

Puget Sound Regional Council
2002 Regional Growth Centers Report

PUYALLUP SOUTH HILL REGIONAL GROWTH CENTER

Community Context

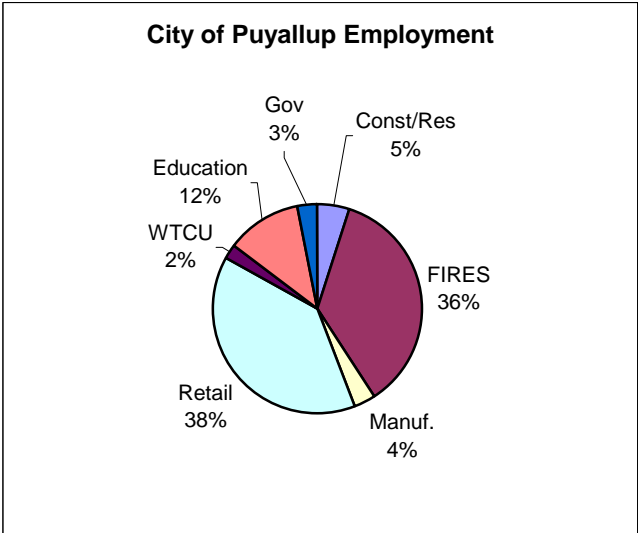
The City of Puyallup emerged in the late 1800s as an agricultural center in the Puyallup Valley east of Tacoma. The city covers just under 12 square miles extending from the Puyallup River valley south and eastward onto the South Hill area. Puyallup has grown along with the rest of the Puget Sound region, and in 2000 had a population of over 33,000. The city’s population forecast for 2010 is 33,970, and for 2014 is 35,396. Employment had reached nearly 18,000 by the turn of the millennium. This compares to the city’s 1994 comprehensive plan employment projection of 14,364 for the year 2010.

Today Puyallup is the third largest city in Pierce County, following Tacoma and Lakewood. Between 1990 and 2000 Puyallup grew by over 38 percent, adding over 9,000 new residents. Much of this growth has occurred in the form of low-density residential and commercial development in the South Hill area, south and east of the older downtown. There has been less growth nearer the center of the city. The downtown Regional Growth Center lost population between 1990 and 2000, while population in the South Hill center grew by 59 percent in the same ten years. According to the city’s 1994 comprehensive plan, about one fourth of the land area within the city (1,711 acres) is vacant or undeveloped. Another quarter of the city’s land area is devoted to single-family residential development.

There are two designated Regional Growth Centers in the city of Puyallup: downtown Puyallup and South Hill. The downtown Puyallup Regional Growth Center includes much of the historic downtown area. A tight street grid, small blocks, a mix of older homes, and transitioning commercial land uses characterize this center, the region’s smallest. The South Hill Regional Growth Center is larger (935 acres), has larger blocks, contains the South Hill Shopping Mall, and has lower density single family residential development.

Puyallup City-Wide Snapshot	
Area (square miles)	11.9
Population (2000)	33,011
Population per square mile	2,774
Employment (2000)	17,970
Employees per square mile	1,510
Housing units (2000):	13,467
Employees per housing unit	1.33

*Source: City of Puyallup, Washington Department of Employment Security,
 Washington Office of Financial Management*



The majority of employment in the City of Puyallup is Retail, Financial, Insurance, Real Estate (FIRE), and Service businesses. These sectors provide over 70 percent of current employment. Education comprises 12 percent of employment citywide. The other three sectors comprise 14 percent of total.

