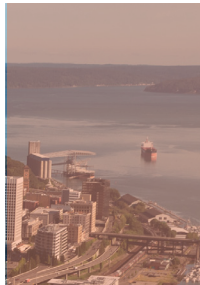
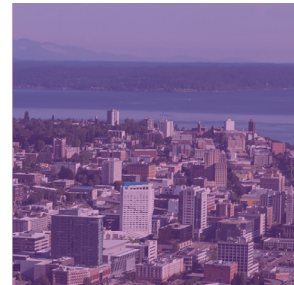


Regional Centers System Monitoring Report

October 2025



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Executive Summary

VISION 2050 focuses future growth into dense, walkable, mixed-use areas called **regional growth centers**, as well as into dense concentrations of employment called **regional manufacturing/industrial centers**. Designated regional centers have served a critical role in the region's planning for the past 30 years.

The entire region benefits from focusing growth and providing connections to and between central places. A limited number of regional centers are formally designated by PSRC to accommodate a significant share of the region's growth and serve as key destinations for transit and hubs for services and infrastructure.

In 2018, PSRC's Executive Board adopted the [Regional Centers Framework](#) to identify consistent criteria for regional centers. The framework includes performance measures to track outcomes of centers over time, guidance on planning for centers and the process for existing regional centers to meet the required criteria.

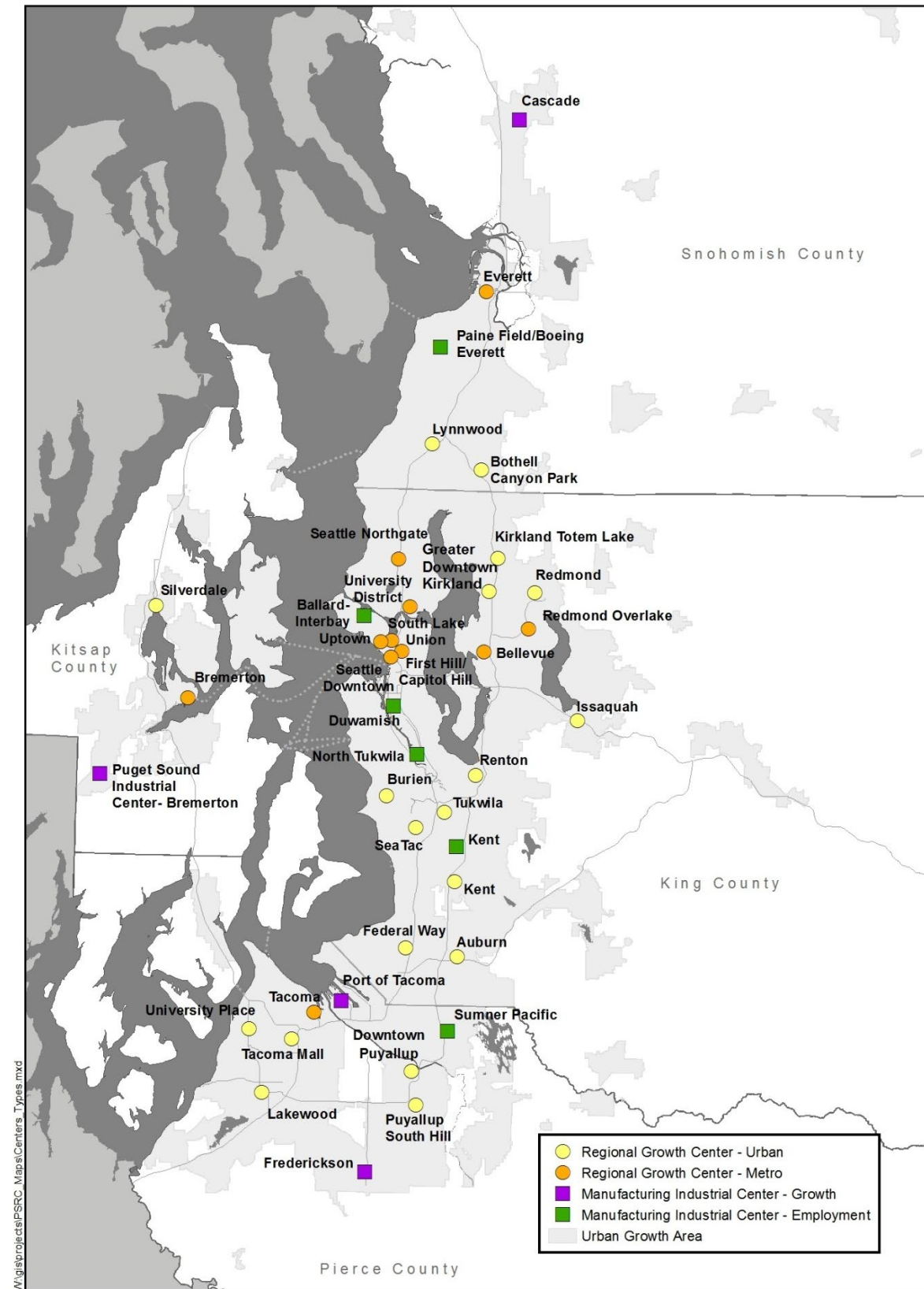
This system monitoring report focuses on the overall performance of regional centers. The monitoring process evaluates how the region's system of centers meets regional objectives. This report informs the process in 2025 to redesignate existing centers and considers future updates to the framework.

Based on the adopted project scope, this report explores the following questions:

- Is the region achieving desired outcomes from the system?
- Does the region have the right number of centers?
- Are any changes needed to the Regional Centers Framework or in future updates to VISION 2050 to better achieve the desired outcomes for centers?



Map 1: Regional Growth Centers and Manufacturing/Industrial Centers



Key Findings

There are many ways to measure how the region's system of centers is performing, including growth rates, transportation investments, travel behavior and affordability. This report offers findings on overall system performance and additional detail by center type and by county. These measures reveal significant differences across the system.

Growth

Overall, regional centers are growing and have significant capacity for future growth.

Although they make up less than 3% of the urban growth area, regional growth centers contain 8% of urban residents and 35% of regional employment. That said, significant recent growth is concentrated in a relatively small number of centers, and regional centers have performed unevenly during this time period. In particular, the larger metro growth centers have grown much more rapidly than the lower-density urban growth centers.

- Regional growth centers have significant capacity for population and employment growth, which should set them up well for future opportunities. VISION 2050 establishes a goal of accommodating 65% of regional population growth and 75% of employment growth in centers and high-capacity transit areas. Increasing rates of growth in urban growth centers would make it more likely for the region to achieve the goals for regional growth centers.
 - A straightline projection of recent growth trends shows regional growth centers accommodating 27% of the region's anticipated population growth. Other high-capacity transit areas could accommodate 38% of the region's growth based on recent trends, potentially achieving the region's goal of 65% of population growth in these areas.
- Growth trends are shifting the balance of population and employment in regional growth centers. Regional growth centers have long been major employment centers with a smaller population base. Since 2010, 25% of the region's housing development has been in regional growth centers. Encouraging residential growth in regional growth centers is essential for achieving the [Regional Growth Strategy](#).
- Regional growth centers with strong recent population gains are accommodating a significant share of growth within their jurisdictions. To



achieve the Regional Growth Strategy, a larger share of citywide growth will need to occur in regional growth centers, particularly in urban growth centers.

- Population growth in manufacturing/industrial centers (MICs) continues. While population growth in MICs is discouraged in regional policy and criteria, it is not prohibited outright.
- Countywide centers show an important opportunity to capture new growth while recognizing the role of smaller centers. Countywide centers show very promising data on overall density. When compared to urban growth centers, many are smaller in overall area but comparable in density.

Mobility

Overall, residents of regional growth centers have good access to high-capacity transit and drive alone to work at almost half the rate of residents of the rest of the region. However, this varies significantly by center type and location, with 26% of metro growth center residents driving alone to work, compared to 60% of urban growth center residents. Shifting towards more transit, walk and bike trips is critical for regional growth centers to support the region's mobility goals.

MICs continue to be active hubs for freight, though their workers have fewer transportation options and drive alone to work at higher rates than other workers in the region.

Metro growth centers are major commute locations and have significant transit, walk and bike trips. Urban growth centers have drive-alone rates lower than the rest of the region and more than double the share of walk trips when compared to the rest of the region. Compared to metro growth centers, urban growth centers provide lower access to transit overall.

Environment and Public Health

Overall, residents of regional growth centers have better access to parks, drive fewer miles and have a low risk of vulnerability to climate change impacts. However, some centers have elevated levels of air pollution when compared to the rest of the region, and residents of many centers experience worse health outcomes than the rest of the region. Health outcomes and risk factors are the result of a variety of social, economic and environmental conditions and will be critical to monitor going forward.



Data indicate potential challenges for some regional growth centers with higher exposure to air pollution, worse health outcomes and less walkable environments. Centers with higher access to opportunity and more positive quality of life indicators are seeing higher levels of growth.

Housing, Equity and Opportunity

Regional growth centers are critical for providing housing and opportunity to the region's residents. Centers are home to a large share of young adults and racially and ethnically diverse communities. Housing in regional growth centers is primarily large, multifamily buildings. Rent for the average one-bedroom apartment is more expensive than equivalent units outside of centers, but cost burden rates are similar to the region overall. While regional growth centers provide significant access to opportunity, they also include many neighborhoods with higher risk of displacement. Regional growth centers have a higher share of income-restricted housing units than the rest of the region.

Economic Development

Regional growth centers serve as important regional destinations within the region for both commute and non-work trips. More than half of all jobs in regional growth centers are service-sector jobs. Centers also have high concentrations of employment in other key sectors, such as Government and Finance, Insurance and Real Estate. Manufacturing/industrial centers continue to represent a significant share of industrial jobs and industrial land in the region.

Policy Considerations

Regional centers continue to be a lynchpin of the Regional Growth Strategy for sustained and concentrated investment in infrastructure, economic development and planning resources.

The Regional Centers Framework established criteria and planning expectations to ensure regional centers are developing as active and connected communities with sufficient market potential to accommodate new jobs and residents. Following review of existing regional centers in 2025, PSRC's boards will consider changes to the requirements and process for regional centers.

As PSRC evaluates the current system of regional centers and looks towards the designation of additional centers, planners and policymakers at the regional and



local levels should consider the opportunities to improve planning and other requirements to keep the region’s vision in focus.

The Policy Considerations section outlines potential policy areas to review for future updates to the Regional Centers Framework. These include topics such as growth expectations, density requirements, role of countywide centers, housing affordability, quality of life indicators and mobility goals.

Looking for more data on regional centers?

PSRC’s [Regional Centers Dashboard](#) includes profiles for all regional centers, including data on demographics, employment, housing, transportation and urban form.



Introduction

The entire region benefits from focusing growth and providing connections to and between central places. A limited number of regional centers are formally designated by PSRC to accommodate a significant share of the region's growth and serve as key destinations for transit and hubs for services and infrastructure. PSRC's Regional Centers Framework has refined the types and expectations of regional centers.

Regional growth centers are locations characterized by compact, pedestrian-oriented development, with a mix of office, commercial, civic, entertainment and residential uses. Regional growth centers are major focal points of higher-density population and employment, served with efficient multimodal transportation infrastructure and services. The Regional Centers Framework establishes two types of regional growth centers—**metro growth centers** and **urban growth centers**—and sets criteria and growth expectations for them. Metro growth centers are the densest and most connected places in the region and are expected to accommodate higher levels of growth.

PSRC also designates **manufacturing/industrial centers**. These are existing employment areas with intensive, concentrated manufacturing and industrial land uses that cannot be easily mixed with other activities. Manufacturing/industrial centers will continue to accommodate a significant amount of regional employment. The Regional Centers Framework establishes two types of regional manufacturing/industrial centers—**industrial employment centers** and **industrial growth centers**—and establishes different criteria and growth expectations for these centers. Unlike regional growth centers, these areas are not appropriate for residential growth.

Together, regional growth centers and manufacturing/industrial centers represent a small share of the region's land but contain a significant share of the region's employment and, in growth centers, the region's population and housing. The Regional Growth Strategy supports strengthening and revitalizing these existing regional growth centers, as well as encouraging development in smaller-scale centers in all municipalities.



Report Structure

Based on the adopted project scope, this report seeks to explore the following questions:

- Is the region achieving desired outcomes for centers?
- Does the region have the right number of centers?
- Are any changes needed to the Regional Centers Framework or in future updates to VISION 2050 to better achieve the desired outcomes for centers?

Expanding on the region's growth goals focused on centers, the Regional Centers Framework identifies several objectives for centers. These objectives have been summarized below:

- **Growth.** Centers attract robust population and employment growth—a significant and increasing share of the region's overall growth.
- **Mobility.** Centers provide diverse mobility options so that people who live and work in centers have alternatives to driving alone.
- **Environment and Public Health.** Centers create safe, clean, livable, complete and healthy communities that promote physical, mental and social well-being. Centers provide access to urban open spaces, mitigate climate change impacts and reduce greenhouse gas emissions for residents and the region.
- **Housing, Equity and Opportunity.** Regional growth centers offer high access to opportunity, including affordable housing choices and access to jobs, for a diverse population.
- **Economic Development.** Centers help the region maintain a competitive economic edge by offering employers locations that are well-connected to a regional transportation network and are both attractive and accessible to workers.

This report follows the five objectives listed above. For each of these objectives, key data measures demonstrate how the entire system of centers is performing. Measures focus on both regional growth centers and manufacturing/industrial centers, and often include additional data based on center type and/or county.

Data in This Report

The data in this report come from a variety of sources. Because centers are small geographic areas that have varying amounts of population and job numbers, some data are unavailable, suppressed or have a high margin of error. Due to these



differences, different data sources are used when providing data for regional growth centers, which have a relatively large population base compared to manufacturing/industrial centers.

Similarly, many of these data sources are updated on an annual basis. At the time of data collection, the most recent available data source was used.

Jurisdictions around the central Puget Sound region have completed significant work to plan for growth out to 2044, including local planning efforts for regional centers. This monitoring report will be updated in 2026 to include these changes, which may include new growth targets and center boundaries. The 2026 update will also incorporate any changes to the list of regional centers following PSRC's redesignation process in 2025 and new data.



Growth

Objective: Centers attract robust population and employment growth—a significant and increasing share of the region’s overall growth.

Regional growth centers are designated to support future employment and population growth. Centers are at the heart of VISION 2050’s Regional Growth Strategy. With their concentration of people and/or jobs, centers form the backbone of the transportation network, allow cities and other urban service providers to maximize the use of existing infrastructure, make more efficient and less costly investments in new infrastructure and minimize the environmental impact of urban growth.

Policies adopted in VISION 2050 call for regional centers to accommodate a significant share of jurisdictional growth.

Questions to Explore:

- Are centers attracting the right growth?
- Are growth goals for centers achievable?

Key Findings for Regional Growth Centers:

Regional growth centers are envisioned to be compact places with a high-intensity mix of uses. VISION 2050 includes a goal for 65% of population and 75% of employment growth to be located in regional growth centers and near other areas with high-capacity transit.

- Although making up less than 3% of the urban growth area, regional growth centers contain 8% of urban population and 35% of regional employment.
- Growth in regional centers ranges from 0% of their respective jurisdiction’s growth since 2010, to over 50% of growth.
- A majority of centers surpass existing density requirements, and half of metro growth centers exceed minimum required planning targets today.
- Density in centers has been increasing since 2010, with a small number of centers responsible for a majority of that growth.
- Based on 2019 zoning data, regional growth centers have capacity for much more employment growth but have less capacity for residential growth to meet regional goals.



- Continuing recent trends, regional growth centers are on track for a significant share of VISION’s goal for job growth in centers and near high-capacity transit. Regional growth centers could accommodate 27% of the region’s growth share based on recent trends, while other high-capacity transit areas could accommodate 38% of the region’s population growth.

Key Findings for Manufacturing/Industrial Centers:

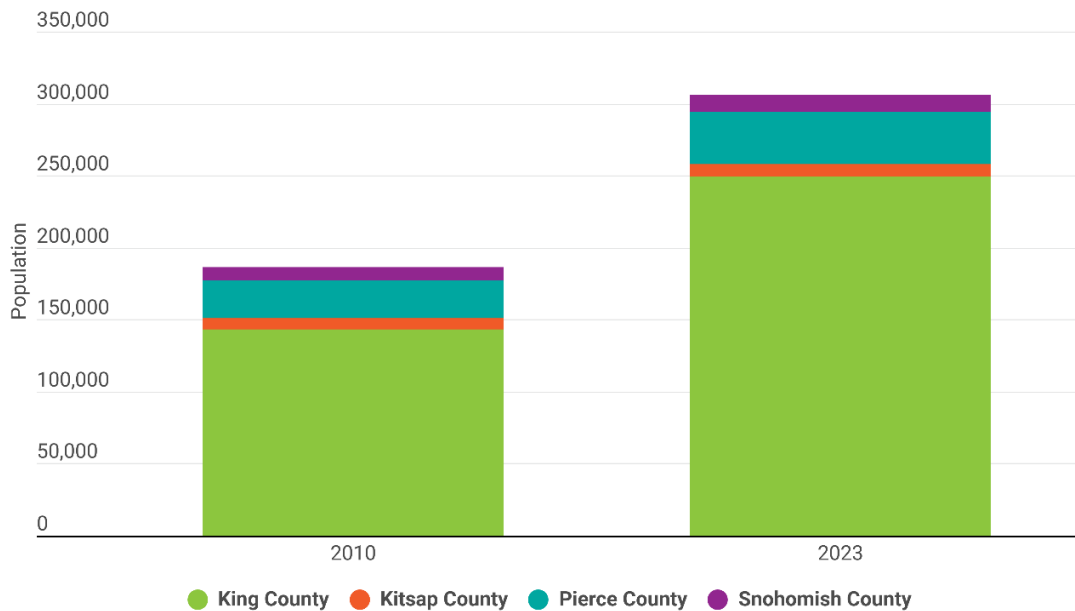
Manufacturing/industrial centers are intended to continue to accommodate a significant amount of regional employment and aren’t appropriate for residential growth.

- Manufacturing/industrial centers represent 5% of urban land area, capturing 11% of urban employment.
- Most manufacturing/industrial centers meet the existing jobs minimum criteria, and half of industrial employment centers exceed the planned jobs minimum.
- While less than 1% of the region’s population lives in manufacturing/industrial centers, these areas have increased in population by 39% since 2010.



Regional Growth Centers: Population Growth

Figure 1 – Regional Growth Center Population by County

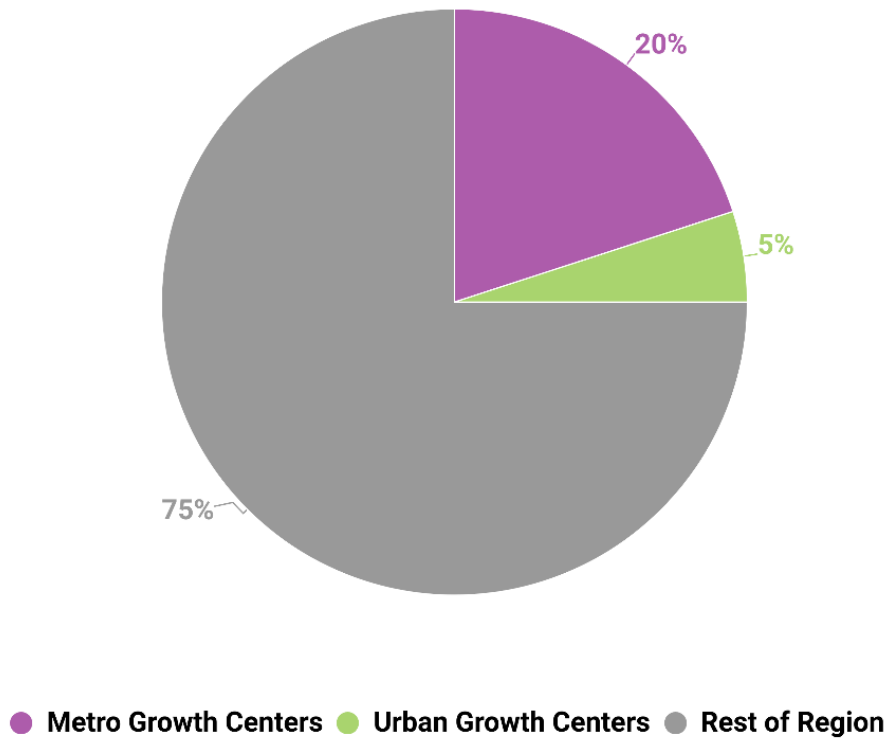


Source: Office of Financial Management Small Area Estimates Program: 2010, 2023; PSRC Parcel Estimates Program: 2010, 2023

Regional growth centers are home to 7% of residents in the region. In 2023, over 300,000 people lived in regional growth centers, up from 186,000 in 2010. Eighty-two percent of all residents of regional growth centers live in King County, and rates of growth (74%) have also been highest in King County since 2010. Population in metro growth centers grew at a higher rate (67%) than urban growth centers (56%), and both grew at a higher rate than the region (20%).



Figure 2 – Regional Growth Center Share of Housing Unit Growth

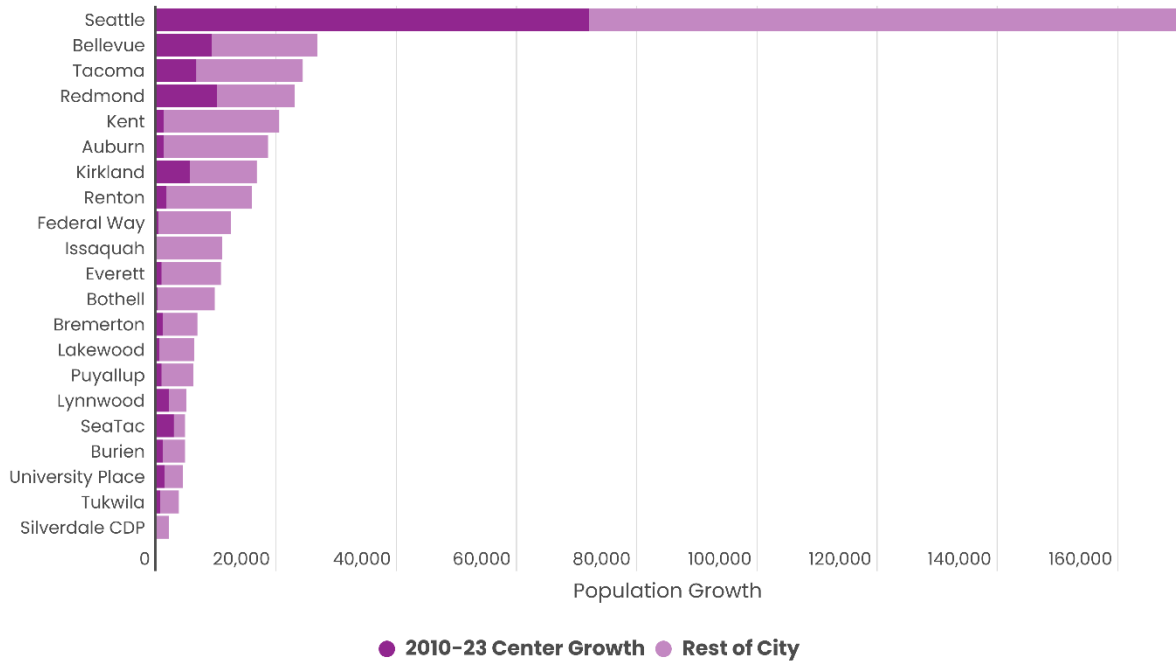


Source: Office of Financial Management Small Area Estimates Program: 2010, 2023; PSRC Parcel Estimates Program: 2010, 2023

There are 183,000 housing units in regional growth centers. Since 2010, 16% of the region's population and 25% of region's housing growth has been in regional growth centers. Over 140,000 of those units, or 20% of the region's housing growth, were in metro growth centers. Today, 10% of the region's housing units are in centers, and 84% of those units are in King County.



