

Tukwila Land Use Background Report

Section 1 – Planning Context

Tukwila boasts a great diversity of natural features and built form across the approximately 9.6 square miles of areas with the City Limits. In the interest of supplying adequate and affordable housing, ample, and well paying jobs and an enjoyable, healthy environment to live and interact, the City designates comprehensive plan designations and zoning designations, encouraging the types of uses and form of development and redevelopment to achieve these aims.

The Land Use Element frames existing conditions, regional framework, including growth targets, and other considerations for how and where the City grows.

Land Capacity

The King County Urban Growth Capacity Report precedes the periodic update of the comprehensive plan, determining capacity for additional net housing units and employment (jobs) within each King County Jurisdiction. Data used to determine capacity included development from 2006 through 2018. Figure 1 below details the housing and employment capacity reported for the City between 2019 and 2044.

		Total Capacity
Housing Units	Growth Capacity	5,577
	Pipeline Units	2,642
	Total	8,219
Employment	Growth Capacity	30,675
	Pipeline Jobs	3,074
	Total	33,749

Figure 1. Growth Capacity

Pipeline units and jobs included in capacity have largely not come to fruition, with the exception of some housing units as further detailed in the Housing Background Report. Even without the actualization of pipeline units and jobs, the City has adequate capacity to achieve housing and employment growth targets.

Growth Targets

Consistent with the Growth Management Act, the City has been assigned growth targets for both additional employment (jobs) and housing units for the period between 2019 and 2044.

	2018 Baseline	Additional Unit/ Job Target	2044 Total Target
Housing (Units)	7,869	6,500	14,369
Employment (Jobs)	44,966	15,890	60,856

From 2019 to present, the City has seen significant housing growth reducing the total number of housing units needed to achieve the housing growth target by 2044, detailed further in the Housing Element and Housing Background Report.

Reasonable Measures

Due to Tukwila’s low housing and employment growth rate compared to the target rates and number of new housing units and jobs achieved, the City was recommended to adopt reasonable measures by King County to address this inconsistency. Specifically, King County recommends adopting “Action(s) to encourage and / or incentivize residential development”, and “Action(s) to encourage and / or incentivize non-residential development”.

Policies and implementation strategies related to increasing residential and non-residential development can be found within the Housing and Economic Development Element and associated materials.

Comprehensive Plan Designations

Comprehensive Plan Designations provide general direction for desired land uses in the designation or anticipated in future development in the designation over the planning period. Zoning Districts should correspond with Comprehensive Plan Designations when areas are redesignated as a new Zoning District.

Descriptions of Comprehensive Plan Designations are below and the corresponding zoning classifications for each designation can be found in Figure 2.

Residential

- Community Residential (CR) designated areas are characterized a variety of low and medium-density housing types including but not limited to single-family, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhomes, cottage housing, courtyard apartments, accessory housing units, and their accessory uses, along with educational, institutional, and

recreational uses. These uses and densities are modified where covered by the Commercial Redevelopment and Urban Renewal Overlays.

- High Density Residential (HDR) designated areas are characterized by larger and higher density multi-family buildings and their accessory uses, along with educational, institutional, and recreational uses. These uses and densities are modified where covered by the Commercial Redevelopment and Urban Renewal Overlays.

Commercial

- Office (O) designated areas are characterized by professional and commercial office structures mixed with retail.

Mixed Use

- Mixed Use Office (MUO) designated areas are characterized by professional and commercial office structures, mixed with retail and residential uses. These uses and densities are modified where covered by the Tukwila South Overlay.
- Neighborhood Commercial Center (NCC) designated areas are areas characterized and scaled to serve multiple residential areas with a diverse mix of uses. Uses include commercial; residential, including senior citizen housing; retail; service; office; and recreational and community facilities, generally along a transportation corridor. These uses are modified where covered by the Urban Renewal Overlay.
- Residential Commercial Center (RCC) designated areas are pedestrian-friendly areas characterized and scaled to serve a local neighborhood, with a diverse mix of uses. Uses include certain commercial; residential; retail; service; office; and recreational and community facilities.
- Regional Commercial (RC) designated areas are characterized by residential, mixed use, commercial services, offices, lodging, entertainment, and retail activities.
- Regional Commercial Mixed-Use (RCM) designated areas are areas characterized by commercial services, offices, lodging, entertainment, retail activities and associated warehousing, and certain accessory light industrial uses. Residential uses mixed with certain commercial uses are also allowed.

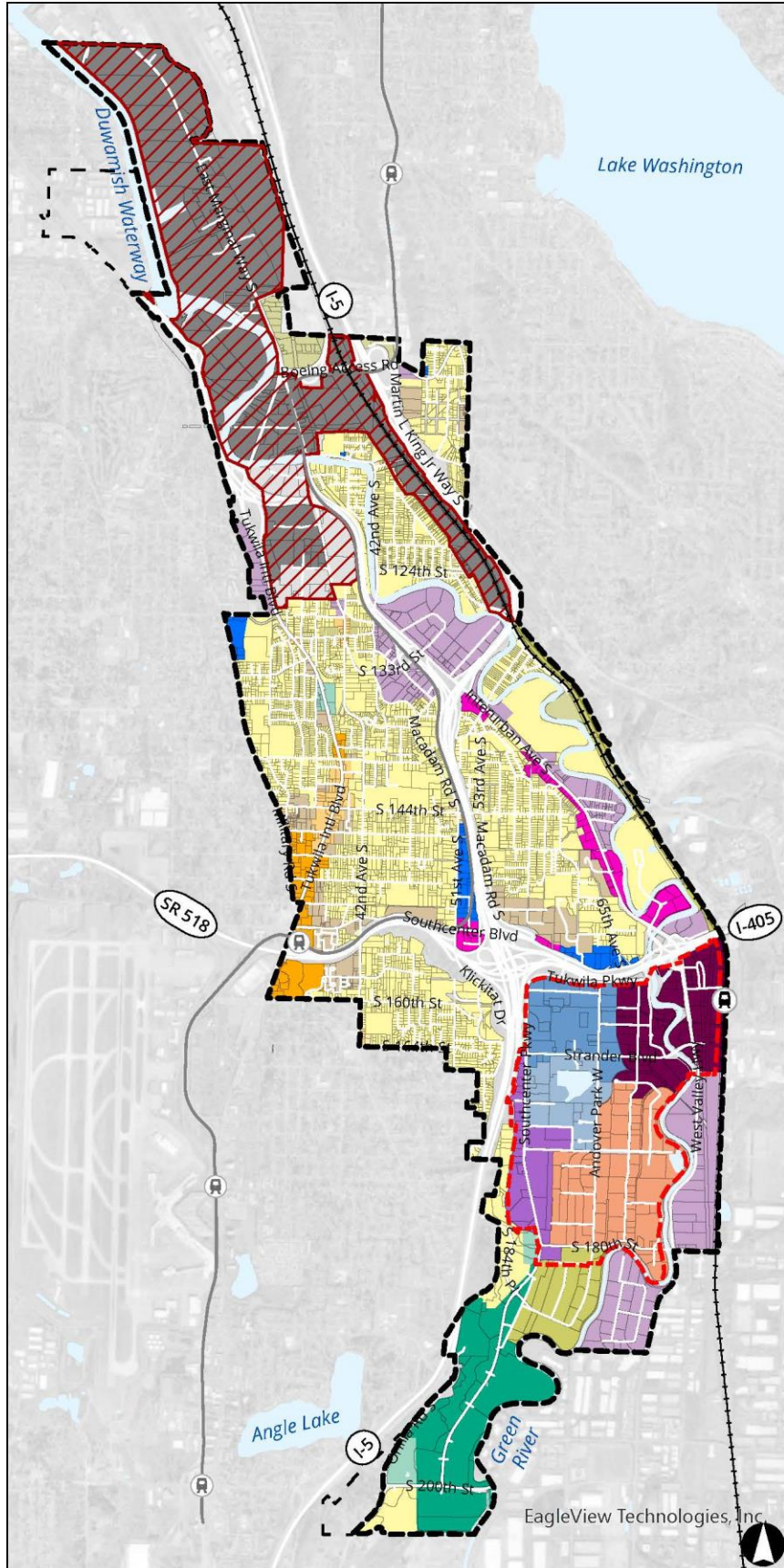
- The Tukwila Urban Center (TUC) designated Southcenter Urban Center subarea is intended to develop as a high-density, regionally-oriented, mixed-use center. Residential development is encouraged in proximity to water amenities, or within walking distance of the Sounder commuter rail/Amtrak station or the bus transit center. It contains five sub-districts differentiated through uses and development standards: Regional Center (RC), Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), Pond (P), Commercial Corridor (CC), and Workplace (WP).
- The Tukwila Valley South (TVS) designated areas are characterized by high-intensity regional uses that include commercial services, offices, light industry, warehousing and retail, with heavy industrial subject to a Conditional Use Permit. Mixed-use residential is conditionally permitted within 500 feet of the Green River. These uses and densities are modified where covered by the Tukwila South Overlay.

