

Kent MIC

Incorporated in 1890, downtown Kent has its roots as a small commercial center catering to the local farming and forestry economy. Over time, the surrounding area experienced a succession of agricultural phases, from early hop and dairy production, to small truck farms just prior to World War II. Commercial logging was also important in the late nineteenth century, with the Kent Lumber Company and other sawmills clearing and processing timber from East and West Hill forests. Transportation improvements, including heavy rail lines, the Seattle-Tacoma Interurban Rail Line, and hard-surfaced roadways for automobiles, encouraged the growth of new businesses and residents throughout the Kent Valley and on its surrounding hillsides. By the 1960s, valley lands had become highly attractive to industrial developers due to the flat terrain, the availability of transportation, and the proximity to Seattle, Tacoma, and SeaTac Airport. By the 1970s, warehousing and distribution had become increasingly important as part of Kent’s industrial development. In the past few decades, Kent has been transformed from a small, primarily residential and agricultural community into an employment and population center for south King County.

The Kent MIC is located in the Kent Valley just north of downtown Kent. The center is generally bounded by SR-167 (Valley Freeway) on the east and south, SW 43rd Street on the north, and West Valley Highway on the west. The Kent MIC is part of a larger industrial area known as the Kent North Valley Industrial Area. The Kent MIC (covering 1,970 acres) comprises about the eastern half of the Kent North Valley Industrial Area. The Kent MIC is planned and zoned for more intense development than the remainder of the larger Kent industrial area. The Boeing Company is a major property owner and business presence on industrial lands immediately west of the Kent MIC. Boeing’s Kent Space Center and Pacific Gateway Business Park are located just across West Valley Highway. The center is also adjacent to the Green River Natural Resource Area.

Acreage, Density & Mix of Activity

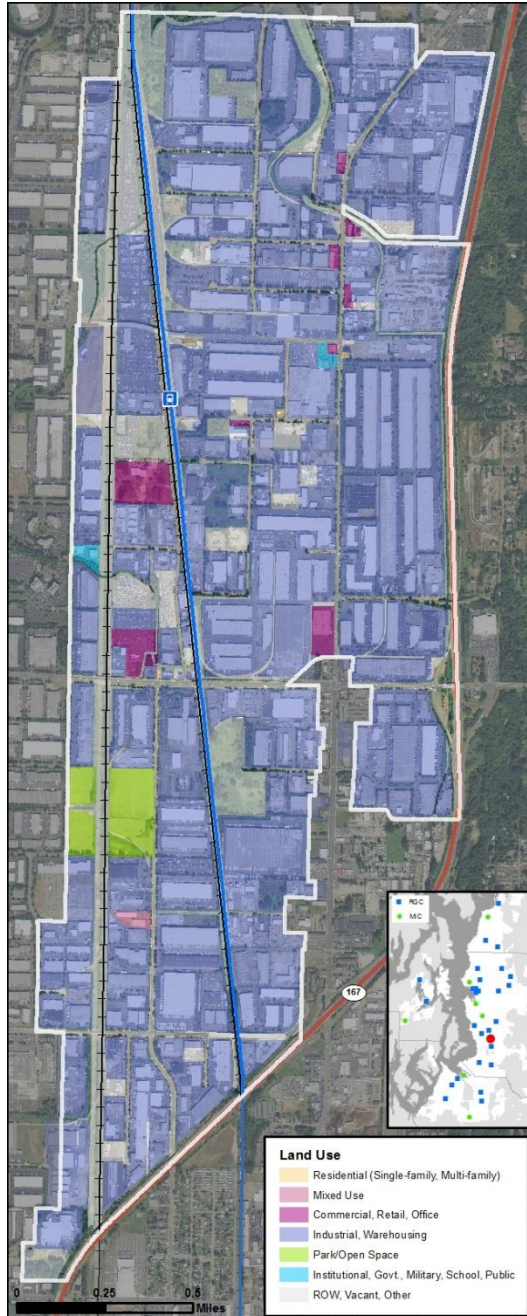
The Kent MIC is a smaller regional manufacturing/industrial center in terms of total gross acreage (1,970 acres) with a net developable acreage of 1,685 acres (86% of gross acres). In terms of its role in the city, the Kent MIC contains 11 percent of the city's overall land area, 0.5 percent of the population, 2 percent of the housing, and 24.9 percent of the city's employment. Compared to centers as a whole, Kent MIC has medium number of total activity units (15,488), a larger number of jobs (15,046 total jobs), and is almost fully employment-oriented (97% jobs/3% residents). At 7.9 activity units per acre, Kent MIC is comparable to the 8.1 average for manufacturing/industrial centers.