Figure 3 – Population Increase in Regional Growth Centers as a Share of Jurisdiction Growth

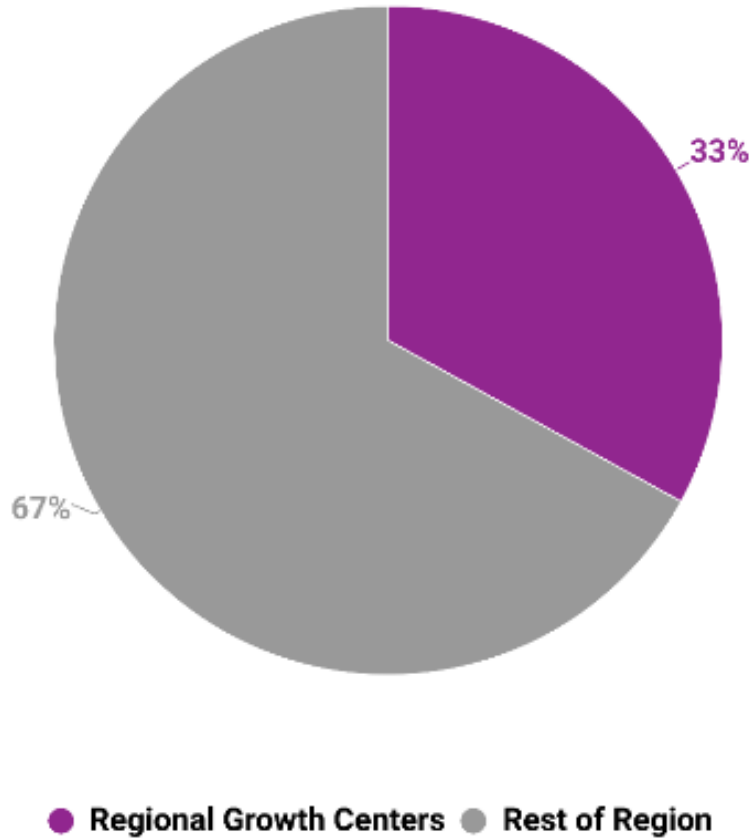


Source: OFM Small Area Estimates Program: 2010, 2023; PSRC Parcel Estimates Program: 2010, 2023

Cities in the central Puget Sound region have been growing at different rates for the past decade. Some cities, such as Seattle, Tacoma, Bellevue and Kent, have added over 20,000 people since 2010. Other cities with regional growth centers, such as Tukwila, University Place and Burien, have seen much less growth. The share of growth to regional centers has also differed widely. For example, 60% of growth since 2010 in SeaTac was in the center, while less than 5% of growth in Issaquah, Federal Way and the Silverdale urban area occurred in their centers.

Regional Growth Centers: Employment Growth¹

Figure 4 – Regional Growth Center Share of Regional Employment



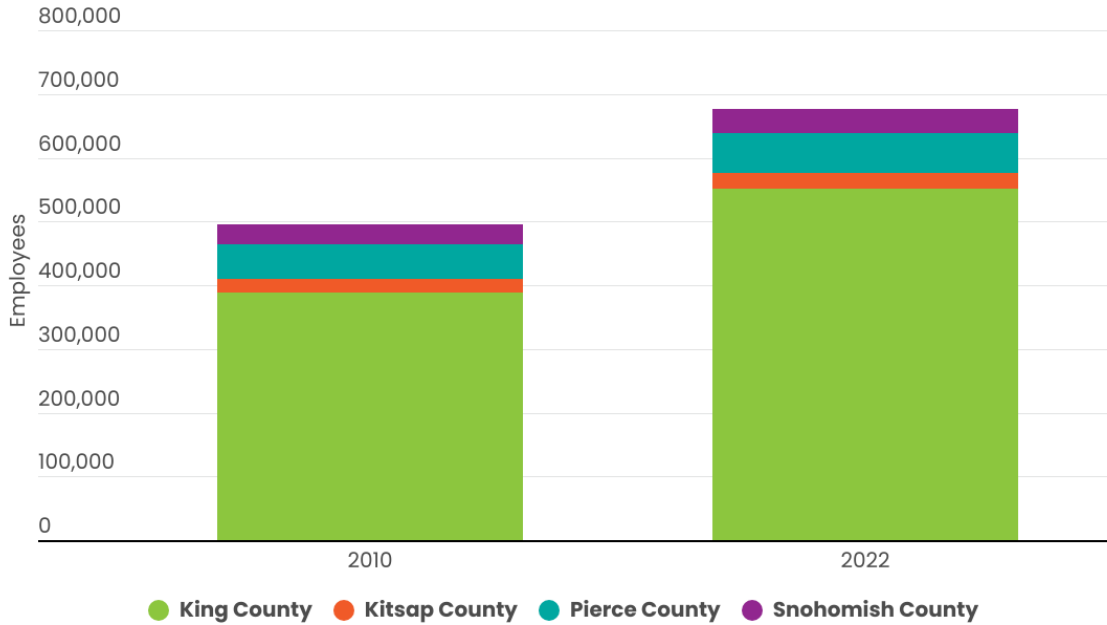
Source: PSRC Covered Employment: 2022

While population has increased in regional growth centers, these centers continue to be the region's primary job centers. In 2022, there were 700,000 jobs in regional growth centers, representing 33% of the region's jobs.

¹ PSRC Covered Employment data in this section excludes employee totals from the Redmond Overlake and Puyallup Downtown regional growth centers due to suppression.



Figure 5 – Regional Growth Center Employment by County



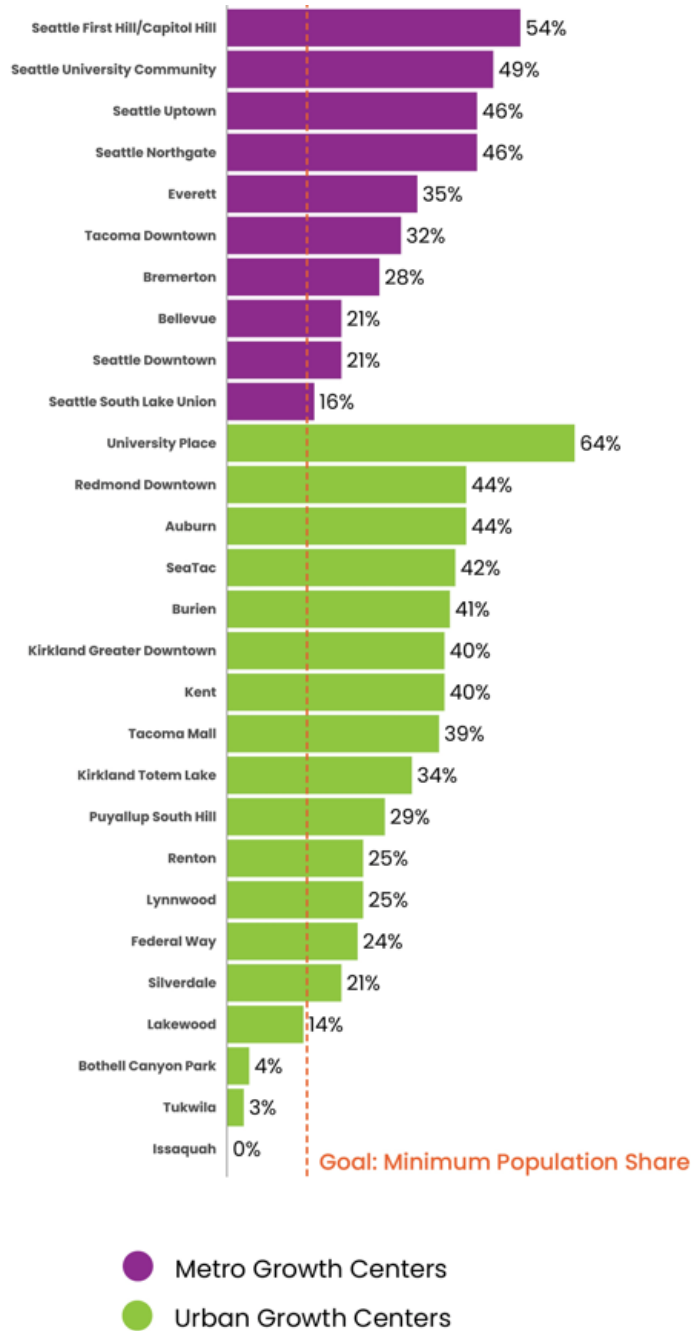
Source: PSRC Covered Employment: 2010, 2022

Over 185,000 jobs have been added to regional growth centers since 2010. King County centers are home to 81% of all regional growth center (RGC) jobs and have been growing at a much higher rate (29%) than centers in Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish counties since 2010. Metro RGCs represent 23% of regional jobs and are growing faster (30%) than Urban RGCs (19%).



Mix of Population and Jobs in Regional Growth Centers

Figure 6 – Residential Population Share in Regional Growth Centers



Source: Office of Financial Management Small Area Estimates Program: 2023; PSRC Parcel Estimates Program: 2023; PSRC Covered Employment: 2022



The Regional Centers Framework establishes criteria for regional growth centers to have a goal for a mix of residential and employment. Each center is required to plan for a minimum of at least 15% residential and 15% employment activity. Today, most centers meet these criteria, as measured by existing activity units. There are four urban growth centers with very low total population, including the Issaquah regional growth center, which has no residents.

Activity Units (People per Acre)

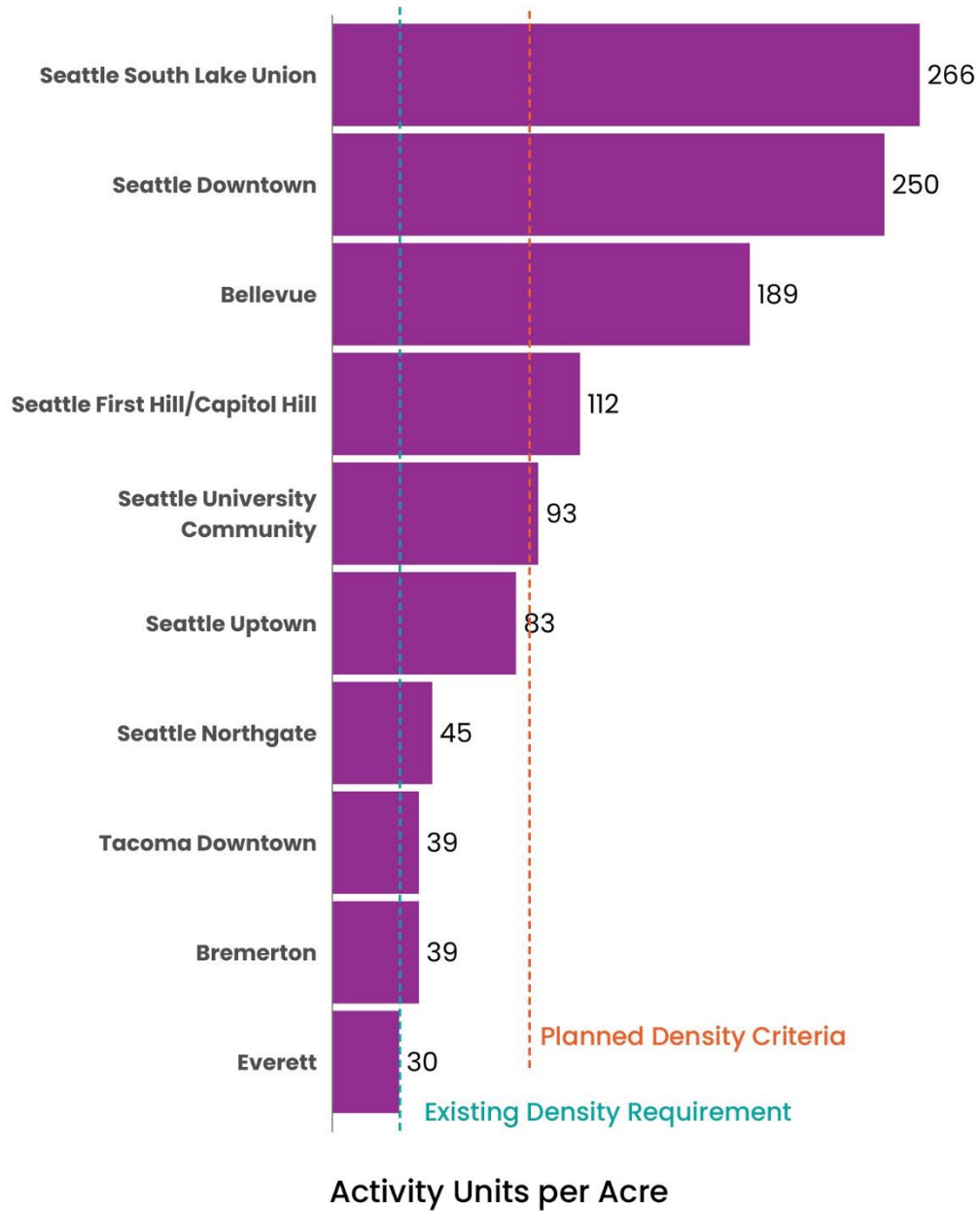
Activity units are a measure of total activity that combines the number of jobs and residents in an area. Activity unit density is calculated for regional growth centers by combining the total number of jobs and residents and dividing by gross acres.

The Regional Centers Framework requires minimum existing density for urban growth centers to be at least 18 activity units per acre, which is slightly less dense than downtown Kent (23 activity units per acre). Metro growth centers are required to have at least 30 activity units per acre, which is similar to the Tacoma Mall neighborhood.



Regional Growth Centers: Density

Figure 7 – Metro Growth Centers: Activity Units per Acre

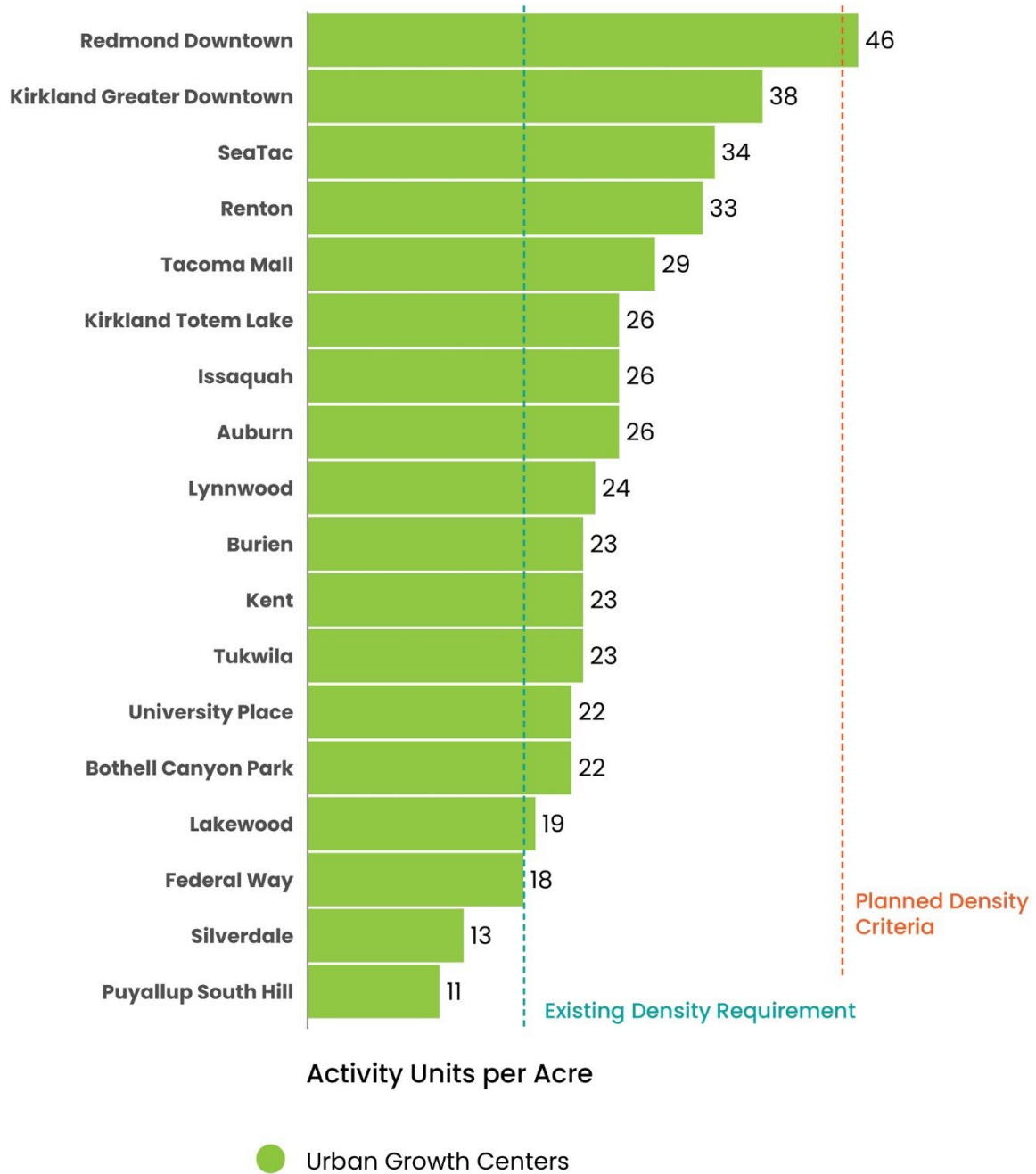


● Metro Growth Center

Source: Office of Financial Management Small Area Estimates Program: 2023; PSRC Parcel Estimates Program: 2023; PSRC Covered Employment: 2022



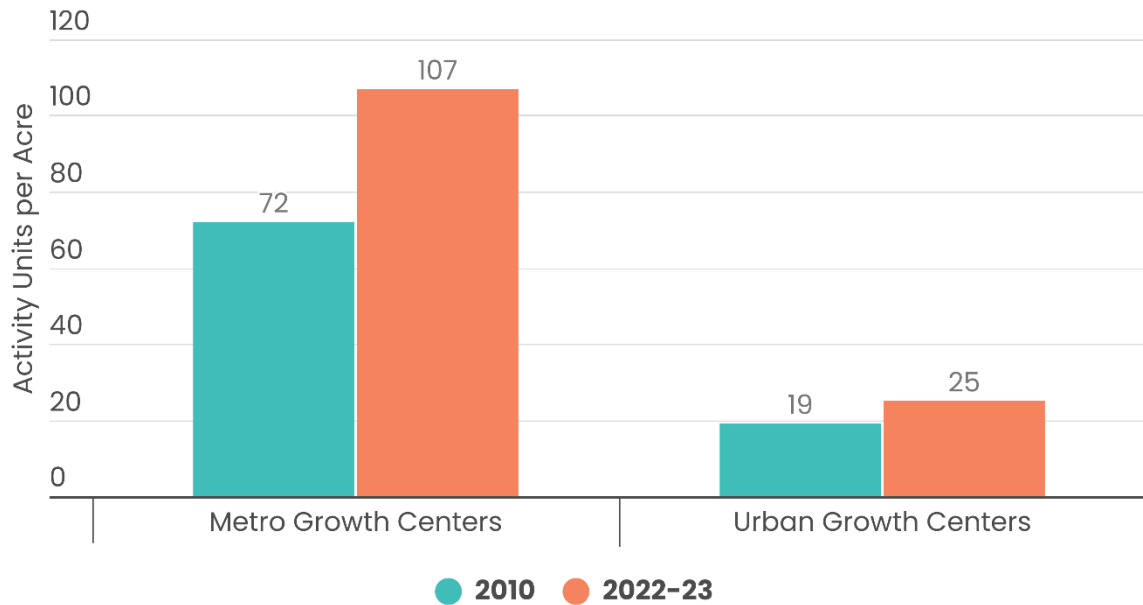
Figure 8 – Urban Growth Centers: Activity Units per Acre



Source: Office of Financial Management Small Area Estimates Program: 2023; PSRC Parcel Estimates Program: 2023; PSRC Covered Employment: 2022

Across all regional growth centers, the activity density is 57.3 activity units per acre (AU/acre), which has increased significantly since 2010, up from 40.0 AU/acre. Metro growth centers have significantly higher levels of activity than urban growth centers, averaging 107.0 AU/acre compared to 24.9 AU/acre.

Figure 9 – Change in Activity Density by Regional Growth Center Type

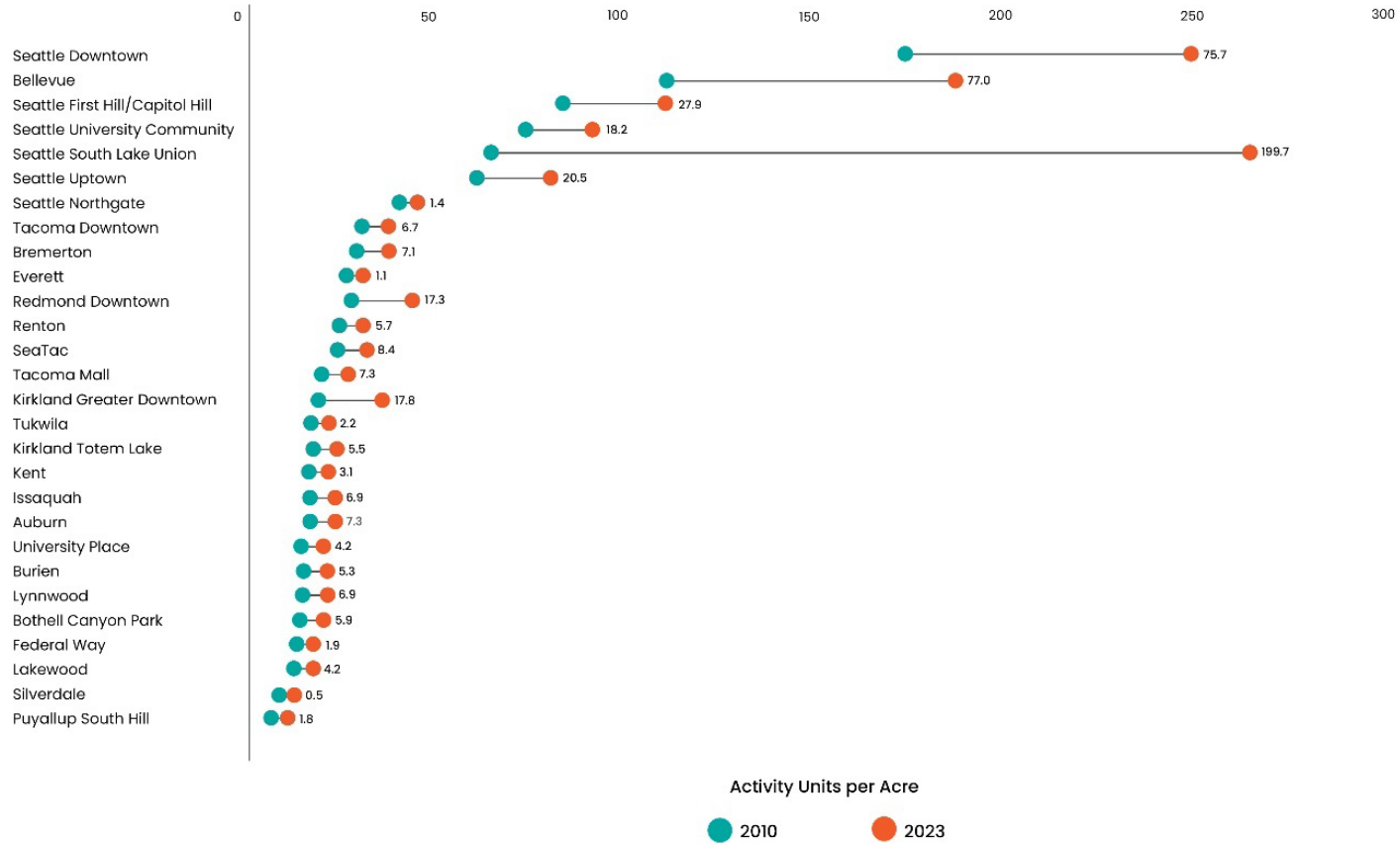


Source: Office of Financial Management Small Area Estimates Program: 2010, 2023; PSRC Parcel Estimates Program: 2010, 2023; PSRC Covered Employment: 2010, 2022

All regional growth centers increased in activity from 2010 to 2022, though some saw significantly higher increases than others. Metro growth centers generally increased in activity more than urban growth centers. On average, Metro RGCs saw an increase of 34.8 AU/acre from 2010 to 2022, while Urban RGCs increased 6.0 AU/acre. However, some urban growth centers saw higher increases in activity density than metro growth centers over the same period. Overall, more than 350,000 activity units are needed in regional growth centers to reach planned density goals.



