

Regional Centers Monitoring Update

Growth Management Policy Board | November 6, 2025



We are leaders in the region to realize equity for all. Diversity, racial equity and inclusion are integrated into how we carry out all our work.

psrc.org/equity

Today's Agenda



Background on why redesignate centers

Review purpose of different types of centers

Proposed approach based on board feedback

Preview criteria reports



Why Redesignate Centers?



Purpose of Monitoring Process:

- Review individual center performance
- Evaluate regional goals

Outcomes:

- Confirm designation of existing centers through the redesignation process
- Evaluate the system of centers



Process & Schedule

July 2025

- Reviewed Growth Centers Framework

Sept 2025

- Introduced barriers to meeting requirements

Oct 2025

- Gathered input from RSC and GMPB

Nov 2025

- Review proposed approach & preview criteria reports

Jan 2026

- Preview criteria reports and recommendations

Feb 2026

- Potential action on regional growth center redesignation





Regional and Countywide Centers

Different Types of Centers



Regional Metro Growth Center

(Downtown
Everett)

9 centers



Regional Urban Growth Center

(Totem Lake)

21 centers



Countywide (Downtown Sumner)

79 centers



Neighborhood & Local

(Madrona)

numerous

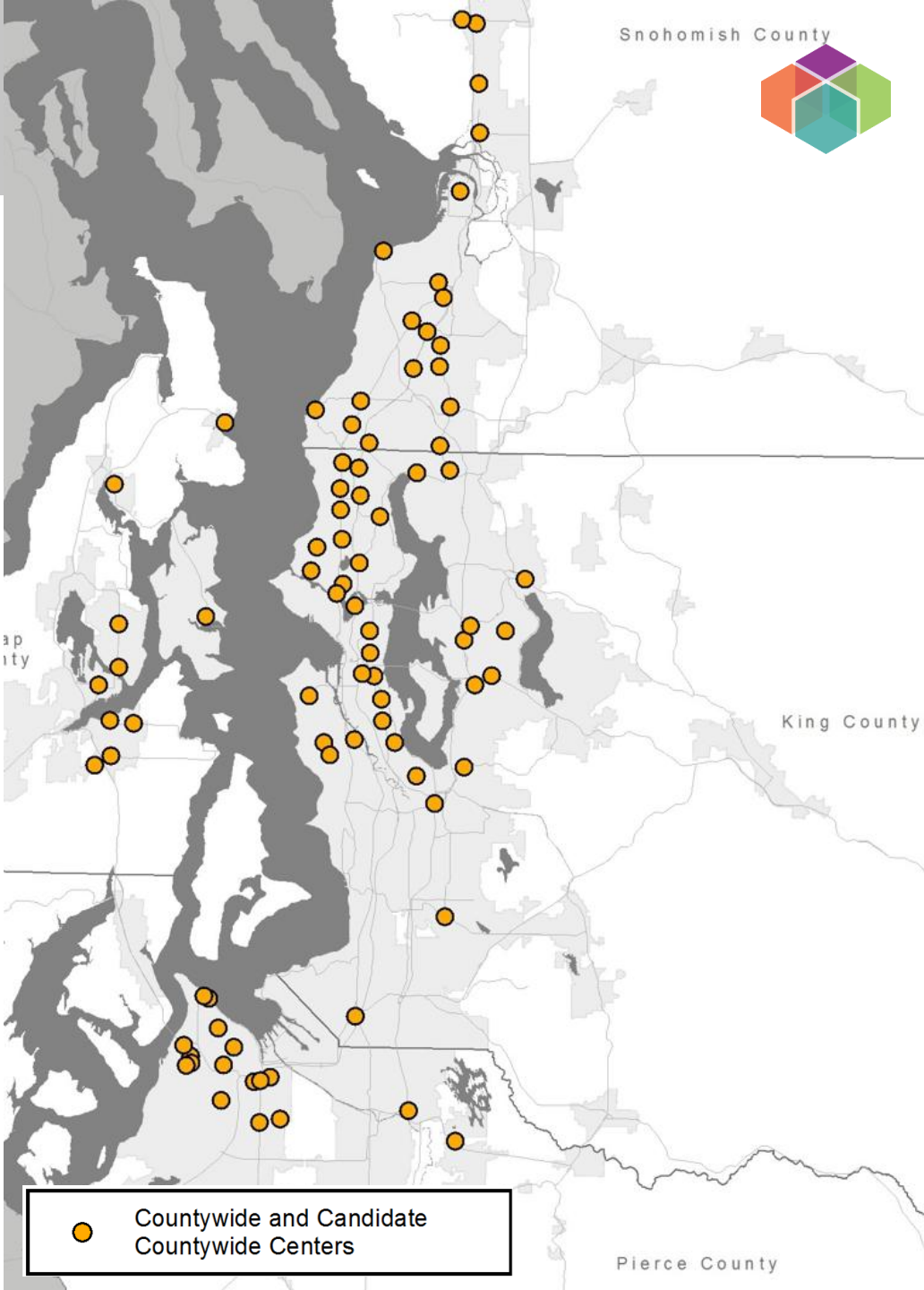
Role of Regional and Countywide Centers



Feature	Regional Centers	Countywide Centers
Scale	Regional/can serve across counties	Serves local community
Who Designates	PSRC	Countywide planning groups
Growth & Jobs	Significant share of regional growth, growth targets	Smaller scale growth & services
Transit / Infrastructure	High-capacity transit, major infrastructure	Locally scaled
Transportation Funding Priority	Regional funding	Countywide funding
Relationship to Broader Strategy	Cornerstone of VISION 2050	Supports county strategies by focusing growth locally

Regional and Countywide

County	Number of Countywide Centers	Average Density
King	37	34 people per acre
Kitsap	8	14 people per acre
Pierce	17	22 people per acre
Snohomish	17	18 people per acre





Addressing Feedback: What we've heard...

