’s overall growth target is approximately 30% of the housing target and 55% of the employment target.

Several tools to address compact development in the center are:

- Kent Station Planned Action Ordinance #3608 (7/16/02) and development agreement
- DCE zoning with liberal development standards including unlimited building height
- Efficient permit process
- Design guidelines
- Multi-family tax exemption
- Parking reductions, structured, city-owned, and shared parking
- Traffic impact fee reduction for downtown
- Infrastructure improvements
- Sales of City properties and development agreements

Kent contains two centers, and just north of the Regional Growth Center is a Manufacturing/Industrial Center in Kent Valley. Another area nearby that is anticipated to have future growth is Midway, along Pacific Highway South, in expectation of light rail in the area. Approval is in process for the Midway
Subarea Plan, and the Cities of Kent and Des Moines are working together on this project, called “Envision Midway”11.

Fieldwork Observations: The boundaries for the center include the historic downtown, Kent Station (an open air, urban village), and the transit center. There are other commercial and residential areas as well. Just outside of the center boundary is the new ShoWare Center, which is a large events center and within walking distance of Kent Station. The southwest corner of the center seems out of place compared with other areas, as it is undeveloped land, unused space that was formerly an RV Park, and a junk yard.

Housing

There are multiple housing types available in the center, such as apartments, condos, and some single-family homes, which we observed in the fieldwork. The City promotes market rate and affordable housing through multi-family tax exemption, parking reductions, city-owned and shared parking.

Economy

There are many government jobs available in the center, such as federal, county and municipal jobs in the Norm Maleng Regional Justice Center, King County Library and Kent City Hall. There is also the Green River Community College, Mill Creek Middle School, and other retail, offices, sports center, theater and churches that employ people in the center. The Small Business Development Center (SBDC), City of Kent Economic Development Department, and BizGrow Program all support businesses and job creation in the area.

Public Services

There are many public facilities which are very accessible in the area, such as city hall, county offices, social service agencies, community centers, educational facilities, medical facilities, public library, theaters, sports complex, post office, hotels, shopping and parks. The City invests in infrastructure improvements, Park Plaza and pocket parks in the center to ensure that public facilities are at a sufficient level.

Transportation

The City has programs that address pedestrian and transit friendly design. These are design guidelines, Park Plaza, bus shelters, benches, lighting, wide sidewalks, and seasonal displays. For cars, there is free parking in the center, and also structured, city-owned and shared parking. Certain transportation issues in the center are overly congested roads, roads with outdated designs, lack of bike facilities, missing pedestrian connections, and barriers to travel due to two railroad lines (Union Pacific and Burlington Northern).

11 (Envision Midway)
Fieldwork Observations: The center is very pedestrian friendly. The downtown, public facilities and Kent Station are all within walking distance from the transit center, making it a very walkable center. Although there are train tracks bisecting the center, there is also a cross walk over those tracks at the transit center.

**Major Investments**

Recent investments in the center have been for infrastructure improvements, Park Plaza, and pocket parks.

**Best Practices**

The center found best practices to be forming public-public and public-private partnerships, the organization of the City of Kent Economic Development Department, multi-jurisdictional government office locations in the center, and having a transit hub.
Kent Photo Essay

Photo 1 Maleng Regional Justice Center, Plaza and Green River Community College

Photo 2 Kent Station – Open-Air Urban Village
Photo 3 Maleng Regional Justice Center – Major Employer

Photo 4 Downtown Kent On-Street Parking and Street Trees
Photo 5 Kent Transit Center

Photo 6 Parking Structure
Photo 7 Interurban Trail Along the West Side of the Center

Photo 8 Kent Station Theaters and Pedestrian Friendly Design
Photo 9 Kent Public Library by Downtown, Transit Center and Kent Station

Photo 10 Kent Transit Center Pedestrian Overpass due to Train Tracks
**Lynnwood Profile**

The Lynnwood RGC is one of three centers in Snohomish County, and the center is bisected by I-5. The center is designated a mall but the large area it covers has a number of different in “feels,” from multifamily housing neighborhoods to a mall to offices. The Alderwood Mall and other big box retailers make up a majority of the amenities in the center. While the center is mainly a regional shopping core, the goal of the City Center Plan is to create a downtown area within the center.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 8 Selected Data from Lynnwood (2009)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
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<td>1,316</td>
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**Center Plan**

City documents addressing the center include:

- City Center Subarea Plan, zoning regulations, and Design Guidelines, March 14, 2005
- City Center Access Study, 2007
- City Center Supplemental EIS, Sept. 2004
- City Center Market Analysis, June 2007
- City Center Parks Master Plan, August 2007
- City Center Streets Master Plan, March 2010
- LID Feasibility Study, October 2008
- Mode Split Analysis, December 2009

These documents cover many topics including the local vision for the center, the natural environment, land use, housing, the economy, public facilities and services, transportation, sustainability, the center’s relationship to the Comprehensive Plan, and the center’s relationship nearby regional centers.

**Environment**

The City Center Subarea Plan of the RGC promotes an urban, high intensity environment that encourages walking, biking and transit use to cut down on air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Conceptual plans for the City Center support these goals by breaking up super-blocks, currently the park and ride and the interurban trail help support these goals. These goals will further be supported by LRT service by Sound Transit that is scheduled to open in 2023.

Fieldwork Observations: Most of the center is developed but there are two protected wetlands in the center both abut I-5, and both are fenced off with signage.
**Land Use**

Land issues facing the center include a lack of market demand, fragmented parcel ownership, oversupply of parking, super-blocks, and a lack of legitimate redevelopment funding options from the State.

The RGC primarily encompasses the retail core of the City and borders were intentionally drawn to exclude residential neighborhoods to avoid issues related to potential relocation.

The City expects most of the future development to occur in the City Center, which makes up approximately 250 of the 764 acres of the current RGC. The City Center has a maximum FAR of 8 for commercial and 10 for residential, and to encourage density, these can be increased for developments that provide public amenities like plazas and pedestrian lighting.

Fieldwork Observations: Super-blocks and an abundance of surface street parking lots make up the landform in the center. The City has a Subarea plan for the south end of the center that they call the “City Center.” The plan calls for breaking up the super-blocks, providing a pedestrian promenade, and installing plazas and gathering areas. This would be a large divergence from the landform that is currently in the area.

It appears that the City has put a substantial amount of time and resources in thinking about the City Center Subarea. It is clear that the City Center is where the City plans for the most significant change and progress to be made, in their hopes of the area form a series of strip malls into a downtown.

**Housing**

The center lacks a significant amount of residential development, but zoning allowed FAR’s in excess of 10 in certain situations to encourage affordable housing. City ordinance also authorizes use of state property tax abatement for new residential development.

Fieldwork Observations: Most of the housing in the City is located outside the RGC, but the housing within the center is mostly apartments, condos, and townhomes.

**Economy**

Most development in the center is one and two story commercial buildings mixed with office and retail uses. These buildings where mostly built in the 1960s and 1970s and are surrounded by large fields of open parking.

Fieldwork Observations: With the center being designated a mall, the main economy is big box retail, but that may change if the City Center Plan comes to fruition.
**Public Services**

The most visible public facility in the center is the Lynnwood Convention Center. The center also features educational and medical facilities, theaters, hotels, regional shopping, a post office, and a transit park and ride. City Hall is located just outside the current boundaries for the center.

Plans for the City Center show future space for a town square, a civic park, and a village green.

Initial investments have been in the Convention Center and expansion of the park and ride; future investments under consideration include a new City administration building and a new library.

**Transportation**

Key issues affecting transportation in the center include overly congested roads, lack of transit and bicycle facilities, and a lack of funding to make improvements.

Planning efforts are attempting to address these issues, the City Center Subarea Plan is to be developed as a pedestrian friendly streetscape. Zoning requires new developments connect directly to public sidewalks not just parking lots.

Fieldwork Observations: The center if very car oriented, buildings are surrounded by parking lots and are not easily accessible by pedestrians. The City Center plan addresses these issues but it has yet to become a reality.

**Major Investments**

The center has several major direct investments:

- The Lynnwood Convention Center
- The I-5/196th St. interchange
- The Lynnwood Transit Center
- A pedestrian bridge over 44th Ave. for the Interurban Trail
- Location of the City Permit Center in the area

Other planning investments include over $1 million for the center planning documents and reports such as the Subarea Plan and SEIS Planned Action.

**Best Practices (as described in the survey)**

“Include substantial public outreach both to current residents of the area and the rest of the city and to the business community.

Don’t try to get everything done at once, but keep working at it.”
**Lynnwood Photo Essay**

Photo 1 Alderwood Mall

Photo 2 Alderwood Mall Structured Parking
Photo 5 Community Transit Bus Shelter

Photo 6 Lynnwood Multi-Family Housing
Photo 7 Office Building near the Alderwood Mall

Photo 8 Interurban Trail
Photo 9 Parking and Malls Surrounding Alderwood Mall

Photo 10 Lynnwood Transit Center and Park and Ride with Bike Facilities
Overlake (Redmond) Profile

Overlake is an office park that is one of two centers located in the City of Redmond (King County). Overlake was originally designated as a Manufacturing/Industrial Center and was changed to a Regional Growth Center since the 2002 centers report was published. It covers an area just east of SR 520. Overlake is dominated by the Microsoft campus, but also includes some housing, retail and food service companies.

As an office park, it has a very small residential population and housing units, but a very large number of people employed in the center. Only Downtown Seattle employs a larger population and has a larger activity unit density of the 27 Regional Growth Centers. In terms of acres, the center is right at the median.

Table 9 Selected Data from Overlake (2009)

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<th>Housing Units</th>
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<td>519</td>
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</table>

Center Plan

The City of Redmond has a Comprehensive Plan Urban Centers Element that contains Overlake neighborhood policies. This was updated in 2007, and is currently being updated as well. Redmond has other planning documents that apply to Overlake which include the Transportation Master Plan (2005), Transportation Improvement Plan (2011-16), Capital Improvement Program (2011-2016), Overlake Village Street Design Guidelines (scheduled for adoption in April 2011), Overlake Parking Management Plan (2009), Overlake Wayfinding Design Manual (2009), GTEC Plan (2007), Overlake Village Master Plan and Implementation Strategy (2007), Overlake Village Stormwater and Park Facilities Conceptual Design Implementation Plan (2010), PARCC Plan (2010), General Sewer Plan and Water System Plan. The plans address the main topics of a vision, environment, land use, housing, economy, public services, and transportation along with the center’s relationship to the overall comprehensive plan and to relevant countywide planning policies.

Environment

The City of Redmond has citywide environmental policies for critical areas and stormwater that apply in Overlake. Specific policies for the center address the importance of protecting downstream properties and receiving waters from erosion and improving water quality. In the 2011-16 Capital Improvement Plan, Redmond has included a project in Overlake to provide regional stormwater facilities for conveyance, detention and water quality to address existing deficiencies and accommodate future growth. The zoning code also includes incentives to encourage green building in Overlake Village.
Redmond has policies and programs help to improve air quality, such as providing for mixed-use development, requiring that a portion of new development in Overlake Village be residential, supporting the land use with a multimodal transportation system, carrying out the City’s transportation demand management programs, and establishing a mode split goal for Overlake (by 2030, 40% of peak period trips by modes other than driving alone).

Fieldwork Observations: The center has some heavily wooded areas in its center, but there are few parks and ballfields. Those located in the center are on the Microsoft campus, and assumed to be private.

*Land Use*

The boundaries of the center only include the employment area east of SR 520, and the west area is excluded due to concerns from the City of Bellevue. Its proposed targets for 2030 are to increase by 4,475 dwellings (39% of citywide increase) and an increase of 16,297 jobs (45% of citywide increase). Overlake is one of two centers in Redmond, the other being Downtown Redmond. Another key employment area located in the City is southeast Redmond, which is planned for significant growth.

To encourage dense development, the City requires that a portion of all new development include housing, developers can purchase transfer of development rights to add height and commercial floor area, incentive zoning allows increased height and FAR for provision of desired neighborhood features, updated SEPA Planned Action (2009), implement design guidelines, and there are maximum and minimum parking ratios.

The survey contains the main land use issues affecting Overlake, which are a lack of market demand, an oversupply of parking, super-blocks, lack of sidewalks, and a lack of parks and other amenities to attract investment and residents.

Fieldwork Observations: Overlake is a very car-oriented center, although there is a transit center near SR 520 and connector shuttles throughout the Microsoft campus for employees. Microsoft is also still expanding and there are a couple new buildings under construction. There is some mixed-use development but not much housing overall in the center, and there are surrounding areas of strip malls. There is also a large area that is an old Group Health building, which has been vacant since 2008 and the vegetation has grown over the sidewalks and parking lots. Group Health moved to another location in Redmond, and the area has yet to be redeveloped into apartments or condos and office space.\(^\text{12}\)

*Housing*

Fieldwork Observations: There are apartments and condos around the outskirts of the Microsoft campus, as well as retirement communities. There is also a mixed-use park and ride, which includes housing through King County Housing Authority and a child care facility.

\(^{12}\) (Bach, 2008)
To ensure affordable housing in the center, there are requirements that a minimum of 10 percent of new housing development (with 10 dwellings or more) be affordable to households with incomes of 80 percent or less of the King County median.

**Economy**

Microsoft is clearly the main employer, although there are other grocery stores, department stores, restaurants, and other businesses located in the center. The largest employers other than Microsoft are Sears and Silver Cloud hotel. The City works with the Greater Redmond Chamber of Commerce and the Redmond Economic Development Alliance to attract and retain businesses in Overlake.

**Public Services**

Most public facilities are not located in Overlake, because those facilities are in the Regional Growth Center of Downtown Redmond. The area does contain a hotel and strip malls for shopping in the center.

**Transportation**

To address pedestrian friendly design, the City has a complete streets ordinance, Overlake Village Street Design Guidelines (2011) for guidance on improvements, a code which requires construction of an urban pathway to support pedestrian access, and development incentives to support redevelopment of car-oriented commercial areas.

The current transportation issues in the center are overly congested roads, lack of transit service, lack of bike facilities, lack of pedestrian facilities, and an incomplete grid.

The City of Redmond has minimum and maximum parking standards and allows shared parking agreements. The code requires on-street parking for certain streets in Overlake, contains development incentives for below grade parking, and restricts the amount and location of any new surface parking lots. The City completed a parking management plan in 2009 for Overlake to guide current and future strategies for parking.

Fieldwork Observations: Overlake has a mixed-use park and ride and housing development at The Village, and has another transit station right off of SR 520. The transit station is well maintained and has many Microsoft connector shuttles, along with a bike center and natural drainage features. Next to this station is the NE 36th Street Bridge which provides a connection across SR 520 and has a pedestrian and bicycle friendly design. The center overall has a pedestrian friendly design, especially on the Microsoft campus, but it is very spread out so the connector shuttles are mostly used instead of walking.

**Major Investments**

The completion of the NE 36th Street Bridge to help alleviate congestion around Microsoft was just opened on December 15, 2010 and goes over SR 520. It provides a connection for cars, pedestrians and
bicyclists. It cost $30 million was funded by Microsoft (58 percent), the City of Redmond (18 percent), the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, and the Federal Highway Administration.\textsuperscript{14}

\textit{Best Practices}

The recent completion of the NE 36\textsuperscript{th} Street Bridge has been the most successful project for the center.

\textsuperscript{14} (NE 36th Street Bridge)
Overlake (Redmond) Photo Essay

Photo 1 Microsoft Offices

Photo 2 Pedestrian Friendly Design by Microsoft Offices
Photo 5 Mixed-Use Park and Ride and Housing – The Village

Photo 6 Mixed-Use Park and Ride – The Village
Photo 7 Major Employer and Surface Parking Lots

Photo 8 Overlake Bus Shelter by Retail
Photo 9 Overlake Transit Center and Microsoft Connector Shuttles

Photo 10 Overlake Transit Center
Downtown Puyallup Profile

Downtown Puyallup is one of two centers located in the City. The center is designated a downtown and is one of the smaller growth centers in area at 215 acres. The center is near highways 161, 167 and 512.

Table 10 Selected Data from Puyallup (2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Covered Employment</th>
<th>% Pop</th>
<th>Housing Units</th>
<th>Housing Units Per Job</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>AU_Totals</th>
<th>AU_Density (Pop+Emp)</th>
<th>AU_Density as % of City AU Density</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,364</td>
<td>1,820</td>
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<td>561</td>
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<td>215</td>
<td>3,184</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>215%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Center Plan

The City of Puyallup has a number of studies, regulations and planning documents specific to downtown. These are a Downtown Zoning Update for higher densities and height bonuses, housing incentives for multi-family housing, Downtown Design Guidelines, Buildable Lands Study on Urban Center Redevelopment, Transit Oriented Development Study, Local Infrastructure Financing Tool, Sound Transit II: Flexible Access Study of Parking Alternatives, Downtown Parking Study, and Community Wayfinding Program.