Figure 10 – Change in Activity Unit Density by Regional Growth Center



Source: Office of Financial Management Small Area Estimates Program: 2010, 2023; PSRC Parcel Estimates Program: 2010, 2023; PSRC Covered Employment: 2010, 2022

Excluding centers in Seattle and Bellevue, all other regional growth centers have increased in density by an average of 6 AU per acre since 2010.

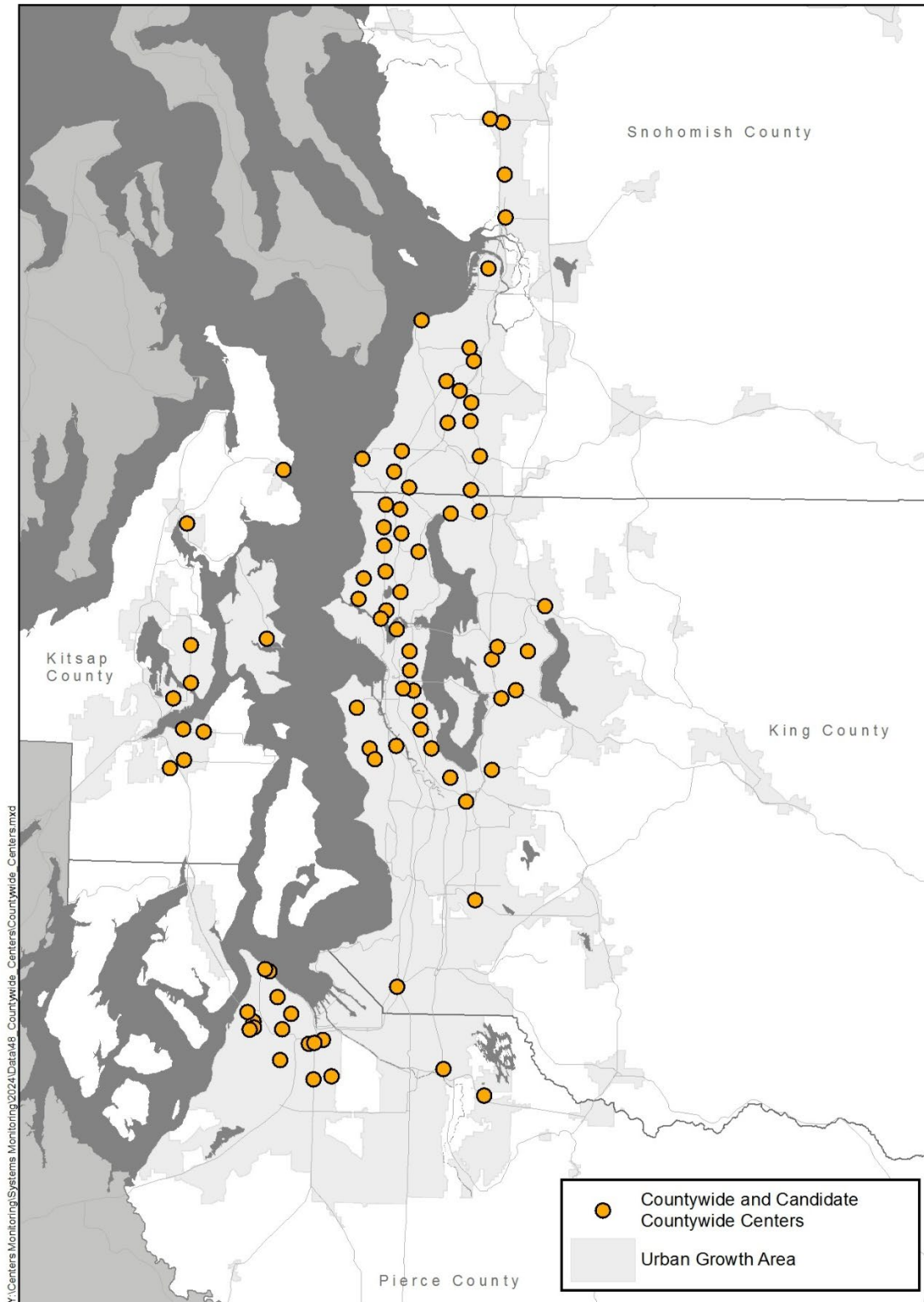


Countywide Centers

Countywide and candidate countywide centers have been designated in each county since the Regional Centers Framework was adopted in 2018. Countywide growth centers are intended to be areas with concentrated housing or commercial activity, often smaller downtowns, high-capacity transit station areas, or neighborhood centers linked by transit. Countywide centers are designated through their respective countywide planning organization and play an important role in VISION 2050 implementation. Several counties have designated “candidate” countywide centers and intend to finalize designation following the 2024 comprehensive plan updates.



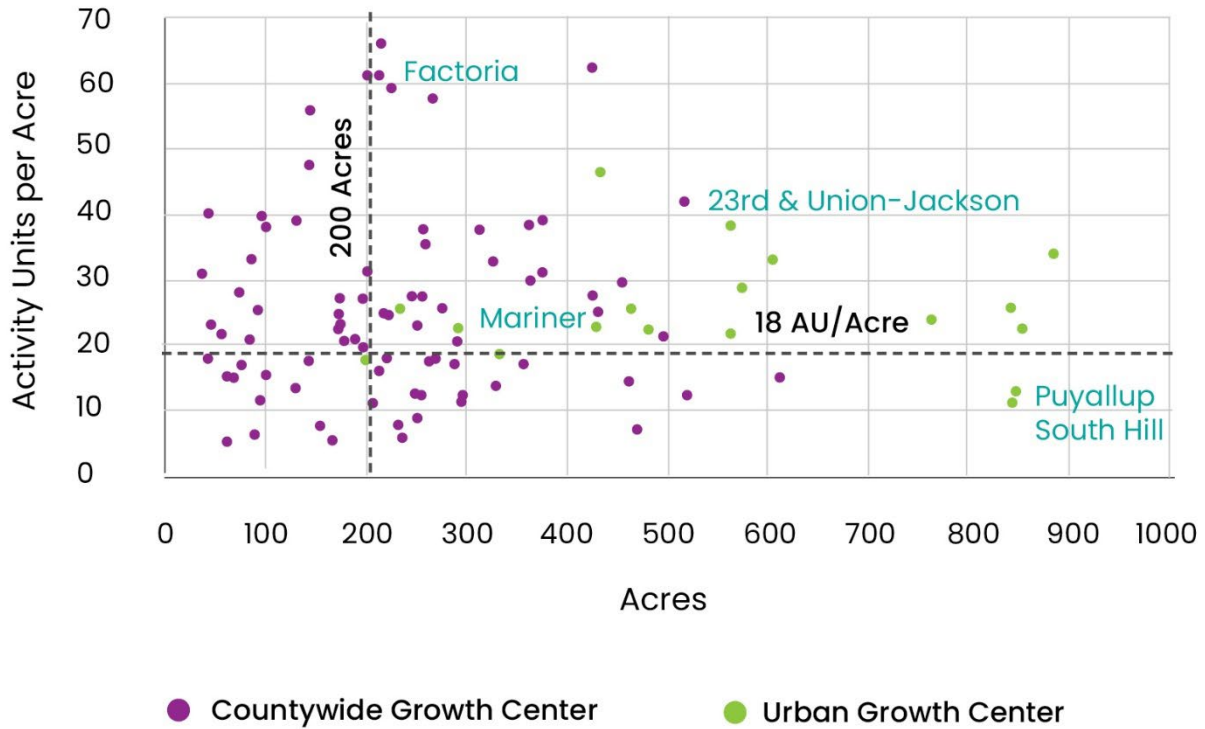
Map 2: Countywide and Candidate Countywide Centers



Source: Countywide Planning Policies; County GIS files



Figure 11 – Center Size and Activity Density: Urban Growth Centers and Countywide Centers



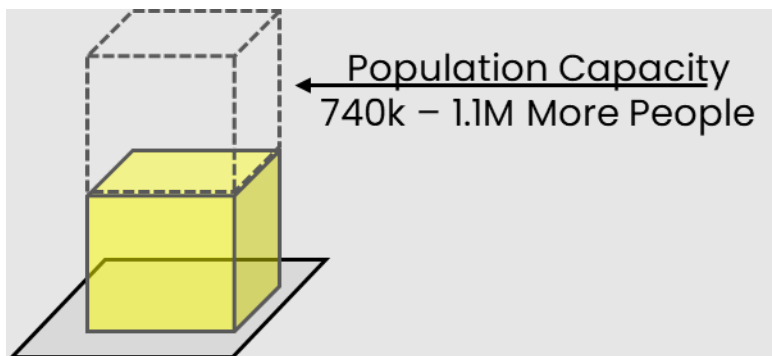
Source: Office of Financial Management Small Area Estimates Program: 2023; PSRC Parcel Estimates Program: 2023; PSRC Covered Employment: 2022

On average, countywide and candidate countywide centers are on par with some regional growth centers with respect to activity density, but many are smaller in total acres. Notably, many countywide centers meet the minimum size and activity density criteria to become regional growth centers. Metro growth centers (not shown in the plot above) are larger than both other center types in both acreage and activity density.



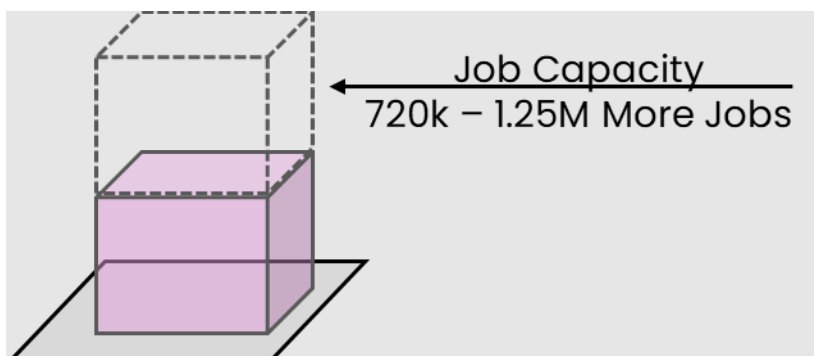
Regional Growth Centers: Capacity

Figure 12 – Estimated Capacity for Population Growth in Regional Growth Centers



Source: PSRC 2018 UrbanSim Model Database

Figure 13 – Estimated Capacity for Employment Growth in Regional Growth Centers



Source: PSRC 2018 UrbanSim Model Database

VISION 2050 has a goal for 65% of the region's population and 75% of the region's job growth to be in regional growth centers and high-capacity transit station areas. Using assumptions of net development capacity and based on 2019 zoning data, PSRC calculated capacity ranges for population and employment in regional growth centers. Total capacity depends on the ratio of residential to commercial development in mixed-use areas and the likelihood of property redevelopment.

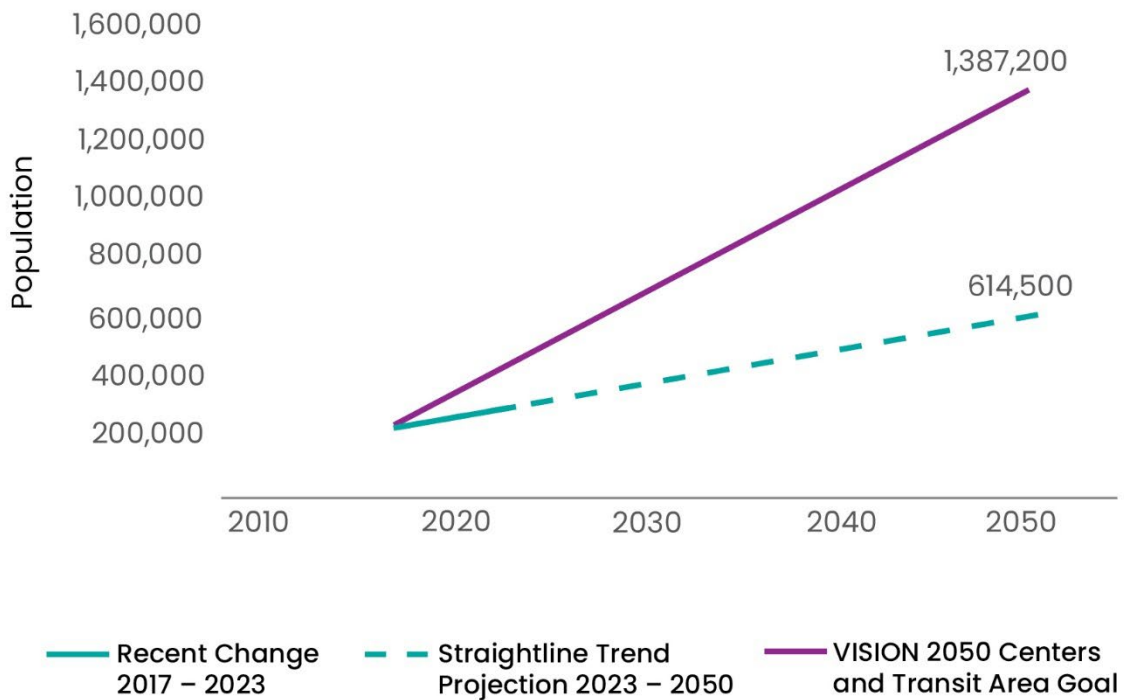
Regional growth centers could accommodate 42-61% of regional population growth, close to being able to accommodate VISION's goal alone, without factoring in other high-capacity transit areas.



Based on 2019 zoning data, regional growth centers could accommodate 62-100% or more of regional job growth, with the potential to exceed the goal in VISION 2050.

Regional Growth Centers: Trends

Figure 14 – Population in Regional Growth Centers: Trend Projection and VISION 2050

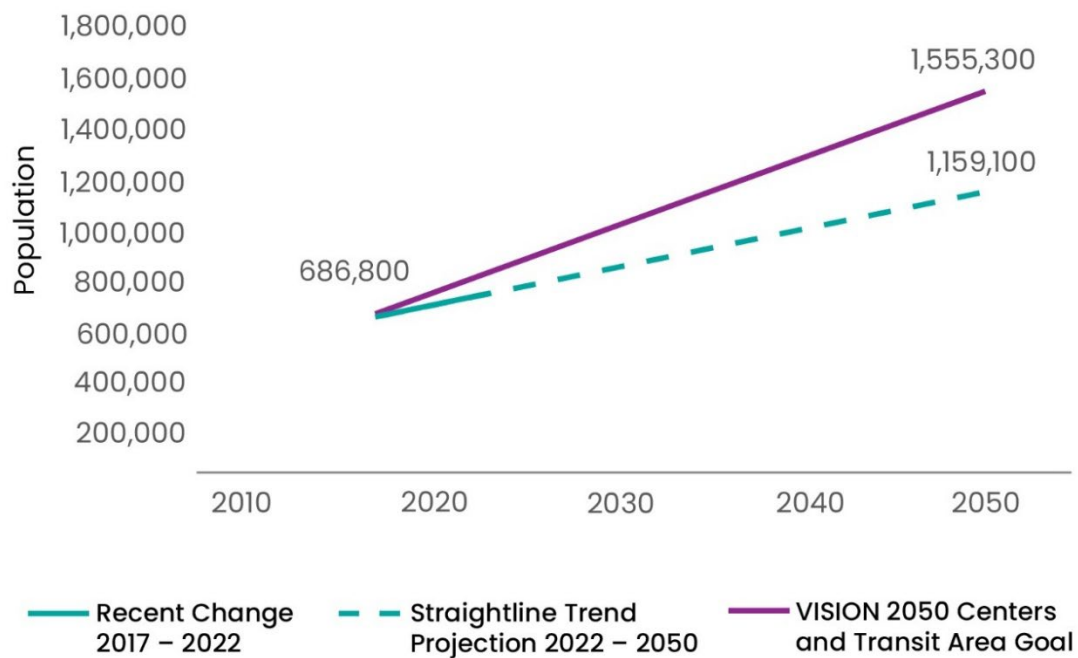


Source: OFM Small Area Estimates Program: 2017, 2023; PSRC Parcel Estimates Program: 2017, 2023; PSRC VISION 2050 Regional Growth Strategy

If population growth trends since 2010 continue, centers could expect an additional 614,500 residents in 2050, representing 27% of the region's anticipated population growth. If trends since 2010 continued in high-capacity transit station areas, those areas could accommodate 38% of the region's population growth. Between regional growth centers and other high-capacity transit areas, the region could achieve the VISION 2050 goal of 65% of population growth in regional centers and near transit.



Figure 15 – Employment Growth in Centers: Trend Projection and VISION 2050



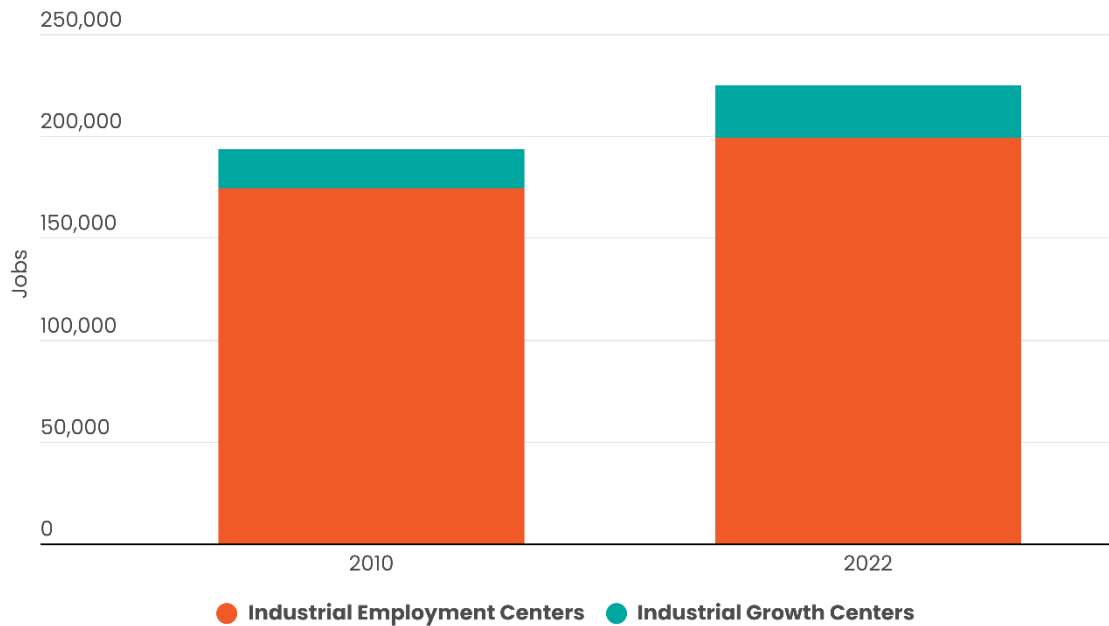
Source: PSRC Covered Employment: 2017, 2022; PSRC VISION 2050 Regional Growth Strategy

If employment trends in regional growth centers since 2010 continued through 2050, jobs in regional growth centers would reach approximately 1,160,000 by 2050, representing 54% of the region's anticipated job growth.



Manufacturing/Industrial Centers: Employment Growth

Figure 16 – Total Employment in Manufacturing/Industrial Centers

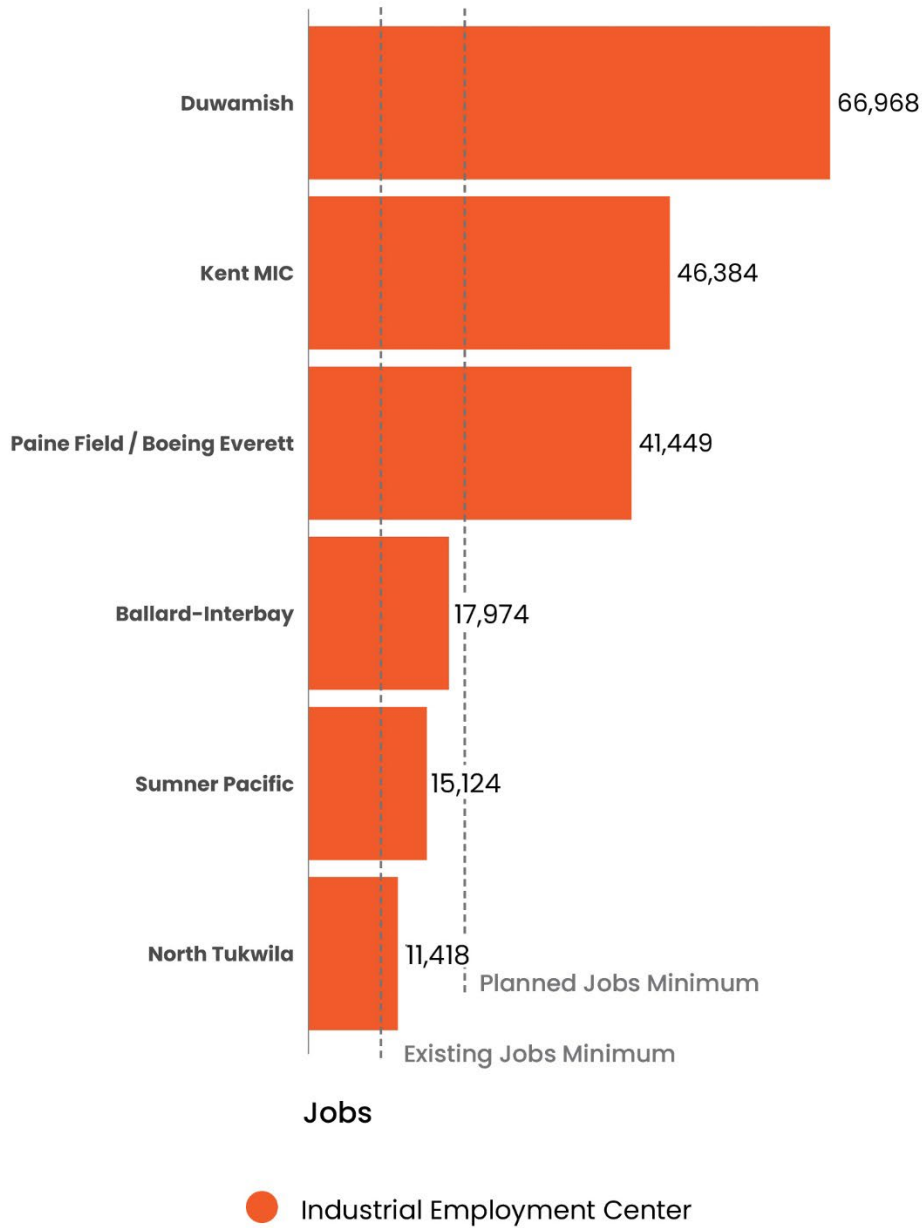


Source: PSRC Covered Employment: 2010, 2022

In 2022, there were nearly 225,000 jobs in manufacturing/industrial centers, and 11% of all jobs in the region were in these centers. Seven percent of all new jobs since 2010 have been in manufacturing/industrial centers. While industrial growth centers have fewer jobs overall (an average of 6,000), they have had a 33% increase since 2010. Jobs in industrial employment centers increased by 14% in this time period.