Industrial

- Commercial/Light Industrial (C/LI) designated areas are characterized by a mix of commercial, office or light industrial uses.
- Light Industrial (LI) designated areas are characterized by distributive and light manufacturing uses, with supportive commercial and office uses.
- Heavy Industrial (HI) designated areas characterized by heavy or bulk manufacturing uses and distributive and light manufacturing uses, with supportive commercial and office uses. These uses are modified where covered by the Tukwila South Overlay.
- Manufacturing Industrial Center/-Light (MIC/L) designated areas are a major regional employment area containing distributive, light manufacturing and limited office uses, with supportive commercial and office uses.
- Manufacturing Industrial Center/-Heavy (MIC/H) designated areas are a major regional employment area containing distributive, light manufacturing and heavy manufacturing uses, with supportive commercial and office uses.

Comprehensive Plan Designation	Corresponding Zoning Classifications
Residential	
Community Residential (CR)	Community Residential (CR), Low Density Residential (LDR), Medium Density Residential (MDR)
High Density Residential (HDR)	High Density Residential (HDR)
Commercial	
Office (O)	Office (O)
Mixed Use	
Mixed Use Office (MUO)	Mixed Use Office (MUO)
Neighborhood Commercial Center (NCC)	Neighborhood Commercial Center (NCC)
Regional Commercial (RC)	Regional Commercial (RC)
Residential Commercial Center (RCC)	Residential Commercial Center (RCC)
Regional Commercial Mixed Use (RCM)	Regional Commercial Mixed Use (RCM)
Tukwila Urban Center (Regional Growth Center)	Commercial Corridor (TUC-CC), Pond District (TUC-PD), Regional Center (TUC-RC), Transit Oriented Development (TUC-TOD), Work Place (TUC-WP)
Tukwila Valley South (TVS)	Tukwila Valley South (TVS)
Industrial	
Commercial/Light Industrial (C/LI)	C/LI
Light Industrial (LI)	LI
Heavy Industrial (HI)	HI
Manufacturing Industrial Center/-Light (MIC/L) (Regional Employment Center)	MIC/L
Manufacturing Industrial Center/-Heavy (MIC/H) (Regional Employment Center)	MIC/H

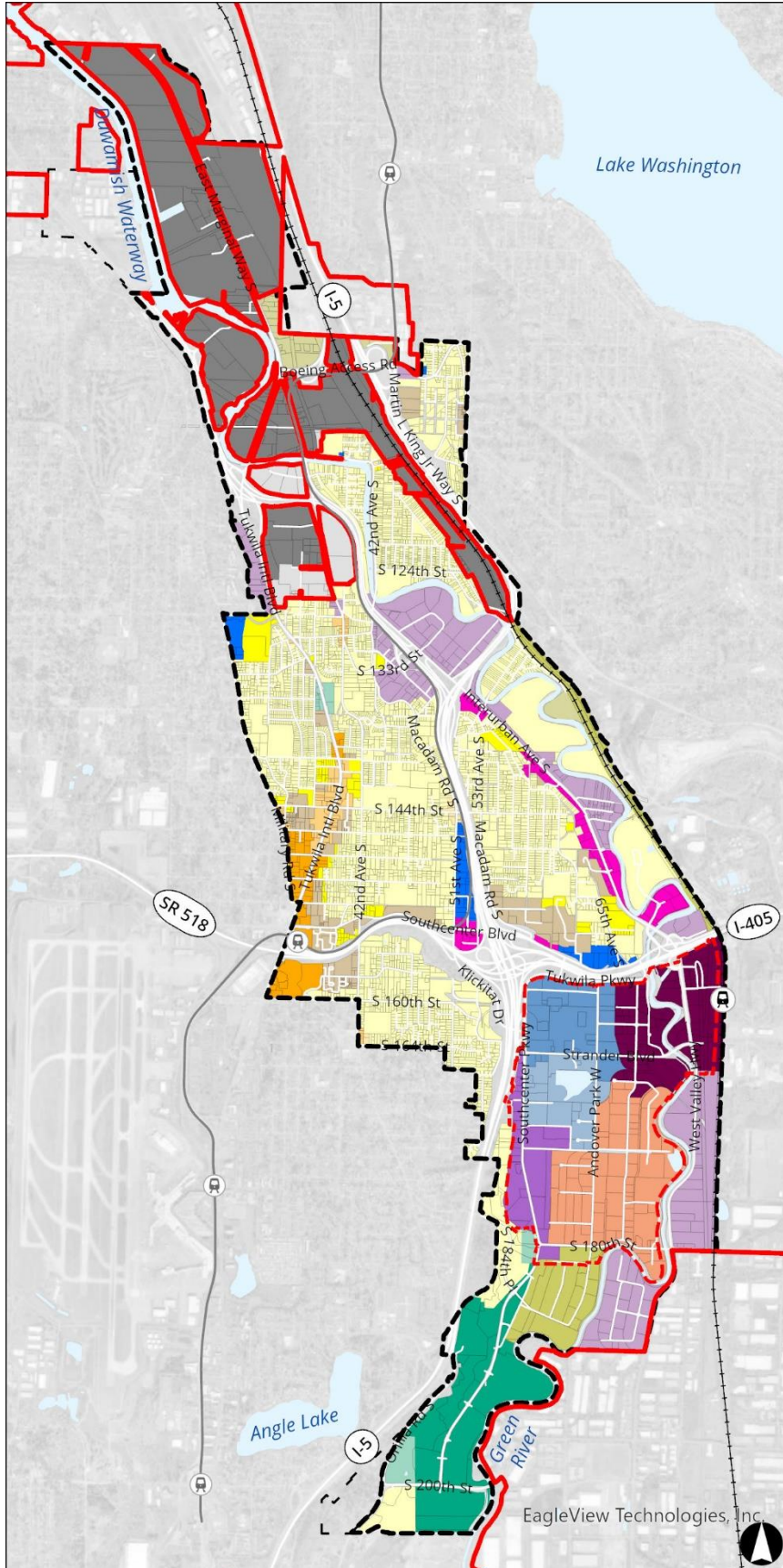
Figure 2. Comprehensive Plan Designations and Corresponding Zoning Classifications



