

Equity Analysis

December 2023



King County

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Introduction

A. Overview

With a triple focus on equity, housing, and climate change, the 2024 Update (Update) of the King County Comprehensive Plan (Plan) has the potential to connect everyone in King County with greater opportunity and the resources they need to thrive over the next 20 years.¹ This can only be achieved through policies and implementation actions that consider: how access to opportunity and resources are currently distributed across the County; which people and places are disproportionately burdened in accessing resources; and what the barriers to accessing opportunity and resources are.

The proposals within the Update are built on a framework of equity analysis and impact review to achieve this kind of understanding. This Equity Analysis was created to document and describe disproportionate burden in access, costs, and health outcomes related to the Plan that communities face, and how, considering these inequities, Plan proposals can help relieve the burdens and break down barriers to support equitable outcomes for all.

The following sections describe the existing conditions in terms of disparate access to indicators of the Determinants of Equity for priority populations,^{2, 3} within King County as well as unincorporated King County; how the Update process was designed to evaluate equity impacts and engage priority populations; and reviews the equity impacts of the Plan proposals.

B. Components of the Equity Analysis

1. Current Conditions

This section of the Equity Analysis provides a baseline snapshot of demographics across King County, with a focus on unincorporated King County at the time of the writing of this document. The Current Conditions section includes key takeaways about priority populations and communities disparately impacted in accessing the Determinants of Equity. This framework supports the equity impact review⁴ of Plan proposals. Development of the Current Conditions section was supported by the: 2022 Comprehensive Plan Performance Measures Report;⁵ Appendix B Housing Needs Assessment for the Plan, including the racially disparate impacts analysis; Determinants of Equity Baseline Report;⁶ and Determinants of

¹ The 2024 Update includes proposed changes to: the Plan (including policies, narrative, and work plan actions); land use designations and zoning classifications; and development regulations in the King County Code (K.C.C.).

² Priority populations include populations that, because of their race, class, gender, primary language spoken, and place of birth, are more likely to experience health or resource disparities.

³ Per K.C.C. 2.10.210, "Determinants of equity' means the social, economic, geographic, political and physical environment conditions in which people in our county are born, grow, live, work, and age that lead to the creation of a fair and just society. Access to the determinants of equity is necessary to have equity for all people regardless of race, class, gender, or language spoken. Inequities are created when barriers exist that prevent individuals and communities from accessing these conditions and reaching their full potential. ..."

⁴ An equity impact review is a process to identify, evaluate, and communicate the potential impact - both positive and negative - of a policy or program on equity.

⁵ 2022 Comprehensive Plan Performance Measures Report [\[LINK\]](#)

⁶ Determinants of Equity Baseline Report [\[LINK\]](#)

Equity Data Tool.⁷ Additional United States Census Bureau and King County-produced data also support the analysis.

2. Process Review

This section provides an overview of executive branch efforts to increase process equity in community engagement supporting the Update and in the Update process itself. It includes a summary of how the Update process was revised to invite more process equity and evaluate for equity impacts throughout Plan development. This section provides an overview of public engagement and shares results of that engagement relative to priority populations, which helped inform the development of proposals in the Update. The Process Review section also describes deeper community engagement through the formation and workplan of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Equity Work Group (Equity Work Group). The Equity Work Group was formed to represent and center communities in unincorporated King County historically underrepresented in comprehensive planning processes, including Black, Indigenous, and other People Of Color (BIPOC) communities; immigrants; refugees; members of lower income households; people that speak a language(s) other than English; people with disabilities; youth; LGBTQIA+ people; and/or those who identify as women. See Appendix A for list of the Equity Work Group's members and Appendix C for their priorities.⁸

3. Proposal Review

This section reviews the distributional equity impacts of the Plan proposals. Equity impacts are reviewed for groups of thematically related proposals through the lens of community priorities for equitable outcomes identified by the Equity Work Group. The proposal review section summarizes the equity impacts on populations and places disproportionately affected by Plan proposals, building from the Current Conditions section.

4. Appendices and Supporting Materials

Three appendices to the Equity Analysis provide information about the Equity Work Group's membership and further detail and documentation of the proposal review and Equity Work Group's priorities. Appendix A provides a list of the members. Appendix B contains detailed equity impact summaries for each scope topic reviewed as a part of the equity impact review. Appendix C shares a summary of the Equity Work Group's priorities and input that was instrumental in shaping housing proposals in Plan, the Current Conditions section, and public engagement.

⁷ Determinants of Equity Data Tool [\[LINK\]](#)

⁸ LGBTQIA+ Communities include Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, and other members of sexual and gender diverse communities.

Current Conditions

A. Introduction

This section will provide important context about the people living and working in King County, with a focus on unincorporated King County, including detail on urban and rural unincorporated areas.⁹

As a part of King County’s effort to center historically underrepresented groups within the Update, each sub-section of this chapter will focus on priority populations that have not shared the benefits of King County’s relative wealth and security. While these priority populations vary in place and demographics depending on the policy area being analyzed, each sub-section will discuss differential experiences by race, place, and income; or, as a proxy for the communities negatively affected by or historically excluded from land use planning, in areas with the highest populations of BIPOC communities, low-income households, immigrants, refugees, and people speaking a language(s) other than English.¹⁰

King County conducted a countywide survey in fall 2022, during early development of the Plan. The survey included two options that participants could choose to take: a housing survey or a climate survey; they could also opt to take both surveys. Each subsection will begin with comments or stories from priority population survey participants describing their lived experiences.

B. A Note about Reporting Terminology and Demographics

Language evolves as the spectrum of human identities unfolds, and society gains consciousness about harmful or inappropriate descriptions of social constructs like race and gender. Surveys that collect information about people’s racial, ethnic, gender, and sexual identities, like those produced by the Census Bureau and other government entities, are generally slower to evolve and struggle to keep up with how people describe their identities.

This report uses a variety of terms related to race and ethnicity informed by the data sources the data is pulled from. Race and ethnicity categories used in this document are based on standard U.S. Census reporting categories. Some terms for race and ethnicity categories used in this document differ from how they are presented in Census Bureau data. Notably, this document refers to individuals reporting “Hispanic and Latino/a/e” identity instead of “Hispanic or Latino”, as the category appears in Census Bureau data, to intersect gender and gender non-conformity in a linguistically appropriate way. Some data sources used within this section do not reflect this terminology because the related tables or graphics were sourced externally or do not reflect the full spectrum of racial and ethnic categories. Wherever possible, data for Hispanic and Latino/a/e residents is reported as a race category, though it is reported separately as “ethnicity” in current Census Bureau questionnaires. Individuals identifying with multiple racial identities are reported as “Multiracial” in this document and correlate to the Census Bureau’s “Two or more races” category. For brevity in some

⁹ The Growth Management Act and the King County Comprehensive Plan use three planning geographies: urban areas, rural areas, and designated Natural Resource Lands. Because of data limitations, this report includes Natural Resource Lands as part of the rural area.

¹⁰ King County Geographic Information Systems Center creates an annual “equity score” index of census tracts, for identifying sub-county representation of these priority populations. [\[LINK\]](#)

graphics, “American Indian and Alaska Native” and “Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander” are abbreviated as “AIAN” and “NHPI,” respectively.

Some sections of this document reference the surveys used to support public comment on Plan proposals. These surveys included demographic questions to relate the responses received to priority populations and King County’s demographics. The survey instruments used a wider variety of race categories, differentiating South Asian and Middle Eastern/Northern African populations, and employed a wider spectrum of gender identities than currently collected in Census Bureau surveys. Where possible, survey data has been re-aggregated to compare to Census Bureau data.

C. Unincorporated King County – People and Equitable Communities

1. Stories from Priority Populations Describing Their Lived Experience from the Fall 2022 Comprehensive Plan Survey

The following comments about King County residents’ experiences are excerpted from open responses to the fall 2022 surveys on housing and climate change provided by BIPOC survey respondents and respondents who completed the survey in languages other than English. Responses have not been edited for punctuation or grammar.

- *We know that neighborhoods that were redlined (i.e. Rainier Valley, Central District) have less tree coverage than other neighborhoods. The county should prioritize planting trees in these neighborhoods, as well prioritize helping low income residents in these areas to access air conditioning for their homes.*
- *I chose this response because the jobs that we have do not pay us more and besides paying the rent, we have to pay bills and also food, clothing, shoes, toilet paper, toothpaste, and more things and besides if you have a car something breaks on the car and the most important thing if you have a car the gas and if you do not have a car paying for transportation. There are too many expenses and in addition the expense of paying a doctor because you get sick from so much stress or desperation from having to pay rent month after month.*
- *There is absolutely NO workaround that will make me non-Disabled. Disabled people like myself will ALWAYS need vehicles to meet our basic needs. Every attempt to de-center cars must be met with guidance and direction from Disabled people on what types of supports and infrastructure we need to get around independently. Disabled people need cars. We will always need cars. And we need accessible parking spots near the entrance of all public spaces, and we need parking spots included in our low income and accessible housing.*
- *For me it is important that my daughters are near places of education like libraries, community centers, parks; places in which to live together healthily.*
- *Affordable places for lower income, multi-generational families near services are non-existent.*
- *Black people have been forgotten during this time of redlining and exclusion. Opportunities and resources for blacks have been extremely limited!*
- *I only recently moved into a co-op building. However, my search showed me how scarce housing is for anyone not in a nuclear family. This includes smaller families, multigenerational families, and non-traditional families.*

- *Per person, community members that are disabled, LGBTQ+, BIPOC, immigrants have disproportionately less access to wealth and income that would allow them to pay rent higher than \$1000/month. Many end up having to live communally to afford cheaper rent, despite this being less accommodating of their health and safety needs.*

2. Demographic Overview, Race, and Place

In 2023, over 2.3 million people are living in King County. The majority, 89 percent, of King County’s population lives in cities and towns, while about 250,000 residents live in unincorporated King County.¹¹ Within unincorporated King County, about 119,000 people live in urban areas, while more than 127,000 people live in the rural area.¹²

The decade of 2010 to 2020 was a period of historic growth for King County, bookended by the Great Recession and early economic recovery in 2008-2010 and the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. These two generational events, and the economic boom experienced between them, strongly affected King County’s socio-economic landscape, compounding existing inequities for the county’s most vulnerable populations, and influencing where people live.¹³

King County’s population grows through “natural increase” (births minus deaths) and from net migration (people moving to King County minus those leaving). People moving to King County is the main driver of population growth. Between 2019 and 2020, natural increase was responsible for approximately 40 percent of population growth, while net migration contributed 60 percent of growth.¹⁴ While these general trends were disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic and have been slow to recover to pre-2020 rates, recent trends demonstrate a rebound in migration, and increasing births, despite lower birth rates, following national trends.¹⁵

Figure 1 below shows population and recent growth for King County. In the table, the first percentage represents that racial group’s share of 2020 population, while the parenthetical percentage reports the share of that community in 2010. The percentage of BIPOC populations increased over the decade from 39 percent to 46 percent of the total population. On net, population growth between 2010 and 2020 in King County and in each unincorporated sub-geography was entirely from BIPOC communities. King County will continue to diversify in coming decades.

¹¹ Office of Financial Management, April 1st Population Estimates, 2022

¹² U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2020

¹³ Public Health – Seattle- & King County, COVID-19 Race and Ethnicity Data, 2023 [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁴ Washington Office of Financial Management, Components of Population Change, 2020 [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, Annual and Cumulative Estimates of the Components of Resident Population Change for Counties, 2023 [\[LINK\]](#)

Figure 1: Population in King County and Selected Subareas, 2020 and (2010)¹⁶

	King County	Unincorporated King County	Urban Unincorporated King County	Rural King County
Total Population	2,269,675 (1,931,249)	246,269 (226,833)	118,720 (104,674)	127,549 (122,159)
Black/African American	7% (6%)	5% (5%)	10% (9%)	1% (1%)
American Indian/ Alaska Native	1% (1%)	1% (1%)	1% (1%)	1% (1%)
Asian	20% (14%)	13% (9%)	21% (17%)	5% (3%)
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	1% (1%)	1% (<1%)	1% (1%)	<1% (<1%)
Another Race	1% (<1%)	1% (<1%)	1% (<1%)	1% (<1%)
Multiracial	7% (4%)	7% (4%)	7% (5%)	7% (3%)
Hispanic/Latino/a/e	11% (9%)	9% (7%)	12% (10%)	7% (4%)
White alone, not Hispanic	54% (65%)	64% (74%)	48% (58%)	79% (88%)

While unincorporated King County has a higher share of White residents than the whole county, BIPOC communities make up a greater share of the population in urban unincorporated areas (52 percent) than the county average (46 percent). This is particularly true for Black and African American and Hispanic/Latino/a/e residents, and in communities like Skyway-West Hill and North Highline. Figure 2 shows the distribution of population by race in 2020 for major urban unincorporated areas. Highlighted cells indicate where the share of population is greater than the county average.

¹⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2010 and 2020

Figure 2 Urban Unincorporated Area Population by Race, 2020¹⁷

	Former Bear Creek UPD ¹⁸	East Federal Way	East Renton Highlands	Fairwood	North Highline	Skyway-West Hill
Total Population	11,027	22,876	6,621	23,958	20,725	17,295
Black/African American	2%	7%	2%	7%	14%	27%
American Indian/Alaska Native	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Asian	41%	16%	10%	21%	20%	28%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0%	2%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Another Race	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Multiracial	4%	7%	8%	8%	6%	7%
Hispanic/Latino/a/e	6%	14%	9%	9%	23%	10%
White alone, not Hispanic	47%	54%	70%	53%	34%	25%

Figure 3 provides additional detail about location, density, and movement of people by racial identity across King County over the last 20 years. Each series of maps shows the share of the total population by race located within a census tract, for example, the share of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders living within that specific area out of the King County’s total Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander population. The “most dispersed” tracts symbolize the bottom 25 percent of tracts for population of a given racial group, while the “least dispersed” tracts illustrate the top 25 percent of tracts for where that population resides. The three snapshot years allow comparison for how different populations have grown and dispersed through time.

Some observations from the maps include:

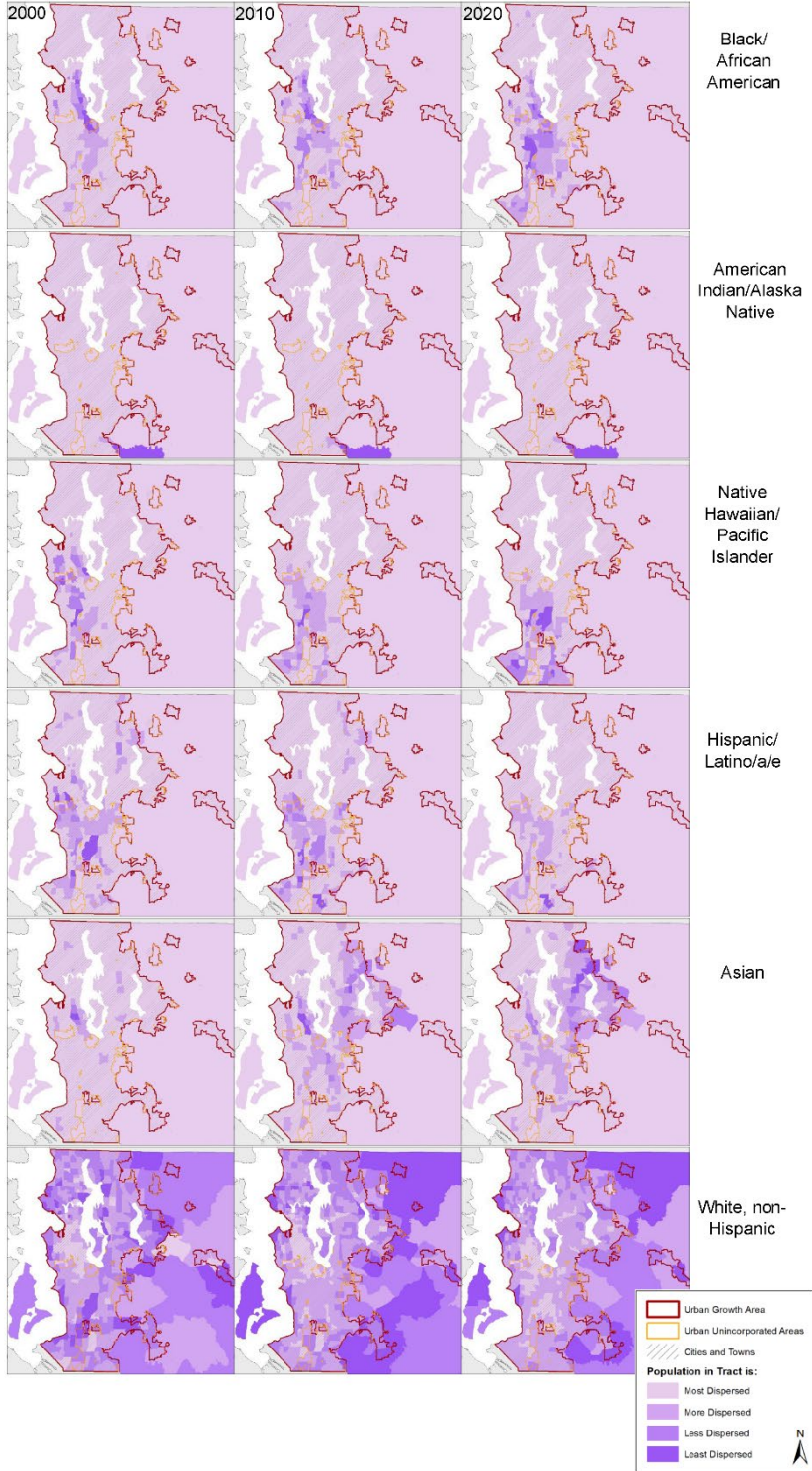
- The displacement and migration of Black and African American communities from central and south Seattle and Skyway-West Hill further south in King County, and growth of African immigrant communities around SeaTac and west of the I-5 corridor.
- Greater representation of American Indian populations on or near Muckleshoot Tribal lands.
- Migration of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders from West Seattle, North Highline and Burien to Kent, Federal Way, and Auburn.

¹⁷ U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2020

¹⁸ The Former Bear Creek Urban Planned Development (UPD) is comprised of the Redmond Ridge, Redmond Ridge East, and Trilogy neighborhoods, east of Redmond.

- Widespread growth of Asian communities throughout King County, and increasing density in eastside cities, and from Skyway-West Hill, to Tukwila, Renton, and Kent.
- Dispersal of Hispanic/Latino/a/e populations in the Snoqualmie Valley, at the northeastern edge of the Urban Growth Area and in southwestern King County.
- Presence of White, non-Hispanic/Latino/a/e populations at the peripheries of the Urban Growth Area and coastal areas.

Figure 3: Distribution of Population by Race, 2000, 2010, and 2020¹⁹



3. Age + Sex

The median age in King County is 37.²⁰ Median age varies by race, as shown in Figure 4. BIPOC residents are on average younger than White King County residents.

Figure 4: Median Age by Race in King County, 2019²¹

	Median Age
White alone, not Hispanic	41.8
King County Average	37.0
Asian	35.5
American Indian/Alaska Native	34.4
Black/African American	32.6
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	30.9
Another Race	28.1
Hispanic/Latino/a/e	28.0
Multiracial	22.2

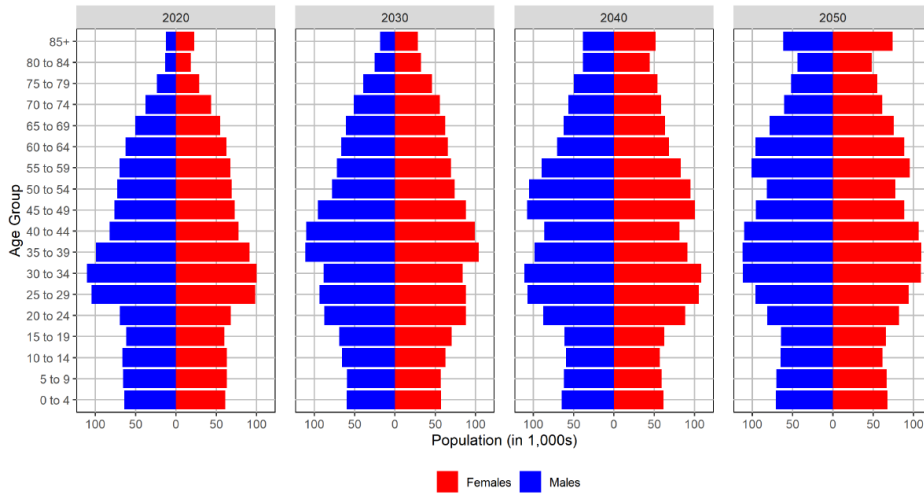
Median age has increased slightly since 2010 and will continue to rise as the population ages over the planning period. Figure 5 shows the decennial population age distribution for King County between 2020 and 2050 to approximate the composition of the population over the course of the planning period for the Update.

¹⁹ US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2020

²⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2019

²¹ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2019

Figure 5: Age of King County Population, 2020 through 2050²²



The evolution of the shapes through time in Figure 5 illustrates how the aging of people currently aged 25 to 64 will contribute to increases in the average and median age over the next 30 years.

As shown in Figure 6, currently the county youth population under age 18 is 20 percent of the total population. Older adults over the age of 65 comprise 13 percent of the total population. Unincorporated King County has a higher share of youth population than the county as a whole, and approximately the same share of older adults.

Figure 6: Youth and Older Adult Population in King County, 2019²³

	King County	Unincorporated King County	Urban Unincorporated King County	Rural King County
Total Population	2,195,502	310,231	117,835	192,396
Population under 18	448,094 (20%)	74,327 (24%)	27,952 (24%)	46,375 (24%)
Population over 65	284,332 (13%)	41,726 (13%)	15,743 (13%)	25,983 (14%)

By 2045, the youth population is forecasted to decrease slightly to approximately 18 percent of the population, while the elder population is anticipated to grow to 20 percent of the total population.²⁴

Numerically, there are more men in King County than women, although proportionately, they are even. Figure 7 shows how there is limited variation in this trend across unincorporated King County, although rural King County has a slightly higher representation of women.

²² Washington Office of Financial Management, Growth Management Population Projections 2023 [\[LINK\]](#)

²³ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2019

²⁴ Washington Office of Financial Management, Growth Management Population Projections 2023 [\[LINK\]](#)

Comprehensive gender data including non-binary and intersex populations is unfortunately lacking at a local level.

Figure 7: Population by Sex, 2019²⁵

	King County	Unincorporated King County	Urban Unincorporated King County	Rural King County
Total Population	2,195,502	310,231	117,835	192,396
Female Population	1,094,894 (50%)	156,587 (50%)	58,990 (50%)	97,597 (50%)
Male Population	1,100,608 (50%)	153,644 (50%)	58,845 (50%)	94,799 (50%)

4. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, Plus (LGBTQIA+) Communities²⁶

As noted in the Age and Sex section above, the Census Bureau provides limited detail about gender diversity.

In 2020, approximately three percent of people in King County households were in same-sex relationships; unincorporated King County had a lower share of people in same-sex relationships, approximately one percent.²⁷ These demographics underreport sexual diversity within King County’s population because the Census Bureau excludes single individuals, LGBTQIA+ individuals in opposite-sex relationships, individuals living in group quarters, and household dependents in its reporting.

5. Household Size and Group Quarters Populations

Ninety-eight percent of King County’s population lives within a household, alone or with their family, in a house, an apartment, or a mobile home. Two percent of the population lives in a group quarters facility, a shared living arrangement where individuals reside and are often affiliated with, or receive services from, an organization that manages the property.²⁸ In unincorporated King County, nearly 100 percent of the population lives within households, as group quarters facilities are more commonly in cities. Figure 8 shows the population in King County geographies living in households and group-quarters facilities.

²⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2019

²⁶ As an evolving acronym, the plus symbol includes all other identities on the gender and sexuality spectra not included already.

²⁷ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2020

²⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census Group Quarters, 2021 [\[LINK\]](#)

Figure 8: Population in Households and Group Quarters Facilities by Type, 2020²⁹

	King County	Unincorporated King County	Urban Unincorporated King County	Rural King County
Total Population	2,269,675	246,269	118,720	127,549
Total Population in Households	2,225,338 (98%)	245,224 (>99%)	118,146 (>99%)	127,078 (>99%)
Total Group Quarters Population³⁰	44,337 (2%)	1,045 (<1%)	574 (<1%)	471 (<1%)
<i>Institutionalized population:</i>	<i>11,035 (25%)</i>	<i>260 (25%)</i>	<i>41 (7%)</i>	<i>219 (46%)</i>
Correctional facilities for adults	2,734 (25%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Juvenile facilities	468 (4%)	105 (40%)	3 (7%)	102 (47%)
Nursing facilities/Skilled-nursing facilities	7,548 (68%)	121 (47%)	32 (78%)	89 (41%)
Other institutional facilities	285 (3%)	34 (13%)	6 (15%)	28 (13%)
<i>Noninstitutionalized population:</i>	<i>33,302 (75%)</i>	<i>785 (75%)</i>	<i>533 (93%)</i>	<i>252 (54%)</i>
College/University student housing	17,679 (53%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Military quarters	204 (1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Other noninstitutional facilities	15,419 (46%)	785 (100%)	533 (100%)	252 (100%)

In King County and unincorporated King County, the group quarters population is split between institutional facilities and non-institutional facilities at approximately 25 percent and 75 percent, respectively. This trend is more skewed in urban unincorporated King County where 93 percent of the group quarters population lives in non-institutional settings. In rural King County, the group quarters population is more evenly split but in an opposite trend, with 54 percent of group quarters population living in institutional facilities.

There are approximately 917,800 households in King County. The average household size for King County in 2020 was 2.42 persons per household, up slightly from 2010 (2.40 persons per household).³¹ Figure 9 shows the average household size for King County

²⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2020

³⁰ Group Quarters population is comprised of people living in institutions and people living in noninstitutional group living settings.

³¹ U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2010 and 2020

geographies. Households in unincorporated King County are larger on average than the county as a whole.

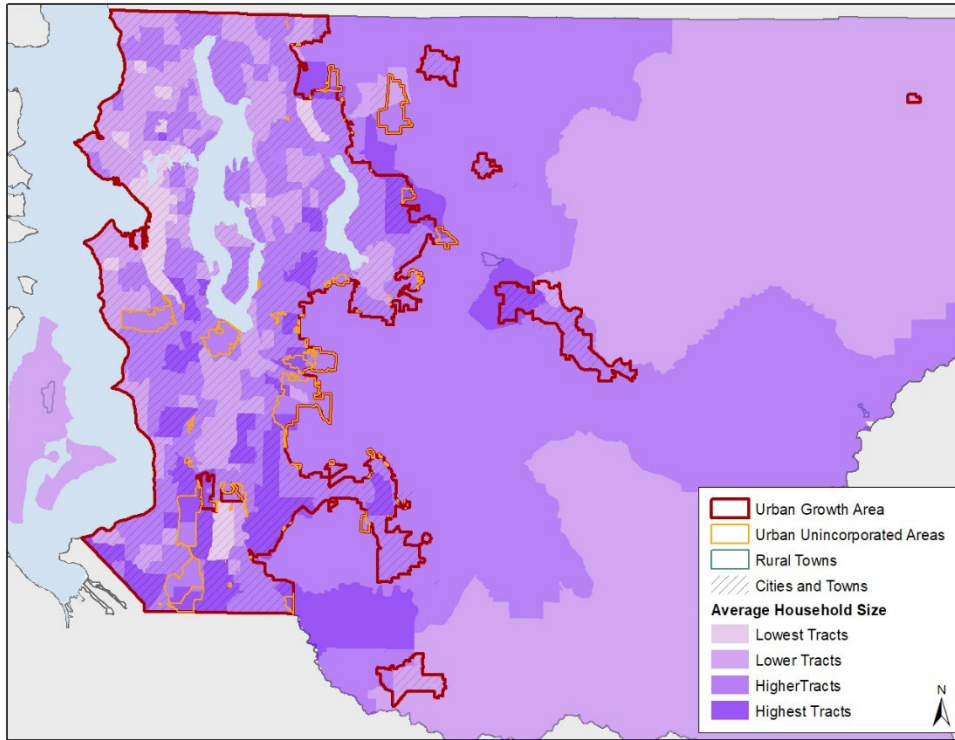
Figure 9: Average Household Size, 2020³²

County Area	Average Household Size- People
Urban Unincorporated King County	2.80
Unincorporated King County	2.78
Rural King County	2.76
King County Average	2.42

The map in Figure 10 shows how average household size varies around King County. In the map, census tracts are divided into quartiles, with the darkest shaded tracts representing the quarter of all tracts with the highest average household sizes.

³² U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2020

Figure 10: Average Household Size by Census Tract, 2020³³



Multigenerational households have three or more generations of family members living together. Alternatively, they are defined as households composed of at least two adult generations, or where members of non-consecutive generations (e.g., grandparents and grandkids) live together. As King County diversifies and ages, multigenerational households are expected to increase, affecting the housing stock needed to accommodate this population. In 2021, seven percent of King County’s population lived in multigenerational households. While the geography of analysis for this trend does lend well for isolating unincorporated areas, trends by geographic subarea are reported in Figure 11. Multigenerational households house a greater share of population in southern King County.

Figure 11: Population in Multigenerational Households, 2021³⁴

County Area	Share of people living in multigenerational households
South King County	13%
King County	7%
Seattle	4%
East King County	5%

³³ U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2020

³⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, Public Use Microdata Sample 5-year data, 2021

6. Immigrants and Refugees

As shown in Figure 12, 18 percent of unincorporated King County residents were born outside of the United States. The share of foreign-born residents is higher in the urban unincorporated area than in rural King County, and in King County overall.

Figure 12: Foreign-born Population, 2019³⁵

	King County	Unincorporated King County	Urban Unincorporated King County	Rural King County
Total Population	2,195,502	310,231	117,835	192,396
Total Immigrants + Refugees	507,576	57,226	29,940	27,286
% Immigrants + Refugees	23%	18%	25%	14%

The foreign-born population varies across urban unincorporated King County both in presence and in the countries the population emigrated from. Figure 13 shows that Skyway-West Hill, North Highline, the former Bear Creek Urban Planned Development (UPD), and East Renton Highlands have greater shares than the county average (23 percent) of people born outside of the United States.³⁶ Following county trends, Asian immigrants make up a majority of the foreign-born population in the former Bear Creek UPD, Fairwood, and Skyway-West Hill. Fairwood, North Highline, and Skyway-West Hill have a greater share of African immigrants than county average (eight percent). East Federal Way, East Renton Highlands, and North Highline have a greater share of immigrants from Latin America than county average (17 percent). Following settlement patterns for the Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander population, East Federal Way and North Highline have a greater share of immigrants from Oceania than the county average (two percent). Finally, the former Bear Creek UPD, East Federal Way, and East Renton Highlands have a larger share of European immigrants than county average (13 percent).

Figure 13: Foreign-born Population in Urban Unincorporated Areas, and Place of Birth, 2019³⁷

	Former Bear Creek UPD	East Federal Way	East Renton Highlands	Fairwood	North Highline	Skyway-West Hill
Total Population	13,239	18,877	6,463	20,236	18,617	14,083
Total Immigrants + Refugees	4,166	4,010	1,615	3,692	6,391	4,867
% Immigrants + Refugees	31%	21%	25%	18%	34%	35%

³⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2019

³⁶ The Former Bear Creek Urban Planned Development (UPD) is comprised of the Redmond Ridge, Redmond Ridge East, and Trilogy neighborhoods, east of the city of Redmond.

³⁷ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2019

	Former Bear Creek UPD	East Federal Way	East Renton Highlands	Fairwood	North Highline	Skyway-West Hill
Place of Birth for Foreign Born Residents:						
Europe	19%	34%	24%	12%	7%	2%
Asia	61%	33%	46%	59%	38%	68%
Africa	4%	3%	0%	13%	9%	14%
Oceania	1%	3%	0%	0%	3%	2%
Latin America	7%	23%	23%	12%	42%	13%
North America	9%	4%	8%	4%	1%	1%

Data on specific nationalities for people born outside of the United States is not provided by the Census Bureau for small geographies to preserve confidentiality. Thus, important details on communities within the major continental areas listed above are not available to include in these materials.

7. Language and Limited English Proficiency

Over 120 languages are spoken across King County.³⁸ Figure 14 shows the population of residents over the age of five who speak a language other than English at home and the share of people who have limited English proficiency.

Figure 14: Population Speaking a Language Other than English at Home and Limited English Proficiency, 2019³⁹

	King County	Unincorporated King County	Urban Unincorporated King County	Rural King County
Total Population (over age 5)	2,067,175	290,974	110,288	180,686
Population speaking a language other than English at home	574,339 (28%)	65,689 (23%)	36,388 (33%)	29,301 (16%)
Population with Limited English Proficiency	220,241 (11%)	24,102 (8%)	15,502 (14%)	8,600 (5%)

³⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample, 2021

³⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2019

While nearly a quarter of unincorporated King County residents speak languages other than English, one in three urban unincorporated residents are speaking languages other than English at home. Urban unincorporated residents are also more likely to have limited English proficiency. Over 40 percent of residents in East Renton Highlands, North Highline, and Skyway-West Hill speak a language other than English at home, and nearly a quarter of the population over age five in North Highline and Skyway-West Hill have limited English proficiency.⁴⁰

Detailed language information is not available for smaller geographies like census tracts, but a dataset with a coarser geography that breaks up King County into 16 smaller subareas provides detail on sub-county language variation, approximating unincorporated King County.⁴¹ Figure 15 presents the fifteen most commonly spoken languages in King County and unincorporated King County.

Figure 15: Most Commonly Spoken Languages, 2019⁴²

Rank	King County	Unincorporated King County
1	Spanish (24%)	Spanish (32%)
2	Chinese (15%)	Vietnamese (9%)
3	Vietnamese (6%)	Chinese (8%)
4	Tagalog and Filipino (5%)	Tagalog and Filipino (6%)
5	Hindi (4%)	Russian (4%)
6	Russian (4%)	Somali (3%)
7	Korean (4%)	Ukrainian (3%)
8	Japanese (3%)	Punjabi (3%)
9	French (2%)	Hindi (2%)
10	Somali (2%)	Korean (2%)
11	Ukrainian (2%)	Amharic (2%)
12	Amharic (2%)	Japanese (2%)
13	Punjabi (2%)	French (2%)

⁴⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2019. Percents represent the share of people speaking the named language out of all individuals speaking languages other than English.

⁴¹ Detailed language data is sourced from the American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) data. PUMS data is reported by Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs), which are assembled from census block level data and approximate areas with a population of approximately 100,000 people. While PUMAs include population living in incorporated areas, this disaggregated data allows for comparisons of language speakers in different areas within King County. The unincorporated data in Figure 15 includes a selection of PUMAs in King County that overlap the unincorporated area.

⁴² U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample 5-year data, 2019

Rank	King County	Unincorporated King County
14	Arabic (2%)	Arabic (2%)
15	Telugu (2%)	Khmer (1%)

While the four most common languages after English are the same in King County and unincorporated King County, differences between the lists show how the distribution of languages spoken varies by place, reflecting the location of different cultural communities. Unincorporated King County has a greater proportion of people speaking Somali, Ukrainian, Punjabi, Amharic, and Khmer than King County as a whole, reflecting specific immigrant or cultural communities within the unincorporated area.

8. Health and People with Disabilities

The average life expectancy at birth in King County in 2020 was 81 years old.⁴³ This is higher than the national average of 77 years.⁴⁴ The data described in this section shows that rates of serious health conditions vary by race. As a result, life expectancy varies by race and place within King County, as have recent declines in life expectancy from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.⁴⁵ Figure 16 reports on life expectancy by race for King County in 2020. Life expectancies for Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander, American Indian and Alaska Native, and Black and African American residents are lower than the county average. Life expectancy for Asian residents is higher than the county average and life expectancy for Hispanic/Latino/a/e residents is slightly higher than average.

