

City of Bremerton Downtown Regional Center Market Study

May 1, 2024

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Prepared by:



Prepared for:



BREMERTON
WASHINGTON



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This market study was undertaken with two key aims. The first is to reassess the consistency of Bremerton’s designated Downtown Regional Center (DRC) with new Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) regional centers’ planning requirements. The second is to develop recommendations for new and / or updated policies to address any areas of possible inconsistency with PSRC guidance, for incorporation via Bremerton’s currently underway Comprehensive Plan update in advance of the 2025 regional centers monitoring period.

To accomplish these tasks, CAI, in collaboration with the City of Bremerton, the Port of Bremerton, and other partners, first assessed the planning and policy context for the DRC. Next, consistency with the latest guidance and re-designation criteria was assessed based on PSRC’s VISION Consistency Tool for Metropolitan Growth Center Plans checklist. In parallel, current market conditions of demographics, housing, downtown trends, and employment and economy, were analyzed in detail and outreach to understand additional local conditions was completed. The results of these analyses were used to evaluate PSRC’s re-designation criteria, by which the DRC will be assessed during the 2025 monitoring period. Finally, detailed recommendations were developed to address any areas of potential inconsistency and articulated as guidance for the ongoing Comprehensive Plan update.

The following key findings emerged from this work to inform the upcoming City of Bremerton Comprehensive Plan update:

- **Areas of non-compliance related to Vision 2050 can be addressed through the 2024 Periodic Update to the City of Bremerton’s Comprehensive Plan and related documents.** As a designated Metropolitan Growth Center by the Puget Sound Regional Council, the Downtown Regional Center must maintain planning, data, and strategies that meet PSRC’s Regional Centers Framework. The Framework was updated in 2018 and now includes strategies and priorities set forth in Vision 2050, the regional long-range growth strategy for the Puget Sound finalized in October 2020. PSRC-required planning for the DRC has not been updated since these reforms were implemented.
- In addition to new planning criteria related to Vision 2050, **other areas of non-compliance are the DRC’s planned growth and target densities.** Plans related to growth and density targets within DRC, or efforts to apply Growth Management Act-mandated county- and city-wide growth targets to the study area, need additional analysis and specificity in how the DRC will accommodate planned growth.
- The square footage of retail and office space in the DRC has remained relatively consistent since 2007. **Multi-family residential square**

footage in the DRC has increased quickly since 2015, more than doubling in square footage by 2023 to more than 500,000 square feet. Residential vacancy in the DRC remains high following the opening of two large multi-family properties in the area and remains at 28.5% vacancy.

- **There are 6,139 residents and 16,683 jobs in the DRC, a combined total of 22,822 activity units.** Based on the acreage of the DRC (592), the DRC has an activity unit density of 38.6 units per acre. This activity unit density complies with the PSRC Regional Centers Framework’s requirements of a minimum of 30 activity units per acre in Metropolitan Growth Centers.
- **Approximately one-fifth (21%) of downtown is zoned Residential and nearly one-half (42%) of downtown is zoned Mixed Use.** This mix of residential and commercial activities complies with the PSRC Regional Centers Framework’s requirements on Center land use mix.
- **The DRC, including the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, is forecasted to reach approximately 26,376 jobs and 15,416 residents by 2050.** This forecast uses projection data from the PSRC, and it estimates that the most dramatic population increase will occur within the shipyard area, while the largest employment increase will occur in the non-shipyard portion of the DRC.

Recommendations to align Bremerton’s future planning efforts regarding the DRC with regional direction from the PSRC and KRCC are summarized below. In some cases, recommendations for compliance have been satisfied within this document. These are as follows:

- The DRC Market Study re-assesses size of DRC in the Activity Units Density section and determines that the size meets requirements.
- The DRC Market Study re-assesses the Activity Unit Density of DRC in the Activity Units Density section and determines that the density meets minimum requirements.
- The DRC Market Study identifies a lack of growth targets outlined for the DRC. It further analyzes the projected Employment and Population growth for the DRC and determines that growth projections and targets does not meet requirements. A methodology to complete the Growth Targets Table from the PSRC's Regional Framework is developed and proposed for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan update.
- An addition to the Comprehensive Plan update is in progress to ensure the availability of public services, including k-12 education, to meet the needs to businesses and residents.
- The DRC Market Study conducts an analysis of existing transit and transit plans and determine future plans are in compliance. Additional strategies for more near-term compliance are proposed for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan update.

Other recommendations for compliance propose implementation in the City's 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update, in other planning documents such as the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), or in future planning documents impacting the DRC. Such recommendations are as follows:

- An expanded partners list, including tribes, ports, military installations, special purpose districts, and adjacent jurisdictions, is developed and documentation strategy proposed for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan update.
- Strategies to prioritize services and access for historically underserved communities, including people of color, and people with low incomes, is proposed for inclusion in Comprehensive plan update.
- Additional outreach in the EIS may be needed to explore equitable park and open space access in the DRC.
- Additional outreach may be needed in the EIS to address environmental impacts for vulnerable populations in the DRC.
- Existing electric transportation infrastructure and plans to expand it in the County are explored. Opportunities to build upon these are proposed for inclusion to the Comprehensive Plan update.
- Role of the DRC in Vision 2050 sample statement developed for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan update.
- Additional analysis in the City's EIS may be necessary to determine access to opportunity for historically underserved communities in the DRC. Findings and strategies surrounding this topic are proposed for inclusion in Comprehensive Plan update.
- Methodology to complete the Growth Targets Table from the PSRC's Regional Framework developed and proposed for inclusion in Comp Plan update.
- Engagement on residential displacement risk proposed to inform potential anti-displacement strategies in the Comprehensive Plan update.
- Analysis and engagement-identified economic development tools and additional industry and job retention strategies are proposed for inclusion in Comprehensive Plan update.
- Commercial anti-displacement tools and strategies are suggested for consideration in the Comprehensive Plan.
- Developed workforce development and training strategies to supplement SAP via Comprehensive Plan update.
- Recommend regularly updating planning documents to reflect updated data.

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INTRODUCTION

Background and Purpose

The City of Bremerton is preparing for its 2024 Periodic Update to its Comprehensive Plan by conducting a market study of the Downtown Regional Center. The Comprehensive Plan is the centerpiece of local planning efforts and communicates the goals and policies that will guide the day-to-day decisions of elected officials and local government staff. The Downtown Regional Center is designated as a Metropolitan Growth Center by the Puget Sound Regional Council. This Market Study will assess current conditions and engage with stakeholders in the downtown area and business community in order to inform recommendations to keep future growth in the Downtown Regional Center in alignment with the Kitsap Regional Coordinating Council and PSRC's Vision 2050. These recommendations will be implemented through the 2024 Periodic Update to the Comprehensive Plan.

Methods

Policy and Regulatory Review

This section summarizes the existing planning documents and regulatory schema to which the Downtown Regional Center must comply. The sources of each document are noted where applicable.

Regional Centers Framework Compliance

This section relies on the PSRC's Regional Centers Framework for a checklist of compliance requirements for Metropolitan Growth Centers, such as the Downtown Regional Center. The assessment of the DRC's compliance with PSRC guidance relies on strategies and data provided through the Bremerton Downtown Subarea Plan (2007), Bremerton Regional Center Profile (published by PSRC in 2013), the Bremerton Municipal Code, Bremerton's Comprehensive plan and Technical Appendices, reporting from Naval Base Kitsap, and the Bremerton Eastside Employment Center Economic and Market Analysis Report (2019).

PSRC also provides a redesignation criteria checklist for Regional Centers. Compliance of these criteria rely on the Downtown SAP, zoning data sourced from Kitsap County, population and employment data from ESRI Business Analyst, the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, and the Bremerton Ferry Terminal.

Market Trends and Socioeconomic Assessment

This section relies on the following data sources:

- CoStar
- Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and HUD Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS)
- Department of Labor and Industries (DLI)
- ESRI
- Kitsap County
- Kitsap County Health
- Office of Financial Management (OFM)
- Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)
- Social Security Administration
- U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) and Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD)

Data methodologies and assumptions are noted where applicable.

Organization of This Report

The remainder of this report will be organized as follows:

- **Policy and Regulatory Review** summarizes the state, regional, and local policies and plans that will guide the analysis of this report and 2024 Periodic Update to the Comprehensive Plan.
- **Regional Centers Framework Compliance** includes a matrix of the Downtown Regional Center's compliance with the Puget Sound Regional Council's Centers Framework requirements. It also summarizes the DRC's compliance with the redesignation requirements.
- **Market Trends and Socioeconomic Assessment** assesses the demographic, economic, housing, and other market conditions of the region, city, and downtown.
- **Recommendations** summarizes new analyses assessing redesignation criteria and presents recommendations for new and updated policies to fulfill current center requirements per Vision 2050 and the Regional Centers Framework update.
- **Appendix I**, attached, includes the DRC's compliance with urban centers checklist, redesignation criteria, and recommendations cross-referenced with analysis and recommendations in the Market Study report.

POLICY AND REGULATORY REVIEW

Growth Management Act and Comprehensive Plan Update

The Growth Management Act (GMA) is a series of State of Washington statutes that require the fastest-growing cities and counties to undertake comprehensive planning to manage their population growth. Kitsap County, as well as the cities and towns within it, is required to plan under GMA and create and regularly update a Comprehensive Plan. All jurisdictions within Kitsap County are required to complete a Periodic Update to their Comprehensive Plans by December 31, 2024.

The comprehensive plan is the centerpiece of local planning and articulates a series of goals, objectives, policies, actions, and standards that are intended to guide day-to-day decisions by elected officials and local government staff. The required Economic Development element establishes “local goals, policies, objectives, and provisions for economic growth and vitality and a high quality of life.”¹

Puget Sound Regional Council, Vision 2050 & Regional Centers Monitoring Report

The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) is the inter-county regional transportation, growth management, and economic development planning entity for King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties. As a part of its long-term strategic planning framework, Vision 2050, PSRC designates a variety of central places with a mix of uses and activities connected by efficient transportation as Centers. These growth centers, by generating jobs and housing, are intended to accommodate population growth and act as a focal point for public investment. Under this framework, downtown Bremerton is designated as a Metropolitan City Regional Center. The PSRC released a Regional Centers framework update in 2018, and it has monitored designated regional centers periodically over time, releasing Regional Centers Monitoring Reports in 1997, 2002, and 2013.

Kitsap Regional Coordinating Council (KRCC)

The Kitsap Regional Coordinating Council (KRCC) serves as the council of local governments for Kitsap County. It plays a crucial role in coordinating transportation and land use decisions and aligning local planning efforts with regional visions and goals. In 2021, the KRCC recommended updates to

¹ Revised Code of Washington 36.70A.080.

the Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs), aligning them with the vision outlined in Vision 2050.

The Kitsap CPPs translate the aspirations of Vision 2050 into actionable policies that form the foundation for growth management in Kitsap County, serving as the policy framework for both the County's and the cities' Comprehensive Plans. These CPPs were adopted by Kitsap County, ratified by Bremerton, and now provide a policy framework for downtown Bremerton's comprehensive planning.

Kitsap Economic Development Alliance (KEDA)

The Kitsap Economic Development Alliance (KEDA) plays a crucial role in driving economic development in Kitsap County along with downtown Bremerton. Their mission is to facilitate healthy economic growth and investments that contribute to livable and resilient communities, fueled by innovation and the diverse people and businesses of Kitsap. Through a collaborative partnership between businesses and government, the KEDA offers free customized services in a confidential manner to business clients, addressing challenges related to market research and analysis, site selection, government bidding and contracting, exporting, capital formation, workforce hiring and training, taxes, regulations and permitting, advanced manufacturing and industry certifications, as well as referral networking.

The KEDA has formulated a comprehensive five-year strategic plan called ONEKitsap, which outlines key priorities for economic development in Kitsap County from 2023 to 2027. This plan captures the strategic, programmatic, and organizational direction provided by stakeholders and focuses on three main goals: ensuring intentional economic growth that preserves Kitsap's beauty and quality of life, promoting the county's self-determination, and countering intense competition for jobs, investment, companies, and talent in the region. It also has identified the top employers in Kitsap County for 2021, including Naval Base Kitsap, St. Michael Medical Center, Central Kitsap School District, and Kitsap County itself. These insights into the prominent employers in the area allow the KEDA to tailor their strategies and initiatives to further strengthen downtown Bremerton's economic landscape.

Downtown Business Association

The Downtown Bremerton Association (DBA) is a collective of downtown Bremerton's property owners, residents, and business owners who actively contribute to the development of downtown Bremerton. The DBA aims to foster a prosperous downtown through strategies such as enhancing the area's appeal, attracting visitors, fostering economic growth, and ensuring inclusivity and representation in the development process. Some of their work involves improving pedestrian and business friendliness, organizing

year-round events that attract people to downtown, collaborating with key stakeholders such as the Greater Bremerton Chamber of Commerce, business and community leaders, and the City of Bremerton, and serving as a voice for individuals with a stake in downtown Bremerton.

Through their four committees, Organization, Promotions, Design, and Economic Vitality, and DBA fundraises, markets and promotes downtown and its businesses through events, beautifies downtown through signage, historic preservation, and pedestrian amenities, and engages in business recruitment, retention, and entrepreneur development in downtown Bremerton.

Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program (SIOP)

Established in May 2018, the Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program (SIOP) is the executive leader for the Navy's initiative to revitalize, modernize, and optimize four aging Naval Shipyards, including the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, the largest Naval shore facility in the Pacific Northwest and a significant Washington state industrial installation.