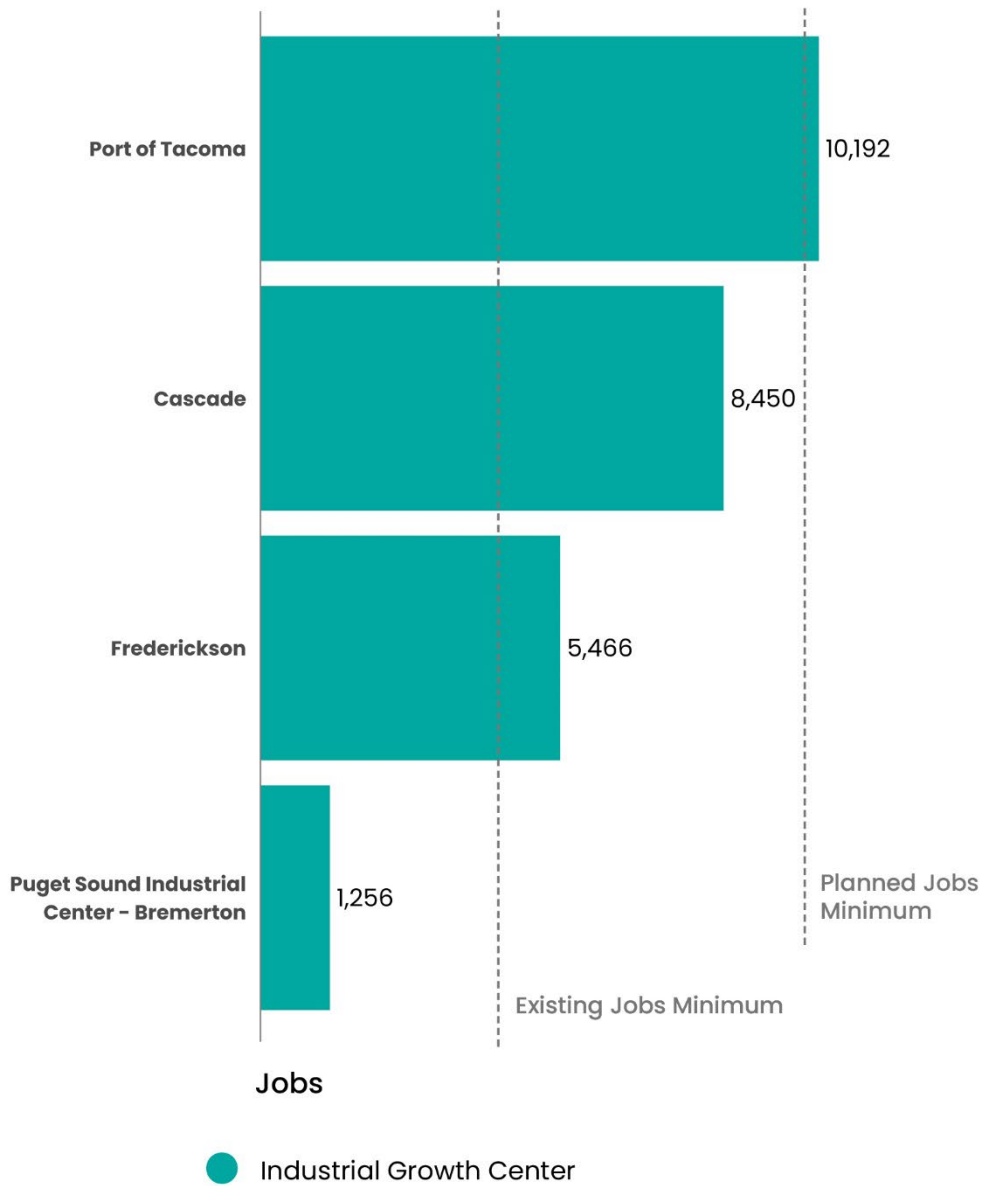


Figure 17 – Industrial Employment Centers: Existing Employment and Criteria



Source: PSRC Covered Employment: 2022

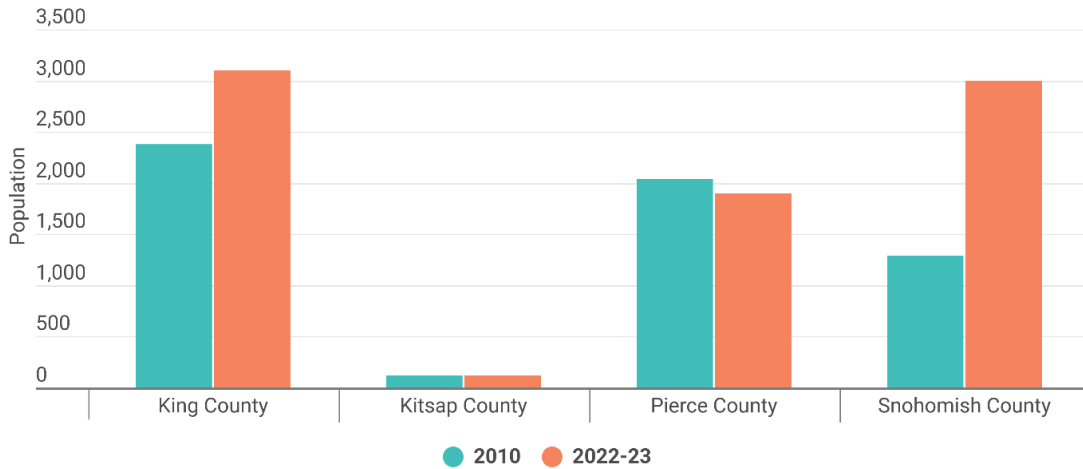
Figure 18 – Industrial Growth Centers: Existing Employment and Criteria



Source: PSRC Covered Employment: 2022

Manufacturing/Industrial Centers: Population Growth

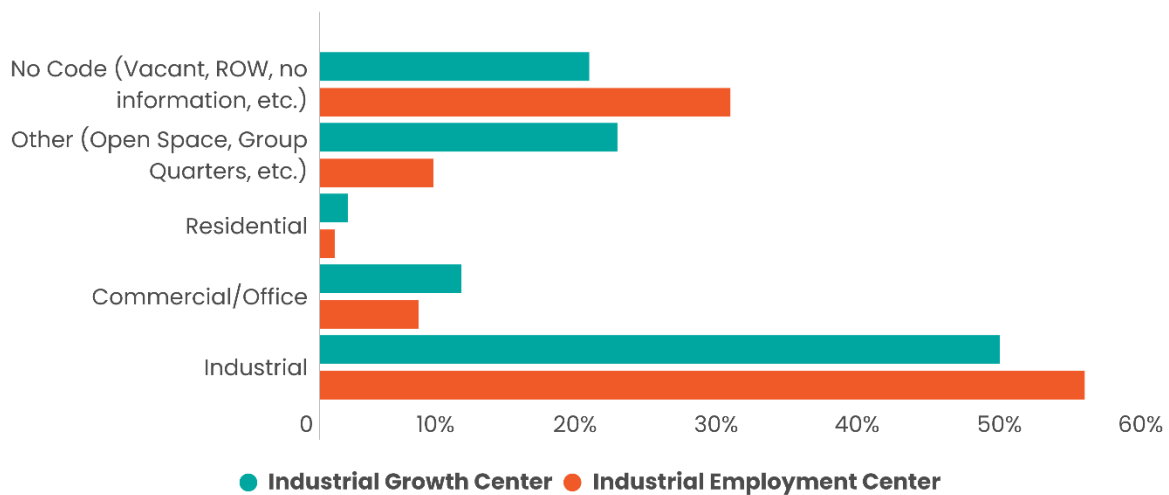
Figure 19 – Population Growth in Manufacturing/Industrial Centers



Source: Office of Financial Management Small Area Estimates Program: 2010, 2023; PSRC Parcel Estimates Program: 2010, 2023

Although less than 1% of the region’s population lives in MICs, these areas have seen a 39% increase in population since 2010. As of 2023, over 8,000 people lived in manufacturing/industrial centers, mostly in King and Snohomish County centers.

Figure 20 – Share of Land Uses in Manufacturing/Industrial Centers



Source: PSRC 2018 UrbanSim Model Database



Over half of all land in manufacturing/industrial centers is classified for industrial use. The share of industrial land in industrial growth centers (48%) is slightly lower than in industrial employment centers (54%). Overall, land for residential uses is very small across all manufacturing/industrial centers (1%).



Mobility

Objective: Centers provide diverse mobility choices so that people who live and work in centers have alternatives to driving alone.

Access to transportation within and between centers is essential for residents and visitors to reach the region's amenities and job centers. Regional transportation policies adopted in VISION 2050 and the Regional Transportation Plan call for the region to create an efficient multimodal transportation system within regional centers and other central places that support the growth strategy and increase multimodal travel options.

The region has committed to prioritizing transportation funding to regional centers. Regional and countywide competitions are held to award funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding is distributed via an Earned Share and Equity Formula process to the region's transit agencies. Since 2010, over \$400 million has been awarded from PSRC's FHWA regional competitions to projects supporting centers. Additional local, countywide and FTA funding is used to fund projects in centers.

High-Capacity Transit Station Areas

Areas within half a mile of existing or planned light rail, streetcar stations, commuter rail stations, ferry terminals, and within a quarter mile of all bus rapid transit stations

Questions to Answer:

- Are there mobility choices within and to centers?
- How are people getting to and around centers?
- Are manufacturing/industrial centers serving as freight hubs?

Key Findings for Regional Growth Centers:

- Overall, residents and employees in regional growth centers have good access to high-capacity transit.
- Residents of regional growth centers drive less than other residents of the region, and rates of walk, bike and transit trips are significantly higher in metro growth centers than the rest of the region.



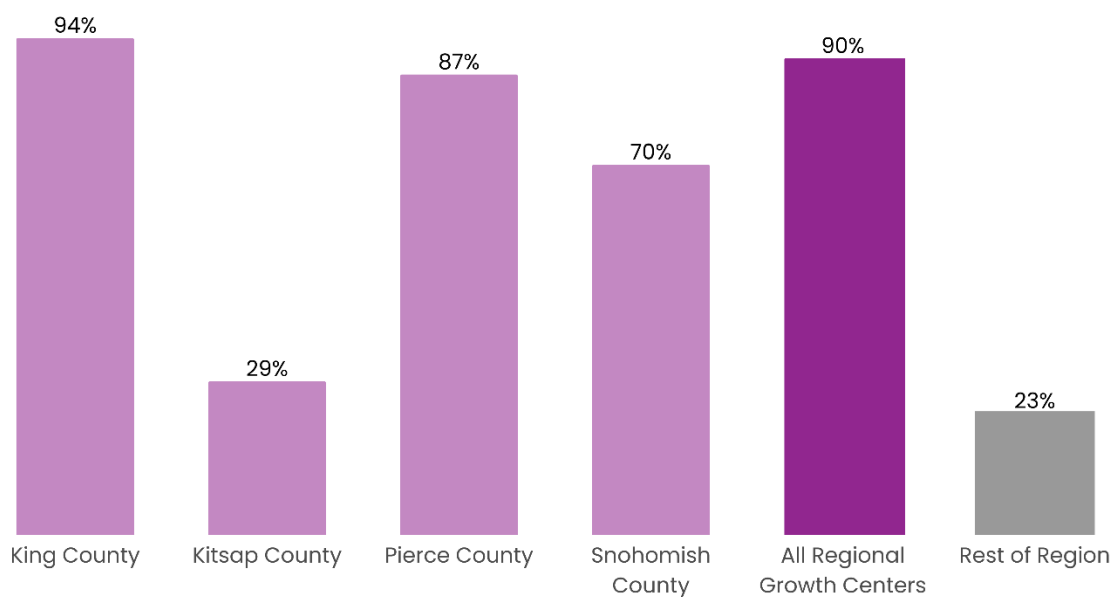
- Regional growth centers are generally walkable areas, but this varies significantly across centers.

Key Findings for Manufacturing/Industrial Centers:

- Manufacturing/industrial centers are active freight hubs, accounting for almost one-fifth of regional truck trips.
- Workers in manufacturing/industrial centers have fewer transportation options and drive alone to work at higher rates than other workers in the region.

Regional Growth Centers: Transit

Figure 21 – Share of Regional Growth Center Residents in High-Capacity Transit Walkshed

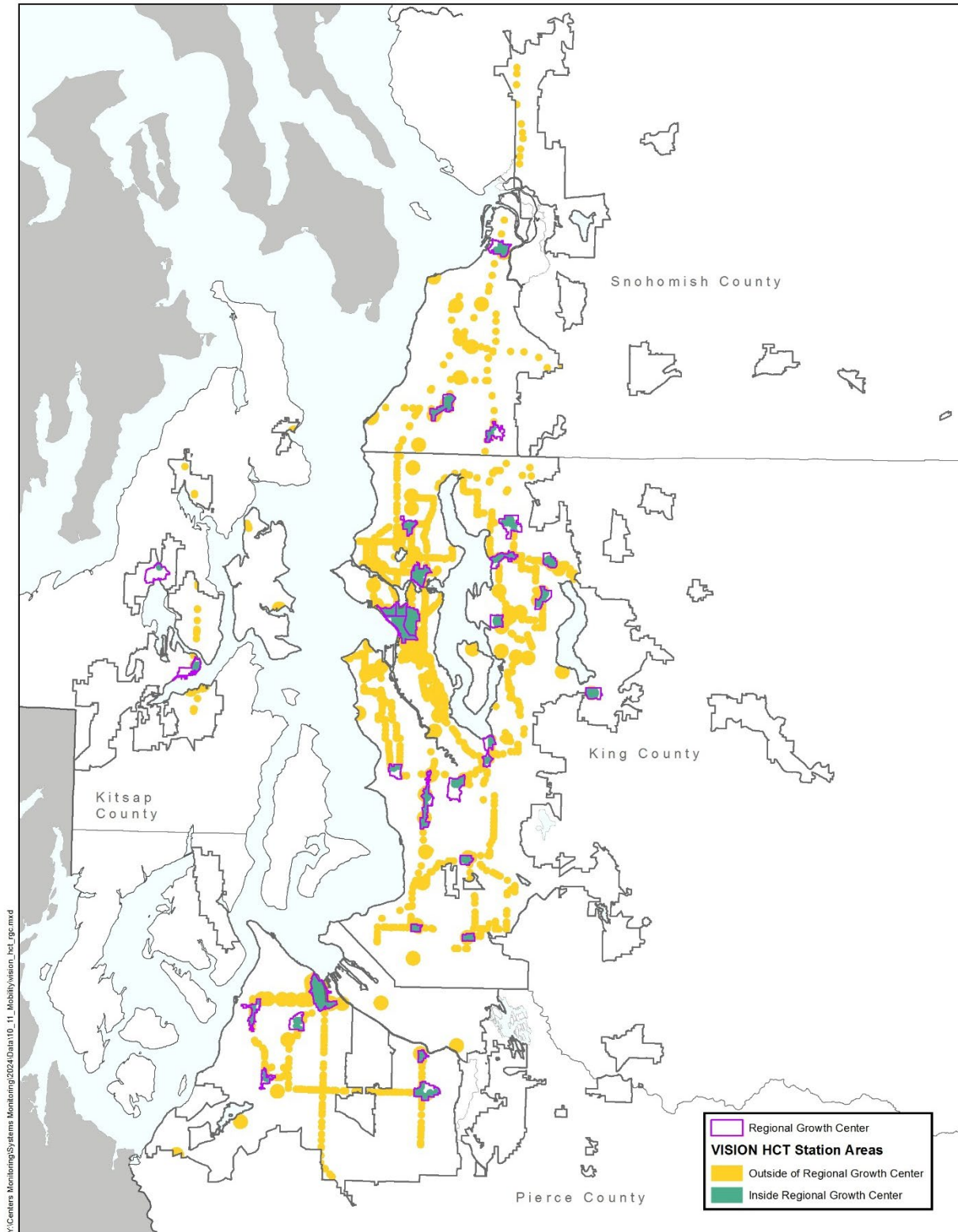


Source: Office of Financial Management Small Area Estimates Program: 2023; PSRC Parcel Estimates Program: 2023

Residents of regional growth centers in King and Pierce counties have the highest access to existing or planned high-capacity transit. Kitsap County residents have the lowest access to high-capacity transit (29%), similar to the share outside of centers (23%).



Map 3: Existing and Planned High-Capacity Transit and Regional Growth Centers

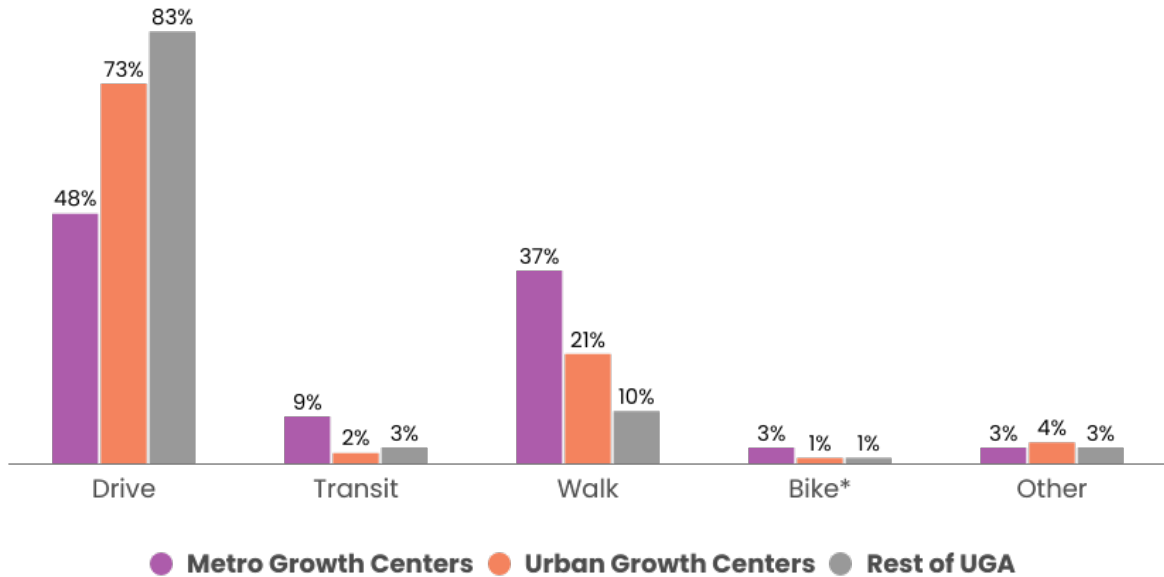


Source: PSRC Geographic Information Systems



Regional Growth Centers: Mode Share

Figure 22 – Mode of All Trips to Regional Growth Centers



Source: PSRC Household Travel Survey: 2023

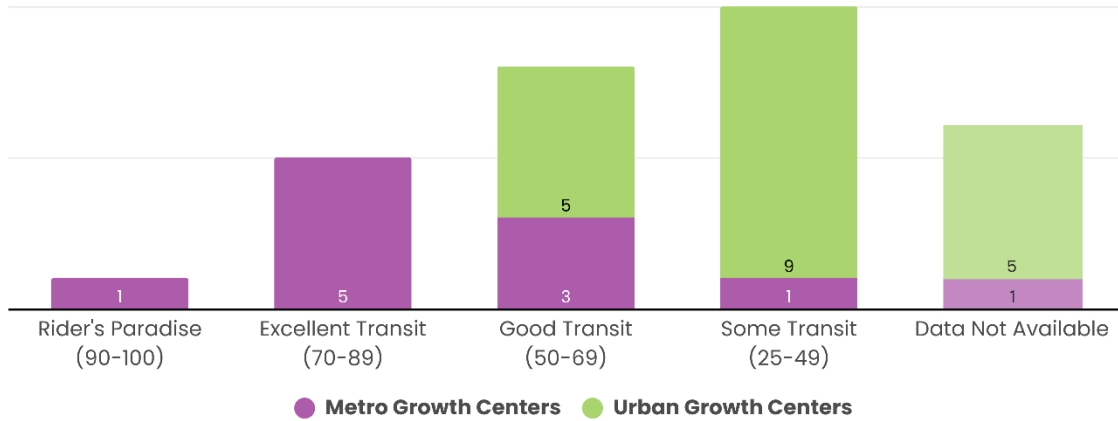
Note: includes all trips starting within and outside of centers, despite where trip-takers live

Travel patterns are significantly different in regional growth centers than the rest of the region, with more trips in centers taken by walk, transit, and bike. Most trips to regional growth centers are done by driving. Driving for all type of trips is lowest in metro growth centers (48%), while drive rates to urban growth centers (73%) are higher but still lower than the rest of the region. Urban growth centers include several major shopping destinations and have less transit service than metro growth centers, which may account for lower transit usage in these centers. Metro growth centers also have the highest share of trips via walking, transit and biking, with 37% of trips done by walking. Urban growth centers have twice the rate of walking as the rest of the region. When looking just at commute trips, residents of regional growth centers drive alone (34%) to work almost half as often as residents of the rest of the region.²

² U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2022 5-Year Estimates
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Figure 23 – Transit Scores of Regional Growth Centers



Source: Walk Score® Transit Score

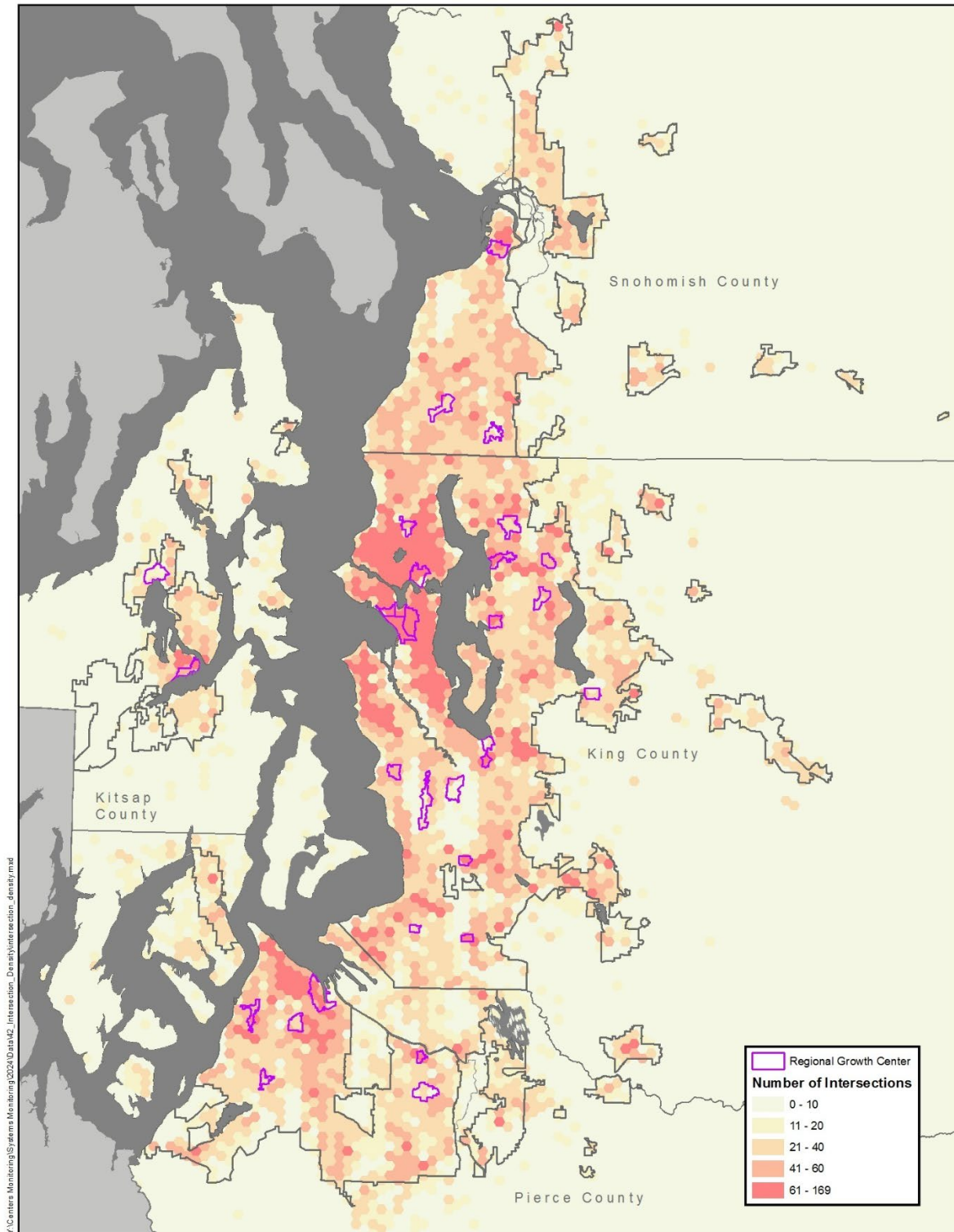
Note: Data for Pierce County centers are not available

Transit Score is a patented measure of how well a location is served by public transit on a scale from 0 to 100. The average Transit Score among regional growth centers is 57.5 (Good Transit). Metro growth centers (71.0) have higher Transit Scores on average than urban growth centers (47.9)



Regional Growth Centers: Walkability

Map 4: Intersection Density and Regional Growth Centers



Source: PSRC Geographic Information Systems

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Figure 24 – Regional Growth Center Intersection Density per Square Mile



Source: PSRC GIS

Intersection density is a common and robust measure of walkability—short blocks and more intersections per mile often make it easier—and more comfortable—to walk around³. On average, regional growth centers have an intersection density of 141 intersections per square mile, but this varies significantly across centers. For example, Seattle First Hill/Capitol Hill has the highest intersection density, with 339 intersections per square mile. Tukwila has the lowest intersection density, with 31 intersections per square mile. Metro growth centers (201) have intersection densities over twice as high as urban growth centers (99).