Figure 16: Life Expectancy at Birth by Race, 2020⁴⁶

Race	Average Life Expectancy
Asian	84.7
Hispanic/Latino/a/e (of any race)	81.4
White alone, not Hispanic	81.1
King County Average	80.8
Black/African American	76.6
American Indian/Alaska Native	71.4
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	70.5

⁴³ Public Health – Seattle- & King County, Washington State Vital Statistics, 2022 [\[LINK\]](#)

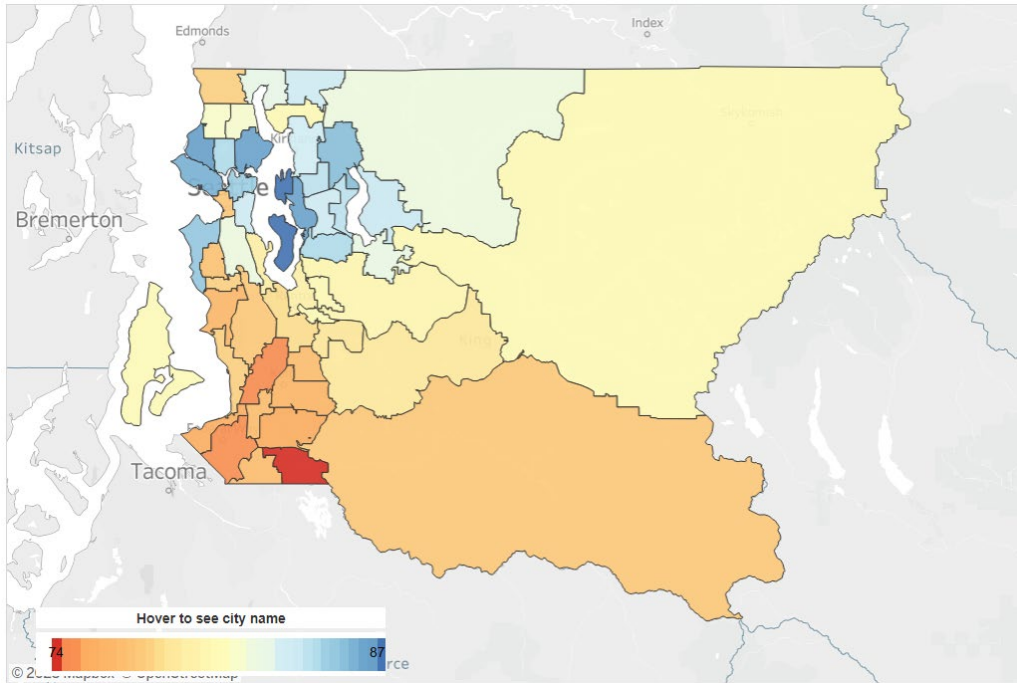
⁴⁴ Centers For Disease Control, Provisional Life Expectancy Estimates for 2020, 2021 [\[LINK\]](#)

⁴⁵ Public Health – Seattle- & King County, Life Expectancy at Birth, 2023 [\[LINK\]](#)

⁴⁶ Public Health – Seattle- & King County, Washington State Vital Statistics, 2022 [\[LINK\]](#)

As race and place are correlated because of the legacy of racially restrictive and exclusive housing policies, life expectancy at birth also varies by place.^{47,48} The map in Figure 17 displays life expectancy by Health Reporting Area.⁴⁹ In the map, red indicates the lowest life expectancy values, while blue indicates higher values. In general, southern King County experiences lower life expectancies at birth than the county average and communities in Seattle and on the eastside of King County.

Figure 17: Life Expectancy in King County by Health Reporting Area⁵⁰



Public Health – Seattle & King County reports a wealth of data on health impacts and disparities by race. Figure 18 reports on health disparities by race for a sampling of indicators directly influenced by land use and the built environment. The health indicators shown come from multiple sources that have differing levels of detail by race.

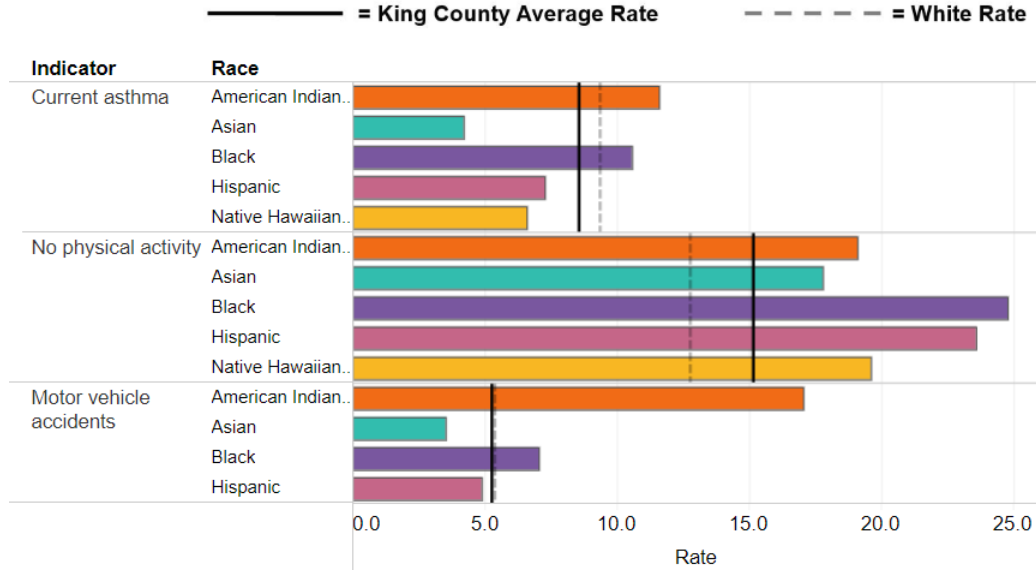
⁴⁷ King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Impact of Redlining and Racist Real Estate Practices on King County Residents, 2023 [\[LINK\]](#)

⁴⁸ Public Health – Seattle- & King County, Life Expectancy at Birth, 2023 [\[LINK\]](#)

⁴⁹ Health Reporting Areas are assembled from census tracts by Public Health – Seattle- & King County to approximate cities and subareas.

⁵⁰ Public Health – Seattle- & King County, Life Expectancy at Birth, 2020 [\[LINK\]](#)

Figure 18: Health Disparities by Race, 2020⁵¹



While the rates of disparities differ by indicator, specific racial groups have disparate health outcomes for rates of asthma (American Indian and Alaska Natives and Black and African Americans have higher rates of asthma): participation in physical activity or exercise in the last year (all non-White racial groups are more likely to have not participated in physical activity than the county average and White residents); and death from car crashes (American Indian and Alaska Natives and Black and African Americans have higher rates of death).

Nearly ten percent of King County residents live with a disability.⁵² Ambulatory disabilities affect approximately five percent of King County residents, and about four percent of residents have a cognitive disability or cannot live independently. About three percent of residents have a hearing disability and about two percent have a vision disability.

Figure 19 shows how the percent of the population with a disability varies by race and ethnicity. American Indian and Alaska Native residents have the most disproportionate rates of disability, followed by Black and African American, and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander residents. Examining disability trends by place, rural residents have slightly lower rates (nine percent) of disability than the county average, while urban unincorporated residents have slightly higher rates (ten percent). Within urban Unincorporated King County, East Federal Way, North Highline, and Skyway-West Hill have higher rates of disability.⁵³

⁵¹ Public Health – Seattle- & King County, Communities Count Health Disparities Dashboard 2019 [\[LINK\]](#)

⁵² U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2019

⁵³ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2019

Figure 19: Percent of Population with a Disability by Race and Ethnicity, 2019⁵⁴

Race and Ethnicity	Percent of the Population with a Disability
American Indian/Alaska Native	17%
Black/African American	12%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	11%
White alone, not Hispanic	11%
King County	10%
Multiracial	9%
Hispanic/Latino/a/e (of any race)	7%
Asian	6%
Another Race	6%

9. Income, Poverty, and Employment

On average, King County workers have higher incomes than other counties in Washington and the United States, though income varies by race and place within King County. Figure 20 shows how median household income varies by race in King County. Median incomes for households headed by Black and African American residents are roughly half of the median incomes for White, non-Hispanic households. American Indian and Alaska Native households earn only slightly more than half of White households’ median income.

Figure 20: Median Household Income by Race and Ethnicity, 2019⁵⁵

Race and Ethnicity	Median Household Income
Asian	\$109,400
White alone, not Hispanic	\$101,265
King County Median	\$94,974
Multiracial	\$80,414
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	\$75,568

⁵⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2019

⁵⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2019

Race and Ethnicity	Median Household Income
Hispanic/Latino/a/e (of any race)	\$66,244
Another Race	\$57,387
American Indian/Alaska Native	\$52,404
Black/African American	\$49,846

Figure 21 shows median incomes for King County geographies in 2019. While unincorporated King County incomes average higher than the county as a whole, income disparities exist in urban and rural areas.

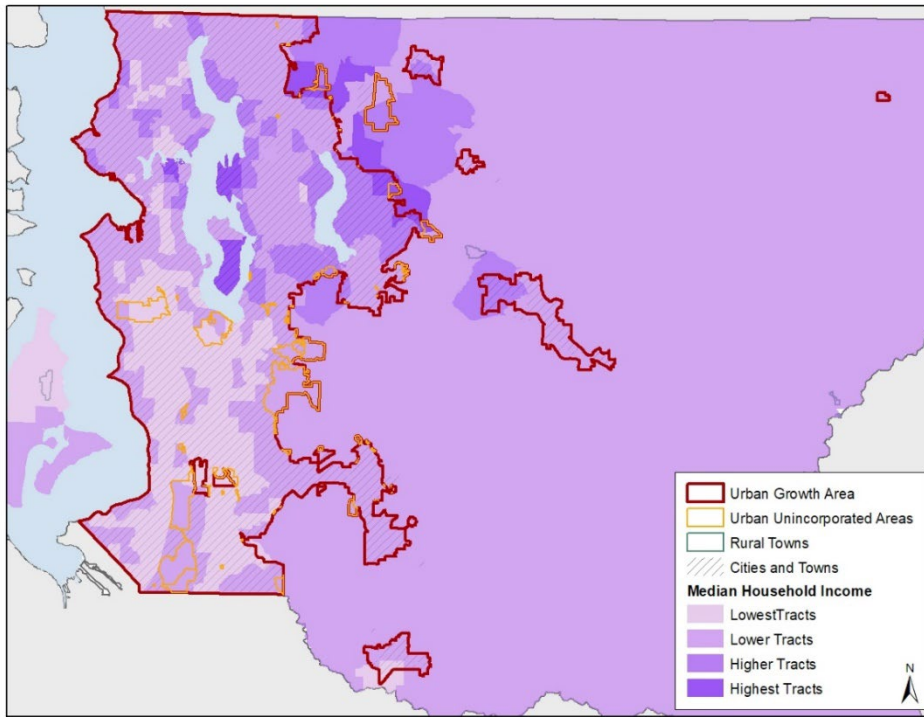
Figure 21: Median Household Income by Place, 2019⁵⁶

	King County	Unincorporated King County	Urban Unincorporated King County	Rural King County
Median Household Income	\$94,974	\$113,702	\$90,395	\$126,002

Figure 22 displays median household incomes by census tract. In the map, tracts are divided into quartiles. The darkest shaded tracts are in the top one-quarter of all tracts for median income in King County. Lower median incomes are more frequent in the core of the Urban Growth Area, and in central and southern King County. Urban unincorporated neighborhoods have some of the lowest median incomes of all places in King County. Median household income in North Highline was about \$58,500 and about \$71,000 in Skyway-West Hill in 2019.

⁵⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2019. Values in sub-county geographies reflect an average of census tract median incomes for the stated geography.

Figure 22: Median Household Income by Census Tract, 2019⁵⁷



Similar disparities in poverty are also seen by race and place. Figure 23 shows the percent of population by race living below the Federal Poverty Level. BIPOC residents have higher rates of below-poverty level incomes than White residents. Black and African American residents experience rates of poverty four times higher than White, non-Hispanic people, with rates among American Indian and Alaska Native residents three times higher.

Figure 23: Population Earning Below Federal Poverty Level by Race, 2019⁵⁸

Race and Ethnicity	Percent of Population Below Federal Poverty Level
Black/African American	24%
American Indian/Alaska Native	19%
Another Race	16%
Hispanic/Latino/a/e (of any race)	14%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	14%
Multiracial	11%

⁵⁷ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2019

⁵⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2019

Race and Ethnicity	Percent of Population Below Federal Poverty Level
King County	9%
Asian	9%
White alone, not Hispanic	6%

Figure 24 shows the percent of population by race living below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level for unincorporated King County geographies. Census data demonstrates that a greater share of urban unincorporated residents live below 200 percent of the federal poverty level than in the county overall.

Figure 24: Population Living at 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level or Lower, 2019⁵⁹

	King County	Unincorporated King County	Urban Unincorporated King County	Rural King County
Percent of Population below 200% Federal Poverty Level	19%	16%	23%	12%

As shown in Figure 25, residents in unincorporated King County are more likely to have low wage jobs than the county average. For reference, in 2019, the minimum wage in King County was \$14.49, or about \$30,100 a year for full time workers. Almost half of workers in urban unincorporated King County are earning \$40,000 a year or less, under \$20 per hour.

Figure 25: Share of Jobs by Annual Earnings, 2019⁶⁰

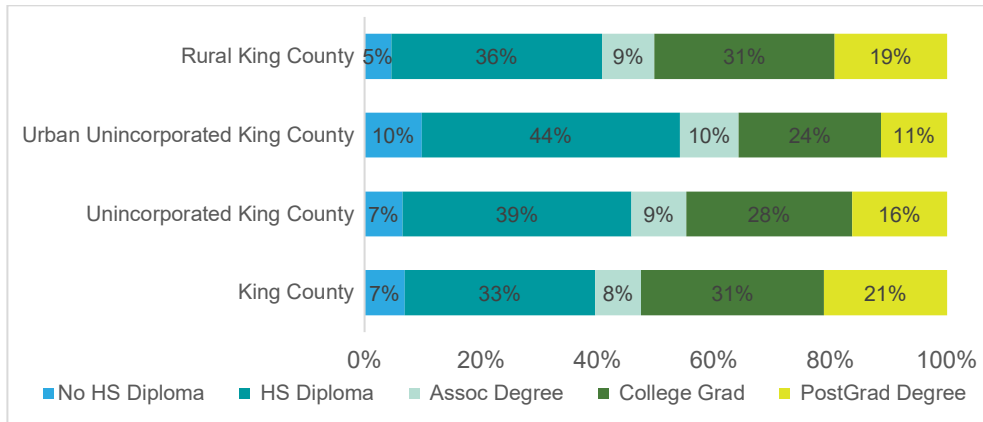
	Earnings		
	Less than \$15,000	\$15,000- \$40,000	More than \$40,000
King County	14%	22%	65%
Unincorporated King County	21%	27%	52%
Urban Unincorporated King County	20%	29%	51%
Rural King County	22%	24%	55%

⁵⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2019. Given King County's higher costs of living and wages than the national average, 200 percent of the federal poverty level provides a more complete picture of people living in poverty, but this specific statistic is not calculated by race in a standard table.

⁶⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES) Data 2019 [LINK](#)

Income levels are related to educational achievement.⁶¹ Figure 26 illustrates how educational attainment varies across King County geographies. Adults in unincorporated King County, particularly urban unincorporated King County, have disproportionately attained fewer college degrees or post-graduate degrees compared to King County as a whole.

Figure 26: Highest level of Education Achieved, 2019⁶²



Income is one measure of a household’s stability. Households may endure periods of time where they need assistance in purchasing food or other resources. Households receiving SNAP, or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, benefits is a standard measure of a household’s food security. Like the population living below the federal poverty level, urban unincorporated households received SNAP benefits at higher rates (11 percent) than the county average (eight percent). Residents in the rural unincorporated King County received SNAP benefits at a lower rate (four percent) than county average.⁶³

10. Key Takeaways

- Unincorporated King County continues to racially diversify with a higher share of White residents than King County as a whole.
- Urban unincorporated King County has a higher share of BIPOC population than King County as a whole, with greater shares of Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino/a/e, and Asian populations than the county average.
- More Black and African American communities particularly reside in Skyway-West Hill, compared to other places throughout the county.
- Hispanic/Latino/a/e communities particularly reside in North Highline, compared to other places throughout the county.
- People aged under 18 (youth) currently comprise one-fifth of King County’s population, while those over 65 (older adults) are 13 percent of the population. This dynamic is anticipated to change dramatically by 2045, with youths projected to

⁶¹ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2019 [\[LINK\]](#)

⁶² U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2019; in the graphic HS abbreviates “high school.”

⁶³ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2019

represent 18 percent of the population, and older adults representing one-fifth of the population.

- Unincorporated King County households are larger on average than the county overall.
- A quarter of urban unincorporated King County residents are immigrants and refugees, a greater share than rural King County or the county overall.
- Urban unincorporated King County residents are more likely to speak a language other than English at home and have a higher rate of limited English proficiency than King County residents overall.
- While higher than the national value, life expectancy in King County varies by race and place. On average, communities in southern King County have shorter life expectancies than northern and eastern county communities. Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander, American Indian and Alaska Native, and Black and African American residents have the lowest average life expectancy.
- Median age differs by race in King County. On average, White residents are older than BIPOC residents countywide.
- Black and African American and American Indian and Alaska Native households have median household incomes of approximately half that of White, non-Hispanic households.

D. Unincorporated King County – Housing and Healthy Communities

1. Stories from Priority Populations Describing Their Lived Experience from the Fall 2022 Housing Survey

The following comments are excerpted from open responses provided by BIPOC survey respondents and respondents who completed the survey in languages other than English to the fall 2022 survey on housing. Responses have not been edited for punctuation or grammar.

- *Because I am a single mother and I am the one who covers the expenses and the rents are very high, one cannot pay for a place alone to give my children a home. At this moment I rent a room and I share a bathroom, kitchen, and washing machines with those who live in the home. I would like to have my own place and privacy.*
- *They knock down old buildings that were economical. They build modern but prices that middle income people cannot pay... they take them out of the neighborhoods and make them get together in dangerous and high-crime areas.*
- *We desperately need small houses with a backyard for kids and pets. Tiny families are forced to buy big houses that they don't need and cannot afford and such houses are wasting a lot of energy. Energy efficiency is also very important.*
- *As an immigrant it can be really difficult to get a home loan with most banks.*
- *The high cost of housing is the #1 barrier to home ownership for me. Also the excessively competitive nature of the housing market and my inability to compete with people who can offer to pay in cash or put down large amounts of cash. These are often white people with generational wealth who cannot afford other localities or wealth people from outside the state or country. These people wield economic power I do not have as a result of multi generational*

structural racism and inequality.

- *When I became disabled in 2015 I could afford my apartment for me and my kids. Since then I got run out by rent increases. Luckily my sister owned an older my on her property she lets me live in.*

2. Housing Supply and Underproduction

While King County experienced record population growth from 2010 to 2020, and despite high permitting volumes for new units, housing supply has struggled to keep pace with population growth. As stated in the 2022 Comprehensive Plan Performance Measures Report, from 2010 to 2020, for every 100 new adult residents in King County, 44 new households were formed, but only 40 housing units were added.⁶⁴ This trend was more pronounced in unincorporated King County, where 27 households were formed for every 100 adult residents added, but only 21 housing units were constructed. When household growth outpaces the development of housing units, housing scarcity increases, which exacerbates affordability issues.

In 2020, King County had nearly 970,000 housing units.⁶⁵ Figure 27 shows the distribution of units in detached and multifamily homes for King County and unincorporated geographies.

Figure 27: Total Housing Units and Shares by Structure Type, 2020⁶⁶

	King County	Unincorporated King County	Urban Unincorporated King County	Rural King County
Total Housing Units	969,234	92,937	43,799	49,138
Single Detached Units	54%	83%	71%	90%
Multifamily Units	46%	17%	29%	10%

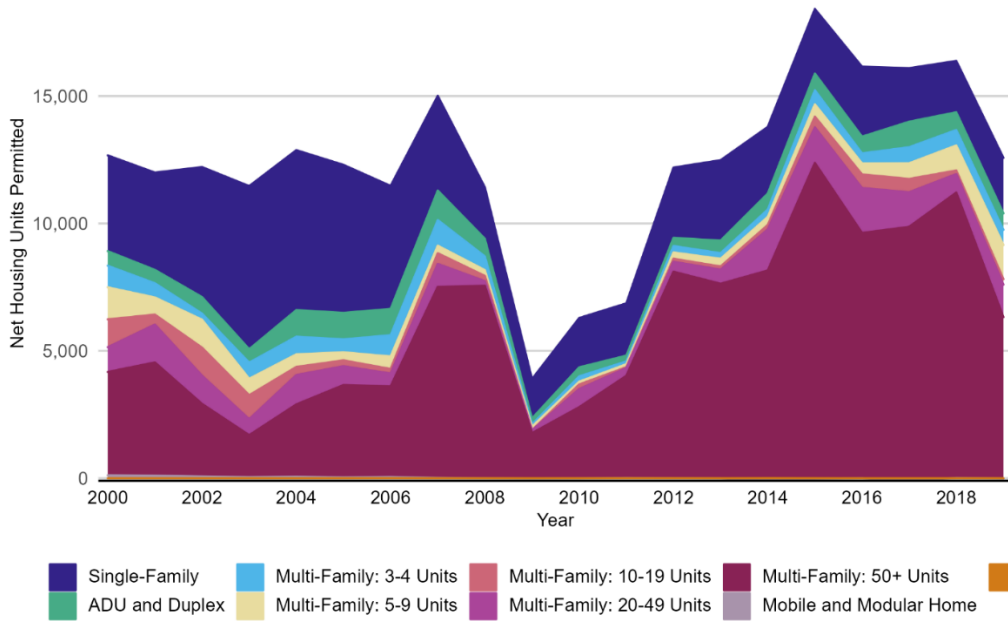
Figure 28 shows net units permitted (new units minus demolished units) between 2000 and 2020 by the structure type of housing units.

⁶⁴ King County 2022 Comprehensive Plan Performance Measures Report, 2022 [\[LINK\]](#)

⁶⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2020

⁶⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2020, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2021

Figure 28: Net Housing Units Permitted by Unit Type, 2000-2020⁶⁷



Multifamily units, including duplex and accessory dwelling units (ADUs), made up the bulk of new units developed between 2010 and 2020, although this trend varied by place, as shown in Figure 29.⁶⁸

Figure 29: Housing Units Permitted by Type, 2010-2020⁶⁹

	Single-detached Units 2010-2020	Multifamily Units 2010-2020
King County	20%	80%
Unincorporated King County	83%	17%
Urban Unincorporated King County	80%	20%
Rural King County	100%	0%

As shown in Figure 30, nearly 50 percent of the housing units added from 2010 to 2020 were studio and one-bedroom homes; 35 percent of homes added had four or more bedrooms.

⁶⁷ Puget Sound Regional Council, Residential Permit Database, 2022 [\[LINK\]](#)

⁶⁸ Washington Office of Financial Management, April 1 Estimates of Housing Units, 2022 [\[LINK\]](#), Puget Sound Regional Council, Residential Permit Database, 2022 [\[LINK\]](#)

⁶⁹ Puget Sound Regional Council, Residential Permit Database, 2022 [\[LINK\]](#)

Figure 30: Housing Units by Number of Bedrooms, 2010-2020⁷⁰

	Housing Units 2010	Housing Units 2020	Housing Units 2010-2020
No bedroom	4%	7%	29%
1 bedroom	17%	17%	17%
2 bedrooms	27%	24%	7%
3 bedrooms	30%	27%	11%
4 bedrooms	18%	19%	24%
5 or more bedrooms	5%	6%	10%

As evidenced by the permitting trends in Figure 29, because of lower zoned densities in unincorporated King County, single detached homes with more bedrooms are more prevalent in King County’s housing supply. This is demonstrated in Figure 31, which shows the change in housing units by bedrooms for unincorporated King County. Seventy-nine percent of units in unincorporated King County added between 2010 and 2019 had three or more bedrooms. While this trend matches the larger household sizes of households in unincorporated King County, new units are more commonly owner-occupied units, and new ownership units are priced out of reach for lower income households.

Figure 31: Housing Units Added by Number of Bedrooms, from 2010-2019⁷¹

	King County	Unincorporated King County	Urban Unincorporated King County	Rural King County
No bedroom	29%	6%	10%	4%
1 bedroom	12%	6%	10%	5%
2 bedrooms	9%	9%	9%	8%
3 bedrooms	13%	24%	16%	27%
4 bedrooms	26%	42%	44%	41%
5 or more bedrooms	10%	13%	12%	14%

⁷⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2020

⁷¹ U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-year data, 2010, 2019. This table reflects a different time period than previous tables to overcome census tract geography differences between 2010 and 2020. Tracts were used to compose this table to reflect unincorporated geography details.

The median price for a home in King County has increased dramatically, by about 50 percent, from \$565,000 in July 2016 to \$850,000 in March 2022, as shown in Figure 32. This significantly increases wealth for existing homeowners but puts homeownership beyond reach for many renters in King County.

Figure 32: King County Median Listing Price, 2016-2022⁷²

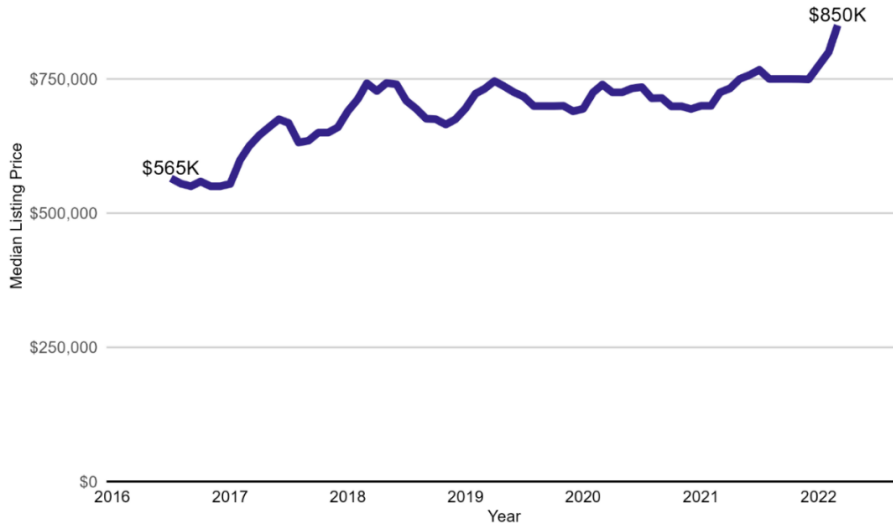


Figure 33 reports the median gross rent by unit size in King County. The median gross rent for King County in 2020 was approximately \$1,800 a month. Rent prices vary across King County, but median rents in urban unincorporated and rural King County are similar to the county median.⁷³

⁷² Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, Median Listing Price in King County, WA, 2022 [\[LINK\]](#)

⁷³ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2020

Figure 33: Median Gross Rent, 2020⁷⁴

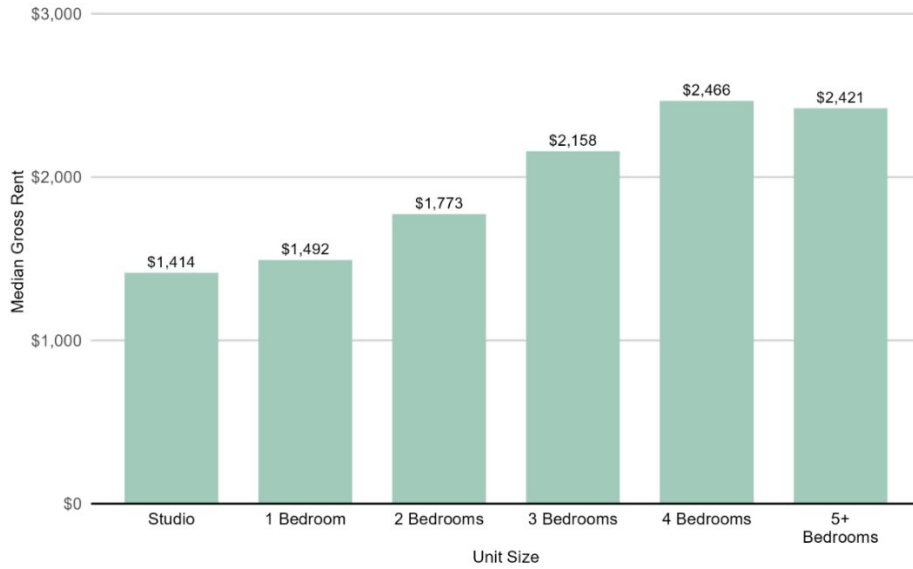
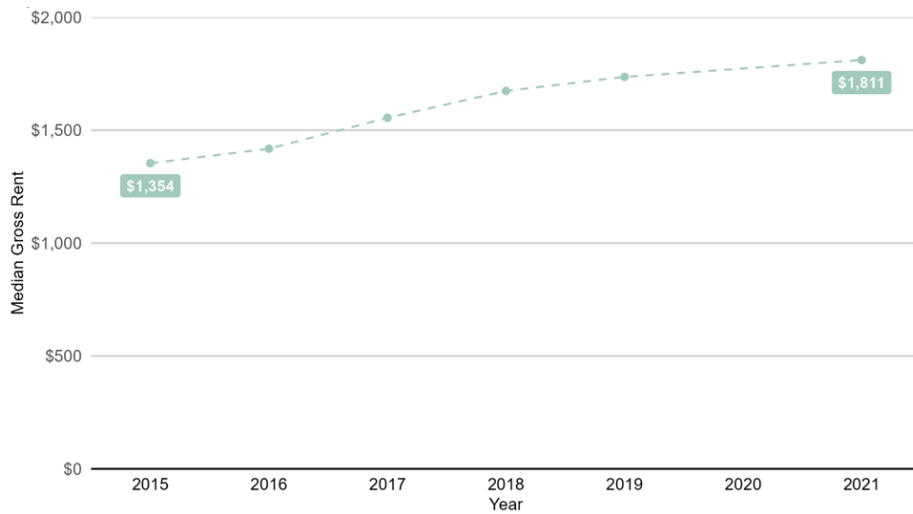


Figure 34 shows how rents have increased over time, 41 percent from 2015 to 2021. The median rent is currently unaffordable for many households. To illustrate, a single person with an income of 50 percent of King County’s Area Median Income (AMI)⁷⁵ in 2022 (\$41,720) can afford a monthly rent of about \$1,040, almost \$400 less than the median gross rent for a studio apartment. A household of four with an income of 50 percent AMI (\$59,560) can afford a monthly rent of about \$1,490, about the cost of the median one-bedroom apartment.

Figure 34: King County Median Gross Rent, 2015-2021⁷⁶



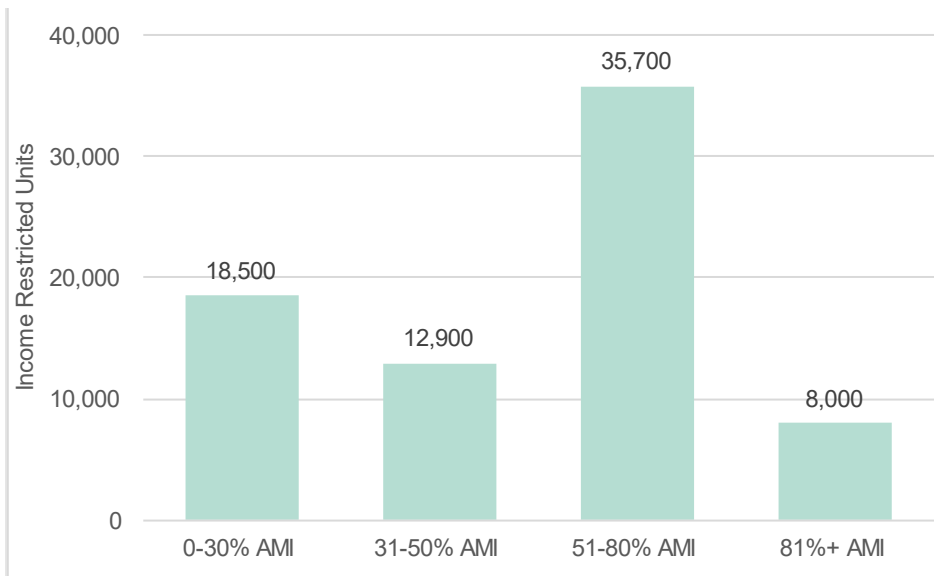
⁷⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2020

⁷⁵ The annual household income the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development calculates for each metropolitan region. This figure differs from King County’s median household income.

⁷⁶ U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 1-year data, 2015-2021. 1-year data not available for 2020.

The cost of housing and unaffordability of market rate housing for those making less than county median income highlights the importance of income-restricted (or income-based) housing. King County has about 65,900 income-restricted housing units, including permanent supportive housing, which is over six percent of all housing units in King County.⁷⁷ Some units are produced through regulatory incentives, but the significant majority are funded through a mix of local, state, federal, and philanthropic funding, tax credits, private debt, and rent from residents. Generally, units restricted at or below 60 percent of AMI are rental units, while units restricted to 60-100 percent AMI are a mix of homeownership and rental units. Over half of King County income-restricted units are for households between 51 to 80 percent AMI. Approximately 26 percent of income-restricted housing units serve households at or below 30 percent AMI.⁷⁸ Figure 35 tallies the income-restricted housing in King County by affordability to standard income groupings.

Figure 35: Income-Restricted Units in King County, 2020⁷⁹



Income-restricted units in unincorporated King County are primarily in the urban unincorporated area. Unincorporated King County has approximately 3,027 income-restricted units.⁸⁰ Units for households at 0 to 30 percent AMI make up a significantly smaller portion of income-restricted units in unincorporated King County (11 percent) compared to King County as a whole (26 percent). Approximately 70 percent of income-restricted units in unincorporated King County are for households between 51 to 80 percent AMI. There are no income-restricted units in unincorporated King County for households at or above 81 percent AMI.⁸¹ Figure 36 shows the distribution of income-restricted units in unincorporated King County.

⁷⁷ King County Department of Community and Human Services, King County Income-Restricted Housing Database, 2020

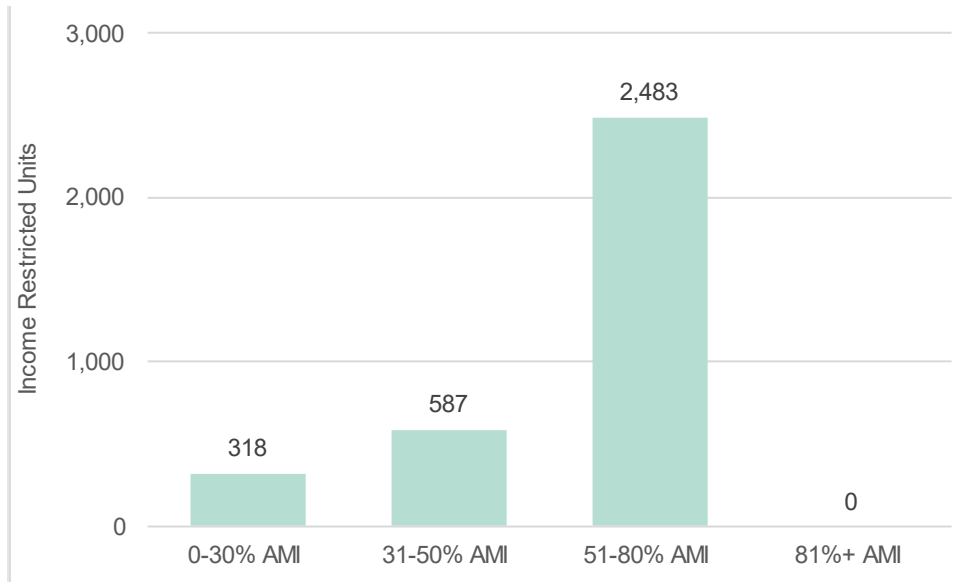
⁷⁸ King County Department of Community and Human Services, King County Income-Restricted Housing Database, 2020

⁷⁹ King County Department of Community and Human Services, King County Income-Restricted Housing Database, 2020

⁸⁰ King County Department of Community and Human Services, King County Income-Restricted Housing Database, 2020

⁸¹ King County Department of Community and Human Services, King County Income-Restricted Housing Database, 2020

Figure 36: Income-Restricted Units in Unincorporated King County, 2020⁸²



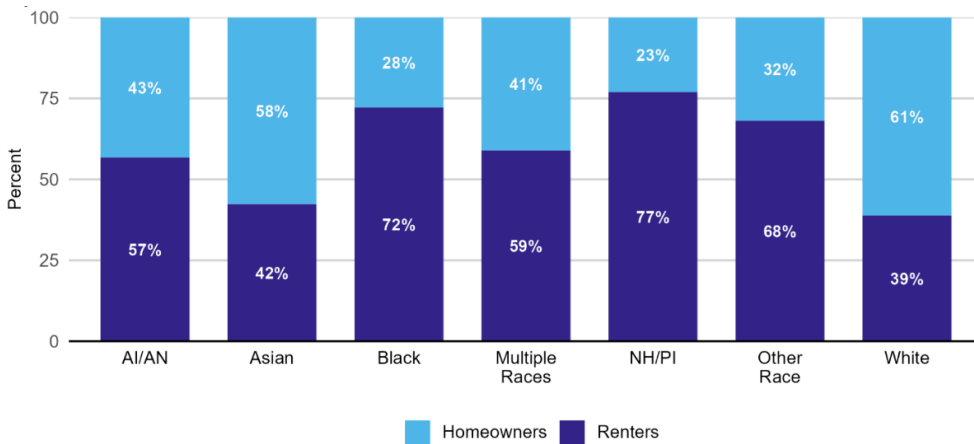
3. Housing Need and Affordability

King County needs a mix of rental and ownership housing to respond to the diverse needs of its population. Most King County households own their home (57 percent) rather than rent (44 percent). Unincorporated King County residents are more likely to be homeowners, regardless of the size of their household. Homeownership rates are much higher in unincorporated King County than the county as a whole, with about 63,800 households living in a home they own (82 percent) and about 13,900 households renting (18 percent). Urban unincorporated households are more likely to rent their home than rural households; about one-third of urban unincorporated households rent their home.⁸³

Housing tenure (renting vs. owning) varies by race. Figure 37 displays tenure by race for King County and Figure 38 displays the same data for unincorporated King County. In King County and unincorporated King County, most White households (61 percent and 88 percent, respectively) and Asian households (58 percent and 75 percent) own their homes. In King County and unincorporated King County, Black and African American households (72 percent and 57 percent, respective of geography) and households of other races not listed (68 percent and 61 percent) are more likely to rent than own their homes. Most American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander, and Multiracial households in unincorporated King County own their homes (53 percent, 81 percent, and 66 percent, respectively). Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander households are nearly four times more likely to own their home in unincorporated King County than countywide.