Environment

The Comprehensive Plan contains policies that address and support low impact development use throughout the city, it requires adherence to local sensitive area requirements, and encourages the use of vegetation (bioswales, street trees) to “soften” the environment and make it more pedestrian friendly.

The Comprehensive Plan also promotes travel choices like carpooling, biking, and transit; also the use of clean fireplaces and stoves, the citing of electric vehicle infrastructure. The City continues to work on designating downtown as a receiving cite for TDR credits.

Fieldwork Observations: Downtown is home to a new City Hall that has bioswales surrounding it and a large commons area. Stormwater drains in the center also have “don’t pollute” placards attached to them.

Land Use

Key issues affecting land use as identified by City staff include:

- Lack of market demand
- Fragmented parcel ownership
- Undersupply of parking
- Community resistance
- Political resistance
The Comprehensive Plan has been amended to include a Downtown Revitalization Element, zoning amendments permit higher densities, height bonuses, and downtown design guidelines to encourage compact development in the center.

SEPA Planned Action for Downtown Puyallup, with inclusion of TDR study establishing Downtown Puyallup as a potential receiving site. This process is expected to identify possible downtown development incentives to be used in the TDR program.

Puyallup has also established the Local Infrastructure Financing Tool (LIFT) grant to provide assistance for infrastructure projects in both RGCs. Eligible projects include development of parking structures, transit oriented development, stormwater sewer system upgrades.

Fieldwork Observations: The center is a traditional downtown with smaller blocks and buildings around 1-5 stories. There are a number of new buildings around the Pioneer Park and older historical buildings along S. Meridian. The center has a good mix of residential and commercial uses, and a large park (Pioneer Park) that is used as a gathering place for the community.

Housing

The Comprehensive Plan has elements to encourage the construction of multi-family housing in the center.

Fieldwork Observations: The center has a variety of housing types including apartments, townhomes, and single-family homes. Single-family homes are located on the outer edge of the center, and the new construction near the downtown is more compact development.

Economy

The economy of the center is primarily local restaurants and shops; large employers include the City of Puyallup at City Hall and the Puyallup School District.

Active community groups in the center include the Puyallup Main Street Association and the Puyallup/East Sumner Chamber of Commerce which both support Downtown businesses. The City also received a LIFT grant in 2008 that intended to support infrastructure improvements that are focused on expanding job creation.

Public Services

From the Downtown Puyallup Survey:

“The ‘jewel’ of the Downtown RGC is the civic plaza which is centered around Pioneer Park which is a gathering place throughout the year. Within a few block radius of the park are a new City Hall, a Pavilion, the City Library, a mixed-use senior center/commercial/residential building, the police station, farmers’ market pavilion, community park with bandstand, children’s wading pool, and Sounder Train station.”
The LIFT program helps ensure that public facilities and service are at a sufficient level for projected population growth.

Fieldwork Observations: Most of the activity in the center happens around the new public facilities (City Hall, Library and Pioneer Park).

Transportation

Primary transportation issues addressed in the survey:

“Local business owners are frustrated by the parking congestion created by the Sounder station – riders take up much of the street parking (Puyallup has the highest boarding numbers of the northbound Sounder communities). In addition, although there are transit facilities and services there are too few to provide a viable alternative to persons traveling to and from the downtown area, in some cases. There are adequate pedestrian and bicycle facilities, although there could easily be expanded to improve use of these travel mode options. The main street through and downtown area (Meridian) is a one-way street changed from 2-way in the 1980’s. Downtown business periodically request that the city re-consider making meridian a 2-way street.”

Puyallup’s Comprehensive Plan addresses “the citing and installation of electric car infrastructure cooperative planning with other transportation and transit agencies; consideration of bus rapid transit system from downtown to the south; the provision of commuter rail in downtown and expansion of the non-motorized system in downtown and the city amenities that support such a system e.g. walkway covers, street sweeping etc.”

The City has adopted a complete streets concept, routinely works with Pierce Transit on bus stop locations, and crossing flags can be found throughout the downtown area.

Fieldwork Observations: Walking the downtown area is very easy and friendly to pedestrians. The center has a number of pedestrian amenities such as:

- Truncated domes
- Pedestrian scale lighting
- Crosswalk flags

Major Investments

Recent City investments include the Puyallup Library in 2003, the Farmer’s Market Pavilion in 2005, the Activity Center Condos project in 2006 and City Hall in 2008.

Fieldwork Observations: The public services really stand out when visiting the Downtown Puyallup center; the City Hall, library, Pioneer Park, and Farmers Market Pavilion all look new and are areas with a lot of activity.
**Best Practices**

The Downtown Puyallup RGC is a vibrant area and easily accessible by all many modes of travel. It is clear through planning documents and investments that the city has a vision for the center and following through with that vision. The downtown area also seems to benefit for the work and dedication of civic groups like the Puyallup Main Street Association and the Puyallup/ East Sumner Chamber of Commerce.
Downtown Puyallup Photo Essay

Photo 1 Puyallup City Hall and Pioneer Park

Photo 2 Mixed-Use Development and Public Art
Photo 3 Puyallup Public Library on Pioneer Park

Photo 4 Mixed-Use Development, Pedestrian Scale Lighting and Crosswalk Flags
Photo 5 Historic Building in Downtown Puyallup

Photo 6 Water Quality Awareness
Photo 9 Puyallup Transit Station with Sounder Commuter Rail Service

Photo 10 Downtown Puyallup Main Street and City Hall
Renton Profile

The center of Renton is located in King County and is designated as a downtown. The growth RGC is off of I-405, and has two distinct areas. The south end is the main street, historic downtown area and the north end is a newer retail core which is near the Boeing plant and Lake Washington. Another unique characteristic in the center is the Cedar River, which features a walkway and a public library extending over it.

Renton is one of the slightly larger centers compared to the nearby south King County downtown centers. It is ninth largest in terms of employment, eleventh largest in population and activity unit totals, and twelfth largest in housing, acreage and activity unit density.

Table 11 Selected Data from Renton (2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Covered Employment</th>
<th>% Pop</th>
<th>Housing Units</th>
<th>Housing Units Per Job</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>AU_Totals</th>
<th>AU_Density (Pop+Emp)</th>
<th>AU Density as % of City AU Density</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>606</td>
<td>17,615</td>
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<td>313%</td>
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Center Plan

There are provisions for the center within the Comprehensive Plan, and there is an incomplete Community Plan that is expected to be finished soon and addresses the center specifically. There are additional provisions in the Capital Improvement Plan and Transportation Improvement Plan. These documents address the key subjects, which are a local vision for the center, the natural environment, land use, housing, economy, public facilities, transportation, sustainability, and the center’s relationship to the overall comprehensive plan.

Environment

The vision found in the Community Plan is to improve the ecological function of the Cedar River and the naturalization of it and Lake Washington shorelines. There are goals to increase the amount of green space in the city center, such as changing what is currently a parking lot into green space. Another goal to reduce stormwater runoff and reduce emissions is to increase the tree canopy with the street tree planting program, and a citywide stormwater manual also addresses water quality. There are several programs to help reduce air pollution, and are addressed below in the transportation section (in transit option goals).

Fieldwork Observations: The center has some distinct environmental features with the Cedar River and shoreline along Lake Washington. There are walkways and trails along the river, and the center contains several public parks and play structures.
**Land Use**

Fieldwork Observations: The boundaries of the center are shaped somewhat like a barbell. The south end of the growth center is the historic downtown, where many of the public services and the main street are located. There is also a large residential area with apartments and single-family homes. The downtown is a very accessible and walkable area, and includes the transit center. Next to the transit center are some mixed-use developments. Moving north, there is a portion of the center that is only one block wide to connect the southern end with the northern end. The north section is right off of large Boeing facilities and the Renton Municipal Airport. This area is called “The Landing,” and is a new area of retail, restaurants and housing. The two sections of the center are very different, as one is a traditional downtown and the other is a large new space of malls, apartments and condos. The map provided by PSRC was also outdated, and “The Landing” looks like a large empty lot on the map.

There are no employment and population targets specific to the center, but it is anticipated that a significant portion of the City’s targets will be accommodated in the center.

To encourage compact development, the zoning for the area allows for significant densities and has minimum densities, design guidelines, and a planned action. The main land use issues the center faces are a lack of market demand and fragmented parcel ownership.

**Housing**

The center contains a significant amount of affordable housing, and the City utilizes fee waivers and tax incentives for affordable housing, as well as density bonuses in certain zones that provide affordable housing. The center plan has a policy to ensure the continued strength of diversity in the area, including all incomes and abilities.

Fieldwork Observations: There are some new mixed-use developments of apartments and condos in the center, but several blocks along the south end of the border are primarily older, single-family homes. The housing in the north area is all mixed-use and includes short- and long-term housing.

**Economy**

The major employer in the center is Boeing. Paccar is another main employer, and the center contains a mix of small local businesses and national and regional retail and restaurant chains.

There is one person employed for the City whose primary responsibility is to ensure the vitality of historic Downtown Renton. There is also an economic development team for the entire city and a small business development center to support businesses and job creation.

**Public Services**

There are several public facilities located in the center, such as city hall, social service agencies, educational facilities, medical facilities, library, museum, theaters, fire station, post office and shopping areas.
Fieldwork Observations: The public services are primarily located in the south end of the center in the downtown. They are easily accessible by transit, biking and walking.

**Transportation**

The City has a complete streets ordinance and building orientation to address pedestrian friendly design. Some transportation issues for the center are roads with outdated designs and a lack of bicycle facilities.

Renton has many goals addressing transit options which include:

- Ensuring the F Line Bus Rapid Transit and long-term Light Rail Transit to Renton
- Connecting the two areas of Renton with a trolley line (may be a rubber wheeled option first, but then implementing a long-term with fixed rail)
- Supporting plans for a water taxi
- Connecting regional trails through Renton to provide improved bike connections
- Creating a road diet on a portion of Rainier Ave. S.

The City owns a multi-story parking garage that is free up to two hours, and then there is a charge for additional hours. There is a possibility of a parking garage in the north end of the center if regional transit connections occur there.

Fieldwork Observations: The south area of the center has the main transit center, and there is a range of King County Metro and Sound Transit options for riders. At this time the north area is more car-oriented, while the south area is more compact and walkable. The south end also contains free 1-2 hour on-street, parallel parking, while the north end has large surface parking lots for the malls.

*No Major Investments or Best Practices were identified in the survey*
Renton Photo Essay

Photo 1 Renton Transit Center Parking Structure

Photo 2 Renton Transit Center
Photo 3 Downtown Renton Free, Short-Term On-Street Parking

Photo 4 Waterfront Apartments and the Cedar River Trail
Photo 5 Renton Public Library over the Cedar River

Photo 6 Bus Shelter and Fire Department by the Public Library
Photo 9 Boeing Facility in North Area of the Center

Photo 10 The Landing Shops and Theater
SeaTac Profile

The SeaTac Regional Growth Center runs from S. 150th St. to S. 212th St., centered along International Boulevard. The center runs along the east side of the Sea-Tac International Airport and much of the amenities in the center support the airport. It is the only growth center from the fieldwork that currently has a Sound Transit light rail station. The type of center is a downtown and it is located in King County.

Table 12 Selected Data from SeaTac (2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Covered Employment</th>
<th>% Pop</th>
<th>Housing Units</th>
<th>Housing Units Per Job</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>AU_Totals</th>
<th>AU_Density (Pop+Emp)</th>
<th>AU Density as % of City AU Density</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10,137</td>
<td>8,208</td>
<td>55%</td>
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<td>886</td>
<td>18,345</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>320%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Center Plan

The City of SeaTac has two different subarea plans that cover separate areas of the center. The City Center Plan (1999) covers the core area of the center around the light rail station, and the S. 154th St. Station Area Plan (2006) is the area across International Blvd from the Tukwila light rail station and contains over 4 acres of city owned property. Economic and market analyses were used to develop both subarea plans and they both address transportation and circulation improvements. The corresponding development regulations for both subarea plans require human scale urban form with building designs that encourage pedestrian activity (such as pedestrian weather protection, ground floor transparency, ground floor use restrictions to promote active uses, surface parking to the rear of the building, and new streets to break up large parcels).

The City of SeaTac also has a Comprehensive Plan for the entire city. It contains policies on focusing employment and population growth in the Regional Growth Center, creating a “Town Center” and forming a connected network of local streets in areas served by high capacity transit and light rail (Land Use Element Policies 1.1A, 1.1B, 1.1C, 1.1D, and 1.1G). The Plan contains Community Image Element Policies (6.2A through 6.2 CC) addressing pedestrian and transit facilities and a Capital Facilities Plan on capital improvement projects in the City.

Environment

The Environmental Management Element of the Comprehensive Plan addresses environmentally sensitive areas throughout the City, including the City’s Shoreline Management policies. The SeaTac Municipal Code provides buffers and other protections.

The environmentally significant areas in the RGC include Bow Lake and parts of the shoreline of Angle Lake.

With development of the Cedarbrook Conference Center the applicants restored major class 1 wetlands associated with Bow Lake in the City Center and deeded wetland property to the City.
Soil contamination cleanup is underway through Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) permits as part of the renovation of the Hilton Hotel (1999), and two MasterPark surface parking lots.

Fieldwork Observations: The center is mostly developed and commercial in nature. There are a lot of paved surfaces for roads and both structured and surface parking lots for park and fly. Despite this, environmental features in the center include:

- Angle Lake Park, which is wooded around the perimeter with a large grass lawn that leads down to a beach by the lake and Angle Lake itself is not in the center
- Bow Lake, which contains class 1 wetlands
- A number of storm water detention ponds

Land Use

Land use issues in SeaTac arise from its proximity to the airport, and employment that targets the traveling public. These employment issues affecting land use in the center include:

- Lack of market demand
- Oversupply of parking
- Community resistance
- Political resistance
- Super-blocks

By 2040, SeaTac has growth targets of 5,800 households and employment of 25,300 with a large majority of this growth targeted in the RGC.

The center has two subareas with the City Center and the S. 154th St Station Area. Both subareas are served by light rail and are served by different subarea plans, with their own specific design and development regulations and zoning code. The subarea plans are focused on creating transit-supportive areas around the two light rail stations in the City.

A third light rail station is planned further south at 200th St. and may be in service as early as 2016.

Other notable land use policies:

- The City is working closely with commercial property owners to develop incentives to move surface park-and-fly businesses into structures with other non-parking uses
- Multi-family development is allowed outright in commercial zones with non-residential ground floor uses
- For much of the RGC, building heights are only regulated by the FAA with a maximum height of 250 feet
- The center has a maximum setback of 10 feet
- There is no parking allowed between the buildings and streets
- Standards call for shared driveways to reduce curb cuts
Fieldwork Observations: The SeaTac RGC is very car oriented in part due to its alignment along highway 99 and super-blocks. But the City is working to enhance the frontage along 99 and there are a number of interesting new mixed-use projects in SeaTac. Newer park and fly lots are structured with ground level commercial space.

- The new Wally Park on International Blvd has a minimal setback and ground floor commercial space
- The MasterPark at 177th is also mixed-use structured parking but it has a large setback with a pocket park

**Housing**

Comprehensive Plan Policy 2.2B encourages a mix of commercial and residential uses in the RGC. Strategies for this policy include reducing residential parking requirements in commercial areas, and working with non-profit developers to acquire vacant or underutilized sites to develop for residential use.

“City Center Policy H-1A encourages a mixture of high quality housing types oriented to all segments of the population in the City Center. In 2008 the City adopted a change to the Building Code to allow 4 stories of wood frame construction over a concrete first floor to encourage new multi-family residential development in the mixed-use zones, which are mostly located in the Regional Growth Center.”

Fieldwork Observations: SeaTac's center contains many different kinds of housing like single-family homes, apartments, condos, and trailer parks. But many of the residential neighborhoods lack through streets and sidewalks making them feel cut off from the commercial districts.

**Economy**

An overwhelming majority of the businesses in SeaTac are related to the Sea-Tac International Airport. The Port of Seattle is the economic engine to the area, the airport is obviously a huge employer but services in the center like hotels, restaurants, park and fly’s, and freight forwarders depend on the airport.

**Public Services**

Public Services in the center are again focused around the airport. There are the light rail station, hotels, and conference centers. In the northern part of the center there is a USPS distribution center.

The City has worked with Sound Transit in developing the airport light rail stations and the City is currently working with Sound Transit on the S. 200 Station. The City has also worked with King County Metro to establish RapidRide bus shelters.
Transportation

Transportation in the SeaTac center is very car oriented. There are acres of surface street parking lots and a number of highways.