Elements to make successful centers



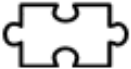







Key criteria reviewed for redesignation:

- Update/complete subarea plans
- Meeting metrics for growth
- Appropriate shape/size/walkability



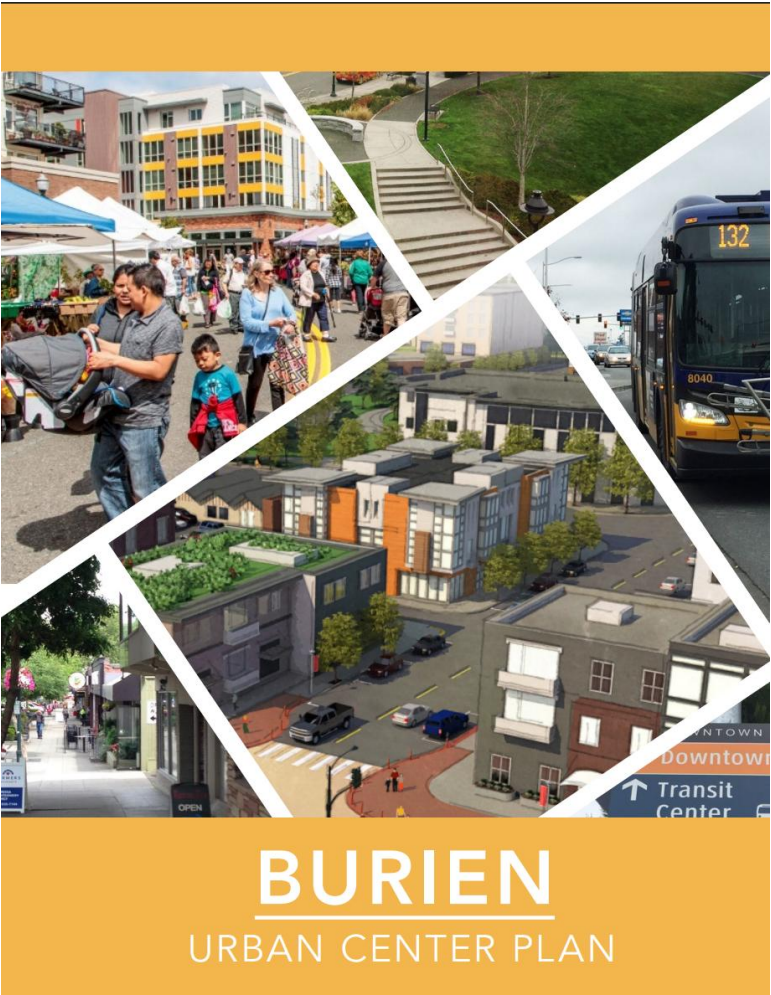
Regional Growth Center Criteria

Qualities of a successful center

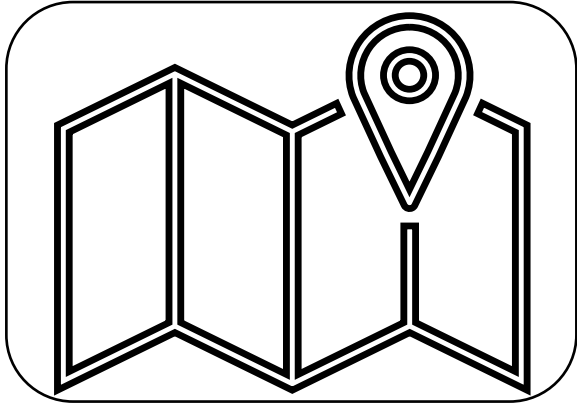
Growth Center	
Key Ingredients	
Existing jobs + housing	
Planning for growth	
Mix of uses (existing + planned)	
Quality transit service	
Walkable size + shape	
Potential to grow	
Destination	

+

Local planning



Center Subarea Plan Requirement



Purpose: Provide a community-driven vision for growth and development

Center subarea plans should include:

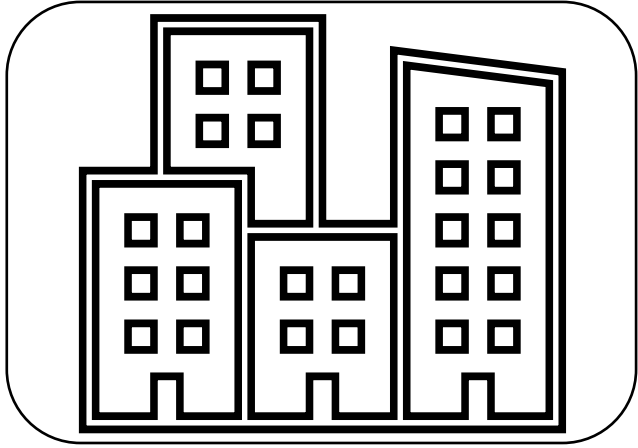
- Equitable community engagement
- Amenities like parks and public space
- Local transportation projects

What we heard: Provide time to subarea plans that are in process

Proposed approach: Condition to extend timeline until December 31, 2027 to adopt plans



Density Requirement



Purpose: Demonstrate current density of residents and jobs and potential for future growth

What we heard: Balance meeting existing criteria and demonstrating potential for growth

Proposed approach:

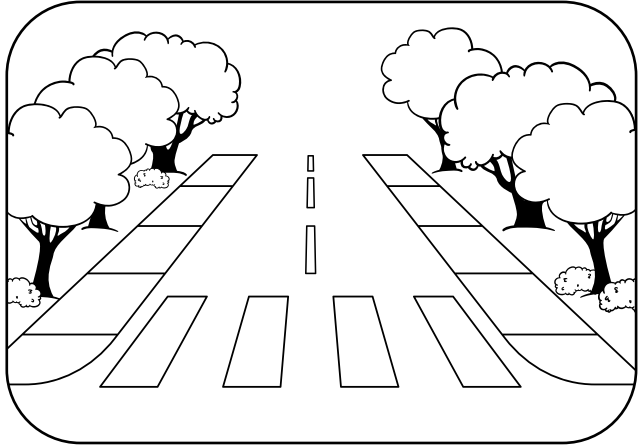
If substantially meeting criteria:

- Conditions for jurisdictions: demonstrate growth by specified date, update plans (where necessary)
- For PSRC: Evaluate center again in VISION update and future cycles

Redesignate to countywide if not meeting multiple criteria that demonstrate future potential



Walkability and Size Requirements



Purpose: Establish pedestrian-oriented areas based on distances people are willing to walk to transit

What we heard: Allow flexibility with size and shape to meet new state requirements and when meeting policy intent

Proposed approach to context-based recommendations:

- **Conditions** to review boundaries where there are major pedestrian barriers and no clear rationale for the existing boundary
- **Comments** in criteria report to seek to improve walkability where boundary may be justified