Puyallup City-Wide Current Land Use		
Residential - Multi family	1,884 Acres	28.8 %
Residential - Single family	234 Acres	3.6 %
Commercial retail	268 Acres	4.1 %
Commercial office	39 Acres	0.6 %
Mixed use	0 Acres	0.0 %
Industrial/manufacturing	162 Acres	2.5 %
Institutional/civic	422 Acres	6.4 %
Parks/open space	230 Acres	3.5 %
Resource (agric., forest, mining)	571 Acres	8.7 %
ROW/other	1,024 Acres	15.7 %
Vacant/undeveloped	1,711 Acres	26.1 %

Source: Pierce County Assessor, City of Puyallup

Comprehensive Plan

The comprehensive plan calls for a city-wide population of 33,970 for the year 2010 and 35,396 by 2014. These projections compare with the 2000 figure of 33,011. The city’s 2000 employment of 17,970 has already surpassed the comprehensive plan forecast of 14,364 for the year 2010.

Seventy-one historic buildings have been inventoried in the downtown center, and many more exist. The city’s plan calls for the formation of an historic district and preparation of development guidelines for the preservation and renovation of historic buildings. The plan’s goals are to preserve the city’s historic character and its residential neighborhoods, promote a mix of housing types, and focus commercial development in to “centers” and “nodes.” The plan designates the downtown and South Hill Mall areas

as Regional Growth Centers. Revitalization of the downtown and strengthening its connections with surrounding neighborhoods is seen as a “centerpiece” of the community’s development strategy. The plan encourages a healthy and vital downtown center, and emphasizes the preservation of downtown as the community focal point. A key component of the plan for downtown Puyallup is the preservation and restoration of the many historic residential structures. The plan encourages adaptive reuse of these structures for office use to allow for transition in land use while maintaining the downtown’s small scale urban design and historic residential character.

In the South Hill area, the city’s plan calls for growth in and around commercial centers to be compact, rather than “strip” development, and envisions a definite identity for the South Hill Regional Growth Center. The plan envisions South Hill as a vibrant center, accessible by transit and walking as well as by car. The plan would connect the South Hill commercial area with industrial and educational development along 39th Street, east of the South Hill Shopping Center. In addition, the plan would develop new moderate and high-density residential use south of the mall, and east of Meridian Avenue South.