Land Use Designations

- CR - Community Residential
 - HDR - High Density Res.
 - MUO - Mixed Use Office
 - O - Office
 - RCC - Residential Com. Center
 - NCC - Neighborhood Com. Center
 - RC - Regional Com. District
 - RCM - Regional Com. Mixed-Use
 - C/LI - Com. / Light Ind.
 - HI - Heavy Ind.
 - LI - Light Ind.
 - MIC/L - Manufacturing Ind. Center (Light)
 - MIC/H - Manufacturing Ind. Center (Heavy)
 - TVS - Tukwila Valley South
 - TUC - Pond
 - TUC - Regional Center
 - TUC - Commercial Corridor
 - TUC - Workplace
 - TUC - TOD
 - Tukwila Urban Center
 - North Tukwila
 - Manufacturing Industrial Center

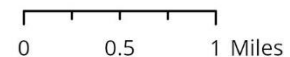
 - Link Light Rail
 - Sounder Commuter Rail
 - City Limits
 - Potential Annexation Area
- 0 0.5 1 Miles



Zoning

- HDR - High Density Res.
- MDR - Medium Density Res.
- LDR - Low Density Res.
- C/LI - Com. / Light Ind.
- HI - Heavy Ind.
- LI - Light Ind.
- MIC/H - Manufacturing Ind. Center (Heavy)
- MIC/L - Manufacturing Ind. Center (Light)
- MUO - Mixed Use Office
- NCC - Neighborhood Com. Center
- O - Office
- RC - Regional Com. District
- RCC - Residential Com. Center
- RCM - Regional Com. Mixed-Use
- TUC - Commercial Corridor
- TUC - Pond
- TUC - Regional Center
- TUC - TOD
- TUC - Workplace
- TVS - Tukwila Valley South
- Urban Center Boundary
- Manufacturing_Industrial

- Link Light Rail
- Sounder Commuter Rail
- City Limits
- Potential Annexation Area



Overlays

In addition to zoning and land use designations, Tukwila employs a number of overlays, modifying or adding additional regulations to certain geographies within the City. These include the Public Recreation Overlay, Special Height Exception Area, Special Height Limitation Area, Tukwila South Overlay and Urban Renewal Overlay. Details of each overlay are defined within the Tukwila Municipal Code.

Potential Annexation Areas

Tukwila has two designated areas of potential annexation within unincorporated King County, as shown in Figure 3.

The first potential annexation area is approximately 50 acres on the southwestern edge of current City Limits, bordering the City of SeaTac directly west of Orilla Road South. This area contains significant changes in topography, likely severely limiting development potential, and has a small number of existing single family homes across several multiacre parcels.

The second potential annexation area encompasses approximately 165 acres on the City's northwestern City Limits, bordering the City of Burien to the south, City of Seattle to the north and Unincorporated King County, generally recognized as White Center, to the west. The area consists of a substation, Hamm Creek's path of flow into the Duwamish River, the Duwamish Yacht Club, low density industrial land and a section of West Marginal Way South.