Due to their age, shipyard deficiencies and outmoded structures have led to increased maintenance expenses, schedule uncertainties, and operational reliability challenges. Recognizing these issues, substantial investments are being channeled into projects such as modernizing dry docks, streamlining industrial procedures, and updating standard equipment, aiming to bring these industrial sites up to modern standards. The Navy is dedicated to integrating environmental considerations such as natural and cultural resources, water and air quality, and more into the optimization process.

The Navy completed SIOP-planned dry dock maintenance in early 2023,² as well as began contracting and work to build an additional dry dock at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard. Construction has not yet begun, but is estimated to take as long as eight to ten years to complete. The dry dock expansion is estimated to impact employment capacity within the Shipyard, with similar projects (such as the dry dock expansion at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard in Hawaii) adding an estimated 2,500 jobs. This project, along with other capital improvement, is expected to have similar if not larger local impacts on job creation and capacity within the Shipyard during and after construction. It also is expected to impact housing demand in the DRC and region and demand for goods and services in the DRC during and after construction..

² Proposed Action, Bremerton Waterfront Improvement EIS (2023), Naval Base Kitsap, United States Department of the Navy, available online at: <https://bremertonwaterfrontimprovementseis.com/proposed-action/>

Downtown Subarea Plan

Bremerton's Downtown Subarea Plan was adopted in 2007 and minor amendments were made in 2016 and 2018. It builds upon policies and goals set forth by the 2004 Bremerton Comprehensive Plan to direct revitalization and regeneration efforts of the downtown area. It sets out design standards, street and transportation standards, and development standards for the downtown area that are supplemental to the Bremerton Municipal Code (BMC) and supersede the BMC when they diverge. These standards include land use plans and districts as well as street typologies and parking plans, and they establish a design review board for oversight.

Goals of the subarea plan include intensifying residential area capacity to accommodate increasing downtown population, fostering an active street life through promoting pedestrian-oriented development, and linking neighborhoods through a functional and accessible downtown. With a heavy focus on designing the built environment, 10 urban design strategies are employed, including sustainable design, sensitive infill, design review, building on existing character, and strategic parking management.

The plan addresses a significant portion of the of the existing expectations in the Regional Growth Center Plan checklist. However, there are aspects that could be updated or strengthened in future updates, such as directly addressing air quality and greenhouse gas emissions; further addressing housing topics on the checklist; providing county or region-wide context for the center; and including residential and employment targets or mode split goals.

REGIONAL CENTERS FRAMEWORK COMPLIANCE

Summary of Consistency

The Puget Sound Regional Council’s Regional Centers Framework checklist includes seven areas of planning that each Regional Center must meet. This section outlines the areas of non-compliance for criteria in each of these seven areas. The full checklist is available in **Appendix I**. Non-compliance due to newly instituted Vision 2050 criteria for Regional Centers is also noted.

The sources of documentation for checklist compliance include the Bremerton Downtown Subarea Plan (2007), Bremerton Regional Center Profile (published by PSRC in 2013), the Bremerton Municipal Code, the Bremerton Eastside Employment Center Economic and Market Analysis Report (2019), reporting from Naval Base Kitsap, and the Bremerton Comprehensive Plan and Technical Appendices (2016).

Center Plan Concept (Vision) / Regional Collaboration

The checklist criteria in this section need to be updated to meet compliance for three new criteria set forth by Vision 2050. The Vision 2050 criteria include a focus on collaboration with additional organizations and local governments and an emphasis on equitable outreach and access to the planning process for historically marginalized communities.

Environment and Climate Change

The DRC is not in compliance with three criteria set forth by Vision 2050. They include:

- Identify and minimize gaps in equitable access to parks and open spaces.
- Avoid or mitigate environmental impacts for vulnerable populations.
- Expand electric transportation infrastructure.

While the first two items will be addressed in the City’s Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which will inform the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update, the last should be taken into account in future DRC planning documents.

Land Use / Development Patterns

DRC planning documents will need to address Vision 2050 growth goals, including the goal of attracting 65% of regional population growth and 75% of employment growth to centers and high-capacity transit station areas.

There are three additional areas of non-compliance in this section. The first is addressed through the Activity Units and Density section of this report

and shows that the DRC exceeds the minimum requirement of 30 activity units per acre (the center is at 67.4).

Secondly, the PSRC Plan Review Manual directs centers to demonstrate how they plan to meet 2050 employment, population, and housing targets (including an activity unit density minimum of 85) and to identify the zoned development capacity to meet that target. Bremerton has not yet adopted growth targets or shown zoned development capacity to meet them. However the Activity Units and Density section of this report shows that the DRC is forecasted to meet the minimum requirement of 85 activity units per acre by 2050. Forecasts show the DRC with an activity unit density of 85.1 in 2050 following PSRC projections and holding employment and population estimates from Naval Base Kitsap-Bremerton constant over the forecast period. See the table listed in Recommendation “Establish Growth Targets (Reference #20)”. The Activity Units and Density section of this paper also provides content for the Existing (baseline) conditions column of this table. As the City adopts growth targets, through the comprehensive planning process in the 2024 update, it should aim to meet or exceed the PSRC projections for the DRC further determine update its zoned development capacity in order to complete the table.

The final area of non-compliance in this section refers to a lack of discussion on improving access to equitable employment and education opportunities. The upcoming EIS, which will support the Comprehensive Plan update, may address this.

Housing

DRC planning documents recognize growth targets outlined in the Comprehensive Plan’s 2016 technical appendices and mention an analysis that was completed addressing them. However, this analysis model is not provided and cannot be verified. In addition, Vision 2050 now requires anti-displacement strategies which should be taken into account in future planning efforts.

Economy

DRC planning documents do not include economic development strategies or tools to promote retention, expansion, and growth of employment opportunities within the DRC. In addition, Vision 2050 has set forth requirements to address commercial anti-displacement and access to economic opportunity.

Public Services

Bremerton’s Comprehensive Plan describes investment in infrastructure and public works while referencing growth targets. However, the DRC does not

seek to ensure availability of public services, including K-12 education, for businesses and residents. Public service and education availability should be included in addition to an update of infrastructure and public works investment plans for the in-progress 2024 update to the City's Comprehensive Plan.

DRC Alignment Matrix

The PSRC's Regional Centers Framework includes redesignation criteria. **Exhibit 1** outlines the Bremerton Downtown Regional Center's compliance with each of the seven redesignation criteria applicable to Metro Growth Centers. The DRC is in compliance with five of the seven criteria; two of these compliance areas will likely be updated in the course of the 2024 update to the Comprehensive Plan.

The DRC is in partial compliance with one criterion around defining the Center's role within the region. The DRC Subarea Plan and PSRC's Monitoring Report of the DRC were completed prior to Vision 2050's requirements for regional centers. There are several areas identified in the checklist (**Appendix I**) that should be updated to reflect the goals, strategies, and planning priorities set forth in Vision 2050.

The major area of misalignment is in planned target density. Planning and growth targets adopted for the Bremerton Urban Growth Area (UGA) should meet or exceed the minimum density of 85 activity units per acre by 2050 in order to meet the PSRC's redesignation criteria. While Bremerton and the Bremerton UGA was assigned population and employment growth targets by Kitsap County, which were updated to reflect Vision 2050 and approved by the KRCC in 2022, these updated targets, when converted into activity units, do not meet the 85 activity units per acre minimum. In addition, while the existing Bremerton Comprehensive Plan Technical Appendix (2016) outlines employment and job goals for the DRC, these targets are not analyzed by activity unit and neither does the Downtown Subarea Plan analyze activity units for future planning of the DRC.

Finally, the redesignation criterion for high-capacity transit is in compliance due to planned transit improvements outlined in Kitsap County's Long-Range Transit Plan for 2022-2042, as well as current fast ferry and drive-on ferry services. Plans to develop a new and larger Bremerton bus capacity with the addition of a Bremerton-Tacoma Express Route and the proposed addition of high-capacity transit (in the form of BRT) bring the DRC into compliance. The plan also recognizes public support for increased ferry frequency and capacity and sets out plans for increasing Bremerton's docking capacity.

Regarding existing service, transit options in downtown Bremerton variably do not meet the criteria for service quality in frequency and operation time on weekdays, nor does it meet requirements for high capacity. The Washington State Bremerton Ferry runs every 2-3 hours, covering a time span of roughly 17 hours on weekdays. The Kitsap County Fast Ferry runs anywhere between 40 minutes to 1 hour and 10 minutes apart, depending on destination, over a span of 17 hours on weekdays and Saturdays. Kitsap County's Foot Ferries to Port Orchard depart every 40 minutes on weekdays, covering about 16 hours on weekdays, while foot ferries to Annapolis depart every 15 minutes, but only run for 12 hours on weekdays. Kitsap Transit Bus service through Bremerton runs anywhere from every 30 minutes to an hour on weekdays, depending on the route, and all routes run for less than 18 hours on weekdays. Transit to and through Bremerton continues to grow, with some transit providers having recently expanded their weekend service, such as Kitsap Transit's fast ferry service on Saturdays and the return of Kitsap Transit's cross-county Sunday route.

Exhibit 1. Summary of Redesignation Criteria, Downtown Regional Center, 2024

Metro Growth Center Redesignation Criteria		
Criteria	Downtown Regional Center Context and Planning	In Compliance
Existing density. 30 activity units per acre minimum.	The DRC has 67.4 activity units per acre.	Yes
Planned target density. 85 activity units per acre minimum.	The Downtown SAP does not include planned target densities or growth targets. Forecasts for the DRC's activity unit density by 2050, using PSRC projections, meets this minimum (showing 85.1 activity units per acre). As the city adopts growth targets in the 2024 Update to the Comprehensive Plan, it should aim to meet or exceed these projections outlined by the PSRC.	No
Mix of uses. Regional growth centers should have a goal for a minimum mix of at least 15% planned residential and employment activity in the center.	42% of the DRC (excluding Naval Base Kitsap) is zoned for residential and employment activity.	Yes
Size. 320 acres minimum - 640 acres maximum (may be larger if served by an internal, high capacity transit system).	The DRC is approximately 592 acres.	Yes
Transit. Existing or planned light rail, commuter rail, ferry, or other high capacity transit with similar service quality as light rail. Service quality is defined as either frequent (< 15-minute headways) and all-day (operates at least 18 hours per day on weekdays) –or- high capacity (e.g., ferry, commuter rail, regional bus, Bus Rapid Transit). Evidence the area serves as major transit hub and has high quality/high capacity existing or planned service.	Bremerton is currently served by two ferries offering a fast ferry option as well as a drive-on option. These ferries meet high-capacity requirements, but do not meet frequency requirements. Long-range transit improvements planned by Kitsap Transit include planned BRT route SR 303 between Silverdale and Bremerton, the proposed Bremerton-Tacoma Express route, and the new Bremerton base. Kitsap Transit also resumed its Sunday Bremerton-Silverdale route, reinstating countywide service for the first time in more than a decade.	Yes, a Combination of In Service and Planned but Not in Operation
Market potential. Evidence of future market potential to support planning target.	The 2016 Comprehensive Plan includes strategies to accommodate the planned employment and population growth assigned through the Growth Management Act and included in PSRC's Regional Growth Strategy. This has not been updated since the completion of the Vision 2050 growth targets. The City is currently undertaking its 2024 Update to the Comprehensive Plan.	Yes, Update Ongoing
Role. Evidence of regional role: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear regional role for center (for example, city center of metropolitan cities, other large and fast-growing centers; important regional destination). • Jurisdiction is planning to accommodate significant residential and employment growth under Regional Growth Strategy. 	The DRC SAP outlines Bremerton and the DRC's roles within the region. The City has not gone through a redesignation process since the addition of new requirements in alignment with Vision 2050. The SAP does not currently address those newly added checklist elements.	Partially

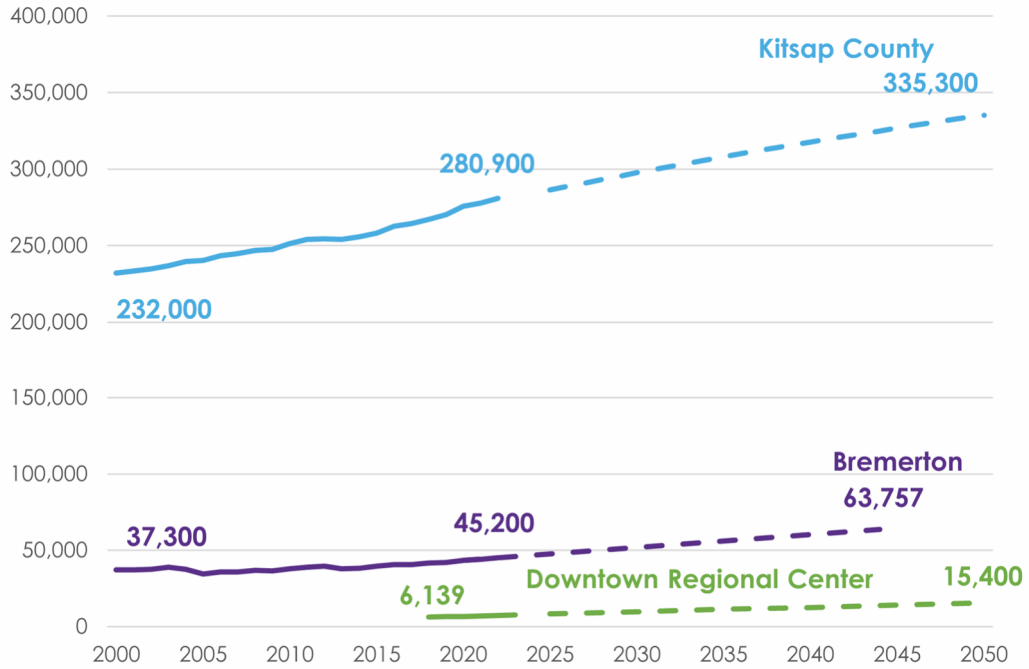
SOURCE: DOWNTOWN SUBAREA PLAN, 2007; VISION 2050, 2020; CITY OF BREMERTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, 2016; KITSAP COUNTY, 2023; WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, 2023; CAI, 2023. MARKET TRENDS AND SOCIOECONOMIC ASSESSMENT

Market Conditions Assessment

Demographic Data

Population growth is a key indicator of economic vitality and can influence factors such as labor supply, market competitiveness, and investment potential. Analyzing Bremerton's population growth helps identify how much growth Bremerton has been experiencing and how much growth is expected in the future, outlining future market opportunities or challenges, such as the need for infrastructure development, housing, or services to accommodate the population. Both Bremerton and Kitsap County have experienced steady population growth since 2000, with Kitsap County growing at a 0.87% annual growth rate and Bremerton at a similar 0.88%. Today, Bremerton continues to make up approximately 16% of Kitsap's greater population, reaching 45,200 residents in 2022 (**Exhibit 2**). Growth estimates from the PSRC for the DRC and adopted Kitsap Regional Coordinating Council growth targets for Bremerton show that the DRC is projected to make up a greater portion (22%) of Bremerton's population by 2044. Both Bremerton's and the DRC's populations are projected to grow steadily, reaching 63,757 individuals and 13,708 individuals respectively by 2044. The DRC is further projected to reach 15,400 individuals by 2050.