The South Hill Regional Growth Center

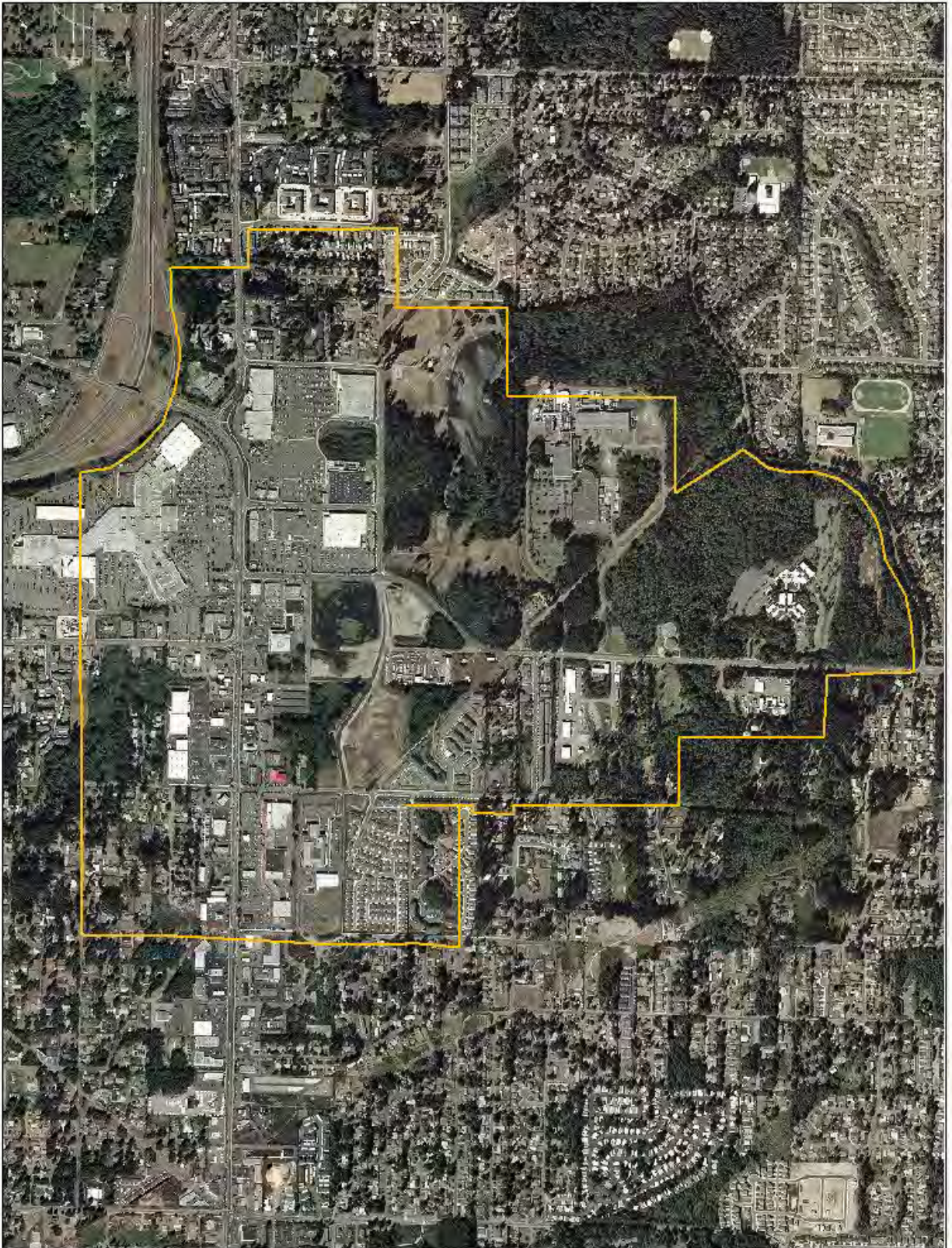
Background

The South Hill Regional Growth Center is the heart of Puyallup’s rapidly growing South Hill Subarea. The center is located just to the east of State Route 512, a limited access freeway that connects the center with downtown Puyallup to the north and Tacoma and I-5 to the west. Major development in the South Hill Regional Growth Center includes the South Hill Mall, auto-oriented retail businesses located along South Meridian Street (SR-161), Pierce College, and the former Matsushita (Panasonic) computer chip manufacturing facility, established in 1991. South Hill Mall (opened in 1988 and expanded in 1994) is a major regional shopping center, with 125 stores, including the Bon Marche, Sears, J.C. Penney, Mervyn’s, Target, Gottchalks, and Regal Theater complex. To the east of the mall, along South Meridian Street, several large retail shopping developments are served by large surface parking lots. In addition, the South Hill Regional Growth Center contains a mix of single and multi family residential development, located in the north end and the southwest corner of the center. As of 2000 there were 595 housing units in the center and a population of 1,178 people.

See the aerial photo on the following page for a depiction of the Puyallup South Hill Regional Growth Center.

Center Planning and Implementation

The city has not prepared any sub-area plans for the South Hill area. Private development is occurring in the center, including expansion of South Hill Mall in 1994, senior housing, apartments, commercial retail big box stores, and retail commercial businesses along SR 161. In addition, the Family YMCA facility and Pierce College provide anchors for the center. A large question about future development concerns the former Matsushita (now Microchip) plant, which has been vacant for since 1998. Until the computer chip market recovers from the current economic slowdown the future of this facility, which could provide significant employment in the South Hill urban growth center, is uncertain.



Population, Housing, and Employment

The South Hill area has been one of Puyallup's higher growth areas for the past 15 years. Between 1990 and 2000 the regional growth center's population grew 59 percent, from 1,865 to 2,969. The city's population target for the center is 6,000 placing the 2000 population at just under 50 percent of its target. Population density in the center increased 78 percent between 1990 and 2000, from 1,142 to 2,032 people per square mile. Housing also grew in the past decade, with housing units increasing by 76 percent, from 856 to 1,507 while the number of households also grew by 67 percent, from 806 to 1,415. Housing unit density doubled, from 0.8 to 1.6 units per gross acre. Meanwhile, household density nearly doubled, from 0.8 to 1.5 per gross acre. *Vision 2020* established density guidelines of 10 households per gross acre for regional growth centers. This guideline was intended to provide a goal for intensified development of centers over the next 20-30 years. South Hill Regional Growth Center has reached only 15 percent of this density guideline. The city will have to attract considerable new growth at much higher household densities to approach this density guideline.