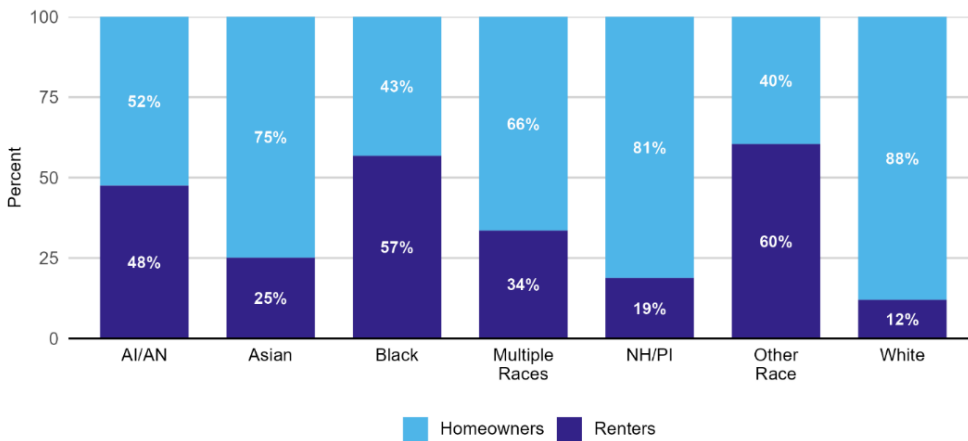
⁸² King County Department of Community and Human Services, King County Income-Restricted Housing Database, 2020
⁸³ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2020

Figure 37: Tenure by Race in King County, 2020⁸⁴



AI/AN is American Indian/Alaska Native
NH/PI is Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

Figure 38: Tenure by Race in Unincorporated King County, 2020⁸⁵



AI/AN is American Indian/Alaska Native
NH/PI is Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

Tenure varies by disability. While 38 percent of people in households in King County live in rental units, 43 percent of people living with a disability in King County live in rental units.⁸⁶

Homeowners in King County tend to have higher incomes than renters. Households below 100 percent of AMI are more likely to rent their home. Figure 39 shows the number of households owning and renting their homes by percent of AMI, for all of King County. Figure 40 displays the same data for unincorporated King County.

⁸⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2020

⁸⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2020

⁸⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, Public Use Microdata Sample 5-year data, 2020

Figure 39: Households by Tenure and AMI Levels in King County, 2018⁸⁷

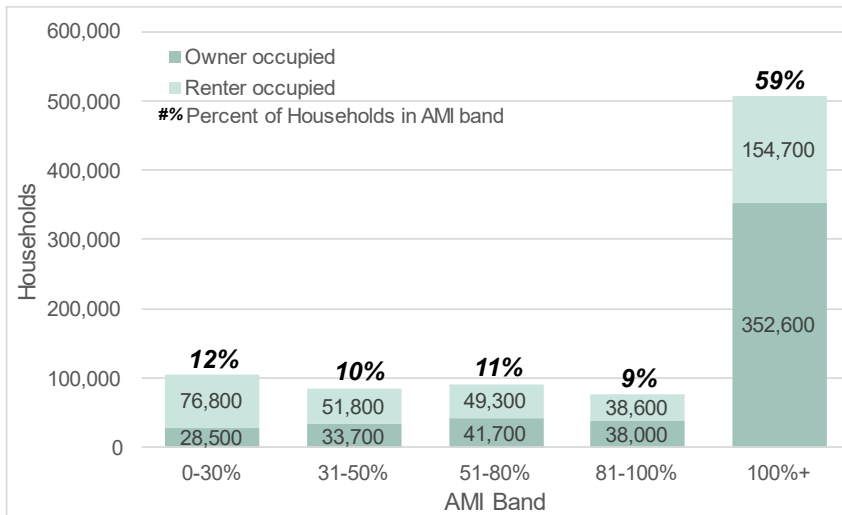
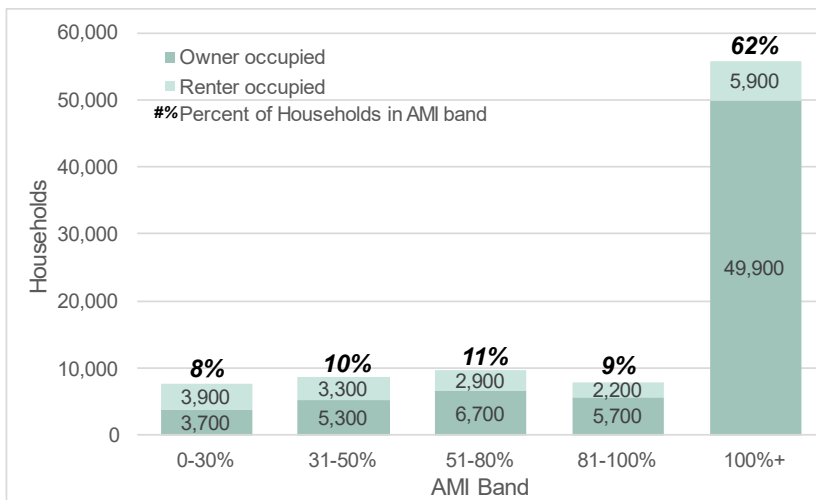


Figure 40: Households by Tenure and AMI Levels in Unincorporated King County, 2018⁸⁸



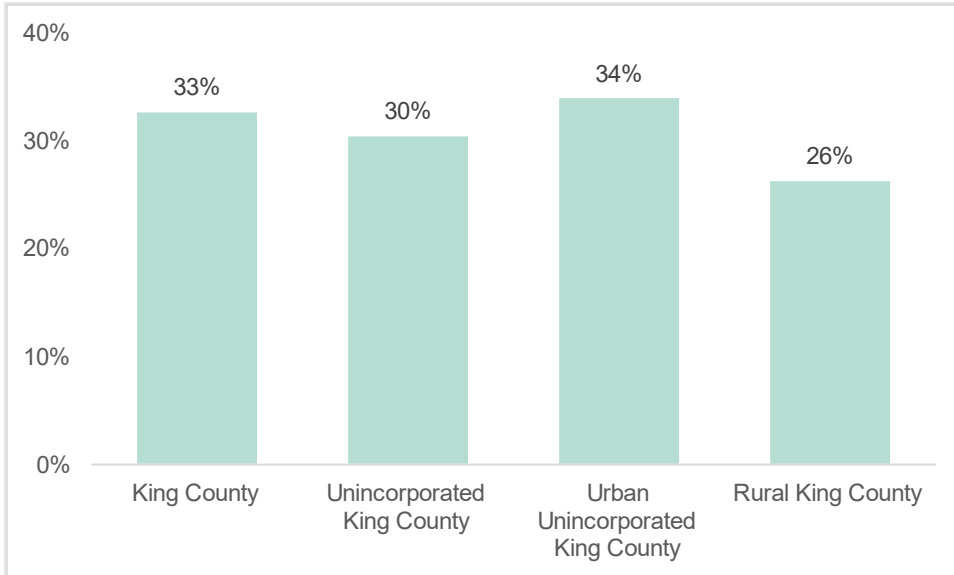
Data shows that King County is experiencing a gap in the supply of affordable homes by income. As population and household incomes have increased between 2010 and 2020, more households were able to afford housing in the area and of the type of their choice. Private landlords and home sellers responded to this increase in high income households by raising prices, especially with a limited housing supply. Comparing the distribution of households by AMI band in Figure 39 and Figure 40, unincorporated King County has a similar share of households to the county as a whole between 31 percent and 100 percent of AMI, and a smaller share of households below 30 percent of AMI.

Policymakers commonly use the concept of cost burden to describe whether housing supply is affordable to households by income. A household paying 30 percent or more of its income

⁸⁷ US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy data, 2014-2018, 2021
⁸⁸ US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy data, 2014-2018, 2021

for housing (including utilities) is considered cost burdened.⁸⁹ Households paying 50 percent or more of income are considered severely cost burdened.⁹⁰ Figure 41 shows how cost burden varies across King County geographies. While cost burden is less prevalent in unincorporated King County, urban unincorporated King County has a slightly higher rate of cost burden than the county average.

Figure 41: Levels of Cost Burden for King County Geographies, 2018⁹¹



Cost burden is common and particularly limiting for households at the lowest income levels, where little income is leftover for other household expenses or savings. Figure 42 shows how rates of cost burden and severe cost burden affect lower income households more severely in King County. Trends for unincorporated King County are similar.⁹²

⁸⁹ US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy data Background, 2023

[\[LINK\]](#)

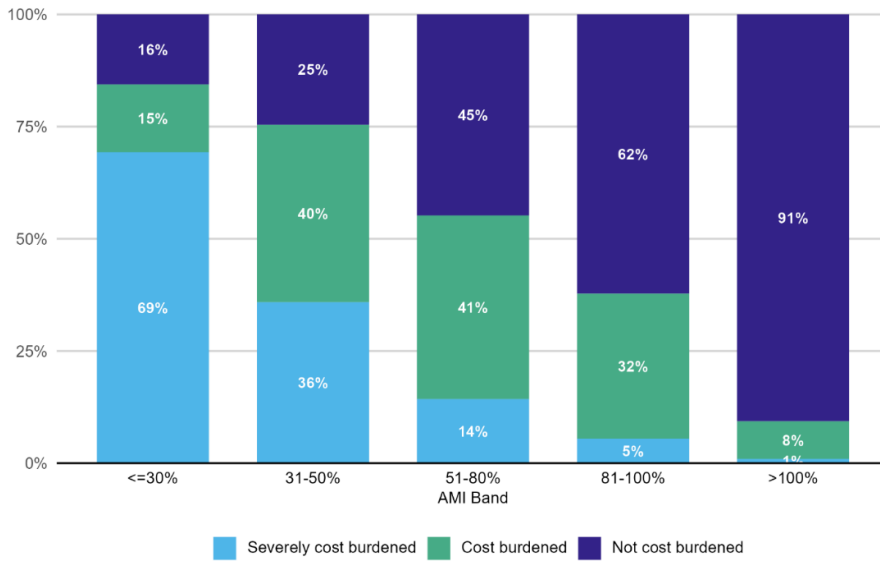
⁹⁰ US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy data Background, 2023

[\[LINK\]](#)

⁹¹ US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy data, 2014-2018, 2021

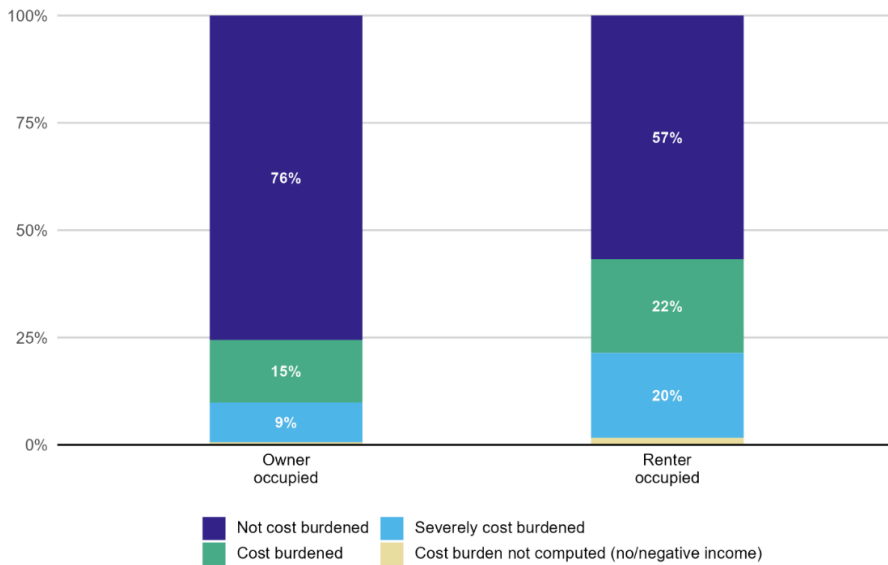
⁹² US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy data, 2014-2018, 2021

Figure 42: Cost Burden by Income in King County, 2018⁹³



Renters are more likely to pay a greater share of their income towards housing than homeowners. Figure 43 shows how rates of cost burden differ by tenure in King County. Rates of cost burden are slightly higher for unincorporated King County renters (45 percent).⁹⁴

Figure 43: Cost Burden by Tenure in King County, 2018⁹⁵



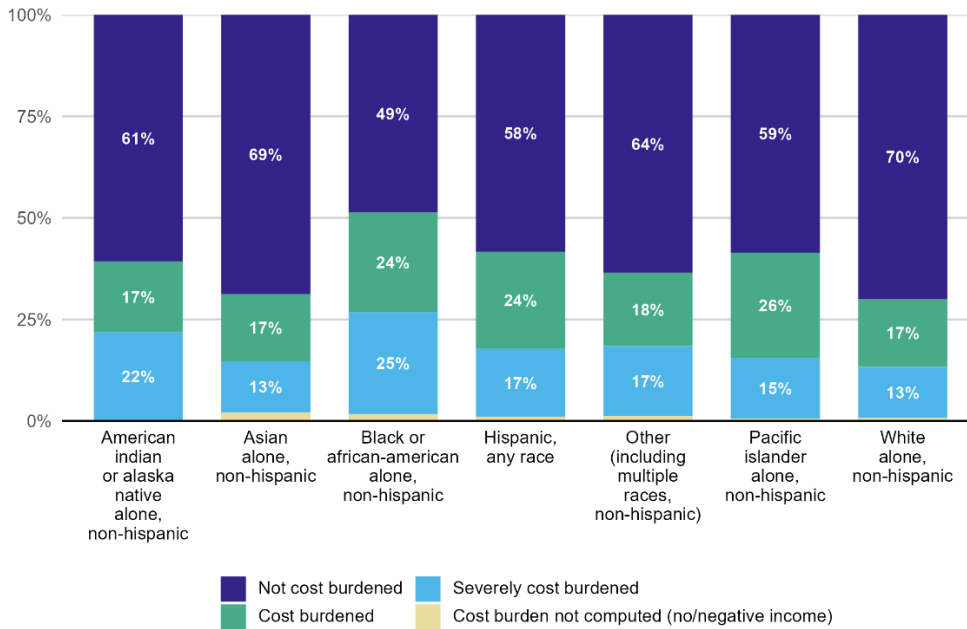
⁹³ US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy data, 2014-2018, 2021

⁹⁴ US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy data, 2014-2018, 2021

⁹⁵ US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy data, 2014-2018, 2021

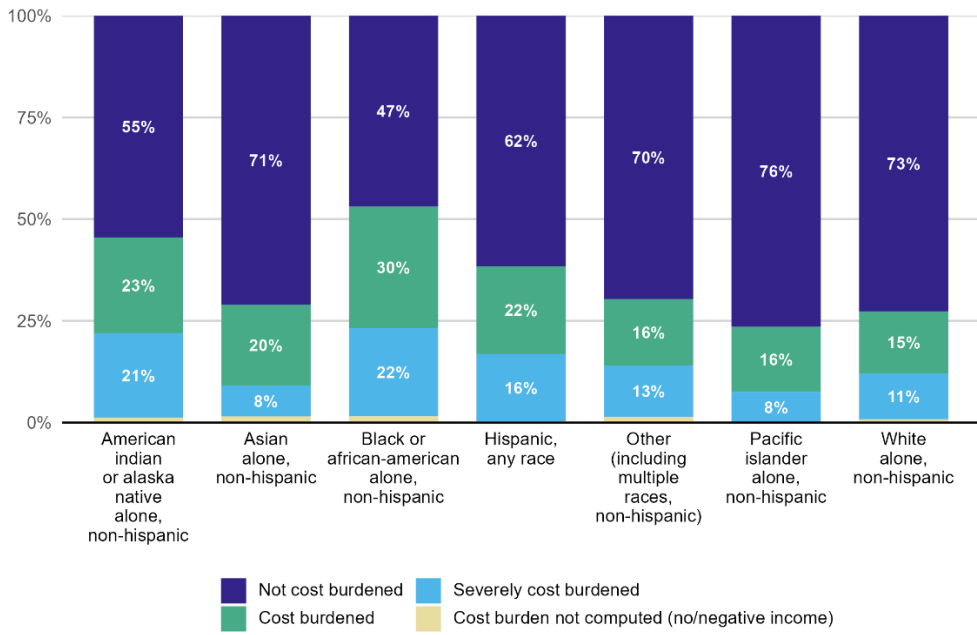
Cost burden varies in prevalence by race as well. More than half of Black households in unincorporated King County are cost burdened or severely cost burdened (52 percent). About a quarter of White households in unincorporated King County are cost burdened (27 percent). Unlike other racial groups, there is a significant disparity in cost burden rates for Pacific Islanders when comparing King County and unincorporated King County. Approximately 40 percent of Pacific Islanders are cost burdened in King County, compared to about 24 percent of Pacific Islanders in unincorporated King County. More than one-fifth of American Indian and Alaska Native households are severely cost burdened in King County and unincorporated King County (22 percent and 21 percent, respectively). Asian households are more likely to be severely cost burdened in King County compared to unincorporated King County (13 percent and eight percent, respectively). Figure 44 and Figure 45 show how rates of cost burden vary by race in King County and unincorporated King County, respectively.

Figure 44: Rates of Cost Burden by Race and Ethnicity in King County, 2018⁹⁶



⁹⁶ US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy data, 2014-2018, 2021

Figure 45: Rates of Cost Burden by Race and Ethnicity in Unincorporated King County, 2018⁹⁷



Shortages in affordable housing contribute to homelessness rates. The 2022 Point-In-Time count of people experiencing sheltered and unsheltered homelessness on a given night identified nearly 13,400 individuals experiencing homelessness in King County, a 14 percent increase over the 2020 Point-In-Time count.⁹⁸ Racial disparities are seen in the experience of homelessness, as shown in Figure 46. American Indian and Alaska Native, Black and African American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latino/a/e, and for Multiracial people make up a higher share of the homeless population than of the total population of King County. This correlates to the lower incomes or higher housing cost burdens that these communities also face.

Figure 46: Race and Ethnicity Differences in Population Experiencing Homelessness, 2022⁹⁹

Race and Ethnicity	Percent of the Homeless Population	Percent of King County Population ¹⁰⁰
Black and African American	25%	7%
American Indian and Alaska Native	9%	1%
Asian	2%	20%
Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander	4%	1%

⁹⁷ US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy data, 2014-2018, 2021

⁹⁸ King County Regional Homelessness Authority, Point in Time Count, 2022 [\[LINK\]](#)

⁹⁹ King County Regional Homelessness Authority, Point-In-Time Count, 2022 [\[LINK\]](#), U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2020

¹⁰⁰ Totals differ from previous sections where Hispanic/Latino/a/e identity is presented as a race category. In this presentation, Hispanic/Latino/a/e individuals are reported in racial categories to match the race/ethnicity groupings in the Point-In-Time data.

Race and Ethnicity	Percent of the Homeless Population	Percent of King County Population ¹⁰⁰
Multiracial	13%	10%
Hispanic/Latino/a/e (of any race)	17%	11%
White	48%	56%

The Point-In-Time Count of people experiencing homelessness is an undercount of the actual number of people experiencing homelessness in King County. In 2021, King County developed an alternative approach using social services data, which counted approximately 40,800 people experiencing homelessness in King County.¹⁰¹

4. Displacement Risk

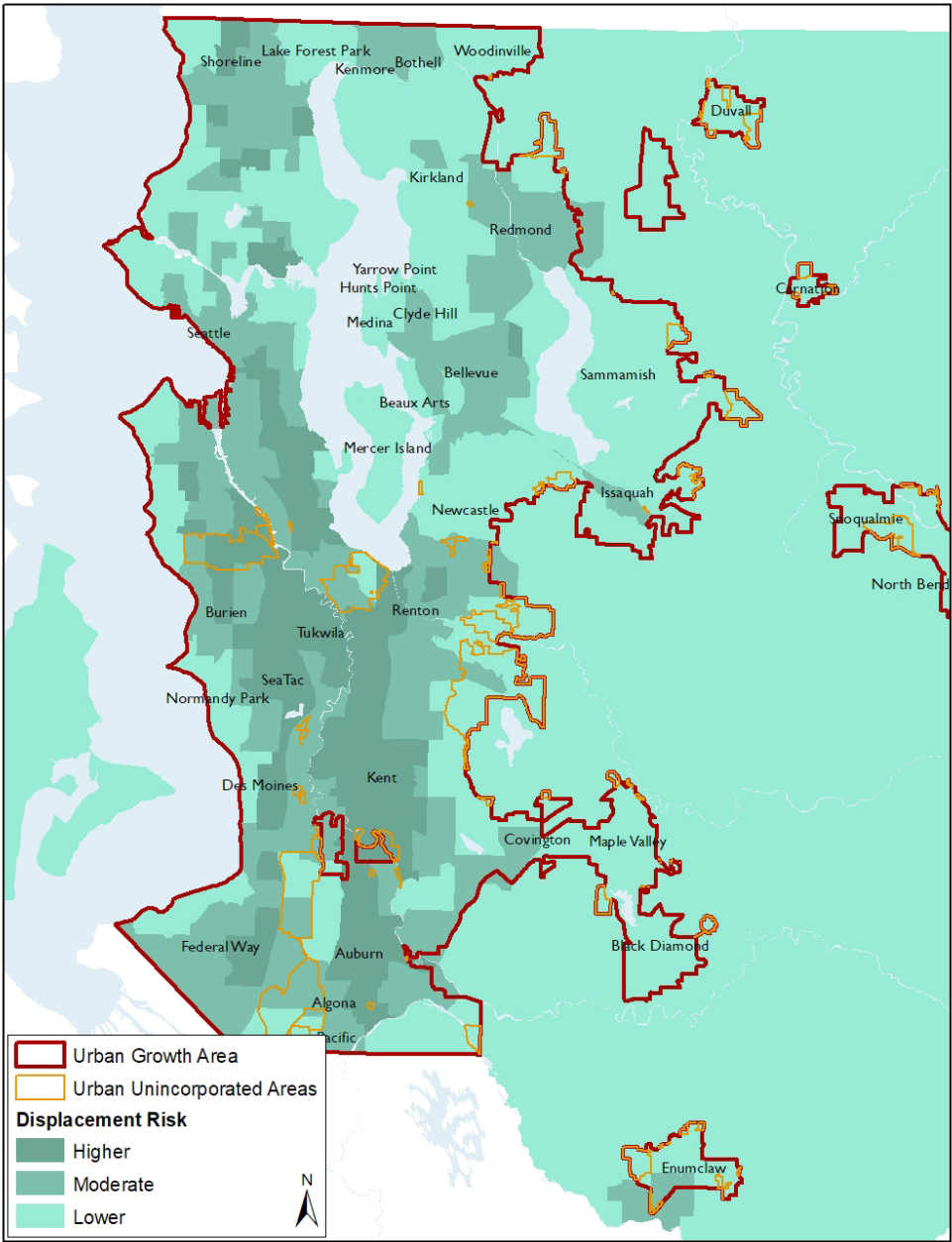
Displacement describes a pattern in which households move involuntarily from their existing home as a result of factors such as housing market forces, disinvestment in communities of color, changing neighborhood preferences, redevelopment projects and new investments, and migration of cultural communities. Displacement can indicate a threat to stability for individuals and communities, placing residents at risk for not only a loss of home, but the loss of connection to their community.¹⁰² The Puget Sound Regional Council’s Displacement Risk Mapping Tool¹⁰³ identifies census tracts that are at lower, moderate, or higher risk of displacement. A map of displacement risk by census tract is shown in Figure 47.

¹⁰¹ King County Department of Community and Human Services, Performance Measurement and Evaluation Division, Integrating Data to Better Measure Homelessness, 2021 [[LINK](#)]

¹⁰² King County Department of Community and Human Services, Skyway-West Hill and North Highline Anti-Displacement Strategies Report, 2021 [[LINK](#)]

¹⁰³ Puget Sound Regional Council, Displacement Risk Mapping, 2023 [[LINK](#)]

Figure 47: Displacement Risk by Census Tract, 2023¹⁰⁴



Currently, 57 percent of King County households live in areas with moderate to higher risk for displacement. BIPOC households are at a higher risk for displacement than White households. Figure 48 shows how displacement risk varies in unincorporated King County. Portions of urban unincorporated King County are identified as higher displacement risk areas, including some neighborhoods within both North Highline and Skyway-West Hill, confirming comments King County has received from the community in those

¹⁰⁴ Puget Sound Regional Council, Displacement Risk Mapping, 2023 [LINK](#)

neighborhoods.¹⁰⁵ Additionally, portions of East Federal Way and Fairwood are identified as moderate displacement risk areas, along with other portions of Skyway-West Hill and the remainder of North Highline. Forty-two percent of unincorporated King County’s development capacity is in areas with at least moderate risk of displacement, indicating that a significant portion of future development could pose a displacement threat to existing communities without complementary anti-displacement actions.¹⁰⁶

Figure 48: Households by Displacement Risk, 2020¹⁰⁷

	King County	Unincorporated King County	Urban Unincorporated King County	Rural King County
Lower Risk	43%	78%	56%	98%
Moderate Risk	40%	13%	26%	2%
Higher Risk	17%	8%	18%	0%

5. Residential Mobility

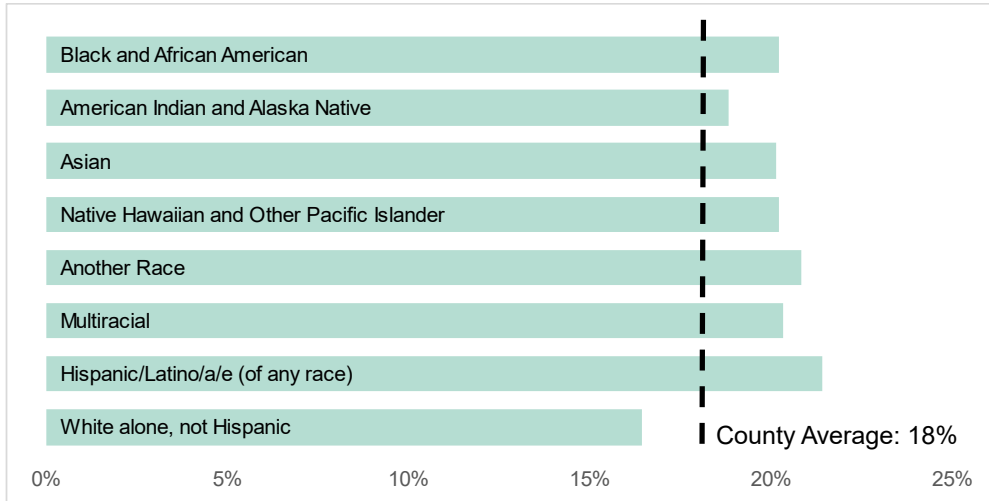
While the displacement risk index is helpful for identifying people and places who may be at risk for displacement, less data is available on who has been displaced and where they have moved. Census data reports on who has moved within King County and generally where they moved from in the last year. Figure 49 displays King County residents who have moved in the last year by race, either within King County or from outside the County. BIPOC residents were more likely to move into or around King County than the county average.

¹⁰⁵ Comments referenced include input from the Equity Work Group and comments received in surveys.

¹⁰⁶ Calculated by overlaying development capacity from the Plan land capacity analysis with displacement risk mapping.

¹⁰⁷ Puget Sound Regional Council, Displacement Risk Mapping, 2023 [\[LINK\]](#); U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2020

Figure 49: King County Residents Who Have Moved in the Last Year by Race, 2021¹⁰⁸



Nationally, lower income households move disproportionately more than higher income households.¹⁰⁹ A recent study drawing upon credit score data sheds some light on moving trends by socio-economic status in King County before the COVID-19 pandemic.¹¹⁰ The study found that King County households with moderate socio-economic status, measured by credit score, were most likely to move overall and that households with lower socio-economic status were more likely to move out of King County. Higher socio-economic status households were more likely to move within their existing neighborhood, but least likely to move overall. Figure 50 reports on the destinations of movers by socio-economic status (Low, Moderate, Middle, High), grouped by King County subarea based on their origin.¹¹¹

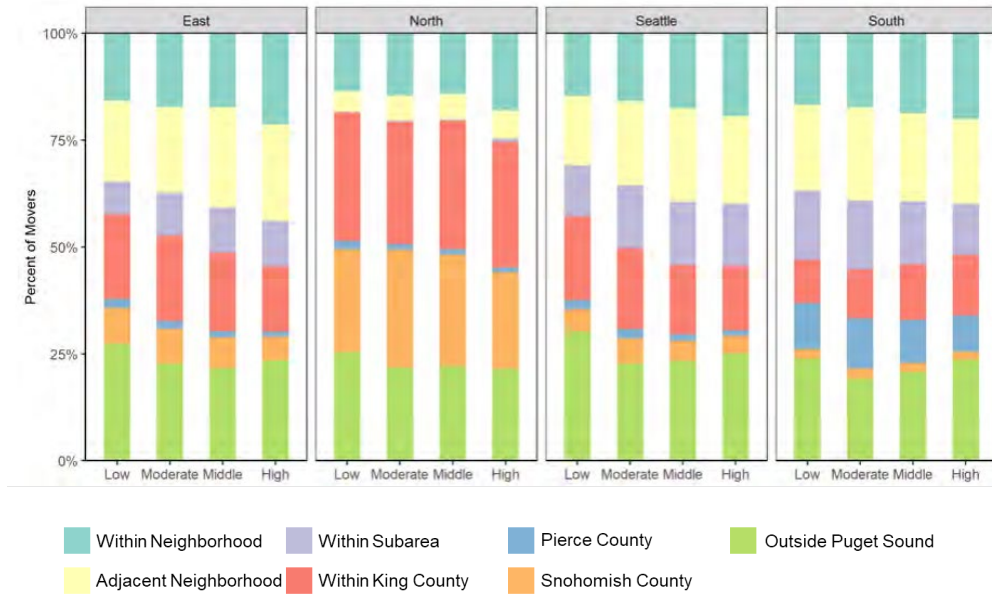
¹⁰⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021

¹⁰⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2021

¹¹⁰ Hwang, Jackelyn, Bina P. Shrimali, Daniel C. Casey, Kimberly M. Tippens, Maxine K. Wright, Kirsten Wysen. 2022. "Who Moved and Where Did They Go? An analysis of residential moving patterns in King County, WA between 2002–2017." Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco Community Development Research Brief 2023-01 [\[LINK\]](#)

¹¹¹ This study uses credit scores (Equifax Risk Scores) as a proxy for socio-economic status. Credit scores reflect creditworthiness to private credit companies and lenders, and do not necessarily conflate with income or other indicators of economic status but are intended as an indicator of financial stability.

Figure 50: Destination of King County Movers by Socio-Economic Status, 2012-2017¹¹²



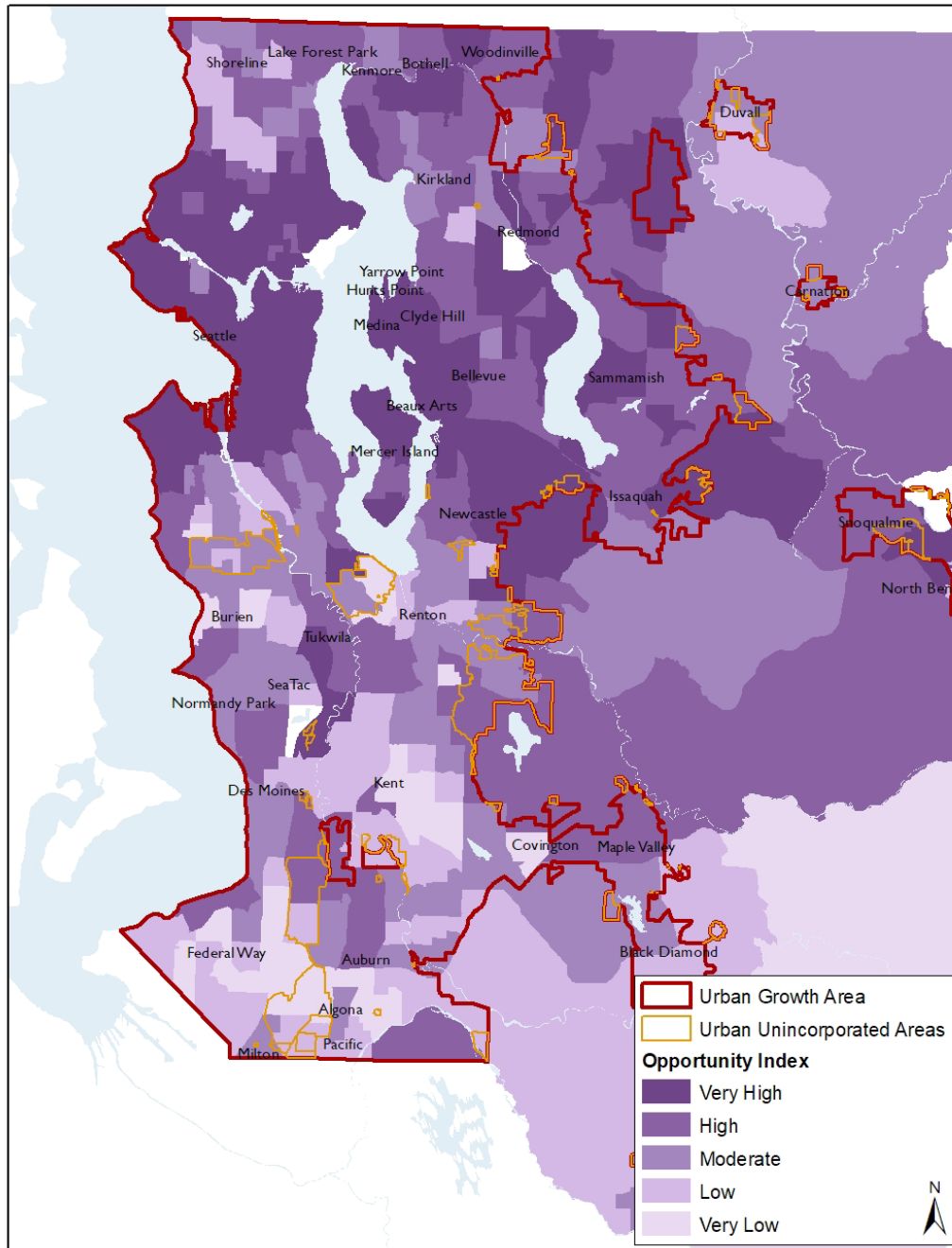
6. Access to Opportunity

The Plan promotes a future where all King County residents have access to the services and conditions they need to thrive, regardless of where they live or who they are. The Puget Sound Regional Council’s Opportunity Index is one measure of whether the current conditions in neighborhoods provide access to the services and amenities that promote opportunity for residents.¹¹³ The Index identifies census tracts with very low, low, moderate, high, and very high access to opportunity. A map of access to opportunity is shown in Figure 51.

¹¹² Hwang, Jackelyn, Bina P. Shrimali, Daniel C. Casey, Kimberly M. Tippens, Maxine K. Wright, Kirsten Wyses. 2022. “Who Moved and Where Did They Go? An analysis of residential moving patterns in King County, WA between 2002–2017.” Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco Community Development Research Brief 2023-01 [\[LINK\]](#) Note: Legend labels have been recreated to replace a poor quality graphic, and some legend titles have been edited for clarity in the context of this report.

¹¹³ Seattle 2035 Growth and Equity, Analyzing Impacts on Displacement and Opportunity Related to Seattle’s Growth Strategy, May 2016. Seattle Office of Planning and Community Development, Page 14 Table 4. [\[LINK\]](#)

Figure 51: Access to Opportunity by Census Tract, 2019¹¹⁴



Access to opportunity varies in unincorporated King County, as shown in Figure 52. In King County overall, 17 percent of households have low or very low access to opportunity. Unincorporated King County geographies have higher rates of households living in areas with low or very low access to opportunity. Portions of East Federal Way and Skyway-West

¹¹⁴ Puget Sound Regional Council, Opportunity Mapping Tool, 2019 [\[LINK\]](#)

Hill experience lower access to opportunity, though neighboring tracts in these neighborhoods have greater access to opportunity.

Figure 52: Households by Levels of Access to Opportunity, 2020¹¹⁵

	King County	Unincorporated King County	Urban Unincorporated King County	Rural King County
Very High	40%	12%	13%	11%
High	24%	28%	24%	32%
Moderate	17%	30%	35%	25%
Low	11%	15%	16%	14%
Very Low	6%	9%	13%	5%
Unclassified ¹¹⁶	2%	7%	0%	13%

7. Access to Amenities, Transit, and Healthy Communities

The previous section describes access to opportunities broadly. This section describes access to some specific amenities or services that are important for healthy and thriving communities.

Open Space

King County maintains a regional and local park system and a network of open space of over 28,000 acres where residents can recreate in a variety of ways, in addition to the park and open space networks maintained by cities and the State of Washington within King County.¹¹⁷ Seventy-nine percent of King County residents live within a 15-minute walk or roll to open space.¹¹⁸ Convenient access to parks and open space varies by race and place within the county. Figure 53 shows the share of county residents by race who lack convenient park access. Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander, Black and African American, Hispanic and Latino/a/e, and Asian residents are living with less access to parks and open space than the county average.