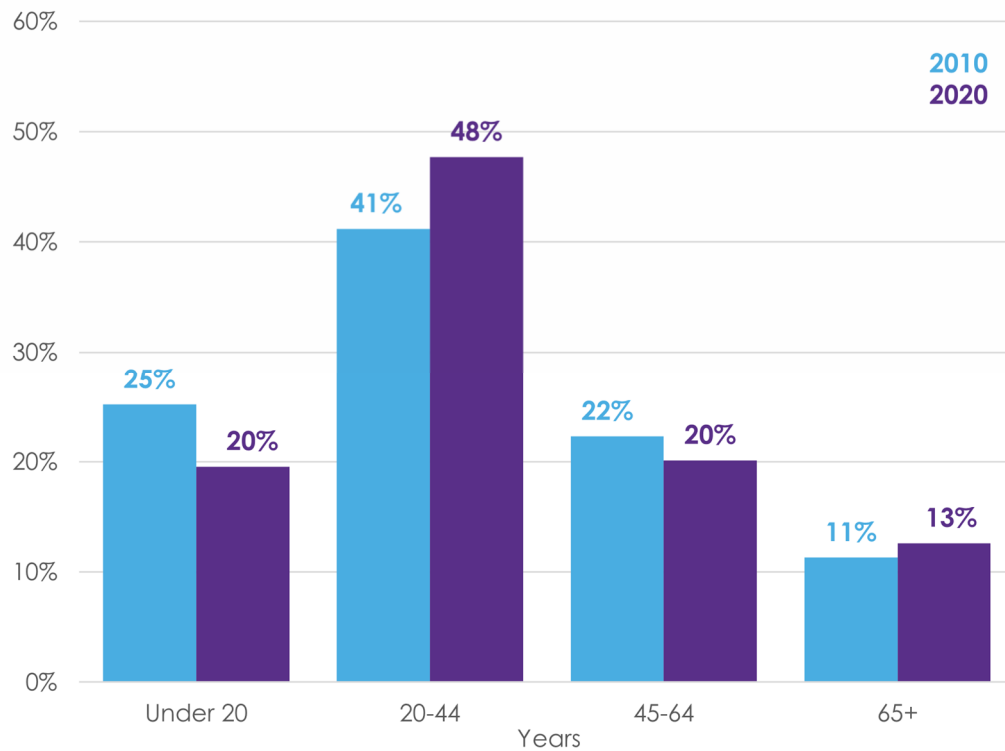
Exhibit 2. Historic and Projected Population, Bremerton, Kitsap County, 2000 - 2050



Source: PSRC, 2023; KRCC 2020; CAI, 2023.

Understanding the distribution of residents’ ages can shed light on consumer preferences, purchasing power, and potential demand for various goods and services as well as help predict future workforce dynamics. From 2010 to 2020, Bremerton’s residents have been aging, increasing the median age from 31.9 in 2010 to 32.4 in 2020. However, this is lower than Kitsap County’s median age of 39.2 in 2020. Compared to Kitsap County, Bremerton has a significantly higher share of working age residents (aged 20-44) and lower share of older residents (aged 65 and older). In 2010, working age residents were the most prevalent age group in Bremerton (**Exhibit 3**). From 2010 to 2020, the share of working aged residents rose by 7% while the share of residents aged under 20 dropped by 5%.

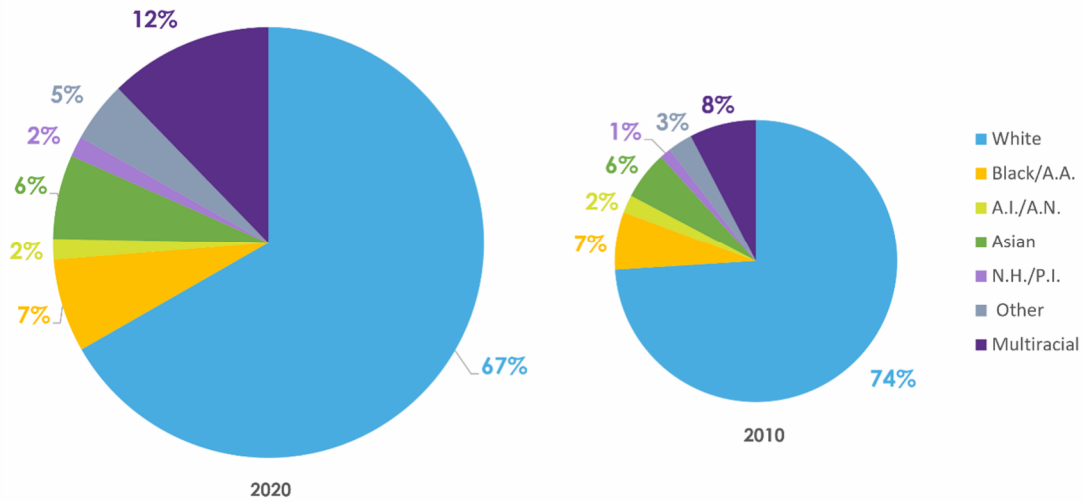
Exhibit 3. Age, Bremerton, 2010 and 2020



Source: ACS, 2010 and 2020; CAI, 2023.

Examining the racial and ethnic makeup of the community can reveal the diversity within a population along with its unique needs and preferences, highlighting the opportunities of an inclusive and representative market. **Exhibit 4** shows the racial and ethnic makeup of Bremerton’s residential population. Bremerton’s racial makeup has remained relatively consistent from 2010 to 2020, with a slight trend towards greater diversity. The White population has seen a slight decrease of -7%, and the Multiracial population has seen a 4% increase, while those who identify as Native American/ Pacific Islander or Other experienced smaller increases at 1% and 2% respectively.

Exhibit 4. Race, Bremerton, 2010 and 2020

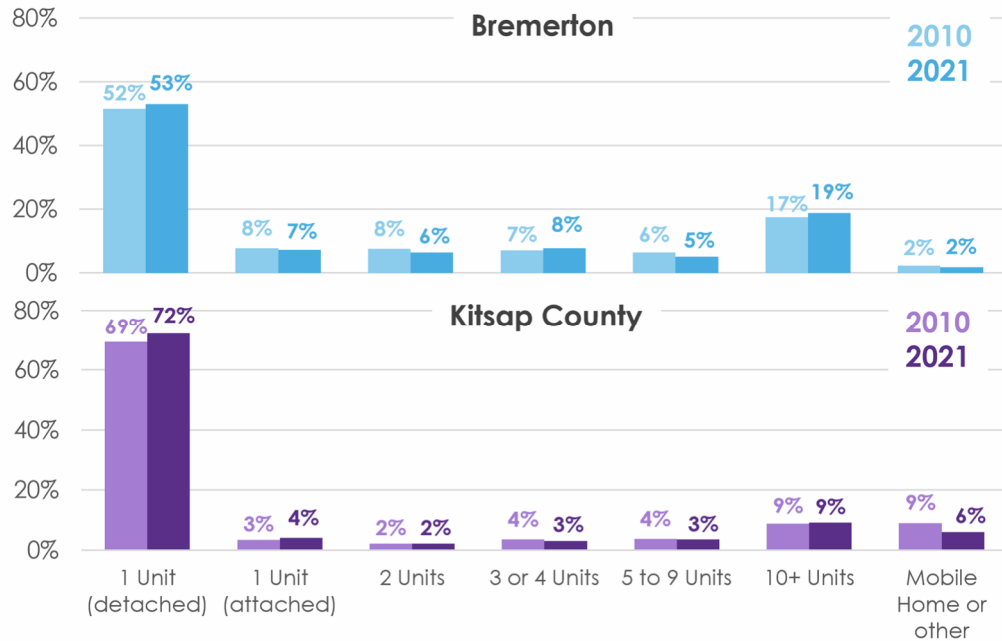


Source: ACS, 2010 and 2020; CAI, 2023.
 Abbreviations: A.A - African American, A.I./A.N. - American Indian/American Native, N.H./P.I. - Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

Housing Data

The type and size of housing units within a community are important factors impacting issues such as housing needs, housing affordability, housing consumption, and population density, among others. Both Kitsap County and Bremerton show little change in their housing stock from 2010 to 2021 (**Exhibit 5**). Kitsap County, relying heavily in 2010 on single family detached homes to make up 69% of its housing stock, saw a 3% drop in mobile homes accompanied by a 3% increase in single family detached homes in 2021. Bremerton saw even less change between 2010 and 2021, with a 2% increase in large-scale apartments (containing 10 units or more) being the most drastic variation. By 2021, Bremerton’s housing stock is also made up predominantly by single family homes (53%). However, Bremerton displays a higher diversity of housing unit type diversity than Kitsap County, with a total of 38% of its housing stock made up of 2 units or more in 2021, as compared to Kitsap County’s 18%. Several upcoming mixed-use developments in Bremerton prepare to add 290 more housing units downtown.

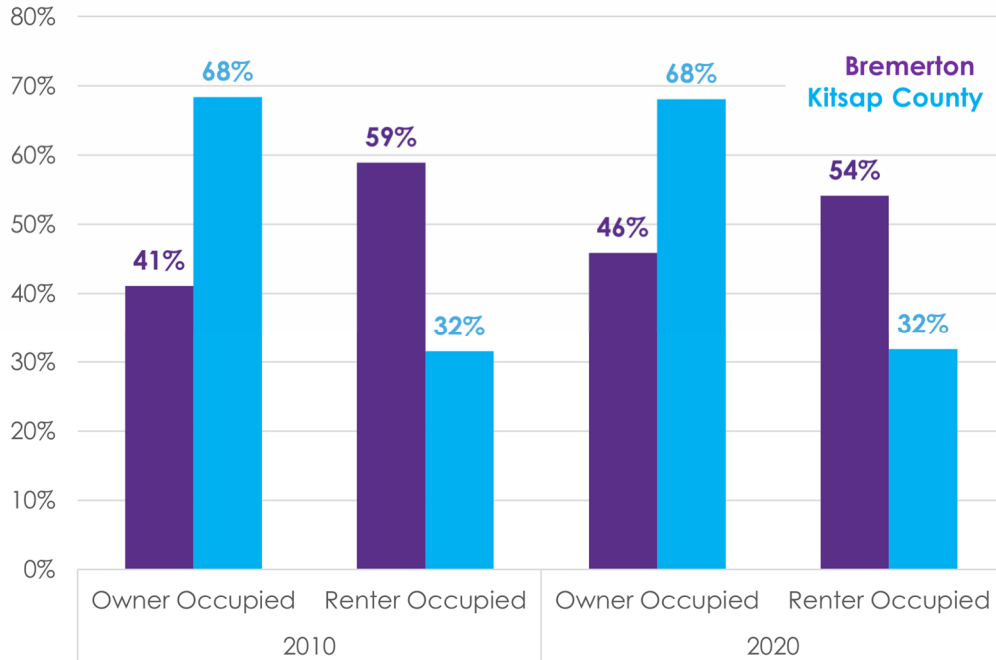
Exhibit 5. Type of Housing Unit, Bremerton, Kitsap County, 2010 and 2021



Source: ACS, 2023; CAI, 2023.

Examining housing tenure provides insights into the proportion of homeowners and renters within a population, which has implications for consumer behavior, housing affordability, and market dynamics. In Kitsap County, housing tenure has seen little change from 2010 to 2020, with 68% of households in 2020 retaining homeownership status and renters making up a lower presence of 32% (**Exhibit 6**). Conversely, renters have been dominant in Bremerton, making up a majority of households in 2010 (with 59%) and maintaining that majority in 2020 (with 54%). This shows that there has been a 5% increase in homeownership in Bremerton from 2010 to 2020.