Employment in the South Hill Regional Growth Center reached 4,969 in the year 2000. The city has not established an employment target for this center. With its orientation toward the shopping mall and other retail development, 63 percent of the center's jobs are in the Retail sector. Finance, Insurance and Real Estate (FIRE) account for 8 percent, Government and Education comprise 11 percent, and Services account for 14 percent. Employment density as of the year 2000 stood at five employees per gross acre, compared with the *Vision 2020* guideline of 25.

South Hill Regional Growth Center Population, Housing, and Employment (2000)			
	1990	2000	Target
Population	1,865	2,969	6,000
Persons per square mile	1,142	2,032	-
Housing units	856	1,507	3,018
Housing units per gross acre	0.8	1.6	-
Households	806	1,415	-
Households per gross acre	0.8	1.5	-
Employment	4,269	4,969	N/A
Employees per gross acre	4.5	5	-
Employees per housing unit	5.3	3.3	-

Source: 2000 U.S. census, Washington Employment Security Department, Puget Sound Regional Council

South Hill Regional Growth Center Employment by Sector (2000)	
Services	14 %
Retail	63 %
FIRE	8 %
WTCU	2 %
Manufacturing	1 %
Government/education	11 %
Construction/resources	1 %

Source: Washington Employment Security Department, Puget Sound Regional Council

Land Use, Character & Urban Form

South Hill Regional Growth Center is one of the region's largest regional growth centers, covering 935 acres. The center has a discontinuous road system. The only arterial streets that traverse the entire center are Meridian Street, 39th Avenue SE, and 43rd Avenue SE. The center has 17 blocks with an average block size of 60 acres. Among the region's 21 regional growth centers, this is second only to Canyon Park center, where blocks average 73 acres. South Hill center has 510 parcels averaging 1.8 acres each. The center has a total of 8.4 road miles, and an intersection density of 0.04, indicating that roads are widely spaced and offer few interconnections.

South Hill Regional Growth Center Character and Urban Form	
Total area (acres)	935
Number of blocks	17
Average block size (gross acres)	60.0
Number of parcels	510
Average parcel size (net acres)	1.8
Road network (linear miles)	8.4
Intersection density (intersections/acre)	0.04