The center does have a light rail station. The residential neighborhoods are not particularly pedestrian friendly due to the lack of sidewalks.

Transportation issues affecting the center are:

- Congested streets
- Large parcels that inhibit vehicular and pedestrian traffic
- Lack of bicycle facilities
- Lack of residential sidewalks
- Lack of connections between neighborhoods and the center, complicated by the side of blocks

Fieldwork Observations: The center is comprised of a number of super-blocks and there are few east-west through streets. The center is not conducive to short trips but is has easy access to highways 99, 518, and I-5.

Major Investments

- Phase 4 reconstruction of International Blvd
- Sound Transit LINK light rail system
- King County Metro Rapid Ride
- Two park and fly structures with ground floor retail
- Contaminated soil clean up
- Land acquisition at S 154th St. Station area

Best Practices (as described in the survey)

“Lessons learned: When SeaTac first proposed reconstructing International Boulevard (SR 99) to include sidewalks and landscaping the proposal was criticized with the argument that no one would use the sidewalks because the road is "hostile" to pedestrians. When Phase 1 was completed in 1994-95, critics were surprised at the high number of pedestrians using the new facilities, especially those walking from local hotels to the airport terminal with wheeled suitcases. Sometimes if you build it, they will come.”
SeaTac Photo Essay

Photo 1 SeaTac Link Light Rail Station

Photo 2 Park and Fly and Hotel by Link Light Rail Station
Photo 3 RapidRide Bus Shelter and Pedestrian Bridge

Photo 4 Mixed-Use, Park and Fly and Retail
Photo 5 Angle Lake Park

Photo 6 Residential Street Missing Sidewalks
Photo 7 Strip Mall Development Across Street from Link Light Rail (City-Owned Land)

Photo 8 Residential Street Sidewalk Ending
Photo 9 Federal Detention Center

Photo 10 International Boulevard with Sidewalks and Street Trees
Silverdale (Kitsap County) Profile

Silverdale, designated as a mall, is the retail center of Kitsap County. It is the only RGC that is in an unincorporated area. Silverdale is another center that is newly added since the 2002 centers report, and is the second RGC in Kitsap County. The majority of the center is the Kitsap Mall and surrounding strip malls, but there are also a lot of natural features in the area, and the center is located right on Puget Sound.

The center is around the median compared to the other centers in terms of population, employment, housing and activity unit totals. However, it is the second largest center in area and second smallest in activity unit density due to its large size.

Table 13 Selected Data from Silverdale (2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Covered Employment</th>
<th>% Pop</th>
<th>Housing Units</th>
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<th>Acres</th>
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<td>11</td>
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</table>

Center Plan

The center has several documents containing plans specific to Silverdale, which include the Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan (2006), Silverdale Subarea Plan (2006), Silverdale Vision 2052 Plan, Silverdale Design Standards, Urban Growth Area (UGA) Financial Analysis Report, Wastewater Infrastructure Taskforce Report, and a Capital Facilities Plan (which is updated annually). These documents address a vision for the center, the natural environment, land use, housing, economy, public services and facilities, transportation and the center's relationship to the overall comprehensive plan.

Environment

In the fieldwork, many natural features were observed, such as Clear Creek with trails along it, heavily wooded areas and the Puget Sound. The survey stated there is a Kitsap County Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) which protects critical areas and their buffers by ensuring there is no net loss to functions and values of wetlands, steep slopes, floodplains, fish and wildlife habitat and critical aquifer recharge areas. In addition, the Kitsap County Shoreline Management Program (SMP) ensures there is no net loss to shoreline ecological functions and shoreline ecosystem wide processes.

Kitsap County has policies that address water quality, and both the CAO and SMP address the prevention and avoidance of stormwater or other discharges to surface waters and shorelines. There is also a Kitsap County Stormwater Code, and when visiting the center we saw multiple, clearly marked stormwater management facilities.

Kitsap County also uses a program to track air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, called the TransCad Transportation Model. It measures climate factors such as greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles travelled. The impetus for this modeling is found in the Goals and Policies within the
Transportation Element (Volume 1, Chapter 8) and the Silverdale Subarea Plan (Volume 1, Chapter 14, Section 14.2.5, goals 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25) of the County Comprehensive Plan.

Land Use

The boundaries for the center were made to encompass the majority of commercial uses in the area and also include a mix of housing types to meet the criteria for Regional Growth Centers. To encourage compact development, the center has incentives for mixed-use development, SEPA Trip Bank, Silverdale Design Standards, and increased building heights (to 65 feet).

The county does not have specific population and employment targets for the center. As of 2010, the Silverdale center makes up 7.8% of the total population in Kitsap County. The largest city in Kitsap County is Bremerton, the only other Regional Growth Center in the county. Bremerton is located about eight miles south of Silverdale.

Some land use issues in the center are fragmented parcel ownership, an oversupply of parking, and most importantly infrastructure improvements that are needed but there is a lack of funding for these improvements.

Fieldwork Observations: Since Silverdale is a mall, it is very car-oriented with large parking lots. It is a concentrated retail area, but the entire center is not walkable or compact. The boundary covers a very large area at just over 1,000 acres. However, since the center is designated as a mall, it seems like the boundaries should be focused around the mall and surrounding commercial areas. The east area of the center contains many residential developments which are difficult to navigate through and are very suburban in nature (primarily everything east of NW Myhre Road, with the exception of Harrison Medical Center).

Housing

There are multiple housing developments in the center, which are a mix of single-family homes, apartments, condos and a mobile home park. These provide a wide range of types and prices of housing in the center. In addition, the Comprehensive Plan encourages density bonuses for affordable housing.

Economy

The main employers in the area are retail and restaurant chains, and Harrison Hospital is another large employer in the center. The Kitsap Economic Development Alliance supports businesses in the county, which includes the Silverdale and Bremerton centers.

Public Services

The center has some public services, such as a library, Kitsap County Sheriff’s Office, post office, a school district administration building, social service agencies, community centers, educational facilities, medical facilities, museum, theaters, hotels and regional shopping. Investments made in the center to support public facilities and services are the Central Kitsap Community Campus (YMCA, Senior Housing),
Bucklin Hill Bridge Improvement, Waaga Way Extension Road, Central Kitsap Sewage Treatment Plan Capacity and Conveyance Upgrades, and Silverdale Water District Reuse Project.

**Transportation**

It is a car-oriented center, and in the fieldwork there was not much observable pedestrian or bicycle friendly design. Kitsap County does not have a complete streets ordinance, but where appropriate or when the road has been identified as a component of the Mosquito Fleet Bike/Trail Facility Plan, the county makes every effort to include pedestrian facilities. The center also has bus shelters and pull-outs on its major streets that are serviced by Kitsap Transit. Signal prioritization exists too; though it is not known to what extent it is used by transit.

The main transportation issues in the center are overly congested roads, a lack of transit and bicycle facilities, and barriers to travel such as very long blocks due to the Kitsap Mall and it’s a highly commercialized area. It is also essentially impossible to build new roads to densify the road network because Clear Creek runs through the center and because of the very large retail mall. The cost of land makes any right of way acquisition very expensive in the center.

On-street parking is allowed and free, but in the Old Town area parking is limited to two hours by ordinance. There is also surface parking throughout the mall and strip malls.

**Major Investments**

The recent investments in the center include the Central Kitsap Community Campus (a low impact development project with includes a YMCA and senior housing), Bucklin Hill Bridge Improvement, Waaga Way Extension Road, Central Kitsap Sewage Treatment Plan Capacity and Conveyance Upgrades, Silverdale Water District Reuse Project, Silverdale Design Standards, Wastewater Infrastructure Taskforce. There are stormwater retrofits and low impact development techniques actively deployed on the ground to address impervious runoff and pollution prevention.

**Best Practices (as described in the survey)**

“Low impact development and stormwater retrofits are being used to tell the story on pollution prevention.”
Silverdale Photo Essay

Photo 1 Kitsap Mall

Photo 2 Big Box Retailers by Kitsap Mall
Photo 3 Wetland Area on Puget Sound

Photo 4 Stormwater Management Facility
Photo 5 Housing in East Area of the Center

Photo 6 Kitsap Transit Stop in Residential Area
Photo 7 Bus Shelter and Strip Malls

Photo 8 Clear Creek which Bisects Silverdale
South Hill (Puyallup) Profile

The South Hill RGC is one of two centers in Puyallup. The center is roughly centered on S. Meridian (which is also SR 161), and is designated a mall. The center is very spread out and covers 845 acres.

Table 14 Selected Data from South Hill (2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Covered Employment</th>
<th>% Pop</th>
<th>Housing Units</th>
<th>Housing Units Per Job</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>AU Totals</th>
<th>AU Density (Pop+Emp)</th>
<th>AU Density as % of City AU Density</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2,742</td>
<td>5,823</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>1,367</td>
<td>2/10</td>
<td>845</td>
<td>8,565</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>147%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Center Plan

The City’s Comprehensive Plan addresses the center with South Hill Neighborhood Plan Policies, Transportation Element, and the Local Infrastructure Financing Tool (LIFT).

Documents address the vision of the center, the natural environment, land use, housing, the economy, public facilities and services, transportation, sustainability, the center’s relationship to the comprehensive plan, the center’s relationship to countywide planning policies, the center’s relationship with other nearby regional centers, and the center’s relationship with VISION 2040.

Environment

The South Hill Element of the Comprehensive Plan has policies that focus on and encourage low impact development, parks, and open space. Policies also address protection of local natural features and wetlands. The Comprehensive Plan encourages the use of green infrastructure to soften urban spaces.

Fieldwork Observations: The center is mostly big box retailers and strip malls. The center is also spread out and contains a large park with a lake and a significant amount of tree canopy/undeveloped land. There is also a large lot on the east side of Meridian that contains a wetland. Of the centers visited, South Hill feels the least developed, although this also means it has potential.

Land Use

Issues affecting land use include oversupply of parking, lack of market demand, community and political resistance, super-blocks, lack of sidewalks and very high traffic volume.

The center has many different land uses with lots of retail along South Meridian, multiple types of housing on the east side of the center, and the 59 acre Bradley Lake Park.

The city is looking into developing a TDR program where the South Hill would be a receiving site.

Fieldwork Observations: Commercial areas along Meridian are solely big box retailers and strip malls, as the center is a regional shopping destination. Buildings are separated by large parking lots, and lack pedestrian right of ways.
Within the center there are large vacant lots and a number of large vacant storefronts. The center is spread out giving it a different feel in different sections of the center. The center is very sprawled out along the Meridian corridor with the South Hill Mall, various strip malls, and big box retailers. There is a secluded community college, and suburban residential neighborhoods.

**Housing**

The City has policies pertaining to affordable housing and offers a multi-family housing tax credit to encourage more housing in the center.

Fieldwork Observations: There are a variety of different kinds of housing in the center including subdivisions with single-family houses, condos, apartments, mobile homes, and senior housing.

**Economy**

The South Hill RGC is a “super regional center” with more that 1 million square feet of retail space and more than 125 stores. The center also is home to Parametrix, which consolidated its offices in a once dormant microchip plant. Other large employers in the area include Pierce College with 460 full time and 535 part-time employees.

**Public Services**

Public services in the center include social service agencies, educational facilities, theaters, and regional and community shopping.

Fieldwork Observations: Most of the public amenities are located down the hill in Downtown Puyallup. The main public facility in the area is Bradley Lake Park.

**Transportation**

Roads in the center are overly congested and also have an outdated design that is potentially unsafe. Congestion in the area is a barrier to travel and the land use of the center is designed for the automobile. The area lacks sufficient facilities for both bicyclists and pedestrians.

The South Hill Neighborhood Plan identifies strategies to improve the pedestrian facilities in the center, including a complete street provision, and installing sidewalks that are at least 8 feet clear of motorized traffic.

The City is focusing on designing streets that would accommodate Bus Rapid Transit and developing a system of trails for non-motorized transportation modes.

The City is also interested in improving the east-west connectivity of roads and establishing a new grid system with smaller blocks.

In the past, the City has applied for grant funding to complete signal prioritization for transit along South Meridian, but it has been unsuccessful.
**Major Investments**

The City has been developing the South Hill Neighborhood Plan with the community for a number of years. In pursuing the Local Infrastructure Financing Tool (LIFT) grant, the City has committed to provide its share of infrastructure improvements.

**Best Practices**

Community education and involvement is critical to an ambitious plan like the South Hill Neighborhood Plan. The City used the help of Pierce County Health Department in the completion of the Health Impact Assessment (HIA). Analyzing the health implications of different land use options, the HIA pointed out the benefits of a more dense community.

A major problem in South Hill is congestions, and a major obstacle to adding density is in helping people understand that adding more people to the area improve the quality of the community.
South Hill (Puyallup) Photo Essay

Photo 1 South Hill Mall off of SR 512

Photo 2 Big Box Retailers by South Hill Mall
Photo 3 Transit Center at South Hill Mall

Photo 4 Bradley Lake Park
Photo 5 South Hill Subdivision

Photo 6 Heavily Wooded Area in the RGC
Photo 7 Office Park Entrance

Photo 8 Pierce College Entrance
Tacoma Mall Profile

The Tacoma Mall RGC is the one of two centers in Tacoma (the other is Downtown Tacoma). It is designated a mall and indeed the Tacoma Mall and other big box retailers dominate the center.

Table 15 Selected Data from Tacoma Mall (2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Covered Employment</th>
<th>% Pop</th>
<th>Housing Units</th>
<th>Housing Units Per Job</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>AU_Totals</th>
<th>AU_Density (Pop+Emp)</th>
<th>AU_Density as % of City AU Density</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3,549</td>
<td>7,725</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>1,673</td>
<td>2/10</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>11,274</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>238%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Center Plan

In the Comprehensive Plan, the Tacoma Mall RGC is comprised of the 3 subareas to the South Tacoma Neighborhood. The subareas are Tacoma Mall, Madison, and Lincoln Heights. They all comprise the Tacoma Mall Mixed-Use Center as it is called in the Comprehensive Plan. The vision for the South Tacoma Neighborhood calls for a community feeling and promote pedestrian access. Future priorities include the development and enhancement of public parks, open spaces, bike and hiking trails, development of industrial areas, and redevelopment of existing retail centers.

Environment

The City of Tacoma has transit supportive programs and land use strategies in place to help reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

Land Use

Issues affecting land use in the center include:

- Lack of demand
- Fragmented parcel ownership
- Super-blocks

The size and shape of the growth center was created in order to meet VISION 2040’s population and employment allocations. To help increase density in the center bus rapid transit is in place and building height restrictions have been raised. The Tacoma planning department is working under the assumption that 20% of the VISION 2040 population and employment allocations will be accommodated in the mixed-use centers, which include Tacoma Mall.

The South Tacoma neighborhood as it had grown commercially and with residences has not kept pace with amenities such as parks, sidewalks, and playgrounds. Basic services are provided but there continue to be issues with flooding, lack of space for recreation, and non-motorized travel. Much of this the City attributes to the dearth of owner occupied housing and landlords unwilling to invest in infrastructure.

The Tacoma Comprehensive Plan also cites an abundance of vacant land in the South Tacoma Neighborhood, this holds true for the Tacoma Mall RGC.
Fieldwork Observations: The center is built out with big box stores and large parking lots; the abundance of parking lots and paved surfaces is clear from overhead.

**Housing**

Housing issues and goals will be addressed in the subarea plan that is to be developed for the Tacoma Mall center.

Fieldwork Observations: The Tacoma Mall center has a wide variety of housing types and ages. There are single-family homes, apartments, townhomes, and condos. Most of the residential neighborhoods in the center consist of older single-family homes, but there are a number of newer town home developments mixed in.

Of the three subareas that make up the Tacoma Mall RGC, the Madison area is the only real residential neighborhood. This area has been zoned to accept the largest concentration of high intensity housing in the city. This area has seen some redevelopment. In the South Tacoma neighborhood only 40.3% of the homes are owner occupied, and landlords are not eager to invest in the area, and there is a lack of demand to redevelop at the moment.\(^{15}\)

**Economy**

The Tacoma Mall RGC’s economy consists of the mall, a number of big boxes, and strip malls. Retail and food services are the economic driving force of the center.

Fieldwork Observations: Tacoma Police Headquarters is also located in the center. Overall the center is a collection of big box retail stores and smaller strip malls.

**Public Services**

The center contains a number of public facilities and services:

- Tacoma Police Department Headquarters
- Post Office
- Theaters
- Community Center
- Puget Sound Energy Offices
- Regional and Community Shopping

**Transportation**

The Tacoma Mall RGC is a major destination by both car and public transportation. The center is very car oriented with large parking lots, and four lane arterials.

The center also contains a transit center with rapid ride bus service.

\(^{15}\) (Comprehensive Plan - Neighborhood Element, 2004)
Pedestrian transportation is hampered by the lack of sidewalks in residential neighborhoods and connectivity to the different shopping centers.