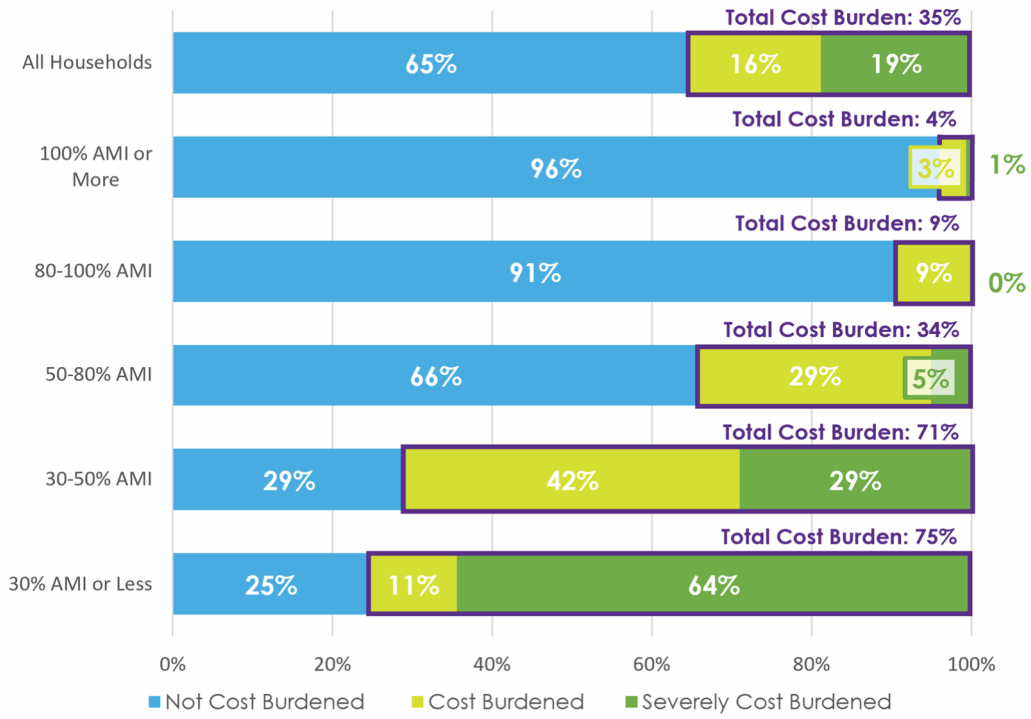
Exhibit 6. Housing Tenure, Bremerton, Kitsap County, 2010 and 2020



Source: ACS, 2010 and 2020; CAI, 2023.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development defines cost burden as those households spending between 30% and 50% of total income on housing. Severe cost burden is defined as households spending more than 50% of total income on housing. Overall, 65% of households in Bremerton are not cost burdened (**Exhibit 7**), while 16% are cost burdened and 19% are severely cost burdened. This is similar to the share of cost burden countywide where 67% of households are not cost burdened, 19% are cost burdened and 13% are severely cost burdened. The likelihood of being cost burdened increases in lower income groups. Roughly 96% of households in Bremerton earning above 100% of the area median income (AMI) are not cost burdened, compared to only 25% of households earning less than 30% AMI. The great majority of very low-income and extremely low-income households spend more than 30% of their income on housing.

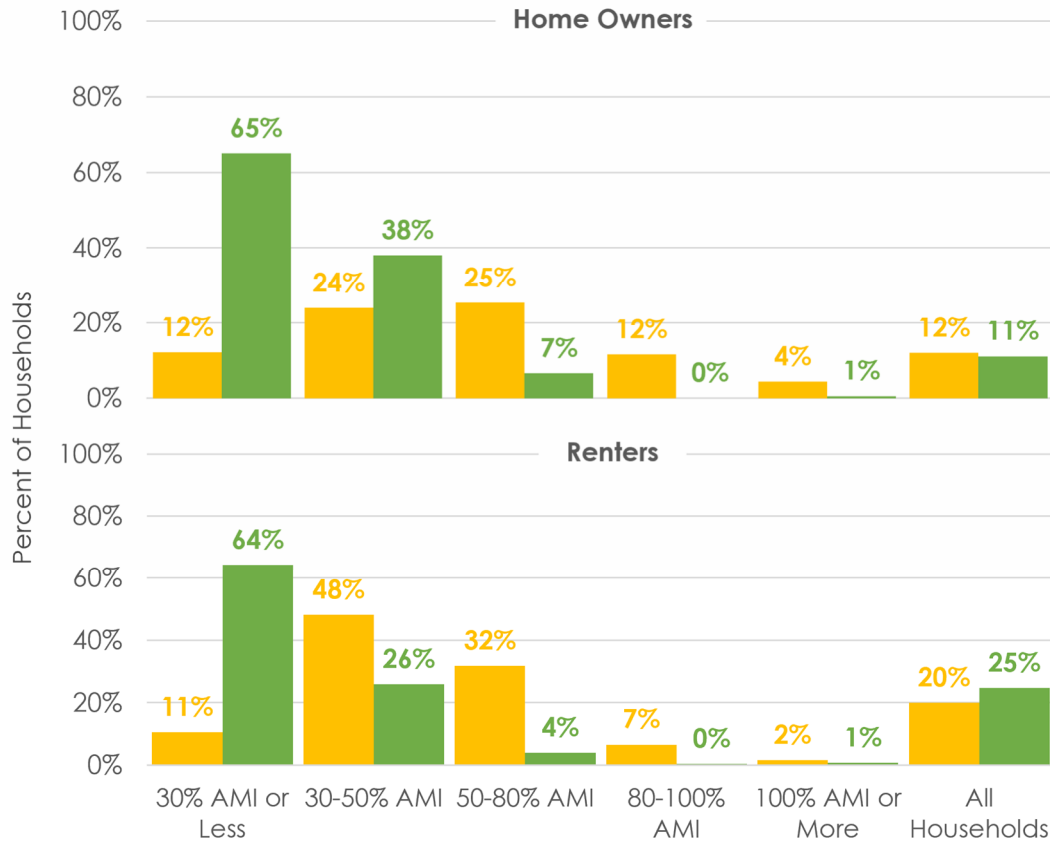
Exhibit 7. Cost Burden by Income Level (AMI), Bremerton, 2019



Source: CHAS 5-year estimates 2015-2019; CAI, 2023.

Exhibit 8 shows a further break down of cost burden by income level and housing tenure. Homeowners in general are less likely to be cost burdened than renters with 23% of homeowner households experiencing cost burden compared to 45% of renter households. Small shares of moderate- and high-income owner households are cost burdened, at 17% and 10% respectively. At the lowest income levels, both homeowners and renters in Bremerton experience the highest shares of cost burden in which 77% and 75% of households spend more than 30% of their income on housing.

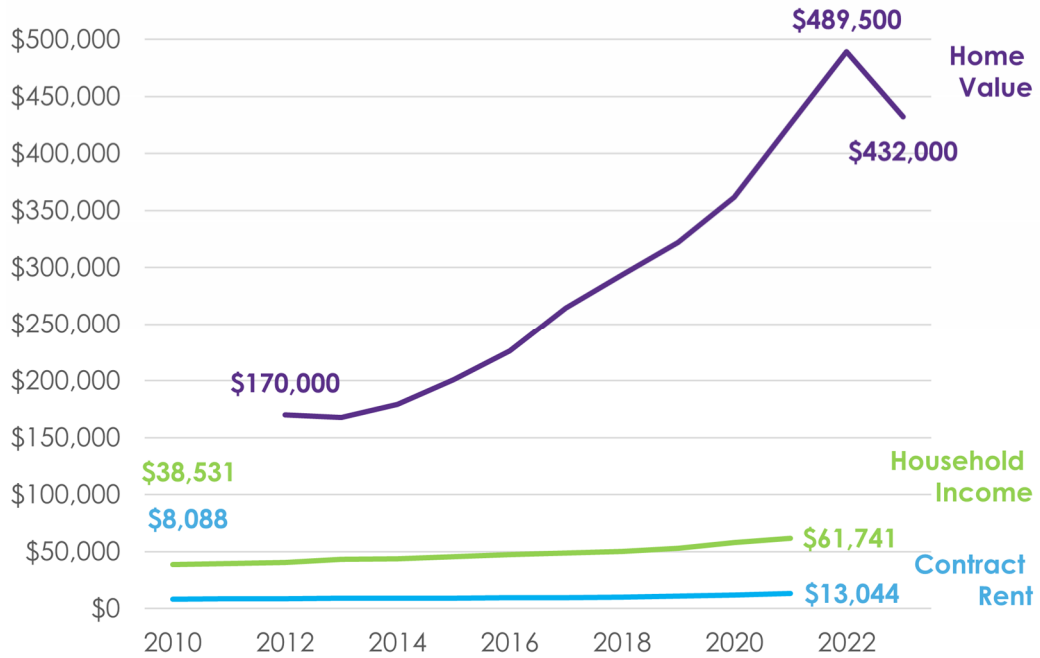
Exhibit 8. Distribution of Cost Burdened Status (Households) by AMI and Tenure, Bremerton, 2019



Source: CHAS 5-year estimates 2015-2019; CAI, 2023.

Median household income in Bremerton has increased from 2010 to 2020 by \$23,210, making a 60% increase (**Exhibit 9**). While rent prices have seen a similar increase (61%) during this same time frame, home values have skyrocketed. As of Q2 of 2023, the median home value in Bremerton was \$432,000. This represents an increase of more than 154% since 2012, although the most current home values are down from a peak of \$489,500 in 2022.

Exhibit 9. Change in Median Home Value, Rent, and Income, Bremerton, 2010 - 2020

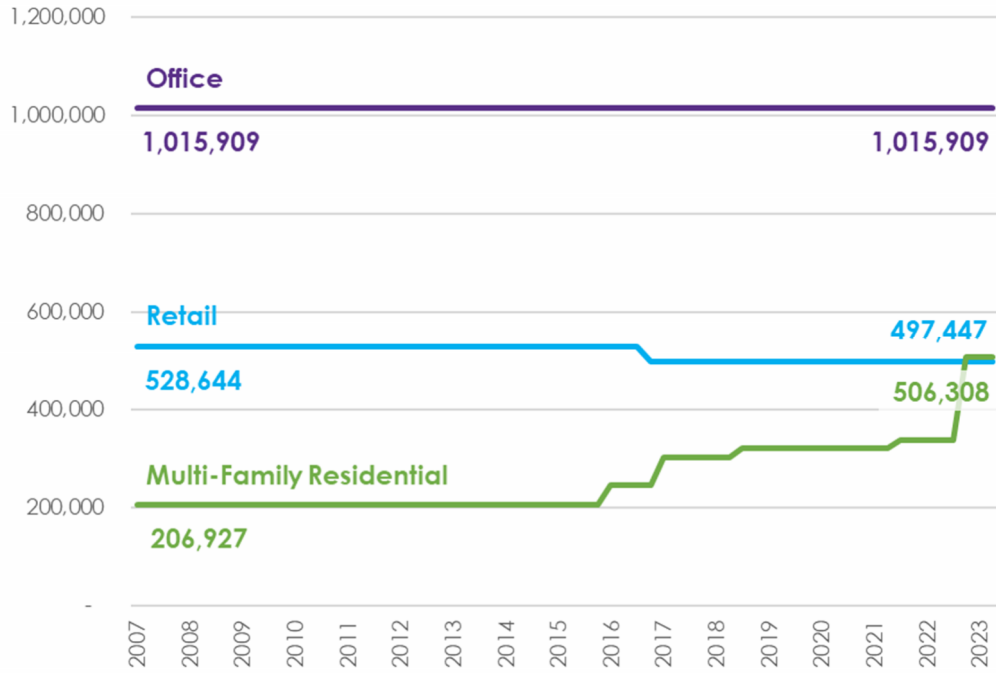


Source: ACS, 2010-2020; CAI, 2023.

Downtown Trends

Exhibit 10 displays changes in land use square footage in the DRC since 2007. Office space steadily maintains the highest square footage use in the DRC, unchanging between 2007 and 2023 at just over 1 million square feet. Retail square footage dropped by approximately 30,000 square feet in 2016. About 50,000 square feet of retail space in two buildings exists on Naval Base Kitsap; the remainder is in downtown Bremerton. Most dramatically, multi-family uses have seen an increase in square footage since 2015, jumping up from 207,000 square feet to 300,000 square feet in 2018 and increasing to slightly more than 500,000 square feet by 2023. Note that there are approximately 100 units of housing on Naval Base Kitsap for which the square footage is not available.