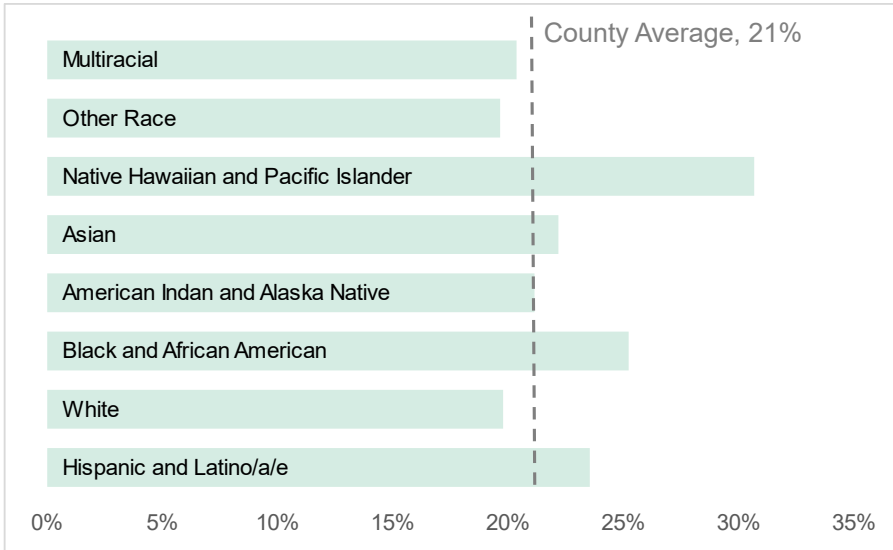
¹¹⁵ Puget Sound Regional Council, Opportunity Mapping Tool, 2019 [\[LINK\]](#)

¹¹⁶ The Opportunity Index combines five separate indices comprised of multiple indicators. For some areas, missing data prevented the creation of one of the indices, and as a result, the overall index, mapped here, has no access to opportunity classification. These areas have been labeled “unclassified” in this map.

¹¹⁷ King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, About King County Parks, 2023 [\[LINK\]](#)

¹¹⁸ King County, 2022 Comprehensive Plan Performance Measures Report, 2022 [\[LINK\]](#)

Figure 53: Residents with Limited Park and Open Space Access by Race, 2020¹¹⁹



Park and open space access also varies by place. Only 49 percent of urban unincorporated King County residents enjoy adequate parks access, compared to 66 percent of rural residents, and 81 percent of city residents. Urban unincorporated King County residents are disproportionately limited in park and open space access.¹²⁰

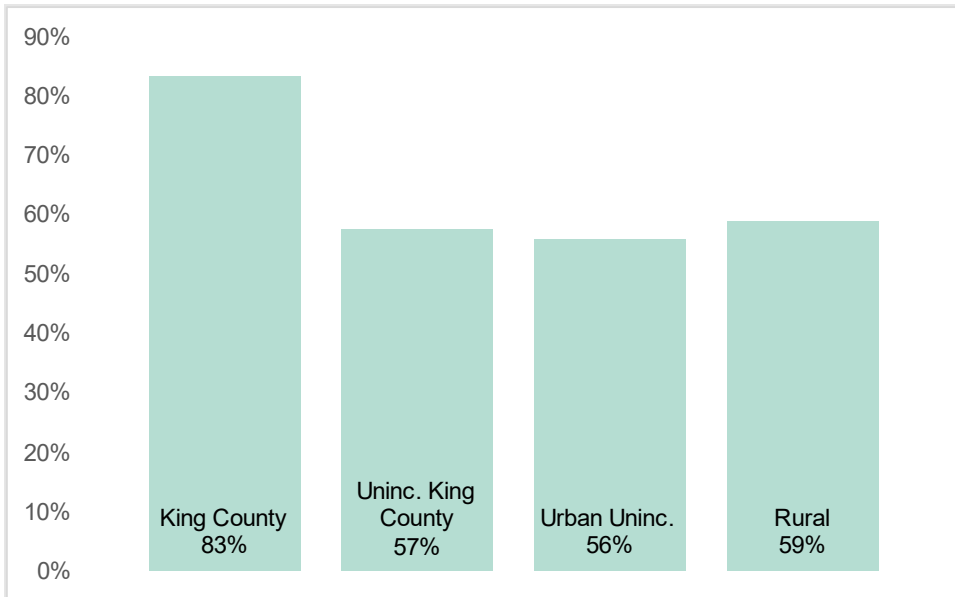
Healthy Food Options

Residents of neighborhoods lacking a nearby grocery store or fresh food vendor face more barriers in accessing a nutritious diet. While proximate access to a neighborhood store does not mean that the food available will be culturally accessible for all residents, examining where residents face barriers to accessing food can indicate where residents may be underserved and in need of support. As shown in Figure 54, 83 percent of King County residents live within proximity (a half-mile in urban neighborhoods with limited car ownership, one mile in other urban neighborhoods, five miles in rural areas) to a grocery store, small grocer, or produce vendor.

¹¹⁹ King County, 2022 Comprehensive Plan Performance Measures Report, 2022 [\[LINK\]](#); Trust for Public Lands, ParkServe, 2018

¹²⁰ King County, 2022 Comprehensive Plan Performance Measures Report, 2022 [\[LINK\]](#); Trust for Public Lands, ParkServe, 2018

Figure 54: Percent of Residents with Access to Healthy Food Options, 2020¹²¹



Data shows that disparities in healthy food access appear to be most pronounced for American Indian and Alaska Native King County residents. It is challenging to draw additional conclusions about food access by race and income from a distance-based analysis and traditional data sources, because of the intersection of race, income, and values about residential neighborhood choice. A more affluent household can elect to live further from dense, mixed use-areas with grocery and other food stores but may be less affected by the distance from a store because of their relative ability to cover transportation costs. Alternatively, households of specific cultural communities may struggle to access culturally relevant foods, despite having proximate access to a store.¹²²

Transit

Eighty-five percent of new King County housing units added between 2014 and 2020 was located near transit stops. In 2020, 51 percent of King County single detached homes, and 85 percent of multifamily units, were within a quarter mile of transit. 86 percent of units in King County’s subsidized housing database are near transit.¹²³ As shown in Figure 55, the share of housing near transit in urban unincorporated King County lags behind cities.¹²⁴

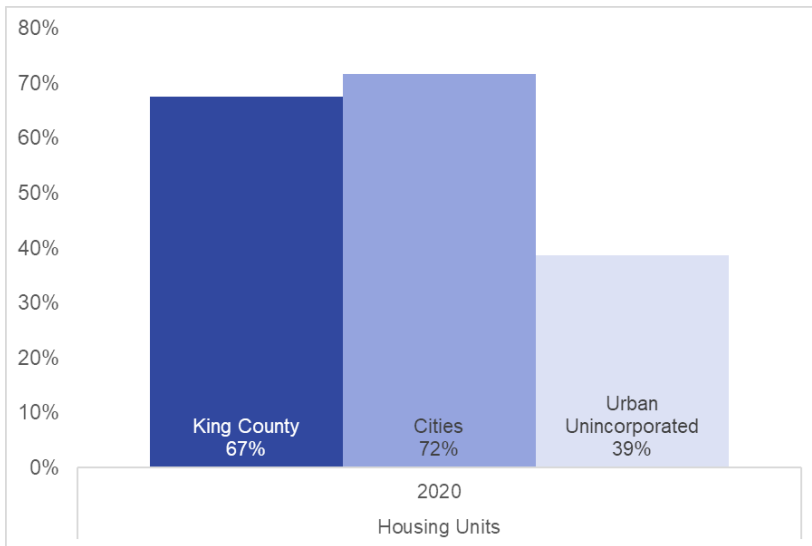
¹²¹ King County, 2022 Comprehensive Plan Performance Measures Report, 2022 [LINK](#)

¹²² King County, 2022 Comprehensive Plan Performance Measures Report, 2022 [LINK](#)

¹²³ King County, 2022 Comprehensive Plan Performance Measures Report, 2022 [LINK](#)

¹²⁴ Rural housing units are not analyzed in this chart as public transportation is considered an urban service.

Figure 55: Share of Housing Units within a Quarter Mile of a Transit Stop, 2020¹²⁵



Living far from work can be a choice, or a result of where a household can afford to live. Long commutes reduce the amount of time workers have for activities often dependent on car travel. Approximately 16,000 workers (two percent) in King County travel 90 minutes (one way) or more to their job. Long commutes are more prevalent for residents in south King County and Vashon-Maury Island, Black and African American residents, and residents with a disability.¹²⁶

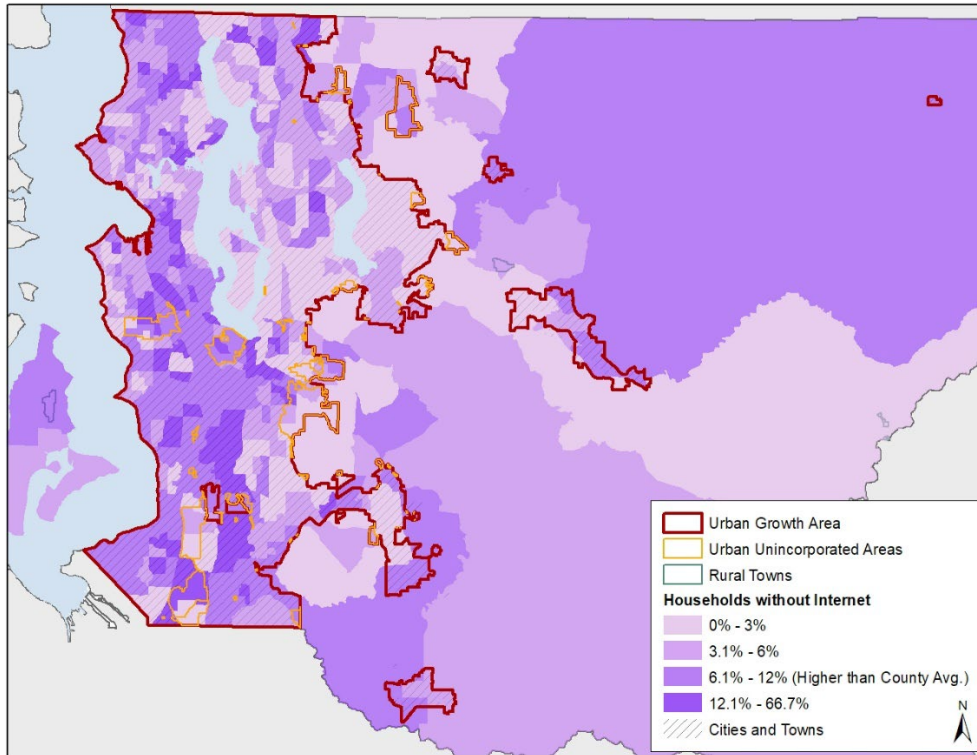
Internet

Equitable access to information and services via the internet is a fundamental equity and social justice goal.¹²⁷ As access has grown from service expansions, technology improvements, and smartphone use, the share of households without internet access at home has dropped from 16 percent in 2014, to six percent in 2021.¹²⁸

Households without internet access at home are more likely to have lower incomes. Households making less than \$50,000 are nearly six times less likely to have internet at home. Figure 56 shows how home internet access varies across King County.

¹²⁵ King County, 2022 Comprehensive Plan Performance Measures Report, 2022 [\[LINK\]](#)
¹²⁶ Public Health – Seattle- & King County, Communities Count, 2020 [\[LINK\]](#)
¹²⁷ King County, Determinants of Equity Data Tool, 2023 [\[LINK\]](#)
¹²⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2014 and 2021 [\[LINK\]](#)

Figure 56: Households without Internet Access by Census Tract, 2021¹²⁹



Despite infrastructure gaps for broadband internet service in unincorporated King County, particularly in the rural area,¹³⁰ according to Census data, more households in the rural area have internet access at home than urban unincorporated King County or the County overall. Five percent of urban unincorporated households do not have internet access at home, although this varies by subarea. Skyway-West Hill (11 percent), North Highline (eight percent), and East Federal Way (seven percent) have a higher share of households without internet access at home than county average (six percent).¹³¹

Cultural Organizations

Neighborhoods are more than a collection of homes and businesses. Strong, vibrant neighborhoods have places and organizations that build community and strengthen resilience. Cultural communities and organizations face displacement as members are displaced or when rents for community spaces or anchor businesses and organizations rise too quickly, and become unaffordable, especially for volunteer or non-profit organizations, or small businesses.

King County government and the cities in King County provide support for cultural organizations and support cultural planning at varying levels to build social cohesion, celebrate and bolster unique identity, and support economic growth.¹³² While King County

¹²⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2021

¹³⁰ King County Broadband Access Study, 2020 [LINK](#)

¹³¹ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year data, 2021

¹³² 4Culture, King County Cultural Health Study, 2021 [LINK](#)

government supports cultural communities and organizations through 4Culture,¹³³ a multitude of informal, mutual aid, and non-profit and community development organizations serving communities within the unincorporated area directly support different enclaves, interests, and neighborhoods.¹³⁴ Cultural organizations were strongly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. A recent statewide study by ArtsFund found a significant drop in arts and cultural workforce and attendance and participation in cultural activities and events in 2021 as organizations and events came back from the pandemic, although donations to organizations has rebounded somewhat.¹³⁵ BIPOC-identifying cultural organizations were particularly spotlighted in the wake of consciousness-raising racial justice protests and the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis during the spring and summer of 2020, leading to increases in revenue; however, this attention lessened in 2021, with organizations average operating revenue falling below 2019 levels.¹³⁶

8. Findings from Fall 2022 Housing Survey

Below are some key findings from the standardized questions of the Plan's fall 2022 housing survey.

- Increasing affordable housing units (in particular for very low-income and extremely low-income households, or those that make between 0 and 50 percent of the area median income) is a priority for 71 percent of respondents.
- “Middle housing” types, such as accessory dwelling units (56 percent), cottage housing (50 percent), and townhomes (43 percent) were the top three housing types that respondents were interested in seeing in their neighborhoods.
- The two biggest barriers to homeownership are having or building a down payment (57 percent) and the monthly payments (44 percent).
- The top concerns for building near transit and employment centers are noise (79 percent), pedestrian safety (61 percent), and air pollution (59 percent).

9. Key Takeaways

- Recent housing development in unincorporated King County has primarily been detached housing; about 20 percent of units developed were multifamily.
- Recent housing production in unincorporated King County has disproportionately been single detached homes with a higher number of bedrooms.
- Despite the relatively high number of new units permitted countywide, housing development has struggled to keep up with population growth. Household growth has outpaced housing growth between 2010 and 2020.
- Countywide, the median listing price for homes has increased almost \$300,000, or 50 percent, between 2016 and 2022. Median rent has increased over 40 percent between 2015 and 2021.

¹³³ 4Culture, About 4Culture, 2023 [\[LINK\]](#)

¹³⁴ 4Culture, cultural development authority, is a public authority created by King County to support, advocate for and preserve the cultural resources of the region in a manner that fosters excellence, vitality and diversity and its primarily supported by lodging tax revenues (K.C.C. chapter 2.49) [\[LINK\]](#).

¹³⁵ ArtsFund, COVID Cultural Impact Study, 2021 [\[LINK\]](#). Note that this study focuses on visual and performing arts organizations and focuses on statewide trends.

¹³⁶ ArtsFund, COVID Cultural Impact Study, 2021 [\[LINK\]](#).

- Black and African American, low-income, and renter households are disproportionately affected by cost burden, meaning they are more likely to pay more than 30 percent of household income towards housing costs.
- Despite being more likely to be renters across King County, BIPOC households have disproportionately higher rates of homeownership in unincorporated King County.
- Residents of some neighborhoods within North Highline and Skyway-West Hill are at higher risk of displacement. The remainder of North Highline, other portions of Skyway-West Hill, East Federal Way, and Fairwood are at moderate risk for displacement.
- Residents in urban unincorporated King County have less proximate access to transit, parks and open space, and healthy food options than King County residents overall, and more so for Black and African American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander, and Hispanic and Latino/a/e residents.

E. Unincorporated King County – Climate and Frontline Communities

Data and analysis in this section draws from the 2020 Strategic Climate Action Plan.¹³⁷ It also draws from analyses completed in support of Plan proposals related to climate change, the environment, and frontline communities. Frontline communities are the people who face the direct impacts of adverse climate, natural hazards, or other threats, earliest and more acutely because of intersecting inequities.¹³⁸

While the population groups comprising frontline communities vary by the specific climate threat, climate change is a threat multiplier and exacerbates existing social and economic inequities.¹³⁹ The root causes of existing inequities like racial segregation, poverty, and lacking living wage employment, affect social and economic factors. These factors include the ability of a household to afford housing, food, and healthcare, and compound a person's existing health conditions making them more vulnerable to climate change threats. Historic and existing social inequities and racism affect the ability of frontline communities to respond, recover, and be resilient in the face of climate-related hazards. They can also limit the ability of BIPOC and low-income frontline community members to participate in or benefit from actions taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including actions that improve energy efficiency in homes, expand transit access, or support vehicle electrification. Because climate change will magnify current inequities, many of the populations described earlier in this document, such as BIPOC communities, low-income households, and people speaking a language(s) other than English, are those most affected by climate threats.

¹³⁷ King County Climate Action Team, King County 2020 Strategic Climate Action Plan, 2020 [\[LINK\]](#)

¹³⁸ Frontline Communities are defined in the Strategic Climate Action Plan as: those communities who are disproportionately impacted by climate change due to existing and historic racial, social, environmental, and economic inequities, and who have limited resources and/or capacity to adapt. These populations often experience the earliest and most acute impacts of climate change, but whose experiences afford unique strengths and insights into climate resilience strategies and practices. Frontline communities include Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities, immigrants and refugees, people living with low incomes, communities experiencing disproportionate pollution exposure, women and gender non-conforming people, LGBTQIA people, people who live and/or work outside, those with existing health issues, people with limited English skills, and other climate vulnerable groups. [\[LINK\]](#)

¹³⁹ King County Climate Action Team, King County 2020 Strategic Climate Action Plan, 2020 [\[LINK\]](#)

1. Stories from Priority Populations Describing Their Lived Experience from the Fall 2022 Climate Survey

The following comments are excerpted from open responses to the fall 2022 survey on climate change provided by BIPOC survey respondents and respondents who completed the survey in languages other than English. Responses have not been edited for punctuation or grammar.

- *Both apartment complexes I have lived in due to concerns about appearance have banned the use of passive cooling tactics and window AC units. Our building is surrounded by streets that absorb heat.*
- *The closest bus stop to my home is more than a mile away and my neighborhood lacks sidewalks. We need a bus to come through often, and more sidewalks for safety.*
- *Disabled people often need to use disposable things. We often need to own and drive cars in order to be safe from public germs and attend our frequent doctor appointments. Changes to protect the environment should always be for the general population, and not equally applied to all groups. You need to establish an advisory council of disabled folks to advise you on when your changes for benefit of the environment are encroaching on the capacity for Disabled folks to stay alive. Only Disabled people have this knowledge.*
- *I've never seen my plants and trees struggle so much during summer. I am worried about wildfires and sea-level rise.*
- *Recent free public transportation, made me feel such a pang because young adults are struggling harder than youth. I hate how help for young adults is just cut off. So much struggle 21-30.*
- *I walk on a sidewalk to pick up my daughter from daycare every day. I use a stroller. I am worried about being hit at intersections and store entrances every day. We need more driver education and police enforcement of pedestrian laws.*
- *It is important that King County prioritize those neighborhoods and communities that are most impacted by heat. People living outside are extremely vulnerable and I have personally assisted people suffering from heat exhaustion in my neighborhood. We need more resources in neighborhoods that have seen chronic divestment.*
- *A lot of programs focus on homeowners. What about renters. What can they do to improve cooling conditions inside rentals?*

2. Climate Threats in Unincorporated King County

Extreme Heat

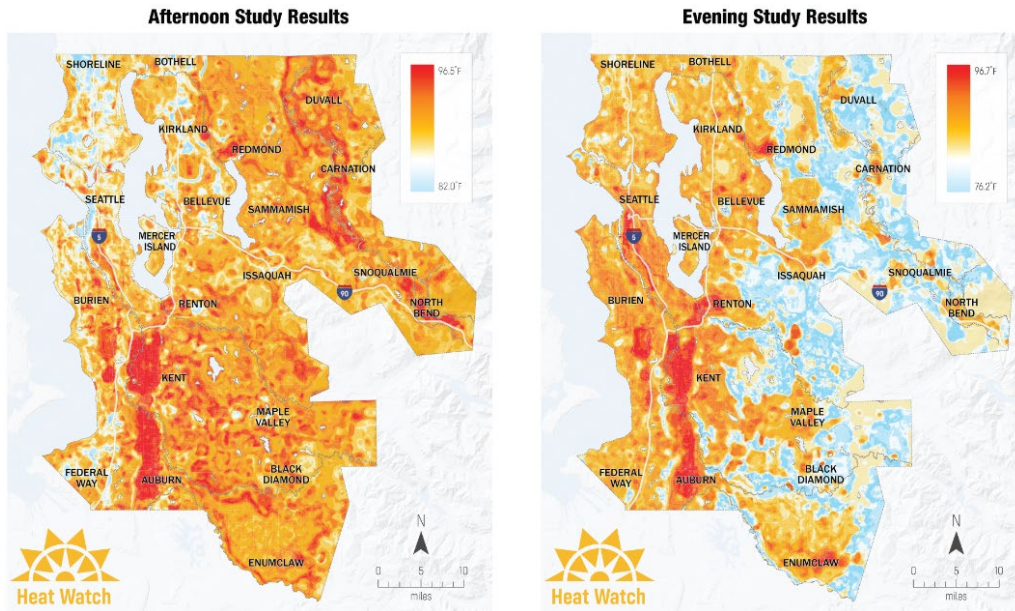
The average summer temperature across Washington has increased 1.3 degrees Fahrenheit between 2000 and 2021.¹⁴⁰ Monitoring stations in Seattle and Snoqualmie have logged even higher average increases of over two degrees.¹⁴¹ The built environment and the natural landscape affect the severity of heat events. Areas with more paved surfaces, less

¹⁴⁰ University of Washington, Office of the State Climatologist, PNW Temperature, Precipitation, and SWE Trend Analysis Tool, 2023 [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁴¹ University of Washington, Office of the State Climatologist, PNW Temperature, Precipitation, and SWE Trend Analysis Tool, 2023 [\[LINK\]](#)

vegetation, and more industrial uses contribute to the “urban heat island” effect, a phenomenon where urbanized areas absorb heat and hold on to it longer than other places.¹⁴² Figure 57 shows how surface temperatures during the hottest part of the dally (left image) remain high in the evening (right image) in urban areas with less vegetation.

Figure 57: Afternoon and Evening Surface Temperatures, July 27, 2020¹⁴³



Places shaded in the deepest orange to red on the right-side of the maps have the greatest heat retention. Extreme heat poses the greatest risk for children, older adults, outdoor workers such as those in agriculture and construction, people experiencing homelessness, low-income households, people who are socially isolated, pregnant women, and people with chronic medical conditions, including mental health conditions.¹⁴⁴

To examine this, Figure 58 overlays the evening temperature map (the right-side map in Figure 57) with the Social and Economic Vulnerability Index developed by Public Health – Seattle & King County and with the Urban Growth Area.¹⁴⁵ Southern King County is most strongly affected by heat retention and a high level of social and economic vulnerability. Communities along the industrial Duwamish and Green River Valleys, near Sea-Tac Airport, and on the Enumclaw Plateau are particularly affected by extreme heat and disproportionate social and economic vulnerability.

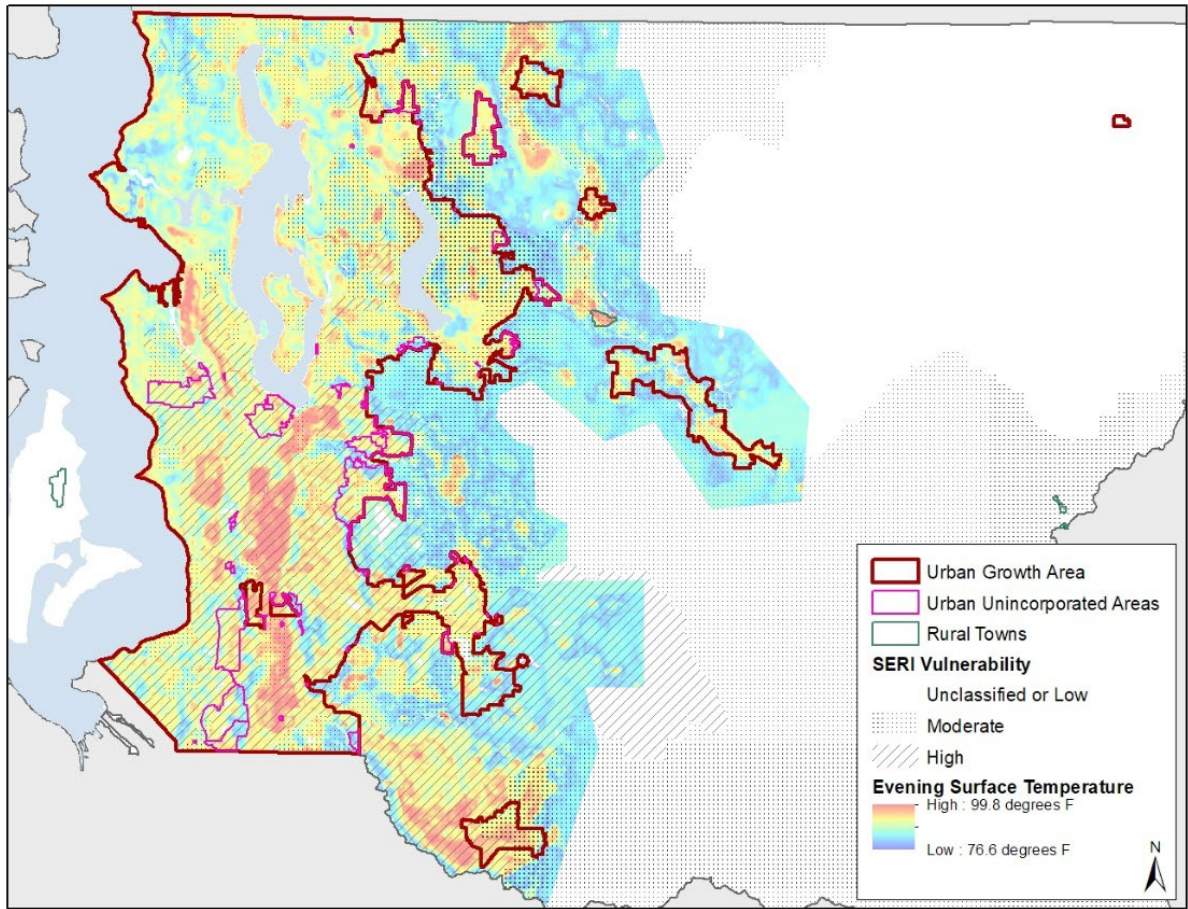
¹⁴² CAPA Strategies, LLC, Heat Watch Report for Seattle and King County, Washington, 2020 [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁴³ CAPA Strategies, LLC, Heat Watch Report for Seattle and King County, Washington, 2020 [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁴⁴ Public Health – Seattle & King County, Blueprint for Addressing Climate Change and Health [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁴⁵ The Social and Economic Risk Index (SERI) was specifically designed to describe vulnerabilities to COVID-19, the index is helpful for describing populations that would be most vulnerable to destabilizing climate or life events because of systemic racism, immigration status, employment sector, poverty, limited ability to speak English, limited education, and large household size. High SERI scores represent the highest level of risk or vulnerability, lower scores indicate lower risk.

Figure 58: Evening Surface Temperatures and Social and Economic Vulnerability¹⁴⁶



Wildlands and Wildfire

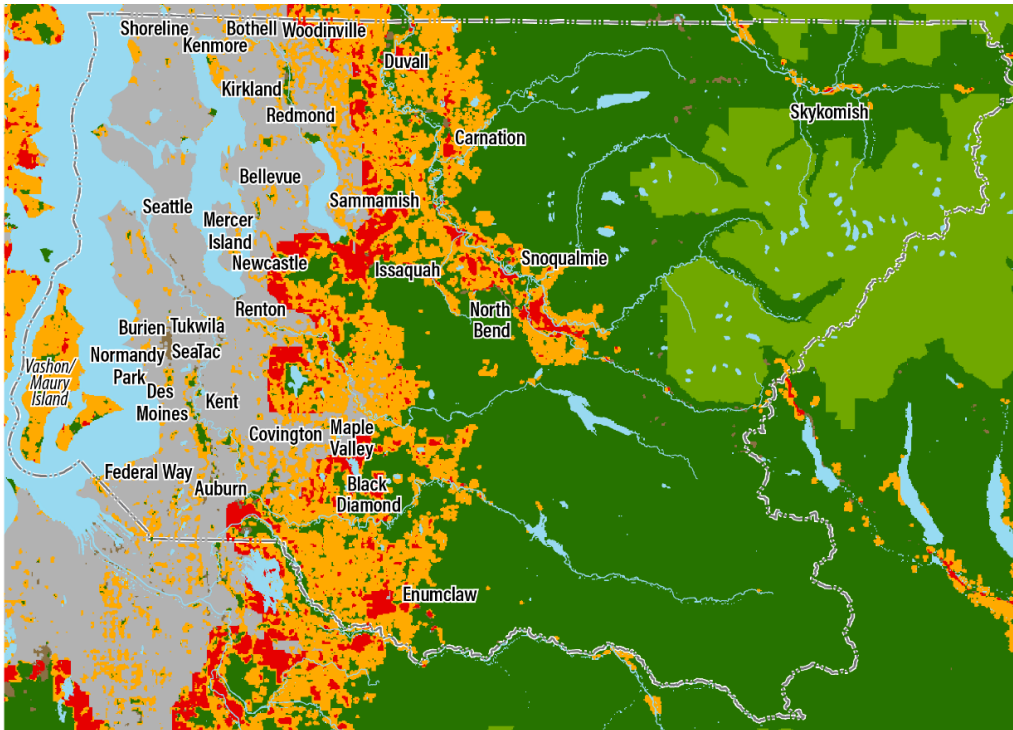
Development at the eastern edge of the Urban Growth Area, around Cities in the Rural Area,¹⁴⁷ and in the rural area is in greater contact with open spaces, habitat networks, and forested lands. The transition from urban areas to wildlands is called the wildland-urban interface (WUI).¹⁴⁸ Figure 59 displays a map of the WUI.

¹⁴⁶ CAPA Strategies, LLC, Heat Watch Report for Seattle and King County, Washington, 2020 [\[LINK\]](#); Public Health – Seattle- & King County, Social and Economic Risk Index, 2020

¹⁴⁷ Cities in the Rural Area are incorporated areas substantially surrounded by the Rural Area, including Black Diamond, Carnation, Duvall, Enumclaw, North Bend, Skykomish, and Snoqualmie

¹⁴⁸ US Fire Administration, Wildfire and the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) [\[LINK\]](#)

Figure 59: Wildland-Urban Interface, 2020¹⁴⁹



King County Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI)

- Long-term Non-Buildable Areas
- WUI - Interface
- WUI - Intermix
- Non-Vegetated Inhabited
- Non-Vegetated Uninhabited
- Vegetated Uninhabited



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 Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Wildfire Division, Forest Health Division

The use of the information in this map is subject to the terms and conditions found at: www.kingcounty.gov/services/gis/Maps/terms-of-use.aspx. Your access and use is conditioned on your acceptance of these terms and conditions.

A sociodemographic analysis of residents in the WUI developed for the Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy¹⁵⁰ found that more than 350,000 county residents live in the WUI, with the majority of those residents identifying as white (68 percent). Other demographic groups include Asian (16 percent), Multiracial (six percent), Black and African American (four percent), and American Indian and Alaska Native (one percent). More than 50 languages are spoken by residents within the WUI, and approximately 75 percent speak English only, about the same as the county average. The median income in the WUI is \$122,300, higher than the county median. Approximately 17 percent of the population living in the WUI has physical or cognitive disabilities that may limit their ability to evacuate quickly during a wildfire.¹⁵¹

During fire season, wildfire smoke affects people across King County, but certain populations are affected more severely. Those at the greatest risk for health impacts from wildfire smoke are people 65 years of age and older; children; pregnant people; outdoor workers; and those

¹⁴⁹ King County Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy, 2022 [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁵⁰ Developed as part of implementation of the 2020 Strategic Climate Action Plan, the Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy is a set of 12 recommended actions to improve preparedness, response, and recovery as the potential for wildfire increases in Western Washington due to climate change. [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁵¹ King County Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy, 2022 [\[LINK\]](#)

who have a respiratory disease or illness, heart disease, or diabetes. Because of structural inequities between race, income, and health, adverse health impacts from wildfire smoke exposure are more likely to be experienced by BIPOC communities, people with low incomes; and people living in areas with poor air quality (e.g., near industrial areas or high-volume transportation corridors).

Flooding and Sea Level Rise

Approximately 2,500 housing units and over 6,400 people are currently located within the 100-year floodplain in unincorporated King County.¹⁵² About 75 percent of this development is within rural King County.¹⁵³ Residents within the floodplain are more likely to be Hispanic or Latino/a/e or White (non-Hispanic) than residents outside of the floodplain or the county average.¹⁵⁴ Climate-induced storms are increasing in frequency and intensity, raising the risk of flooding and landslides, as well as exposure to water-borne pathogens and mold.¹⁵⁵

Data shows that sea level has increased by nine inches since 1899.¹⁵⁶ Sea levels in Seattle are expected to rise by nearly seven inches by 2050 and by two feet by the end of the century, increasing risk to public health and property from more frequent coastal flooding and storm surges.¹⁵⁷ The greatest impacts of sea level rise in unincorporated King County will be along Vashon-Maury Island and in low lying communities along river valleys like South Park.

In establishing its Sea Level Rise Risk Area in 2020,¹⁵⁸ King County counted approximately 850 buildings at risk of more frequent flooding or facing risk for flooding from sea level rise.¹⁵⁹ The number of full-time residents of coastal properties within the Sea Level Rise Risk Area is relatively small (estimated at less than 500 residents in unincorporated King County), but the risk to groundwater contamination from saltwater and from pollution from potentially inundated septic systems, which are disproportionately more common in unincorporated King County, threatens the broader public health.¹⁶⁰

3. Environmental Health Disparities

While King County is relatively healthy in national comparisons, disparities in health outcomes across King County communities are significant and becoming more pronounced over time.¹⁶¹ Risk for adverse health outcomes is a product of a community's general vulnerability due to socio-economic factors and existing health conditions, and the overall

¹⁵² Based on GIS analysis of 2020 census blocks in the 100-year floodplain.

¹⁵³ Estimate based on U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2020 block-level estimates

¹⁵⁴ Estimate based on U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2020 block-level estimates

¹⁵⁵ Crimmins, A., J. Balbus, J.L. Gamble, et al., *The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States: A Scientific Assessment*. U.S. Global Change Research Program, 2016; cited in: Public Health – Seattle- & King County, *Blueprint for Addressing Climate Change and Health* [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁵⁶ King County, 2020 Update to the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, *Sea Level Rise and Land Use Regulation Code Study*, 2020 [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁵⁷ Public Health – Seattle- & King County, *Blueprint for Addressing Climate Change and Health* [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁵⁸ The Sea Level Rise Risk Area is adopted in King County Code Title 21A to regulate development for properties located in areas adjoining the current coastal high hazard area on Vashon-Maury Island. The Risk Area recognizes that coastal flooding will expand inland with sea level rise, affecting areas that may not experience flooding today.

¹⁵⁹ King County, 2020 Update to the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, *Sea Level Rise and Land Use Regulation Code Study*, 2020 [\[LINK\]](#)

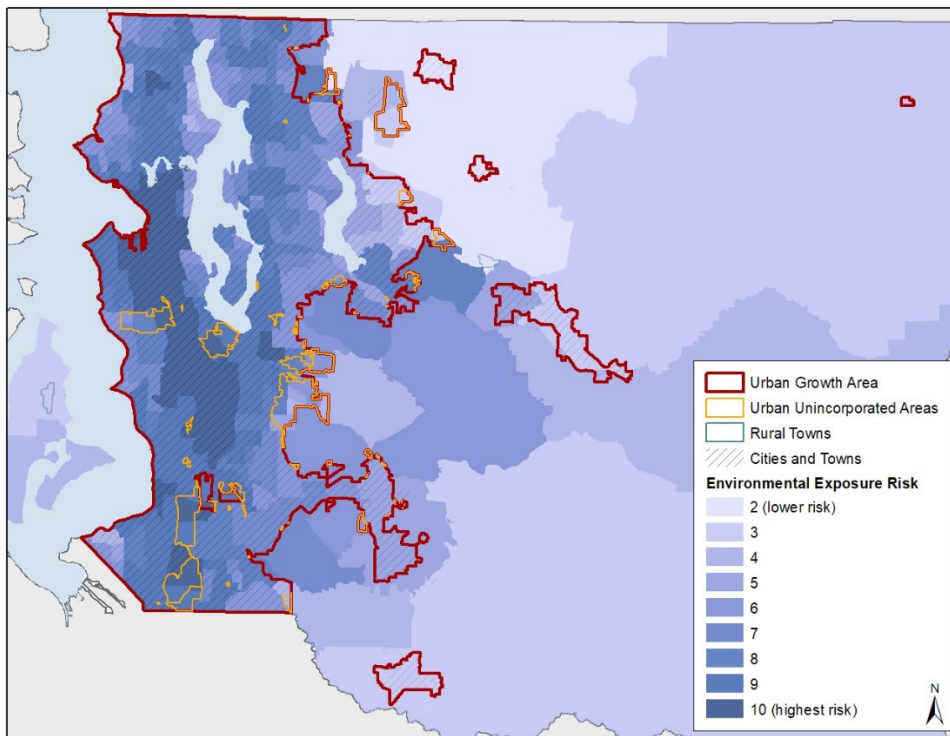
¹⁶⁰ Estimate based on U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2020 block-level estimates; King County, 2020 Update to the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, *Sea Level Rise and Land Use Regulation Code Study*, 2020 [\[LINK\]](#) Source for disproportionate septic systems in King County: Public Health – Seattle- & King County, *King County On-site Sewage Systems (OSS) and Social Vulnerability Dashboard*, 2023 [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁶¹ Life expectancy at birth for the United States was 76.3 years in 2021. (World Bank, 2023 [\[LINK\]](#)). In King County life expectancy at birth was 81.6 years. (Public Health – Seattle- & King County, 2023 [\[LINK\]](#)).

severity of the environmental threat.¹⁶² Existing systemic disparities in exposure and health outcomes by race, place, and income will be exacerbated by health impacts from climate change.¹⁶³ Locally created tools show how environmental exposure to health risks and vulnerability to future threats vary across King County.