³ [Ewing & Cervero, 2010](#)



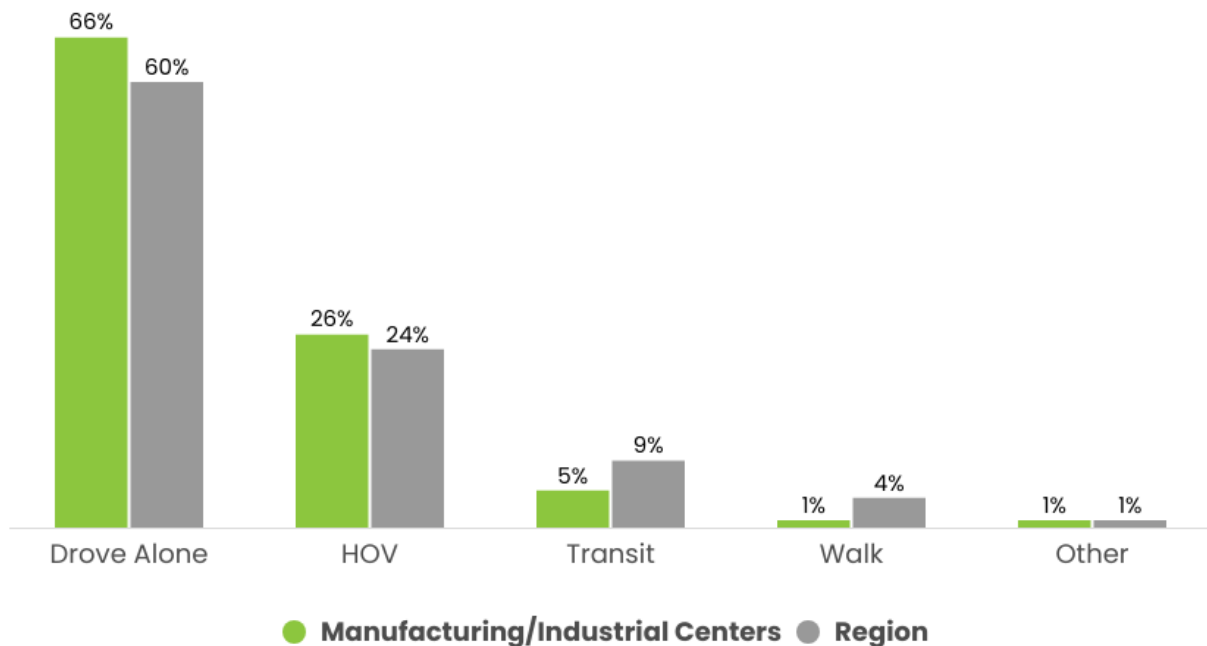
Manufacturing/Industrial Centers: Freight

Manufacturing/industrial centers are serving as freight hubs. In 2019, 17% of all of the region's truck trips ended in MICs, though these areas represent less than 1% of the region's land area. From 2015 to 2019, truck trips increased in manufacturing/industrial centers by 12%, compared to 5% for the region overall. Truck trips destined to MICs were growing more than twice as fast as truck trips regionally.

Source: INRIX, 2015 and 2019

Manufacturing/Industrial Centers: Mode Share

Figure 25 – Mode Share for Workers in Manufacturing/Industrial Centers



Source: PSRC 2018 SoundCast Model Estimates

Employees in manufacturing/industrial centers primarily drive alone to work (66%). While some carpool (26%), this is done at a similar rate to other regional workers. Workers in MICs walk (1%) and take transit (5%) at lower rates than other workers in the region.



Housing, Equity and Opportunity

Objective: Centers offer high access to opportunity, including affordable housing choices and access to jobs, to a diverse population.

The Regional Growth Strategy calls for centers to accommodate a large share of population growth and housing development in the future, solidifying their role as major population and employment centers. VISION 2050 calls for the development of housing for all income levels and demographic groups that is also accessible to job centers. By accommodating new housing in areas with access to employment, centers are an important part of advancing equity within the Puget Sound region.

Housing, equity and opportunity are deeply connected. Both location and affordability of housing impact residents' health, employment and economic well-being. As documented in PSRC's [Legacy of Structural Racism](#) report, policies and practices at both the local and national levels have contributed to the racial disparities seen in the region today. The [Regional Housing Strategy](#) emphasizes the need to develop and preserve affordable housing in the region with a focus on BIPOC communities. The indicators presented in this section show our region's progress on advancing equity and opportunity. They also point to tools that can continue this work.



Questions to Answer:

- Who lives in regional growth centers?
- How affordable is housing in centers?
- Do centers provide access to opportunity?
- What types of jobs are available in centers?

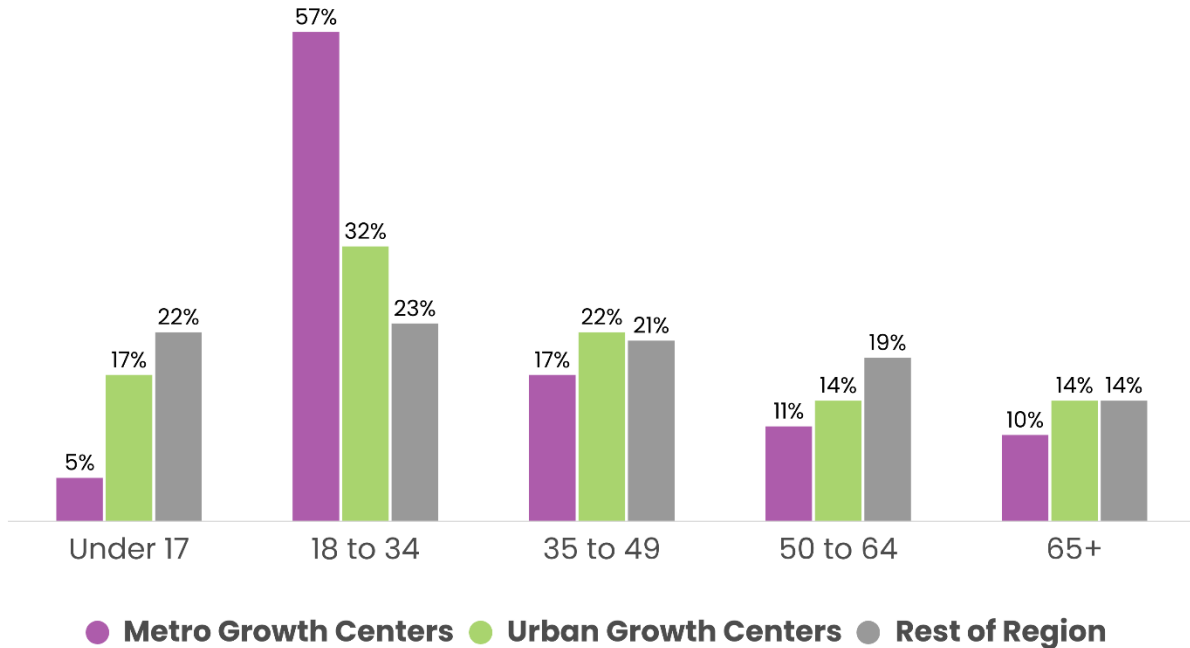
Key Findings for Regional Growth Centers:

- Regional growth centers are home to a large share of young adults and more racially diverse communities.
- Households in regional growth centers are smaller than the regional average and are more likely to include residents living alone or with a roommate than the rest of the region. However, as growth centers are anticipated to accommodate a large share of the region's growth, household size and composition in centers may change over time.
- While household income is lower on average in regional growth centers, per capita income is higher than the region.
- Housing in centers is primarily rentals in large, multifamily buildings. Recent development has increased the share of these housing types.
- Housing in centers is more expensive than average for the region, but rates of cost burden are similar to the region overall. Centers also have a large proportion of their housing stock as income-restricted affordable housing.
- While centers offer many job opportunities, most have a shortage of housing affordable to those working low-wage jobs.
- Investment in centers makes them desirable places to live, with consequences for affordability and displacement. Centers have less affordable housing than needed and have many areas with higher risk of displacement.
- Residents of regional growth centers have higher access to opportunity than the average resident.



Regional Growth Centers: Demographic Trends

Figure 26 – Regional Growth Center Population by Age Group



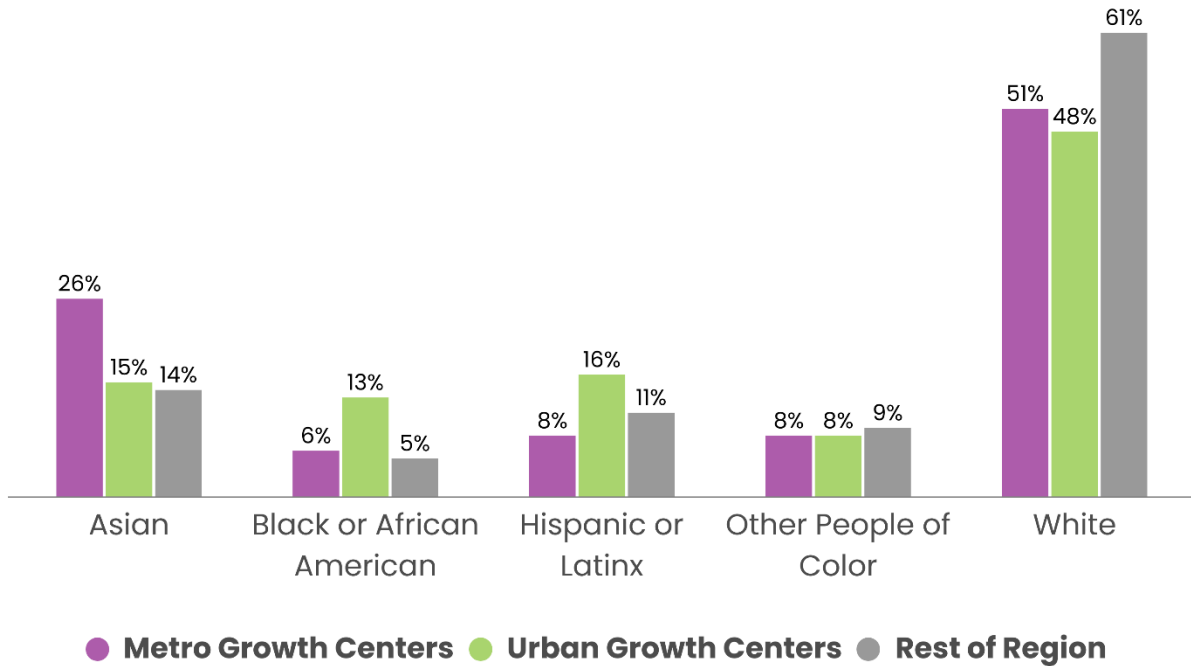
Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey: 2022 5-Year Estimates; PSRC Parcel Estimates Program: 2022

The share of 18- to 34-year-olds in regional growth centers is nearly twice the region's share, making up 50% of the population in regional growth centers compared to 25% in the region overall.

In contrast, children 17 and under make up 21% of the region and only 8% of the population in regional growth centers.



Figure 27 – Regional Growth Center Population by Race and Hispanic/Latinx Origin



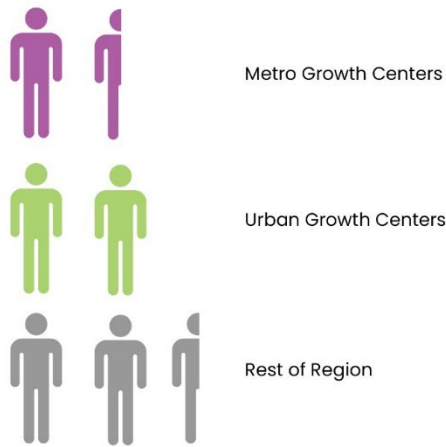
Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey: 2022 5-Year Estimates; PSRC Parcel Estimates Program: 2022

Regional growth centers are more diverse areas when compared to the region, with larger shares of Asian and Black residents and significantly smaller shares of white residents.

Metro growth centers have significantly larger shares of Asian residents than the region, while urban growth centers have significantly larger shares of Black and Hispanic residents.

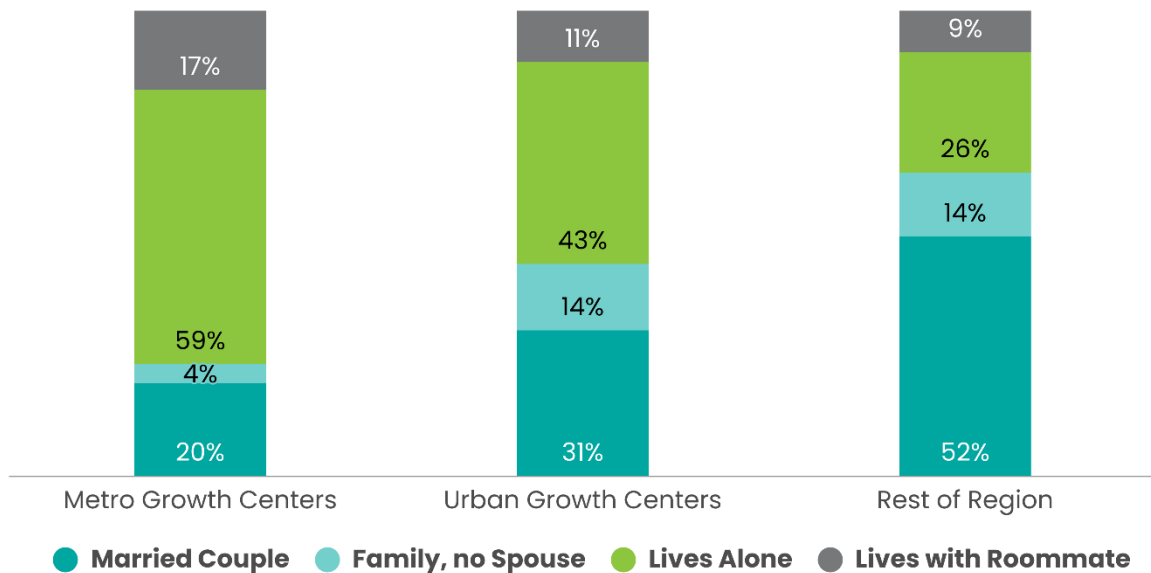


Figure 28 – Average Household Size in Regional Growth Centers by Center Type



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2022 5-Year Estimates; PSRC Parcel Estimates Program: 2022

Figure 29 – Distribution of Household Types in Regional Growth Centers



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2022 5-Year Estimates; PSRC Parcel Estimates Program: 2022

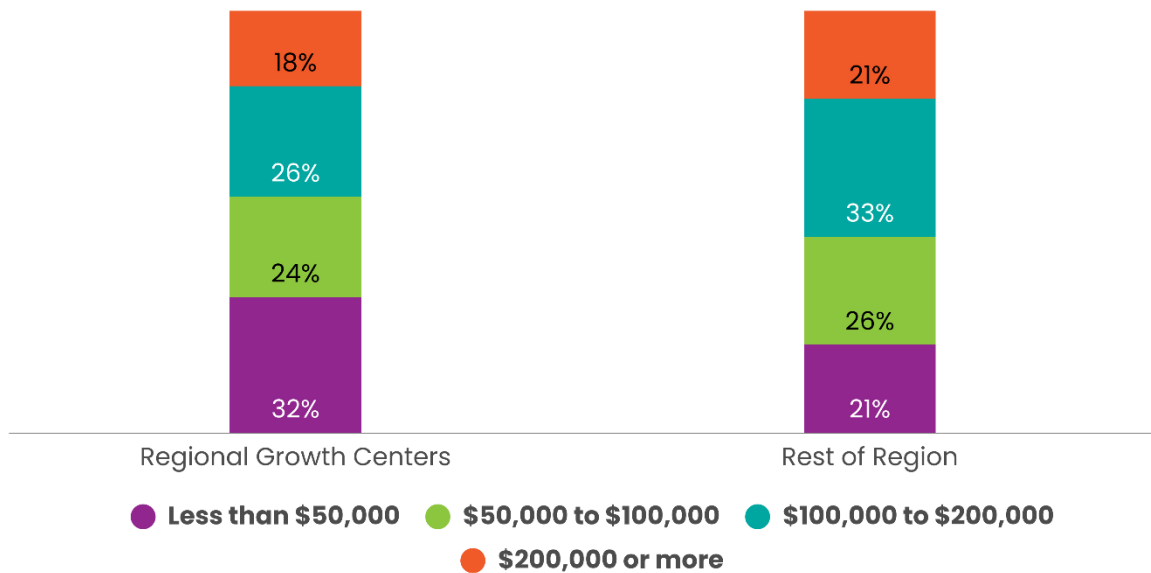


Households in regional growth centers are currently significantly smaller than the rest of the region, with nearly one fewer resident per household in centers than the regional average. The most common household type in regional growth centers are people living alone (55% of households). Less than a quarter are married couple households. In metro growth centers, nearly 60% of all residents live alone. In the Puget Sound region overall, nearly half of all households are married-couple households, and just over a quarter are those living alone.

Why does it matter?

Regional growth centers are expected to accommodate significant population growth through 2050. To successfully accommodate growth, providing housing for a wider variety of household sizes will be important.

Figure 30 – Household Income in Regional Growth Centers



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey: 2022 5-Year Estimates; PSRC Parcel Estimates Program: 2022

The median income of households in regional growth centers is slightly lower than the rest of the region. Nearly one in three households in centers has an annual



income below \$50,000, compared to one in five in the rest of the region. In addition, centers have a much smaller share of households earning between \$100,000 and \$200,000 per year.

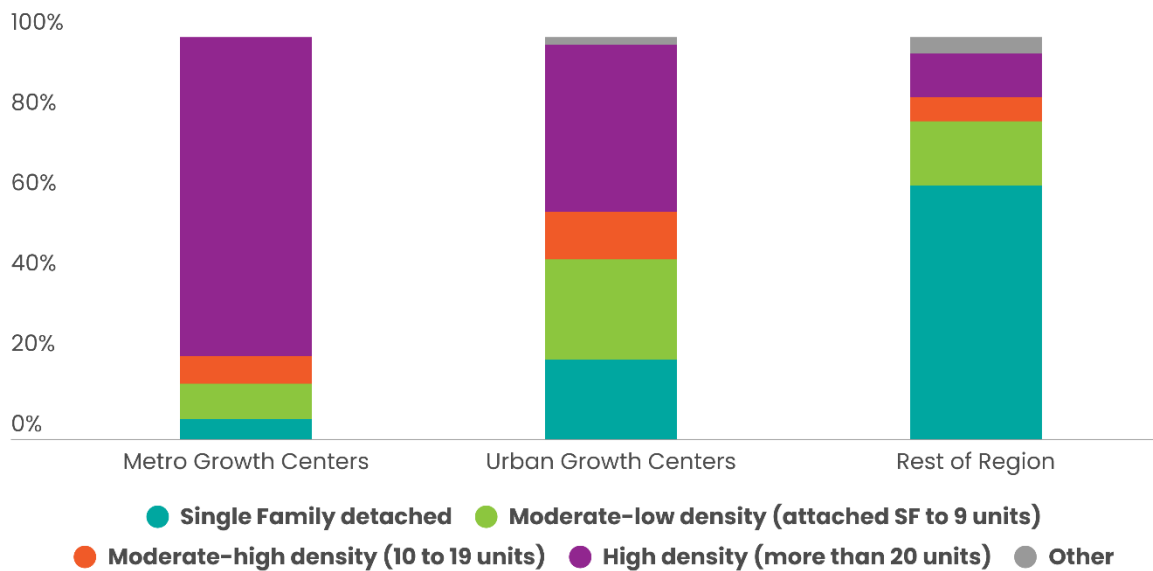
Income and Household Size

Households in regional growth centers have a lower median income than those in the rest of the region. However, when taking smaller household sizes into account, households in centers earn more income on average per person.

Households in centers are 63% the size of the average household but earn around 80% of the income of the regional median household.