**Exhibit 10. Square Footage of Land Use Types,
Downtown Regional Center Excluding Naval Base Kitsap, 2007 - 2023**

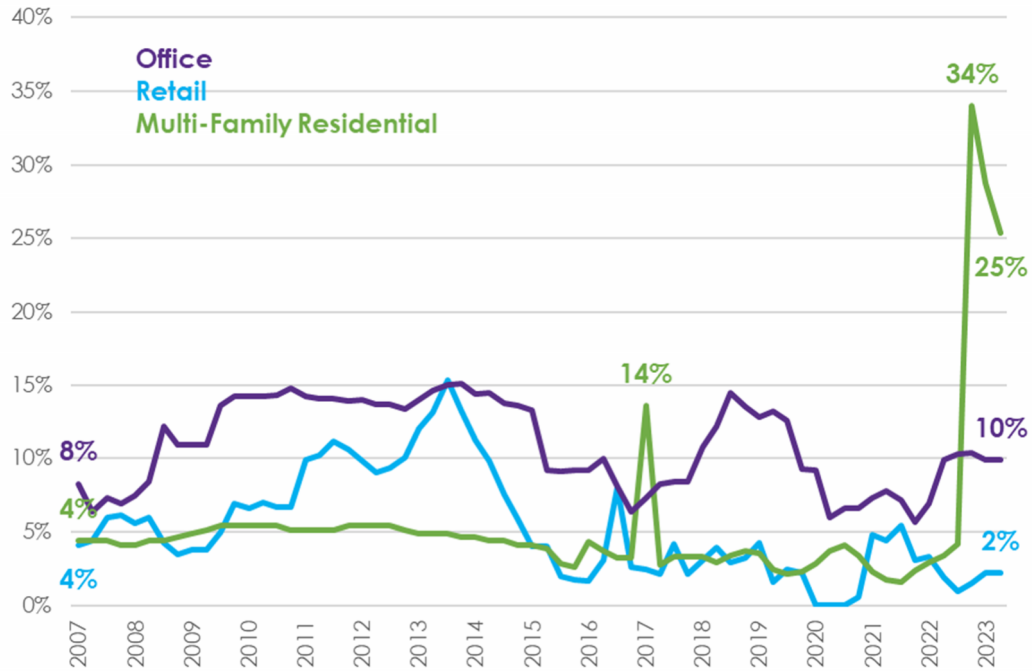


Source: CoStar, 2023; CAI, 2023.

Note: Data sources do not include the square footage of 100 residential units on Naval Base Kitsap. Those units are not featured in this data.

Exhibit 11 shows the change in vacancy rate by land use in the DRC from 2007 to 2023. There are two spikes in vacancy of multi-family residential units. The first occurs at the end of 2016, increasing to approximately 14% before returning to less than 5% in 2017. The second vacancy spike to 34% coincides with the development and opening of two new multi-family residential buildings offering 814 new units in the fourth quarter of 2022. The decline from late 2022 into 2023 from a 34% residential vacancy rate to 25% indicates units in those buildings are being leased. The delivery of these new units likely masks any vacancy trend associated with market factors and housing demand for multi-family residential land uses. Office vacancies have ranged between 5% and 15% since 2007. Following a recent low of vacancy between 2020 and 2022 (potentially reflecting pandemic-era rent or lease support), office vacancy has increased to approximately 10% in 2023. Retail has generally decreased to around 5% or less after a high of approximately 15% in 2013. In 2023, it is approximately 2%.

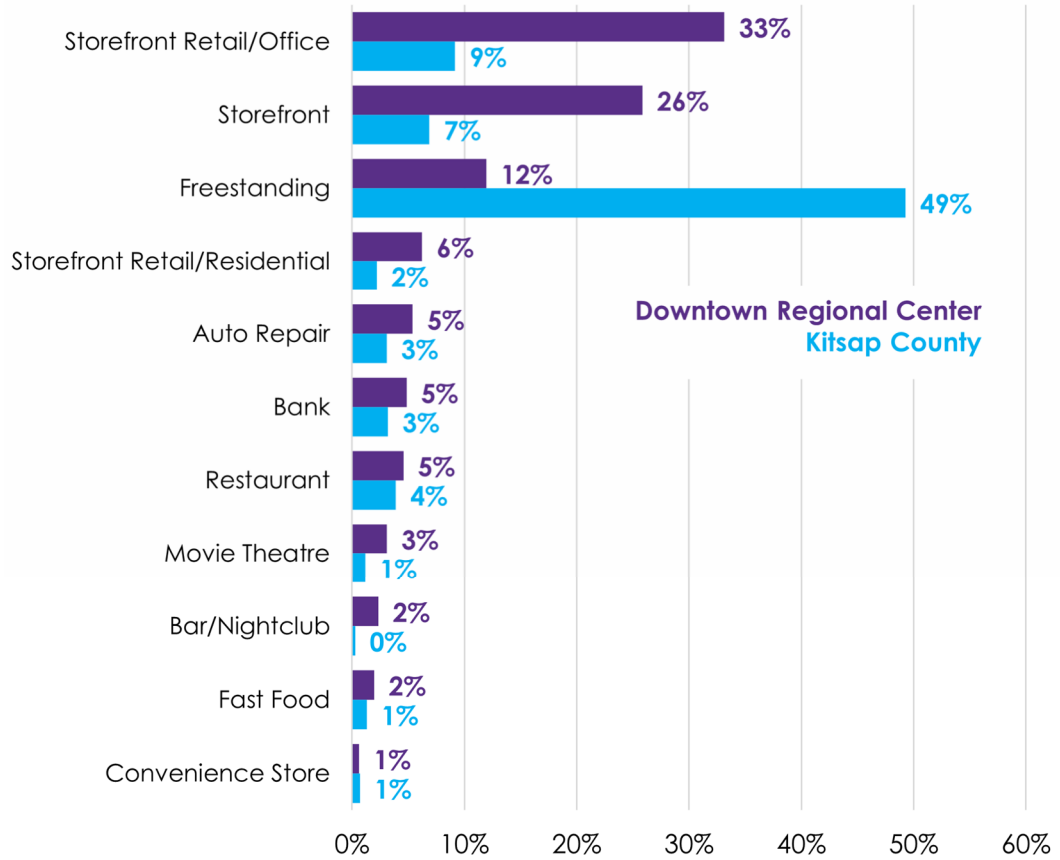
**Exhibit 11. Vacancy Rate by Land Use Type,
Downtown Regional Center Excluding Naval Base Kitsap, 2007 - 2023**



Source: CoStar, 2023; CAI, 2023.

As of 2023, there is approximately 450,000 square feet of retail space in the DRC. This represents 9% of all retail space in Kitsap County. In 2016, three retail buildings were torn down, reducing available retail space by approximately 30,000 square feet. The DRC’s retail inventory is mostly made up of storefront retail and/or office space (**Exhibit 12**). In contrast, Kitsap County’s largest category of retail is freestanding retail, accounting for almost 50% of Kitsap County’s inventory. Freestanding retail is not connected to surrounding structures, as in a commercial center. Freestanding retail often includes a drive through or independent parking.

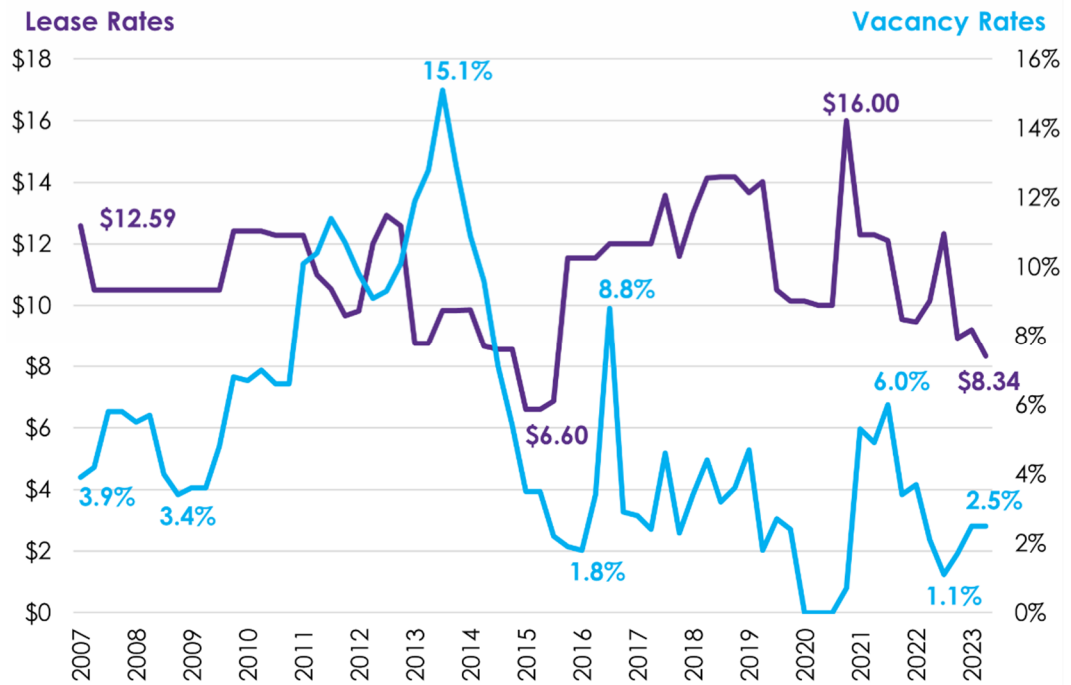
**Exhibit 12. Retail Inventory by Type,
Downtown Regional Center and Kitsap County, 2023**



Source: CoStar, 2023; CAI, 2023.

Exhibit 13 shows that retail lease rates have overall decreased by \$4.25 in the DRC from 2007 to 2023. The lowest retail lease rate in that time frame was \$6.60 in 2015 and the highest was \$16.00 in 2021. At the same time, retail vacancy rates have trended downwards, decreasing overall by 1.4% after several sharp declines in 2014 and 2020.

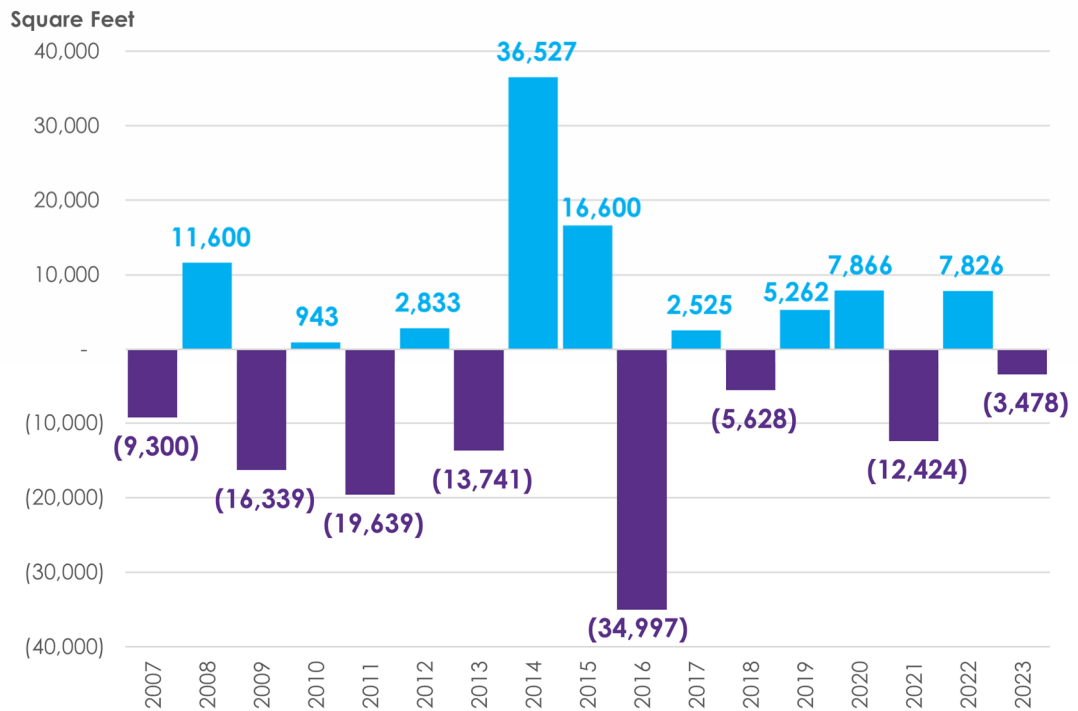
Exhibit 13. Retail Lease and Vacancy Rate, Downtown Regional Center, 2006 – 2023 YTD



Source: CoStar, 2023; CAI, 2023.

The DRC saw low annual retail net absorption before 2014 but has been overall trending upwards since 2017 (**Exhibit 14**). A spike of net absorption in 2014 was accompanied by a dramatic decline in 2016. While the DRC's net absorption has generally seen an increase since then, the first two quarters of 2023 have shown a drop of -3,478 square feet indicating the demand for retail real estate spaces in the DRC has declined slightly relative to the supply.

**Exhibit 14. Annual Retail Net Absorption,
Downtown Regional Center, 2007 – 2023**

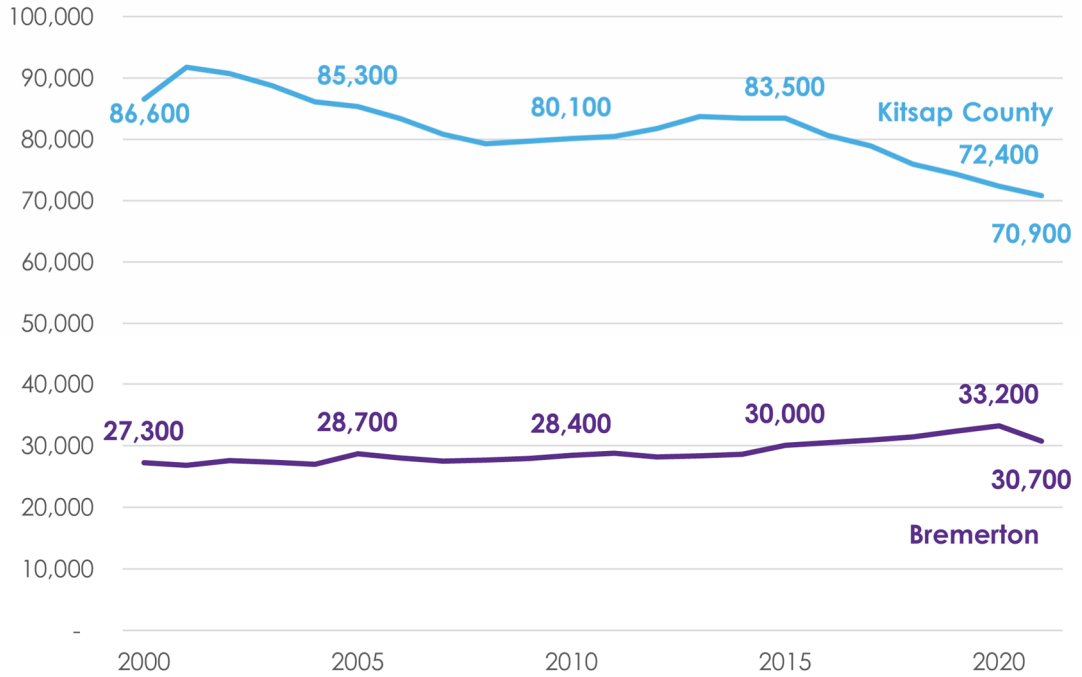


Source: CoStar, 2023; CAI, 2023.