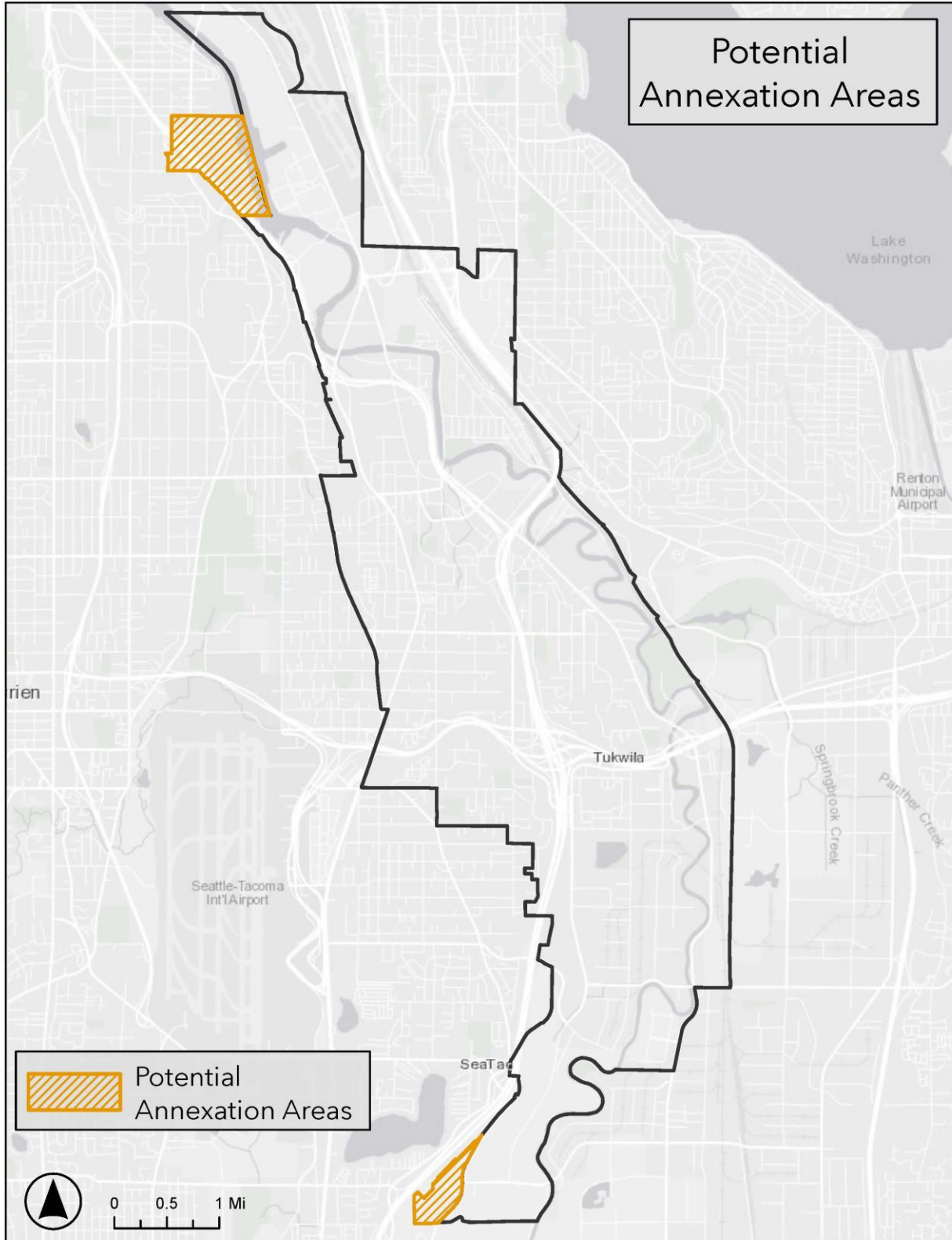


Figure 3. Potential Annexation Areas

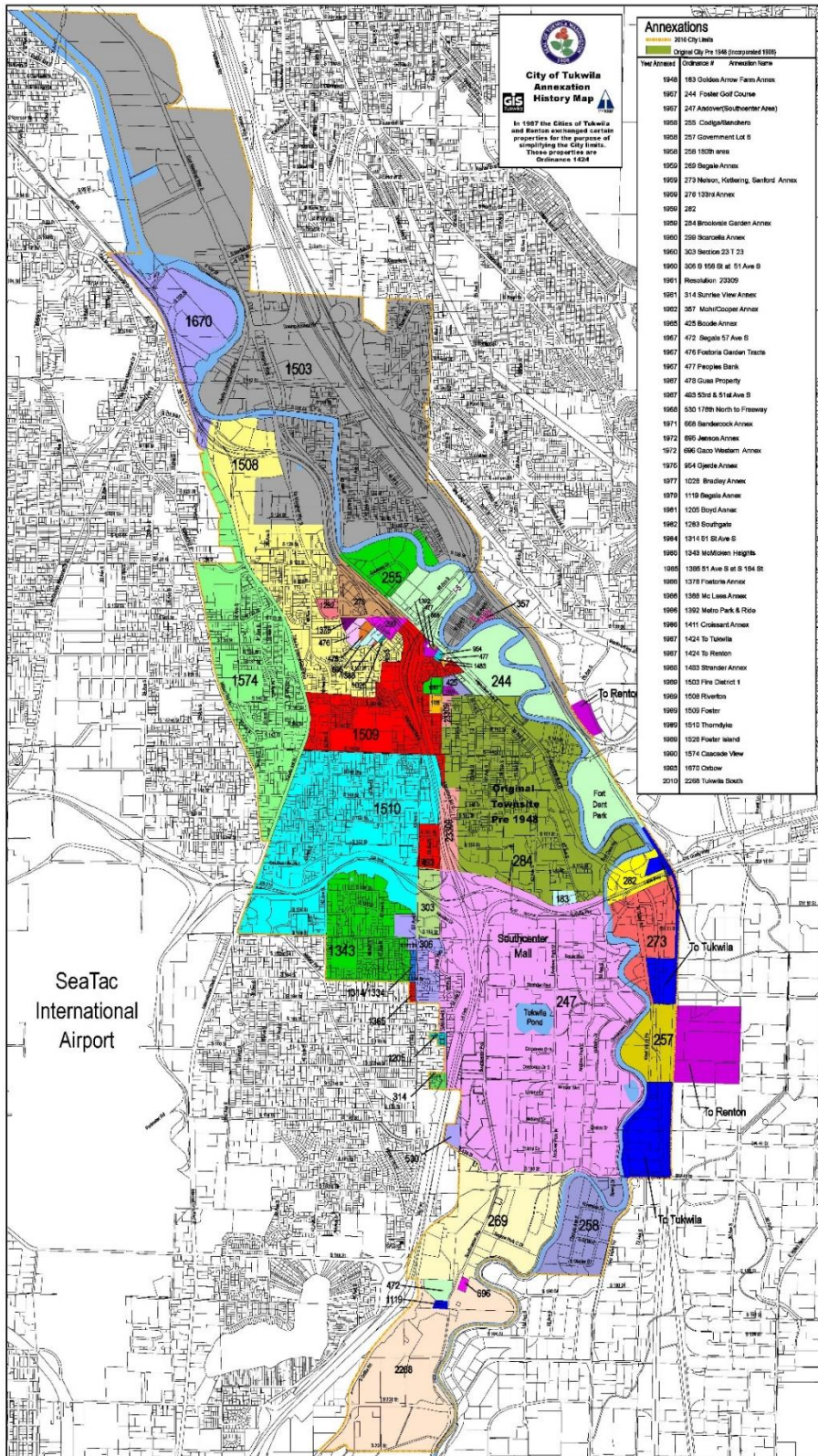


Figure 4. Historical Annexations

Zoning Classification	Acres	Percentage of City Land
LDR (Low Density Residential)	1,118.3	35.4%
MDR (Medium Density Residential)	57.7	1.8%
HDR (High Density Residential)	121.0	3.8%
MUO (Mixed Use Office)	7.3	0.2%
O (Office)	27.2	0.9%
RCC (Residential Commercial Center)	5.1	0.2%
NCC (Neighborhood Commercial Center)	28.3	0.9%
RC (Regional Commercial)	50.8	1.6%
RCM (Regional Commercial Mixed Use)	60.9	1.9%
TUC-CC (Tukwila Urban Center - Commercial Corridor)	89.8	2.8%
TUC-Pond (Tukwila Urban Center - Pond)	70.1	2.2%
TUC-RC (Tukwila Urban Center - Regional Center)	120.8	3.8%
TUC-TOD (Tukwila Urban Center - Transit Oriented Development)	126.3	4.0%
TUC-WP (Tukwila Urban Center - Workplace)	227.3	7.2%
C/LI (Commercial/Light Industrial)	342.7	10.8%
LI (Light Industrial)	51.4	1.6%
HI (Heavy Industrial)	88.3	2.8%
MIC/L (Manufacturing Industrial Center/Light)	59.0	1.9%
MIC/H (Manufacturing Industrial Center/Heavy)	488.6	15.5%
TVS (Tukwila Valley South)	10.7	0.3%

Figure 5. Zoned Land

Section 2 – Community Profile

The Community Profile discusses Tukwila’s current and future population as well as the age, race, and ethnicity of residents. It also discusses the size, income, and characteristics of the City’s households. These demographic and household characteristics provide background and context for the types of services, amenities, and housing required to better serve Tukwila residents.

Population

Washington’s Office of Financial Management (OFM) 2024 estimates that Tukwila has a population of 22,930 people. Figure 3 shows the change in population by decade between 1970

and 2023. Over the last 20 years Tukwila’s population has grown by about 33%, similar to the 35% population growth experienced by King County over the same time period. Note: Since the 1990 annexation of Cascade View, Tukwila has had added little or no population from through annexation.

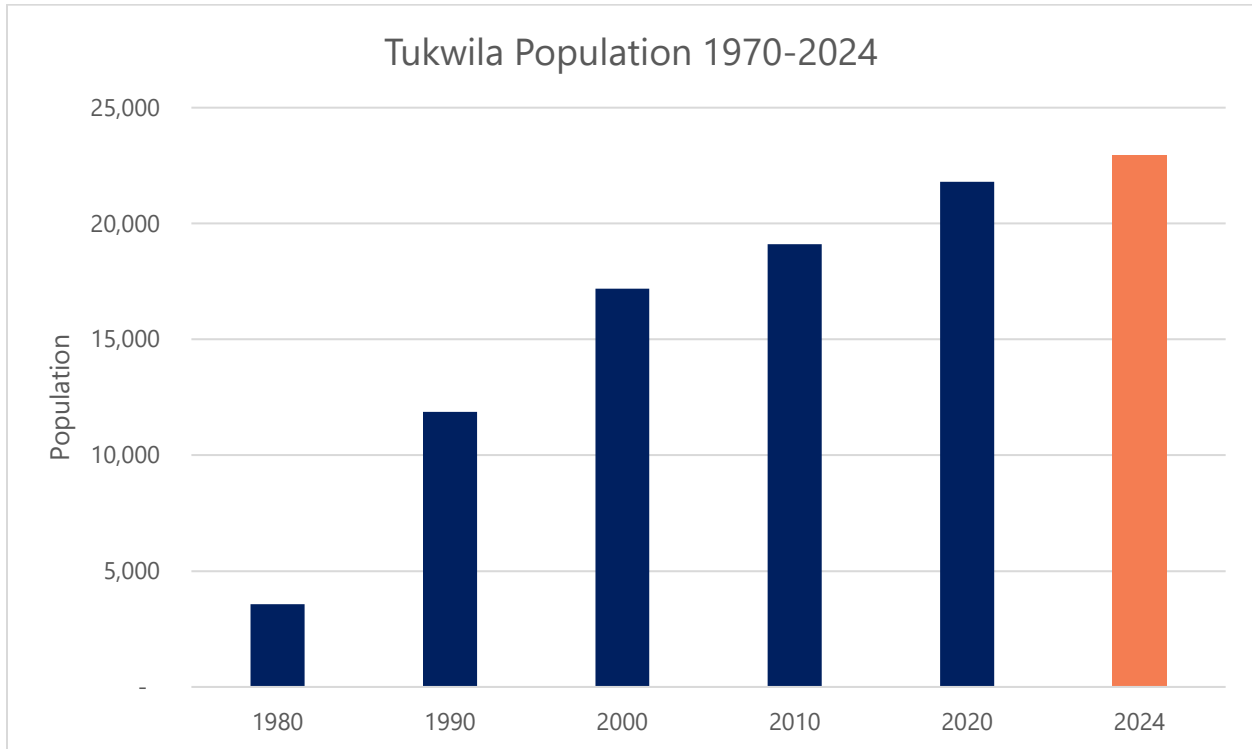


Figure 6. Tukwila’s population, 1970-2023. Source: 2023 Office of Financial Management, Forecasting and Research Division, Postcensal Estimates of April 1 Population, 1960 to Present

Age, Race/Ethnicity, and Language

Figure 4 shows the racial and ethnic breakdown of the Tukwila and King County populations. Tukwila is a much more diverse community than most of King County with about 70% of the population identifying as people of color, compared with 43% in King County. The city has a higher share of Hispanic/Latino, Asian, and Black residents than the county as a whole.