Regional Growth Centers: Housing

Figure 31 – Housing Types in Regional Growth Centers

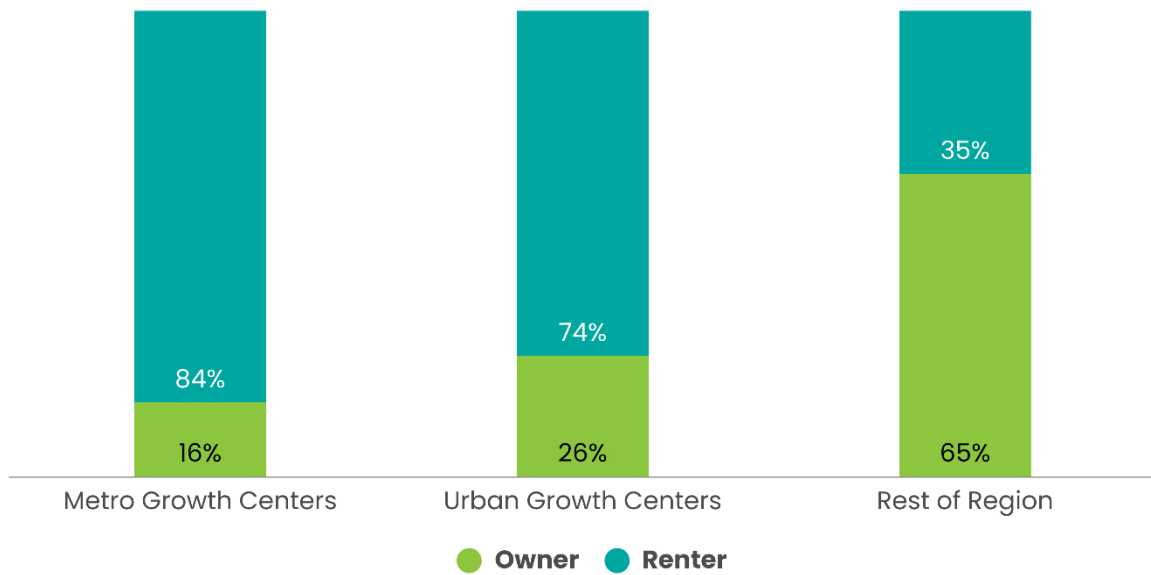


Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey: 2022 5-Year Estimates; PSRC Parcel Estimates Program: 2022

Housing in regional growth centers is predominantly high-density, multifamily housing. From 2010 to 2022, 96% of housing unit growth in centers was in high-density buildings with more than 20 units. In comparison, only 30% of housing unit growth outside of centers consisted of high-density housing during the same period.



Figure 32 – Housing Tenure in Regional Growth Centers

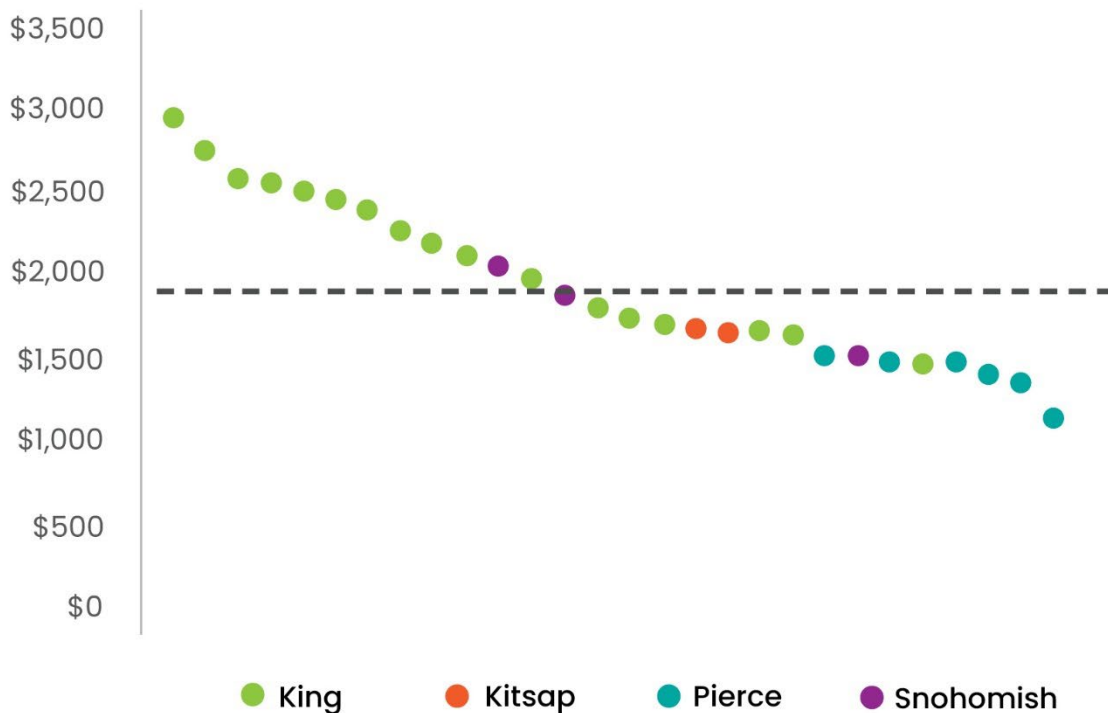


Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey: 2022 5-Year Estimates; PSRC Parcel Estimates Program: 2022

Rental housing is a large and increasing share of the housing within centers. Renters made up 78% of households in regional growth centers in 2010 and 82% in 2022. Urban growth centers saw a significant increase in renter households, from 65% of households in 2010 to 75% in 2022.



Figure 33 – Average Rent in Regional Growth Centers, One-Bedroom Units

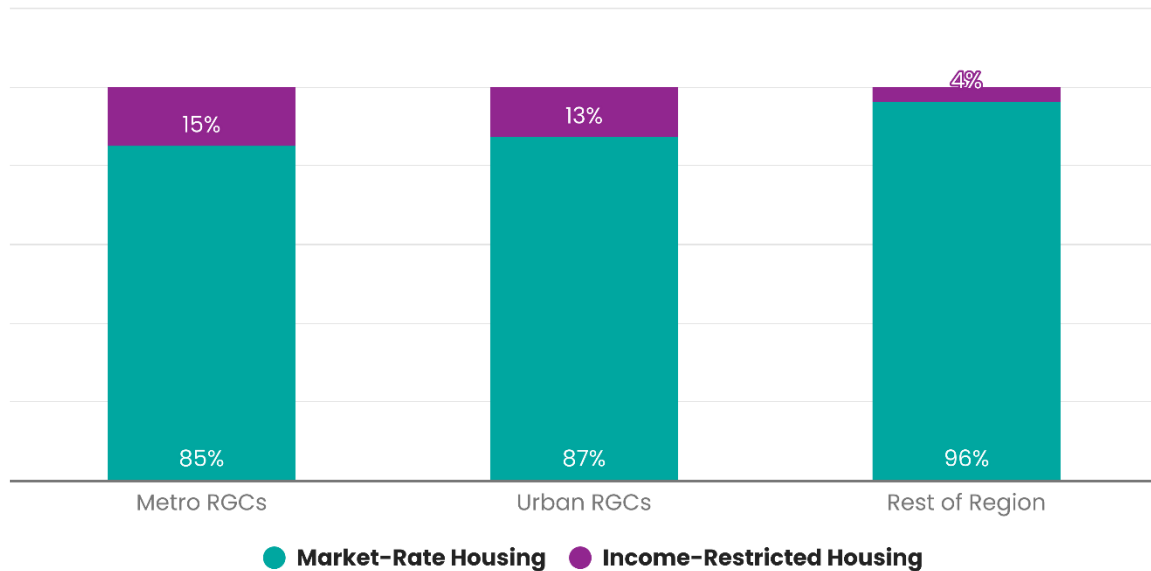


Source: CoStar Properties Database: Q2 2024

The average asking rent for a one-bedroom apartment in a regional growth center is \$2,210, approximately 16% higher than the overall regional average of \$1,910. However, rents vary significantly across centers. In the Puget Sound region, approximately 46% of renter households are cost-burdened and paying more than 30% of their income towards rent. Rates of cost burden are similar in regional growth centers, with 43% of residents paying more than 30% of their income towards rent. PSRC’s [2024 Housing Monitoring Report](#) found that households in the region headed by a person of color pay a greater share of their income on housing than white households.

Income-Restricted Housing

Figure 34 – Share of Income-Restricted Housing by Regional Growth Center Type



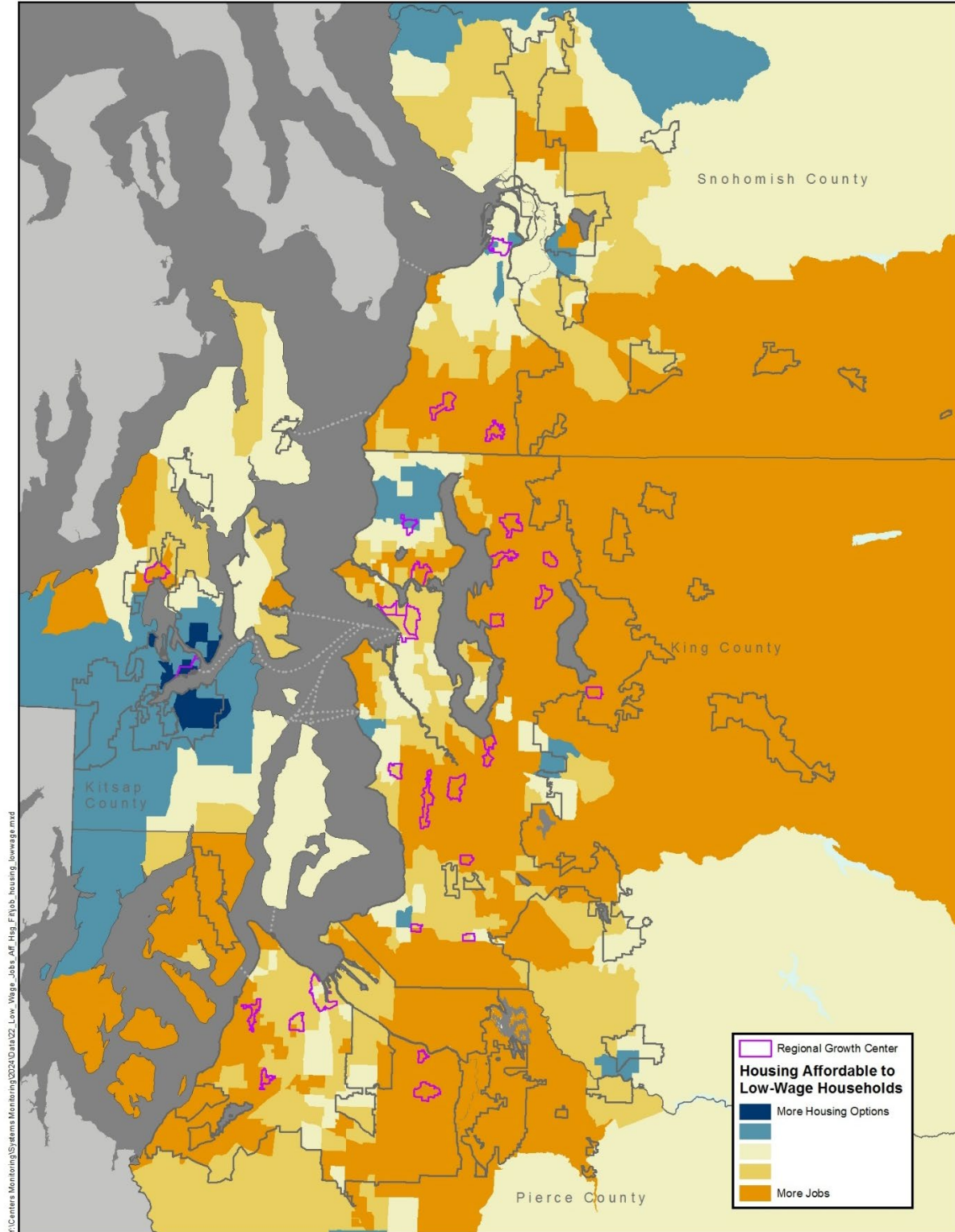
Source: PSRC Income Restricted Housing Database: 2021; King County Income-Restricted Housing Database: 2021, OFM Small Area Estimates Program: 2021

Centers are home to a total of 23,400 income-restricted housing units. In both Metro and Urban RGCs, income-restricted housing makes up a larger proportion of housing units than the rest of the region.

In 2021 alone, the region added 3,400 income-restricted units, 27% of which were in centers.



Map 5 – Affordable Housing Low-Wage Jobs Fit and Regional Growth Centers



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2022 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau, LEHD-LODES



As documented in PSRC’s [2022 Regional Housing Needs Assessment](#), the imbalance in location and quantity between jobs and housing, as well as the growth in high-wage employment, exacerbates the region’s housing affordability challenges and drives many households to search for housing further from employment centers.

The low-wage affordable housing fit map (Map 5) is based on an approach created by the University of California Davis Center for Regional Change⁴. This measure provides insight into whether low-wage workers have access to affordable housing near their place of employment. Areas (or census tracts) with balanced or greater access to affordable housing options relative to the low-wage jobs base are shown in lighter greens, while places with more low-wage jobs but fewer affordable housing options are shown in darker blues.

Regional growth centers have fewer options for deeply affordable housing relative to the number of low-wage jobs available in centers. In contrast, centers provide a much better balance of housing affordable to moderate wage earners.

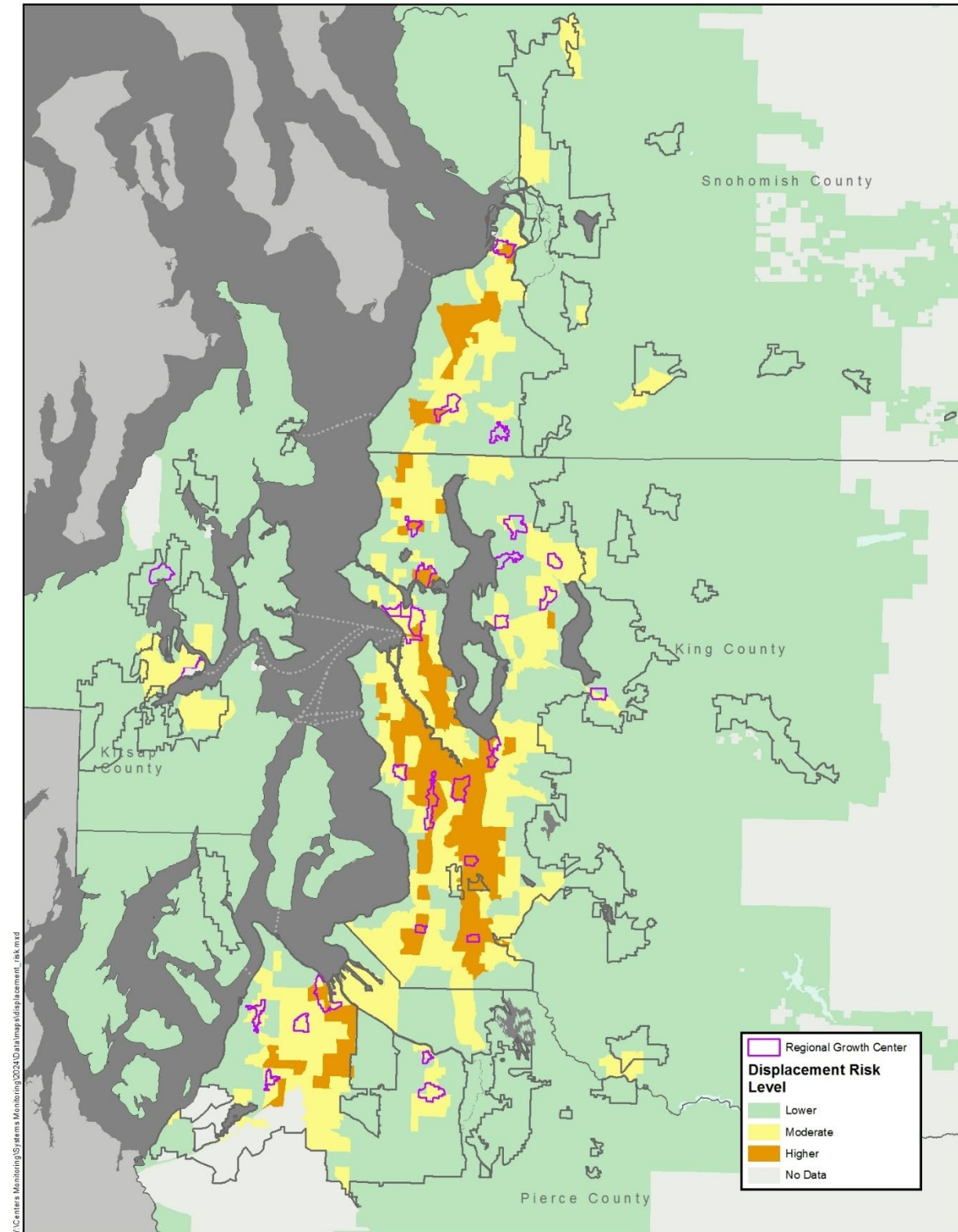


⁴ Benner, Chris, and Alex Karner. 'Low-wage Jobs-housing Fit: Identifying Locations of Affordable Housing Shortages.' *Urban Geography* 37, no. 6 (2016): 883-903 Affordable low-income housing is defined as rental housing that costs less than \$750/month (including utilities), while low-wage jobs are jobs that pay gross wages of \$15,000/year or less.



Regional Growth Centers: Displacement

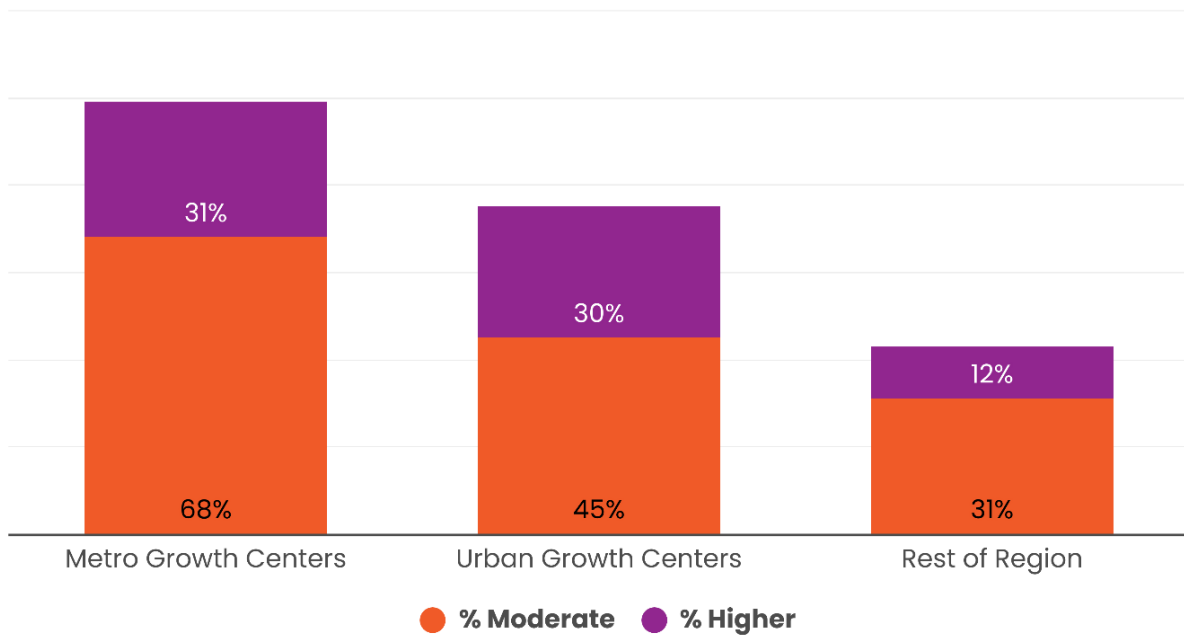
Map 6 – Residential Displacement Risk and Regional Growth Centers



Source: PSRC Displacement Risk Index



Figure 35 – Share of Regional Growth Center Residents Living in Displacement Risk Areas



Source: [PSRC Displacement Risk Index](#)

PSRC's [Displacement Risk Mapping](#) identifies areas where residents and businesses are at greater risk of displacement. Displacement risk is a composite of indicators representing five elements of neighborhood displacement risks: socio-demographics, transportation qualities, neighborhood characteristics, housing and civic engagement.

The data from these five displacement indicators were compiled into a comprehensive index of displacement risk for all census tracts in the region.

Residents of centers live in neighborhoods with a higher risk of displacement than the average resident of the region: 92% of regional growth center residents live in neighborhoods with moderate or higher risk of displacement, while only 43% of the rest of the region's residents live in neighborhoods with moderate or higher risk of displacement.



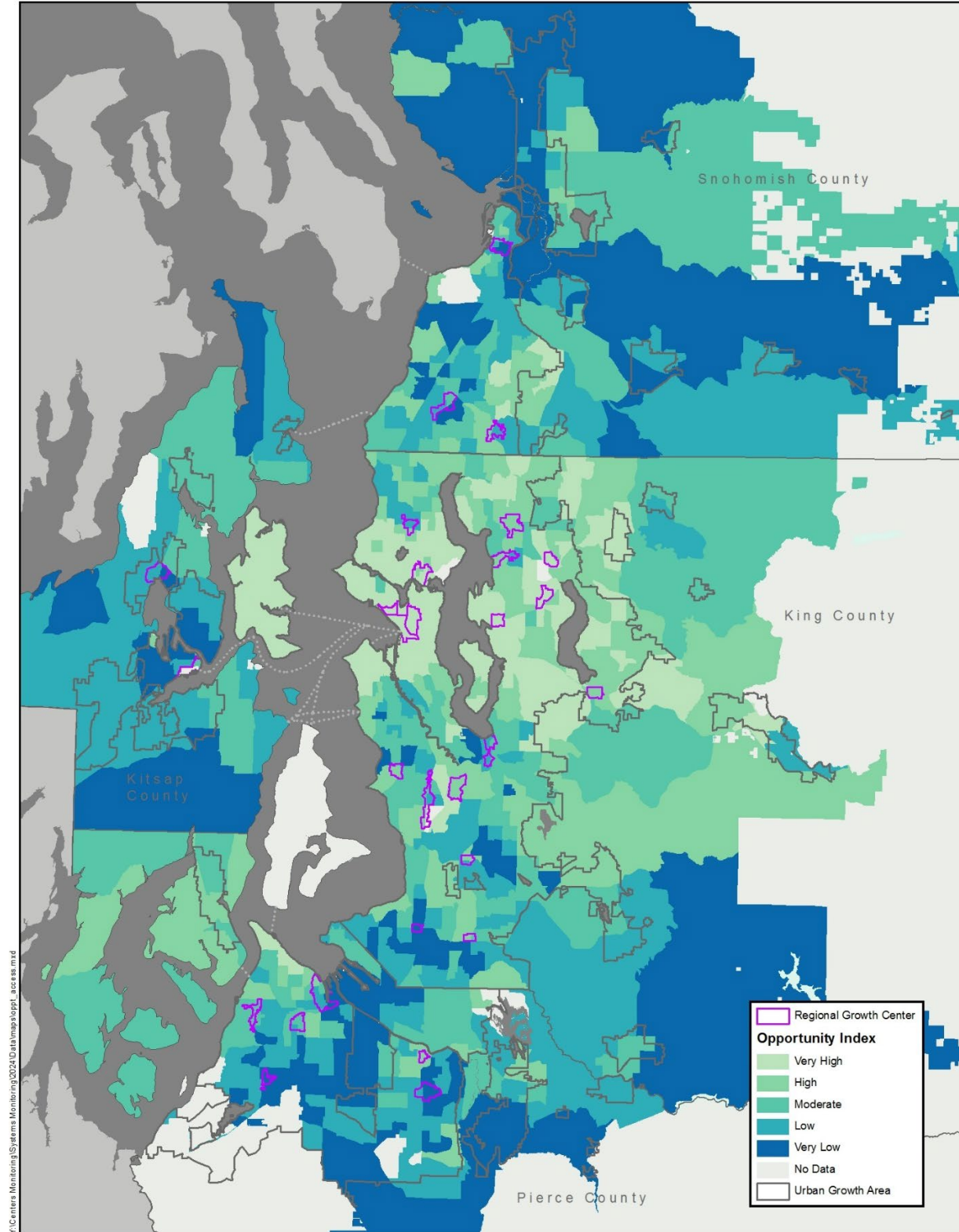
Regional Growth Centers: Opportunity

PSRC's [Opportunity Mapping](#) combines measures of five key elements of neighborhood opportunity and positive life outcomes: education, economic health, housing and neighborhood quality, mobility and transportation, and health and environment. The level of opportunity score (very low, low, moderate, high, very high) is determined by sorting all census tracts into quintiles based on their index scores.