Source: US Bureau of Census, Puget Sound Regional Council

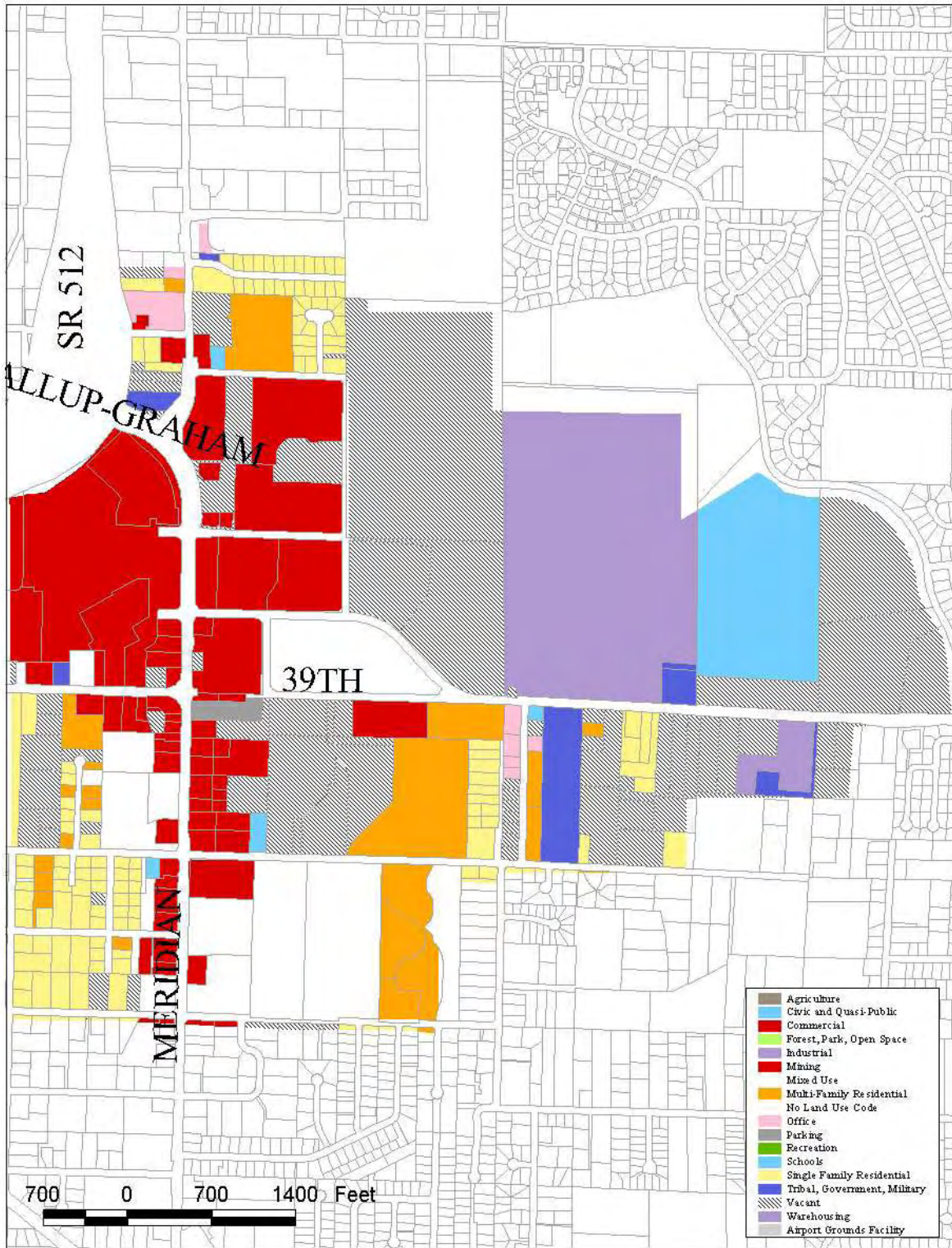
South Hill Mall and commercial retail development along Meridian Street dominate the center. Major "big box" retailers have developed along Meridian Street. These include WalMart, Home Depot, Lowe's, GI Joes, Petsmart, Good Guys, Office Depot, Ross Dress for Less, Borders Books, Best Buy, and Safeway. The overall feel of the Meridian Street corridor, as well the mall and surrounding areas, is of auto-oriented, low-density, large-scale retail.

Since 1995, there has been investment in new housing developments in the center, mainly along 43rd Avenue SE. These include clustered single family units, apartment buildings, and a retirement complex. Other residential areas of housing are located in the southwest and northwest corners of the center.

South Hill Regional Growth Center is still largely underdeveloped. Over 27 percent of the center (approximately 257 acres) is currently vacant. Commercial activity accounts for 17 percent of the center's land use, while industrial comprises another 10 percent. Residential uses comprise 14 percent of the center.

See the map on the following page for a depiction of current land uses in the Puyallup South Hill Regional Growth Center.