2010 Summary Statistics

Land use	
Gross acreage	1,970
Average block size (acres)	33.9
Average parcel size (acres)	4.6
Mix of uses	
Population/Employee ratio	.3 : 10
Population	
Total population	442
Change (2000–2010)	272
Housing	
Total housing units	199
Change (2000–2010)	139
Employment	
Total employment	15,046
Change (2000–2010)	-1,127
Transportation	
Employee access to transit	35%
Work-based mode share	
SOV / HOV	85% • 9%
Walk & Bike / Transit	1% • 5%

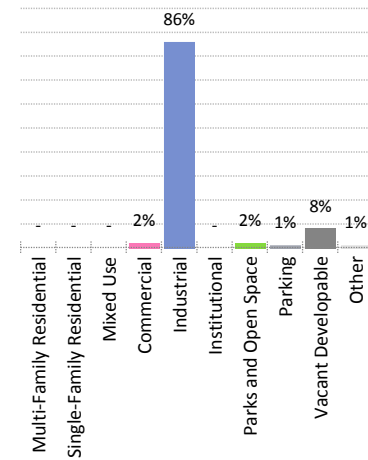
Land Use & Urban Form

The major land use in the Kent MIC is industrial (86%); the remaining parcels are largely vacant developable (8%). About 88 percent of the center's 1,685 net acres are in employment-related use. Kent MIC's average parcel size is 4.6 acres, which is smaller than the average 7.0-acre size for manufacturing/industrial centers. The center's average block size is 33.9 acres, smaller than the average 55.4-acre size among manufacturing/industrial centers. Kent MIC has a moderate network of sidewalks (69% coverage).



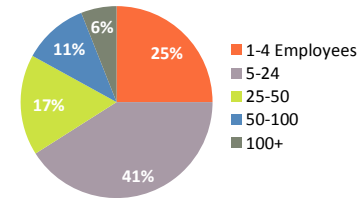
Current Land Use

(1,685 net acres)



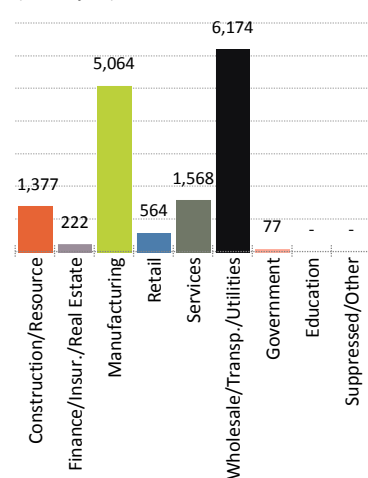
Size of Businesses

(459 workplaces)



Jobs by Sector

(15,046 jobs)



Population

The total population in Kent MIC is 442, and it has grown by 272 residents over the past 10 years.

Employment

The total employment in Kent MIC is 15,046, a decrease of 1,127 jobs over the past 10 years. The major industry sectors are Wholesale, Transportation & Utilities (41%), Manufacturing (34%), Services (10%) and Construction & Resources (9%). Of the total number of jobs, the vast majority (84%) are in 'goods dependent' industries that are typically appropriate for regional manufacturing/industrial centers. Some of the largest employers in the center are Hexcel, Oberto Sausages, and Mikron Industries.

Housing

Kent MIC has 199 total housing units, with a density of 0.1 housing units per gross acre. Over the past 10 years, housing has grown by 139 units (231% increase).