Residents in regional growth centers have higher access to opportunities than those living outside of centers. Seventy-four percent of residents in centers live in an area classified as High or Very High Opportunity, while 37% of residents outside of centers live in an area classified as High or Very High Opportunity.



Map 7 – Access to Opportunity and Regional Growth Centers



Source: PSRC Opportunity Index

2025 Regional Centers System Monitoring Report



Environment and Public Health

Objective: Centers create safe, clean, livable, complete and healthy communities that promote physical, mental and social well-being. Centers provide access to urban open spaces, mitigate climate change impacts and reduce greenhouse gas emissions for residents and the region.

Centers should be healthy and attractive places to live and work. Through their compact urban form, regional growth centers allow residents to live active, healthy lifestyles and reduce their average vehicle miles traveled by walking, biking or taking transit to more destinations. Environmental review of VISION 2050 showed the benefits of directing growth to centers and high-capacity transit areas and protecting farms, forests and the environment overall.

Policies adopted in VISION 2050 call for the region to provide parks, trails and open space within walking distance of urban residents, reduce vehicle miles traveled and increase resilience to climate change impacts. Policies also recognize the importance of promoting physical, mental and social health through the built environment, improving health outcomes in all communities.

Questions to Answer:

- Do people living in regional growth centers have access to open space?
- Are centers healthy places to live and work?
- Are people in centers more vulnerable to climate change impacts?

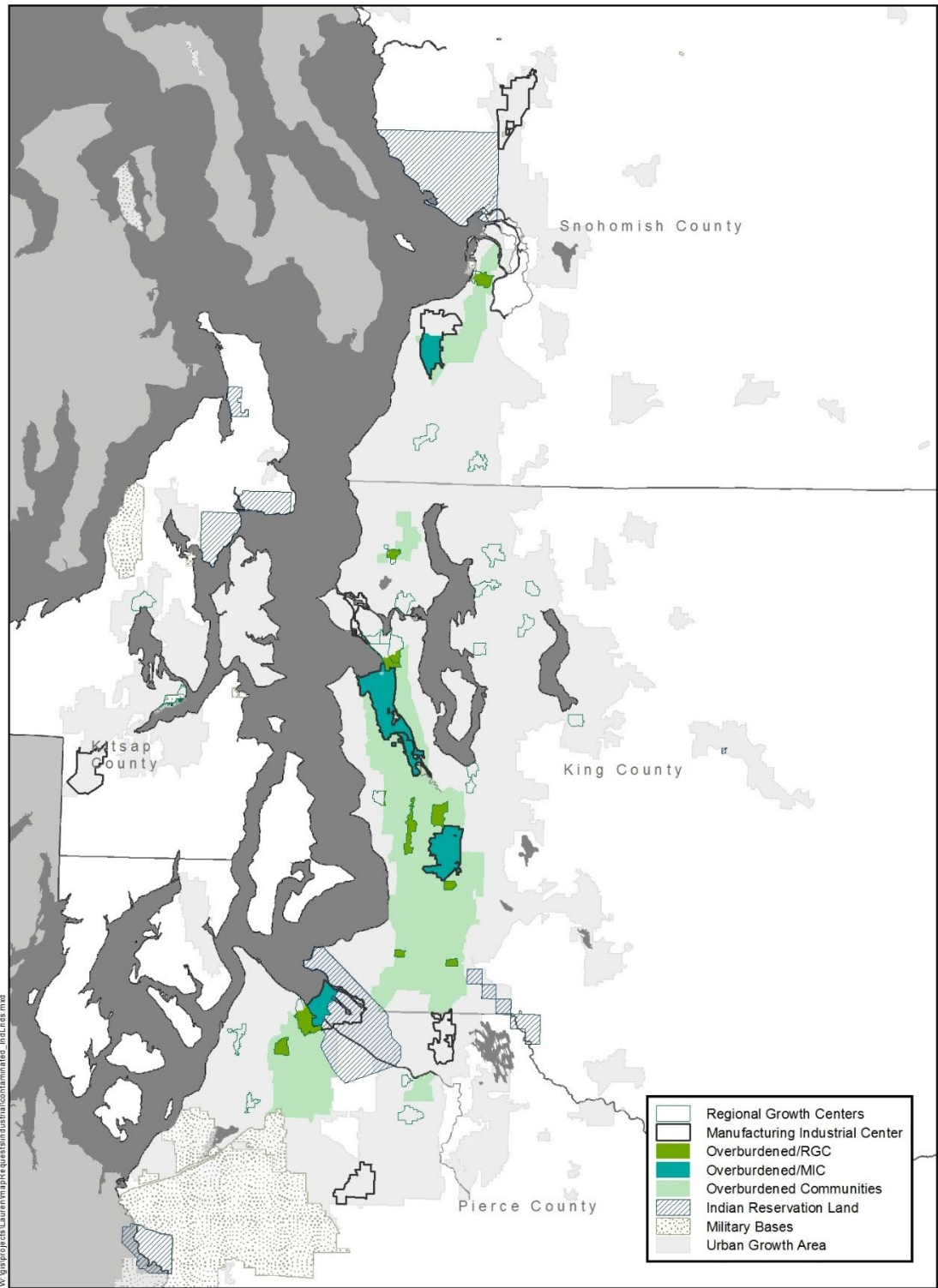
Key Findings for Regional Growth Centers:

- On average, regional growth centers have relatively low climate vulnerability. Most residents live in areas with low vulnerability compared to the nation and comparable vulnerability levels to the rest of the region.
- Residents of regional growth centers are more likely to have easy access to parks when compared to the average resident of the Puget Sound region.
- Except for residents of King County centers, residents of regional growth centers have slightly poorer health outcomes than the average resident of their respective county.
- Across the region, regional growth center residents drive fewer miles than those outside of centers.



Centers and Overly Burdened Communities

Map 8 – Overly Burdened Communities and Regional Centers



Source: Washington Department of Ecology

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The [Washington Department of Ecology](#) identified 16 areas in Washington that are overburdened and highly impacted by criteria air pollution. They define overburdened communities as ranking high on the [Washington Environmental Health Disparities map](#) and/or EPA's EJScreen mapping tool and having an elevated level of criteria air pollution. In combination, the designation from Ecology identifies where vulnerable populations face more risk or exposure to pollution.

At the state level, overburdened communities include a mix of urban, suburban and rural places. They vary in population, from about 1,500 to more than 200,000 people. They also range in area, from less than three square miles to 173 square miles. Together, they represent more than 1.2 million people or about 15.5% of Washington's population.

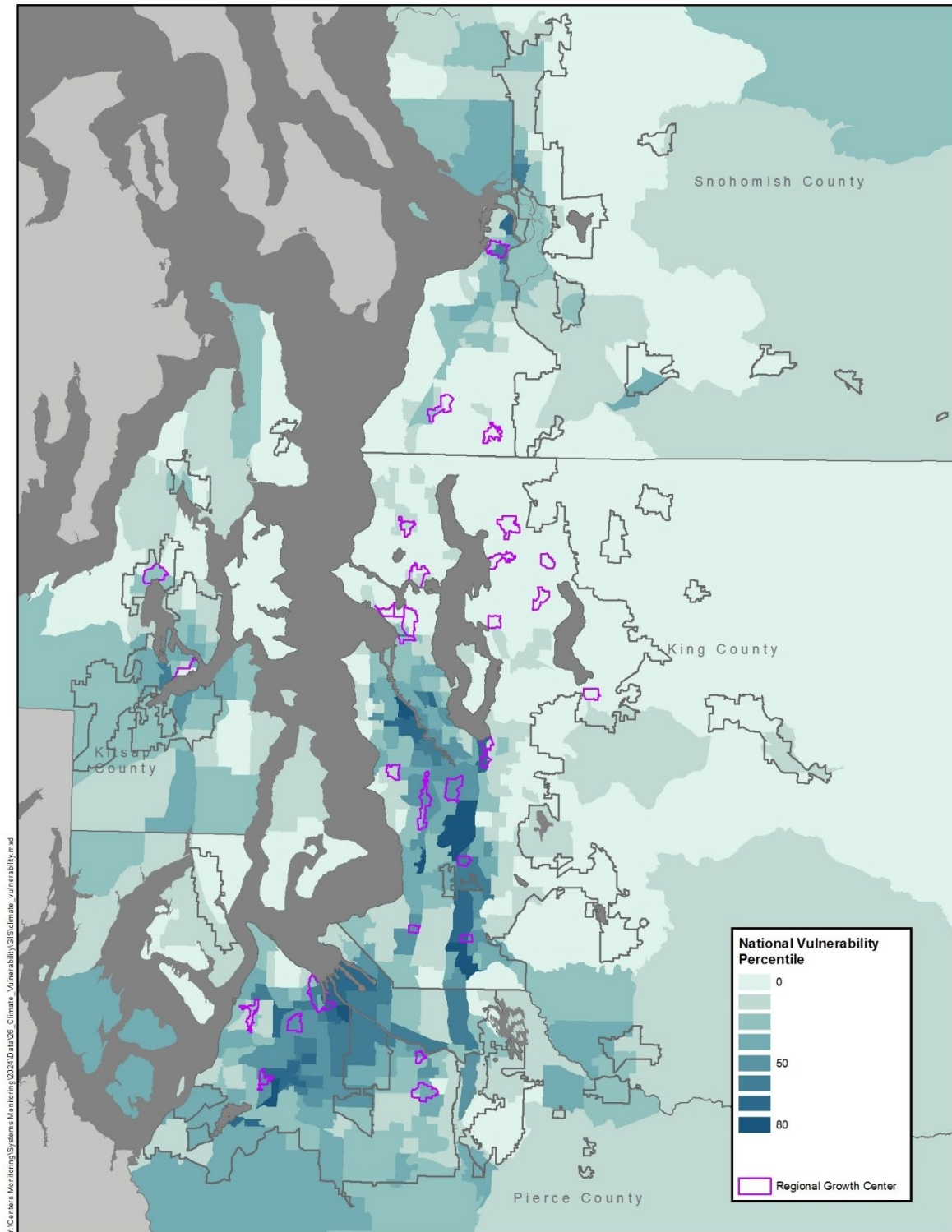
Six MICs (60%) are located in overburdened communities. In these areas, industrial uses are prioritized and may contribute to the criteria air pollution responsible for the overburdened designation. Incompatible residential uses in these areas risk putting residents in proximity to the associated noise and air quality impacts. Although residents of MICs account for only 1% of the region's population, the population in MICs increased by 39% from 2010 to 2023.

Fifteen RGCs (50%) are located in overburdened communities, many of which are close to industrial areas and major highways. While population growth is targeted for these centers, strategies to mitigate air quality impacts may be necessary.



Regional Growth Centers: Climate Vulnerability

Map 9 – Climate Vulnerability and Regional Growth Centers



Source: U.S. Climate Vulnerability Index



The [U.S. Climate Vulnerability Index](#) is a composite index including both baseline (community-level) vulnerabilities, as well as climate change risk factors. The index combines data sources across seven distinct domains and assigns a value to each census tract to summarize the climate vulnerability for that area.

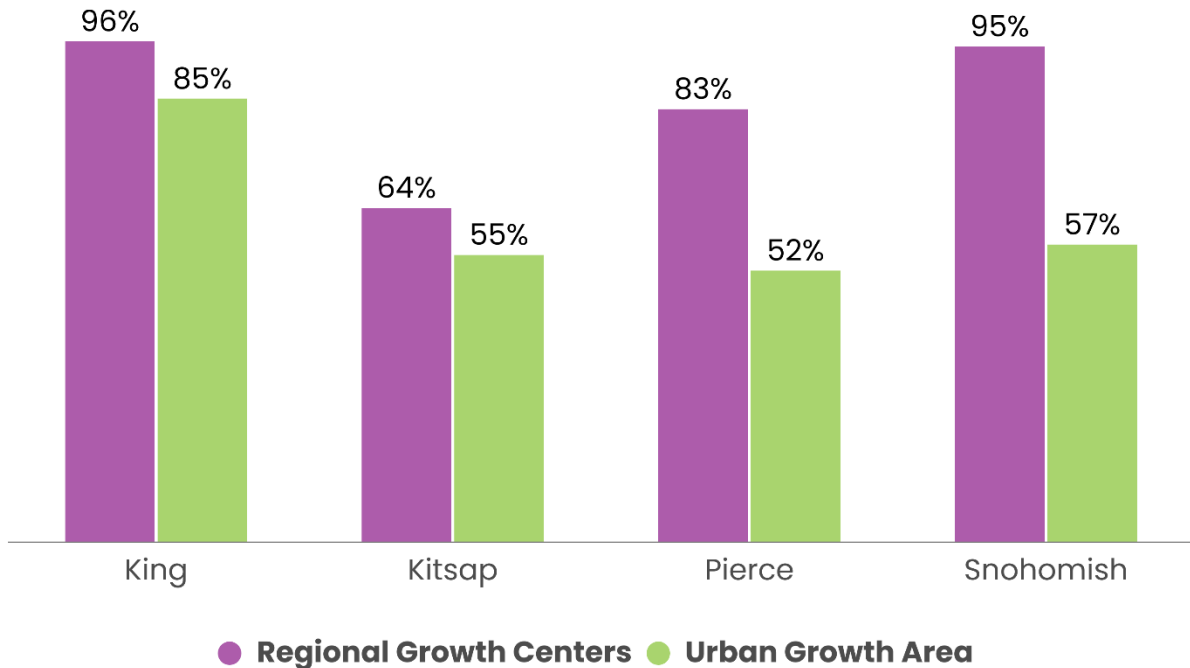
Climate vulnerability in the central Puget Sound region is low relative to the nation. King, Kitsap and Snohomish counties are all below the 15th percentile of climate vulnerability and Pierce County is in the 29th percentile. That said, there is much larger variation at the census tract level, and tracts in the region range from the 0th percentile to the 73rd percentile. In many of the census tracts rated at higher climate vulnerability, vulnerability is driven significantly by community baseline factors (health, social, economic and environmental factors), rather than by climate impact factors (risk of flooding, extreme heat, etc.).

- On average, 92% of regional growth center residents live in areas below the national median for climate vulnerability, and 77% live in areas below the 25th percentile of climate vulnerability.
- In comparison, 95% of the region's residents live in areas with below median climate vulnerability.



Regional Growth Centers: Parks

Figure 36 – Percentage of Regional Growth Center Residents Living Within ½ Mile of a Park

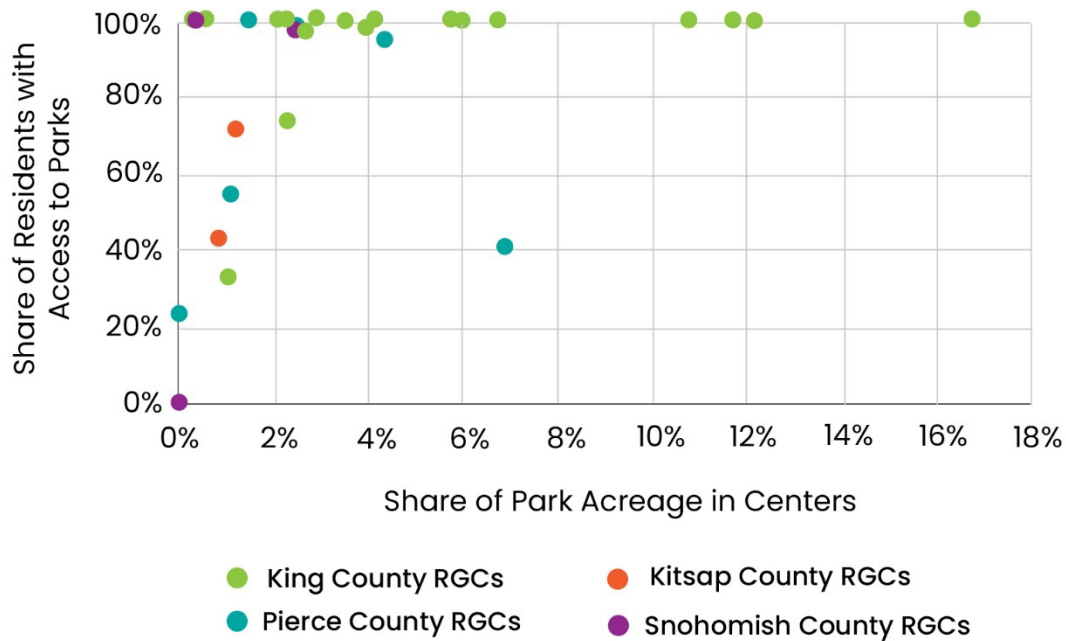


Source: [Trust for Public Land, ParkServe Database: 2016-2018](#)

Residents of regional growth centers are significantly more likely to have access to a park than urban residents in the rest of the region. Ninety-three percent of regional growth center residents live within ½ mile of a park, while 72% of the region’s urban residents live near a park.



Figure 37 – Share of Residents with Access to Parks Compared to Regional Growth Center Park Land Share



Source: [Trust for Public Land, ParkServe Database: 2016-2018](#)

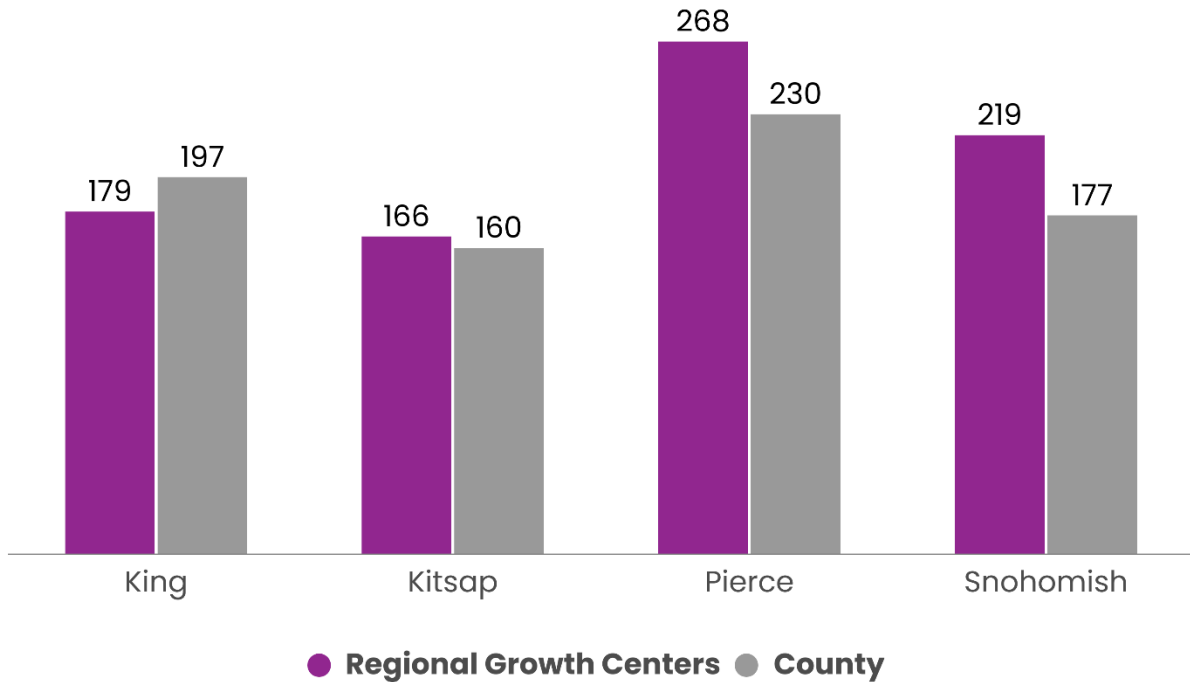
While many residents of centers have access to parks, parks make up only 4% of regional growth center acreage on average.

Park acreage as a share of the center varies significantly across centers, from 0 to 17% of total acreage. With park access as a goal in VISION 2050 (MPP-En-15), location can be more important than size, as some centers with below average park area still provide universal access to parks.



Regional Growth Centers: Health

Figure 38 – Cardiovascular Disease Mortality, Rate per 100,000 (Age Adjusted)



Source: Washington Tracking Network, 2020

In total, residents of regional growth centers have lower rates of cardiovascular disease than the region as a whole, though there are notable differences by county. Residents of regional growth centers in Kitsap, Pierce and Snohomish counties have higher rates of cardiovascular disease and lower life expectancy when compared to the average resident of their respective counties. Throughout the region, health outcome disparities are associated with areas with concentrations of people of color, people with disabilities and households with children.



Regional Growth Centers: Environment



Vehicle miles traveled is an important measure to understand environmental impacts. In 2023, the average resident living in a regional growth center drove about 10 miles per weekday, compared with 16 miles per weekday for residents living outside of regional growth centers. Residents of Metro RGCs drove less than 50% of the vehicle miles than people living outside of RGCs.

Source: PSRC Household Travel Survey: 2023



Economic Development

Objective: Centers help the region maintain a competitive economic edge by offering employers locations that are well-connected to a regional transportation network and are both attractive and accessible to workers.

Regional centers are a critical piece of the Regional Economic Strategy, which provides a strategic blueprint for a resilient future that expands economic opportunity for all residents. VISION 2050 and the Regional Growth Strategy call for both regional growth centers and manufacturing/industrial centers to continue serving a major role in the regional economy. Centers draw people throughout the region for employment, commerce and entertainment.

Policies adopted in VISION 2050 call for concentrating economic growth in centers, encouraging the development of established and emerging industries, and maximizing the use of existing manufacturing/industrial centers. The indicators presented in this section highlight the current role of centers in our regional economic ecosystem.

Questions to Answer:

- Are centers serving as regional destinations?
- What types of jobs are available in centers?
- Do centers account for a significant share of the region's industrial jobs?

Key Findings for Regional Growth Centers:

- Centers are critical destinations within the region for both commuting and non-work trips.
- More than half of all jobs in regional growth centers are classified as service-sector jobs, but centers also have high concentrations of employment in several other key sectors.

Key Findings for Manufacturing/Industrial Centers:

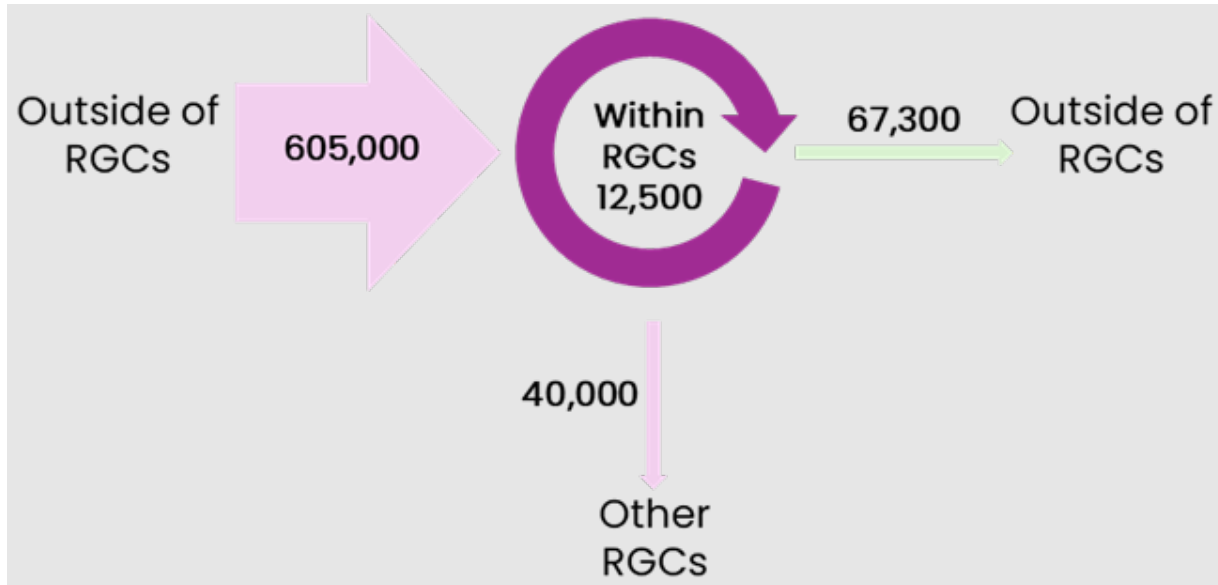
- Manufacturing/industrial centers provide significant concentrations of employment in the Manufacturing, Wholesale, Transportation and Utilities, and Construction and Resources industries.