The Washington Environmental Health Disparities Map produced by the Washington State Department of Health provides a composite index of health risks from environmental exposures that strongly relate to land use and transportation.¹⁶⁴ The environmental exposures comprising the index include diesel exhaust particulate matter emissions (PM 2.5), ozone concentration, particulate matter concentration (PM 2.5), proximity to heavy traffic roadways, and toxic releases from facilities. Figure 60 shows how risk from environmental exposures varies across King County.

Figure 60: Health Risk from Environmental Exposure, 2022¹⁶⁵



Portions of urban unincorporated neighborhoods in East Federal Way, North Highline, and Skyway-West Hill experience some of the highest exposure risk levels in the county from environmental toxins. Nearly 60 percent of King County residents live in an area with a risk index score of eight or above. This is true for only 31 percent of rural residents, but 64 percent of urban unincorporated residents live in areas with risk scores over eight. Residents from BIPOC communities face disparate risk of environmental exposure: 62 percent of

¹⁶² Washington State Department of Health, Washington Environmental Health Disparities Map, 2022 [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁶³ Crimmins, A., J. Balbus, J.L. Gamble, et al., The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States: A Scientific Assessment. U.S. Global Change Research Program, 2016; cited in Public Health – Seattle- & King County, Blueprint for Addressing Climate Change and Health [\[LINK\]](#)

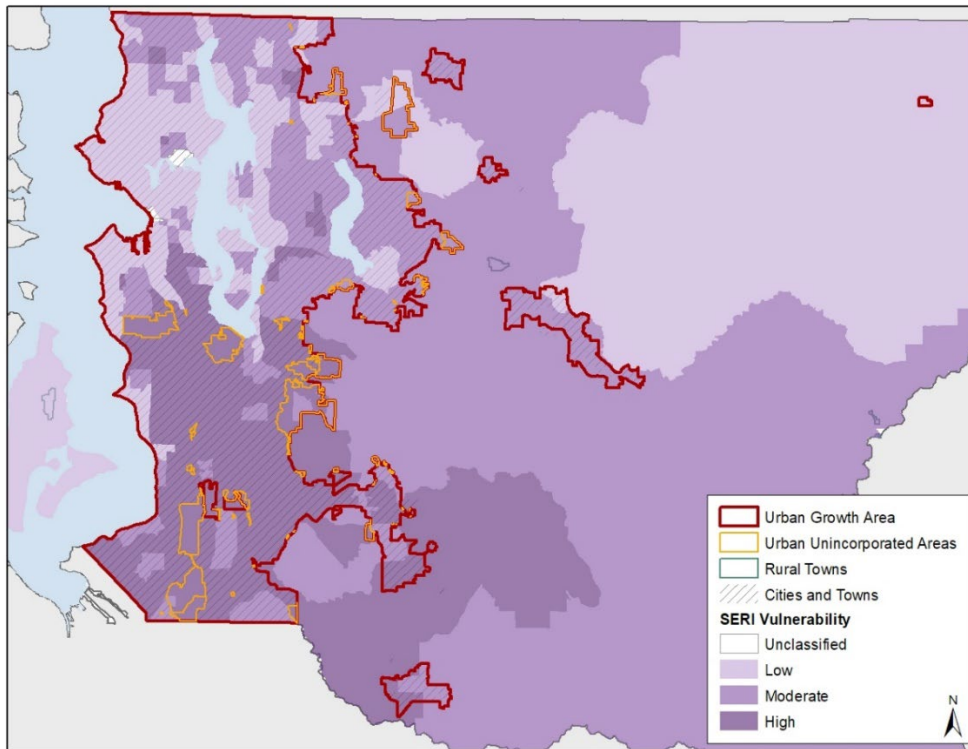
¹⁶⁴ Washington State Department of Health, Washington Environmental Health Disparities Map, 2022 [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁶⁵ Washington State Department of Health, Washington Environmental Health Disparities Map, 2022 [\[LINK\]](#)

BIPOC residents across King County live in neighborhoods with a risk index score of eight or above, compared to 53 percent of White non-Hispanic residents.¹⁶⁶

To aid targeted community response and resource allocation during the height of the COVID-19 global pandemic, Public Health – Seattle & King County created an index designed to identify where communities most vulnerable to COVID-19 for social and economic reasons were located.¹⁶⁷ While the Social and Economic Risk Index (SERI) was specifically designed to describe prerequisite vulnerabilities to COVID-19, the index is helpful for describing populations that would be most vulnerable to destabilizing climate or life events because of systemic racism, immigration status, employment sector, poverty, limited English proficiency, limited education, and large household size. High SERI scores represent the highest level of risk or vulnerability; lower scores indicate lower risk. Figure 61 shows how SERI values vary across King County.

Figure 61: Social and Economic Risk Index Scores by Census Tract, 2020¹⁶⁸



High SERI census tracts are disproportionately located in south and southeast King County. Census tracts in Central and North Seattle, Vashon-Maury Island, and the eastern shore of Lake Washington have lower SERI scores, and census tracts with moderate SERI scores are primarily located in North and East King County and rural areas of South King County. Urban unincorporated communities in East Federal Way, East Renton, North Highline, and Skyway-

¹⁶⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2020

¹⁶⁷ Public Health – Seattle & King, Social & Economic Inequities in COVID-19 Testing and Outcomes in King County Census Tracts, 2021 [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁶⁸ Public Health – Seattle- & King County, Social and Economic Risk Index, 2020

West Hill, and rural communities in the Enumclaw Plateau and east of Kent and Black Diamond face greater vulnerability.

4. Findings from Fall 2022 Climate Survey

Below are some key findings from the standardized questions of the Plan's fall 2022 climate survey.

- Of the climate concerns listed, 75 percent of respondents indicated they were concerned about wildfire smoke and other forms of air pollution, 63 percent noted extreme heat.
- Of the outcomes respondents wanted to see in their neighborhoods, almost 75 percent of respondents were interested in a thriving environment overall, while two-thirds of respondents were interested in increased energy efficiency or increasing access to renewable energy. 60 percent of respondents were interested in affordable and efficient alternatives to driving.
- On participants' preferred actions to respond to extreme heat: almost three-quarters of respondents were interested in affordable in-home solutions for energy efficiency, cooling systems, or air quality. Nearly half of respondents were interested in more trees in their neighborhood.
- The top three actions to reduce driving: easier access to fast and affordable public transit (63 percent); safe walking and biking options (60 percent); affordable housing options closer to family, work, or school (41 percent).

5. Key Takeaways

- **Climate change and environmental threats compound existing inequities**, meaning that while locations and the people affected will vary by the nature of the threat (e.g., flooding, extreme heat, or wildfire), communities already experiencing economic or social vulnerabilities from racial segregation, poverty, income inequality, or limited social capital will be disproportionately affected by climate change.
- **Central and South King County residents face greater health risks from environmental exposures than other subareas within the county.** Communities in North Highline, Skyway-West Hill and East Federal Way are most disproportionately burdened in unincorporated King County.

Process Review

This section describes how the Plan was updated, including specific points where staff evaluated or worked to address process equity.

A. Overview

The Update is rooted in the value of making King County a welcoming community where every person can thrive.¹⁶⁹ In support of this, the Update included significant efforts to ensure that the County is addressing the most pressing long-range planning needs of the community – particularly for those who have been historically underrepresented in the comprehensive planning process. To ensure a more equitable process, the Update focused on:

- **Centering the voices** of those who are BIPOC, immigrants, and/or refugees, and other intersectional populations, including those who earn less than 80 percent of the area median income, people with disabilities, seniors, LGBTQIA+ people, and/or those who identify as women;
- **Advancing Recommendations** from King County equity cabinets;¹⁷⁰ and
- **Partnering** with community-based organizations.

Executive staff strove to meet the "County engages in dialogue" level of community engagement with these priority populations, as outlined in the King County Office of Equity and Racial and Social Justice's Community Engagement Guide,¹⁷¹ with:

- two-way channels of communication;
- multiple interactions;
- the advancement of solutions to complex problems; and
- the creation of an advisory board and community partnerships.

Staff from the King County Office of Equity and Racial and Social Justice were instrumental in supporting Executive staff colleagues with strategies, coaching, and meeting facilitation to review and analyze the existing Plan update process and achieve engagement and process equity goals.

1. Analysis of the Previous Process

The previous process of developing a Plan update had been opaque, with limited opportunities for public input. Public comment would be elicited in the beginning of the process (through the Docket)¹⁷² and close to the end of plan development (with the release of a draft of the Executive Recommended Plan or "Public Review Draft"). Public comments and additional changes would be incorporated into a final Executive Recommended Plan, which would then submitted to County Council for consideration. The King County Council

¹⁶⁹ 2024 Update Scope of Work, Motion 16142, Attachment A [\[LINK\]](#)

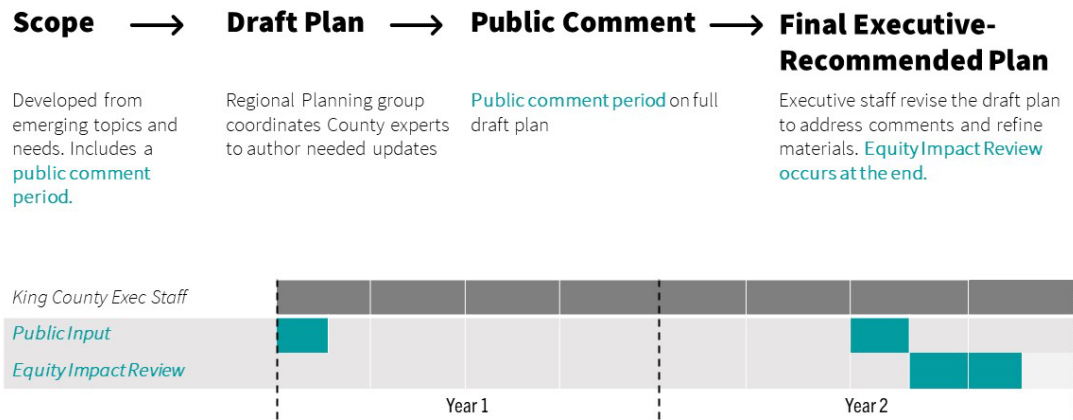
¹⁷⁰ Climate Equity Community Task Force, Mobility Equity Cabinet, Open Space Equity Cabinet, and King County Immigrant and Refugee Commission.

¹⁷¹ King County Community Engagement Guide [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁷² The Docket is an opportunity for the public to request changes to the Plan, land use designations, and development regulations. [\[LINK\]](#)

holds a separate public input process as the Plan is reviewed and finalized. As Figure 62 shows, the opportunities to allow the community into the plan development decision making process were limited in this structure. In addition, these opportunities for input were highly dependent on the community being proactive about staying informed and having the capacity and resources to do so.

Figure 62: Comprehensive Plan Update Process – 2022 and Earlier



To find opportunities to make engagement around development of Plan updates more accessible and equitable, Executive staff conducted a power mapping analysis of the Plan update process, which identifies levels of power and influence at different points in a decision-making process. The power mapping analysis included identifying key development phases, deliverables, and decision-making points for the preparation of the Executive Recommended Plan. It included identifying the interested parties and decision makers that influenced the Plan’s development at each stage of the process. This power mapping analysis offered some key observations about process equity and the review of distributional equity under the previous process. Insights gleaned around the previous process recognize it reflected

- Limited opportunity for community to learn about and influence Plan proposals (only during Plan scoping and after release of the Public Review Draft);
- Limited lasting community engagement (in addition to public engagement) to build capacity on comprehensive planning topics;
- Limited representation of priority populations;
- Heavy influence of County staff at all decision-making points;
- Well-resourced and most influential parties receive higher levels of engagement; and
- Evaluation of equity impacts occurs after the work was mostly complete.

These observations led to changes in the Update process discussed in the next section.

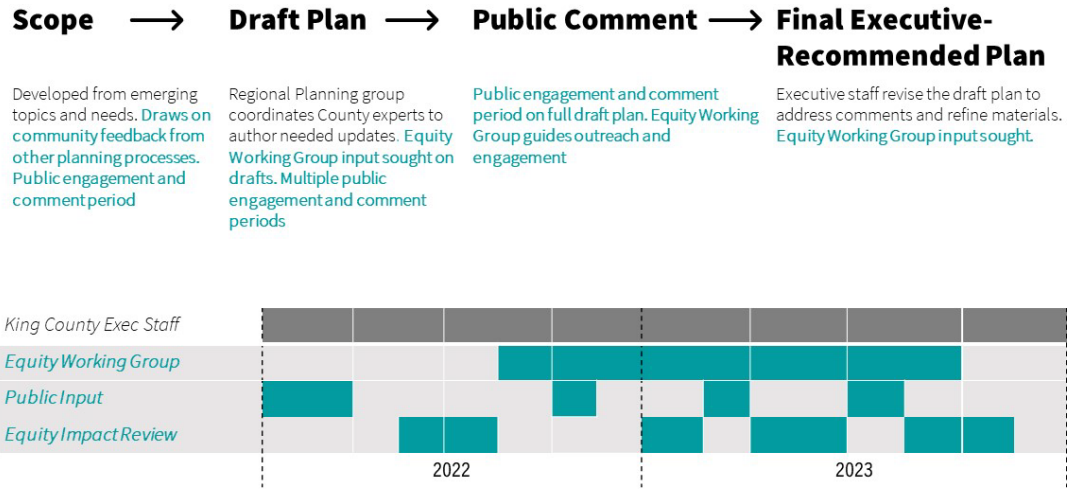
2. Key Interventions

The power mapping analysis led Executive staff to design a revised process for the Update with specific interventions to improve process equity through community access to the process and the consideration of distributional equity impacts throughout Plan development. These revisions are illustrated in Figure 63 below. The process for the Update was revised in four critical ways to make it more collaborative, accessible, and equitable:

1. **Increased opportunities for public input during the development of Plan proposals.** Executive staff created two additional opportunities for public input during the development of Plan proposals: 1) the Update was the first time that the County offered the option of a survey to share input on the direction of the proposals after the scope was approved by the Council; and 2) it was also the first time that the general public received an early concept of draft proposals for review and input, prior to the release of the full Public Review Draft. The early concepts proposal document was translated into eight different languages and circulated to multiple County email lists that included hundreds of thousands of recipients.¹⁷³
2. **Diversified and more accessible methods of participation.** To lower barriers to participation, Executive staff used digital surveys, virtual meetings, an open house meeting with all ages activities and language interpretation, and partnership with community-based partners for creating awareness of and gaining public input on the Plan.
3. **Incorporation of community engagement in addition to public engagement.** To encourage ongoing two-way dialogue, build capacity through multiple interactions on complex topics, and center community input in development of the Plan, Executive staff formed the Equity Work Group. This is an advisory body of community leaders who represent communities historically underrepresented in comprehensive planning processes, to collaborate on development of the Update.
4. **Continuous equity impact reviews** through different stages of Plan development. Figure 63 lists key interventions intended to increase process equity or evaluate equity impacts of proposals during Plan development.

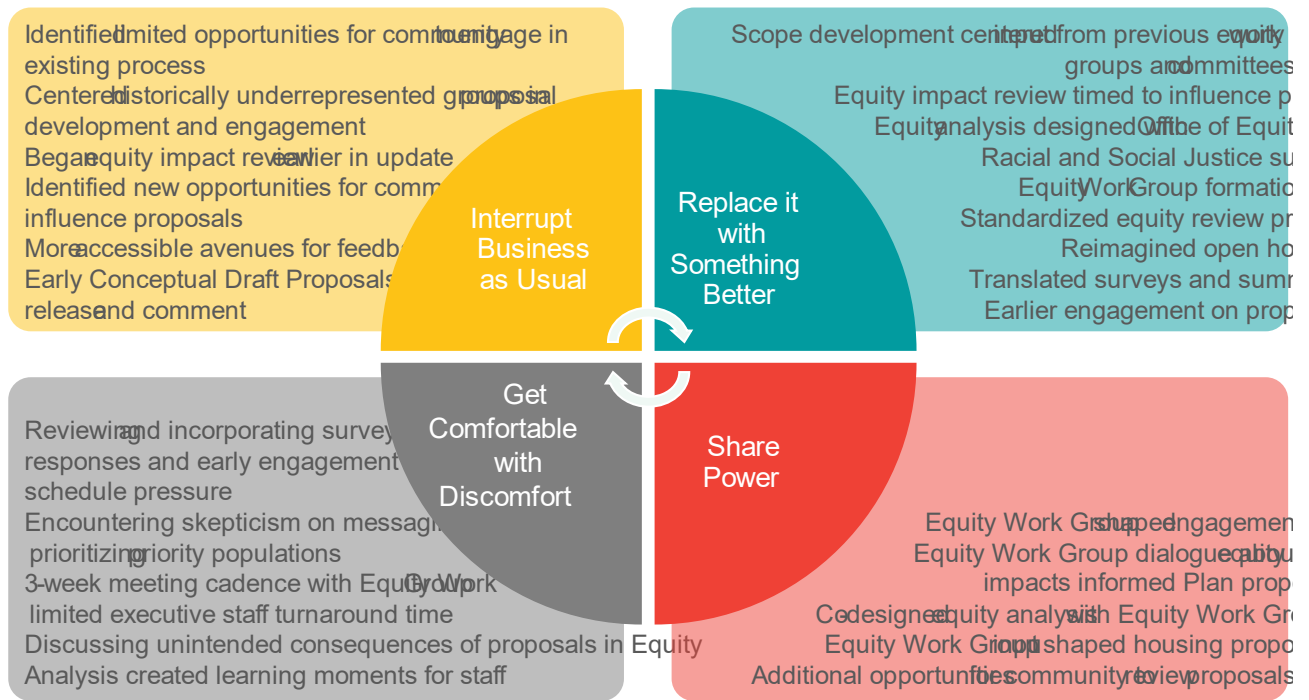
¹⁷³ More information on the outreach methods is provided in the Public Participation Summary for the 2024 update.

Figure 63: 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update Process



Inside the framework of these major engagement process changes, Executive staff implemented a series of smaller adjustments whenever an opportunity arose to make the work more collaborative, accessible, and equitable to community. These micro-interventions were assessed by Executive staff through the Office of Equity and Racial and Social Justice’s four Pro-Equity Compacts: interrupting business as usual, replacing it with something better, sharing power, and getting comfortable with discomfort. Figure 64 below groups the specific interventions by Equity Compact.

Figure 64: Equity Interventions by Equity Compact



3. Results

The following sections discuss the public response from the public to the process changes; the Equity Work Group’s role and influence on the process and proposal development; and, lessons learned and recommendations for future exploration.

B. Public Engagement

In early 2022, Executive staff in Regional Planning applied for and received a federal American Rescue Plan Act grant to assist with implementing language access strategies for the Update. These language access strategies were critical to successfully hearing from communities who have been historically excluded from the comprehensive planning process -- due to either lack of access to information about proposals or lack of support in reviewing the proposals.

The grant funds were used to provide interpreters for six languages at all public meetings (virtual and in-person), as well as the translation of key written materials in eight languages. These languages reflected the top six languages spoken in unincorporated King County (Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Somali, and Russian), as well as the inclusion of two additional languages (Khmer, Samoan) for surveys and the summary of the proposals, at the suggestion of the Equity Work Group.

In addition, County staff worked with graphic designers and public engagement consultants to create audience-friendly, inclusive, and accessible materials for explaining key concepts and inviting community members to participate.

Executive staff also sought to inform the general public of the Update process and proposals through email newsletters, social media, newspaper advertisements, blogs, posters, and multilingual radio interviews.

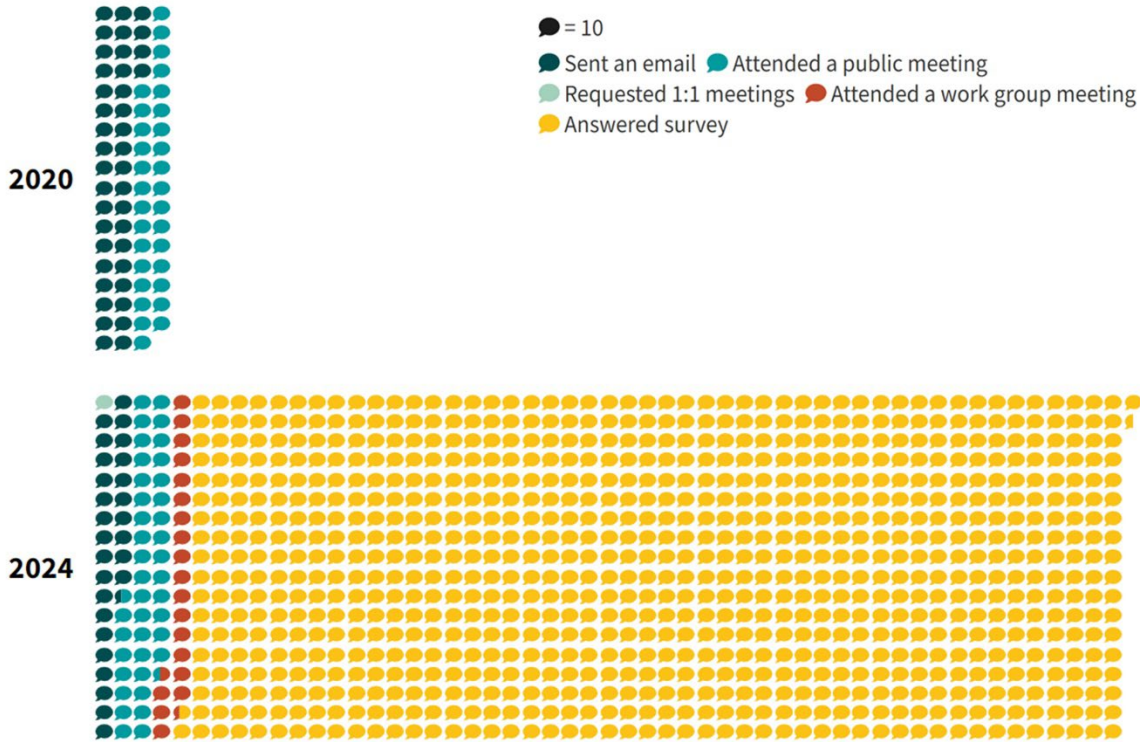
1. Overall Results

The revised public engagement process for the Update led to an overall increase of input from the public compared to previous updates. Consistent with the Growth Management Act requirement for early and continuous public participation in Plan updates, over 1.5 million quantifiable points of engagement occurred throughout scoping and development of the Update.¹⁷⁴

Figure 65 shows approximately how the amount of public input differed between the Update and the 2020 Plan update. One of the most impactful changes to the Update process was the addition of short surveys as an alternative to attending a meeting or drafting an email to provide input. While similar numbers of meeting attendees and emailed comments were received for both Update engagement periods, the 2022 surveys greatly increased written comment. Survey responses accounted for 92 percent of all written comments, and provided a means for county staff to identify comments from priority populations in order to center their input, as a series of optional demographics questions was included at the end of each survey.

¹⁷⁴ Please note that these points of engagement are not necessarily specific to level of engagement, nor are they necessarily unique touch points, as there is often overlap between email lists, meetings, and social media.

Figure 65: Estimated Public Participation during the 2020 and 2024 Updates



Source: King County Regional Planning (2022-2023, 2020)

The demographic data provided by survey respondents allowed Executive staff to disaggregate survey results by race, income, gender, location, language, and other factors to better contextualize responses and understand patterns. Weekly review of response data and results also helped Executive staff to monitor demographic participation and tweak outreach methods to ensure a representative proportion of responses from priority populations. Throughout each engagement period, adjustments were made to the engagement strategies to better engage populations with lower response rates.

Figure 66 below reports the demographics of all survey participants who chose to share their demographic information, compared to the overall King County (KC) and Unincorporated King County (UKC) population. Some of the categories are marked “N/A” for “not available” because there is no comparable census data available.

Figure 66: Public Comments by Race, Gender, Income, Migration, Disability

Demographic Categories	Percent of Population		
	Survey	KC	UKC
Race			
White, Caucasian (of European descent)	68%	54%	64%
Black/African American	6%	7%	5%
Latino/ Latino/ Latinx or Hispanic	7%	11%	9%
Asian/ Asian American	8%	20%	13%
South Asian/ South Asian American	2%	<i>included in Asian</i>	
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	2%	1%	1%
American Indian or Alaska Native	4%	1%	1%
Middle Eastern or North African	2%	N/A	N/A
Biracial/Multiracial	2%	7%	7%
Gender			
Woman	50%	50%	50%
Man	37%	50%	50%
Prefer not to say	9%	N/A	N/A
Non-binary/Genderqueer/Gender Fluid	3%	N/A	N/A
Transman	0.4%	N/A	N/A
Transwoman	0.4%	N/A	N/A
Write in	1%	N/A	N/A
Income			
\$200k or more	20%	17%	20%
\$150-199k	11%	11%	13%
\$100-149K	24%	19%	21%
\$75-99k	15%	12%	12%
\$50-74k	13%	14%	13%
\$35-49K	8%	9%	8%
\$25-34k	4%	5%	5%
\$15-24k	3%	5%	4%
\$10-14k	1%	3%	2%
Less than \$10k	2%	4%	3%
Migration*			
Our people are from this land for time immemorial/ many generations	67%	77%	82%
I and/or my family came to this county in the last 70 years	26%	23%	18%
None of the above	8%	N/A	N/A
Disability**			
Serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs	21%	5%	4%
Deaf, hard of hearing, or have serious difficulty hearing	16%	3%	3%
Physical, mental, or emotional condition that causes serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions	20%	4%	4%
Physical, mental, or emotional condition that causes serious difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping	13%	4%	4%
Blind, low vision, or have serious difficulty seeing even when wearing glasses	5%	2%	2%
Difficulty dressing or bathing	3%	2%	2%
Other Disability	22%	N/A	N/A

*The survey questions asked did not correspond precisely to standard reporting categories for foreign born population. Survey responses designed to identify individuals and households born outside of the United States are compared to Census data for the population born outside of the United States.

** The survey responses in this section reflects whether the individual or anyone in their household identified with any of the following conditions. The census numbers for King County and Unincorporated King County reflects individuals who identify with the following conditions.

2. Public Participation

Public comment periods netted over 10,000 written comments from the public during the development of proposals phase, and over 700 written comments during the Public Review Draft public comment period. Over 550 residents attended the five virtual and in-person events throughout the Update. Public comments are quantified in Figure 67 below.

Figure 67: Public Participants by Plan Phase

Phase	Public Participants
Development of the Proposals (June 2022 – May 2023)	10,000+ public participants 3,300+ unique participants (fall survey) 1,900+ unique participants (Early Concepts) 150+ participants (in-person and virtual events) 50+ hours of Equity Work Group meetings
Public Review Draft (June – July 2023)	740+ public participants 3,300+ unique participants (Public Review Draft survey) 400+ participants (in-person and virtual events) 20+ hours of Equity Work Group meetings

To facilitate Executive staff’s consideration of survey results and public comment, survey responses were compiled after each survey and organized by scope topic area and priority population status. Summaries of multiple choice or short form responses and raw long form comments were shared with department staff to inform proposal development. The surveys were designed to give respondents the opportunity to provide approval ratings on specific proposals so that staff could better calibrate overall response to a proposal. The following sections provide a high-level overview of each survey’s content and when during the Update survey input was considered to influence the Plan proposals.

Fall Survey

During September and October of 2022, Executive staff conducted its first public opinion survey for the Plan. Two surveys were offered regarding housing and climate change, with demographic questions imbedded in both. A group of Executive staff and Equity Work Group members vetted the questions and answer choices to ensure accessibility and relevance to the plan development. The surveys were then translated into the top six languages spoken in King County (Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Somali, and Russian) to increase accessibility, and shared widely via King County media channels, ethnic media, and through a partnership with a community-based organization. Small incentives (\$6 gift cards for locally owned restaurants in unincorporated King County) were offered to survey participants. Executive staff attended multiple community events to promote and encourage survey participation and raise awareness of the Update.

Each survey included multiple-choice questions and space for respondents to provide open-ended responses. Results from these surveys are summarized earlier in the sections Findings from Fall 2022 Housing Survey, and Findings from Fall 2022 Climate Survey. The results from the fall survey set were shared among Executive staff to influence development of the early conceptual draft proposals and Public Review Draft.

Early Conceptual Draft Proposals

During February 2023, the Executive published the early conceptual draft proposals for the 2024 Comprehensive Plan to get public input on the initial direction of the proposals. Members of the public were encouraged to respond with their reaction to the proposals via filling out a short input survey, sending in an email, or participating in virtual townhall meetings. The draft conceptual proposals and the survey were translated into the top six languages spoken in King County, Khmer, and Samoan.

Email and townhall commenters had the opportunity to provide open-ended comments. Respondents to the input surveys also had space to provide open-ended responses. Each survey respondent was asked to provide: 1) an approval score on a scale of 0 to 100 that

ranked how satisfied they were with the direction of the proposals (a score of 100 meaning complete satisfaction); and 2) additional details and comments about their chosen score in an open response section. Survey results and emailed comments were shared with department staff to influence development of the proposals in the Public Review Draft.

Public Review Draft

On June 1, 2023, the Executive released the Public Review Draft of the Plan. The 45-day public comment period provided an important opportunity to continue to build relationships with community, to ensure that key proposals were clearly communicated with the public, and to receive and incorporate public input into the final proposals – especially from those who have been historically excluded or underrepresented in previous comprehensive planning processes. Based on input received from previous surveys, the Public Review Draft survey was designed to be as accessible as possible by:

- Dividing up the material into separate surveys grouped by the four focus areas of the Update (pro-equity, housing, climate change & environment, and general planning);
- Guiding participants to respond to specific proposals, rather than large topic areas (e.g., climate change);
- Offering simple approve/disapprove/unsure ratings, as well as optional open response sections for each proposal to allow for differing levels of engagement; and
- Allowing participants to skip questions if desired.

The survey and a summary of the proposals were translated into the top six languages spoken in King County, Khmer, and Samoan. Survey participants were asked to rank proposals from each focus area, within specific proposal topics. The Public Review Draft comment period and survey were promoted at remote and in person events held to raise awareness of the Update, in addition to email and King County media channel promotion. Responses from this survey and emailed comments received were considered in the finalization of the proposals for the Executive Recommended Plan.

C. Community Engagement & Equity Work Group

1. Formation

The process improvements to expand the reach and accessibility of public involvement in the 2024 Update netted levels of public interest, engagement, and input that vastly superseded previous Updates. To reach the community engagement goal of “County engages in dialogue,” the Update process required means for sustained conversation with community for deep conversations to help facilitate the advancement of solutions to complex problems, in addition to general public engagement. The power mapping analysis revealed not only the limited role for the public in shaping the development of the Plan, but also the need for developing community capacity to engage on complex conversations about comprehensive planning topics. The formation of the Equity Work Group was driven by this need for deeper community engagement (two-way dialogue, building capacity, and centering community input) focused on the needs and interests of priority populations disproportionately affected by Plan proposals, while building understanding and awareness of comprehensive planning more generally.

Equity Work Group members would gain the opportunity to experience the evolving Update process to build understanding of comprehensive planning topics, and to provide direct input to shape the direction and content of equity impact review, plan proposals, and engagement efforts. The Equity Work Group's experience would also inform future efforts to move Plan engagement up the community engagement continuum and increase process equity.

2. Composition

The Equity Work Group was comprised of 15 individuals representing communities and places historically underrepresented in King County's comprehensive planning efforts. While representation was not proportional to the demographic distribution with unincorporated King County, all Equity Work Group members were members of BIPOC communities, and many members were residents or worked in different geographic communities within unincorporated King County, including North Highline, Skyway-West Hill, and East Federal Way. Members included participants of other King County equity cabinets or convened work groups, as well as individuals recommended by community-based groups engaged in King County's equity and racial and social justice work. Members were compensated for their participation at standard compensation rates for 2022-23.

3. Workplan

The Equity Work Group met 16 times between September 2022 and October 2023. Staff from various County Executive departments (department staff) attended to better understand the lived experience of community members, participate in more nuanced discussions of community input, and discuss the potential equity impacts of proposals.

In December 2022, the Equity Work Group approved a workplan (Figure 68) to outline its efforts and priorities for 2023. The Equity Work Group identified three focus areas to maximize their influence and build upon the interests and strengths of its members: housing proposals, the equity impact review process, and public engagement efforts.

The Equity Work Group's efforts supporting public engagement on the Update began with review and advisement on public engagement survey content. Members were also critical in advocating for in person engagement, identifying and attending community events for tabling opportunities, and shaping and attending the Public Review Draft open house.

To support deeper discussion on the housing proposals, the Equity Work Group met for several educational sessions to learn about land use and housing planning and to delve into specifics about affordable housing issues within King County. In conversation, staff from the Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS), Department of Local Services, Regional Planning, and the Office of Equity and Racial and Social Justice learned which community hopes, values, fears, and shared experiences were important to consider to ensure equitable outcomes in the housing proposals.

These early conversations also led the Equity Work Group to begin crafting a series of questions to help County staff evaluate and consider equity implications of Plan proposals as part of the equity impact review of the Update. To further the spirit of two-way channels of communication and multiple interactions, department staff provided responses to the Equity Work Group's questions as well as to follow-up questions. This iterative process encouraged both County staff and Equity Work Group members to collaborate in looking for opportunities and identifying unintended consequences to strengthen the proposals.

Figure 68: Equity Work Group 2023 Workplan

Approved Workplan Component	Approved Workplan Description	Equity Work Group Activities
Public Engagement	Work Group members will have an opportunity to be lead and/or participate in various aspects of the public engagement efforts for the comprehensive plan.	<p>Provided input on scoping and early concepts draft proposal survey questions</p> <p>Provided input and prioritized events and locations for in person engagement on Public Review Draft</p> <p>Hosted King County staff at community events and centers</p>
Equity Impact Review	The Work Group will provide feedback on current conditions and community context to integrate racially disparate impacts and illuminate missing data to tell a more compelling story about the conditions in unincorporated King County. Members of the Work Group will also develop a set of questions in dialogue with county staff to ensure that plan proposals are centering equity.	<p>Provided input on current conditions report content</p> <p>Developed standard Equity Analysis Question and guiding prompts</p> <p>Provided review of and input on King County staff equity analysis</p>
Housing Proposals	Work Group members will engage in dialogue with county staff to ensure that the selected proposals for the affordable housing strategies centers equity and community needs. Work Group members will have an opportunity to access additional data, complete background readings, review policy and code language, and provide feedback to staff members throughout the development of affordable housing strategies.	<p>Engaged in initial topic discussions with King County staff subject matter experts</p> <p>Identified community priorities for housing proposal prioritization</p> <p>Provided input on housing proposals in the early concepts and Public Review Draft</p>

4. Priorities

The Equity Work Group’s efforts to develop the equity analysis questions revealed its priorities for pro-equity and anti-racist outcomes of plan proposals. These priorities form the lens through which equity impacts are analyzed in the Proposals Review section below.

Specific to the housing proposals, the Equity Work Group identified the people, land use, and neighborhood qualities that should be centered in proposal development to achieve equitable outcomes.

Each set of priorities are listed in Figure 69.

Figure 69: Equity Work Group Priorities

Priorities	
Equitable Outcome Priorities	Address and repair structural, racial inequities from land use polices and disparities in the Determinants of Equity
	Encourage and support equitable, thriving existing communities
	Safe and responsible growth for new residents and businesses
	Removing barriers for those most directly affected by structural, racial inequities
	Expand opportunities for racial equity and social justice
	Policies, programs, and investments that balance the negative consequences
Housing Proposal Priorities	Centering the needs and experiences of youth, elders, immigrant communities, and families, particularly multigenerational and single parent families
	Creating mixed-income neighborhoods
	Cultural preservation and strengthening existing communities, including small businesses and community organizations
	Creating opportunity for transit and open space access
	Creating mixed-use neighborhoods

5. Input on Plan Process and Proposal Development

Beyond shaping the equity impact review process, the Equity Work Group provided input that influenced public engagement, the development of the Plan, and the Update process. The Equity Work Group’s input was collected through its regular meetings, follow-up surveys, and in its review of staff responses to the equity analysis questions. A summary of the Equity Work Group’s priorities and detailed input on housing proposals is contained in Equity Analysis Appendix C.

Figure 70 below describes how the Equity Work Group’s workplan influenced the Update process and proposal development. The table shows how the input was supported by work already in progress or integrated to the planning process or Plan proposals or could potentially be supported by new bodies of work that are not currently resourced. The intent of this was to demonstrate where the current proposals advance the Equity Work Group’s input, as well as highlight areas where the proposals could go further. The Equity Work Group’s input influencing the Update process and proposal development was largely received before the release of the Public Review Draft and through August 2023, before proposals were finalized for the Executive Recommended Plan. The table in Figure 70 reflects language about and characterization of Plan proposals included in the Public Review Draft, reflecting the timing of the Equity Work Group’s process and the development of this table for the Equity Work Group’s review.