Fieldwork Observations: Roads and sidewalks in the residential areas of the center are in disrepair or non-existent. New and improved sidewalks are found in front of new housing constructions, of which there is a fair amount.

The commercial centers around the mall are very car oriented and are surrounded by large parking lots.

**Major Investments**

Major housing projects have been added around the Tacoma Mall itself.

**Best Practices (as described in the survey)**

“Improved design guidelines have been added to development regulations.”
*Tacoma Mall Photo Essay*

Photo 1 New Front Entrance to the Tacoma Mall

Photo 2 North Side of the Tacoma Mall
Photo 3 Housing and Retail by Tacoma Mall

Photo 4 Tacoma Police Headquarters
Photo 5 New Residential Development and Street with Speed Humps

Photo 6 Residential Street Lacking Sidewalks
Photo 7 New Townhomes and Transit Stop

Photo 8 Tacoma Mall Area Strip Mall
Photo 9 Puget Sound Energy Offices

Photo 10 Tacoma Mall Transit Center
**Totem Lake (Kirkland) Profile**

The Totem Lake RGC, located in the City of Kirkland (King County), is a designated office park. It is one of the newer centers, so it was not included in the 2002 centers report. Totem Lake has some distinct characteristics, such as Totem Lake and its wetland trail, Totem Lake Mall, and Evergreen Medical Center, which stands out as the main employer. Many other medical offices are located in Totem Lake to be near the medical center. Another feature of the center is that it is bisected by I-405, and there is a new freeway station with HOV on and off ramps that was built by a partnership between the City of Kirkland, WSDOT and Sound Transit.

The center is a somewhat large compared to the other centers. Its population ranks eighth largest and housing is ninth largest, which is rather unexpected for an office park. It also covers a considerable area as the sixth largest center. It is around the midrange in its activity unit totals (13th largest), activity unit density (17th largest), and employment (13th largest).

Table 16 Selected Data from Totem Lake (2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Covered Employment</th>
<th>% Pop</th>
<th>Housing Units</th>
<th>Housing Units Per Job</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>AU_Totals</th>
<th>AU_Density (Pop+Emp)</th>
<th>AU Density as % of City AU Density</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>11,327</td>
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<td>3,315</td>
<td>3/10</td>
<td>860</td>
<td>17,047</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>166%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Center Plan**

The Kirkland Comprehensive Plan contains a neighborhood plan for Totem Lake, which was adopted in 2002. The boundaries of the center are slightly smaller than those of the entire neighborhood. The plan addresses topics such as a vision for the neighborhood, the environment, land use, housing, economy, public services, transportation, and the center’s relationship to the overall comprehensive plan.

**Environment**

Fieldwork Observations: The major natural feature is Totem Lake, which is a small lake and wetland area. There is a trail that goes around and over Totem Lake; however the trail is somewhat hidden behind the buildings of the Totem Lake Mall. The trail was also flooded and not useable in the spring, although in the survey the City of Kirkland stated that the stormwater utility is focusing its efforts on reducing flooding in the area.

The City zoning code contains regulations addressing critical areas, and the Plan has policy guidance on preservation and enhancement of streams and Totem Lake, protection from natural hazards such as landslides and flooding, and preservation of an east-west forested and landscaped greenway through the center.

The City of Kirkland also has a program to promote green development practices. To reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, there are policies that foster implementation of transportation demand management measures, better transit service, preferential treatment for carpools and transit on
arterials, and improved access for non-motorized modes of transportation. The center has had major transit improvements recently, as described in the major investments section.

**Land Use**

Fieldwork Observations: There are four quadrants in Totem Lake. The northeast quadrant contains Evergreen Medical Center, a transit center with a mix of parking and offices, and some housing. The southeast quadrant is both Totem Lake and mainly the Totem Lake Mall, which was built in 1973 and has many vacancies. The City stated in the survey that it is offering incentives for redevelopment of the entire property. The southwest quadrant is the business park, and the northwest quadrant is mixed-use and contains housing, retail and offices. The area is somewhat car-oriented, although there are sidewalks and landscaping, it is too large of an area for the entire center to be walkable.

To encourage compact development, the City implemented zoning regulations which greatly increase development potential by allowing taller buildings and in some cases minimum density requirements. Mixed-use development is frequently required in the center, and development bonuses are offered for affordable housing and public improvements.

The center does not have explicit employment and population targets, but citywide growth targets reflect the City's intent to meet a large portion of future growth in Totem Lake (up to 40% of housing and 80% of employment growth). The long-term capacity for redevelopment in the center exceeds targets.

Totem Lake is the only RGC in the City of Kirkland, and Downtown Kirkland is the next largest center in the City (and classified as a subregional center). Totem Lake has not experienced as much recent redevelopment than Downtown Kirkland, and the downtown has a more urban pedestrian-oriented character than Totem Lake.

The main concerns listed in the survey regarding land use issues include a lack of market demand, fragmented parcel ownership, super-blocks, and fragmentation/limited connectivity due to freeway and arterials bisecting the center.

**Housing**

Fieldwork Observations: There are many types of housing throughout the center, such as apartments, condos, and some single-family. Housing is on Totem Lake or overlooking the lake, and these are all apartments, condos and a retirement community. These housing options are also right next to the Evergreen Medical Center.

The City revised zoning regulations to allow increased building heights, and in some cases to allow residential buildings to be taller than commercial buildings. To address affordable housing, zoning regulations require that residential buildings exceeding a stated height must have a portion of new units affordable for prescribed income levels.

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16 (Totem Lake Urban Center, 2010)
**Economy**

The largest employer in the center, and also the entire city, is Evergreen Medical Center, which employs 2,600 people. There are also many medical offices that employ many people in the area, and other large employers are Nintendo with 116 employees and Marketleader.com with 136 employees. The Fred Meyer store has 187 employees, and there are several auto dealerships in the center. There is a variety of office, retail and restaurants in Totem Lake.

In 2010, the City of Kirkland organized a one day symposium for property owners, developers, architects and civic leaders provided ideas on how to promote development. The City used those ideas to create an action plan to make Totem Lake more attractive for development. There is also an Economic Development Manager for the City who attracts and retains businesses, and a Business Roundtable group made up of business leaders in Kirkland.

**Public Services**

Public services within the center include the Kirkland Municipal Court, medical facilities, social service agencies, theaters, hotels, and shopping. The City recently purchased a building to use as the Kirkland public safety building. Lake Washington Technical College is located just outside of the center. Kirkland is also contributing up to $15 million to public improvements to redevelop the Totem Lake malls, but the plans are on hold due to the economic downturn.

**Transportation**

Kirkland has several strategies to address pedestrian and transit friendly design. There is a complete streets ordinance and the City strives to design all streets to accommodate the needs of all modes of transportation. Totem Lake has street standards which are a large sidewalk width with street trees and pedestrian scale light standards. It is mandatory for all new development to improve adjacent streets to these standards, and new buildings are required to be designed with a pedestrian orientation. Some transportation issues in the center are overly congested roads, roads with outdated designs, lack of transit service, lack of pedestrian facilities, and lack of fine grained street grid as a barrier to travel.

There are many areas in the center with large expanses of surface parking, most notably around the Totem Lake malls and other commercial areas, but new development standards require parking to be in structures, below grade or behind buildings.

Fieldwork Observations: Certain parts of the center are more walkable than others, but it is somewhat car-oriented overall. The area has a good deal of transit service, and there is a transit center next to Evergreen Medical Center and a new I-405 overpass with HOV on and off ramps that is convenient. The freeway station was developed through a partnership of the City of Kirkland, WSDOT and Sound Transit.\footnote{I-405 - Totem Lake Freeway Station}

\footnote{I-405 - Totem Lake Freeway Station}
**Major Investments**

Recently, the major investments made in the Totem Lake center include several new buildings on the Evergreen Medical Center campus, the Metro transit center on the Evergreen Medical Center campus, a new overpass at NE 128th Street over I-405, additional improvements to NE 128th Street, and several new medical office buildings. There is also a St. Andrews low income housing project in progress, and the City has committed $15 million on public improvements associated with the redevelopment of the Totem Lake malls.

**Best Practices (as described in the survey)**

“The Totem Lake Urban Center is very much a work in progress and it's too early to know if we will achieve the desired development pattern. Probably the most successful project to date is the work to locate a transit center on the Evergreen Medical Center campus. Through our comprehensive planning, the City identified the edge of the campus as the preferred location for the transit center. Funding for the center was included in phase one of Sound Transit's plan (even though the center is not directly served by Sound Transit). Development regulations for EMC required that in order to maximize development potential for new buildings on campus, EMC must reserve space for a new transit center and enter into an agreement with Sound Transit and Metro for joint development of the site. ”
Totem Lake (Kirkland) Photo Essay

Photo 1 Totem Lake Malls and Evergreen Hospital Medical Center

Photo 2 Evergreen Hospital Medical Center – Largest Employer
Photo 7 Multi-Family Housing Units

Photo 8 Commercial Area
Photo 9 Office Building

Photo 10 Freeway Station
Tukwila Profile

The center of Tukwila, found in King County, is a designated mall. It is in a very accessible location in the region, at the I-5 and I-405 interchange. The center is also less than five miles away from the Sea-Tac Airport. Tukwila is very recognizable by its Westfield Southcenter Mall. There are many more strip malls throughout the center, making it a popular shopping area and employing a large number of people. Another unique feature is Tukwila Pond, which is almost undetectable when driving through the center but could be a valuable asset.

Tukwila is the only center with zero housing units and, not surprisingly, also has the smallest population of all centers. However, it is eighth largest of the centers in employment, seventh largest in acres and tenth largest in activity unit totals. It is just slightly lower than the median in activity unit density, as the median is 23.

Table 17 Selected Data from Tukwila (2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Covered Employment</th>
<th>% Pop</th>
<th>Housing Units</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>AU_Totals</th>
<th>AU_Density (Pop+Emp)</th>
<th>AU Density as % of City AU Density</th>
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<td>(0)</td>
<td>-0</td>
<td>847</td>
<td>17,886</td>
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The City of Tukwila failed to return the survey sent to them, so most of this description comes from the fieldwork in Tukwila, a presentation the City gave to PSRC in January of 2011\(^\text{18}\), the City's Comprehensive Plan, and their subarea plan\(^\text{19}\).

Center Plan

The City of Tukwila has a Comprehensive Plan and there is a Tukwila Subarea Plan for the center. These documents contain topics addressing a vision for the center, natural environment, land use, housing, economy, transportation, sustainability, and the center’s relationship to the Comprehensive Plan, countywide planning policies, and nearby centers. It addresses VISION 2020, but is not yet compatible with VISION 2040.

Environment

The center has environmental features such as the Green River along the east boundary, which has a trail along it but is currently sandbagged due to flooding concerns, and the Tukwila Pond in the central area of the center, which has a small wetland park but is mostly hidden at this time. There are overgrown sidewalks and railroad tracks around some of Tukwila Pond. The Interurban Trail runs along the east side of the center.

The subarea plan emphasizes development along the waterfront areas of the river and pond, as well as improving the water quality and preserving wetlands and the natural habitat in those areas. It also

\(^{18}\) (Draft Tukwila Urban Center Plan, 2011)
\(^{19}\) (Tukwila Urban Center Plan, 2009)
addresses increasing accessibility to the waterfront and natural features by improving connections between Westfield Southcenter Mall and Tukwila Pond.

At this time there is one park near the Green River named Bicentennial Park which has a playground for children and some picnic tables, and the subarea plan discusses that additional urban parks should be created in the future.

The center is very obviously in a floodplain, and it was very wet in the empty lots. There are signs throughout the center that display flood evacuation routes. The Green River flooding concerns are due to the Howard Hanson Dam upstream and since late 2009 there have been barriers and giant sandbags along the river in the entire center.

**Land Use**

Since the center is a regional shopping mall, it is very car-oriented and spread out. There are four main districts in the area. The northwest corner is the regional shopping and entertainment district, where the mall is located and surrounded by large surface parking lots. The central and southwest area is the commercial corridor of many strip malls and big box retailers. The workplace and specialty commercial district is in the south central and southeast portion, which is mainly warehouse and distribution centers that serve the mall and region and also contains office buildings. There are many furniture outlets throughout the southern end of the center as well. The transit oriented development district is in the northeast part, which is near the Green River and at this time has hotels and a transit center. There are plans to improve the connections from the transit center to the Westfield Southcenter Mall and Tukwila Pond.

It is a very concentrated area of jobs and retail, and the targets for 2030 are an additional 6,300 employees and 2,030 households.

To address compact development, the subarea plan specifies having higher building heights near the transit oriented development district, and lower heights on the river and pond. It includes plans for more mixed-use with upper floors of offices, residential or hotels. There are some large vacant lots throughout the center too, which show its potential for development.

**Housing**

Tukwila is the only center with no housing units, but there are short- and long-term hotels available. The subarea plan discusses increasing housing in the center through mixed-use developments.

**Economy**

The center clearly has a retail core of Westfield Southcenter Mall and the other strip malls surrounding it. There are many large retail and restaurant chains that employ a large population. There is also light industry and warehouses, although it is unknown if they are major employers.
**Public Services**

The area contains some public services, such as a fire station, post office, City maintenance shops, hotels, and regional shopping.

**Transportation**

The Westfield Southcenter Mall and the newer surrounding strip malls have a pedestrian friendly design. However, the area also contains large surface parking lots and is not easily walkable. The subarea plan speaks to increase pedestrian, bicycle and transit accessibility, and to create better connections to the mall and waterfront areas.

At this time the bus shelters primarily near the mall. The transit center is located in the center, but it is not very accessible to the Westfield Southcenter Mall or the rest of the center at this time. The subarea plan addresses the need to create better connections from the transit center to other areas in the center.
Tukwila Photo Essay

Photo 1 Westfield Southcenter Mall

Photo 2 Bus Shelters at Westfield Southcenter Mall
Photo 3 Tukwila Pond

Photo 4 Tukwila Pond Conservation Area and Overgrown Sidewalk
Photo 9 Newer Strip Mall with Landscaping and Pedestrian Friendly Design

Photo 10 Westfield Southcenter Mall Parking Structure
Chapter 3: Application of the Growth Centers Subarea Planning Checklist – Comparisons from the Survey Responses

This chapter contains comparisons of all 27 Regional Growth Centers from the answers they provided in the survey. There are 9 sections addressed: center plan concept, environment, land use, housing, economic development, public facilities and services, transportation, major public investments, and best practices. Research was conducted on the four centers that did not return the survey: Auburn, Canyon Park, Federal Way and Tukwila. The quality of survey responses ranged from very detailed and comprehensive to certain questions being skipped altogether. The comparisons in this chapter come from the survey responses, and some centers may have additional policies not addressed in this chapter because they were not listed in the returned survey.

VISION 2040 provides regional guidance for the centers, and to distinguish aspects of VISION 2040 and the Growth Centers Subarea Planning Checklist from the analysis, regional guidance will be italicized for clarity.

Center Plan Concept
The survey inquired about which planning documents contain provisions for the center and what topics are addressed in those plans. The cities each have comprehensive plans, and many centers have additional planning documents like capital improvement plans (CIP) or transportation improvement plans (TIP). VISION 2040 calls for all jurisdictions with regional growth centers to adopt a subarea plan for the center within four years of designation. This expectation has been in effect in PSRC’s Plan Review procedures since 2003. Most centers have a subarea plan, others have similar RGC plans by different names (downtown or neighborhood plans), some plans are under development, and two centers do not have any sort of subarea plan (see Table 18). Table 18 also shows which comprehensive plans contain elements specific to the center, and any additional plans listed in the survey.

Lakewood and Tacoma Mall are the only two centers without a subarea plan. The Tacoma Mall survey stated that there are plans to create a subarea plan for the RGC, but did not provide a timeline on when the center plans will be developed. While both the Tacoma Mall and Lakewood have provisions for the centers within the Comprehensive Plan, it would be beneficial for them to have a more in-depth analysis and work with PSRC in developing subarea plans that are compatible with VISION 2040 and the Subarea Planning Checklist. Plans that are currently under development include the Renton Community Plan and Downtown Tacoma Subarea Plan.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Subarea Plan</th>
<th>RGC Plan</th>
<th>Under Development</th>
<th>Comp. Plan Elements</th>
<th>Additional Plans</th>
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The RGCs should use PSRC’s Subarea Planning Checklist when developing, updating or amending their plans. Subarea plans should address the center plan concept or vision, environment, land use, housing, economy, public services, and transportation. Table 19 shows the answer from the survey on which aspects are found in each center’s planning documents. Every center said in their survey that their plans addressed land use, housing, public services, and transportation (and so these topics are omitted from Table 19). The Growth Management Act requires that these elements be included in Comprehensive Plans. The following describes the missing components from specific planning documents:

LOCAL VISION: Lakewood’s plans do not provide a local vision for the center, and it was the only center to answer the survey that it lacks a clear vision. However, the City of Lakewood has a vision in its Comprehensive Plan for the city as a whole. Creating a subarea plan for the center would be a worthwhile approach to define a specific vision for the RGC.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT: Only Bellevue, Burien and Everett’s surveys said their subarea plans do not focus on the natural environment. Upon further review, all three cities address the natural environment in citywide planning documents. Bellevue’s Comprehensive Plan contains a section on environmental elements, Burien’s Comprehensive Plan has policies on parks, recreation and open spaces, and Everett’s Comprehensive Plan has a chapter on parks and recreation.