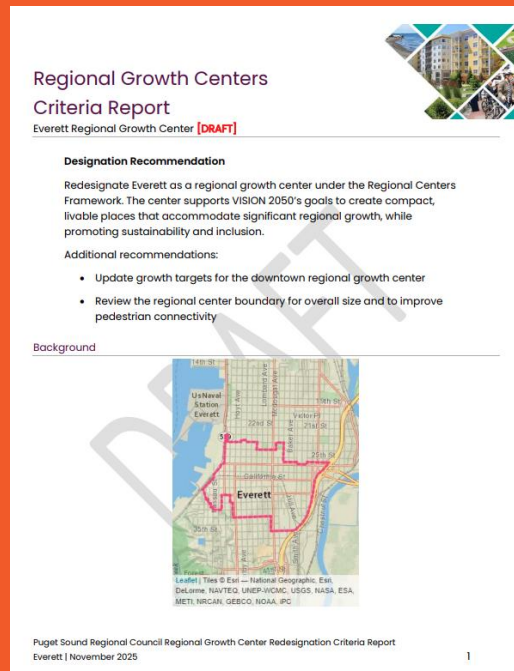
Preview Criteria Reports



Redesignation Materials

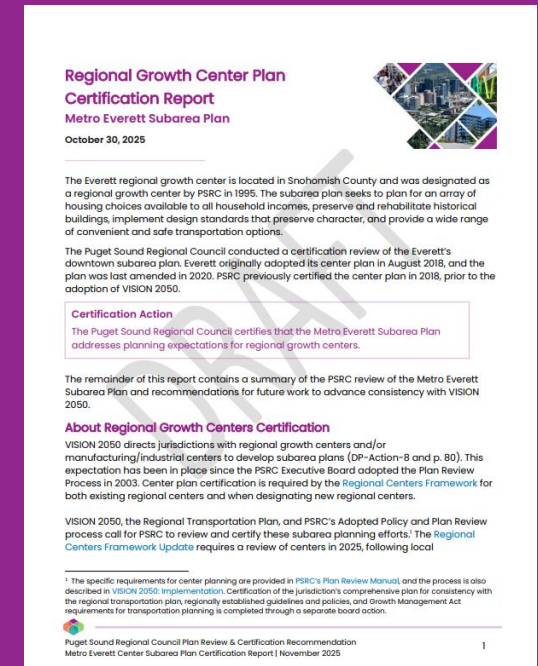
Center Criteria Report

- Overview of how center meets criteria
- Identifies any comments or conditions
- Jurisdictional comments



Subarea Plan Certification Report

- Summary of center subarea plans
- Planning recommendations



Preview Criteria Reports: Everett, Seattle, Tacoma

Successes:

- Region's largest and fastest-growing centers
- Meeting density and growth goals
- Appropriate mix of uses
- Provides various transit options

Conditions (required to address by established date):

- Seattle regional center plans by December 2027
- Review Northgate boundary and pedestrian access

Criteria Report Guide



On Track



Needs Improvement



Does Not Meet
Criteria

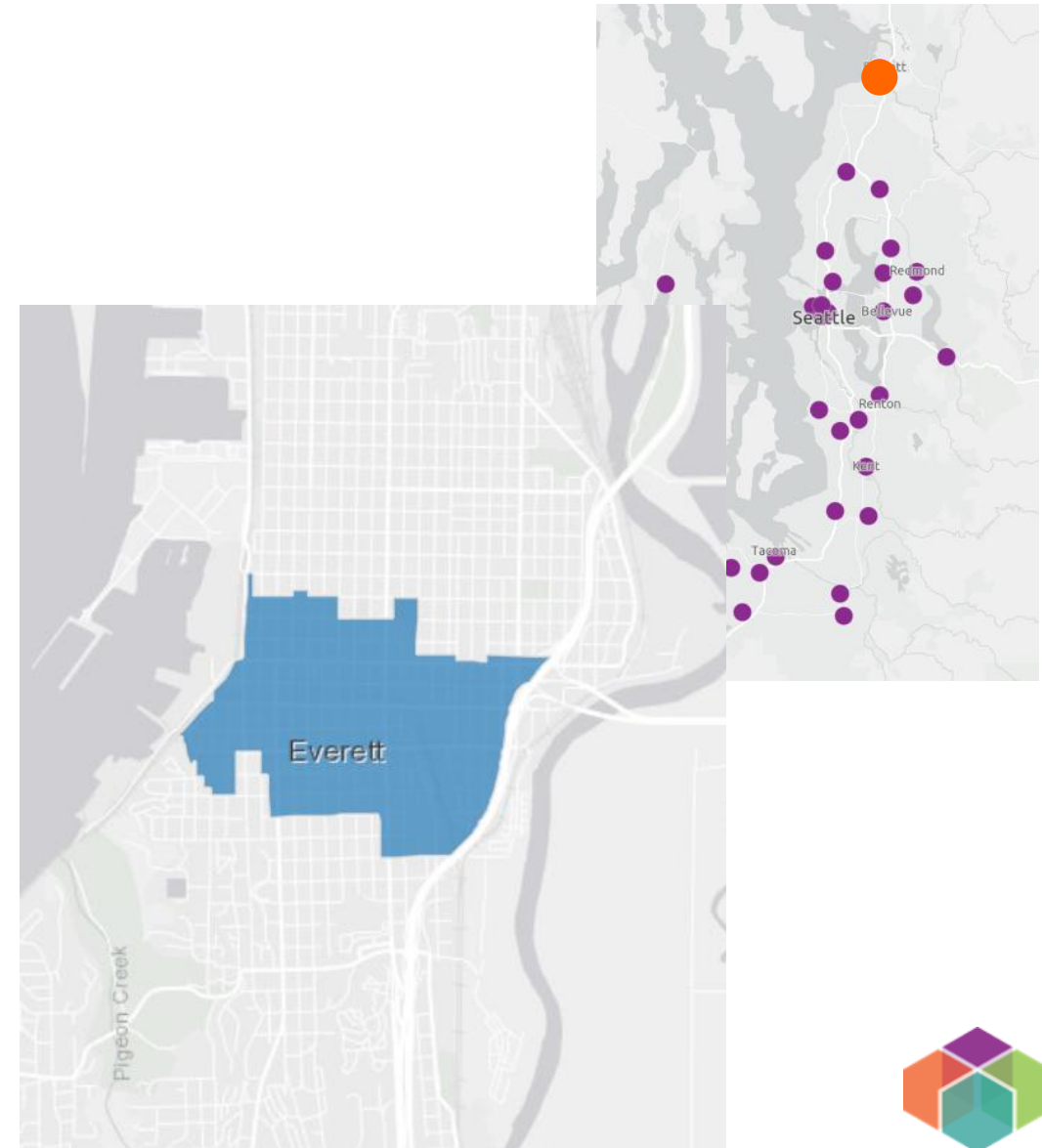


Regional Growth Center: Everett

Metro Growth Center

- ✓ Current Density: 31 people per acre
7,360 residents | 13,246 jobs
- ✖ Planning Target: 71 people per acre
- ⚠ Recent growth: 2 more people per acre since 2010
- ⚠ Size: 661 acres
- ✓ Meets criteria for mix of uses, transit service
- ✓ 2018 Metro Everett subarea plan