Economic and Workforce Data

The DRC continues to make up a large portion of Kitsap County’s workforce, covering more than one third in 2021 (**Exhibit 15**). The workforce population in both downtown Bremerton and Kitsap County has increased steadily since 2000, peaking in 2019 and each showing a small decrease in employment population through 2020 and 2021.

**Exhibit 15. Historic Covered Employment,
Bremerton, Kitsap County, 2000 – 2021**



Source: PSRC, 2022; CAI, 2023.

While jobs and housing have both been increasing in Bremerton, housing units have not kept up with job growth, leaving a significant gap between new employment and new housing units. Bremerton has seen a net gain in jobs between 2000 and 2021, not only due to the annexation of the PSIC area. While manufacturing jobs increased by 904 jobs (a 520% increase), employment on the whole increased by 14%, resulting in over 3,800 new jobs in the city by 2021 (**Exhibit 16**). At the same time, housing in Bremerton has seen a 3% increase, reaching just over 3,000 new units in 2021. Therefore, the gap between new jobs and new housing units in Bremerton in 2021 develops, leaving 830 new jobs in Bremerton in 2021 for which there is no new housing.

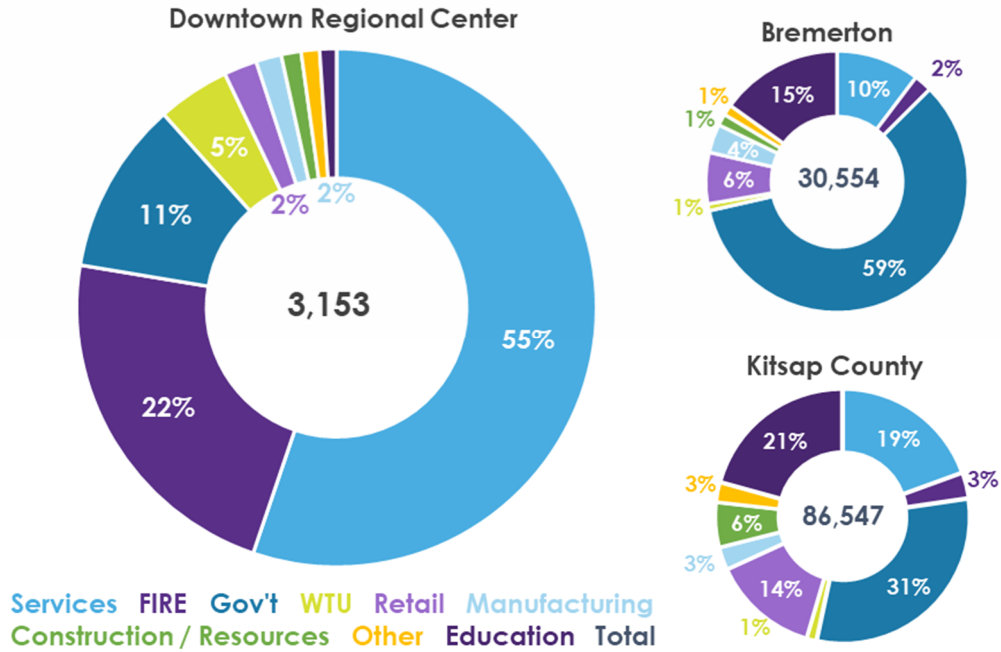
Exhibit 16. Net Gain and Loss of Jobs and Housing, Bremerton, 2000-2021

	2000	2021	Net Change	Percent Change	CAGR	
Employment	Government	13,702	18,009	4,307	31%	1.3%
	Health and Education	4,014	4,609	595	15%	0.7%
	Trade	2,282	1,941	(341)	-15%	-0.8%
	Food and Entertainment	1,661	1,546	(115)	-7%	-0.3%
	Professional Services	2,387	1,449	(938)	-39%	-2.3%
	Manufacturing	174	1,078	904	520%	9.1%
	FIRE	896	677	(219)	-24%	-1.3%
	Ag, Forestry, Mining, Construction	-	444	444	NA	NA
	Other	948	400	(548)	-58%	-4.0%
	WTU	236	256	20	8%	0.4%
	Information	397	145	(252)	-63%	-4.7%
	Total Employment	26,697	30,554	3,857	14%	0.6%
Housing	Single Family	69,616	79,898	10,282	15%	0.7%
	Multi Family	17,428	18,791	1,363	8%	0.4%
	Other	8,618	6,288	(2,330)	-27%	-1.5%
	Total Housing Units	95,662	98,689	3,027	3%	0.1%

Source: PSRC, 2022; OFM, 2022; CAI, 2023.

There are a total of 3,153 jobs in the DRC (**Exhibit 17**). The largest industry in the DRC are Services, which include professional services and food and entertainment services, with 55% of all jobs. This is a larger share of jobs than Bremerton (10%) and Kitsap County (19%). The next largest sector are finance, insurance, and real estate (FIRE) at 22% of all jobs, a much higher share than Bremerton and Kitsap County at 2% and 3%, respectively. Approximately 11% of jobs in the DRC are government jobs, a smaller share than city- and countywide.

**Exhibit 17. Employment Share by Industry, DRC, 2023
and Bremerton, Kitsap County, 2021**



Source: PSRC, 2023; ESRI Business Analyst, 2023; CAI, 2023.
 Note: Bremerton and Kitsap County data provided by PSRC for FY 2021. ESRI Business Analyst data for the Downtown Regional Center is for 2023.

Exhibit 18 shows the locations, by city and by county, in which Bremerton’s working residents work. The largest group of Bremerton’s working residents, over 2,200 workers, stay to work in Bremerton. In total, 45% of Bremerton’s residents who work stay in Kitsap County. The second largest group of Bremerton’s workers, just under 2,000 people, commute from Bremerton to Seattle. On the larger scale, about 31% of Bremerton’s working residents commute to King County for work.

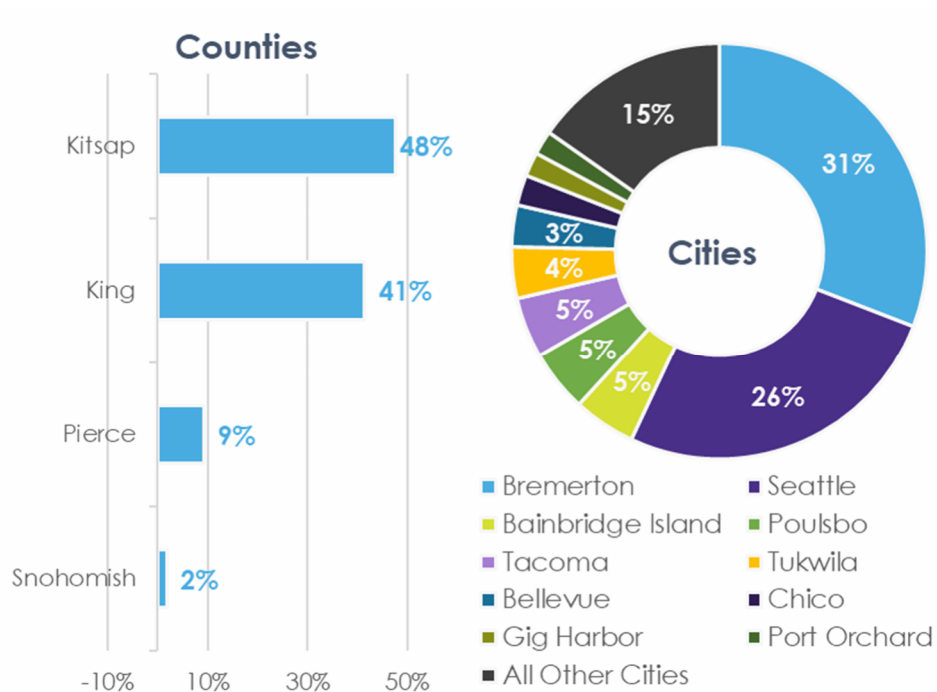
Exhibit 18. Where Bremerton’s Residents Work, 2020

Bremerton's Total Private Primary Jobs				11,262	
	Count	Share		Count	Share
Bremerton	2,265	20%	Kitsap County	5,164	45%
Seattle	1,911	17%	King County	3,547	31%
Silverdale	779	7%	Pierce County	1,344	12%
Tacoma	571	5%	Snohomish County	425	4%

Source(s): U.S. Census LEHD, 2020; CAI, 2023.

Exhibit 19 shows the county and city work destination for residents of downtown Bremerton. Nearly half of all residents stay within Kitsap County for work (48%), followed by 41% of residents who commute to King County. Approximately one-third of all residents (31%) work in Bremerton. Seattle is the next most common work destination with 26% of all downtown residents working in the city. The Kitsap County cities of Bainbridge Island and Poulsbo are also top destinations for residents, with 5% of downtown residents commuting there for work.

Exhibit 19. Commute Destination of DRC Residents, 2020

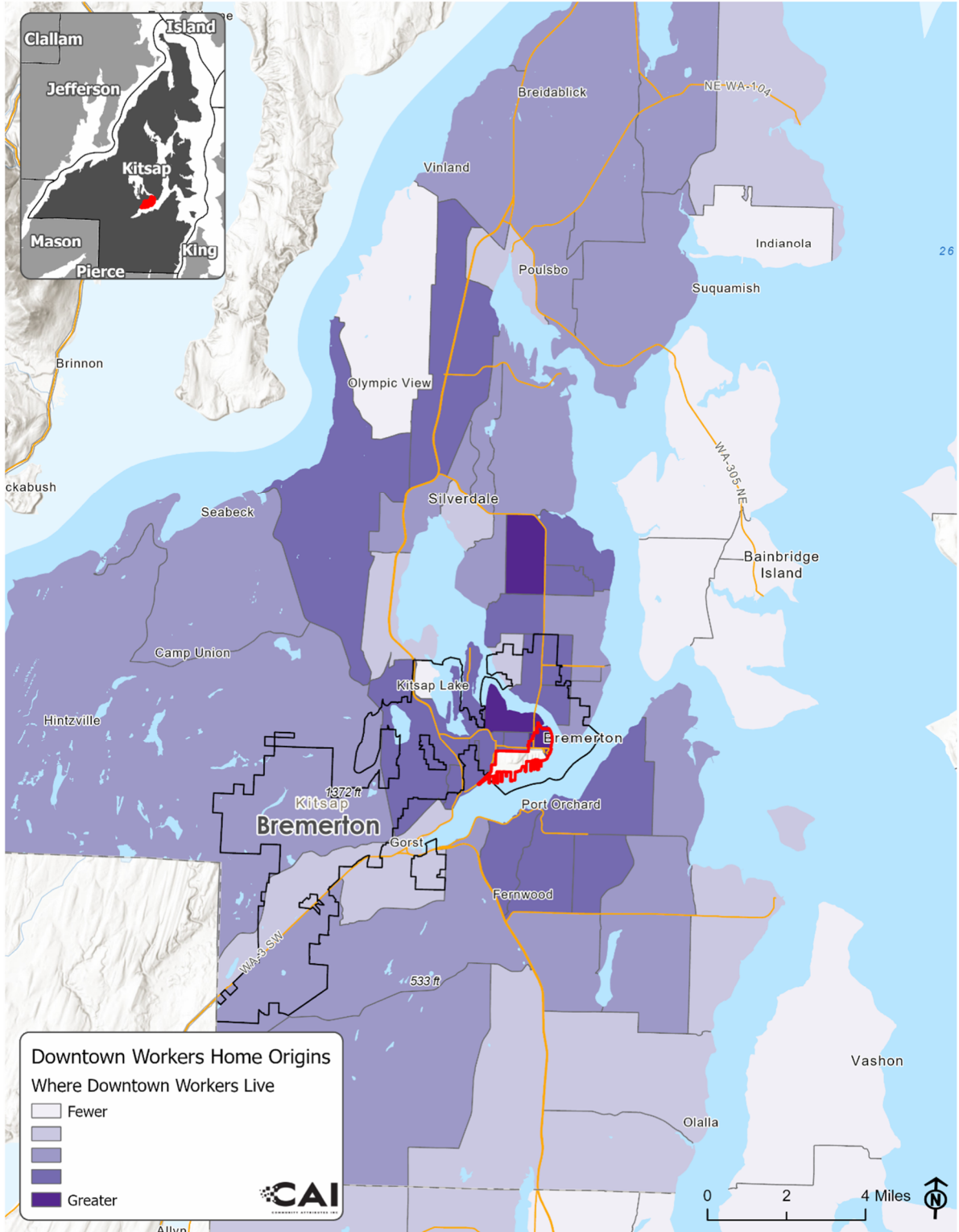


Source: LEHD, 2020; CAI, 2023.