ECONOMY: All of the centers except for Burien said their plans address the economy, and again, after looking at Burien’s Comprehensive Plan, there are policies that address economic development citywide, just not specifically for the RGC.

SUSTAINABILITY: This term may be up to interpretation, because there are many definitions of sustainability. Eight centers do not think their center plans directly deal with sustainability. However, the cities surveyed all have long-term, comprehensive plans that seem to address sustainability either explicitly or implicitly.

Center plans should address the relationship to the jurisdiction’s comprehensive plan, countywide planning policies, and VISION 2040. A key attribute of VISION 2040 and the Growth Management Act is to coordinate planning at all levels of government. It is interesting to note that eight of the centers lack plans addressing the relationship of the center to countywide planning policies and ten centers’ plans lack policies on the relationship to other nearby regional centers. There are 16 centers without planning documents on the relationship of the center to VISION 2040, although this is not very surprising since VISION 2040 was adopted in 2008. Many plans still only speak to VISION 2020, and need to be updated to be compatible with new planning guidelines.
### Table 19 Topics Addressed in Center Planning Documents

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</table>
Environment

Center plans should address critical areas, parks and open space, habitat, water quality, air quality, and climate change. In the survey, the centers were asked about their policies on protecting environmentally sensitive areas, addressing water quality and reducing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

Protecting Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Under the Growth Management Act, every city in the four county area (King, Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish) is required to designate and protect critical areas\(^{20}\). These include areas like wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat, and steep slopes. While all cities protect critical areas, most centers have been built up and lack environmentally sensitive areas.

Policies to Improve Water Quality or Reduce Air Pollution and Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Table 20)

WATER QUALITY POLICIES: This category indicates the center has programs, policies, or incentives to improve water quality in addition to the minimum requirements by state law. Most cities have policies citywide or specific to the RGC that address water quality (23), and almost all of these policies are incentives for low impact development or green building. Centers also have guidelines or manuals on stormwater management. In its 2011-2016 Capital Improvement Plan, Redmond has a project to provide regional stormwater facilities.

MODE SPLIT GOALS: This category indicates whether an RGC has established goals or developed policies to increase the amount trips by modes other than driving, to decrease the effects of car emissions. This is a common practice, as 19 centers have mode split goals in place for their centers or citywide.

VMT REDUCTION: This indicates if a center has set goals or established policies to reduce the amount of vehicle miles traveled in the RGC and thereby reduce air pollution. This is also a common mechanism used by the centers, and 19 centers have VMT reduction policies in place.

TRANSIT SUPPORTIVE POLICIES: This category shows an RCG with policies in place to support public transit ridership, to reduce the number of cars entering the center. Many centers employ this strategy, and 20 centers have transit supportive policies.

LAND USE STRATEGIES: This indicates a center has land use policies or incentives in place to increase density in the RGC or support mixed-use development. Only 10 of the centers indicated they had land use strategies in place to help reduce air pollution. This question may have been confusing to respondents as under the Land Use section of this chapter it indicates 20 centers have incentive zoning, 19 centers have increasing FAR or building heights bonuses.

AIR POLLUTION MONITORING: This indicates an RGC has established goals to reduce pollution and is monitoring levels of air pollution. Only Seattle, Bellevue and Kitsap County (Silverdale) have air pollution monitoring, but these cities make up 8 centers.

\(^{20}\) (Natural resource lands and critical areas — Development regulations, 2005)
<table>
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<th>Regional Growth Centers</th>
<th>Water Quality Policies</th>
<th>Mode Split Goals</th>
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</table>
Land Use
The survey had five land use questions about the rational for center boundaries, mechanisms to encourage compact development, housing and employment targets, key land use issues faced in each center, and relationships to other planning districts within the jurisdiction (see Appendix I).

Boundaries
VISION 2040 calls for centers with defined boundaries that are compact and walkable, and near a diverse collection of services, shopping, recreation, and jobs. Boundaries for each center were designated starting in 1994, and centers come in a variety of shapes and sizes. The centers are between 126 and 1,026 acres, with a median of 519 and an average of 576. Sixteen centers are less than one square mile (640 acres), and only two centers are over 1.5 square miles, or 960 acres. The size and density of each center in acres and activity units is shown in Table 21. Some centers are stretched out to include major employers or residential areas, even when those areas are not as well linked with the rest of the center. As changes occur over time, some centers have reevaluated and slightly moved their boundaries to be compatible with their center planning.

Most centers include the following features within their boundaries:

- A mix of land uses
  - Metropolitan cities that are central business districts (Bellevue, Downtown Bremerton, Downtown Everett, Downtown Seattle, Downtown Tacoma)
    - Established residential areas, civic cores
  - Historic downtowns or main street (Auburn, Burien, Kent, Puyallup, Redmond, Renton)
    - Established residential areas, civic cores
  - Retail shopping cores (Federal Way, Lakewood, Lynnwood, Northgate, Silverdale, South Hill, Tacoma Mall, Tukwila)
  - Office parks and commercial cores (Canyon Park, Overlake, SeaTac, Totem Lake)
  - Mixed-use neighborhoods in Seattle with a large focus of regional activity (First Hill/Capitol Hill, South Lake Union, University Community, Uptown Queen Anne)
- Regional transportation systems
  - Transit center and/or Park and Ride
  - Interstates/highways as boundaries or bisecting the centers
  - Focus of major transportation investments
- High density areas of compact development
  - Residential
  - Employment
- Adequate infrastructure to accommodate future growth
- Physical features are occasionally used for boundaries
Table 21 Size and Density of Regional Growth Centers (2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Growth Centers</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>AU Density</th>
<th>Regional Growth Centers</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>AU Density</th>
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<td>234</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Renton</td>
<td>606</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bellevue</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>SeaTac</td>
<td>886</td>
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<tr>
<td>Downtown Bremerton</td>
<td>126</td>
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<td>950</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burien</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>Canyon Park (Bothell)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Tacoma Mall</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Overlake (Redmond)</td>
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<td>Downtown Puyallup</td>
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<tr>
<td>Downtown Redmond</td>
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<td>Average</td>
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<td>Median</td>
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</table>

Mechanisms Encouraging Compact Development

VISION 2040 calls for centers to be compact, pedestrian-oriented, and include a mix of uses. Table 21 shows the activity unity (AU) densities for each of the centers (activity units are population plus employment). The AU densities range from 10 to 169 AU per acre, with an average density of 40 AU and 23 as the median. RGCs use several approaches to promote compact development, which will in turn increase their AU densities and accommodate future growth. PSRC expects RGCs to have a minimum of 18 AU density, but there are seven centers below this number that need to increase center density.

The centers employ multiple programs and policies to encourage dense, compact, mixed-use development. The most common mechanisms used are incentive zoning, planned actions, increasing FAR or building heights, minimum density ordinances, design guidelines, parking incentives and bonuses for the provision of public amenities or desired features, as shown in Table 22. Many centers also have housing incentives, which are addressed in the “housing” section of this report. Other strategies mentioned in the survey are:

- Silverdale (Kitsap County) has incentives for mixed-use development
- Overlake (Redmond) and Totem Lake have some requirements for mixed-use development
- Kent, Downtown Puyallup, South Hill, Downtown Tacoma, and the Tacoma Mall are improving infrastructure and transit in the center
Table 22 Mechanisms to Encourage Compact Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Growth Centers</th>
<th>Incentive Zoning</th>
<th>Planned Action</th>
<th>Increasing FAR/Building Heights</th>
<th>Min. Density Ordinances</th>
<th>Design Guidelines</th>
<th>Parking Incentives</th>
<th>Amenity Bonus</th>
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<tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
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<td>✓</td>
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<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tacoma Mall</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Totem Lake (Kirkland)</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>University Community (Seattle)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uptown Queen Anne (Seattle)</td>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
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</table>
**Growth Targets**

Centers are identified to receive a significant portion of population and employment growth, and should include growth targets and the development capacity to accommodate them. Some cities have specific targets for centers, others use a percentage of city growth that is targeted in the centers, some growth targets are under development, and others do not have growth targets for their Regional Growth Center. Table 23 shows the percentage of citywide growth focused in the center and/or specific growth targets addressed in their plans.

### Table 23 Regional Growth Center Growth Targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Growth Centers</th>
<th>Growth Targets - % of citywide targets / any specifics listed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auburn</td>
<td>7,323 housing, 6,482 jobs (citywide 2001-2022)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bellevue</td>
<td>80% housing and jobs / 10,117 housing, 40,000 jobs (2001-2022)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Bremerton</td>
<td>12,972 population, 9,000 jobs (citywide 2003-2023)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burien</td>
<td>25% housing, 20% jobs / 1,552 housing, 1,712 jobs (citywide 2001-2022)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canyon Park (Bothell)</td>
<td>1,574 housing, 7,690 jobs (citywide 2002-2025)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Everett</td>
<td>8.6% population, 6% jobs / 3,287 population, 2,650 jobs (2007-2025)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Way</td>
<td>6,188 housing, 7,481 jobs (citywide 2001-2022)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Hill/Capitol Hill (Seattle)</td>
<td>7% housing, 5% jobs / 3,500 housing, 4,600 jobs (2004-2024)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>30% housing, 55% jobs / 11.7 housing/acre, 48.6 jobs/acre (2031 capacity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakewood</td>
<td><strong>No growth targets specifically for the RGC</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynnwood</td>
<td><strong>No growth targets specifically for the RGC</strong> (significant portion of citywide growth expected to occur in RGC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northgate (Seattle)</td>
<td>5% housing, 5% jobs / 2,500 housing, 4,220 jobs (2004-2024)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overlake (Redmond)</td>
<td>39% housing, 45% jobs / 4,475 housing, 16,297 jobs (by 2030)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Puyallup</td>
<td><strong>Currently under development</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Redmond</td>
<td>31% housing, 11% jobs / 3,550 housing, 3,924 jobs (by 2030)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renton</td>
<td><strong>No growth targets for the RGC, significant portion of citywide growth</strong> 6,198 housing, 25,597 jobs (citywide 2001-2022)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SeaTac</td>
<td>85% housing, 98% jobs / 5,800 housing, 25,300 jobs (citywide by 2040)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Seattle</td>
<td>21% housing, 35% jobs / 10,000 housing, 29,015 jobs (2004-2024)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silverdale (Kitsap County)</td>
<td><strong>No growth targets specifically for the RGC (currently 7.8% countywide pop.)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Hill (Puyallup)</td>
<td><strong>Currently under development</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Lake Union (Seattle)</td>
<td>17% housing, 19% jobs / 8,000 housing, 16,000 jobs (2004-2024)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Tacoma</td>
<td>70% population and employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tacoma Mall</td>
<td><strong>Will set targets in next Comprehensive Plan update</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totem Lake (Kirkland)</td>
<td>40% housing, 80% jobs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Regional Growth Centers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Growth Centers</th>
<th>Growth Targets - % of citywide targets / any specifics listed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tukwila</td>
<td>3,200 housing, 16,000 jobs (citywide 2001-2022)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Community (Seattle)</td>
<td>5% housing, 7% jobs / 2,450 housing, 6,140 jobs (2004-2024)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uptown Queen Anne (Seattle)</td>
<td>2% housing, 1% jobs / 1,000 housing, 1,150 jobs (2004-2024)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Key Land Use Issues

Table 24 contains the key land use issues faced in the centers as specified in the survey. The most common issues are an oversupply of parking, lack of market demand, fragmented parcel ownership, and super-blocks. Three centers face some community and political resistance, and Downtown Puyallup is the only center with an undersupply of parking. Another three centers noted a lack of sidewalks; however in the fieldwork it was observed that many centers had sidewalks in the downtown area but lacked sidewalks in their residential areas.

Some centers also wrote in additional land use issues not in Table 24, such as:

- Downtown Bremerton has vacant buildings and storefronts
- Lakewood does not have a traditional downtown, there is an inconsistent grid pattern, financing and property values unsupportive of property redevelopment, and private covenants
- Lynnwood has felt a lack of legitimate redevelopment funding options from the State
- Northgate faces established use and property patterns supportive of automobiles, but transformation is occurring gradually
- Overlake (Redmond) lacks parks and other amenities to attract investment and residents
- Downtown Redmond, in addition to fragmented parcel ownership, has small parcels
- SeaTac notes that its key land use issues address employment (rather than housing) due to its proximity to the airport and the emphasis on serving the traveling public
- Seattle has encountered healthy public debate and some opposition to proposals for increased density or travel efficiencies in the centers (recent proposals for travel efficiencies were increasing on-street parking prices)
- Silverdale’s biggest issue is a lack of funding for infrastructure improvements
- South Hill (Puyallup) has high traffic volumes
- Totem Lake is bisected by a freeway and arterials, and therefore faces fragmentation and limited connectivity
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Growth Centers</th>
<th>Lack of market demand</th>
<th>Fragmented parcel ownership</th>
<th>Undersupply of parking</th>
<th>Oversupply of parking</th>
<th>Community resistance</th>
<th>Political resistance</th>
<th>Super-blocks</th>
<th>Lack of sidewalks</th>
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<tr>
<td>Federal Way</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Hill/Capitol Hill (Seattle)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kent</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakewood</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynnwood</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overlake (Redmond)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Redmond</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renton</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SeaTac</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Downtown Seattle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Silverdale (Kitsap County)</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Downtown Tacoma</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tacoma Mall</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totem Lake (Kirkland)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tukwila</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>University Community (Seattle)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uptown Queen Anne (Seattle)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
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<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Relationship to Other Planning Districts

The centers have relationships with other planning districts in their jurisdictions. Some examples of how cities address this relationship include:

- Bellevue’s Capital Investment Program links the center with adjacent subareas, regional transportation initiatives and employment centers
- Bellevue’s Bel-Red Subarea Plan not only recognizes its importance and location with regards to the Bellevue RGC, but also to the Overlake (Redmond) RGC
- Everett is interested in reevaluating its 1994 boundaries to create a more unified plan between the multiple areas of its downtown, transit station, mixed-use zone, and core residential area
- Lakewood has areas of the city with much greater needs than the center, and sometimes needs to prioritize its investments to areas other than the center to ensure that these areas have adequate urban amenities
- The City of Redmond has two RGCs, Downtown and the office park of Overlake, and plans for significant growth in both centers
- The City of Puyallup also has two RGCs, Downtown and the mall at South Hill, and they are meant to complement one another with a different focus and characteristics
- SeaTac has two subareas with separate subarea plans within its RGC, one is the City Center and the other the S. 154th St. Station Area
- The City of Seattle has six RGCs and another two dozen urban villages or local neighborhood centers that are planned to have significant growth
  - Downtown, First Hill/Capitol Hill, South Lake Union, and Uptown Queen Anne comprise the “Center City”
  - Northgate and University Community are two other concentrated centers of residential and business activity in North Seattle
- Tacoma is another city with two RGCs, Downtown and the Tacoma Mall, where most of its future growth is targeted
Housing
VISION 2040 calls for centers to expand the supply and range of housing types, including housing that is affordable to all income groups. Center plans should address these issues and identify strategies to meet housing goals. There are multiple approaches for cities to encourage a range of housing types and affordable housing. Common mechanisms used by the centers to promote market rate and affordable housing options are a multi-family tax exemption program, requirements on affordability, parking incentives, and density bonuses. Table 25 displays answers from the survey on four commonly used tools to promote housing in the centers. They are described in more detail as well, since some tools are used to encourage affordable housing and others to encourage all residential development.

TAX INCENTIVES: The 15 centers with property tax incentives for offering housing are shown in Table 25. Many centers use the state tax incentive for multi-family housing, which is an eight or twelve year program that provides developers with property tax exemption for new construction or rehabilitation of multi-family housing. The City of Seattle has a multi-family tax exemption for new development with 20% affordable housing unit set-asides. The survey showed that tax incentives are the most commonly used tool for encouraging housing in the centers.

PARKING INCENTIVES: In the survey, four centers responded that they offer certain reductions in residential parking requirements when affordable housing is provided. Federal Way’s planning documents also suggest they provide reductions in parking requirements.