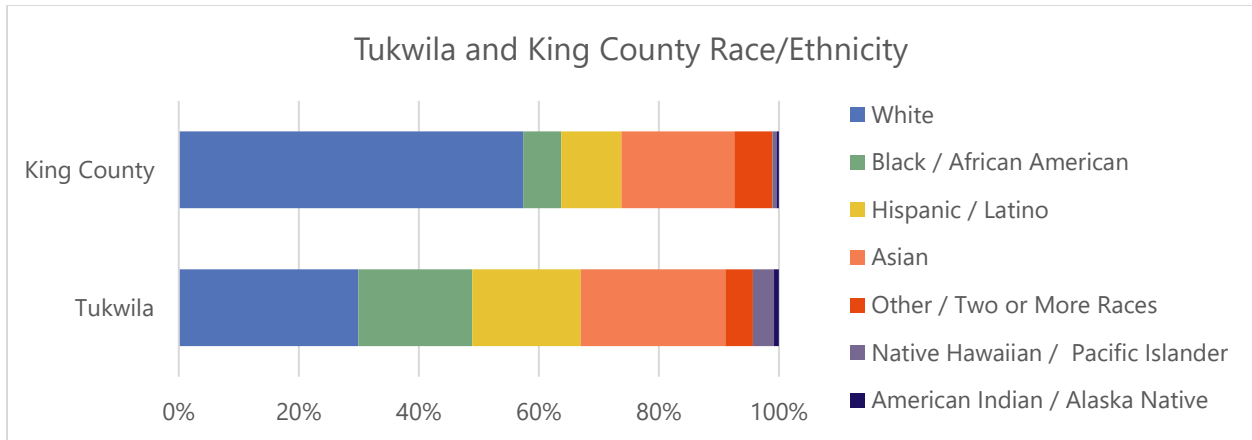


Figure 7. Racial and Ethnic Distribution in Tukwila and King County, 2021. Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table DP05. Note: all categories except "Hispanic/Latino" show non-Hispanic portions of population for each racial group.

Figure 5 shows age by sex in Tukwila and King County. The Tukwila population is somewhat younger than the county population with 65% under 45 years old compared to 62% countywide, and 11% over 65 compared to 13% countywide. Tukwila also has a significantly larger share of male residents than the county (54% versus 46%).

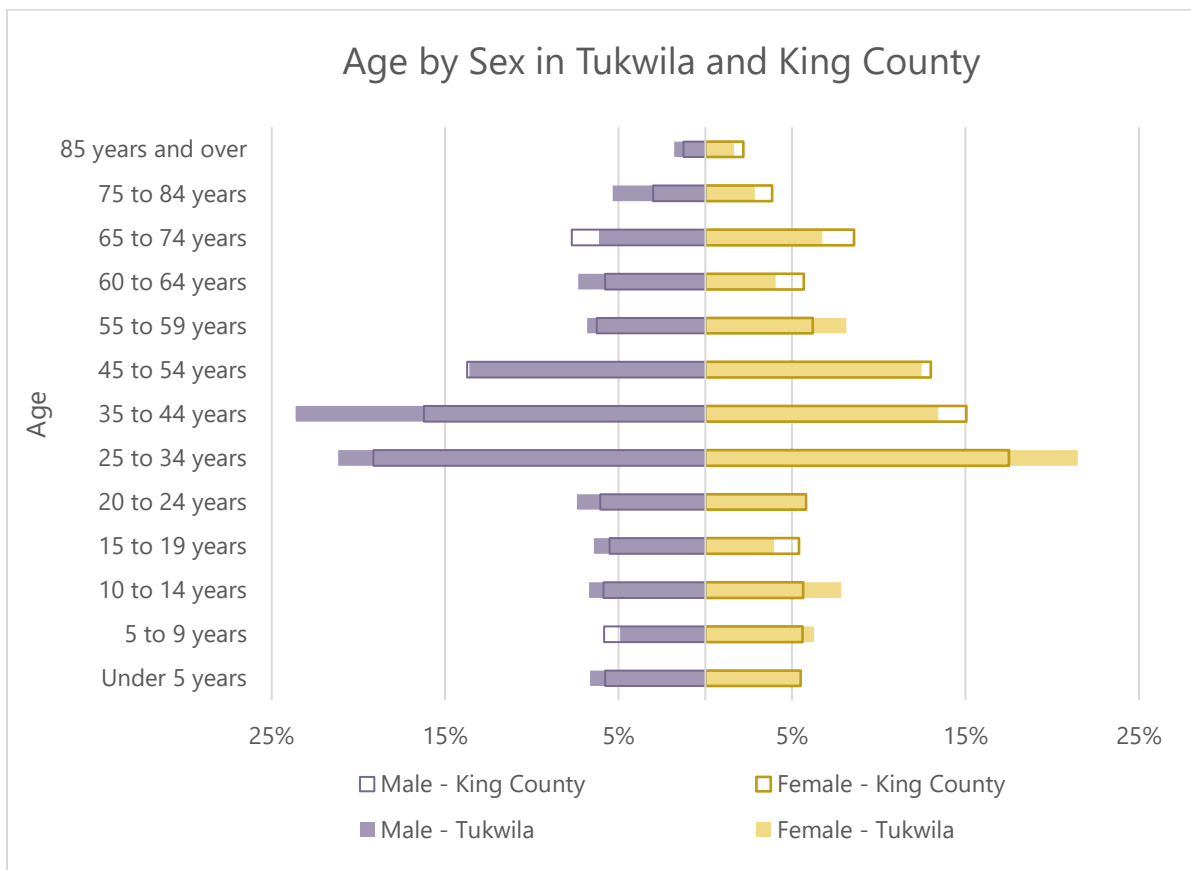


Figure 8. Age Distribution by Sex in Tukwila and King County, 2021. Source: 2021 American Community Survey, Table S0101

Nearly 40% of Tukwila residents were born in a country other than the United States. A little over a third of Tukwila residents were born in the state of Washington and 22% were born in another U.S. state or territory. A significant number of Tukwila residents were born in Asian, African, and Latin American countries, as seen in Figure 6. Among those that were born in other nations, 20.5% are naturalized U.S citizens (2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table B05001).

Place of Birth	Percent	Total
Native Born	60.8%	13,099
Washington State	36.3%	7,821
Elsewhere in US	24.5%	5,279
Foreign Born	39.2%	8,446
Europe	2.9%	616
Asia	17.4%	3,754
Africa	8.5%	1,839
Oceania	1.8%	388
Latin America	8.2%	1,772
Northern America	0.4%	76

Figure 9. Tukwila Residents Place of Birth, 2021. Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table CP02

Almost 50% of Tukwila residents speak a language other than English at home. The diversity of languages spoken at home correlates well with the diversity of residents that are foreign born. About 17% speak an Asian or Pacific Island language, and 12% speak Spanish at home.