South Hill Urban Center (Current Land Use)



South Hill Regional Growth Center Existing Land Use	
	Percentage
Civic/Quasi-public	0.05%
Commercial	16.75%
Industrial	10.46%
Mobile Home Park	0.83%
Residential – Multi family	7.13%
Office	1.03%
Parking	0.24%
Schools	4.40%
Residential – Single Family	6.83%
Government/Military	1.83%
Unknown (No Data)	23.13%
Vacant	27.32%
Total	100%
Employment Related Land Use	34.52%
Residential Related Land Use	13.96%

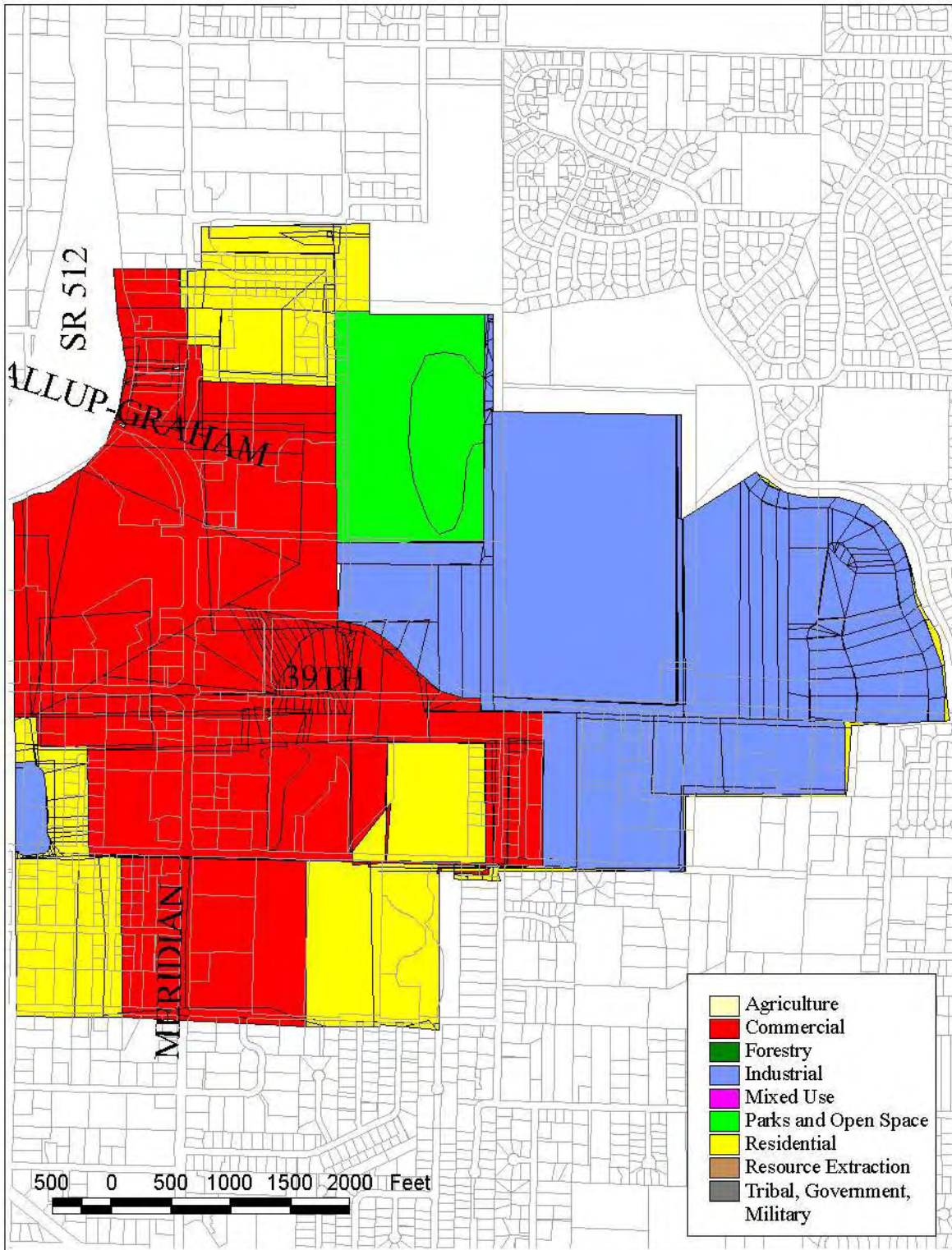
Source: Pierce County Assessor, Puget Sound Regional Council