Recommend redesignation as a metro growth center

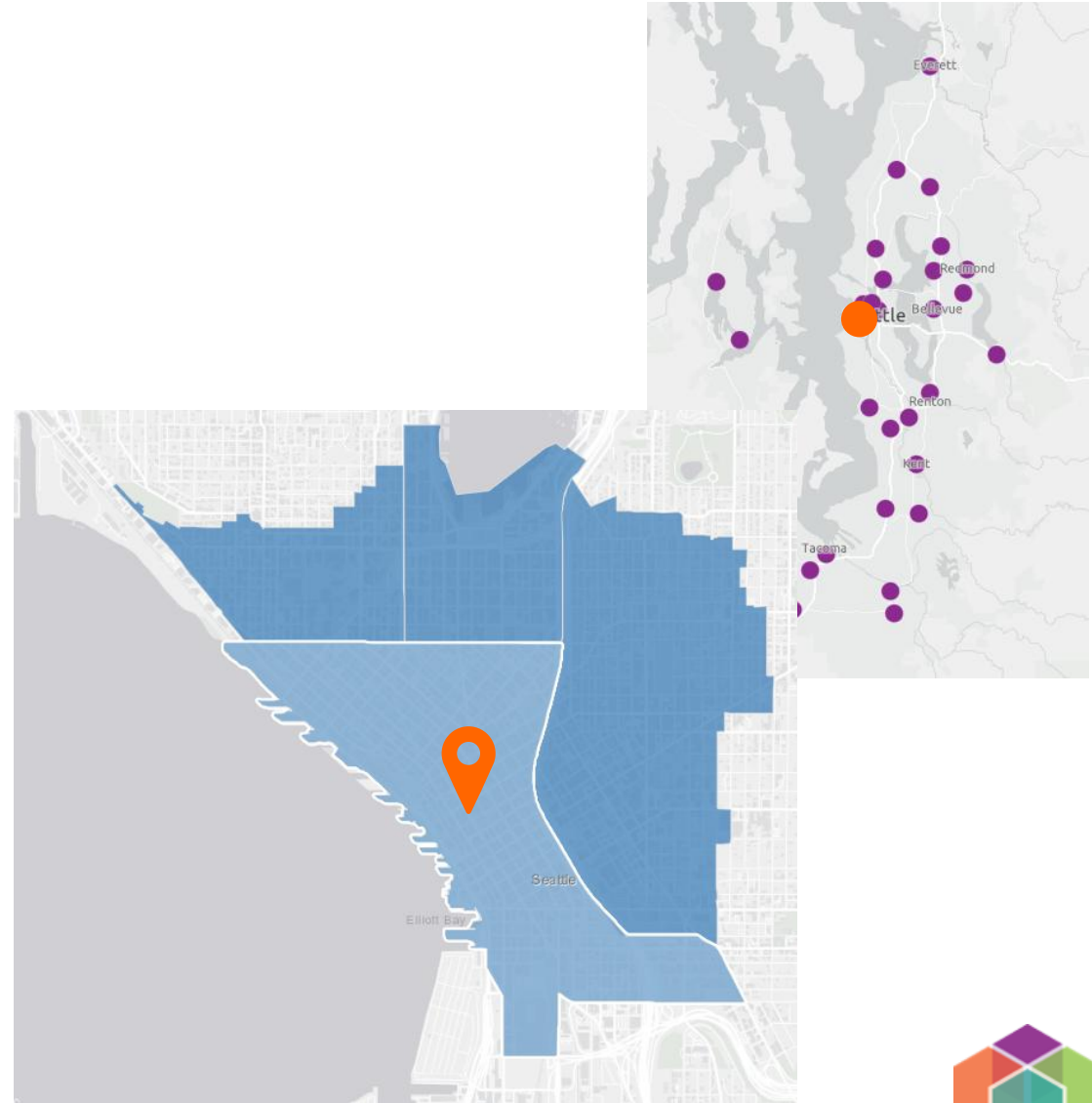


Regional Growth Center: Downtown Seattle

Metro Growth Center

- ✓ Current Density: 253 people per acre
49,450 residents | 186,820 jobs
- ✓ Planning Target: 345 people per acre
- ✓ Recent growth: 79 more people per acre since 2010
- ⚠ Size: 934 acres but qualifies for acreage exception
- ✓ Meets criteria for mix of uses, transit service

