

# Puyallup Downtown

Incorporated in 1890, Puyallup is the third largest city in Pierce County. With a 2010 population of 37,022 residents, the city is home to two designated regional growth centers: Downtown and South Hill. Since its early days as a commercial center for the surrounding agricultural community, much of the recent 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.

The Downtown Puyallup regional growth center includes much of the historic downtown area. Downtown Puyallup has a “main street” feel, characterized by narrow streets, historic buildings, small blocks, a mix of older homes, and transitioning commercial land uses. The city hall, public library, senior activity center, Puyallup Sounder station, historic Meeker Mansion and a city park are located in the Downtown regional growth center. Immediately south of the Downtown Puyallup regional growth center are the Western Washington Fairgrounds. Most blocks currently contain a mix of residential, commercial, and institutional uses, and the many historic buildings along Meridian Street also have a mix of uses.

Historically, downtown Puyallup has served as the city’s business, cultural, and government focal point. This status has been diminished by commercial and office growth on the periphery of the city, especially in the South Hill area. While many businesses remain, the downtown area has seen a decline in investment and property maintenance. One of the city’s goals is to retain downtown as the community focal point by improving streetscapes, attracting new businesses, preserving and reusing historic buildings, and making investments in transportation, civic, and cultural facilities.

## Acreage, Density & Mix of Activity

Puyallup Downtown is one of the smallest regional growth centers in terms of total gross acreage (215 acres) with a net developable acreage of 147 acres (68% of gross acres). In terms of its role in the city overall, Puyallup Downtown contains 2 percent of the city's land area, 3 percent of the population, 4 percent of the housing, and 11 percent of the employment. Compared to centers as a whole, Puyallup Downtown has among the smallest number of total activity units (3,464), with mostly employment-oriented activity (64% jobs/36% residents) and moderately-low density of activity (16.1 units per gross acre).

## Urban Form

Puyallup Downtown's average parcel size is 0.2 acres, which is significantly smaller than the average size for growth centers. Puyallup

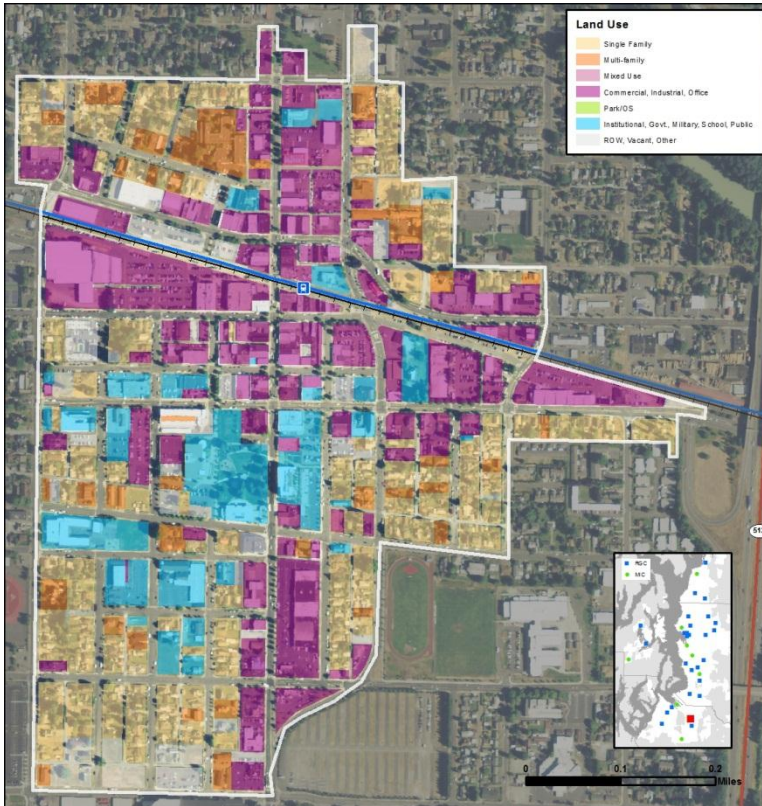
## 2010 Summary Statistics

Land Use	
Gross acreage	215
Average block size (acres)	3.6
Average parcel size (acres)	0.2
Mix of Uses	
Population/Employee ratio	.56 : 1
Population+Employee/acre	16.1
Population	
Total population	1,245
Population density/acre	5.8
Change (2000–2010)	67
Housing	
Total housing units	669
Housing unit density/acre	3.1
Change (2000–2010)	74
Employment	
Total employment	2,219
Employment density/acre	10.3
Change (2000–2010)	207
Transportation	
Housing access to transit	88%
Employee access to transit	96%
Work-based mode share	
SOV / HOV	83% • 9%
Walk & Bike / Transit	3% • 5%