- Most land in manufacturing/industrial centers is currently in industrial use, and several centers have significant shares of vacant or redevelopable land.
- MICs continue to be home to a significant share of the region’s industrial jobs.

Regional Growth Centers: Travel

Figure 39 – Regional Growth Center Worker Inflow/Outflow

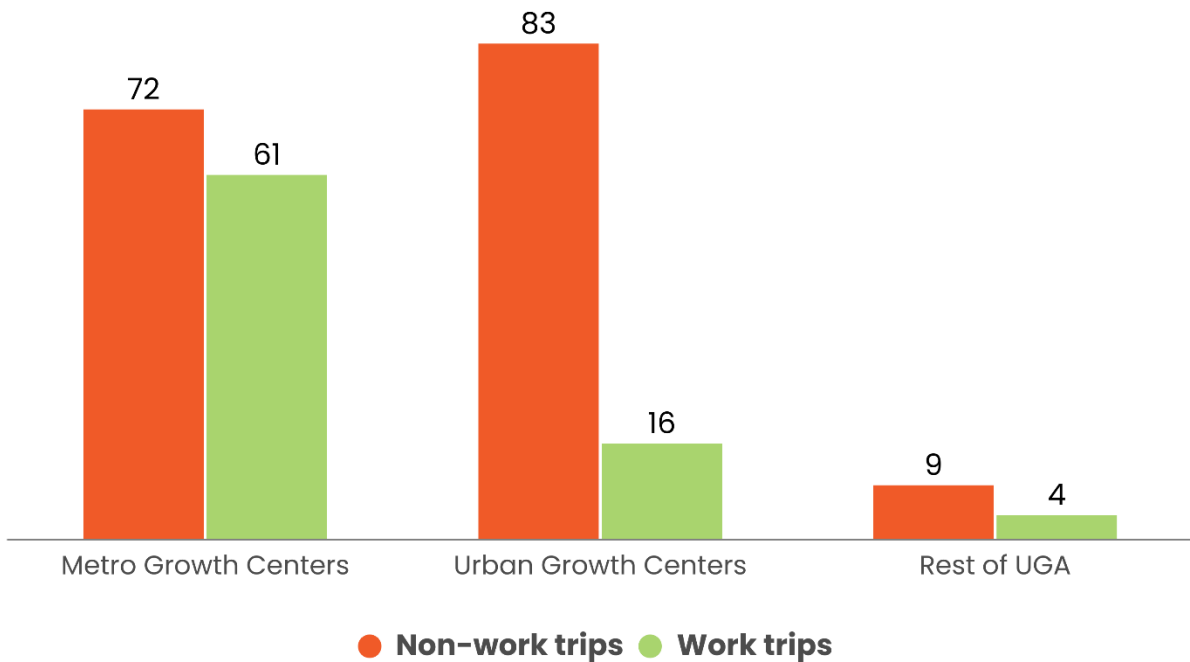


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES) Origin-Destination table: 2021

Regional growth centers are major employment centers, and 92% of people who work in centers commute from elsewhere in the region. One-third of residents in centers commute to a different regional center for work, while 11% live and work in the same center.



Figure 40 – Trips per Acre to Regional Growth Centers, by Center Type



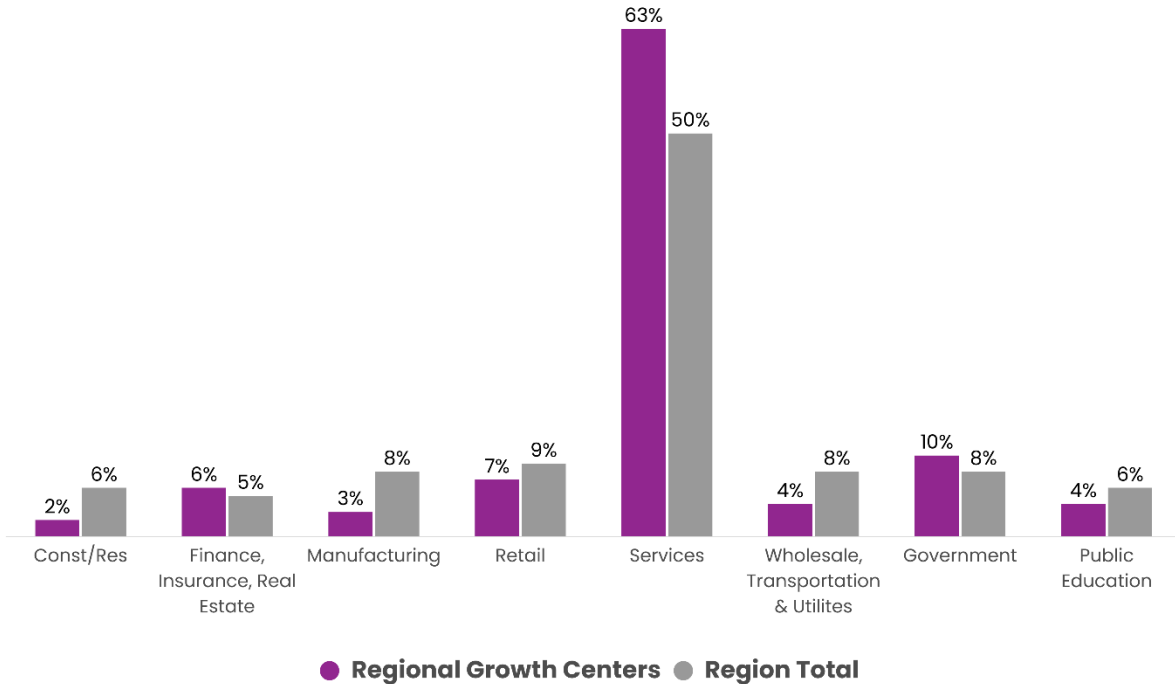
Source: PSRC Household Travel Survey: 2023

Regional growth centers serve as major regional destinations. For their size, significantly more trips are made to metro and urban growth centers than other parts of the urban growth area. Urban growth centers, which are home to many regional shopping areas, have the most non-work trips by acre (83 per day/per acre) and significantly fewer work trips per acre than metro growth centers. Many of these trips to urban centers are for meals, shopping and escorting others.



Regional Growth Centers: Employment

Figure 41 – Employment Distribution in Regional Growth Centers



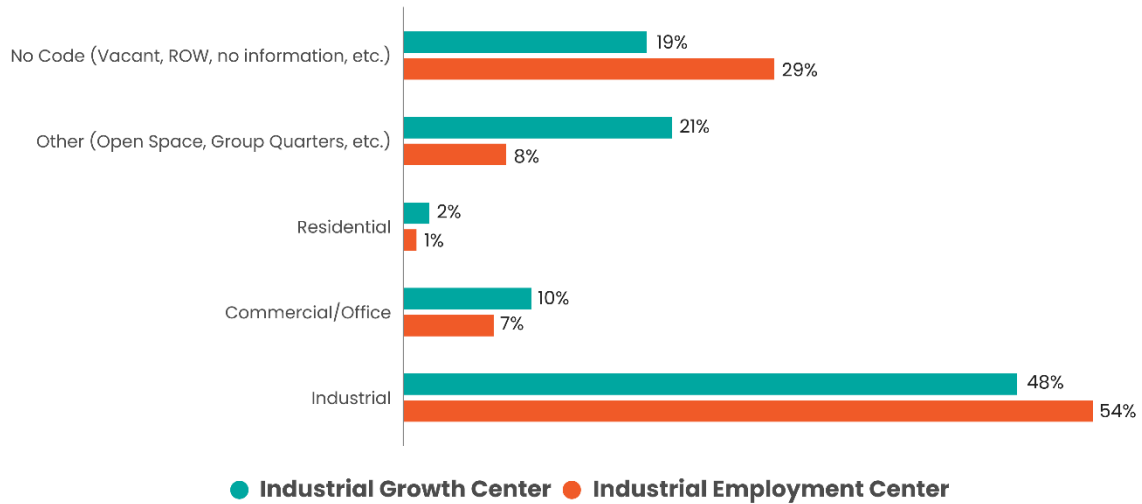
Source: PSRC Covered Employment: 2022

Regional growth centers have high concentrations of Finance, Insurance and Real Estate jobs, as well as Services and Government jobs, when compared to the Puget Sound region overall.



Manufacturing/Industrial Centers: Industrial Lands

Figure 43 – Share of Land Uses in Manufacturing/Industrial Centers

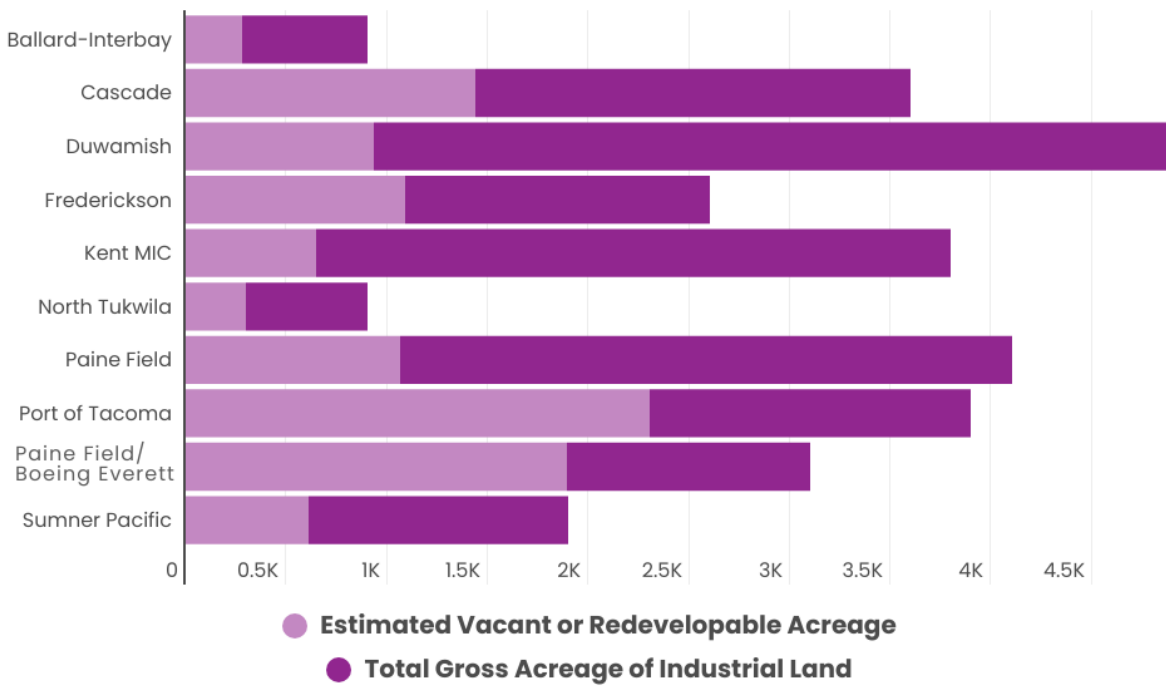


Source: PSRC 2018 UrbanSim Model Database

On average, 52% of land in manufacturing/industrial centers is currently occupied by industrial uses. The share of industrial land use in industrial growth MICs is lower than in industrial employment MICs. Residential land use is very low within MICs.



Figure 44 – Manufacturing/Industrial Center Size and Estimated Redevelopable Acreage



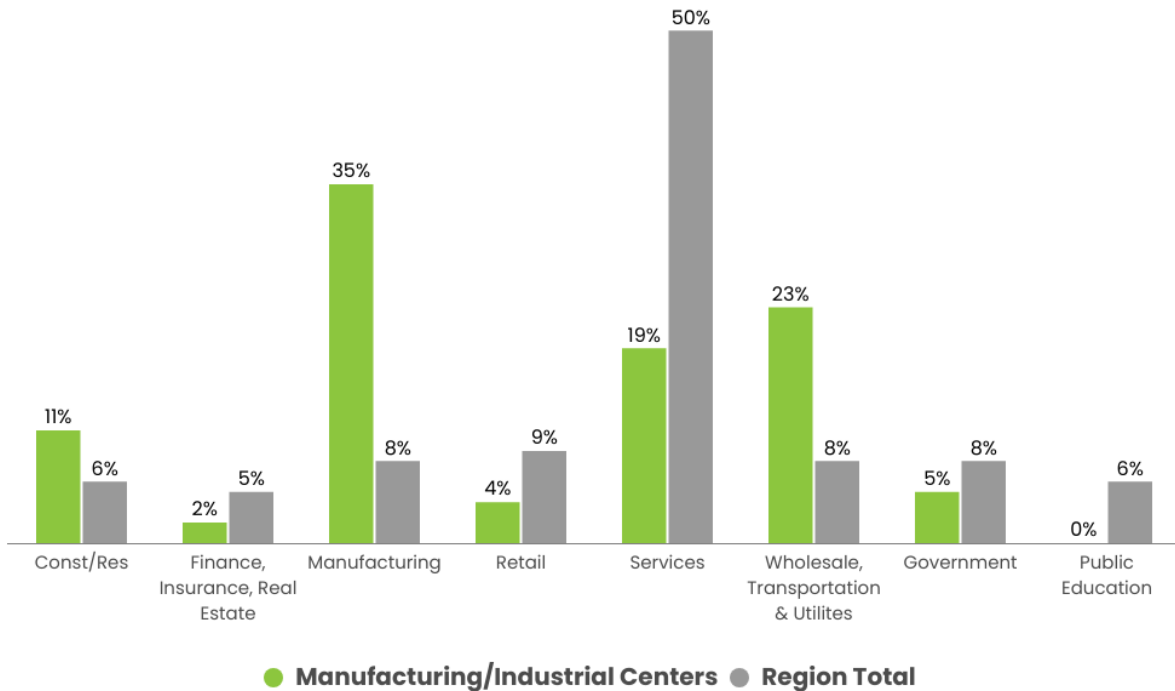
Source: PSRC Industrial Lands Inventory: 2023

MICs with the highest share of vacant or redevelopable land include Puget Sound Industrial Center-Bremerton (61%), Port of Tacoma (59%), Frederickson (42%) and Cascade (40%). Although some MICs have a larger amount of available land, they may face other challenges to development, such as access to transportation corridors, limited infrastructure, proximity to workforce and other amenities.



Manufacturing/Industrial Centers: Employment

Figure 42 – Employment Distribution in Manufacturing/Industrial Centers

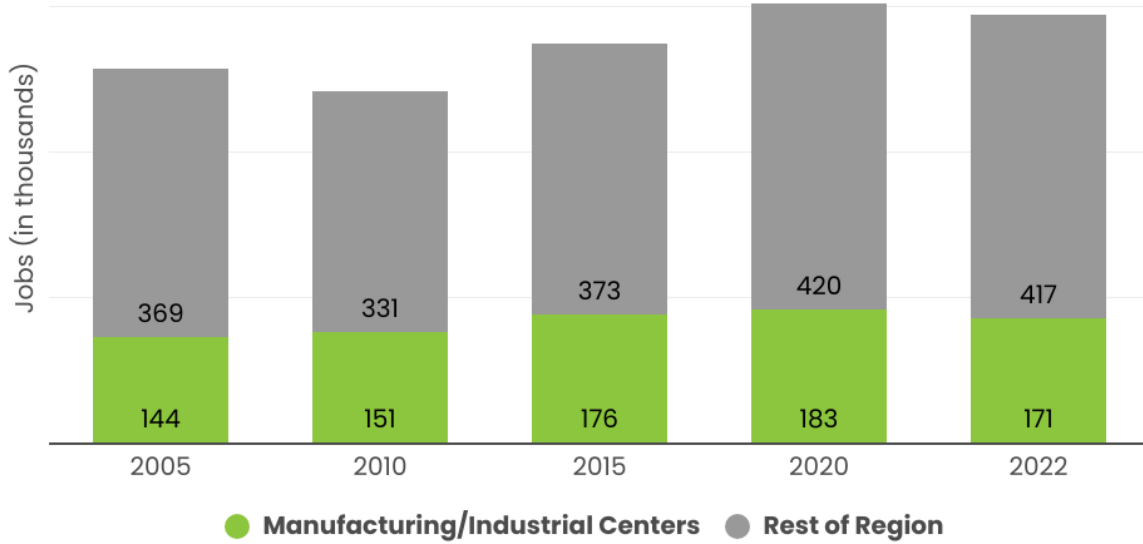


Source: PSRC Covered Employment: 2022; PSRC Industrial Lands Inventory: 2023

Manufacturing/industrial centers have several significant concentrations of employment relative to the region, including Manufacturing, Wholesale Trade, Transportation, Utilities, and Construction and Resources.



Figure 45 – Share of Region’s Industrial Jobs in Manufacturing/Industrial Centers

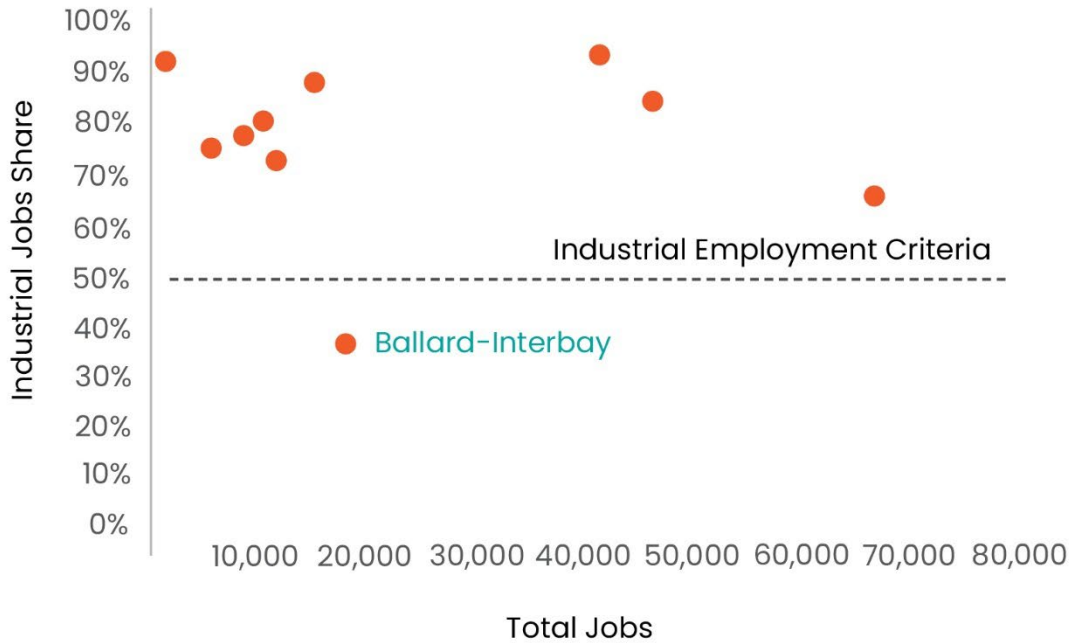


Source: PSRC Covered Employment Database: 2005–2022; PSRC Industrial Lands Inventory: 2023

MICs continue to be major industrial employment centers –76% of all jobs in MICs are categorized as industrial. MICs represent 29% of the region’s industrial jobs and 11% of the region’s overall jobs. While the number of industrial jobs in MICs has increased since 2005 by 18%, the number of non-industrial jobs has risen at a faster rate (37%).



Figure 46 – Share of Industrial Jobs in Manufacturing/Industrial Centers by Size



Source: PSRC Covered Employment. 2022; PSRC Industrial Lands Inventory. 2023

At least half of jobs in manufacturing/industrial centers are required to be classified as industrial. Drawn from research on industrial lands, PSRC maintains a list of employment sector codes that can be classified as industrial jobs. Most MICs have more than 70% industrial employment, well above the MIC eligibility threshold. However, MICs experience competition for commercial and office uses, and one MIC is currently below the 50% threshold.



Policy Considerations

Many measures show that regional centers are on the right track overall, though some areas may warrant additional consideration of requirements for regional centers. Areas to consider in future updates to the Regional Centers Framework or VISION 2050 include:

Growth and Density

- Given the current pace of development across all regional growth centers, additional regional centers may help to meaningfully accommodate 65% of population growth and 75% of employment growth.
- While PSRC monitors regional centers over time, there are no specific requirements that regional centers demonstrate actual growth. The VISION 2050 Regional Growth Strategy relies on regional centers to grow significantly over time. PSRC should continue to track growth in regional growth centers and consider potential updates to regional criteria.
- Several regional centers have grown beyond the minimum planned density requirements. Density requirements for regional growth centers and employment goals for manufacturing/industrial centers may warrant additional review to address this growth.
- The designation of countywide centers is serving an important role to recognize the smaller areas that are also accommodating new growth. Countywide centers show very promising data on overall density, and many countywide centers have higher densities than the minimum requirements for regional centers. Future updates to the Regional Centers Framework or VISION 2050 may consider the enhanced role of countywide centers in accommodating new regional growth.

Housing

- Regional growth center criteria do not require specific housing goals or affordable housing tools. Particularly in light of new requirements from HB 1220 and the importance of multifamily housing to provide affordable housing, regional growth centers have a key role to play in accommodating affordable



housing. PSRC should consider expectations in planning for affordable housing in regional growth centers.

- In addition to affordability tools, larger housing units may be needed in the future to accommodate significant population growth. Additional research or criteria may help support housing for larger households.

Equity, Health and Opportunity

- VISION 2050 anticipates that a significant share of future housing growth will be focused in regional growth centers. Centers represent a crucial opportunity to address equitable access to affordable housing, services, high-quality transit and employment, as well as to build on the community assets currently in centers. PSRC should consider review of the Regional Centers Framework to consider ways to support equitable outcomes for all.
- Health and quality of life indicators are not as favorable for urban growth centers. To improve quality of life as well as growth potential in these centers, additional research may be needed on strategies that enhance livability, promote well-being and address disparities to improve outcomes in these centers.
- While population in manufacturing/industrial centers continues to be relatively small, population growth is not on the right trajectory. Housing growth is discouraged, but PSRC does not have a specific policy to restrict or prohibit new housing in manufacturing/industrial centers.

Mobility

- To meet the region's climate and mobility goals, encouraging walk, bike and transit trips is important. Urban growth centers are not showing reduced single-occupant vehicle trips compared to the rest of the region. For urban growth centers in particular, more focus and potentially more funding resources may be needed to encourage walk and transit trips.



Next Steps

Regional centers will continue to play an important role in the region for decades to come. Tracking data and making adjustments over time will be essential to help the region achieve its goals for regional centers.

Jurisdictions around the central Puget Sound region have completed significant work to plan for growth out to 2044, including local planning efforts for regional centers. This monitoring report will be updated in 2026 to include these changes, which may include new growth targets and center boundaries. The 2026 update will also incorporate any changes to the list of regional centers following PSRC's redesignation process and application period for new centers in 2025, as well as new data.

In 2026, PSRC's boards will also consider any future updates to the Regional Centers Framework to refine criteria or address emerging policy issues.