Recommend redesignation as a metro growth center with planning conditions

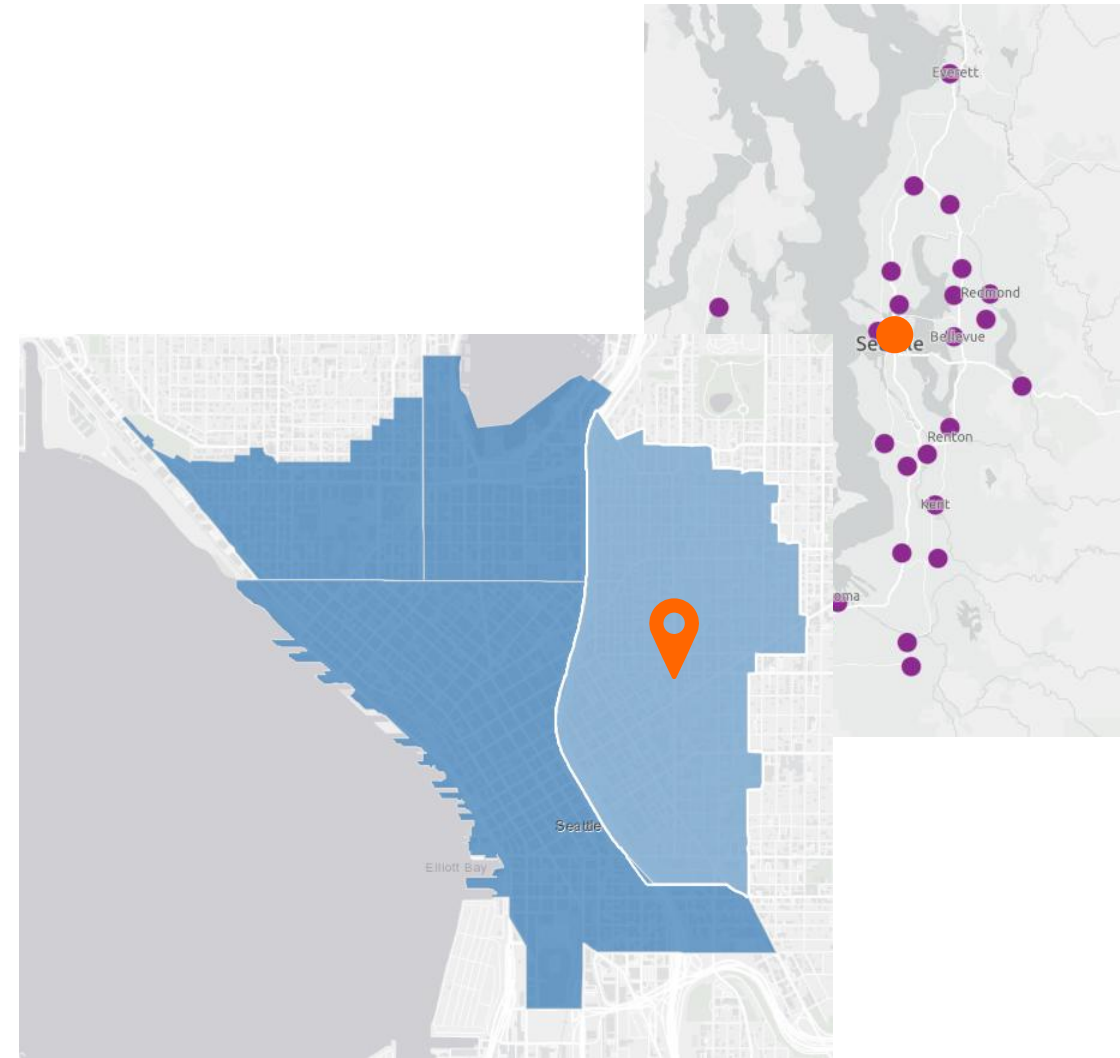


Regional Growth Center: First Hill/Capitol Hill

Metro Growth Center

- ✓ Current Density: 116 people per acre
59,197 residents | 46,510 jobs
- ✓ Planning Target: 137 people per acre
- ⚠ Size: 915 acres but qualifies for acreage exception
- ✓ Recent growth: 31 more people per acre since 2010
- ✓ Meets criteria for mix of uses, transit service

Recommend redesignation as a metro growth center with planning conditions

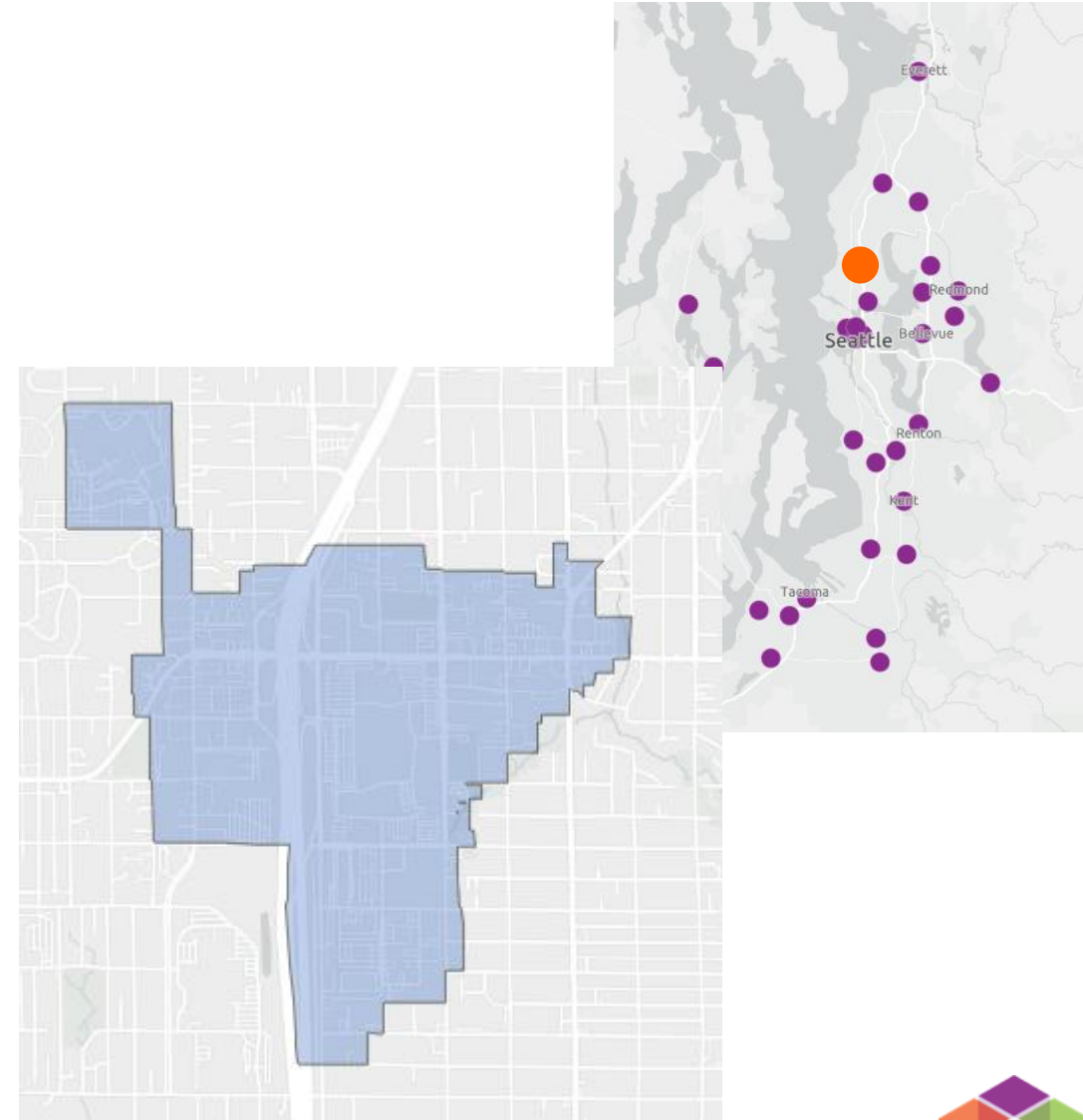


Regional Growth Center: Northgate

Metro Growth Center → Change to Urban Growth Center

- ✓ Current Density: 47 people per acre
8,940 residents | 10,210 jobs
- ✓ Planning Target: 62 people per acre
- ⚠ Recent growth: 3 more people per acre since 2010
- ✓ Size: 409 acres
- ✓ Meets criteria for mix of uses, transit service

Recommend redesignation as an urban growth center with boundary & planning conditions