## Urban Amenities

Food & Drink	
Restaurants	20
Grocery	3
Cafes & Bars	6
Home Supplies & Services	
Pet Supplies	1
Laundry & Haircuts	9
Home supplies	1
Clothing & Shoes	2
Banks	7
Arts & Recreation	
Spectator Sports	-
Fitness & Outdoors	-
Electronics & Toys	-
Bookstores & Libraries	-
Arts & Culture	-
Public & Civic Services	
Social Services	6
Schools & Childcare	3
Police, Fire, Postal, City Hall	3
Pharmacy	1
Healthcare	19
Residential Care Centers	2

Downtown provides a walkable pedestrian environment, with a complete network of sidewalks (98% coverage) and small blocks with a 3.6-acre average size. The presence of amenities is an important aspect of urban form. Puyallup Downtown has a limited set of urban amenities (83 total amenities / 0.39 amenities per gross acre). Food/Drink (39%) and Public/Civic Services (38%) represent the largest amenity categories, with specific concentrations in Restaurants and Healthcare.



### Land Use

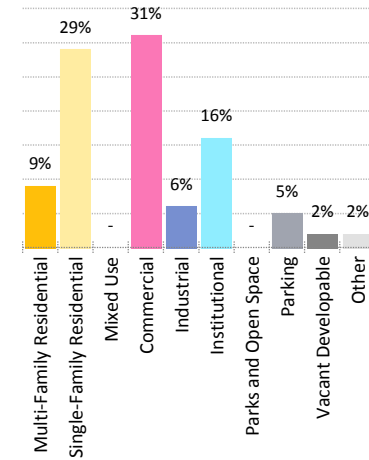
Puyallup Downtown contains a diverse set of current land uses that are evenly distributed between commercial/industrial (37%) and residential (38%) in terms of total net land area. The major land uses are commercial (31%), single-family residential (29%), institutional (16%) and multi-family residential (9%).

### Demographics

The total population in Puyallup Downtown is 1,245, and grew by 67 residents from 2000 to 2010. The center has slightly older age profile than the region as a whole, with a high share of youth (21%) and among the highest shares of seniors (19%). The age range of residents is predominantly 35-64, followed by 18-34 (60% for both age groups combined). At just 14 percent, Puyallup Downtown's racial diversity is significantly lower than the region's 27 percent share of non-white residents. The groups with the highest shares in Puyallup Downtown

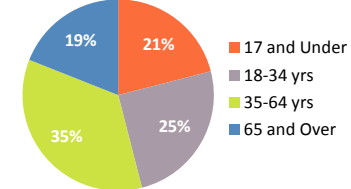
### Current Land Use

(147 net acres)



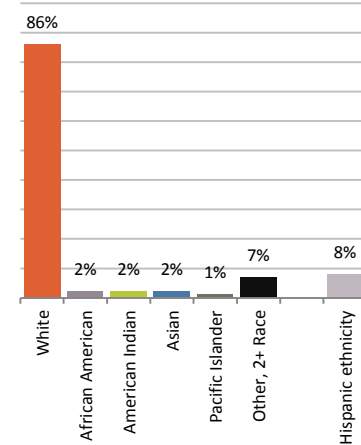
### Age of Residents

(1,245 residents)



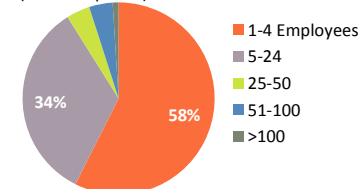
### Racial/Ethnic Composition

(1,245 residents)



### Size of Businesses

(200 workplaces)



are White (86%), Other (7%), and Asian/Pacific Islander (3%). Eight percent of residents identify as Hispanic.

### Employment

The total employment in Puyallup Downtown is 2,219, increasing by 207 jobs from 2000 to 2010. The major industry sectors are Services (57%) and Government (15%). Some of the largest employers in this center are the City of Puyallup and the Puyallup School District. Downtown also includes restaurant, retail and office employment.

### Housing

Puyallup Downtown has 669 total housing units, with a density of 3.1 housing units per gross acre. From 2000 to 2010, housing has increased by 74 units (12% increase). Based on Census Block Group data, Puyallup Downtown has a very large share (69%) of single family and 2- to 4- unit multifamily dwellings and a moderate share of 5- to 19- and 20+ unit multifamily (32%). In terms of unit affordability, Puyallup Downtown's owner-occupied housing tends to be significantly less expensive than the region as a whole (based on Census Block Group data). The center's share of units under \$300,000 is 85 percent, whereas the region's share is 38 percent. The center's share of units over \$500,000 is 0 percent, whereas the region's is 25 percent.

### Transportation

For work-based trips, the Puyallup Downtown regional center'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 83 percent. The region's non-SOV share is 24 percent, with 10 percent in transit and 5 percent in walk/bike. The center's non-SOV share is 17 percent, with 5 percent in transit and 3 percent in walk/bike. Total daily trips from Puyallup Downtown are highly focused on destinations in regional centers (26 percent of all trips); this includes trips that stay within the center (15%) and trips that go to other centers (11%).