REQUIRING AFFORDABLE HOUSING: Another four centers wrote in their surveys that they require certain amounts of affordable housing, and do so in various ways:

- Burien’s Town Square project required a certain amount of affordable housing
- Overlake (Redmond) and Downtown Redmond require a minimum of 10% of new housing developments (of 10 dwellings or more) be affordable to households with incomes of 80% or less the King County median
- Totem Lake’s zoning regulations require residential buildings exceeding a certain height have a portion of new units affordable to prescribed income levels

DENSITY: There are additional mechanisms used by the centers for the provision of housing such as FAR or density bonuses, reduced or no limits on density or building heights, and other strategies. The centers which provide incentives on FAR, density or building heights include:

- Bellevue offers developers FAR bonuses for residential development components
- Lakewood uses incentives such as increases in lot coverage and allowable height and density for providing extremely low-income units
- Lynnwood has no limits on density and FAR up to 10.0
- Overlake (Redmond) and Downtown Redmond have no density/acre limits
- Renton and Silverdale have density bonuses for the provision of affordable housing
- Totem Lake’s zoning regulations allow for increased building heights, sometimes so that residential buildings can be taller than commercial buildings
### Table 25 Housing in Regional Growth Centers (2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Growth Centers</th>
<th>Housing Units</th>
<th>Housing Units Per Job</th>
<th>Tax Incentives</th>
<th>Parking Incentives</th>
<th>Requires Affordability</th>
<th>Density</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auburn</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>2/10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bellevue</td>
<td>4,036</td>
<td>1/10</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Bremerton</td>
<td>1,001</td>
<td>5/10</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burien</td>
<td>1,704</td>
<td>5/10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canyon Park (Bothell)</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>4/100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Everett</td>
<td>2,745</td>
<td>2/10</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Way</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>5/100</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Hill/Capitol Hill (Seattle)</td>
<td>24,714</td>
<td>6/10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>1/10</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lakewood</td>
<td>1,307</td>
<td>2/10</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lynnwood</td>
<td>715</td>
<td>1/10</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northgate (Seattle)</td>
<td>3,809</td>
<td>4/10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overlake (Redmond)</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>1/100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Downtown Puyallup</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>3/10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Redmond</td>
<td>1,114</td>
<td>1/10</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renton</td>
<td>2,124</td>
<td>2/10</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SeaTac</td>
<td>4,293</td>
<td>5/10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Downtown Seattle</td>
<td>19,061</td>
<td>1/10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Silverdale (Kitsap County)</td>
<td>1,400</td>
<td>2/10</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>South Hill (Puyallup)</td>
<td>1,367</td>
<td>2/10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>South Lake Union (Seattle)</td>
<td>2,302</td>
<td>1/10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Tacoma</td>
<td>4,515</td>
<td>1/10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tacoma Mall</td>
<td>1,673</td>
<td>2/10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totem Lake (Kirkland)</td>
<td>3,315</td>
<td>3/10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tukwila</td>
<td>(0)</td>
<td>-0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Community (Seattle)</td>
<td>7,710</td>
<td>2/10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uptown Queen Anne (Seattle)</td>
<td>4,936</td>
<td>4/10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>96,409</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,571</strong></td>
<td><strong>2/10</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Median</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,673</strong></td>
<td><strong>2/10</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The other incentives that centers use to encourage housing are:

- Bremerton: incentive based amenity program
- Everett: funding affordable and low income housing projects in the downtown
- Lakewood: reduced fees and meeting with developers about opportunities there
- Renton: fee waivers for the provision of affordable housing
- SeaTac: working with non-profit developers to acquire vacant or underutilized commercial sites to develop for residential use
- Seattle: land use regulations that incorporate incentive zoning provisions and Seattle housing levy funding and other financial support for new construction and preservation of low-income housing

Along with displaying which centers use tax incentives, parking incentives, requirements and density or height bonuses, Table 25 also shows the volume of housing units in each center, which ranges from zero in Tukwila to 24,714 in First Hill/Capitol Hill in Seattle. Federal Way is the second smallest with 124 housing units, and Downtown Seattle and University Community in Seattle are the second and third largest centers when looking at housing units.

**VISION 2040 states that geographic areas should have a balance between jobs and housing.** The jobs-housing balance spans from zero housing units per job in Tukwila to .6 housing units per job in Seattle’s First Hill/Capitol Hill center. Centers with large numbers of jobs should increase housing to improve accessibility to those jobs and nearby amenities. Housing should be focused in RGCs and cities should promote diversity in types of housing and in affordability at all income levels. At this time the centers have an emphasis on jobs rather than housing.
Economic Development

VISION 2040 calls for concentrating a significant amount of economic growth in designated centers and supporting businesses and job creation in the centers. The survey asked about the types of businesses in the center and major employers. Table 26 includes the centers’ employment figures along with some of the main economic sectors found in the surveys: government and education, retail, services, and healthcare. Much of the education employment is in higher education, and government employers are mostly cities, although areas with county employment include Bremerton (Kitsap), Everett (Snohomish), Kent (King), Downtown Seattle (King), and Downtown Tacoma (Pierce). The “other” category specifies additional types of businesses from the survey responses, which was typically “office.”

Table 26 Employment and Economic Sectors in Regional Growth Centers (2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Growth Centers</th>
<th>Covered Employment</th>
<th>% Pop</th>
<th>Gov Edu</th>
<th>Retail</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auburn</td>
<td>2,796</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bellevue</td>
<td>29,813</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>Finance, Ins., Real Estate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Bremerton</td>
<td>1,971</td>
<td>49%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Office, Banking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burien</td>
<td>3,286</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canyon Park (Bothell)</td>
<td>8,078</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Everett</td>
<td>11,903</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Way</td>
<td>2,733</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Hill/Capitol Hill (Seattle)</td>
<td>39,628</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>4,351</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Office, Theater, Sports, Churches</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lakewood</td>
<td>5,885</td>
<td>31%</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lynnwood</td>
<td>11,490</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northgate (Seattle)</td>
<td>10,501</td>
<td>36%</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overlake (Redmond)</td>
<td>47,168</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Puyallup</td>
<td>1,820</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Downtown Redmond</td>
<td>8,627</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renton</td>
<td>13,601</td>
<td>23%</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Boeing, Paccar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SeaTac</td>
<td>8,208</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Airport-related</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Seattle</td>
<td>132,172</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Office, High-Tech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silverdale (Kitsap County)</td>
<td>8,346</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Hill (Puyallup)</td>
<td>5,823</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Lake Union (Seattle)</td>
<td>20,071</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Office, High-Tech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Tacoma</td>
<td>31,577</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Banking, Invest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tacoma Mall</td>
<td>7,725</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Totem Lake (Kirkland)</td>
<td>11,327</td>
<td>34%</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>Office</td>
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<td>Tukwila</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>University Community (Seattle)</td>
<td>32,472</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Research</td>
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<td>Uptown Queen Anne (Seattle)</td>
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</table>
Downtown Seattle has the largest number of people employed, followed by Overlake (Redmond) and then Seattle’s First Hill/Capitol Hill neighborhood. The smallest centers in terms of employment are Downtown Puyallup and Downtown Bremerton with just under 2,000, followed by Federal Way and Auburn with just over 2,700. (However, those four centers are also the smallest in area at 126-234 acres each, while Overlake is 519 acres and Downtown Seattle and First Hill/Capitol Hill are over 900 acres each.)

The centers mostly have local, nonprofit associations that support job creation and businesses. The most frequently used associations are:

- Chamber of Commerce
- Downtown Business Association
- Economic Development Alliance
- Small Business Development Center

The cities also have Economic Development departments which work on development in their Regional Growth Centers. Although each center is unique and many associations and government departments are very active in promoting economic development, a couple of the distinctive programs mentioned in the survey were:

The Southwest King County Economic Development Initiative (SKCEDI), a partnership between the cities of Burien, SeaTac, Tukwila, Des Moines, and Normandy Park, the Port of Seattle, Highline Community College, and King County, shows coordination among multiple jurisdictions in the region.

The Burien Wellness Cluster works to attract medical and wellness service providers.

Recent reform of downtown zoning in Seattle encouraged new office development that supported construction employment and provided new buildings for future employment growth in Downtown Seattle and South Lake Union.

Totem Lake had a one day symposium, held by the City of Kirkland, for property owners, developers, architects and civic leaders to come up with ideas to promote development, and the City created an action plan from those ideas.
Public Facilities and Services

VISION 2040 calls for centers to be locations for public and semi-public facilities and services such as civic buildings, libraries, fire and police stations, arts centers, and related facilities.

As expected, public facilities and services are concentrated in the centers that are designated downtowns. RGCs that are malls or office parks have considerably fewer public facilities, as they are mainly regional employment and shopping centers. Of these, Canyon Park (Bothell), Federal Way, and Overlake (Redmond) have the least public facilities available. The survey did not ask about transit centers or park and rides, but the only public facility found within each of these three center’s boundaries is a park and ride (and transit center in Federal Way and Overlake). Table 28 shows the RGCs with a park and ride and/or a transit center. Canyon Park only has privately-run hotels and shopping. Federal Way did not send a survey back but fieldwork and online research revealed that there is only a theater, shopping, and hotels in the center, all of which are privately run. Overlake also only has hotel/conference center and shopping, which are both privately run.

The survey failed to ask about public facilities like parks, plazas and open space. Some centers mentioned these areas in the “other” category. Through site visits and online research, 22 centers were found to have parks, plazas or other forms of designated public open space (see Table 27).

County offices located in the centers tended to be large centers of employment, and were often in newer developments surrounded by pedestrian amenities. Kitsap County offices are primarily located in Bremerton near the waterfront, Snohomish County offices in Downtown Everett have a community gathering area around them, King County offices are mainly located in Downtown Seattle, and Pierce County offices in Downtown Tacoma. As an unincorporated area, Silverdale only has county offices since it isn’t a city. Kent’s RGC has a King County justice center, and Burien and Downtown Redmond also have county offices located in their centers.

Table 27 Public and Semi-Public Facilities in Regional Growth Centers

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<th>Regional Growth Centers</th>
<th>City Hall</th>
<th>County Offices</th>
<th>Social Service Agencies</th>
<th>Community Center</th>
<th>Educational Facilities</th>
<th>Parks</th>
<th>Library</th>
<th>Post Office</th>
<th>Medical Facilities</th>
<th>Museum</th>
<th>Theaters</th>
<th>Sports Complex</th>
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<th>Shopping</th>
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</table>
Table 28 RGCs with Transit Centers or Park and Ride Facilities

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<th>Auburn</th>
<th>Bellevue</th>
<th>Downtown Bremerton</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Burien (under construction)</td>
<td>Canyon Park</td>
<td>Downtown Everett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Way</td>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>Lakewood</td>
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<td>Lynnwood</td>
<td>Northgate</td>
<td>Overlake (Redmond)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Downtown Puyallup</td>
<td>Downtown Redmond</td>
<td>Renton</td>
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<tr>
<td>SeaTac</td>
<td>Downtown Seattle</td>
<td>South Hill (Puyallup)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Downtown Tacoma</td>
<td>Tacoma Mall</td>
<td>Totem Lake</td>
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<td>Tukwila</td>
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**Transportation**

The survey asked three questions about transportation: key issues affecting transportation, strategies and policies used to address pedestrian and transit friendly design, and how management of parking is handled in the center(s).

**Key Transportation Issues**

Lack of bicycle facilities (15), barriers to travel (16), overly congested roads (10), and other issues (13) (other issues identified included road maintenance, pending cuts to transit, incomplete grid, barriers to completing a grid, and residential streets encourage cut through traffic) are the most prominent transportation issues identified by cities.

Of the centers that identified bicycle facilities as an issue affecting transportation, 10 are designated downtowns, four are malls, and one is an office park, and is an issue in all four counties.

Barriers to travel and “other“ are transportation issues in 16 and 13 RGCs, respectively. This category is vague, as it does not indicate what exactly the barrier is, but a number of cities acknowledged that the center lacked a complete grid. Other barriers included highways bisecting centers. In the Land Use section, several centers identified an oversupply of parking and super-blocks as land use issues. Of the 16 centers that listed barriers to travel as an issue affecting transportation, 11 of them also identified super-blocks or oversupply of parking as key land use issues as well.

Only 3 centers identified a lack of transit facilities as an issue affecting transportation, while 6 identified transit service as an issue affecting transportation. This shows that most centers feel that transit facilities and service are not issues affecting transportation. In total, 19 RGCs have polices that support transit friendly design (see Table 30), and transportation investments often occur in centers.

Only nine of the centers identified the lack of pedestrian facilities as an issue affecting transportation in their RGC. All of the centers have policies addressing pedestrian friendly design to some extent.

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21 (Park and Ride Lot Locations, 2011)
Table 29 Regional Growth Center Key Transportation Issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Growth Centers</th>
<th>Overly congested roads</th>
<th>Roads with outdated designs</th>
<th>Lack of transit facilities</th>
<th>Lack of transit service</th>
<th>Lack of bicycle facilities</th>
<th>Lack of pedestrian facilities</th>
<th>Barriers to travel</th>
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<tr>
<td>Totem Lake (Kirkland)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tukwila</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Community (Seattle)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uptown Queen Anne (Seattle)</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Pedestrian and Transit Friendly Design**

VISION 2040 calls for centers to be places with ample pedestrian facilities and transit-supportive areas. Center plans should include multimodal provisions, identify and prioritize investments to create a complete network, and integrate with transit. Pedestrian and transit friendly design includes elements like complete street ordinances, road diets, pedestrian bulb-outs, bus shelters, and signal prioritization. All centers indicated that they address pedestrian friendly design in planning documents or in capital investments. Policies that address transit friendly design are not found as often but are still common (19/27) in cities with RGCs.

Table 30 Pedestrian and Transit Friendly Design Policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Growth Centers</th>
<th>Policies Address Pedestrian Friendly Design</th>
<th>Policies Address Transit Friendly Design</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auburn</td>
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<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bellevue</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Bremerton</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burien</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canyon Park (Bothell)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Everett</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Way</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Hill/Capitol Hill (Seattle)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakewood</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynnwood</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northgate (Seattle)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overlake (Redmond)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Puyallup</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Redmond</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renton</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SeaTac</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Seattle</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silverdale (Kitsap County)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Hill (Puyallup)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Lake Union (Seattle)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Tacoma</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tacoma Mall</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Regional Growth Centers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policies Address Pedestrian Friendly Design</th>
<th>Policies Address Transit Friendly Design</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Totem Lake (Kirkland)</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tukwila</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Community (Seattle)</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uptown Queen Anne (Seattle)</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>27</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Parking Management

*VISION 2040 calls for Regional Growth Centers to have parking management techniques in place.* Parking in most centers is abundant and free. The following bullets highlight the techniques used by municipalities to manage parking within centers.

- Most centers have free parking throughout the center.
- Bellevue, Bremerton, and Everett are all looking into charging for on-street parking in their RGCs. Seattle is pursuing a proposal to increase on-street parking rates.
- Lynnwood, Overlake, SeaTac, and Totem Lake all require or have incentives for placing parking in structures or below grade.
- Bremerton, Kent, and Renton have city owned parking structures in their RGCs.
- RGCs with shared parking include Kent, Lynnwood, Overlake, Downtown Redmond, Downtown Tacoma, and Tacoma Mall.
- As indicated in the Land Use section of this chapter, 12 centers identified an oversupply of parking as an issue affecting their RGC, and one noted an undersupply (Downtown Puyallup).