Figure 70: Equity Work Group Input and Executive Staff Response

Themes from Equity Work Group	Executive Staff Response
<p>1 Engagement and data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illustrating incomes/AMI with types of jobs/actual incomes is helpful • Outreach on affordable housing should be by and for community • A robust and resourced community engagement plan ahead of future updates is essential • Discuss multiple, not just majority, themes in trend analysis • Prioritize unincorporated King County comments • Resource community participation, particularly those most impacted so they can be present early and often in the process, and recognize housing struggles and displacement prevent people from engaging 	<p>New Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Comprehensive Plan Work Plan Action¹⁷⁵ regarding improving comprehensive planning engagement reflects input • Include data input and framing in equity impact review of the 2024 Update • Amend housing policies to include equitable engagement processes • Add new definitions in the Comprehensive Plan for historically underserved and historically underrepresented communities <p>Work already underway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program</i> - Building a database of evictions filed in King County since 2015 • <i>Policy</i> – Requires the County to use equitable engagement strategies to actively solicit public participation from a wide variety of sources, particularly from populations historically underrepresented or excluded from planning processes, in its planning processes, including the development, update, and implementation of King County plans • <i>Study</i> – In the Equity Impact Review of the 2024 Update: 1) include stronger community input and context and 2) use visuals to illustrate complex issues <p>Current and Proposed Comprehensive Plan policies¹⁷⁶</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King County shall initiate and actively participate in regional efforts to advance solutions that address critical affordable housing needs of all economic segments pursuant to the countywide housing growth targets and other goals established through the Countywide Planning Policies, such as adopting tenant protections, creating mandatory and incentive programs, and developing funding initiatives. King County shall invite jurisdictions, community members, private sector and housing representatives to identify and implement solutions.
<p>2 Inclusionary Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize requiring affordability within new development • Bonus programs that increase over time • Incentivize developments that plan to house more lower-income households (Below 50-80% AMI) • Low income/fixed income policies for seniors or elders • Preferences for strong incentives and mandatory inclusionary zoning, • Preference for community preference policies, excluding areas with limited BIPOC residents erases their existence and struggle • Enact an Multifamily Tax Exemption (MFTE) program (include a higher affordability limit with MFTE renewal) 	<p>New Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Study</i> – Include a Comprehensive Plan Work Plan Action to evaluate whether to expand the mandatory inclusionary housing and/or community preference development regulations to other areas of unincorporated King County (beyond the current areas in Skyway-West Hill and North Highline). Currently, only the voluntary portion of the inclusionary housing regulations is proposed to be expanded into other geographies (all of urban unincorporated King County and the Vashon and Snoqualmie Pass Rural Towns). • <i>Study</i> – Include a Comprehensive Plan Work Plan Action to explore MFTE program feasibility for unincorporated King County. <p>Current and Proposed Comprehensive Plan policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King County shall take actions to prevent and mitigate residential and cultural displacement for unincorporated communities at risk of displacement to address racial disparities in housing and help protect cultural communities for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color by supporting cultural institutions, community hubs, and using community preference programs for affordable housing that helps people with a connection to the local community remain in or return to their community of choice.

¹⁷⁵ The Comprehensive Plan Work Plan directs additional actions the County will take after adoption of the 2024 Update to: 1) further implement and refine the plan, and/or 2) continue work on issues that arose during plan development but there was not sufficient time or resources to complete the work prior to adoption.

¹⁷⁶ “Current and Proposed Comprehensive Plan Policies” includes applicable policies in the 2024 Update, either as currently adopted or as proposed in the Public Review Draft, that are responsive to the actionable themes in the Equity Work Group’s input. This version of the policies does not reflect the final language as proposed in the Executive Recommended Plan.

Themes from Equity Work Group	Executive Staff Response
<p>3 Middle Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middle housing posed as a solution for lower income households with incomes too high for subsidized housing • Concept of “fitting in” to existing (single family) neighborhoods is less important than developing housing supply • Access to nearby green/garden space, access to transit, and pedestrian safety are important middle housing considerations • Middle housing options focused for the rural area • Incentivize renting ADUs/middle housing to lower income households 	<p>New Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Development Regulations</i> - Expand the middle housing regulations to include density bonuses to incentivize middle housing developments near transit. <p>Current Comprehensive Plan policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King County shall provide opportunities for development of middle housing to increase housing supply affordable to all incomes.
<p>4 Specific Population Needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize affordable housing for the lowest income residents • Incentivize lower-AMI affordable housing to developers • (Policies to) Limit or prevent destabilizing rent increases • Prioritize policies that create homeownership opportunities for BIPOC residents • More clearly define “low-income” to effectively serve populations • Draw out data on multigenerational households • Connect/lift-up how middle housing can provide flexibility for multigenerational households, that locating senior housing near low-income housing or childcare • Necessary to discuss housing for elderly and disabled residents 	<p>New Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update appropriate policy language to include multigenerational families as priority populations • BIPOC ownership: Add disparate impact data/language to narrative and support in policy <p>Work Already Underway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program</i> - DCHS is working with the Community Planning Workgroup (CPW) to develop recommendations for implementation for a potential King County Equitable Development Initiative (EDI). The CPW has identified an annual \$100 million need for possible EDI implementation. • <i>Policy</i> – Existing support for equitable ownership opportunities in Skyway-West Hill & North Highline subarea plans • <i>Development Regulation</i> – Existing mandatory and voluntary Inclusionary Housing program in Skyway-West Hill & North Highline <p>Current and Proposed Comprehensive Plan policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King County shall prioritize funding for affordable housing projects that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provide low-barrier housing designed to meet the needs of homeless households and other high-need households; b. Provide accessible housing to people with behavioral health, cognitive, physical, or developmental disabilities; c. Create homeownership opportunities for households at or below 80 percent area median income to build generational wealth and promote housing stability; d. Are located near high-capacity transit to give residents access to job opportunities and services; e. Are in areas with communities at risk of displacement and as shortage of affordable housing; f. Reflect an equitable regional distribution of funding; and g. Are inclusive community-driven projects developed and stewarded by and in collaboration with historically underserved communities facing displacement pressures and disparate health and economic outcomes. • King County shall encourage the use of universal design in the development of affordable housing, family-sized housing, and market rate housing to create housing units that are accessible to seniors and people with disabilities. • King County shall support development of new affordable housing units that include a sufficient number of two-, three-, and four-bedroom units to meet space needs of anticipated households and to promote culturally relevant housing options. • King County shall take intentional actions that repair harms to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color households from past and current racially exclusive and discriminatory land use and housing practices that result in racially disparate impacts such as development patterns, disparate homeownership rates, disinvestment in lower-income communities, and infrastructure availability. • Density bonuses and other incentives for the development of affordable housing shall be available within unincorporated urban areas, with a focus on affordable rental and homeownership housing in commercial areas. Bonuses shall be periodically reviewed and updated, as needed, to ensure they are effective in creating affordable housing units, especially in coordination with any mandatory inclusionary housing requirements that may be adopted. • King County shall prioritize funding for affordable housing projects that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provide low-barrier housing designed to meet the needs of homeless households and other high-need households;

Themes from Equity Work Group	Executive Staff Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Provide accessible housing to people with behavioral health, cognitive, physical, or developmental disabilities; c. Create homeownership opportunities for households at or below 80 percent area median income to build generational wealth and promote housing stability; d. Are located near high-capacity transit to give residents access to job opportunities and services; e. Are in areas with communities at risk of displacement and as shortage of affordable housing; f. Reflect an equitable regional distribution of funding; and g. Are inclusive community-driven projects developed and stewarded by and in collaboration with historically underserved communities facing displacement pressures and disparate health and economic outcomes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King County shall prioritize community-driven development of permanently affordable homeownership and rental projects led by community-based organizations and community land trusts.
<p>5 Non-land Use Tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support community-based organizations in developing capacity for working with developers • Advocate for policies that increase the housing supply at the state and federal level • Develop a fund that supports community care and solutions to homelessness and displacement • Create or facilitate an equity source that defers principal repayment as long as affordability levels are maintained and better yet increased with time 	<p>New Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Motion</i> – Advocate for adding requests for more funding and/or additional revenue authority for affordable housing to the state and federal legislative agendas¹⁷⁷ <p>Current and Proposed Comprehensive Plan policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King County shall prioritize funding for affordable housing projects that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provide low-barrier housing designed to meet the needs of homeless households and other high-need households; b. Provide accessible housing to people with behavioral health, cognitive, physical, or developmental disabilities; c. Create homeownership opportunities for households at or below 80 percent area median income to build generational wealth and promote housing stability; d. Are located near high-capacity transit to give residents access to job opportunities and services; e. Are in areas with communities at risk of displacement and as shortage of affordable housing; f. Reflect an equitable regional distribution of funding; and g. Are inclusive community-driven projects developed and stewarded by and in collaboration with historically underserved communities facing displacement pressures and disparate health and economic outcomes. • King County shall work with community members, cities, the private sector, and service providers to establish new, countywide funding sources, and urge the federal and state government to adopt new funding sources, for affordable housing development, acquisition, rehabilitation, preservation, and operating costs. • King County shall promote equitable outcomes in communities most impacted by racially exclusive and discriminatory land use and housing practices by supporting, in partnership with impacted communities, equitable access to resources, such as surplus properties and affordable housing financing.
<p>6 Preventing displacement of existing residents and businesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to “displacement” more broadly as “community displacement” • Refer to “thriving” communities rather than “healthy,” if “healthy” is used define it • Connect residential/business displacement more broadly as cultural displacement • Supporting housing co-ops as a community stabilizer • Prioritize requiring affordability within new developments • Emphasize stabilization of significant or legacy businesses • Require considering equity impacts upfront in implementing land use policy • Limit barriers to home-based and commercial childcare–Incentivize childcare centers in new housing developments, remove existing zoning/land use barriers 	<p>New Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update polices to support equitable and community-driven development <p>Work already underway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Program</i> – Encourage and incentivize culturally relevant childcare programming to increase affordability and address childcare access deserts • <i>Program</i> – Eviction database • <i>Policy</i> – Existing anti-displacement policy framework in Skyway-West Hill & North Highline subarea plans • <i>Policy</i> – 2024 Comprehensive Plan proposal to incorporate an anti-displacement policy framework for all unincorporated areas

¹⁷⁷ The County's legislative agenda is a list of key issues that the County prioritizes in its work with the state and federal governments. There are separate state and federal legislative agendas, both of which are approved by motion annually by the King County Council.

Themes from Equity Work Group	Executive Staff Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand rent caps and rental assistance programs to people with income above limits, but struggle with market rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Development Regulation</i> – Existing mandatory and voluntary Inclusionary Housing and Community Preference program in Skyway-West Hill & North Highline <i>Development Regulation</i> – 2024 Comprehensive Plan proposal to expand voluntary Inclusionary Housing program to all of urban unincorporated King County and the Vashon and Snoqualmie Pass Rural Towns <p>Current and Proposed Comprehensive Plan policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> King County shall take actions to prevent and mitigate residential and cultural displacement for unincorporated communities at risk of displacement to address racial disparities in housing and help protect cultural communities for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color by supporting cultural institutions, community hubs, and using community preference programs for affordable housing that helps people with a connection to the local community remain in or return to their community of choice. King County policies, programs, and strategies shall recognize the role and importance of small and locally owned businesses in community stability and creating opportunity for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC); immigrants and refugees; the LGBTQIA+ community; women; and other historically underrepresented groups. King County shall protect cultural resources, prevent their displacement, and promote expanded cultural opportunities for its residents and visitors in order to enhance the region's quality of life and economic vitality. King County shall encourage and support community based and community led efforts to develop and retain existing small and local businesses and resilient communities. These efforts may include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Priority hire programs that create middle-wage employment in disadvantaged communities; Ensuring public investment decisions protect culturally significant economic assets and community anchors; and Engaging communities directly affected by economic development activities in planning, decision-making, and implementation. King County shall coordinate with a broad range of partners, organizations, businesses, and public sector agencies to support the development of business innovation districts and other community stabilization initiatives to help prevent the displacement of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), immigrant and refugee, LGBTQIA+, and lower income communities. King County shall prioritize funding for community and economic development projects that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Benefit households at or below 80 percent area median income; Create equitable opportunities for economic prosperity, good health, safety, and connection to community; Reflect an equitable regional distribution of funding; and Meet the needs of historically underserved communities facing economic pressures and disparate health and economic outcomes. King County shall encourage the development of new housing models that are healthy and affordable by providing opportunities within the unincorporated urban area and near commercial areas. King County shall work to allow innovative housing projects to move forward, including affordable housing demonstration projects, community-driven development projects, affordable owner-built housing, land trusts and cooperative ownership structures for rental and ownership housing, co-housing, and other innovative developments. Density bonuses and other incentives for the development of affordable housing shall be available within unincorporated urban areas, with a focus on affordable rental and homeownership housing in commercial areas. Bonuses shall be periodically reviewed and updated, as needed, to ensure they are effective in creating affordable housing units, especially in coordination with any mandatory inclusionary housing requirements that may be adopted. King County should provide opportunities for incorporation of the principles of healthy communities and housing, climate resiliency, and sustainability into policy initiatives on housing, affordable housing, and community development in unincorporated areas. King County shall actively promote and affirmatively further fair housing in unincorporated King County through its housing programs, and shall participate in efforts with its partners to further fair housing in its regional role promoting housing affordability and choice and access to opportunity for communities that experience disproportionate rates of housing discrimination and communities that bear the burdens from lack of investment and access to opportunity. King County shall prohibit restrictive covenants or other land use, permitting, or property conditions that limit the ability of persons from protected classes (as defined in the King County Fair Housing Ordinance) to live in residences of their choice. King County shall ensure that there is sufficient zoned capacity in the unincorporated urban areas zoned to accommodate King County's housing need allocations and provide a range of affordable, climate resilient housing types, including higher

Themes from Equity Work Group	Executive Staff Response
	<p>density single detached homes, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhouses, apartments, manufactured housing, cottage housing, accessory dwelling units, and mixed-use developments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King County shall support and implement programs and policies that increase housing stability and help to prevent and reduce homelessness, such as permanent supportive housing, emergency rental assistance, short-term rental assistance, diversion assistance, eviction prevention, and mortgage default and foreclosure counseling. • King County shall support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Rental assistance, eviction prevention, and other programs that provide tenants with the resources and information to successfully navigate landlord-tenant disputes; and b. Legislation that increases tenants' access to safe, affordable, healthy, and stable housing.

D. Future Opportunities for Process Change

The power mapping analysis helped shape the revised Update process. It also revealed longer term opportunities to shift how comprehensive planning is conducted in King County to achieve additional process equity and downstream distributional equity.

Power mapping identified that a key shortcoming of the previous process was the lack of continuous capacity building and knowledge retention on land use and comprehensive planning issues. During Plan updates, there is a concerted effort to stir community interest and solicit input, but that engagement ceases after the Plan update is completed. This means that a large amount of energy is expended every five or ten years to raise consciousness and build trust and understanding, but that the investment of resources and energy and the time community expends to participate is not continuously or carried over to the next process. A continuous process for community capacity building and engagement on land use and comprehensive planning would help bridge this knowledge and engagement gap. This would help to ensure community voices are centered in the planning process and to make efficient use of engagement investments by King County and the community. Equity Work Group members emphasized that partnerships with community-based organizations could be an effective way to create more durable relationships and retain knowledge.

There are also opportunities to better resource plan updates. Process improvements that center community in engagement, such as partnering with community-based organizations for more authentic participation and providing comprehensive translation of documents and interpretation at meetings, require additional time and resources to fund and staff these efforts than currently exist.

Relatedly, considerable effort was expended to create surveys that provided a more accessible means for commenting on the Plan, and as a result, the volume of public comment increased sharply. While survey input was processed and shared with Executive staff drafting Plan proposals, time between Plan phases and available resources were insufficient to respond to detailed comments provided by respondents and perform detailed opinion analysis. Future Plan updates need to be planned with adequate time and resources to fully process, absorb, and respond to voluminous public comment resulting from more equitable engagement.

While these kinds of long-term changes to the comprehensive planning process would constitute next steps in transforming the County's engagement process, the formation of the Equity Working Group as a body supporting the Update and the group's input on the existing planning process were essential in helping to conceive process improvements that could build a more equitable process to support future Plan updates. Some Equity Work Group members expressed interest in the opportunity to build upon their experience with the Update to continue the effort to transform the planning process.

Proposal Review

The following section considers the equity impacts of the proposals included in the Update. Earlier sections describe how process equity impacts were evaluated in designing the Update process, in conducting engagement, and through the work of the Equity Work Group. This section evaluates the impacts to distributional and cross-generational equity from the proposals in the Plan.

A. Context

As a 20-year planning document focused on expanding access to opportunity for everyone living or working in King County, the Plan plays an essential role in achieving King County’s Fair and Just Principle.¹⁷⁸ Implementing pro-equity and anti-racist practices and policies within the Plan and through the process was a focus of the Update. As such, the Update is aligned with mandates for plans and budgets to incorporate equity and social justice values, as well as goals to analyze equity impacts for decision-making and to improve the scope and effectiveness of efforts to ensure that all communities receive information and have the opportunity to shape County policies and services.

The process for reviewing equity impacts of Plan proposals is rooted in the strategies and tools developed by the King County Office of Equity and Racial and Social Justice, including being informed by the equity impact review process and the Determinants of Equity Data Tool.^{179,180} Staff from the King County Office of Equity and Racial and Social Justice were essential to guiding Executive Staff colleagues in crafting a robust equity impact review specifically for the Plan that aligned with equity impact review tools and resources. While the process for analyzing equity impacts in the Update was developed with the Equity Work Group, other aspects correlate to the stages of the equity impact review process, including: identifying people and places disproportionately affected by plan proposals, understanding community priorities, understanding impacts to the Determinants of Equity for decision making, and future implementation monitoring.

The Plan is a broad policy document providing a framework for the natural and built environment through managing urban, rural, and natural resource land uses; housing supply; transportation networks; and the provision of infrastructure and services. Upstream to individual outcomes, the Plan indirectly affects educational access, employment access, and outcomes related to peoples’ health, well-being, and safety. While the Plan in whole influences all Determinants of Equity, the Update, with focus areas of equity, housing, and climate change, most directly affects the following Determinants by affecting the location and intensity of development:

- Healthy built and natural environments,
- Neighborhoods,
- Housing, and
- Transportation.

More information on how Plan proposals affect access to these Determinants of Equity is shared in the “Summary of equity impacts and outcomes” and “Monitoring Equity Impacts

¹⁷⁸ K.C.C. Chapter 2.10

¹⁷⁹ *Equity Impact Review Process*, King County Office of Equity, Racial and Social Justice, 2016. [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁸⁰ King County, *Determinants of Equity Data Tool*, 2023 [\[LINK\]](#)

and Plan Performance” sections below. The “Current Conditions” section details current performance relative to equity indicators tied to the Determinants, and the people and places disproportionately affected in accessing these Determinants of Equity.

B. Methodology

1. Process

Department staff’s review of the equity impacts of Plan proposals was conducted in partnership with the Equity Work Group. As a part of its work plan, the Equity Work Group designed a framework to guide Departmental staff as they conducted the equity impact review of the proposals. The framework included an overarching equity analysis question and guiding prompts for department staff to use to analyze the potential outcomes of the proposals. This framework was rooted in the Equity Work Group’s priorities for a more equitable future that can be created through Plan implementation. It reflected that this type of planning can help create that future, and that well-intended planning policies and interventions can also have unintended, inequitable consequences if the solutions aren’t coordinated and if equity impacts go unevaluated. The question and prompts are as follows:

How do the proposed changes in this Scope Topic address or repair structural, racial inequities from land use policies, or known disparities in the Determinants of Equity?

- Which specific communities and populations will be affected by the changes? Be explicit about positive and negative impacts and consequences.
- How do the changes encourage and support equitable, thriving existing communities? Some characteristics of equitable communities highlighted by the Equity Work Group include:
 - Well-resourced
 - Economic equity
 - Thriving in place
 - Affordable housing
 - Food equity
- How do the changes encourage or discourage safe and responsible growth for new residents and businesses?
- How do the changes remove or create barriers for those most directly affected by structural, racial inequities?
- Are there unintended consequences?
- How do the proposed changes expand opportunities for racial equity and social justice?
- Are there policies, programs, and investments that balance the negative consequences?

Department staff provided responses to the equity analysis question and associated analysis of potential equity impacts for each topic area (discussed more in Subsection 2 Level of Analysis below). This analysis included how the proposals: affect priority populations and places, relate to and further access to relevant Determinants of Equity, balance for unintended consequences, and contribute to the stability of existing communities. This review of equity impacts was performed by department staff at the "80 percent" draft stage so

that staff could refine proposals in consideration of Equity Work Group input on equity impacts in the Executive Recommended Plan.

Department staff responses were then reviewed by Equity Work Group members, who provided questions and input to staff on the quality of their responses, including additional concepts, people, and places to consider within the Plan proposals. This part of the review took place as department staff were finalizing proposals for the Public Review Draft Plan. Department staff reviewed the input, responded to questions, and shared how the group's input had been or could be incorporated back into the proposals for the Executive Recommended Plan and the equity impact review.

The discussion of proposal equity impacts incorporates department staff's initial equity impact review, Equity Work Group input, and responses from department staff on addressing equity impacts in finalizing Plan proposals. This methodology, combined with level of analysis for the equity impact review, described in the next section, allowed for broad but comprehensive understanding of equity impacts of plan proposals as they evolved from the Plan Scope of Work to the Executive Recommended Plan.

2. Level of Analysis

With the myriad changes included in the Plan, equity impacts are not analyzed for each proposal or edit. Instead, staff evaluated 12 groups of "scoping topics" corresponding to the approved Scope of Work for the Update.^{181,182} Each scoping topic included multiple proposed changes. This roll-up at the scoping topic scale allowed the analysis to consider cumulative effects of equity impacts rather than the limited impact of an individual proposed change, while still having enough specificity to inform and shape the proposals. For example, how the County supports retention and development of mature and old growth forests has limited scope and impact on most geographies and populations; but when considered along with other changes to environmental regulations, a larger picture of equity effects and outcomes can emerge. Figure 71 below lists the scoping topics and related issue areas analyzed as a part of the equity impact review.

¹⁸¹ Motion 16142, Attachment A [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁸² There are 15 scoping topics in the approved Scope of Work, but only 12 were evaluated in this Proposal Review analysis. Individual issue areas from Scope Topics I.B. and IV.E. were folded into the analysis of other applicable scoping topics due to their overlapping nature. Scope Topic IV.F. was not included in this analysis because those issues were addressed via a separate equity review as part of the Area Zoning and Land Use Studies element of the 2024 Update.

Figure 71: Scope Topics Reviewed for Equity Impacts

I. Focus Area: Pro-Equity

Scoping Topic	Early Concepts
<p>A. Reduce housing and business displacement and advance equity for those who are Black, Indigenous, People of Color, immigrants, and/or refugees, especially those who also earn less than 80 percent of the area median income</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Support housing stability and mitigate and prevent residential displacement in unincorporated King County through strategies that increase access to affordable housing for historically underrepresented populations who experienced systemic racism or discrimination in accessing housing opportunity. Some examples include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> incentivize projects that promote housing stability, prevent displacement, and promote equitable development as part of King County’s financing of affordable housing; support community-driven development projects, including prioritization for affordable housing and community development investments; support strategies to address racially disparate impacts for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color households such as increasing home ownership and supporting community-driven development; require County participation in regional tenant protection efforts, including County support of programs and strategies that prevent eviction and provide rental assistance; County partnership with others to preserve and improve the quality of manufactured housing communities in unincorporated King County; support reuse of nonresidential buildings, such as extended stay hotels, as permanent supportive housing; and create a voluntary inclusionary housing incentive program for unincorporated King County modeled after recently adopted voluntary and mandatory inclusionary housing regulations for Skyway-West Hill and North Highline. The program would offer density bonuses and other regulatory flexibilities (such as increases in building heights and reductions in requirements for parking) in exchange for providing on-site affordable units as part of a market-rate residential or mixed-use development project. The program would apply to residentially and commercially zoned properties in urban unincorporated King County and in the Rural Towns of Snoqualmie Pass and Vashon. A “fee-in-lieu” of construction of affordable units with market-rate units and offsite development options would be incorporated in the program. This program would update and replace the current Residential Density Incentive Program and the Vashon Rural Town Affordable Housing Special District Overlay. Support actions to mitigate and prevent cultural displacement, such as community-driven affordable housing, protections of cultural institutions and community gathering spaces, and supporting culturally appropriate childcare. Support actions, such as business innovation districts and community stabilization initiatives, to mitigate and prevent economic displacement of businesses and to recognize the role of small businesses in creating opportunity for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; immigrants and refugees; the LGBTQIA+ community; women; and other historically underrepresented groups. Require the County to work with other jurisdictions, agencies, and partners to encourage a wide range of housing affordable at all income levels to equitably meet the needs of a diverse population. This includes those who are Black, Indigenous, People of Color, immigrants, and refugees; those who also earn less than 80 percent of the area median income; and other intersectional populations, such as people with disabilities, seniors, LGBTQIA+ people, and women. Strategies could include community-driven developments and land trusts, affirmative marketing plans, and gathering input from these culturally specific communities in the pre-development phase to ensure the housing is welcoming and appropriate. <p><i>Additional items from Scope I.B. Integrate a pro-equity and anti-racist policy framework:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Require intentional, targeted actions, such as adopting zoning practices that increase the types and/or density of housing allowed, that repair harms to Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color households from past and current racially exclusive and discriminatory land use and housing practices that resulted in racially disparate impacts (including development patterns, disparate homeownership rates, disinvestment in communities, and infrastructure availability). Support equitable development projects and investments (such as community-driven development for affordable housing, local businesses, and community facilities) in areas most directly impacted by structural racism and discrimination, at a higher risk of displacement. This will work to improve access to economic and health opportunities for significant populations of communities experiencing disparities in life outcomes. Require engagement with historically underrepresented populations to advance community-driven development, implementation, and evaluation of countywide affordable housing goals, policies, and programs.
<p>C. Improve health equity outcomes in communities with the greatest and most acute needs</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Require the County to improve access to local parks and green spaces in Opportunity Areas where disparities exist due to historic and ongoing underinvestment. Support equitable and sustainable healthy food access to make locally grown, healthy, and culturally relevant foods available and reflective of King County communities and traditionally underserved and/or socially disadvantaged farmers (as defined by the USDA). Support the development of and collaboration with programs that produce and distribute affordable and healthy foods, provide nutrition incentives, and increased ability to use food assistance benefits. Change “marijuana” terminology to “cannabis,” to help reduce the historic and racist stigmatization of cannabis use and to align with recent changes in state law. Support actions that limit disproportionate concentrations of retail sales and advertisement of tobacco and cannabis in areas with high percentages of youth and/or residents who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. Prioritize investments in strategies and programs that support young people in reaching their full potential, such as through programming that builds life, academic, and employment skills. Support actions for and investments in culturally relevant and equitable health and human service delivery, such as behavioral health services and facilities. Support incorporating people-centered design that includes principles of patient-centered, recovery-oriented, and trauma-informed care in County-owned or -funded regional health and human services facilities, behavioral health facilities, emergency shelters, transitional and permanent supportive housing, and affordable housing. Require a feasibility analysis for possible creation of a regional network of public hygiene, sanitation, and drinking water facilities. This proposal is in response to a 2024 Update “mini Docket” request. The feasibility analysis would consider issues such as community needs, whether such facilities should be designated as essential public facilities, possible County and non-county roles and/or partnerships, infrastructure needs, and potential costs and funding options. The study would be used to inform future Comprehensive Plan updates. To help reduce health impacts on frontline communities and vulnerable populations from extreme heat in urban heat islands, encourage the use of passive cooling approaches and energy efficient cooling technologies in residential developments in the urban unincorporated area.

Scoping Topic	Early Concepts

II. Focus Area: Housing

Scoping Topic	Early Concepts
A. Comprehensive housing policy review and update	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Incorporate requirements of House Bill 1220, including policies addressing housing needs and racially disparate impacts; details to be determined until guidance and recommendations are available from the Washington State Department of Commerce. 2. Adopt a King County Housing Needs Assessment; details are to be determined as analysis continues and more information is provided by the State later in 2023. 3. Align policies with current housing strategies, practices, and resources and regional housing funding guidelines and priorities. See more details in the Housing subsection B. below and in the Pro-Equity section above. 4. Update affordable housing income levels in the Plan and the Code to use consistent terminology and standards when incentivizing and regulating affordable housing and affordability levels. Clarifying housing income bands will increase the transparency of incentives and resource distribution within affordable housing projects in King County.
B. Improve affordable housing supply, especially for those who are Black, Indigenous, People of Color, immigrants, and/or refugees and that earn less than 80 percent of the area median income	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Require monitoring of progress towards meeting countywide housing targets, countywide affordable housing needs, and eliminating disparities in access to housing and neighborhood choice. Require updates to countywide and King County strategies when they are not resulting in adequate affordable housing to meet the countywide need. 2. Through the Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC), require regional planning, coordination, and accountability that supports affordable housing efforts across the county, including actions towards and monitoring of implementation of the Regional Affordable Housing Task Force report.¹⁸³ 3. Prioritize working with other jurisdictions, agencies, and partners to support an equitable distribution of affordable housing and supportive services countywide as outlined in the County’s Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan; Best Starts for Kids Implementation Plan; Health Through Housing Implementation Plan; Veterans, Seniors and Human Services Levy Implementation Plan; Mental Illness and Drug Dependency Behavioral Health Sales Tax Fund Plan; and other housing and human services-related implementation plans. 4. In County-funded affordable housing subsidy programs, prioritize affordable housing projects that serve individuals and households at or below 50 percent of area median income for rental projects, at or below 80 percent of area median income for homeownership projects, and/or in areas where there is a severe shortage of affordable housing. 5. Encourage regional land use and investment strategies that support mixed-use and mixed-income urban developments as a way to help racially and economically integrate neighborhoods, increase housing and transportation choices throughout King County, and improve housing stability for people of all incomes. This includes land use strategies such middle housing and inclusionary housing, transit-oriented development, and affordable housing that serves a range of incomes below 80 percent of area median income. 6. Support development of climate-resilient affordable housing throughout the County’s regional and local housing strategies and actions, such as prioritizing awarding subsidies to climate-resilient affordable housing projects and advocating for incentives that support climate-resilient practices in the statewide green building standards for affordable housing. 7. To reduce displacement risks and support development of more affordable housing, create an unincorporated-wide voluntary inclusionary housing incentive program. See more details in the Pro-Equity section above. 8. Repeal the Vashon Rural Town Affordable Housing Special District Overlay, and rely instead on the new inclusionary housing program discussed in the Pro-Equity section above. The Overlay was not successful in producing any affordable units, and the new inclusionary housing program is anticipated to more effectively support the improved affordable housing access intended by the Overlay. 9. Require the County to work with other jurisdictions, agencies, and partners to encourage a wide range of housing affordable at all income levels that equitably meets the needs of a diverse population. See more details in the Pro-Equity section above.
C. Expand housing options	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Incentivize development of new affordable housing that includes sufficient two-, three-, and four-bedroom dwelling units to meet space needs of anticipated households and promote culturally relevant housing options. 2. Expand housing options by increasing the types of housing allowed in low-density urban residential zones to support development of middle housing, which is typically more affordable than traditional single-detached homes. Allow outright duplex, triplex, and fourplex multifamily developments in all residential zones in unincorporated King County. Limit building heights to 35 feet in lower-density zones, to support compatible development with existing neighborhoods. Adjust minimum and maximum lot widths to keep scale of buildings small to support multiple units and improved affordability. Reducing landscaping and on-site recreation requirements, and reduce parking requirements, to incentivize development of the middle housing types and improve affordability. Allow outright apartments (five units or more) in lower-density zones if the site allows. 3. Expand allowed SEPA exemptions to match those allowed in state law. This change would exempt the following types of development from SEPA review if the project is below a certain size: single-detached residential, multifamily residential, barn, loafing shed, farm equipment storage, produce storage, packing structure, office, school, commercial, recreational, service, storage building, parking facilities, and fill or excavation. Expanding the exemptions will help reduce time and costs of permitting such developments, which can help support the region’s wide range of housing needs and goals.

¹⁸³ Regional Affordable Housing Task Force Final Report and Recommendations as adopted by [Motion 15372](#)

III. Focus Area: Climate Change & the Environment

Scoping Topic	Early Concepts
<p>A. Alignment with and advancement of 2020 Strategic Climate Action Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, support sustainable and resilient communities, and prepare for climate change</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a new Comprehensive Plan climate change Guiding Principle and associated policy direction that requires the County to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, advance climate equity, and prepare for climate change impacts consistent with the Strategic Climate Action Plan. 2. Require climate solutions that result in equitable outcomes that benefit frontline communities; see more details in the Pro-Equity section above. 3. Update greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets to match those in the Countywide Planning Policies and the King County Strategic Climate Action Plan. Require King County to regularly assess and report on countywide greenhouse gas emissions. 4. Require development regulations and programs that reduce energy use, increase the use of renewable energy, and phase out fossil fuel use in the built environment. Require programs to prioritize access and affordability for frontline communities. Encourage energy utilities to provide fossil fuel reduction strategies. Set fossil fuel use reduction goals for County operations and require fossil fuel elimination action plans that, for example, identify strategies to replace fossil fuel usage with renewable electricity sources. 5. Support actions, such as increasing methane capture and use at King County owned landfills and wastewater treatment facilities, that remove barriers for and maximize use of renewable natural gas to decrease reliance on greenhouse gas-emitting carbon fuels. 6. Integrate consideration of equity and social justice impacts in the siting of renewable energy technologies. 7. Promote investment in equitable transit-oriented development to help reduce emissions from the transportation sector. This includes prioritizing the inclusion of housing affordable to households earning less than 80 percent of the area median income in transit-oriented development on King County Metro property; considering land use, inclusionary housing, anti-displacement measures, and community characteristics when planning bus rapid transit investments; and partnering with regional affordable housing funders to align resources, when possible, to advance regional housing development goals. 8. Support expansion of private electric vehicle use, including opportunities to improve equitable access to electric vehicle information, incentives, and charging infrastructure. This could include providing information in multiple languages about access to and the economic benefits of electric vehicle ownership, supporting electric carsharing programs in underserved communities, and supporting increased federal or state rebates for households with low incomes for the purchase or leasing of electric vehicles. 9. Require the County to take steps to plan for and reduce wildfire impacts in wildland-urban interface in unincorporated King County. Encourage cities in the wildland-urban interface to conduct wildfire risk assessment and planning. Support actions to improve forest health and wildfire resilience on forest lands. Amend clearing and grading regulations to allow for vegetation management to reduce wildfire risk near residential buildings. Collaborate with regional partners to reduce landslide and flooding risks resulting from wildfire damage and associated impacts. Support actions that reduce health impacts of wildfire smoke. Support actions for community wildfire education and preparedness. 10. Support actions and programs that provide frontline communities skill development for and access to living-wage green jobs, such as increasing County employment on-ramps that lead to green jobs and careers. 11. Support actions and programs that increase waste prevention, reuse, recycling, and composting to improve resource conservation and lead toward the goal of achieving cost-effective zero waste of resources, such as supporting innovative technologies that can recover more useful materials and adopting regulations that make waste prevention and recycling easier to do. <p><i>Additional items from Scope I.B. Integrate a pro-equity and anti-racist policy framework:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Require climate solutions that result in equitable outcomes that benefit frontline communities. Require prioritizing and supporting ongoing partnerships with frontline communities in co-development and implementation of County climate planning, policies, and programs. Require investment in and enabling of culturally and linguistically contextualized climate change engagement and community education with frontline communities. Require work with regional partners to advance climate equity.
<p>B. Integrate and implement Clean Water, Healthy Habitat goals</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen requirements for shoreline development to be located and designed to avoid the need for future shoreline stabilization over the life of the structure, consistent with recent state-level legislative changes and current practices. Allow new or replacement structural shoreline stabilization only when a geotechnical report confirms a time-sensitive need for the stabilization. In such cases, require the use of nonstructural shoreline stabilization measures first, then soft structural shoreline stabilization if nonstructural solutions are not feasible; new or replacement hard structural stabilization (including bulkheads) would only be allowed in limited circumstances. Create more clarity on the thresholds for stabilization repair and replacement. Encourage shoreline development to be set back enough from steep slope and erosion hazards to protect them over the life of the development, not just at the time of construction. 2. To further protect environmental quality and important ecological functions, require implementation of the County's fish passage restoration program, Land Conservation Initiative,¹⁸⁴ and Clean Water and Healthy Habitat strategic plan.¹⁸⁵ 3. Support restoration and enhancement of flood storage, flood conveyance, and ecological functions through floodplain management actions that provide multiple benefits, rather than a singular outcome. Other benefits flood risk reduction projects may include are resiliency to climate change, consistency with King County's equity and social justice goals, improvements to habitat, expanded recreation access, or improvements to viability of farming or forestry land uses in the vicinity. 4. Review and update of the County's critical areas regulations, using best available science, such as: reviewing riparian, aquatic, and/or alluvial fan regulations; stream, wetland, and/or Critical Aquifer Recharge Area (CARA) mapping; climate change considerations; and species and habitats of local importance. 5. Amend Critical Areas code and Clearing and Grading code to allow for management of beaver dams. This would allow for actions to reduce or mitigate the impacts or hazards of beaver dams, including but not limited to removal of a beaver dam or portion of a beaver dam; the installation, maintenance, adjustments, replacement, and removal of beaver dam devices; and removal of sticks and other debris accumulated against beaver dam devices.