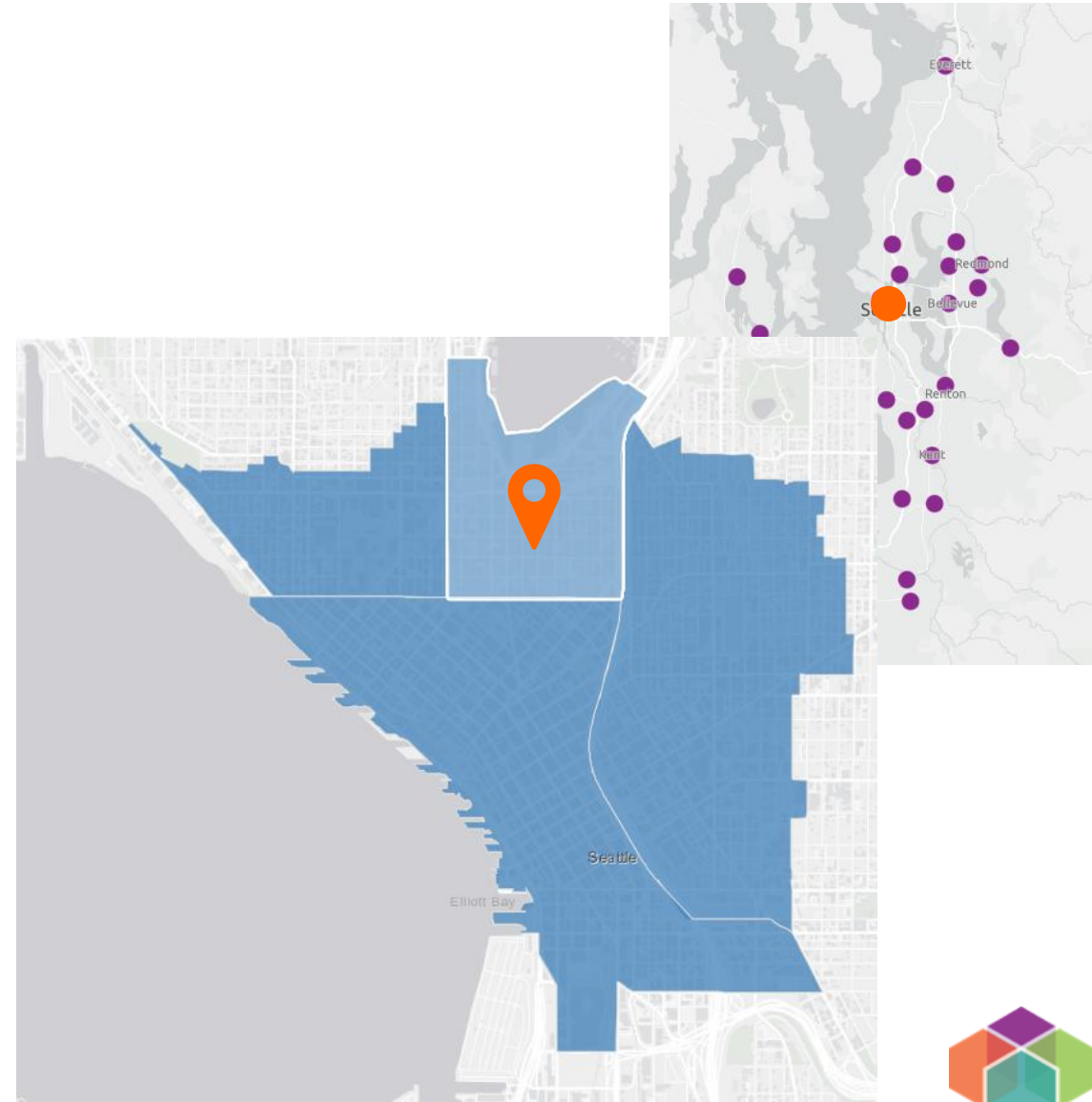


Regional Growth Center: South Lake Union

Metro Growth Center

- ✓ Current Density: 260 people per acre
16,620 residents | 76,990 jobs
- ✓ Planning Target: 356 people per acre
- ✓ Recent growth: 195 more people per acre since 2010
- ✓ Size: 359 acres
- ✓ Meets criteria for mix of uses, transit service

Recommend redesignation as a metro growth center with planning conditions

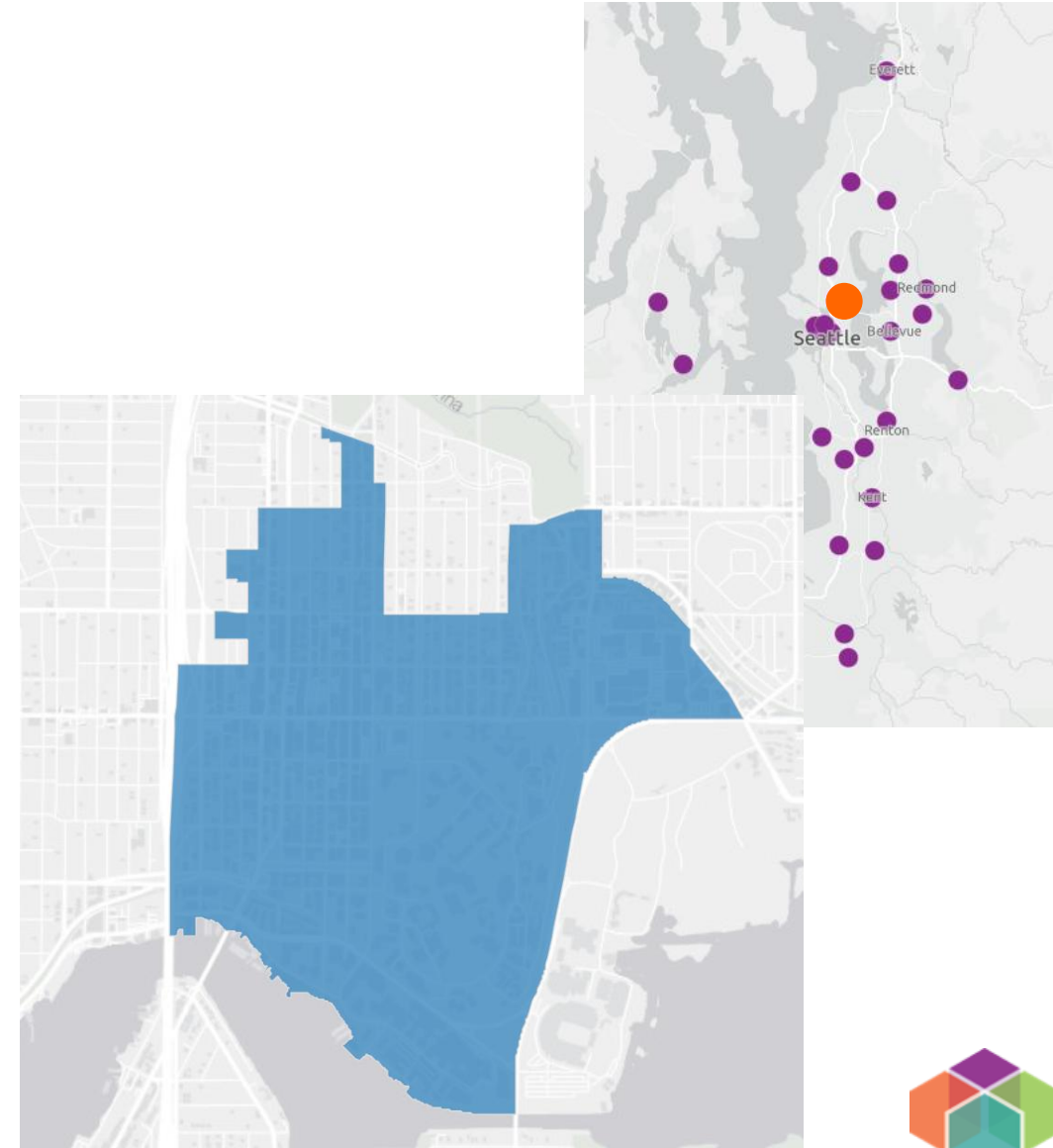


Regional Growth Center: University District

Metro Growth Center

- ✓ Current Density: 94 people per acre
33,940 residents | 36,710 jobs
- ✓ Planning Target: 109 people per acre
- ✓ Recent growth: 19 more people per acre since 2010
- ⚠ Size: 753 acres but qualifies for acreage exception
- ✓ Meets criteria for mix of uses, transit service