Exhibit 20 shows the home origins of individuals who work in the DRC, or where those who hold jobs in the DRC live. Darker shades indicate the areas with the highest concentration of workers. The highest densities of workers live in the DRC, directly to the west of the subarea and north by the town Silverdale. Areas with medium to high density are concentrated about the DRC and to the northwest by Olympic View.

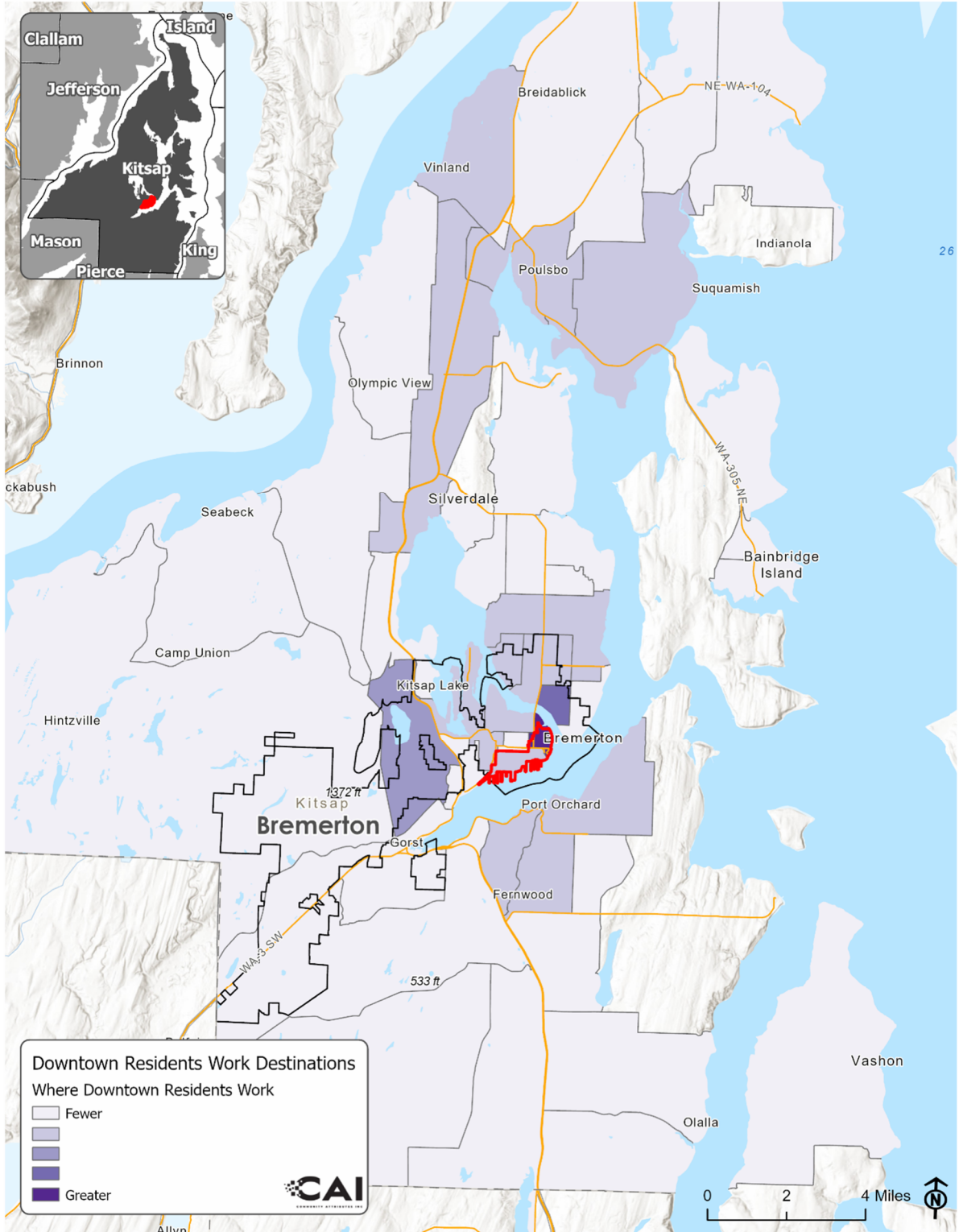
Exhibit 21 shows the work destinations of DRC residents, or where those who live in the DRC travel to for work. Darker shades indicate the areas with the highest concentration of employment. Most employment destinations are located within the DRC and northwest of the subarea. Areas with medium to high concentrations of employment are concentrated around the DRC.

Exhibit 20. Residence Locations of DRC Workers, Kitsap County, 2020



Source: LEHD, 2020; CAI, 2023.

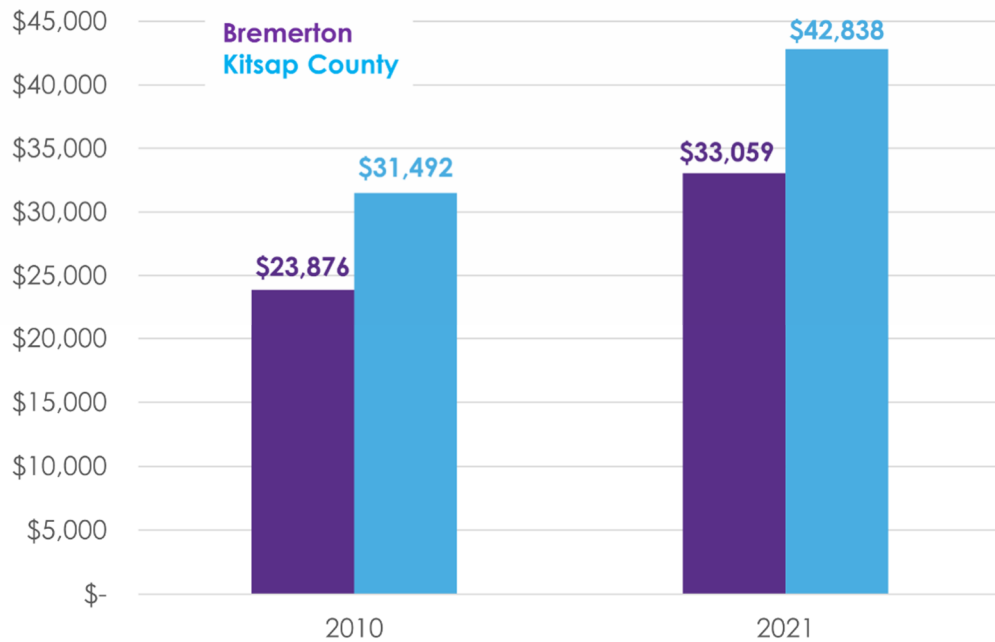
Exhibit 21. Work Destinations of DRC Residents, Kitsap County, 2020



Source: LEHD, 2020; CAI, 2023.

Median resident income has increased in both Bremerton and Kitsap County from 2010 to 2021, with Kitsap County increasing by 36% and Bremerton by 38% (**Exhibit 22**). While Bremerton’s median income rose more quickly in Bremerton than in Kitsap County, Bremerton’s median resident income continues to be lower than that of Kitsap County on the whole, facing a discrepancy of \$9,779.

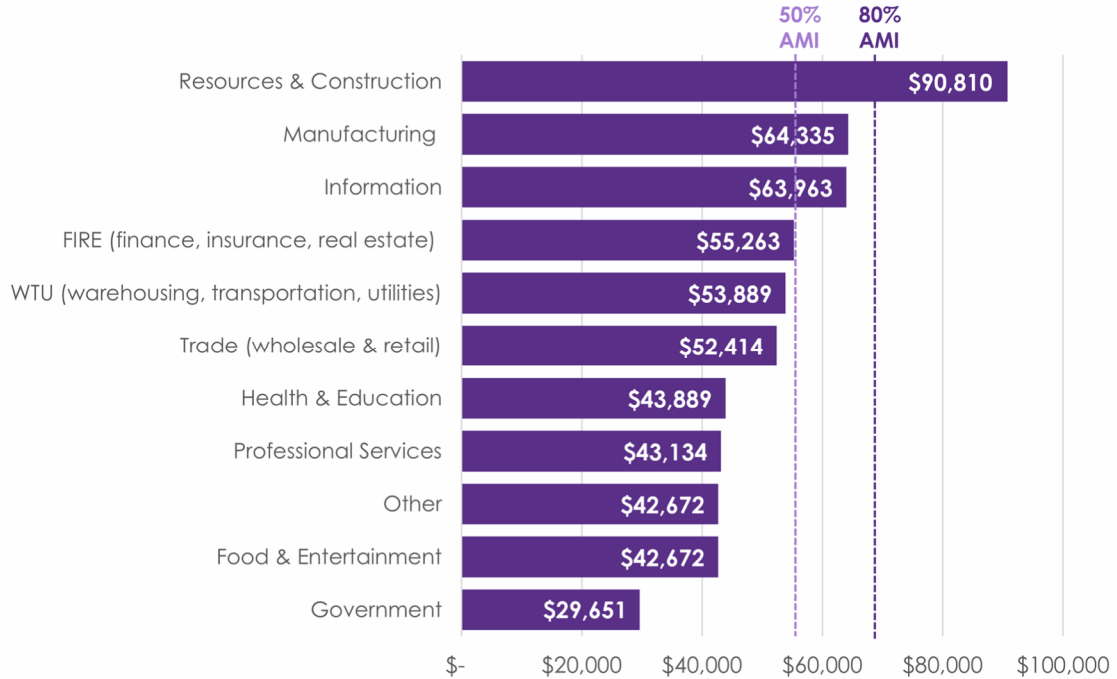
Exhibit 22. Median Resident Income, Bremerton and Kitsap County, 2021



Source: ACS, 2021; CAI, 2023.

Exhibit 23 compares median earnings of Bremerton’s employed residents for a selection of industries as well as the income for residents earning minimum wage or relying on Social Security with the Kitsap County’s HUD income limits for a 1-person household in 2021. Using data for 1-person households directs analysis onto individual wages by disregarding households with multiple wage-earners. In Bremerton, residents working in resources and construction make the highest median earnings and are the only industry in which employees’ median earnings are higher than 80% AMI. Residents working in the manufacturing and information industries earn a median wage between 50% and 80%, which is considered low-income by HUD. All other industries, including industries in which a large share of Bremerton’s residents work such as wholesale & retail trade, health & education, professional services, food & entertainment, government, and residents working full time at minimum wage or reliant on Social Security, earn less than 50% of AMI.

Exhibit 23. Median Earnings by Industry for Employed Residents vs. HUD Income Limits (1-Person), Bremerton, 2021

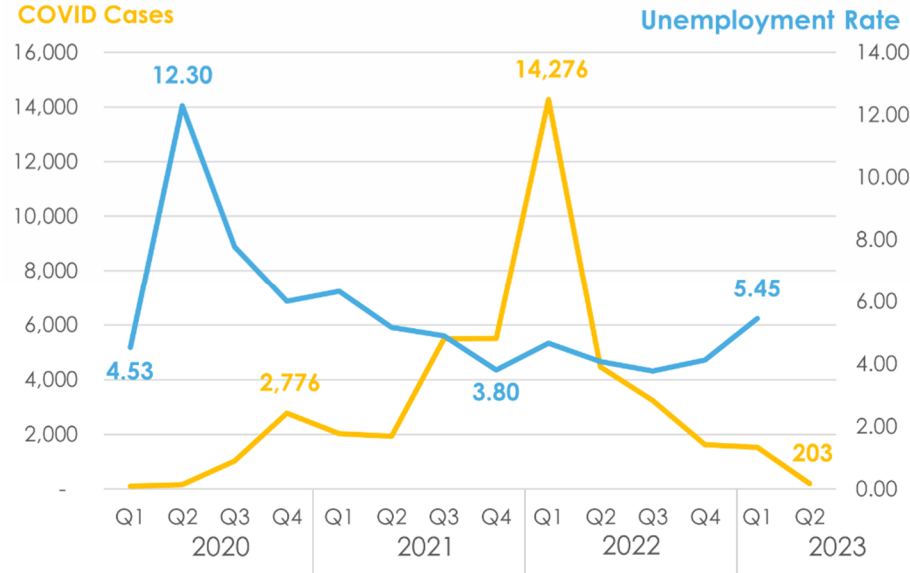


Source: HUD, 2021; ACS, 2021; Social Security Administration, 2021; DLI, 2021; CAI, 2023.

COVID 19 Impacts

Prior to the pandemic, Kitsap County had an unemployment rate of 4.5% (**Exhibit 24**). Shortly after the county registered its first case of COVID at the end of January 2020, unemployment spiked to 12.3% in April 2020. The unemployment rate steadily decreased from this high, even as Kitsap County registered multiple waves of COVID starting in winter of 2020 and continuing into summer 2022. After several months at a post-pandemic low of 3.8% unemployment over summer 2022, the unemployment rate has increased slightly to reach 5.5% in quarter 1 of 2023. COVID cases have decreased since the most recent wave in the summer of 2022. According to the most recent available data, quarter 2 of 2023 registered 203 COVID cases.