Language	Percent	Total
English	53.8%	10,951
Spanish	12.1%	2,455
Indo-European languages	5.4%	1,097
Asian/Pacific Island languages	17.3%	3,530
Other languages	11.4%	2,318

Figure 10. Language Spoken at Home, 2021. Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table S1601

Household Characteristics

Household Size, Type, and Tenure

The U.S. Census Bureau defines a household as “all the people who occupy a housing unit.” Households can be comprised of any combination of related family members, unrelated people, or individuals.¹ The 2021 American Community Survey estimated about 7,755 total households in Tukwila (note: the current figure is higher, due to recent housing production).

Figure 8 shows household composition in Tukwila and King County. Overall, the shares of family and non-family households are very similar to county averages, with 59% of households classified as family households. About 28% of Tukwila residents live alone, and 8% of nonfamily households are residents over 65 years old.

Household Type	Tukwila		King County	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Total Households	7,755	100%	924,763	100%
Family households	4,591	59%	548,708	59%
Married-couple family	3,100	40%	445,269	48%
Other family	1,491	19%	103,439	11%
Nonfamily households	3,164	41%	376,055	41%
Householder living alone	2,201	28%	274,452	30%
Householder 65 years and over	586	8%	75,138	8%
Householder not living alone	963	12%	101,603	8%

Figure 11. Household Composition in Tukwila, 2021. Source: 2021 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, Table S2501

Figure 9 shows tenure (renting vs owning a home) in Tukwila. Within King County Tukwila is unusual in having a greater share of renters than homeowners, with 57% of households renting and 43% owning their homes.

¹ Source: U.S. Census Bureau, [Subject Definitions](#).

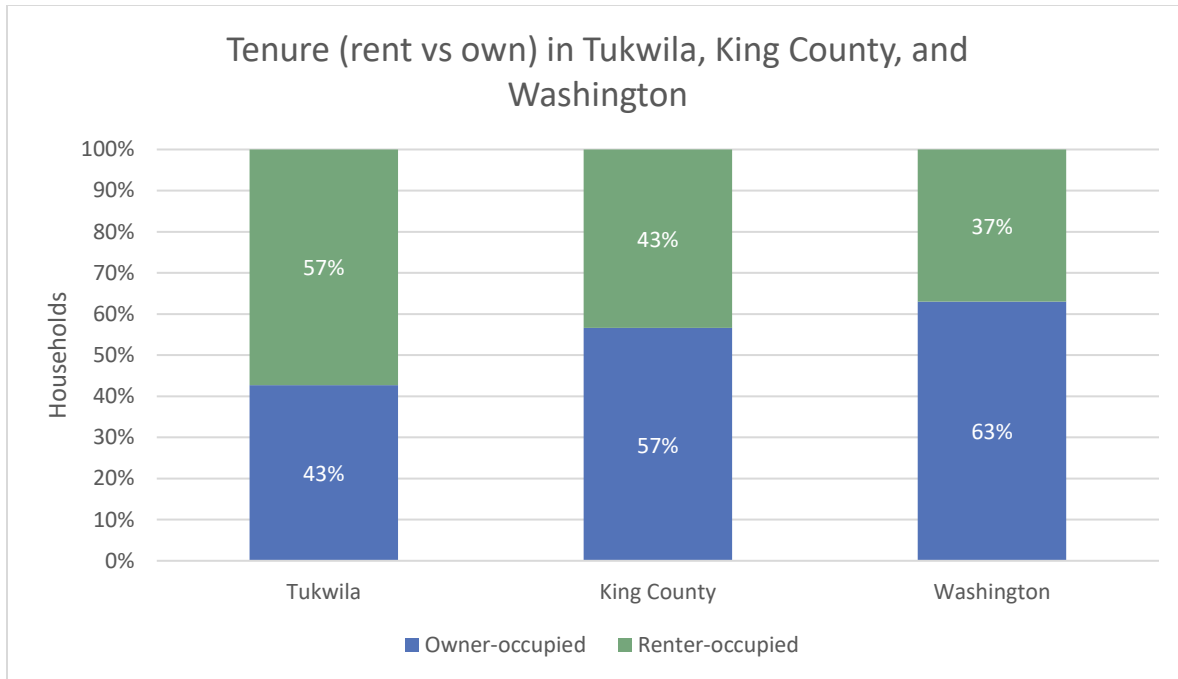


Figure 12. Tenure in Tukwila, King County, and Washington State, 2021. Source: 2021 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, Table DP04

As shown in Figure 10, in Tukwila, White non-Hispanic households are significantly more likely to be homeowners than renters, as are Asian households, to a lesser degree. Hispanic, Black, and other non-White groups or Asian households are more likely to rent. As a result these groups are disproportionately exposed to increasing housing costs, which impacts renters more directly than homeowners.

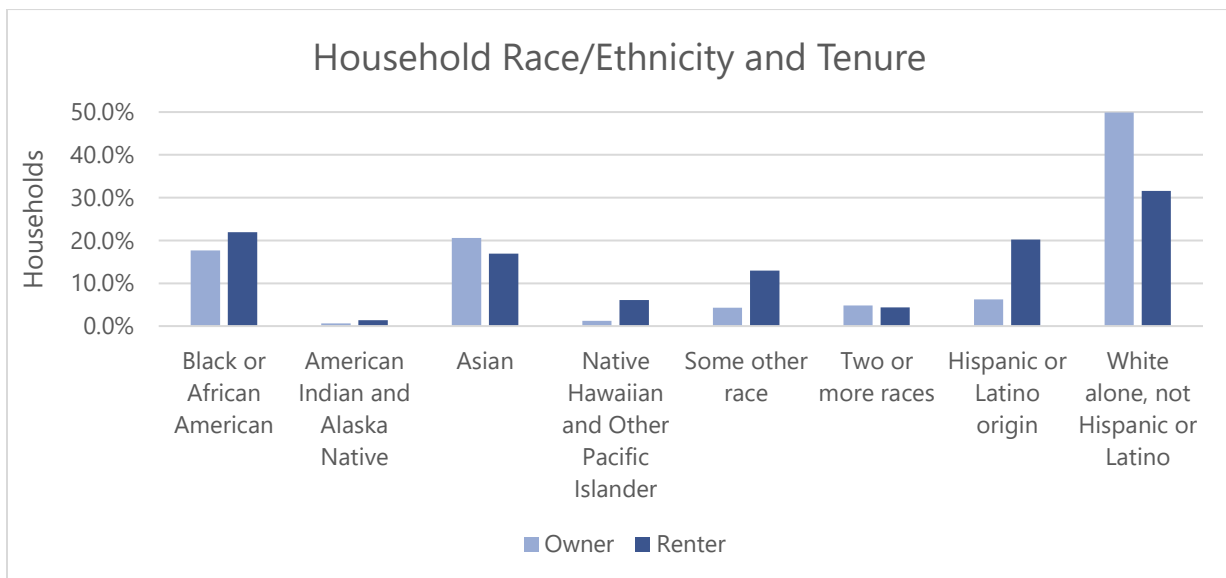


Figure 13. Tenure by Race in Tukwila, 2021. Source: 2021 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, Table S2502

Vehicles per Household

Most Tukwila households have one vehicle or less, including 60% of all renter households. About 8% of households have four or more vehicles (including 15% of homeowners). Overall, these figures are similar to countywide averages.