Recommend redesignation as a metro growth center with planning conditions

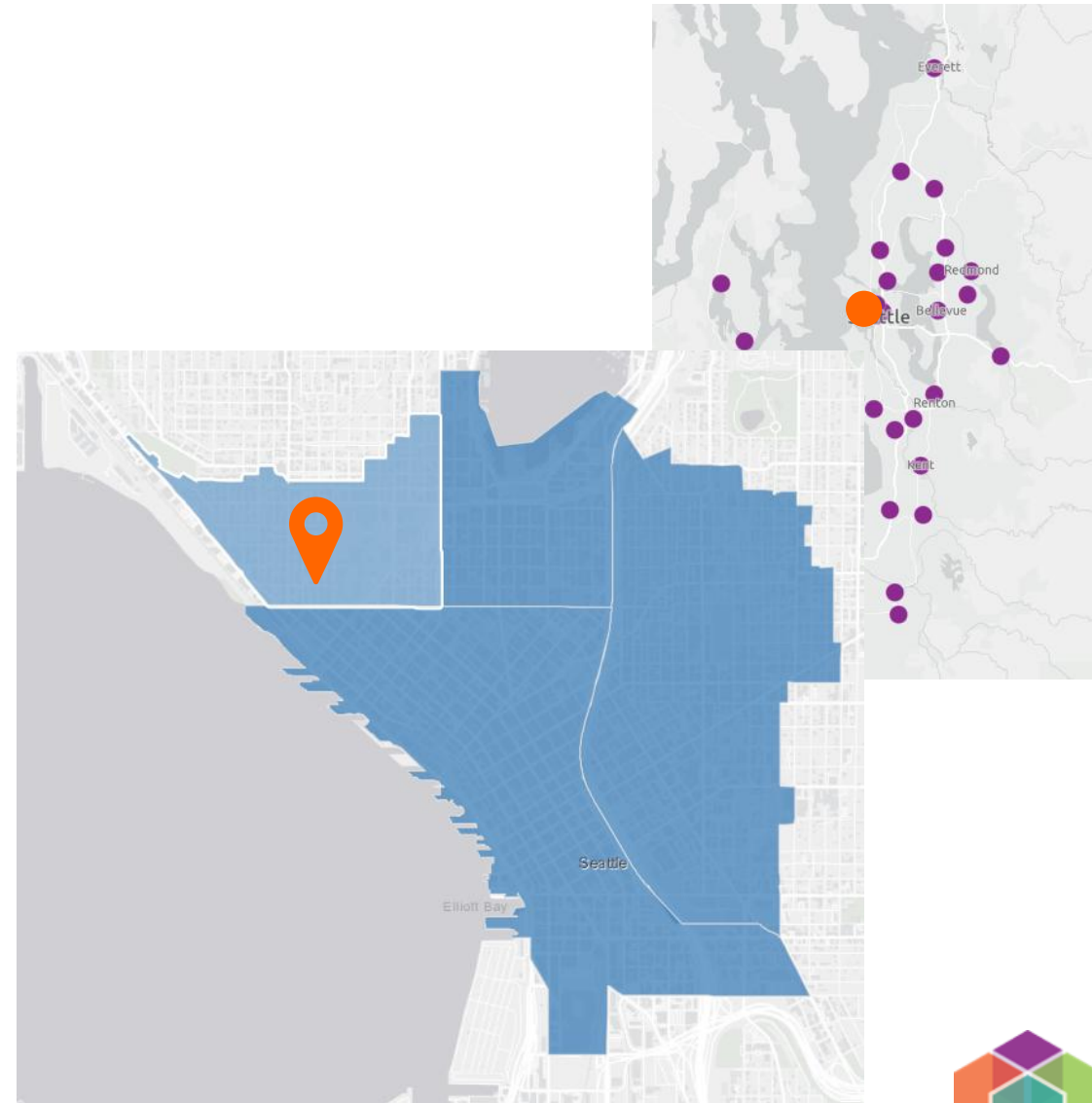


Regional Growth Center: Uptown

Metro Growth Center

- ✓ Current Density: 86 people per acre
13,980 residents | 14,800 jobs
- ✓ Planning Target: 186 people per acre
- ✓ Recent growth: 24 more people per acre since 2010
- ✓ Size: 335 acres
- ✓ Meets criteria for mix of uses, transit service