¹⁸⁴ King County Land Conservation Initiative [LINK](#)

¹⁸⁵ King County Clean Water Healthy Habitat [LINK](#)

Scoping Topic	Early Concepts
	<p>6. Support actions for regional collaboration on stormwater management planning, regulations, and funding to prioritize regional stormwater system improvements where cost-effectiveness and the benefits to communities and ecosystems are the greatest, regardless of jurisdictional boundaries.</p>
<p>C. Increase land conservation</p>	<p>1. The GMPC is currently considering possible changes to the Four-to-One program. Some of the changes being evaluated include whether to allow: reduced open space dedication for lands with high ecological value, facilities to be located in the rural area, nonresidential developments, multifamily developments, and projects along the Urban Growth Area boundary as set by previous joint planning agreements rather than the original 1994 boundary. If changes are recommended by the GMPC, the Comprehensive Plan and King County Code would also need to be amended accordingly. Those changes will be determined when the GMPC completes its review; a draft of the GMPC recommendations are anticipated to be published in March for possible action in May, which would then be included in the Public Review Draft of the 2024 Update.</p> <p>2. Update Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program regulations. Allow urban open space acquired using conservation futures tax funding to become TDR sending sites. Clarify study requirements for impacts of using TDRs to increase base densities in formal subdivisions. Incentivize preservation of vacant marine shoreline parcels without hard structural stabilizations by providing bonus sending site TDRs. Remove exemption for calculating greenhouse gas emission impacts of increased densities resulting from urban TDR receiving sites.</p> <p>3. Support strategies for and investment in development and retention of future old growth corridors, including landowner incentives and land conservation tools such as TDRs, conservation easements, and acquisition.</p> <p><i>Additional items from Scope I.B. Integrate a pro-equity and anti-racist policy framework:</i></p> <p>1. Support improving access to farmland for traditionally underserved and/or socially disadvantaged farmers, and update associated County agricultural planning processes to ensure agriculture remains economically viable for all farming communities.</p>

IV. General Updates

Scoping Topic	Early Concepts
<p>A. Implement unincorporated area-related changes from the CPPs</p>	<p>1. Adopt new housing and jobs growth targets for unincorporated King County, as established in the Countywide Planning Policies.</p> <p>2. Designate the Skyway and White Center Unincorporated Activity Centers as countywide centers, allowing them to be prioritized for additional infrastructure investments. The Puget Sound Regional Council's (PSRC) VISION 2050¹⁸⁶ states that funds managed by the PSRC will be directed toward designated regional and countywide centers. The Countywide Planning Policies identified Skyway and White Center Unincorporated Activity Centers as candidate centers. This would formalize that action.</p> <p>3. In 2022, the Washington State Legislature passed SB 5593,¹⁸⁷ which allows, but does not require, counties to utilize Urban Growth Area exchanges when specific conditions are met. This would allow lands currently in the Urban Growth Area to be removed in exchange for rural lands added to the Urban Growth Area in areas pressured by patterns of development that exceed available, developable urban lands. The Countywide Planning Policies would need to be amended in order use this allowance in King County. The GMPC is currently evaluating whether to recommend allowing such exchanges. If recommended, the Comprehensive Plan and King County Code would also need to be amended accordingly. Those changes will be determined when the GMPC completes its review; a draft of the GMPC recommendations are anticipated to be published in March for possible action in May, which would then be included in the Public Review Draft of the 2024 Update.</p> <p>4. Support coordination with cities adjacent to the Rural Area and Natural Resource Lands to ensure that the development review process for large mixed-use developments in a city mitigates impacts on unincorporated areas, such as to prevent increased traffic, maintain rural character, and protect environmentally sensitive areas.</p> <p><i>Additional items from Scope I.B. Integrate a pro-equity and anti-racist policy framework:</i></p> <p>1. When evaluating and implementing its land use policies, programs, investments, and practices, require the County to proactively address issues of equity, social, and environmental justice; racially and environmentally disparate health outcomes; and physical, economic, and cultural displacement.</p> <p>2. Support equitable public engagement in County planning processes in a manner that centers and prioritizes populations historically underrepresented or excluded from planning processes.</p> <p>3. Support strategies to improve equitable economic opportunity, such as encouraging priority hire programs and stabilizing local business districts to prevent displacement.</p> <p>4. Improve tribal coordination based on recommendations developed with tribal governments and consistent with new state requirements; details are to be determined pending additional engagement with the Tribes.</p>

¹⁸⁶ A multicounty policy making body for King, Pierce, Snohomish and Kitsap counties; [LINK](#). The PSRC oversees the multicounty planning policies in VISION 2050. [LINK](#)

¹⁸⁷ Engross Substitute Senate Bill 5593 [LINK](#)

Scoping Topic	Early Concepts
<p>B. Implement Subarea Planning Program</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> As part of the 2024 Update, the County is developing and will adopt a Snoqualmie Valley/Northeast King County Community Service Area Subarea Plan, as well as implementing land use and zoning changes and development regulations. This subarea plan will apply to the entire Community Service Area and will replace the current Fall City Subarea Plan. More information about those proposals and how to provide feedback on them can be found at https://publicinput.com/SnoValleyNEKC. As required by the Vashon-Maury Island Community Service Area Subarea Plan, update property-specific zoning conditions Vashon-Maury Island.¹⁸⁸ More information about those proposals and how to provide feedback on them can be found at https://publicinput.com/vashonsubarea. The King County Department of Local Services is working with community members to co-create an improved process to develop Community Needs Lists.¹⁸⁹ This work is ongoing, and potential changes are to be determined. Update the subarea planning schedule to reflect a recent change in state law that puts comprehensive planning on a 10-year update cycle. The updates will ensure there is a break in subarea planning to support development of those 10-year updates.
<p>C. Update transportation policies. Modifications to transit-related policies contemplated in the 2024 KCCP update are those to reflect already-adopted updates to County transit policies, including as part of Ordinance 19367.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Support transportation services and facilities that equitably provide mobility services to communities with the greatest need as noted in the Pro-Equity section above. Support investments that improve safe, equitable, and accessible opportunities for public transportation services, pedestrians, bicyclists, car and van pools, and other alternatives to single occupant vehicles – especially where the needs are greatest – such as providing fixed or flexible transit services, safe and accessible bus stops, sidewalks, road shoulders, and bike lanes. Support the state traffic safety goal of zero deaths and serious injuries by collaborating with other agencies, emergency service providers, and road users to prioritize the elimination of these type of crashes. Support health and safety by incorporating complete streets infrastructure in the County roadway standards. <p><i>Additional items from Scope I.B. Integrate a pro-equity and anti-racist policy framework:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Support transportation services and facilities that equitably provide mobility services to communities with the greatest need, especially populations who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; immigrants, and/or refugees; and other intersectional populations. Evaluate displacement risks resulting from transportation programs, projects, and services. Support provision of accessible and culturally appropriate information about and opportunities for engagement on transportation services, infrastructure, and planning, including for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; immigrant and refugee populations; and other intersectional populations.
<p>D. Review rural and natural resources regulations</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Update Farm, Fish, Flood policies to ensure that, when implementing flood risk reduction and habitat projects, there remains sufficient land within Agricultural Production Districts available to support long term viability of commercial agriculture. While implementing the Growth Management Act mandates to preserve Agricultural Production Districts for commercial agriculture uses, these updates recognize that 1) the ability to advance salmon recovery in these areas is important to honoring and sustaining the rights held by the State of Washington and Indian tribes as sovereign trustees for fish, wildlife, and other aquatic resources, and 2) restoring floodplain processes and mitigating flood risks are necessary to ensure human health and protect public safety. The County will continue to support the Snoqualmie Valley Farm, Fish, Flood work, but will not create similar processes in other Agricultural Production Districts. Instead, the County will more quickly and efficiently implement the Farm, Fish, Flood goals in all Agricultural Production Districts based on the lessons learned from the Snoqualmie Valley work. In that vein, the 2024 update commits the County to utilize a review process that considers a watershed context for projects sponsored by the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Water and Land Resources Division, in Agricultural Production Districts where a habitat or floodplain restoration project may result in reducing the amount of land available for farming; the process will identify ways to balance the goals of agricultural production, habitat quality, and floodplain and ecological functions in individual projects. Modify regulations to clarify where resorts are allowed in the Rural Area, consistent with County policies that support protection of Rural Area and Natural Resource Lands, and in acknowledgment of the infrastructure limitations in such areas. In response to a 2022 Docket request, limit impacts of materials processing uses, such as clarifying that retail sales of the materials on the site are only allowed with a conditional use permit; as an accessory to a mineral use, only allow processing of onsite and/or nearby (within three miles of the site) materials; and additional requirements for sites in the rural area, including storage limitations (up to 3,000 cubic yards), ensuring code compliance requirements (landscaping, nonresidential land use standards, and grading permits), and requiring that materials be primarily from rural and resource lands to ensure it is a rural-dependent use. In response to a 2022 Docket request and to help reduce impacts of mining operations, create phasing requirements that limit the size of each phase, such as: on sites 100 acres or less, each phase would be limited 25 acres; and on sites more than 100 acres, each phase would be limited to 50 acres, and any areas of greater than 25 acres would be required to have setbacks twice as large as would be otherwise required. Regardless of size of the site, a third phase would not be able begin until reclamation on the first phase is substantially complete. Uses, buildings, and storage of equipment or materials not directly related to an approved mining use, reclamation plan, or accessory use would be expressly prohibited. Disallow mixed use developments on Neighborhood Business (NB) and Office (O) zoned properties in the Rural Area, except in Rural Towns. These zoning classifications are applied to parcels in both urban and rural areas. A range of uses are allowed within those zones, with a focus on commercial uses. However, multifamily housing (apartments, townhouses, and group residences) is also allowed if part of a mixed-use development. The allowed residential densities of these developments currently range from eight to 96 dwelling units per acre, regardless of whether the property is in the urban or rural area. As directed by the Growth Management Act and the Comprehensive Plan, those are urban levels of development that are not appropriate for the Rural Area, where the general growth pattern and established density limits range from one home per 2.5 to 10 acres (depending on the applicable rural zoning classification).

¹⁸⁸ Vashon-Maury Island Community Service Area Subarea Plan, VMI CSA Workplan Action 1 [LINK](#)

¹⁸⁹ Community Needs Lists help implement subarea plans and identify specific actions such as programs, services, or capital improvements that respond to community-identified needs. [LINK](#)

Scoping Topic	Early Concepts
	<p>6. Disallow new Urban Planned Developments (UPDs) in unincorporated King County. There are no current UPDs; previously established UPDs have either been annexed into cities or been redesignated to conform to standard King County zoning and development regulations. Additionally, there are no remaining large, undeveloped unincorporated urban areas that would be suitable for future UPDs.</p>

C. Equity Impact Review of Plan Proposals

This section summarizes the equity impacts of proposals in the Public Review Draft. Impacts are organized by the concepts within the equity analysis question and guiding prompts. These priorities for equitable communities are summarized in in Figure 69.

The narrative below abridges detailed analyses completed for individual scope topics described in Figure 71, and input shared by the Equity Work Group in dialogue with department staff. Detailed summaries for each scope topic that describe specific populations disproportionately affected by the proposals, related Determinants of Equity, unintended consequences of proposals that mitigate for those consequences, Equity Work Group input, and relevant performance indicators from the Determinants of Equity data tool and comprehensive plan performance measures, are contained in Appendix B Equity Impact Review of Plan Proposals Summary Tables.

1. Summary of equity impacts and outcomes

Proposals address and repair structural, racial inequities from land use policies and disparities in the Determinants of Equity

The Update proposals most directly affect the Healthy Built and Natural Environment, Housing, Neighborhoods, and Transportation Determinants of Equity. The Plan, as the guiding document for unincorporated King County's zoning and future land use has a direct role in addressing and repairing harms of racialized housing and land use policies and practices that are detailed in the Housing Needs Assessment (Appendix B) of the Update. Historical restrictions on home lending to specific neighborhoods based on their racial composition along with restrictive covenants that prevented Black, Asian, Hispanic/Latino/a/e, and other prospective homebuyers from living in their neighborhood of choice has had downstream effects, including preventing intergenerational wealth transfer, and devaluation of and disinvestment in neighborhoods with greater shares of BIPOC residents.¹⁹⁰ The results of these practices are evident today in disparities in homeownership rates and housing cost burden between BIPOC and white households, the overrepresentation of communities of color and immigrants in neighborhoods with limited economic opportunity and greater environmental pollution, and higher rates of poverty among BIPOC communities than for White residents.¹⁹¹

The Plan advances housing proposals that encourage land use and investment strategies that support mixed-use and mixed-income urban developments, such as an expanded supply of middle housing, transit-oriented development, and increased affordable housing development for lower income households. While land use solutions can expand housing choice for lower income households, additional funding is necessary to significantly increase affordable housing stock, particularly for households earning less than 30 percent of area median income. In urban unincorporated King County, where population and employment growth are focused, the lack of diversity of housing types limits housing choice and supply. Scare housing choice and supply leads to increased housing prices that are unaffordable for households with lower incomes. Plan proposals encourage developing mixed-income and mixed-use housing to racially and economically integrate neighborhoods and promote access to opportunity for people of all income levels. This is particularly important for urban

¹⁹⁰ King County, 2024 Comprehensive Plan Appendix B: Housing Needs Assessment, 2023

¹⁹¹ King County, Determinants of Equity Data Tool, 2023 [\[LINK\]](#)

unincorporated King County where residents have less access to parks and open space and transit amenities than other urban residents.¹⁹²

Climate change is creating wide-ranging impacts on King County communities and the Puget Sound region. While climate change affects everyone in King County, not everyone is affected equally. Climate change is a threat multiplier that exacerbates existing social and economic inequities driven by environmental injustice, institutional racism, and economic inequality. Historic and existing social inequities and racism impact the ability of BIPOC communities to respond, recover, and be resilient in the face of escalating climate-related hazards. These inequities can also limit the ability of BIPOC communities, low-income households, people speaking a language(s) other than English, and immigrant and refugee communities to participate in or benefit from actions taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including actions that improve energy efficiency in homes, expand transit access, or support vehicle electrification.

Supporting the recommendations of the Strategic Climate Action Plan, Plan proposals formalize King County’s commitment to climate equity, requiring proposed climate solutions that result in equitable outcomes that benefit frontline communities, supporting partnerships with community, and co-development of planning and proposals. Specific climate proposals aimed at improving access to the Determinants of Equity that disproportionately affect frontline communities include:

- prioritizing financial investments and partnerships toward community-driven climate planning processes;
- funding pathways for BIPOC communities, including youth, to access living-wage green careers;
- supporting the food system through the King County Local Food Initiative, farmland access, and representation of underserved or socially disadvantaged farmers;¹⁹³
- expanding transit access; and
- creating opportunities for equitable access to electric vehicles, charging infrastructure, and utility assistance to support an equitable renewable energy transition.

Proposals encourage and support equitable, thriving existing communities, and, proposals encourage safe and responsible growth for new residents and businesses

The Current Conditions section of this report outlines structural and racial inequities and disparities related to land use and Determinants of Equity that existing communities experience. As evidenced by the focus on anti-displacement proposals in the Plan Scope of Work, the benefits of growth are not equitably distributed to existing communities and can have destabilizing effects on communities that are increasingly vulnerable to displacement. Displacement can be direct, such as residents or businesses dislocated by redevelopment of a property; from economic pressure, like rising rents or property values and taxes in redeveloping neighborhoods that pressure existing communities’ relocation to more affordable areas; or from the erosion of neighborhood cultural anchors (businesses, community organizations, and meeting spaces) that connect and sustain cultural

¹⁹² King County, 2022 Comprehensive Plan Performance Measures Report, 2022 [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁹³ Socially disadvantaged is aligned with U.S. Department of Agriculture language, which is defined as farmers and ranchers (SDFRs) belonging to groups that have been subject to racial or ethnic prejudice. SDFRs include farmers who are Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Hispanic or Latino, and Asian or Pacific Islander. For some but not all USDA programs, the SDFR category also includes women. [\[LINK\]](#)

communities and are displaced directly or indirectly for economic reasons. Populations most vulnerable to displacement are low- and fixed-income households, and renters intersecting with BIPOC, immigrant, refugee, and LGBTQIA+ identities. Places most vulnerable to displacement in unincorporated King County include North Highline, Skyway-West Hill, and East Federal Way.¹⁹⁴

The Plan advances proposals that attempt to balance the need to accommodate growth with strengthening existing residents' and businesses' ability to thrive in their community of choice in multidimensional ways. Proposals strengthen language committing King County to identifying and evaluating physical, economic, and cultural displacement risk in land use and transportation policymaking and implementation. Proposed economic development policies recognize the role of cultural anchors and small, local businesses in creating place and supporting existing communities, and commit the County to supporting community-based efforts to enable resiliency through public investments that protect culturally significant assets and priority hire programs. County-led workforce development efforts are proposed to be informed by communities lacking access to economic opportunity to ensure alignment with community needs and work to build personal and systemic resiliency.

Existing needs for affordable housing and overall housing supply are outlined in the Housing Needs Assessment and adopted in the allocation of housing need to unincorporated urban King County. Housing proposals expanding middle housing options aim to respond to supply shortages that exacerbate housing affordability and provide opportunities to address the racialized gap in homeownership. Inclusionary housing proposals encourage the development of affordable housing along with market rate housing. Code changes also propose to streamline permitting for emergency housing, including emergency shelters, microshelter villages (tiny homes), safe parking sites, and permanent supportive housing.

Proposals remove barriers for those most directly affected by structural, racial inequities

Plan proposals center the needs of communities living in neighborhoods where patterns of disinvestment have limited access to opportunity and the Determinants of Equity. Plan proposals expand housing choices by lowering barriers to constructing middle housing options, which can provide new opportunities for homeownership or serve as anti-displacement measures in urban unincorporated neighborhoods where BIPOC communities that have been harmed by the legacy of racist housing practices and policies disproportionately live. Proposals also incentivize affordable housing development for low-income households that disproportionately endure higher levels of cost burden.

Residential and employment growth in the Plan is focused in urban unincorporated areas where high-capacity transit is planned or currently available, to improve access to transportation and employment. Additionally, the Plan proposes to apply to the Growth Management Planning Council to designate the White Center and Skyway Unincorporated Activity Centers as countywide centers, which could enable additional future transportation infrastructure funding for those neighborhoods. Focusing growth near transit, encouraging transit-oriented development, and enhancing access to transportation helps to improve transportation choices and access to transit in communities in need.

¹⁹⁴ Puget Sound Regional Council, Displacement Risk Mapping, 2023 [\[LINK\]](#)

The Update includes proposals that address urban parks in unincorporated King County. Plan proposals align with the Land Conservation Initiative to preserve open space and prioritize access for communities with disproportionately limited access to parks and open space.

Collectively, the proposals aim to build strong, vibrant neighborhoods by increasing opportunity for local businesses through an expanded customer base, by providing employment opportunity in neighborhoods, by adding everyday services and housing, and by influencing how County services like parks and transit are provided.

Proposals expand the racial equity and social justice planning framework

In addition to the opportunities for racial equity and social justice for individuals disproportionately burdened in accessing opportunity to the Determinants of Equity described above, proposals expand opportunity for racial equity and social justice downstream of the Plan by embedding equitable engagement and explicit consideration of equity impacts in King County’s land use planning, policies, programs, investments, and practices.

Policy language on community engagement throughout the Plan has been amended to prioritize engagement with disproportionately affected or priority populations and to strive for decision making with community. Policies encourage culturally relevant communications, translation for people with limited English proficiency, and partnership with community-based organizations. The Plan also proposes a revised policy on engagement and consultation of Indian tribes that respects tribal sovereignty and elevates Tribes as planning collaborators in a more proactive way.

Proposals balance negative consequences through policies, programs, and investments

While policy changes and other Plan proposals are well intentioned, positive actions can have unintended consequences. Taken together, the Plan proposals seek to neutralize the negative consequences of some proposals with other proposals and action items. Anti-displacement measures are crucial in stemming the displacing forces that growth and redevelopment can bring to communities at risk of displacement. Adding significant investment through new development can cause residential and commercial rents and property values to rise from the real and perceived value of these investments, destabilizing vulnerable existing communities. Community members have also expressed concerns about “green gentrification” from the addition of parks and transit amenities that enrich neighborhoods. To offset these potential impacts, Plan proposals call for ensuring that these kinds of amenities or investments respond to community needs, through proactive, culturally sensitive community engagement in planning and design. In housing anti-displacement measures, affordable housing incentives work to ensure that new affordable units accompany market rate development. Opportunities for middle housing development can help homeowners with low incomes stay in their homes through revenue generation, enable multigenerational families to stay together, and relieve redevelopment pressure on limited commercial areas. Cultural anchor preservation and priority hire policies recognize the destabilizing effects growth can have on communities and create opportunity for community preservation within new development.

Equity Work Group members were supportive of anti-displacement measures in Plan proposals, but shared doubt about whether the measures were enough to balance meaningfully enough against displacement pressure as quickly as development occurs.

While it is a tenet of growth management in Washington state that “growth pays for growth” in terms of the costs of infrastructure and development impacts, the economic system the Plan operates within does not necessarily return value equally to the communities it is extracted from. It is not an assumption of the Plan that growth will cure disparities in access to opportunity or the Determinants of Equity. Instead, it is an assumption of the Plan that growth can be harnessed to help correct for or balance out negative consequences and aid in the repair for the lingering effects of past injustices. Proposals have been informed not just by where unincorporated King County is expected to grow, but also where existing access to the Determinants of Equity is lacking. As a long range policy framework, the Plan will shape King County’s progress over time, but does generally cannot implement actions to substantively address community needs in the short term.

The Plan presents a strong vision for environmental preservation and restoration, and for climate preparedness and resiliency. Aligning the Plan with the updated 2020 Strategic Climate Action Plan prioritizes frontline communities and climate justice. Land and environmental conservation measures contribute to a healthy natural environment and aim to alleviate disparities in environmental pollution burden, access to open space, and support the food system. One consequence of climate preparedness actions and environmental conservation can be new or increased costs, like purchases of equipment or home improvements, or taxes and fees necessary to implement programs. At a systemwide level, regressive taxation systems and upfront costs pose barriers to widespread access and could leave behind low-income households and renters with fewer resources or less autonomy in their housing or transportation choices. Programs that implement the Plan’s climate goals will require sensitivity to ensure that investments in cost sharing are aimed towards lower income households disproportionately affected by new costs. This is also supported by other policies requiring equity impact reviews and prioritizing frontline communities’ voices in decision making.

The pro-equity and anti-racist future envisioned by Plan proposals and downstream implementation requires intensive community engagement, including culturally appropriate and linguistically accessible communications. These transformations require additional resourcing and time for capacity building with community and materials development. While this is not a negative consequence, it challenges a large bureaucracy like King County to effectively work across departments, make decisions, and be responsive to community.

D. Monitoring Equity Impacts and Plan Performance

As compiled in the Current Conditions section of this report, many data resources were used to evaluate populations and places disproportionately affected by the Plan proposals. The 2022 Comprehensive Plan Performance Measures Report informed the scope of the Update, and reviewed plan performance across 16 standardized measures by race and place, wherever practicable.¹⁹⁵ Housing proposal development was directly supported by the Housing Needs Assessment, including the analysis of racially disparate impacts, in Appendix B of the Plan and the 2019 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice.¹⁹⁶ Both the Performance Measures Report and data from the Housing Needs Assessment overlap with the indicators evaluated in the Office of Equity and Racial and Social Justice’s Determinants of Equity Report, which was updated in 2023 by the Determinants of Equity Data Tool.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁵ King County, 2022 Comprehensive Plan Performance Measures Report. [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁹⁶ King County, 2019 King County Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice. [\[LINK\]](#)

¹⁹⁷ King County, The Determinants of Equity, 2015. [\[LINK\]](#), King County, Determinants of Equity Data Tool, 2023. [\[LINK\]](#)

These sources will be periodically updated and will inform future Comprehensive Plan updates.

The set of indicators in the Determinants of Equity Data Tool presents a standardized framework for identifying disparate impacts across diverse programs and time. While a variety of Determinants of Equity indicators have been helpful to determine populations disproportionately affected by specific Plan proposals, Figure 72 below lists the Determinants of Equity most relevant to the Update, and the indicators related to those determinants most germane to identifying disparately affected populations related to Plan proposals. Evaluating performance on these indicators in future performance monitoring will help identify whether progress is being made in decreasing disparities.

Figure 72: Comprehensive Plan Related Determinants of Equity and Indicators

Determinant of Equity	Indicator
Healthy Built and Natural Environment	Environmental Pollution Burden
Neighborhoods	Displacement Risk
Housing	Housing Affordability (cost burden)
	Homelessness
Transportation	Transit Access

Conclusion

Since adoption of its first Comprehensive Plan under the Growth Management Act in 1994, King County has made tremendous gains in the preservation of rural areas and natural resource lands by focusing growth within the urban area and supporting it with urban services. Unfortunately, the benefits of these policies have not been shared equally across communities in unincorporated King County.

The 2024 Update, focused on strengthening the Plan's pro-equity, housing, and climate change proposals, was informed by the structural inequities and legacy of racist policies and practices that have led to disparate access for BIPOC communities, households with low-incomes, immigrants, refugees, and people speaking a language(s) other than English; to the resources and opportunities needed to thrive and feel welcomed within people's neighborhood of choice.

Proposals advanced as a part of the Update seek to help address and repair structural racial inequities from land use policies and disparities in the Determinants of Equity, balance for negative consequences, and support existing communities while accommodating new growth. Proposal development included explicit and intentional equity impact review at multiple stages throughout the Plan's development and was supported by deep engagement with the Equity Work Group, ushering a new level of community involvement into the Update process. The Equity Work Group was central in improving community engagement and evolving engagement towards the "County engages in dialogue" level on King County's Community Engagement Continuum.

The Plan update process included many public engagement innovations aimed to increase process equity. Engagement activities were designed to be more accessible and centered priority populations' inclusion by lowering barriers to access in location, language, and methods. Opportunities were provided earlier on in proposal development, increasing the public's ability to influence Plan proposals.

The challenges of removing structural barriers to accessing the Determinants of Equity and repairing for generations of harm from institutional racism may seem overwhelming. As a long range, 20-year plan guiding the shape of King County's built and natural environments, changes downstream may not come quickly enough for the people most affected by injustice and disparate access to resources. The consequences of not making changes to help address these shortcomings, however, would be much more harmful, and the Update pushes King County along the path towards justice, equitable communities, and a future where all residents have the resources and access to opportunity they need to thrive. The work to continue to help remove these barriers and undo these harms will also occur through other ongoing and future County plans, programs, and services, as well as future Plan Updates.

Appendices

E. Equity Work Group Membership

Eric Alipio

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F. Equity Impact Review of Plan Proposals Summary Tables

This section contains detailed summaries for each of the twelve scoping topics that formed the basis for the equity impact review of plan proposals. Each summary table includes the Executive staff's review and input from the Equity Work Group.

Scope Topic: General Planning - Implement Countywide Planning Policies
People and Places Disproportionately Affected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People at higher risk for displacement: Low-income households and BIPOC communities in urban unincorporated King County, specifically Black/African American, Asian, Hispanic/Latino/a/e population groups, particularly in North Highline, Skyway-West Hill, and East Federal Way; immigrants, and people with limited English proficiency • Sovereign Indian tribes have had marginal access or inclusion in past countywide planning efforts
Affected Determinants of Equity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing • Healthy Built and Natural Environment • Jobs and Jobs Training • Transportation • Neighborhoods • Parks and Natural Resources
Related Proposals or Topics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive Housing Policy Review and Update • Expand Housing Options • Improve Affordable Housing Supply • Rural and Natural Resources Regulations
Unintended Consequences of Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directing growth towards urban places can destabilize existing communities at risk for displacement • Affordable housing provision frequently depends on market rate growth, which is good for creating mixed-income communities, but growth can have a destabilizing effect

Scope Topic: General Planning - Implement Countywide Planning Policies

- Annexation can be viewed as unloading underserved, diverse urban areas to cities

Mitigating Actions and Strategies

- Anti-Displacement strategies
- Inclusionary housing proposals
- Culturally relevant communications
- Equity impact reviews
- Power sharing and community role in decision making

Equity Work Group Input

- Mitigating proposals and strategies are insufficient in supporting existing communities, including growth, which has been entirely from BIPOC communities (on net).
- Voluntary inclusionary housing will not construct enough affordable units to meet need.
- There is no MFTE style program to incentivize private landowners to allow low-income or affordable rentals on their properties.
- There is not enough support in King County government at the moment to support entities to build 100% affordable developments in unincorporated King County.

Measurement

- Displacement risk
- Access to open space
- Housing Affordability
- Housing supply compared to growth

Scope Topic: General Planning – Implement Subarea Planning Program

People and Places Disproportionately Affected

- Affordable housing supply on Vashon-Maury Island and in the Snoqualmie Valley/Northeast King County is limited, disproportionately affecting low-income people and renters, who face higher levels of cost burden than county average
- Black/African American residents are more likely to be renters in these subareas
- Sovereign Indian tribes have been marginalized in past planning efforts

Affected Determinants of Equity

- Healthy Built and Natural Environment
- Neighborhoods
- Housing
- Parks and Natural Resources
- Community Economic Development

Related Proposals or Topics

- Expanding Housing Options
- Improve Affordable Housing Supply
- Implement Countywide Planning Policies
- Anti-displacement Strategies

Unintended Consequences of Action

- Delivery on Community Needs Lists is dependent on county funding
- Rural densities can prohibit more affordable housing types
- Changes in comprehensive planning schedule lead to a longer timeline for completing all subarea plans and a longer cadence between updates

Mitigating Actions and Strategies

- Community Needs Lists
- Culturally relevant communications
- Collaboration with cities and service providers
- Power sharing and community role in decision making

Equity Work Group Input

- Community needs lists and subarea planning outreach need to center the people who don't usually show up to virtual town halls.
- Community participation in subarea planning should be resourced to authentically engage with impacted communities.
- Need to implement tools to invest in existing communities that want to thrive in place and age in place.
- The costs of displacement are communities that lack small businesses and entrepreneurs that bring character, culture, and meaning.

Scope Topic: General Planning – Implement Subarea Planning Program

- Equity Work Group input about consideration of BIPOC communities and the erasure of Indian tribes within communities with limited populations of these residents was a learning moment for staff in understanding equity impacts.
- A 10 year schedule will give planners the time to be intentional about 1) Their outreach to communities that will be positively and adversely affected by changes, 2) Have culturally relevant and translation services available for outreach efforts with BIPOC communities, 3) Work off of a thoroughly compiled needs list that is reflective of the whole community in the subarea.

Measurement

- Displacement risk
- Access to open space
- Housing Affordability

Scope Topic: General Planning – Rural and Natural Resources Regulations

People and Places Disproportionately Affected

- By limited parks and open space access: urban unincorporated King County, Black/African American residents, Hispanic/Latino/a/e residents, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander residents
- High agricultural land costs pose a barrier particularly for BIPOC and young or beginning farmers
- Proposals will aid salmon recovery, which is important for Indian tribes to fully exercise their sovereignty and associated treaty rights
- Proposals benefit the natural environment and working natural resource lands, upstream from most King County communities
- Limited affordable housing opportunity for low-income households and renters working in the rural area

Affected Determinants of Equity

- Healthy Built and Natural Environment
- Housing
- Access to Parks and Natural Resources
- Food Systems
- Community Economic Development

Related Proposals or Topics

- Implement Countywide Planning Policies
- Implement Clean Water Healthy Habitat Goals

Unintended Consequences of Action

- Limiting growth in the rural area and on natural resource lands increases the value of urban land and housing costs
- Limiting mixed use development on commercially zoned rural parcels decreases housing capacity

Mitigating Actions and Strategies

- Expanding Housing Options
- Improve Affordable Housing Supply
- Green Jobs Strategy

Equity Work Group Input

- It is critical that adequate resources be apportioned to any planning and implementation efforts for community engagement and co-design and creation processes and not be in the marketing and outreach budgets by default.
- Equitable development and growth always come with unintended consequences. Thus the need to resource those most impacted to be at the table early and often.

Scope Topic: General Planning – Rural and Natural Resources Regulations

- The elimination of Urban Planned Developments and the disallowing of additional Mixed use neighborhood business and office zones in rural areas can have the unintended consequence of reducing the possibility to grow thriving communities in places that are not convenient to existing commercial centers that have staples such as daycares, grocery stores, health clinics, and community centers.

Measurement

- Access to open space
- Housing affordability

Scope Topic: General Planning - Transportation

People and Places Disproportionately Affected

- Places disproportionately affected by a lack of public transportation access: urban unincorporated King County
- People and places disproportionately affected by environmental pollution burden: BIPOC residents, low-income residents, unsheltered residents, urban unincorporated King County
- People disproportionately affected by transit policies: Transit-dependent populations, population with disabilities
- People disproportionately affected by traffic-related deaths and injury: American Indian/Alaska Native residents, Black/African American residents

Affected Determinants of Equity

- Transportation
- Healthy Built and Natural Environment

Related Proposals or Topics

- Implement Countywide Planning Policies
- Strategic Climate Action Plan Alignment

Unintended Consequences of Action

- Focus on non-automotive travel can appear as leaving out populations in areas where transit access does not exist or is very limited, or those who require a personal vehicle for travel
- Limited transportation funding sources to implement equitable service provision
- Actual or perception of gentrification risk from infrastructure investment

Mitigating Actions and Strategies

- Metro service guidelines prioritizing access for priority populations
- Prioritization of snow removal routes that serve transit-dependent populations
- Culturally relevant communications in public engagement
- Directing active transportation investments toward neighborhoods priority populations disproportionately reside
- Flexible transportation service programs for “last mile” travel where transit service is lacking

Equity Work Group Input

- Appreciation for the County’s recognition of the need to support travel that isn’t through driving and “complete streets.” By taking a more human-centered design and approach to planning “other-than-driving” modes of travel, these proposals can help facilitate the holistic growth and health of communities. More folks will be encouraged to walk on safer, unpolluted roads and develop a strong social

Scope Topic: General Planning - Transportation

infrastructure in the process. Leaning into public transit and infrastructure would benefit all.

- Supporting opportunities to travel through other modes than driving alone: it's not just access to economic opportunities (also cultural spaces, community, etc.).
- Priority interest in minority owned planning/design/construction companies that would respond to transit-related RFPs in neighborhoods/areas with large minoritized populations.
- "Culturally appropriate" information could be dispersed and workshopped directly with community orgs and businesses in the affected areas

Measurement

- Equitable access to transit
- Mode split, increasing use of alternatives to single occupant vehicle travel
- Environmental pollution burden
- Distribution of regional trails

Scope Topic: Climate Change and Environment – Implement Clean Water, Healthy Habitat Goals

People and Places Disproportionately Affected

- Proposals primarily benefit the natural environment, literally upstream from most King County communities
- Proposals will aid salmon recovery, which is important for Indian tribes to fully exercise their sovereignty and associated treaty rights
- People and places disproportionately affected by environmental pollution burden: BIPOC residents, low-income residents, unsheltered residents, urban unincorporated King County
- People and places disproportionately affected by limited parks and open space access: urban unincorporated King County, Black/African American residents, Hispanic/Latino/a/e residents, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Residents

Affected Determinants of Equity

- Healthy Built and Natural Environment

Related Proposals or Topics

- Strategic Climate Action Plan Alignment

Unintended Consequences of Action

- Increased taxes, rates, fees to pay for program operation that may not be progressively applied
- “Green gentrification” from rising property values or perceived worth of new climate-friendly infrastructure investments
- Barriers to adoption for systemwide changes (e.g., vehicle electrification, renewable energy) could leave behind renters and low-income households with fewer resources or less autonomy in housing/transportation choices

Mitigating Actions and Strategies

- Land Conservation Initiative opportunity areas
- Stormwater Parks
- Green Jobs Strategy
- Anti-Displacement strategies
- Culturally relevant communications
- Climate preparedness focused on frontline communities

Equity Work Group Input

- While many impacts from these proposals affect the rural area, urban North Highline and Skyway-West Hill, which are on the Duwamish River and Lake Washington respectively. Portions of East Federal Way and East Renton are also adjacent to or include riverways. These clean water and flood planning proposals could also be applied to urban areas as well.

Scope Topic: Climate Change and Environment – Implement Clean Water, Healthy Habitat Goals

- Having the right to land or a garden in the place of residence is important for emotional health and a green space helps to keep the space cooler in addition to having plants cleans the air.
- Ensuring stormwater drainage in urban centers of UKC is able to handle one time devastating events that cost millions in damages and displace priority populations.
- More conversations are needed directly with the community with both youth, adults and seniors.

Measurement

- Environmental pollution burden
- Access to open space

Scope Topic: Climate Change and Environment – Strategic Climate Action Plan Alignment

People and Places Disproportionately Affected

- Climate change is a threat multiplier that exacerbates existing social and economic inequities driven by environmental injustice, institutional racism, and economic inequality. Disproportionately affected populations map to populations experiencing lack of access to amenities from historical disinvestment and opportunities to build intergenerational wealth, including places where BIPOC communities, households with low-incomes, and people with limited English proficiency disproportionately reside. Urban unincorporated King County, particularly North Highline, Skyway-West Hill, and East Federal Way specifically have greater representation of disproportionately affected populations.