### Table 31 Management of Parking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Growth Centers</th>
<th>Parking Management Approaches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auburn</td>
<td>Free parking throughout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bellevue</td>
<td>Min and max parking ratios in development regulations, no independent parking lots, City is investigating charging for on-street parking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Bremerton</td>
<td>Free 2 hour on-street parking, City owns two parking garages and constructing one more, City is also looking into paid street parking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burien</td>
<td>Free parking, structured parking, short and long term parking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canyon Park (Bothell)</td>
<td>Free parking throughout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Everett</td>
<td>No off-street parking requirements for commercial only 1 for residential, City is studying charging for on-street parking. Lack funding for future transportation projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Way</td>
<td>Free parking throughout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Hill/Capitol Hill (Seattle)</td>
<td>No minimum parking requirements for new development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Growth Centers</td>
<td>Parking Management Approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>Free parking both structured and on-street, city owned, shared parking; transit hub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakewood</td>
<td>Free parking throughout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynnwood</td>
<td>FAR bonuses allow building to incorporate parking within the structures. Shared parking, parking management system part of Subarea plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northgate (Seattle)</td>
<td>No minimum parking requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynnwood</td>
<td>Shared parking, incentives for below grade parking, limits on amount and size of new surface parking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Puyallup</td>
<td>Sounder riders occupy most parking downtown; off-site parking for Sounder riders is being looked at as a solution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Redmond</td>
<td>2-hour limited parking in center, limited number of paid parking permits for all day use, rechannelization open up street parking, shared parking, city recently completed parking study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renton</td>
<td>City owned structured parking, 2 free hours then paid, shared parking, incomplete grid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SeaTac</td>
<td>Most airport parking is at grade; two structured lots built in the last 5 years. City actively promotes turning surface lots into structured with ground level retail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Seattle</td>
<td>No minimum parking requirements, parking maximum for office uses in Downtown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silverdale (Kitsap County)</td>
<td>On-street parking is limited to 2 hours in old town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Hill (Puyallup)</td>
<td>Parking associated with commercial buildings is abundant and free. More transit service is required in the future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Lake Union (Seattle)</td>
<td>No minimum parking requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Tacoma</td>
<td>Shared parking, free and paid parking, structured parking, short and long-term parking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tacoma Mall</td>
<td>Shared parking, free and paid parking, structured parking, short and long-term parking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totem Lake (Kirkland)</td>
<td>New development standards require parking to be in structures, below grade or behind buildings; minimum parking standards have not yet been established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tukwila</td>
<td>Free parking throughout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Community (Seattle)</td>
<td>U-pass helps manage University Parking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uptown Queen Anne (Seattle)</td>
<td>No minimum parking requirements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Major Public Investments
Cities were asked to identify the major investments made in their centers related to topics previously addressed (environment, land use, housing, economic development, public facilities and services, and transportation). Because Auburn, Canyon Park, Federal Way, and Tukwila failed to return their surveys these RGCs are excluded from this section. Renton is also excluded because the question was left unanswered. South Hill (Puyallup) is not shown in Table 32, but with a Local Infrastructure Financing Tool grant, has future plans to make several infrastructure improvements such as creating a pedestrian and bicycle trail system and TOD improvements. The noticeable themes in investments were roads, transit centers, public buildings (city hall, libraries), and parks.

Table 32 Regional Growth Center Investments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Growth Centers</th>
<th>City Hall</th>
<th>Library</th>
<th>Conference/Events Center</th>
<th>Transit/LRT</th>
<th>Roads</th>
<th>Parks, Plazas, Open Space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bellevue</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Bremerton</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burien</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Everett</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Hill/Capitol Hill (Seattle)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakewood</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynnwood</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northgate (Seattle)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overlake (Redmond)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Puyallup</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Redmond</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SeaTac</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Seattle</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silverdale (Kitsap County)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Lake Union (Seattle)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Tacoma</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tacoma Mall</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totem Lake (Kirkland)</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Community (Kirkland)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uptown Queen Anne (Seattle)</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
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<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Public Buildings: In total, eight cities have invested money into the construction of public buildings in nine different RGCs. The purpose of these buildings varies: new city halls provide a civic core and place of employment, libraries are a resource for the whole community, and conference or events centers can bring in direct revenues to the cities. Of these nine centers, seven are designated downtowns and two designated as malls. These projects are expensive to build and it makes sense they would be in central places like downtowns. The Lynnwood Convention Center is the beginning of what the City hopes will be a transformation of the area south the Alderwood Mall; where they hope to break up super-blocks, install a smaller grid system, and create a town center. A library and community center were investments in the Northgate Mall to encourage private investments.

Transit Investments: Eleven different cities have invested in transit in 12 different RGCs. This list only includes the cities that identified transit as a major investment; other cities have major transit facilities, or are building them in their RGC, but did not identify them as recent major investments. A transit center is currently under construction in Burien, and the cities of Federal Way and Auburn, who did not fill out a survey, have park and ride facilities in their respective RGCs.

Light Rail (LRT) Investments: Both SeaTac and Downtown Redmond listed land acquisitions near current or future light rail stations as public investments. SeaTac has a subarea plan associated with the land acquisition at S. 154th St. and hopes in the future for transit oriented development. Redmond’s acquisition is in order to provide a regional trail, open space and to expand the downtown grid. By owning large pieces of land in the centers, cities are able to have a more immediate and direct impact on the center’s future development.

Major Road Improvements: Thirteen centers have made investments to widen roads, streetscape projects, connect roads, road diets, add bike lanes, and/or add pedestrian amenities. Road maintenance is a significant investment for every city every year, but this section indicates that the city did more than just maintain the road as is. This shows that RGCs are creating roads that are safer, better connected, or are being improved to accommodate non-motorized modes of travel.

Everett indicated their street grid was at its likely capacity making bike lane necessary in hopes of reducing car traffic.

Parks, Plazas, Open Space: Open space or passive space in the form of parks or plazas are important to RGCs, they are places where people can recreate, walk their dog, socialize, or relax in all while in an urbanized environment. While only five surveys cited parks or plazas as significant investments these surveys called out 9 different centers. As noted in the Public Facilities section of this chapter many more centers have parks.
Best Practices
Cities were asked to identify any replicable best practices used to promote the goals laid out in VISION 2040. A number of the surveys left this question blank, but there were a few best practices themes that multiple centers mentioned.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT
The most common answer of best practices was the emphasis put on engaging the community and the public process when developing a plan and vision for the area. Bremerton, Burien, Everett, Lynnwood and Puyallup all emphasized the importance of reaching out the community to get buy in on the plan. Answers detailing how these outreach strategies were not included in the surveys, but some indicated that the community engagement process was performed by outside actors.

The engagement process could also help the cities educate the public about what RGCs are, why they are important, and the role the area will play in future development of the region. This process could help cities develop a clear vision of what their RGCs are capable of becoming and what the public wants or is willing to let the area become.

PUBLIC INVESTMENTS
Bellevue, Downtown Everett, Kent, Downtown Redmond, and Seattle all cited the importance of public investments in the center towards projects like roads (including streetscape projects), public buildings, and public transportation. These investments help make the RGCs more attractive to private sector investment and attract growth. Everett stated that the public sector has invested heavily in their center and it will be up to the private sector to do their share once the economy recovers. These sentiments were first discovered back in 2003 when the PSRC interviewed six centers about their best practices. Centers emphasized that “the pump must be primed” in order to be successful, meaning that jurisdictions must first invest if they expect to attract private capital.

Other centers that may be positioning themselves for significant public investment are Auburn, Federal Way, SeaTac, and Lynnwood. These centers have transformative projects planned for their centers and have started acquiring land to make those planned project become a reality. Uncertainties surrounding the economy have no doubt delayed these projects.

Another important aspect is creating partnerships with public and private agencies. Funding from multiple parties increases the amount of funding available and spreads out the risk. Many centers have benefited from partnerships with the regional transportation agencies, such as Sound Transit, or major employers or developers in the area, like Microsoft.

STAY THE COURSE
Burien, Lynnwood, and SeaTac emphasized that sticking to one’s plans is important despite criticism or changing attitudes. Establishing a vision and sticking to that vision is imperative. Some of the plans

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22 (The Development Toolkit, 2003)
envisioned for the centers are very ambitious, and it is vital not to take on all aspects of the plan at once and to keep working over time to achieve the vision. These sentiments were also reported in the 2003 Development Toolkit report, stating “nothing seems to breed future success better than current success\(^2\).” A calculated approach to developing RGCs is important and delays may occur, but if the process to establish plans was thorough and the plans have a clear vision, consistency is important when trying to attract investment.

**INCREASING MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING**

Other best practices cited were tools to increase investment in multi-family housing in centers, like incentive zoning (Seattle, Bellevue), and multi-family housing tax exemptions (Seattle). These tools help attract large-scale investment and help centers residential and employment population. When the centers have more housing available, residents are able to walk, bike and use public transit to shop or commute to work because they live in a concentrated area of jobs and amenities.

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\(^2\) (The Development Toolkit, 2003)
Chapter 4: Findings and Conclusions

This report was commissioned in order to give a status update on the 27 Regional Growth Centers, and identify any replicable best practices or lessons learned from cities with RGCs. The following summarizes the key findings from the surveys that were returned, and the impressions from the 16 fieldwork visits conducted in March 2011.

Integration of VISION 2040 into Planning Documents

One of the findings from center planning documents is that many still address VISION 2020, and over half do not address VISION 2040. There are new expectations and guidelines set out in VISION 2040 and the Growth Center Subarea Planning Checklist. Almost all of the centers have very strong and in-depth subarea plans, and amending them to include any missing aspects from VISION 2040 would be beneficial. The subarea plans also address a unique vision to each center, which can form as the foundation for creating improvements and incorporating VISION 2040 expectations.

Many centers plans do not address their relationship to other nearby centers, and part of VISION 2040 is to have coordinated regional planning. The centers face many of the same land use and transportation issues, and working together to find best practices would be incredibly valuable for centers to improve planning policies. PSRC is also a valuable resource for cities and counties in providing wide expanse of research on the many issues that affect the area and effective planning practices.

One positive example of cities working together to address concerns is between Redmond and Bellevue. The City of Redmond reduced the size of the proposed boundaries for the Overlake RGC due to concerns from the City of Bellevue. Another neighborhood in Bellevue, Bel-Red, addresses not only its relationship to the Downtown Bellevue RGC, but also its location and significance for Overlake. Other than this example, many of the center’s plans address countywide planning policies but have no reference to other centers in the area.

Sustainable Practices

The environment is one of the key policy areas in VISION 2040, and is part of its central theme of people, prosperity, and planet. Most centers are built up and do not have critical areas within their boundaries. However, improving water quality is a goal in the region due to the location on Puget Sound. Sustainable design practices are crucial for the region to preserve and restore the natural environment. Many centers offer incentives for green building and low impact development, which greatly decrease the impact of buildings and pavement in the region. Common low impact development practices seen around the centers are rain gardens or bioswales, pervious pavements, preserving vegetation, or green roofs. Centers have different water quality policies, but Silverdale (Kitsap County) stood out in the fieldwork as playing an active role in using strategies for improving water quality.

Silverdale is an example of a center with many natural features throughout, such as a creek and wetland areas along Puget Sound. Silverdale is the only unincorporated RGC, and employs Kitsap County water
quality policies. The use of stormwater retrofits throughout the center is clearly identified with signs, and the center also encourages low impact development. There is a large low impact development project in the center called the Central Kitsap Community Campus, which will include a YMCA, senior housing, a community center and library. It will retain open space and include green roofs, bioswales and pervious pavement to reduce building footprints.

**Parks and Open Spaces**

As previously mentioned, centers are areas that are mainly built up and lack parks and open spaces within the RGC boundaries. Parks and open spaces are important amenities for people who live and work in centers. They are urban oases for the community to enjoy and congregate. Some centers have made major investments in their parks and open spaces, such as Downtown Bremerton has new condos and apartments along its extensive waterfront park, and Burien, which has a distinct lack of parks in the center, has created a rain garden and “Town Square” at its new city hall and library building. Both parks contain many pedestrian amenities and local art. These developments add vitality to the center and create an attractive place to live and visit.

**Shift from Jobs to Mixed-Use**

The centers are focused areas of employment, while population and housing units contribute to a much smaller portion of most centers. The total number of jobs in all of the centers is 492,277, while population is only 167,642 and housing units total 96,409. Centers should concentrate on encouraging housing within their borders, so that the people of the region are able to live closer to their places of work and cut down commute times and associated issues that arise from traffic congestion. Residents of RGCs will also have more availability to alternative modes of transportation, such as walking, biking or public transit.

Encouraging mixed-use in the centers is done in a wide variety of ways, most often by incentive zoning, increasing FAR or building heights, planned actions, and design guidelines. The most common incentive for increasing the provision of housing is through the multi-family tax exemption. It is interesting to note that the majority of these mechanisms are incentives rather than regulations. Increasing public amenities and pedestrian friendly design in the centers, creates a more desirable area to live. Centers like Downtown Puyallup have integrated public art for display and sale throughout its center, which add a unique and local character to the area. Some centers currently lack pedestrian friendly amenities that would make the RGC more desirable to live in. Often the fieldwork showed that a key amenity missing in the center’s residential areas were sidewalks and bike paths connecting to the downtown or core of the RGC. Most centers still need to make investments to link streets and sidewalks and improve connectivity, which would also make the center a more attractive place to live.

Many centers have vacant lots or unused parking lots that would benefit from infill projects. One great example of an infill project in a former parking lot is the Thornton Place development at the Northgate center. The project added 530 housing units and 50,000 square feet of retail. The project has also brought with it the partial day lighting of Thornton Creek which has improved the environmental health of the area, and increased open space. The Thornton Place development has recently received national
attention from The Atlantic magazine as the ideal example of what unnecessary parking lots in urban area can become\textsuperscript{24}.

PSRC also expects a minimum activity unit density of 18, and seven centers still have densities lower than the minimum (as of 2009). Major mixed-use developments to increase housing and density have been recently constructed in several centers, such as Northgate, Renton, Downtown Puyallup, Downtown Bremerton, and Burien centers. Some of these projects have fared poorly as a result of the weak economy, but similar projects are envisioned in for SeaTac, Lynnwood, Auburn, and Federal Way RGCs.

**Boundaries and Land Use**
The boundaries and land use of the RGCs is related to the shift from jobs to mixed-use and increasing density. The centers vary greatly in shape, size and activities within each center. *The Growth Center Subarea Planning Checklist suggests a roughly uniform shape of about 1 mile* (640 acres). Many centers are elongated and have residential neighborhoods that are not well connected to the downtown or core area. There are nine centers that are between 1 square mile and 1.5 square miles, and two that are even larger than that.

From the fieldwork, South Hill (Puyallup) and Silverdale (Kitsap County) stand out as centers that are large when compared to other centers and not well connected. Because both centers are malls, the focus of the center should be the mall and surrounding retail. The centers probably felt they should include nearby residential areas to make the center meet the expectations of an RGC, which is to have a mix of uses. However, this created centers that do not meet the minimum density expectations of 18 activity units per acre, as South Hill’s density is 10 and Silverdale’s 11. Both centers contain large undeveloped parcels of land and several undeveloped wooded areas. While these areas may be developed in the future, there is probably not enough current market demand to warrant such large boundaries.

This is another key issue with center designations: there is not one clear idea of what a center should look like, since there are downtowns, central business districts, mixed-use neighborhoods, malls and office parks. Often cities choose to create wider center boundaries to include residential areas rather than create a more compact center and use incentives and guidelines to encourage residential developments closer to the center’s main amenities and employment areas.

**Management of Parking**
About half of the centers have an oversupply of parking as a key land use issue. Most centers outside of Seattle do not charge for parking, but the metropolitan cities of Bellevue, Bremerton, and Everett are looking into charging for on-street parking, which creates revenue for the city and causes some drivers to choose alternative modes of travel. There are a few centers with shared parking policies or incentives for structured or below grade parking, which allows shops to be more accessible because there are not

\textsuperscript{24} (How to Turn a Parking Lot Into an Ideal Green Community, 2011)
expansive surface lots surrounding them. Centers with large amounts of surface parking surrounding buildings feel disconnected, and are not places where pedestrians typically feel comfortable.

Keeping on-street parking short-term and limited to usually two hours in centers also creates more accessibility to shops and creates a safety buffer between the sidewalk and street for pedestrians. This pushes long-term parking to the periphery or to park and rides.

Centers that are designated malls have an oversupply of parking as a key issue affecting land use. Some of these large parking lots should be redeveloped, but other strategies for malls to better manage parking are creating guidelines or incentives to add landscaping or environmental features, such as bioswales, to existing parking lots.

SeaTac has a whole industry centered on parking, with park and fly businesses. The City has developed regulations to make the parking structures more of an asset to the city rather than a burden. The new Wally Park parking structure on International Boulevard is an example of that, the structured parking facility has a minimal setback and ground floor retail and a beautification area in the form of a fountain. This structure has helped increase the amenities in the center that has suffered from a lack of amenities in the past.

**Coping with Barriers to Travel**

One common theme among the centers is their accessibility by major interstates and highways. One issue that affects many RGCs is a major interstate or highway that bisects the center, causing a barrier to travel. Other barriers listed in surveys were large parking lots, lack of a complete road network, and congestion. Centers are struggling to find innovative ways to fix these problems, and have indicated they do not have the money to either expand or complete their grid. Everett stated that their road network is most likely at capacity and efforts have now shifted to enhancing and encouraging modes of travel other than SOV.

Centers need to make major public investments to cope with barriers to travel. As these projects are often transportation improvements, working with the regional transportation agencies, the state or federal government is a common way to increase funding. A partnership between the City of Kirkland, WSDOT and Sound Transit developed a new freeway station with HOV on- and off-ramps in Totem Lake to improve connections in the center from I-405 bisecting it. In Overlake, a new bridge was constructed over SR 520, but this funding was primarily from the main employer in the private sector, Microsoft (along with the City of Redmond and federal funding).