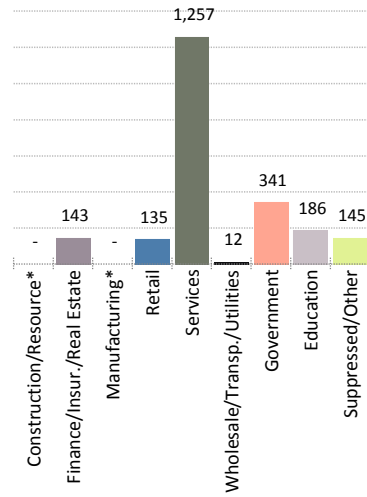
In terms of employee access to transit, Puyallup Downtown has nearly complete access, with 96 percent of employees within a 1/4 mile walk of transit. For residential, Puyallup Downtown has very good access, with 88 percent of housing units within a 1/4 mile walk. For the 1/2 mile walkshed, the center has complete levels of residential access to transit (100%).

### Plan Overview

Puyallup's Downtown Revitalization element is a chapter in the city's comprehensive plan, first developed for its 1994 plan and most recently updated in 2009. The element focuses on transformation of the center from primarily commercial and auto-oriented center to a livable, mixed-use area with housing choices and neighborhood services.

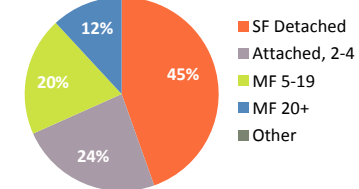
### Jobs by Sector

(2,219 jobs)



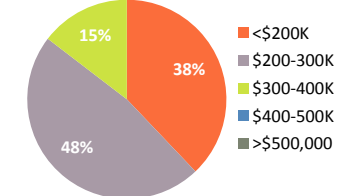
### Housing Units by Type

(2,293 units)

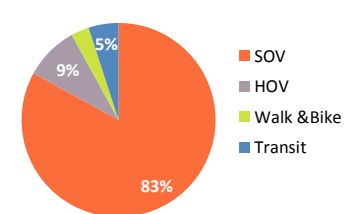


### Value of Owner-Occupied Units

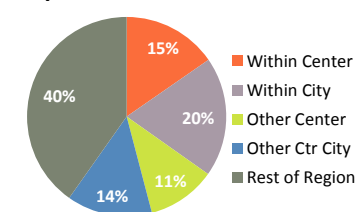
(745 units)



### Mode Shares



### Trip Destinations



The element includes an overview of existing conditions, design concepts and development issues, including land uses and transportation circulation and parking.

The element provides extensive detail on use of Local Infrastructure Financing Tool (LIFT) funding for redevelopment in the center. Most of the downtown regional growth center is located in the LIFT redevelopment area. The plan states that LIFT funding will be used to transform 10 publicly owned surface parking lots into mixed-use, transit-oriented developments, develop structured parking to accommodate Puyallup Sounder train commuters, increase stormwater capacity in the downtown area, increase mobility between downtown and South Hill through development of bus rapid transit service.

### **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.

Many aspects of the Regional Growth Center Plan Checklist are well addressed by the plan element. The element acknowledges the role of downtown as a regional growth center and includes a policy to monitor activity units to achieve regional objectives for density in the center. A description of parks, open spaces and civic use is provided, along with policies to continue providing open space downtown. A map of the center is included along with a narrative description of the mix, distribution and location of uses. The element addresses design standards to promote pedestrian-friendly, transit-oriented development and addresses most Transportation 2040 Physical Design Guidelines. Policies are included that address supporting a multimodal transportation network, coordination with transit agencies, and managing parking downtown.

The plan addresses many of the existing expectations of the Regional Growth Center Plan Checklist, though there are aspects that the element does not address or that could be strengthened in future updates. Residential and employment growth targets and mode split goals have not yet been incorporated into the plan. While the plan emphasizing economic activity downtown, the plan doesn't yet include a detailed discussion of the economic role of the center and key sectors or clusters. The plan includes some environmental policies, but doesn't yet include policies addressing air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, and stormwater. Discussion of housing is limited, and could be strengthened with discussion of implementation strategies and monitoring. Finally, the subarea plan does not specifically deal with capital facilities and their financing.

### **Planning Challenges**

As noted by the city in its May 2010 presentation to the Growth Management Policy Board, as well as a 2011 survey, the Puyallup Downtown center's challenges include limited redevelopment potential, parking issues related to the Sounder station, limited development incentives, lack of market demand and fragmented parcel ownership. The city also identified undersupply of parking, few transportation alternatives, and community and political resistance as barriers to achieving their vision for the center.

Puyallup has employed strategies to address challenges and plan for the success of its Downtown center. Incentives and investments include enabling Multifamily Tax Exemption within the center, and investments with the Local Infrastructure Financing Tool (LIFT) grant, awarded in 2008. Puyallup received a \$1.5 million appropriation from the State Capital Budget to complete infrastructure improvements related to transit-oriented development on and around city-owned property on 3rd St SW. In addition, the city continues to coordinate with Sound Transit on their Station Access Study and investment planning.