Affected Determinants of Equity

- Healthy Built and Natural Environment
- Access to Parks and Natural Resources

Related Proposals or Topics

- Implement Clean Water Healthy Habitat Goals
- Implement Countywide Planning Policies
- Improve Health Equity Outcomes
- Increased tree canopy
- Wildland-urban interface proposals

Unintended Consequences of Action

- Implementation necessitates additional communication and engagement with frontline communities
- Increased taxes, rates, fees, or costs of implementation may not be progressively applied
- “Green gentrification” from rising property values or perceived worth of new climate-friendly infrastructure investments
- Barriers to adoption for systemwide changes (e.g., vehicle electrification, renewable energy) could leave behind renters and low-income households with fewer resources or less autonomy in housing/transportation choices

Mitigating Actions and Strategies

- Sustainable and Resourced Frontline Communities and Climate Equity proposals
- Green Jobs Strategy
- Cultural relevant communication proposals
- Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy
- Heat pump pilot program

Equity Work Group Input

Scope Topic: Climate Change and Environment – Strategic Climate Action Plan Alignment

- Youth are a priority population. Schools and educational programs need investment to elevate a just transition from extractive economies and invest in regenerative processes.
- Equity comes in when we center marginalized voices, considering communities who often fall victims of unintended consequences due to economic stability and their inability to keep up with the environmental changes or advancement, like electrification.
- Unintended consequence of talking about transit-oriented development but not providing efficient and safe transit that goes to where people need to go. People drive cars because they don't have transportation choices that get them where they need to go in a reasonable time, especially for most people living in suburban and rural areas.
- Parking is important for many low-income and immigrant workers who drive for work or cannot access multiple jobs via transit.
- Need to work with city, state, and federal partners to repair, maintain, upgrade, and build infrastructure (red tape and delays) that will help to mitigate the effects of climate change in areas, especially those feeling effects from these one time events (ex. King tides in South Park).
- Places with identified past harms from highways or other forms of infrastructure and business have been built and negatively affect existing communities are opportunities.
- Electrification is important, but there needs to be acknowledgement that hybrid is a good alternative to all-electric vehicles as infrastructure at the moment does not have the capacity to have charging stations for everyone to have electric vehicles.
- There needs to be acknowledgement of preserving local food production and acknowledging there may be food insecurity as our environments become warmer, colder, or more weather volatile.

Measurement

- Environmental pollution burden
- Tree canopy
- Access to open space and parks

Scope Topic: Climate Change and Environment – Increase Land Conservation

People and Places Disproportionately Affected

- By limited parks and open space access: urban unincorporated King County, Black/African American residents, Hispanic/Latino residents, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Residents
- High agricultural land costs pose a barrier particularly for BIPOC and young or beginning farmers
- Proposals benefit the natural environment and working natural resource lands, upstream from most King County communities

Affected Determinants of Equity

- Healthy Built and Natural Environment
- Access to Parks and Natural Resources
- Strong and Vibrant Neighborhoods
- Community Economic Development

Related Proposals or Topics

- Strategic Climate Action Plan Alignment

Unintended Consequences of Action

- “Green gentrification” from rising property values or perceived worth of new park, open space, or trail investments

Mitigating Actions and Strategies

- Land Conservation Initiative opportunity areas for prioritizing open space investments and Conservation Futures funding
- Green Jobs Strategy

Equity Work Group Input

- Acknowledge Tribal and local BIPOC leadership should be acknowledged.
- Include support for career pathways for those that can't afford to volunteer.
- Prioritize local food production, preserve productive agriculture lands from development, and be aware that climate change will affect crop yields, not just access to agriculture lands. There may need to be access to programs that help compensate for losses if folks are not aware of or able to access Federal programs.
- A substantial share of population that works in agriculture are undocumented immigrants and the sensitivity that it takes to outreach with these communities is more important than sending out King County employees with logos and official vehicles.
- Landowner incentives should include an anti-displacement lens. Rebate programs should be responsive to all communities and other incentives should be used if certain demographics are not benefitting.

Scope Topic: Climate Change and Environment – Increase Land Conservation

- Be aware of cultural differences and immigration status when performing outreach to priority populations.
- Urban unincorporated King County needs open space and greenery as much as we need to preserve old growth forests, agriculture lands, rural areas, and nature preserves.

Measurement

- Access to open space and parks
- Tree canopy

Scope Topic: Housing – Comprehensive Housing Policy Review

People and Places Disproportionately Affected

- People disproportionately affected by cost burden: low-income residents that are more likely to be Black/African American residents, Hispanic/Latino/a/e residents, and American Indian/Alaska Native residents, renters
- Households who have disproportionately low rates of homeownership: Black/African American households and residents identifying as “a race not listed”

Affected Determinants of Equity

- Housing
- Neighborhoods
- Healthy Built and Natural Environments

Related Proposals or Topics

- Expand Housing Options
- Affordable Housing Supply
- Anti-Displacement Strategies
- Implement Countywide Planning Policies

Unintended Consequences of Action

- Affordable construction mandates could have a chilling effect on development, and stall needed housing development, particularly affordable units, and investment
- Displacement risk from redevelopment
- Real or perceived gentrification risk from redevelopment or infrastructure investment

Mitigating Actions and Strategies

- Anti-displacement proposals
- Tenant Protections
- Power sharing and community role in decision making
- Expanding housing options to build a greater variety of housing types
- Voluntary affordable housing incentives
- Community preference program

Equity Work Group Input

- It would be helpful to show actual household incomes or type of jobs so it’s more relatable to lay readers
- The needs for housing and jobs should be put into a context of enabling wealth and asset building for historically marginalized communities. Stable housing near jobs, good education and transit or transportation access, small business location in neighborhoods with strong markets, and access to healthcare are privileges that historically have aided the better off segments of our society. This Comprehensive

Scope Topic: Housing – Comprehensive Housing Policy Review

Plan Update is being specific and explicit about equity so that historic disparities in asset creation can be offset with more intentional proposals.

- Lift up housing types or mixes that positively support intergenerational connections for household with extended families- e.g., locating senior housing near low-income housing/childcare or homeownership opportunities for larger or extended families.
- Zoning and building code requirements should not make home-based childcare more restricted or infeasible, to support immigrant households and culturally competent childcare needs.
- Community-based organizations collaborating with developers in housing development need support for capacity development so they can equitably engage with the developer. Often, the housing developer has much greater experience with projects financing and processes than the community-based organization partner. Ideally, the CBO can gain some form of tangible equity, like land or acquisition funding or predevelopment funding to bring to the table to be treated as a true real estate partner in addition to mission collaboration.

Measurement

- Housing affordability
- Displacement risk
- Housing supply compared to growth

Scope Topic: Housing – Improve Affordable Housing Supply

People and Places Disproportionately Affected

- People disproportionately affected by cost burden: low-income renters that are more likely to be Black/African American residents, Hispanic/Latino/a/e residents, and American Indian/Alaska Native residents
- Places where most residents earn less than 80 percent of area median income including North Highline and Skyway-West Hill

Affected Determinants of Equity

- Housing
- Neighborhoods
- Healthy Built and Natural Environments

Related Proposals or Topics

- Expand Housing Options
- Affordable Housing Supply
- Anti-Displacement Strategies
- Improving Health Equity Outcomes

Unintended Consequences of Action

- Redevelopment can destabilize vulnerable communities and neighborhoods leading to displacement
- Increasing requirements on developers and development can have a chilling effect on development, preventing supply increases
- Affordable housing provision frequently depends on market rate growth, which is good for creating mixed-income communities, but can have a destabilizing effect

Mitigating Actions and Strategies

- Anti-displacement proposals
- Community preference program
- Power sharing and community role in decision making
- Expanding housing options to build a greater variety of housing types

Equity Work Group Input

- Overlap with other housing and anti-displacement topics

Measurement

- Housing affordability
- Displacement Risk

Scope Topic: Housing – Expand Housing Options

People and Places Disproportionately Affected

- People disproportionately affected by cost burden: low-income residents, particularly renters, that are more likely to be Black/African American residents, Hispanic/Latino/a/e residents, American Indian/Alaska Native residents
- Households who have disproportionately low rates of homeownership: Black/African American households and residents identifying as “a race not listed”

Affected Determinants of Equity

- Housing
- Neighborhoods
- Healthy Built and Natural Environments

Related Proposals or Topics

- Improve Affordable Housing Supply
- Anti-Displacement Strategies
- Improving Health Equity Outcomes

Unintended Consequences of Action

- Redevelopment can destabilize vulnerable communities and neighborhoods leading to displacement

Mitigating Actions and Strategies

- Anti-displacement proposals
- Community preference program
- Power sharing and community role in decision making
- Subarea plan community needs lists
- Priority Hire policies

Equity Work Group Input

- Clearly define “low-income” for clarity to developers. Suggest relating low-income to the definition for free and reduced lunch.
- Prioritize homeownership for people of color

Measurement

- Housing affordability
- Displacement Risk
- Housing supply compared to growth
- Homeownership rates

Scope Topic: Pro-Equity – Anti-Displacement

People and Places Disproportionately Affected

- Places disproportionately affected by displacement risk: North Highline, Skyway-West Hill. Moderate risk: East Federal Way, Fairwood and unincorporated Auburn, Enumclaw, Redmond, and Renton
- People disproportionately affected by cost burden: low-income residents that are more likely to be Black/African American residents, Hispanic/Latino/a/e residents, American Indian/Alaska Native residents, and renters

Affected Determinants of Equity

- Housing
- Neighborhoods
- Healthy Built and Natural Environments

Related Proposals or Topics

- Expand Housing Options
- Affordable Housing Supply
- Implement Subarea Planning Program

Unintended Consequences of Action

- Over-correction in requiring affordable construction could have a chilling effect on development, and stall needed housing development, particularly affordable units, and investment
- Real or perceived gentrification risk from redevelopment or infrastructure investment

Mitigating Actions and Strategies

- Public-private partnerships
- Power sharing and community role in decision making
- Subarea plan community needs lists
- Priority hire policies
- Cultural displacement policies

Equity Work Group Input

- Concerning economic displacement of businesses, emphasize historically significant or legacy businesses where applicable.
- Proposals that promote large-scale development or attract big corporations could potentially disadvantage local small businesses, leading to closures and loss of community character.

Measurement

- Housing Affordability

Scope Topic: Pro-Equity – Anti-Displacement

- Displacement Risk

Scope Topic: Pro-Equity – Improve Health Equity Outcomes

People and Places Disproportionately Affected

- By environmental health burdens: BIPOC residents, low-income residents, unsheltered residents, urban unincorporated King County
- By extreme heat and smoke: youth, older adults, outdoor workers, people with respiratory illness (including American Indian/Alaska Native residents, Multiracial residents), unsheltered residents, south King County and urban unincorporated King County
- By lack of restroom access: youth, older adults, families with children, low-income and unsheltered residents
- By limited parks and open space access: urban unincorporated King County, Black/African American residents, Hispanic/Latino/a/e residents, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Residents
- By limited food access or food insecurity: youth, women, Black/African American residents, Hispanic/Latino/a/e residents, low-income residents, urban unincorporated King County

Affected Determinants of Equity

- Healthy Built and Natural Environments
- Food Systems
- Health and Human Services
- Parks and Natural Resources

Related Proposals or Topics

- Strategic Climate Action Plan Alignment
- Implement Countywide Planning Policies
- Increased tree canopy
- Wildland-urban interface proposals

Unintended Consequences of Action

- Perception of “targeted universalism” as in conflict with population health, i.e., that focusing on interventions for the most burdened takes away from interventions for everyone
- Increased taxes, rates, fees for program operation that may not be progressively applied
- Perception of “green gentrification” from rising property values or perceived worth of new climate-friendly infrastructure investments
- Additional housing costs from improved amenities (e.g., air conditioning)

Mitigating Actions and Strategies

- Upfront costs mitigate for downstream healthcare costs that are avoided
- Increasing housing supply near transit
- Heat pump grants
- Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy

Scope Topic: Pro-Equity – Improve Health Equity Outcomes

- Land Conservation Initiative

Equity Work Group Input

- Health equity related topic descriptions and proposals could be better defined to build greater understanding.
- Engaging impacted communities and incorporating their perspectives and needs into decision-making can help to ensure that the benefits of the changes are equitably distributed and that any negative impacts are minimized.
- Proposals feel reactive and passive.
- Proposals that can balance for negative consequences: targeted workforce development, culturally responsive services, restorative justice and community healing initiatives, affordable and accessible childcare, and addressing biases and systemic discrimination.

Measurement

- Environmental pollution burden
- Access to open space and parks
- Food insecurity
- Access to healthy food retail
- Asthma among adults and youth
- Life expectancy

G. Equity Work Group Priorities & Summary of Comments on Housing Proposals

The following two documents are intended to provide a snapshot of the Equity Work Group's priorities and perspectives on the 2024 Comprehensive Plan proposals.

- The first document – “Compilation of 2024 Comprehensive Plan Equity Work Group Priorities” – is from the Equity Work Group itself. It has been written and approved by the majority of Equity Work Group members and showcases the Work Group's priorities - based on input from learning sessions, guiding equity questions, and retreat consensus building activities.
- The second document, “Summary of Equity Work Group Comments on Housing Proposals” is a document that was written by King County staff that has been included as an attachment to the first document, at the request of Equity Work Group members. It is intended to provide additional nuance and depth to the first document by sharing direct comments from the Equity Work Group members on specific themes.

Compilation of 2024 Comprehensive Plan Equity Work Group Priorities

Our hope for this Comprehensive Plan update is that the explicit focus on equity and repairing historic disparities and injustices will be met with intentional policies that create a more livable community for all. As current King County residents, we want the King County of 2044 to be a welcoming community where everyone can thrive - whether they are young or elderly; a current resident or a recent immigrant or refugee; a single-parent household or a multi-generational family. Given the time and capacity available for this process, the group focused on shaping 2024 Update proposals related to equity impact review, housing proposals, and public engagement strategies. We encourage continued development and engagement directly with equity and justice focused community groups and tribal nations.

Priority considerations for all proposals

As King County continues to grow over the next twenty years, we envision a place where growth is placed in the context of enabling wealth- and asset-building for historically marginalized communities. Access to stable housing near career opportunities, good schools, transportation choices, thriving small businesses, and healthcare are not privileges for the few, but available to all.

We understand that equitable development and growth always come with unintended consequences to people and the environment. This is why it is critical to resource meaningful community engagement -- to make sure that those who are most impacted have the opportunity to be at the table early and often. Part of this includes sharing decision making and resources. Another part includes increased support for community-based knowledge and leadership of existing strategies and work -- for instance Black Lives Matter or Landback (in association with Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives) -- and reports or calls to action generated by community.

To help community members, decision makers, and County staff center equity and assess unintended consequences -- we designed a framework for reviewing equity impacts of Comprehensive Plan proposals. This reflects themes from our shared experiences with structural inequities, disparate impacts, affected communities, and inequitable outcomes resulting from previous long-range planning efforts.

Figure 1. Framework for considering equity implications



Policy Priorities

The Comprehensive Plan and accompanying land use regulations create the foundation for producing and preserving affordable housing and thriving, equitable neighborhoods. The following priorities reflect what we see as core community needs and equity considerations.

Increase the supply of affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize requiring affordability in new development and anti-displacement for existing residents • Expand mandatory inclusionary housing • Support community preference and Multifamily Tax Exemption programs • Diversify housing options, including opportunities for those not typically served
Adjust for specific population needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address the gap for households that do not qualify for subsidies but cannot afford market rate housing • Prioritize housing, services, and opportunities for the lowest income households, including stabilization and community cohesion to confront climate change and any inequities • Create homeownership opportunities for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color and community managed spaces • Support housing and services for the elderly residents and people with disabilities • Support multigenerational households through mixed use and middle housing development, including incentivizing ethical development that is responsive to and ideally led by the community
Prevent the displacement of existing communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on cultural displacement, connecting the impact of residential and business displacement with a sense of belonging in neighborhoods, green spaces, and rural places • Protect tenants and residents from destabilizing rent, tax, and service increases; climate change; and other impacts. This includes job loss and other economic impacts through resourcing, living wages, support for community cohesion, and other strategies • Emphasize stabilization of significant or legacy businesses • Support housing co-ops as a community stabilizer • Incentivize renting accessory dwelling units and middle housing to lower income and households at-risk of displacement
Invest in data, engagement, and non-land-use tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support community-based organizations in developing capacity for working with developers and implementing development • Outreach on affordable housing should be by and for community with an understanding of the history, direction, and community needs - including evaluation that centers the knowledge and experiences of the community • Analysis should not just focus on the majority or solely rely on numerical methodologies with understanding extended to all communities • Require support for meaningful engagement and address equity impacts in implementing land use policy • Advocate for policies that increase the housing supply at the state and federal level and compliance that is responsive to tenants and the community • Include support for community driven equity and justice including data sovereignty, community benefit agreements, and paid support in areas that matter to community, such as engaging with the environment or community-based solution generation

About

The 2024 Comprehensive Plan Equity Work Group has met roughly once every three weeks throughout late 2022 and 2023 to center community needs and interests in the Plan. The Work Group is comprised of 15 individuals representing organizations, communities, and places historically underrepresented in King County’s comprehensive planning efforts.

- | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Bao Nguyen | Lalita Uppala | Spencer Lau |
| Eric Alipio | La Tanya VH DuBois | Steven Lewis |
| Everly Faleafine | Nimco Bulale | Tony To |
| Gloria Ramirez | Pah-tu Pitt | Whitney Nakamura |
| Jill Kong | Sameth Mell | Wanjiku Kahacho |



Compilation of Equity Work Group Comments on Housing Proposals

The following table contains housing-related comments from the various Equity Work Group members from September 23, 2022, to July 17, 2023. There are three types of comments: 1) comments shared in post-meeting surveys, 2) comments shared as part of the Equity Analysis response for housing, and 3) paraphrased comments/questions shared during large group discussions in meetings.

A few things to note:

- Any written comment from an Equity Work Group member has been included verbatim (or with slight modifications to provide context – e.g. “Yes to question 1”). While each comment was assigned to a single section, repeated comments on the same subject have been included to show increased levels of interest/emphasis from the group.
- Paraphrased questions from the Equity Work Group also include paraphrased answers from staff in italics for reference

Comments are organized into 7 topic areas for ease of navigation: 1) connecting the dots, 2) displacement, 3) non-land use tools, 4) specific population needs, 5) middle housing, 6) inclusionary housing, and 7) data collection & community outreach.

Topic Area	Comments
 <p>Connecting the dots</p>	<p>GENERAL</p> <p>Housing policy work should link to transit and job and services access (11/18/2022)</p> <p>Breaking down silos between programs that grow income and provide housing opportunity supports both aims. (12/09/2022)</p> <p>“Great to see links to the ESJ Strategic Plan, Determinants of Equity Report, and Climate Resiliency Plan referenced.” (Equity Analysis Response)</p> <p>“The elimination of Urban Planned Developments and the disallowing of additional Mixed use neighborhood business and office zones in rural areas reduces the possibility to grow thriving communities in places that are not convenient to existing commercial centers that have staples such as daycares, grocery stores, health clinics, and community centers. These policies also encourage far commutes for folks that work in cities, especially if transit is inconvenient. Rural UKC should not have sprawling urban planned or mixed use developments, but disallowing these encourages suburban sprawl and reduces the amount of affordable housing for people who live in these communities already. Having these zones close to existing cities that have urban developments or mixed use neighborhoods is more common sense than taking these tools out of your tool box now and wishing you had them a few years from now.” (Equity Analysis Response)</p> <p>EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS</p> <p>“Good to see connection between health disparities and location of where BIPOC communities reside.” (Equity Analysis Response)</p> <p>“Really appreciate connecting housing, historic harms, and equity in this section. Also listing the full range of housing affordability from very low to moderate incomes shows scope and scale of supply problem.” (Equity Analysis Response)</p> <p>“The needs for housing and jobs should be put into a context of enabling wealth and asset building for historically marginalized communities. Stable housing near jobs, good education and transit or transportation access, small business location in neighborhoods with strong markets, and access to healthcare are privileges that historically have aided the better off segments of our society. This Comp Plan Update is being specific and explicit about equity so that historic disparities in asset creation can be offset with more intentional policies.” (Equity Analysis Response)</p>
 <p>Displacement</p>	<p>RESIDENTIAL DISPLACEMENT</p> <p>Observing patterns of gentrification in the Black community, from Seattle to Puyallup, gentrification in Skyway – people have already been displaced, how can we provide the housing needed? (10/17/2022)</p> <p>Suggestion to refer to displacement more broadly as “community displacement” (10/17/2022)</p>

Has there been any discussion about housing co-ops to prevent community dissolution? (12/09/2022) *This has been of interest in the past, but this is not a strategy KC has funded much in the past. There has been strong interest and encouragement of Community Land Trusts. Finance for co-ops is difficult, and they can become exclusive without public monitoring or structuring to prevent exclusivity.*

King County should prioritize requiring affordability within new development (1/20/2023)

BUSINESS DISPLACEMENT

"In response to economic displacement, King County should emphasize historically significant or legacy businesses where applicable." (Equity Analysis)

"In point 3 concerning economic displacement of businesses- perhaps emphasize historically significant or legacy businesses where applicable- e.g Earl's Barbershop in the CD in Seattle or the Salvadoran Bakery in White Center." (Equity Analysis)

"The Pro Equity and Anti-racist paragraphs in each section address my concern about unintended consequences of promoting growth in the unincorporated and PAA areas. Just hope the implementation phases will require equity consideration upfront and earlier in the process. That being said, we can't expect equity without growth." (Equity Analysis Response)

CULTURAL DISPLACEMENT

In addition to residential displacement, King County should consider ways to prevent cultural displacement (1/20/2023)

"One thing I'd like to explore in more detail is how to support actions to mitigate and prevent cultural displacement. In particular, we need to support culturally appropriate childcare. Many immigrant childcare providers have in-home childcare in their homes which is a source of income for the household and a much-needed culturally competent service to the respective communities. Zoning and building code requirements should not make this use more restricted or not feasible. I'm interested to explore what kind of incentives are available for having childcare centers on the ground floor of new housing developments." (Equity Analysis Response)

Cultural displacement is not discussed. What kind of growth is going to happen, who do you want to inhabit that area? There are residents currently here who want to thrive, don't drive them into pierce county. Open spaces are very important to communities and need to be preserved and businesses are going to go away. (3/22/2023)

SUPPORTING EXISTING RESIDENTS

The work is not moving as quickly as people are being moved due to displacement (3/3/2023)

Observation that County staff are taking time acknowledging what community is already aware of, and that the bigger question is "now what?" (10/17/2022)

How will the County invest in the unincorporated urban areas of King County? How will the County partner meaningfully and with honest intent on slowing displacement in unincorporated urban areas of King County and how will there be recognition that distinct communities already exist that need to be interacted with and nurtured? If folks (White or BIPOC) are displaced from unincorporated King County, where do they go, and is it more or less convenient to their places of business, worship, and activities of enjoyment? (12/13/2023)

Noticing people have already been displaced, how can needed housing be provided? (1/20/2023)

"The equity response does a good job about identifying 1) The priorities of King County to create a wealthier tax base in urban UKC by investing capital and changing zoning in these areas, 2) Which will have the "unintended consequence" of displacing the BIPOC communities attempting to thrive in place, 3) So a city will annex these areas to benefit the "wealthier and whiter" populations already residing in these areas to allow them to "thrive"." (Equity Analysis Response)

"As written, the proposals do not equitably support existing communities to thrive. If population growth has been 100% from by BIPOC people, why are we not supporting BIPOC people? Why is it an unintended consequence that BIPOC people cannot live in urban UKC?" (Equity Analysis Response)

"Prefer using 'thriving' as opposed to 'healthy' - county gets to be the savior and our communities get to be disempowered. It means existing condition is unhealthy. I'm

ambivalent because of gentrification and impact of marketplace on growth policies. Somewhere between prioritizing private investment and equitable policies. We need to be clear upfront that we need to have mitigation for market forces that we will not be able to control." (3/3/2023)

EVICTION/RENTAL DISCRIMINATION

How is KC dealing with rental discrimination by race or credentials that may be burdensome for immigrants or refugees? (12/09/2022) A "fair housing" report (Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice) that is updated every five years is currently being updated. This is separate from the comprehensive plan update, but findings from the report do influence policy. King County tenant protection staff can be tapped for this group

It would be great to expand these kinds of programs (rent caps, assistance programs) to people with incomes above income limits but that still struggle to afford market rates. (12/09/2022)

"Please do update us on the "Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice" that was mentioned, and if possible bring on board some people that can speak about rental discrimination." (12/13/2023)

Concerns re: eviction especially for fixed income households (10/17/2022)

Concerns of eviction especially for those on fixed incomes (1/20/2023)

FUNDING/ADVOCACY

Suggesting a fund for community care to prevent housing displacement and houselessness (11/18/2022)

"We cannot solve affordable housing locally through taxes; federal funds and advocacy are necessary. Advocate for policies that increase supply (by increasing density and allowed housing types)" (12/09/2022)

"I forget who said it, but there was a comment on federal and advocacy actions necessary to make meaningful change in our communities regarding inclusionary housing. I definitely agree with that sentiment and think that as much as King County can be doing with neighboring counties to garner federal support would be amazing. As we've all thought/mentioned before, we will probably be crossing this bridge again if we don't make that meaningful change in our systems that we all hope to see – middle and inclusionary housing included." (12/13/2023)

COLLABORATION/PARTNERSHIPS

"In terms of promoting collaboration and partnerships, it's important to be explicit about "fair and equitable" agreements. Often times in mixed use development partnerships among non-profits, it is assumed that there is shared mission for the general good. Though this is true, often times the housing developer has much greater experience with project financing and processes than the community-based organizational partner. The CBO's should be supported with capacity funding so they can equitably engage with the developer. Ideally, the CBO can gain some form of tangible equity, like land or acquisition funding or predevelopment funding to bring to the table to be treated as a true real estate partner in addition to mission collaboration." (Equity Analysis Response)

LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS

Need to prioritize incentivizing this group with developers

"Important to incentivize lower AMI affordable housing to developers" (10/17/2022)

King County should prioritize affordable housing for lowest income residents (1/20/2023)

"County staff have a lot of insight on which brackets of AMI need more assistance, but no policies or suggestions on how to address this. Incentives do not exist for developers and property managers to prioritize lower income AMI folks access to properties. Public funded housing scantily exists to address the housing need in the communities, especially where the market has dropped the ball." (12/13/2023)

"For lower income levels, it can be extremely hard for families to continue renting a place after some time, are there policies put in place to prevent too high of renting price rises? I understand rent control is illegal in Washington, but it can be easy for landlords to have workarounds that raise prices unreasonably for families." (12/13/2023)

Need to better define "low income" to more effectively serve this community



Non-Land Use Tools



Specific population needs

Discussion on how the standard housing data indicators are not inclusive of other costs, do not include the felt reality or relative difficulty of living on a lower/fixed income (10/17/2022)

"The standard housing data indicators are not inclusive of other costs, do not include the felt reality or relative difficulty of living on a lower/fixed income" (1/20/2023)

The "low-income" aspect of "low-income housing" needs to be better defined. (1/20/2023)

"If developers are to implement low- income housing the definition of low income can be led by a personal interpretation. Therefore, low-income must be clearly defined. The failure to do so leads to continued displacement of minorities and low- income residents out of that city area. This should reflect the income of occupants pertaining to the free and reduced lunch definition of low income. To utilize the median income would not be equitable or fair to all residents." (Equity Analysis Response)

MULTI-GENERATIONAL HOUSEHOLDS

"Multigenerational households are represented in the data, but not often specifically pulled out. King County can take steps to draw out data on multigenerational families to ensure they're a part of our policy considerations." (12/09/2022)

"Noted a connection to missing middle housing forms that can be flexible or accommodating to multigenerational households" (12/09/2022)

"It would be good to mention housing types or mix that positively support intergenerational connections for household with extended families- eg. locating senior housing near low-income housing/childcare or homeownership opportunities for larger or extended families." (Equity Analysis Response)

"I want to lift up housing types or mixes that positively support intergenerational connections for household with extended families- eg. locating senior housing near low-income housing/childcare or homeownership opportunities for larger or extended families." (Equity Analysis Response)

RENTERS/HOMEOWNERS

Do affordable housing strategies include ownership opportunities and keeping people in their homes, and how rent control fits in? (12/09/2022) *Affordable housing strategies include both affordable rental and ownership strategies, anti-displacement strategies that are aimed at keeping people in their homes or neighborhoods, and repair grants/financing strategies to help keep people in their homes. Property tax exemptions also exist for some low-income households*

"The feedback on taking homeownership by People of Color is well taken." (Equity Analysis Response)

"Homeownership for people of color" (Equity Analysis Response)

MISCELLANEOUS

"It is necessary to focus more on rural areas for middle housing and salaries since they pay differently in each area and that means a decrease in income" (2/17/2023)

"It is still necessary to talk about housing for the elderly, housing for people with disabilities, land space in the house to have vegetal garden" (2/17/2023)

GENERAL ELEMENTS

"Thinking about ways to help folks caught between incomes too high for subsidized housing but that cannot afford market rate housing – missing middle housing posed as one solution" (10/17/2022)

"Supporting Duplexes/Triplexes and streamlining regulations. Building fitting into single family neighborhoods - That is not an important priority to me; increased housing is more important than "fit" in an area, 4. Elements that are important to me are access to nearby green/outdoor space and useful transit, and updates to infrastructure to increase pedestrian safety." (2/17/2023)

"Do you support more duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes? Yes! Do you support removing barriers to the development middle housing? Yes. Do you want these buildings to fit well



in single family neighborhoods? Yes. Are there any other elements we should consider as to create incentives for middling housing? Not yet" (2/17/2023)

"Duplexes/Triplexes definitely. Yes, it's critical that as we increase density that we maintain affordability across all market segments. There is no financial equity source to support development of middle housing. We need to create or facilitate equity source that defers principal repayment as long as affordability levels are maintained and better yet increased with time. Payoff principal at time of sale, refi, or restructuring of the property." (2/17/2023)

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

"They have all of the information and data and once again there are politics and policies that are not so equitable that they have to manage as well as trying to get on the right track. Despite missing middle housing not focusing on specifically lowest income households, there should still be incentives & policies put in place that can make it more affordable & easier for those populations to get housing as well, this can be in conjunction with other policies." (12/13/2023)

"Regarding missing middle, adding more structures to a property or ADUs should recognize that these solutions are less likely to generate income and address affordability as units for extended family or friends. Wonder if a strategy could be implemented to incentivize renting to lower income households" (12/09/2022)

"I appreciate how they highlighted it can increase units but not necessarily create affordable options/not reaching folks with low incomes" (12/13/2023)

"So long as we do not sugar coat that missing middle as is currently written only helps landowners then it is acceptable. Missing middle strategies will most likely allow landowners to house their family, friends, and close contacts. If we want to use missing middle strategies to help the housing issues that are present in King County, there needs to be an additional step for incentivizing private landowners to rent out additional space to folks in the community." (12/13/2023)

"Missing middle forms will be most helpful for multigenerational households that already own property vs. affordability for renters" (12/09/2022)

"In terms of generational wealth accumulation, a lack of home ownership is one of the (if not the) biggest hinderance for people. Creating and prioritizing middle housing is a step in the right direction. In addition to inclusionary housing, there could always be more pushes to create middle housing." (12/13/2023)

"Looks good to me. I worry about the displacement of renters in single family homes currently and where they will end up, especially in unincorporated areas. Will the creation of middle housing displace BIPOC families if they do not own their property? How are we ensuring that communities of color are not sold to developers and gentrified as people from out of state move in or cultural centers are removed?" (2/17/2023)

INCENTIVE STRUCTURE

King County should prioritize requiring affordability within new development (1/20/2023)

Bonus programs that increase over time - more bonus or deeper affordability? (1/20/2023)

"When speaking about development, incentives should be flipped, to incentivize developments that plan to house more lower AMI households than those in the 50%-80%+ ranges. Are we considering low-income/fixed-income housing policies for seniors and elders who need rentals?" (12/13/2023)

"How can we make sure that the incentive is high enough for developers to include enough affordable housing with new developments? What is considered a good threshold especially noting the limitations and challenges with the voluntary program?" (12/13/2023)

MULTI-FAMILY TAX EXEMPTION (MFTE)

Is there a way to provide higher affordability limit as MFTE is renewed? Thinking that as debt is financed over time, that presents an opportunity to increase affordability (12/09/2022) *KC does not have a MFTE program, but this is a helpful comment to guide the implementation of an MFTE program.*

"Do more discussion on potential policy options such as MFTE and incentive zoning with inclusionary zoning" (12/13/2023)



MANDATORY INCLUSIONARY

"The amount of developments or entities that will choose to voluntarily allow for inclusionary housing will probably be low. There is no MFTE style program to incentivize private land owners to allow low-income or affordable rentals on their properties. There is not enough support in King County government at the moment to assist to support entities to build 100% affordable developments in UKC." (Equity Analysis Response)

"I don't have anything to contribute more than what I shared in the meeting/breakout room, but a main observation and concern is the voluntary nature and no community preference feels risky, as many others have also expressed, as strong incentives and a mandatory component in more areas, and some sort of community preference consideration seems like a strategy to advance stability and affordability. Also if the previous residential incentive program was underutilized, and a recommendation from that code study includes mandatory IH, I'm curious how some of those study recommendations are or aren't chosen to move forward here." (2/17/2023)

"One thing that stood out to me was that inclusionary housing policies will include only a voluntary inclusionary housing option. I know we discussed this during at our meeting and more specifically in our small groups, but what would it look like to explore making it mandatory? I also want to reiterate that the proposed inclusionary housing policies are strong and make big strides in terms of equity, but hope that we can see" (2/17/2023)

COMMUNITY PREFERENCE

"Having voluntary inclusionary housing is fine, forcing it without an MFTE infrastructure would be disastrous. Eliminating community preference altogether rubs salt in the wound for communities like Skyway and White Center who have faced displacement of BIPOC populations to South King County and Pierce County because housing is too expensive. Saying that Vashon Island doesn't qualify because there are too many retired white people living on the island says the Latinx population trying to survive doesn't matter. How will affordable housing stock created by inclusionary housing policies be tracked by King County so that these properties ensure long-term or perpetual affordable housing on site?" (2/17/2023)

"The proposals are comprehensive and inclusive of many solutions. 2. Where appropriate (places where existing residents face the high risk of displacement) preference policies should be included as part of the voluntary inclusive housing. Also coordinating with transit planning options to reconnect displaced households with transit to access jobs and services. 3. This is the first time that equity is being incorporated into the corpus of Comp Plan policies that I am aware of so its real progress. More resources to directly engage communities at the front end of future update processes is critical to sustain this effort. 4. They certainly are beginning to but more connections between housing, climate change/health, and transit would be helpful with future updates." (2/17/2023)

DATA COLLECTION

Question whether KC tracks when developers choose not to build affordable housing, or do we track incentives that developers use. (12/09/2022) *KC tracks the use of developer incentives. A fee-in-lieu (for developers to pay into a fund instead of providing affordable units on site) will be going into effect in North Highline and Skyway as a part of recently adopted subarea plans. Determining that the fee is high enough is political and difficult to address through policy*

Who is being surveyed in the data county staff cite- does it include people with extremely low or no income? (12/09/2022) *Yes, the survey includes all households, though county staff share concerns about these groups' underrepresentation in the data.*

Is King County collecting stories from the community? (12/09/2022) *King County held a survey in September and October which collected lots of qualitative feedback and personal stories that we plan to include in policy making and represent in our equity analysis. We need to process the data and share it with King County staff. We plan to complete that in the first few months of 2023.*

Interest in community collecting data from community voices. (1/20/2023)

"Perhaps in section on AMI's, it would be helpful to show actual household incomes or type of jobs so it's more relatable to lay readers even though this is policy document" (Equity Analysis Response)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Outreach about affordable housing by/for the people who benefit. (1/20/2023)



**Data
Collection &
Community
Engagement**

"The term "healthy" in second bullet needs to be defined or explained. First I think just introducing the concept and impacts of lack of accounting for equity or lack of it is a breakthrough and the first step to restructure how Comp Plans will be updated iteratively over time. A robust and resourced community engagement plan ahead of future updates is essential. The current process is rushed at best but understandable given fixed timeline. But this cannot continue into future updates without tokenizing the process. Kudos to the staff and Workgroup members for making things work with the cards we've all been dealt." (2/17/2023)

"Don't let the majority be the thing in trend analysis- also important to discuss multiple themes. Prioritize UKC comments- the pop the policies will affect" (3/3/2023)

Real engagement is in person- feeling heard, especially if community is speaking languages other than English (3/3/2023)

Displacement and housing struggles prevent people from engagement, especially folks who have previously been discriminated against. Displacement means is hard to find where people are (now) w/o community knowledge- hard to engage people who we can't find (3/3/2023)

"The diversity of KC is glaring in this section. It is critical that adequate resources be apportioned to any planning and implementation efforts for community engagement and co-design and creation processes and not be in the marketing and outreach budgets by default." (Equity Analysis Response)

"Hope the GMPC is equitably represented." (Equity Analysis Response)

"Good to identify GMPC in point 2. Need to get upstream as much as possible." (Equity Analysis Response)

"Yes, we need community participation in subarea planning, and we need to resource their participation so they can authentically engage with impacted communities." (Equity Analysis Response)

"Equitable development and growth always come with unintended consequences. There is the need to resource those most impacted to be at the table early and often." (Equity Analysis Response)