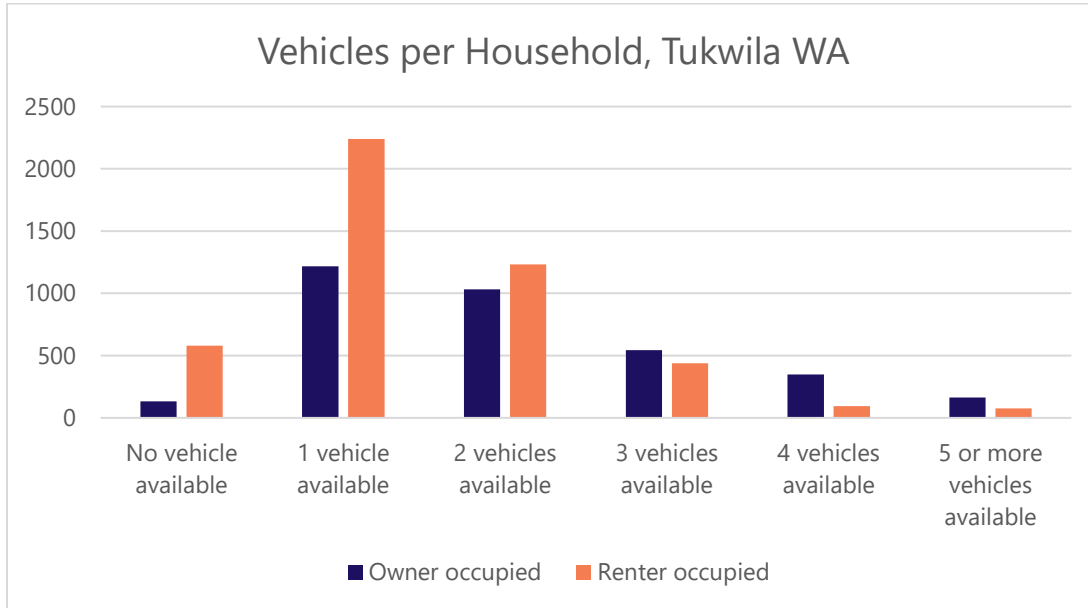


Figure 14. Vehicles per household in Tukwila. Source: 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Income

As shown in Figure 12, the median household income (MHI) in Tukwila was \$71,688 in 2021, \$38,898 less than the King County MHI and \$12,559 less than the statewide average. Additionally, renters in Tukwila earn less than homeowners, with a median household income for renter households of \$62,929 in 2021, compared to \$89,653 for ownership households.

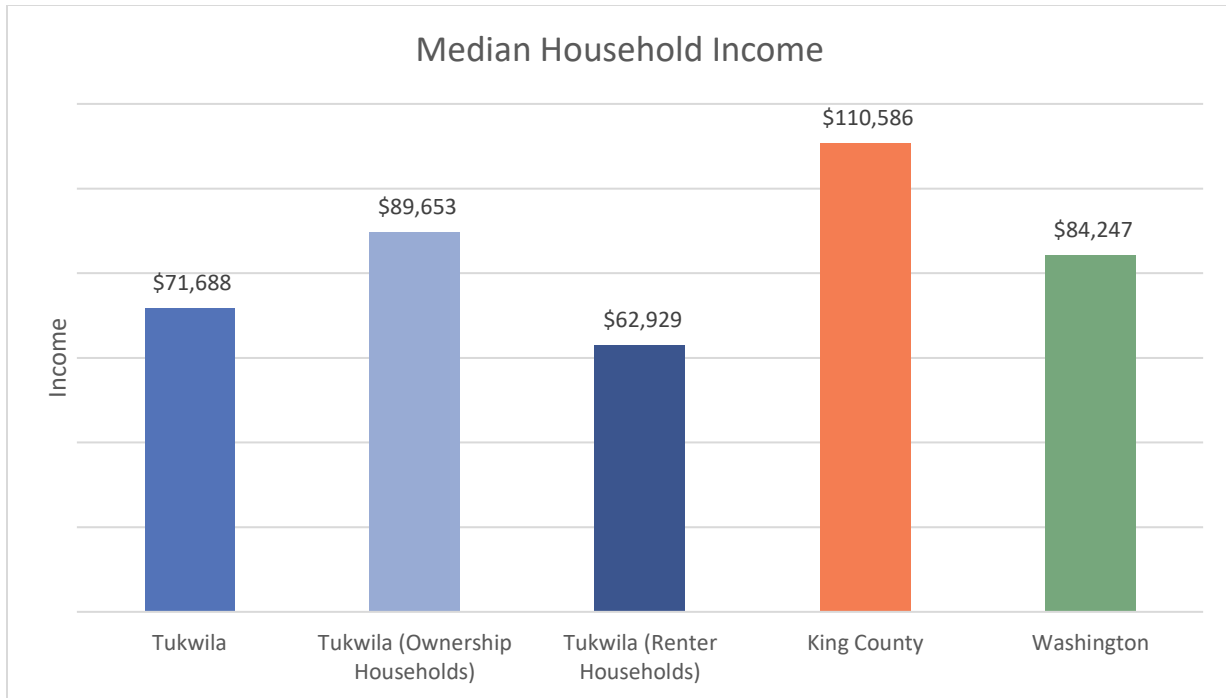


Figure 15. Inflation-Adjusted Median Household Income in Tukwila and Region, 2021. Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table S2503, CPI Inflation Index

Figure 13 shows the income distribution of Tukwila households. In Tukwila 58.6% of households earn less than 80% of the area median income, the maximum threshold to be eligible for most income-restricted affordable housing units.

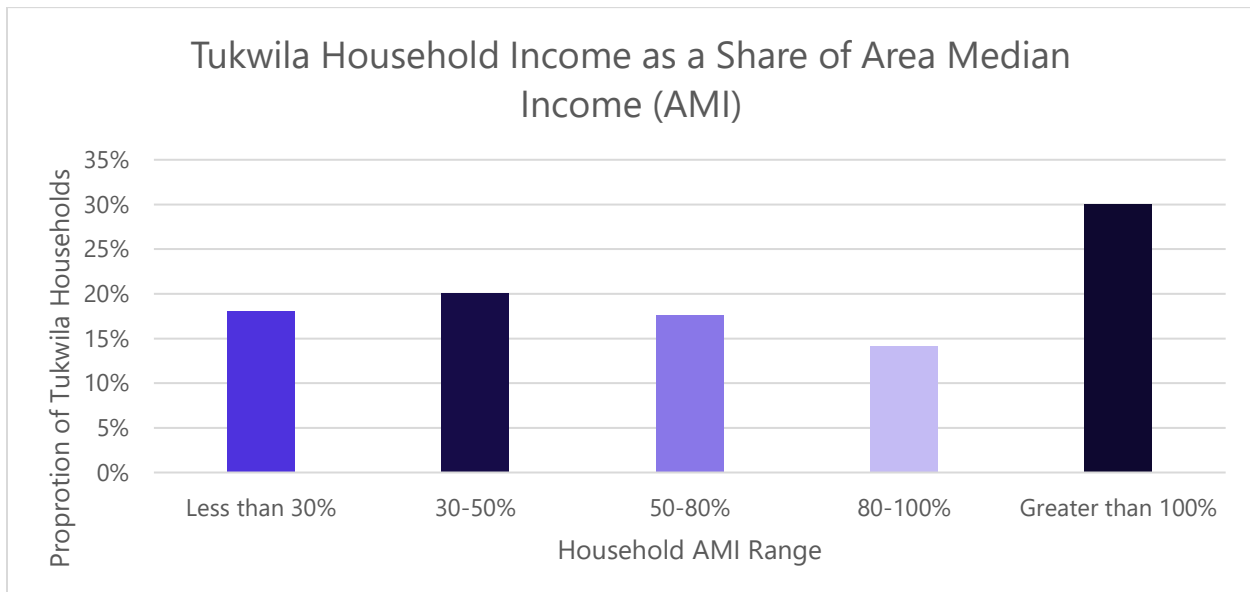


Figure 16. Share of Households by Income Level in Tukwila, 2016-2020. Source: HUD CHAS

Workforce Profile

Tukwila’s workforce is significantly larger than its residential population; the city has 45,825 primary jobs as of 2022, compared to a population of 22,780.