**Public Facilities and Investments**

Regional Growth Centers are, in general, places with abundant public facilities and services. The most common truly “public” facility found in centers are post offices (21). Other public or semi-public facilities often found in RGCs are social service agencies (21), local or regional shopping (22), hotels/conference centers (20), educational facilities (18), and public libraries (15). Many municipalities with growth centers have invested heavily in public facilities and services within center boundaries. From fieldwork observations, centers that invested in public facilities that are common to everyday life seemed the
most vibrant. These include facilities like libraries, parks, community centers, major transit hubs, and museums. These centers seem to attract activity and investment. Other public facilities and services like city hall buildings, post offices, courthouses, and police stations are essential to urban living environments, but do not seem to create as much activity as parks, transit hubs, and libraries.

A good example of public investment in public facilities in a growth center is Downtown Puyallup. In the heart of the center is a library, park, outdoor band stage, publically-operated pavilion (used for farmer’s markets), and a new city hall located in a mixed-use building. All this investment has occurred in the area of about two-city block and is the most vibrant area of the downtown center. Other townhomes and mixed-use condo developments have sprung up around the complex.

**Lack of Market Demand**

Many centers noted a lack of market demand as an issue in their center. Recently, centers have had to put plans on hold and reduce investments into their centers. This issue contributes to several areas in the center, such as economic development, a greater need for housing that is affordable, possible reductions in public services, and needs for improved transit so people do not have to rely on single occupancy vehicles to get around the region. Centers try to encourage density and compact development, but the economic downturn slowed the creation of these new developments.

There are several positive aspects of the centers despite dealing with a lack of market demand. The centers have associations and economic development departments that still actively support businesses and seek to create jobs. The centers also use a variety of mechanisms to promote housing affordability, such as giving developers tax incentives for the provision of affordable housing units. Many of the recent major investments have also been in public facilities or transportation, showing a continued commitment to these areas and to providing benefits to their residents and visitors of the region. Still a few surveys indicated that public investment in the center has been substantial and that it now up to the private sector to follow suit. These sentiments were first expressed in a 2003 report on RGC’s 25 stating that jurisdictions must first invest if they expect the private sector to do so as well. Under better economic conditions maybe the private sector would be investing more in centers, but as it is right now public investment is the most evident.

**Public Engagement**

While only a few centers emphasized the importance of public engagement and an extensive public process when asked about best replicable practices, it was the most common response. Bremerton, Burien, Everett, Lynnwood and Puyallup all felt that their public engagement with the community was vital to their success when developing their Comprehensive Plan, Subarea Plan(s), or establishing a clear vision for their center. A lot of the time the vision for the RGC is a huge departure from the current landform; this makes actively seeking the public’s involvement helpful to the process of establishing a future vision for the area. If cities do this visioning process on their own they risk future opposition from the community, which in turn could hold back a successful transformation of the area.

25 (The Development Toolkit, 2003)
Complex Land Use Issues

Fragmented parcel ownership, lack of market demand, and oversupply of parking are the most common land use issue affecting RGCs. These issues can make the transformative and large scale projects that are envisioned for most centers extremely hard to carry out. Fragmented parcel ownership makes land acquisition time consuming and costly. Lack of market demand also makes land acquisition risky as private investment will not necessarily follow public investment. An oversupply of parking makes centers feel disconnected and car centric. These land use issues make it important that municipalities only take on projects that have a high likelihood of success. This may make ambitious redevelopment plans of centers take longer, but one project could threaten the success of future good projects. That is why it is important for centers to only bite off what they can chew and stay the course as is stated in the best practices of this paper and the 2003 Development Toolkit Report²⁶.

These land use issues also emphasize the importance of public involvement when developing a vision or plan for growth centers, as doing so will make it more likely to produce a product that will be palatable to the public and therefore more likely successful.

²⁶ (The Development Toolkit, 2003)
Appendix I: Regional Growth Centers Survey Tool

Regional Growth Center Survey
February 2011

Introduction

To start, thank you for participating in this survey!

As a jurisdiction with a Regional Growth Center, you are aware that the centers strategy is a core component of VISION 2040. Centers provide the spine for the urban growth area by serving as regional hubs for jobs, housing, services, cultural amenities, and transportation. The regional centers will need to be successful in order for the regional growth strategy in VISION 2040 to be successful.

- The purpose of this survey is to ensure that Puget Sound Regional Council has the best information on the full range of planning that is occurring in the Regional Growth Centers as they update the 2002 Centers Report and reassess the designation of the existing centers.

- This survey follows the framework of PSRC’s Center Plan Checklists in their Plan Review Manual. However, to reduce the overall length, the survey does not address each topic in the Checklists.

- This survey has 20 questions and should take less than 1 hour to complete. Note that if your jurisdiction has more than one center, you should provide separate surveys to discuss all of them.

- Please return your completed survey to IMiller@psrc.org by March 25, 2011.

This survey is being conducted by two University of Washington Graduate School Students, with the assistance of the PSRC, as our Masters of Public Affairs Degree Project.

Contact Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your Name:</th>
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I. Center Planning

VISION 2040 calls for all jurisdictions with regional centers to adopt a subarea plan for the center within four years of designation. This expectation has been in effect in PSRC’s Plan Review procedures since 2003. Center plans should include a vision, a commitment to human scale urban form, address the relationship to the jurisdiction’s comprehensive plan, countywide planning policies, and VISION 2040.

Question 1:
Please list the name and dates for any planning documents that you have for your center, including: subarea plan, comprehensive plan element, provisions within comprehensive plan, market analysis for center, transportation improvement plan or capital facilities improvement plan, etc.

Question 2:
Please list all of the topic areas that are addressed in the plan:

- [ ] A local vision for the center
- [ ] Natural environment
- [ ] Land use
- [ ] Housing
- [ ] Economy
- [ ] Public facilities and services
- [ ] Transportation
- [ ] Sustainability
- [ ] The center’s relationship to the overall Comprehensive Plan
- [ ] The center’s relationship to relevant countywide planning policies
- [ ] The center’s relationship to other nearby regional centers
- [ ] The center’s relationship to VISION 2040

II. Environment

VISION 2040 calls for centers to consider the natural environment as well as the built environment. Center plans should address critical areas, parks and open space, habitat, water quality, air quality, and climate change.

Question 3:
Please describe how the plan, or implementing development regulations, protects the environmentally sensitive areas that are in the center.
Question 4:
Please describe the programs or policies that address water quality, such as: stormwater, low-impact development, green buildings or green roofs, gray-water or rainwater capture requirements, etc.

Question 5:
Please describe the programs or policies in the center that help to reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, such as: mode split goals for the centers, VMT reduction programs, transit supportive programs, land use strategies, air pollution monitoring, etc.

III. Land Use
VISION 2040 calls for centers to be compact, pedestrian-oriented, and include a mix of uses. Centers are identified to receive a significant portion of population and employment growth. Center plans should include defined boundaries that are compact and walkable, growth targets and the development capacity to accommodate them, and a mix of uses that are oriented around transit and include transit-supportive densities.

Question 6:
Please check the key land use issues facing your center, such as:

- [ ] Lack of market demand
- [ ] Fragmented parcel ownership
- [ ] Undersupply of parking
- [ ] Oversupply of parking
- [ ] Community resistance
- [ ] Political resistance
- [ ] Super-blocks
- [ ] Lack of sidewalks
- [ ] Other:

Question 7:
Please describe the background and rationale for the boundaries of your designated center. If the boundaries have changed since its regional designation, please discuss why the changes were made.
Question 8:
Please describe any population or employment targets that have been set for the center as well as the capacity to accommodate anticipated levels of growth. What percentage of the city’s overall growth target does this represent?

Question 9:
Please list the types of mechanisms used to encourage dense, compact, mixed-use development in the center, such as: incentive zoning, SEPA planned actions, removal of building height restrictions, minimum density ordinances, design guidelines, etc.

Question 10:
Please describe how the center relates to other important planning districts within the jurisdiction (i.e., are there other priority planning areas that are designated for significant levels of growth).

IV. Housing
VISION 2040 calls for centers to include a variety of housing types, including housing that is affordable to all income groups. Center plans should address these issues and identify strategies and implementation tools to meet housing goals, including local monitoring.

Question 11:
Please describe any mechanisms the jurisdiction has adopted to promote market rate and affordable housing in the center.

V. Economic Development
VISION 2040 calls for concentrating a significant amount of economic growth in designated centers, supporting the clusters of businesses in the centers, and connecting centers to each other. Center plans should also address the economic and residential role the center plays within the jurisdiction.

Question 12:
Please describe the types of businesses that are in your center. Who are the major employers?
Question 13:
Please describe any programs in your center to support businesses and job creation.

VI. Public Facilities and Services
VISION 2040 calls for centers to be locations for public and semi-public facilities and services such as civic buildings, libraries, fire and police stations, arts centers, and related facilities. The center plan should also describe existing and planned capital facilities, including how each will be financed.

Question 14:
Does your center contain the following public/semipublic uses:

- [ ] City Hall?
- [ ] County offices?
- [ ] Social service agencies?
- [ ] Community centers?
- [ ] Educational facilities?
- [ ] Medical facilities?
- [ ] Library?
- [ ] Museum?
- [ ] Theaters?
- [ ] Sports complex?
- [ ] Post office?
- [ ] Hotels/conference center?
- [ ] Regional or community shopping?
- [ ] Other:

Question 15:
Describe programs and investments made in the center to ensure that public facilities and services at a sufficient level to accommodate projected growth in the center.
VII. Transportation

VISION 2040 calls for linking centers, providing complete facilities, and creating pedestrian- and transit-supportive areas. Center plans should include multimodal provisions, identify and prioritize investments to create a complete network, integrate with transit, and include parking manage techniques.

Question 16:
Please list the key transportation issues in your center, such as:

- [ ] Overly congested roads
- [ ] Roads with outdated designs that are potentially unsafe
- [ ] Lack of transit facilities
- [ ] Lack of transit service
- [ ] Lack of bicycle facilities
- [ ] Lack of pedestrian facilities
- [ ] Barriers to travel (explain):
- [ ] Other:

Question 17:
Please describe the programs or strategies that address pedestrian friendly design (such as complete street ordinances, building orientation, etc.) and transit friendly design (such as curb bulbs, signal prioritization, bus shelters, etc.).

Question 18:
Please describe how your jurisdiction is managing parking in the center, including free parking, structured parking, shared parking agreements, short- and long-term parking, etc.

VIII. Public Investment, Best Practices & Lessons Learned

Question 19:
Please describe the major investments that have been made in the center in recent years related to each of the topic areas addressed previously, including: environment, land use, housing, economic development, public facilities and services, and transportation.
Question 20:
Please describe any replicable best practices and/or lessons learned related to each of the topic areas addressed previously, including: planning processes, environment, land use, housing, economic development, public facilities and services, and transportation.

This information will be compiled in our UW Degree Project as well as shared with PSRC as they update the 2002 Centers Report and reassess the designation of the existing centers. When our Degree Project is finished, we will also send a copy to you for your records. Again, thank you very much for participating in this survey!

Sincerely,

Michelle Ward, MPA Candidate 2011
Reid Bennion, MPA Candidate 2011
Appendix II: Fieldwork and Photo Essay Tools

REGIONAL GROWTH CENTER – ANALYSIS TOOLS

The following pages describe the tools we will use to conduct our fieldwork, including a Fieldwork Checklist Tool and Photo Essay Tool. We will visit 16 of the Regional Growth Centers, passing through each center multiple times as we visit all the parts of the center. We will need to stop multiple times to write notes in the Fieldwork Checklist and take photos for the Photo Essay.

Because the fieldwork is a companion effort to the electronic survey that will be sent to planning staff in the jurisdictions with Regional Growth Centers, these tools are designed to allow cross-tool comparison and give a fuller sense of how the planning work is being translated into on-the-ground features. Also, because a project purpose is to identify replicable best practices as well as lessons learned, the Checklist and Photo Essay should document examples of both good and bad features.

FIELDWORK CHECKLIST TOOL

A check box is provided for the VISION 2040 Center Plan Checklist items. However, to reduce the overall length, the tool does not address each topic in the Checklists. We will check the box if the feature is observed in the center and take notes on observations. The following text lists the features and provides examples that show an illustrative list for each of the features.

Center Plan Concept / Vision
[ ] Vibrant area, healthy communities (people on the street walking or jogging)
[ ] Anything unique or recognizable (and explain – cultural, architectural, recreational, etc.)
[ ] Businesses, shops, retail

Additional Comments:

Environment
[ ] Natural features (stream corridors, buffers, ravines)
[ ] Parks (active spaces such as ballfields, play structures, trails)
[ ] Open spaces (passive spaces such as medians, boulevards, landscaping)
[ ] Air and water pollution control (tree canopies, clean fuel vehicles, drainage swales, pervious pavements, stormwater detention ponds, “don’t pollute” drainage signs)

Additional Comments:

Land Use
[ ] Mixed-use development (apartments, condos with ground level retail or office)
[ ] Walkable / Compact (multiple activity centers, multiple story buildings, lack of strip malls)
[ ] Concentrated jobs and/or housing
[ ] New development (current construction, signs about new construction)
Additional Comments:

Housing

[] Affordable housing (research before visit where complexes are, also if housing is near mixed-use areas)
[] Multiple housing types (apartments or condos, single-family homes, townhomes)

Additional Comments:

Economy

[] Main industries or employers (near mixed-use or large employment-only centers, etc.)
[] Main street or retail core

Additional Comments:

Public Services

[] Public / Semipublic Facilities (city hall, county offices, social service agencies, community centers, educational facilities, medical facilities, library, museum, theaters, sports complex, post office, hotels/conference center, regional or community shopping – and if easily accessible by transit, biking or walking)

Additional Comments:

Transportation

[] Pedestrian friendly design (crosswalks, sidewalk, bollards, street trees, bike racks, trash receptacles, newsstands, drinking fountains, landscaping)
[] Bike lanes / parking facilities
[] Accessibility for pedestrians and bicyclists (to all areas listed above – parks, mixed-use, housing, main employers, public facilities, etc.)
[] Transit stations / bus shelters (check regularity – if available at least every 15 minutes)
[] Facilities near transit (retail, grocery, daycare centers, healthcare facilities)
[] On-street parking or parallel parking

Additional Comments:
PHOTO ESSAY TOOL

Photograph the following features and take approximately 30 high-quality pictures per center. Image resolution will be 14 megapixels (for Michelle) and 10.2 megapixels (for Reid) and image size will be large (Michelle: 3648x2736 and Reid: DSLR).

While all photos will be provided to PSRC, a small portion will be used to develop the Photo Essay. To the extent practicable, photos should try to include people in everyday situations, be dynamic and not stagnant, be at multiple scales (close-ups and larger context photos) and include both portrait and landscape orientations.

Center Plan Concept / Vision
- Anything unique or recognizable
- Iconic architecture (thematic elements)
- Bridges
- Skylines
- Waterfronts
- Farmer’s Markets
- Healthy looking communities (people out jogging or biking, etc.)

Environment
- Natural features (stream corridors, buffers, ravines)
- Parks (active spaces such as ballfields, play structures, trails)
- Open spaces (passive spaces such as medians, boulevards, landscaping)
- Community gardens or farmland
- Bioswales / natural drainage elements
- Pervious pavement

Land Use
- Mixed-use of housing, retail and business
- People at coffee shops or restaurants
- Open or abandoned lots (brownfields, paved lots)

Housing
- Dense areas (multiple story apartment buildings)
- Multiple housing types (single-family detached, apartments, townhomes, condos)

Economy
- People shopping
- Storefronts, main-streets, office buildings (particularly mixed-use)
- Key industries, clusters or employers
Public Services

- Public and semipublic facilities including:
  - City Hall
  - County offices
  - Social service agencies
  - Community centers
  - Educational facilities
  - Medical facilities
  - Library
  - Museum
  - Theaters
  - Sports complex
  - Post office
  - Hotels/conference center
  - Regional or community shopping

Transportation

- People walking and biking on sidewalks, bike lanes
- Sidewalk curb and gutter (or lack thereof)
- Bollards, street trees, landscaping
- Benches, trash receptacles, newsstands, drinking fountains, way finding
- Bike racks, bike lanes
- Crosswalk facilities (special amenities for blind and handicapped)
- Transit pockets
- Bus shelters, transit stations, light rail, commuter trains, park and ride
  - Especially connected to mixed-use areas or public facilities
- Stoplight switch for busses
- Traffic roundabouts, speed bumps, speed limits 35 mph or below (safety)
Bibliography


*NE 36th Street Bridge*. (n.d.). Retrieved March 2011, from City of Redmond: http://www.ci.redmond.wa.us/PlansProjects/Transportation/NE36StBridge/