Recommend redesignation as a metro growth center with planning conditions

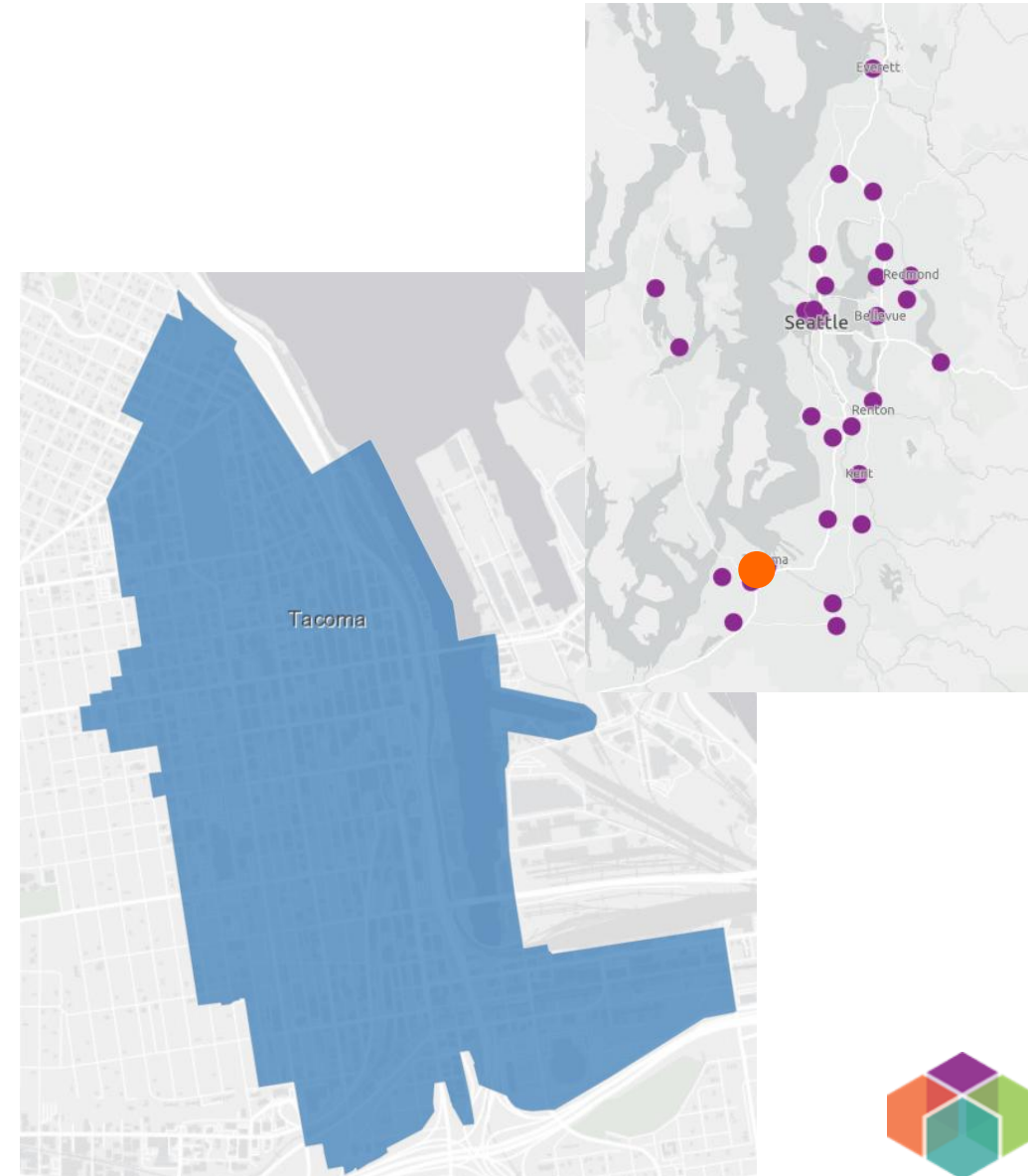


Regional Growth Center: Downtown Tacoma

Metro Growth Center

- ✓ Current Density: 45 people per acre
19,740 residents | 39,000 jobs
- ✓ Planning Target: 95 people per acre
- ✓ Recent growth: 10 more people per acre since 2010
- ✖ Size: 1385 acres but qualifies for acreage exception
- ✓ Meets criteria for mix of uses, transit service

Recommend redesignation as a metro growth center

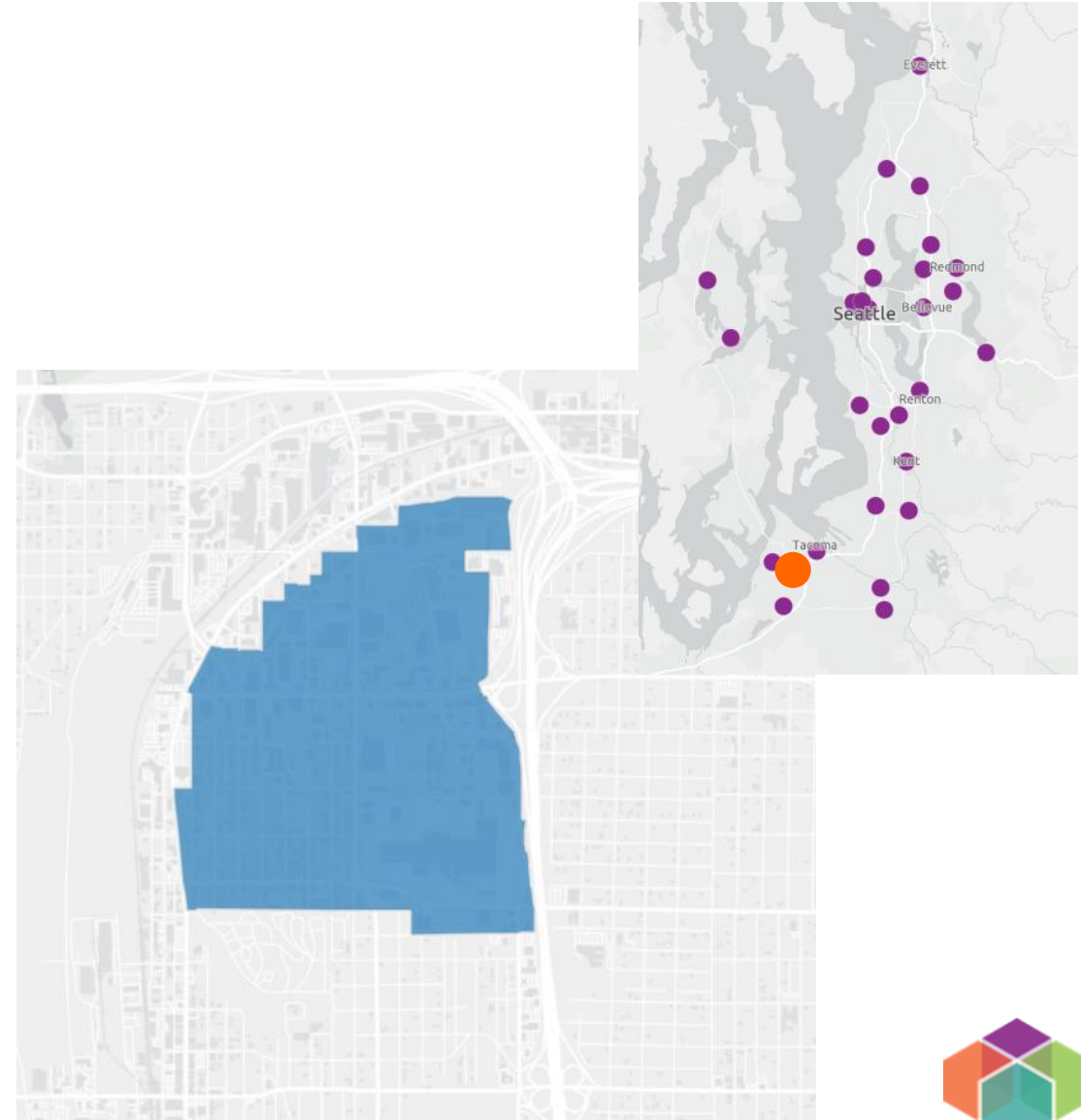


Regional Growth Center: Tacoma Mall

Urban Growth Center

- ✓ Current Density: 30 people per acre
6,480 residents | 10,950 jobs
- ✓ Planning Target: 49 people per acre
- ✓ Recent growth: 9 more people per acre since 2010
- ✓ Size: 575 acres
- ✓ Meets criteria for mix of uses, transit service

Recommend redesignation as an urban growth center



Questions?

- Questions or feedback on the criteria or certification reports?
- Additional information needed to make decisions?





Thank You!

Liz Underwood-Bultmann, AICP

Principal Planner

LUnderwood-Bultmann@psrc.org

Nancy Ferber, AICP

Senior Planner

NFerber@psrc.org



Puget Sound Regional Council