Compared to the county, Tukwila’s workforce is more concentrated in manufacturing, wholesale trade, retail, and transportation/warehousing, and less concentrated in information technology, professional services, education, healthcare, and other services. Overall Tukwila’s workforce is somewhat lower income and less educated than the county’s as a whole.

Additionally, 64% of Tukwila’s workforce commutes 10 or more miles to get to work. Aligning land use and transportation policies can help reduce the number of residents and workers that have long commutes.

Commute Distance	Share
Less than 10 miles	36.4%
10 to 24 miles	40.8%
25 to 50 miles	12.6%
Greater than 50 miles	10.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2022. LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (2002-2020) [computer file]. Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal-Employer Household Dynamics Program [distributor], accessed on 9/1/2023 at <https://onthemap.ces.census.gov>. LODS 8.0 [version]

Jobs by NAICS Industry Sector	Tukwila Share	King County Share
Manufacturing	18.8%	7.8%
Retail Trade	16.5%	8.6%
Wholesale Trade	8.8%	5.0%
Accommodation and Food Services	8.2%	7.4%
Health Care and Social Assistance	7.5%	12.0%
Construction	6.6%	5.5%
Transportation and Warehousing	6.3%	4.7%
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	4.7%	5.5%
Finance and Insurance	3.9%	3.2%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	3.7%	10.1%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	3.6%	2.2%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	2.7%	2.8%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	2.5%	1.9%
Information	1.9%	9.1%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	1.8%	3.5%
Educational Services	1.5%	7.1%
Public Administration	1.1%	2.8%
Other	0.0%	0.4%

Section 3 – Current Land Use

Land Use Mix

Tukwila has a broad mix of land uses, with a larger share of non-residential land uses than most suburban cities. By land area the largest existing land use is characterized by wholesale, warehousing, and distribution related uses, which may include some manufacturing uses as well, generally located in the north and southern ends of the City in low-lying areas along the valley of the Green/Duwamish River. The majority (63%) of parcels citywide are used for single-unit residential, predominantly located in hillier areas in the central portion of the city.

Use	Parcels	Acres	Acres %
Single unit residential	3,420	939.4	18.9%
Multi-unit/middle housing residential	199	196.7	4.0%
Mobile homes/other residential	148	37.2	0.7%
Lodging	61.2	24	1.2%
General commercial	140	324.8	6.5%
Private services/office	111	251.6	5.1%
Wholesale, warehouse and distribution	256	956.6	19.2%
Civic and religious	43	194.3	3.9%
Parking	8	16.9	0.3%
Vacant	794	890.3	17.9%
Recreation and open space	29	242.1	4.9%
Utilities and infrastructure	121	505.0	10.2%
Other (water, ROW)	105	355.3	7.1%
Total	5,400	4,972.5	100%

Figure 17. Existing Land Uses, Source: King County Tax Assessor, 2023

Residential Use Mix

According to OFM, Tukwila has 9,154 housing units as of 2023. The breakdown of unit types is shown below in Figure 15. Compared to the County, Tukwila has a lower share of housing units that are single-family detached units (40%) versus the County’s share of single-family detached units (52%). Tukwila also has a noticeably higher share (24%) of middle density (having 5-19 units) multifamily buildings than the county, which only has 12.2% of similar buildings with a total of 5-19 units. In Tukwila, the percentage of 5–19-unit multifamily buildings is actually a slightly higher share of housing structures having more than 20 or more units (21.8%).

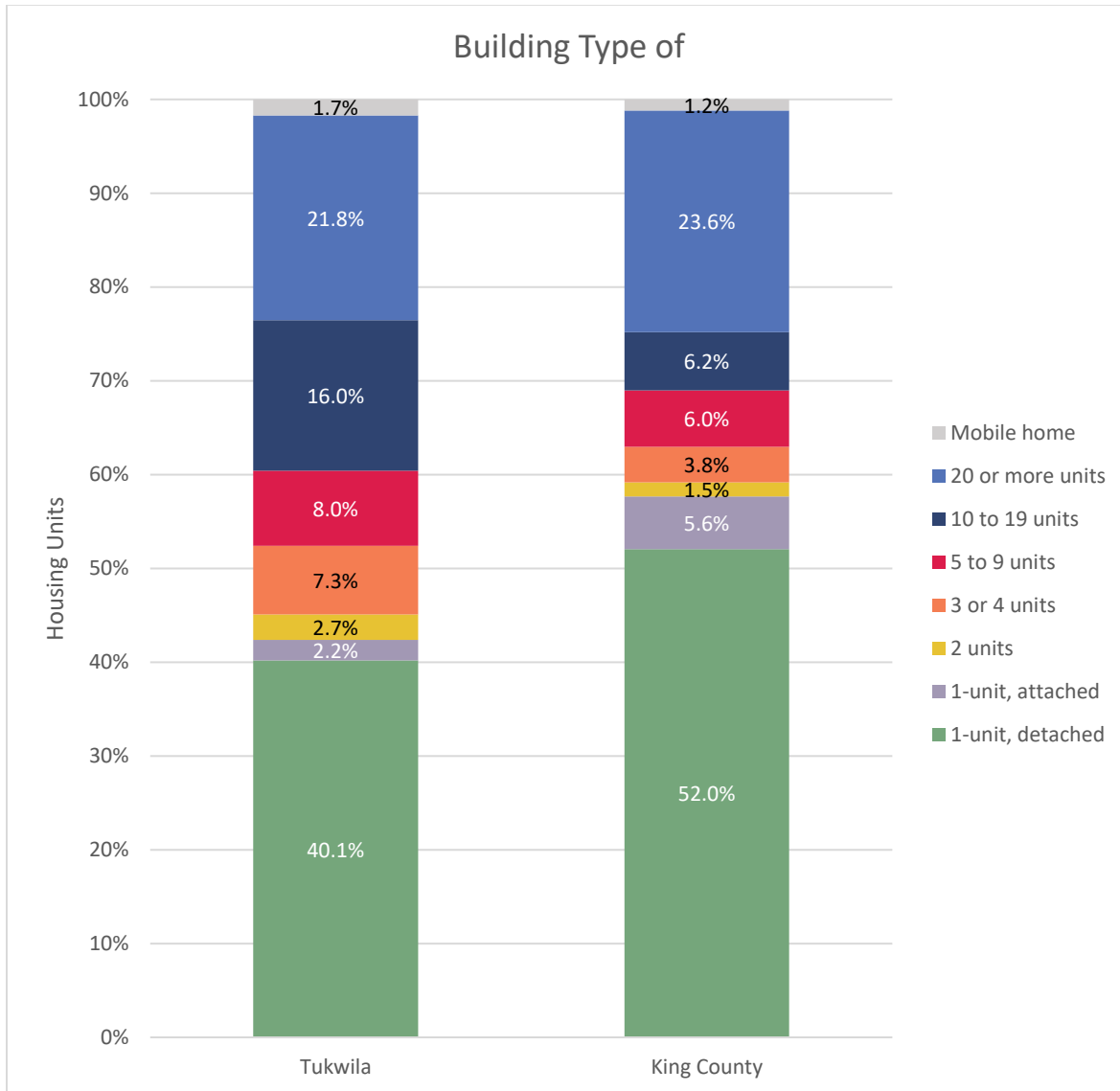


Figure 18. Housing Unit Type in Tukwila and King County, 2021. Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table DP04.