South Hill Mall, the commercial development along Meridian Street, and the residential areas cover about the western half of the center. The eastern half contains significant open space, wetlands, and surface water features (10-acre Bradley Lake, 6-acre Willows Pond, and Wildwood Creek). About 41 percent of the center’s land area is currently vacant. Pierce College at Puyallup is located on the north side of 39th Avenue SE near the eastern boundary of the center. In addition, new public service oriented investment has occurred in the center, at the large new Family YMCA facility on the south side of 43rd Avenue SE.

Future planned land use in South Hill Regional Growth Center includes a mix of Auto Oriented Commercial, Business/Industrial Park, and high density residential area. These land use categories will account for 70 percent of the center’s future land use.

See the map on the following page for a depiction of future land uses in the Puyallup South Hill Regional Growth Center.

South Hill Urban Center (Future Land Use)



South Hill Regional Growth Center Future Land Use	
	Percentage
Auto Oriented Commercial	34.71%
Business/Industrial Park	23.76%
High Urban Density Residential	10.98%
Light Manufacturing/Warehousing	8.77%
Limited Commercial	2.16%
Low Urban Density Residential	4.77%
Moderate Urban Density	8.85%
Open Space & Parks	5.63%
Rural Buffer Residential	0.15%
Unknown (No Data)	0.22%
Total	100%

Source: City of Puyallup, Puget Sound Regional Council

Transportation and Access

South Hill Regional Growth Center has direct access to the region’s highway system via State Route 512, a 4-lane limited access state highway, which adjoins the northwest corner of the center. A full interchange is located at SR-512 and Meridian Street (designated as SR-161 south of the mall). To the north of the interchange, Meridian Street is a four lane arterial with sidewalks. To the south Meridian Street is a four to six lane arterial with either two or three lanes in each direction. In the vicinity of South Hill Mall, Meridian Street has six through lanes, single or double left turn lanes, sidewalks, and landscaped areas. The center’s main east-west arterial, 39th Avenue SE, has four travel lanes, and includes sidewalks in some sections. Other roadways in the center are typically two lanes without sidewalks.

While the South Hill Regional Growth Center is known as an auto oriented area, many of the center’s major streets have sidewalks. These include South Meridian Street, 37th Avenue SE, 39th Avenue SW and SE (both west and east of Meridian Street), 31st Avenue SE, 35th Avenue SE, and 5th Street SE.

Pierce Transit provides local bus service to South Hill Regional Growth Center, including a transit center at South Hill Mall. Four local bus routes operated by Pierce Transit (400, 402, 410, and 413) connect the South Hill area with Graham, downtown Puyallup, downtown Tacoma, Federal Way, and Parkland. These routes each provide on average one bus every 60 minutes in the AM peak period. In addition, Sound Transit provides regional express bus service along SR-512 just west of the South Hill Center. This Sound Transit route 585 serves the South Hill Park & Ride lot at 31st Avenue SW and 9th Street SW, and connects to Lakewood and Auburn about once per hour between 4 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. weekdays.

South Hill Regional Growth Center Transit Routes and Frequencies (AM Peak Period)			
Item	Route #	Destination	Freq
1	413	WILDWOOD 413	60.00
2	400	PUYALLUP 400	60.00
3	402	MERIDIAN 402	60.00
4	410	112TH STREET 410	60.00
			60.00

Source: Puget Sound Regional Council, Community Transit, Everett Transit, Kitsap Transit, Metro Transit, Pierce Transit, Sound Transit

South Hill Regional Growth Center Parking Requirements		
	Min.	Max.
Multi family	Varies	No Limit
Office	Varies	No Limit
Retail (general)	Varies	No Limit
Restaurant, other	Varies	No Limit

Source: Application of Physical Design Guidelines in Regional Growth Centers Survey, 2002

Regional Growth Center References and Contacts

City of Puyallup Comprehensive Plan (1994)

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