Transportation

For work-based trips, the Kent MIC's travel characteristics are somewhat different from the region as a whole, with more single-occupant vehicle (SOV) and fewer transit trips. The region's SOV share is 76 percent, while the center's share is 85 percent. The region's non-SOV mode share is 24 percent, with 10 percent in transit and 5 percent in walk/bike. The center's non-SOV share is 15 percent, with 5 percent in transit and 1 percent in walk/bike. The total daily trips from Kent are moderately focused on destinations in regional centers (18% of all trips); this includes trips that stay within the center (4%) and trips that go to other centers (14%).

In terms of employee access to transit, Kent has limited access, with 35 percent of employees within a 1/4 mile walk to a transit stop. For the 1/2 mile walkshed, the center has significant levels of employee access to transit (86%).

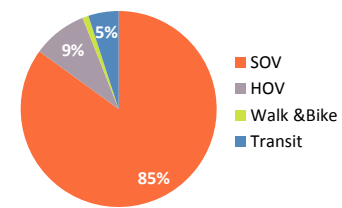
Plan Overview & Comparison to Center Plan Checklist

The city's primary center planning document was reviewed to evaluate the extent to which the plan addresses topics in the PSRC Regional Center Plan Checklist. This policy-level review of the current plan is intended both to provide preliminary assessment of consistency of the plan with center guidelines and to evaluate the Regional Centers Checklist for any potential improvements.

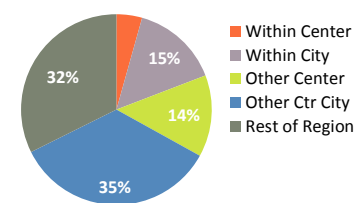
Policies specific to Kent's MIC are contained in Kent's 2004 Comprehensive Plan. Although the citywide plan has policies to guide development in the center, Kent does not have a specific element for its manufacturing/industrial center. The comprehensive plan establishes goals for Kent's manufacturing/industrial center in many of its elements. Kent has a good deal of industrial land, and the most intensive industrial uses are designated to occur in the MIC. In the absence of policies specific to the MIC, policies specific to industrial lands were reviewed, as they would be applicable to the industrial lands within the MIC.

Several of the Regional Manufacturing/Industrial Center Plan Checklist items are addressed through policies in the plan. The comprehensive plan does not contain a vision specific to the MIC, but it does state that Kent, as a primary goal, will "preserve a portion of the Valley Floor Industrial Area as a

Mode Shares



Trip Destinations



Manufacturing/Industrial Center for manufacturing and related land uses.” The MIC is designated by a land use category in the plan’s land use map, and contains only industrial zoning. The plan seeks to protect industrial uses from infringing commercial use, allowing only smaller scale retail intended to serve employees in the center. The plan notes that a majority of employment in Kent is within warehousing and manufacturing, and maintains that an adequate supply of land is provided to sustain these sectors for at least 20 years. The plan frames the existence of the center well within the region’s industrial context, noting how the MIC capitalizes on placement between the Ports and airport, and connections to freight corridors, both road and rail. The transportation element calls for addressing rail and road conflict through grade separation as much as possible. Addressing freight movement is a key goal of the transportation element. The plan proposes many strategies to preserve and attract industrial employers to the MIC including a programmatic EIS, priority permitting for industrial redevelopment, and connecting local schools with businesses and tradespeople.

Very few elements on the Regional Manufacturing/Industrial Center Plan Checklist were unaddressed, but some items could be strengthened through a dedicated MIC plan element. Public utilities in the MIC were addressed very broadly, and more detail on financing and specific improvements to public services could be provided. Economic development could include a more nuanced discussion of sectors within the MIC, and how it compares to the city, county, and region overall, as well as targets specific to the MIC and a market analysis of development potential. Most transportation checklist items are addressed, though the next center plan update should address mode split goals and a discussion of high capacity transit service.

Planning Challenges & Implementation Strategies

As noted by the city in its June 2012 presentation to the Growth Management Policy Board, the Kent MIC’s challenges include reduced tax revenue from the Streamlined Sales Tax, identifying funding for infrastructure improvements, maintaining integrity of freight corridors, and providing workforce education and training aligned with industry needs. The city identified several environmental issues, including hazardous facilities, increased environmental & permitting requirements, and floodplain regulations.

The city sees significant assets in the center, including large parcels to accommodate large users, available land, access to major freight corridors, and continued diversification of industry in the center.