Exhibit 24. Unemployment Rate and Positive COVID-19 Tests by Week, Kitsap County, January 2020 to Date



Source: Kitsap County Health/WA Health, 2023; CAI, 2023.

Activity Units and Density

PSRC’s Regional Centers Framework utilizes activity units as a singular measurement of residential and employment density. An activity unit represents one person, either an employee or a resident, who spends a significant part of nearly every day in the center. Activity units represent the total amount of activity present in an area and do not distinguish by the mix or proportion or the activity that is residential versus commercial.³

The total employment in the DRC, excluding the Puget Sounds Naval Shipyard, is 3,787 in 2018 (**Exhibit 25**). This makes up roughly 10% of all employment in Bremerton. The majority of these jobs (52%) are in finance, insurance, and real estate (FIRE) and services, which include professional services as well as entertainment and accommodations. The Puget Sound Naval Shipyard makes up a greater portion (47%) of Bremerton’s employment, of which the vast majority (98%) are jobs in government, which includes the jobs of enlisted personnel. In Bremerton as a whole, government employment makes up the majority (52%) of employment, while FIRE and services employment makes up an additional 24% of jobs.

³ Regional Centers monitoring Report, PSRC, 2013.

Exhibit 25. Employment, Bremerton, Downtown Regional Center, and Puget Sound Naval Shipyard 2018

	Bremerton Employment		DRC Employment (without Shipyard)		Puget Sound Naval Shipyard Employment	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
FIRE and Other Services	8,964	24%	1,960	52%	304	2%
Government	19,777	52%	925	24%	12,563	71%
Retail and Food Services	4,021	11%	501	13%	26	0%
Manufacturing and WTU	1,895	5%	344	9%	2	0%
Construction and Resources	939	2%	46	1%	-	0%
Education	2,283	6%	11	0%	1	0%
Total	37,879		3,787		17,678	

Source: PSRC, 2023; CAI, 2023.

Naval Base Kitsap reported the following employment and population estimates for the portion of the base which is adjacent to downtown Bremerton and included in the City’s Metropolitan boundary (NBK-B).

Exhibit 26. Activity Units Total and Density, Naval Base Kitsap-Bremerton (2024)

Activity Units	Total Activity Units	Acres	Activity Unit Density
Reported Population	2,241		
Beds	2,200		
Dwelling Units	41		
Reported Employment	28,265		
Open Job Positions	25,765		
Additional SIOP Workforce	2,500		
	30,506	397.5	76.7

Source(s): Naval Base Kitsap, 2024; CAI, 2024.

Note: Population values are conservative, assuming 1 person per bed or dwelling unit.

Dwelling units in Naval Base Kitsap often accommodate officers and their families.

According to estimates provided by the Puget Sound Regional Council and the above reported estimates from Naval Base Kitsap-Bremerton in 2024 there were 6,511 residents and 33,369 jobs in the Downtown Regional Center, of which 2,241 residents and 28,265 jobs were located in NBK-B (**Exhibit 27**). This makes a combined total of 39,879 activity units in the DRC in 2024. Based on the acreage of the DRC (592 total acres, including Naval Base Kitsap-Bremerton), the DRC has an activity unit density of 67.4 units per acre, exceeding the minimum value of 30 activity units per acre designated for metro growth centers by the PSRC.

**Exhibit 27. Activity Units Total and Density,
Downtown Regional Center and Naval Base Kitsap-Bremerton (2024)**

	Activity Units			Total Activity Units	Acres	Activity Unit Density
	DRC	NBK-B	Combined			
Population	4,270	2,241	6,511	39,879	592.0	67.4
Employment	5,104	28,265	33,369			

Source: PSRC 2023; Naval Base Kitsap, 2024; CAI, 2024. Exhibit 28. Projected Activity Unit Density, Downtown Regional Center and Naval Base Kitsap-Bremerton, 2044

	Activity Units			Total Activity Units	Acres	Activity Unit Density
	DRC	NBK-B	Combined			
Population	9,462	2,241	11,703	47,424	592.0	80.1
Employment	9,956	25,765	35,721			

Sources: PSRC 2023; Naval Base Kitsap, 2024; CAI, 2024.

Note: Estimates of personnel at Naval Base Kitsap-Bremerton are held constant through the forecast period.

Exhibit 29 use PSRC growth projections for the Downtown Regional Center and reported employment and population estimates for Naval Base Kitsap-Bremerton to calculate the DRC’s projected activity unit density for 2044 and 2050. Population and employment in this area is projected to reach 13,310 residents and 37,046 jobs by 2050, making a combined total of 50,356 activity units. Based on the acreage of the DRC (592 total acres, including Naval Base Kitsap-Bremerton), this brings the total DRC’s projected activity unit density up to 85.1 activity units per acre. This value falls just slightly above the PSRC’s recently designated minimum planned activity unit density of 85 activity units per acre for metro urban centers. In growth targets developed for the DRC, the City should plan for a similar or higher population or employment growth than is projected by the PSRC in order to meet this PSRC designated planned activity unit density minimum of 85 activity units per acre.

Exhibit 28. Projected Activity Unit Density, Downtown Regional Center and Naval Base Kitsap-Bremerton, 2044

	Activity Units			Total Activity Units	Acres	Activity Unit Density
	DRC	NBK-B	Combined			
Population	9,462	2,241	11,703	47,424	592.0	80.1
Employment	9,956	25,765	35,721			

Sources: PSRC 2023; Naval Base Kitsap, 2024; CAI, 2024.

Note: Estimates of personnel at Naval Base Kitsap-Bremerton are held constant through the forecast period.

Exhibit 29. Projected Activity Unit Density, Downtown Regional Center and Naval Base Kitsap-Bremerton, 2050

	Activity Units			Total Activity Units	Acres	Activity Unit Density
	DRC	NBK-B	Combined			
Population	11,069	2,241	13,310	50,356	592.0	85.1
Employment	11,281	25,765	37,046			

Sources: PSRC 2023; Naval Base Kitsap, 2024; CAI, 2024.

Note: Estimates of personnel at Naval Base Kitsap-Bremerton are held constant through the forecast period.

Land Use and Zoning

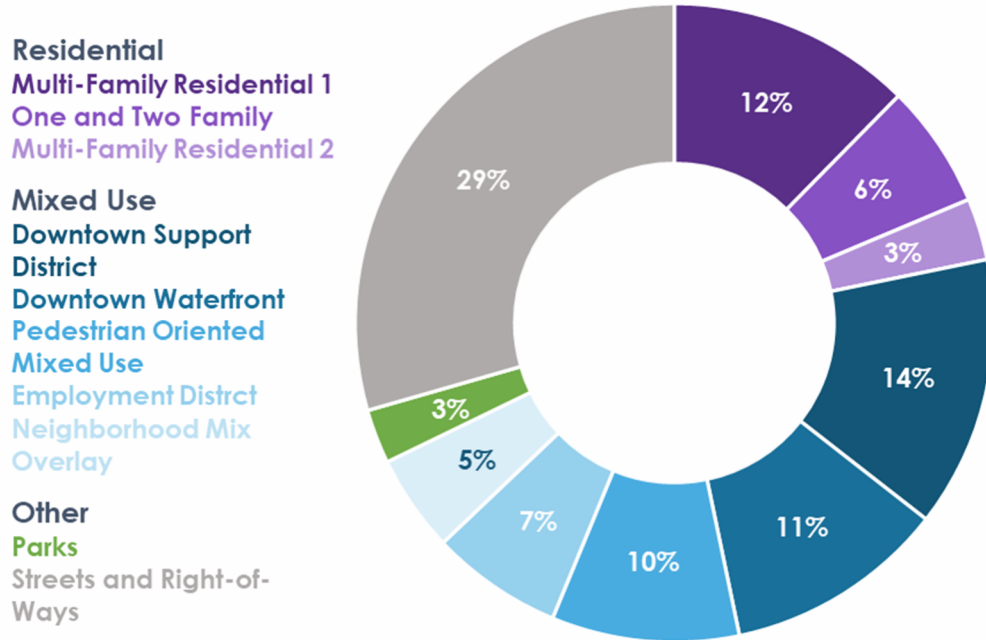
Exhibit 30 and **Exhibit 31** show the zoning and the share of each zoning districts’ acreage in the DRC. There are nine zoning districts within the DRC. They correspond to three types of land use.

Approximately one-fifth (21%) of downtown is zoned Residential. There are three zones that permit only residential uses. One and two family residential (R-20) allows small lot single family and townhomes and account for 6% of downtown. Two multi-family residential zones (MR-1 and MR-2) allow medium-to-high density residential uses and totals 15% of downtown. MR-1 includes a number of historic comes on Highland.

Nearly one-half (42%) of downtown is zoned Mixed Use. The Downtown Support District (DSD) is the largest zoning district (14% of downtown acreage) and allows commercial and medium density residential. The waterfront (DW) accounts for 12% of downtown and allows for residential, office, and mixed use activities. Pedestrian Oriented Mixed Use (POMU) allows medium-to-high density residential with neighborhood retail and services on the ground floor. The Employment District (ED) allows for mixed residential as well as a range of commercial and light industrial uses in support of the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard.

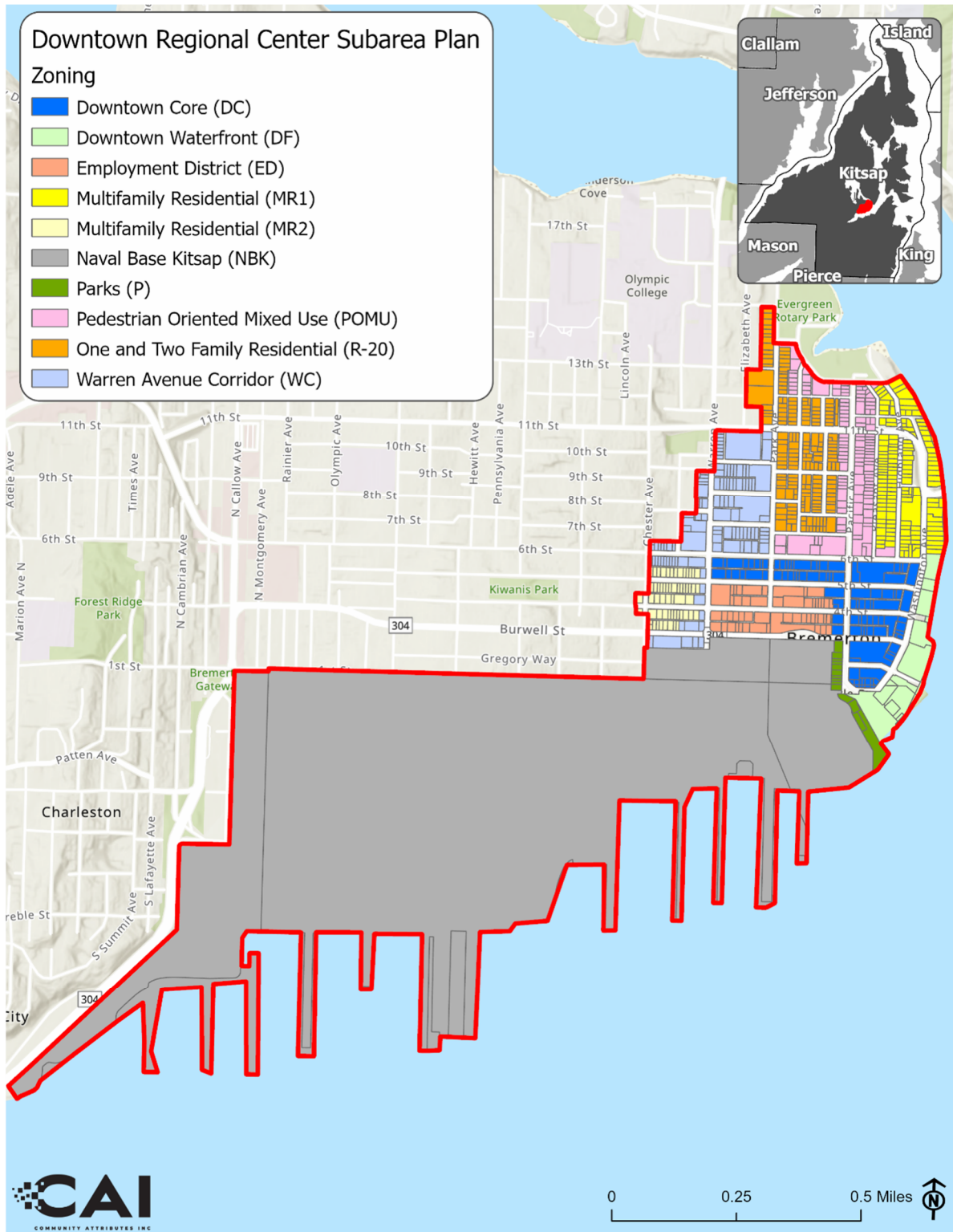
The park zoning district runs on the strip of land between the Ferry Terminal and the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, and accounts for 3% of space in the DRC. However, downtown has additional access to parks through the nearby Evergreen Park, and through parks provided on other land use types. Many developments in the DRC, including mixed-use and waterfront developments, require provisions of public and/or private open space.

Exhibit 30. Zoning Mix, Downtown Regional Center, 2023



Source: Kitsap County, 2023; CAI, 2023.

Exhibit 31. Downtown Regional Center Zoning, 2023



Source: Kitsap County, 2023; CAI, 2023.

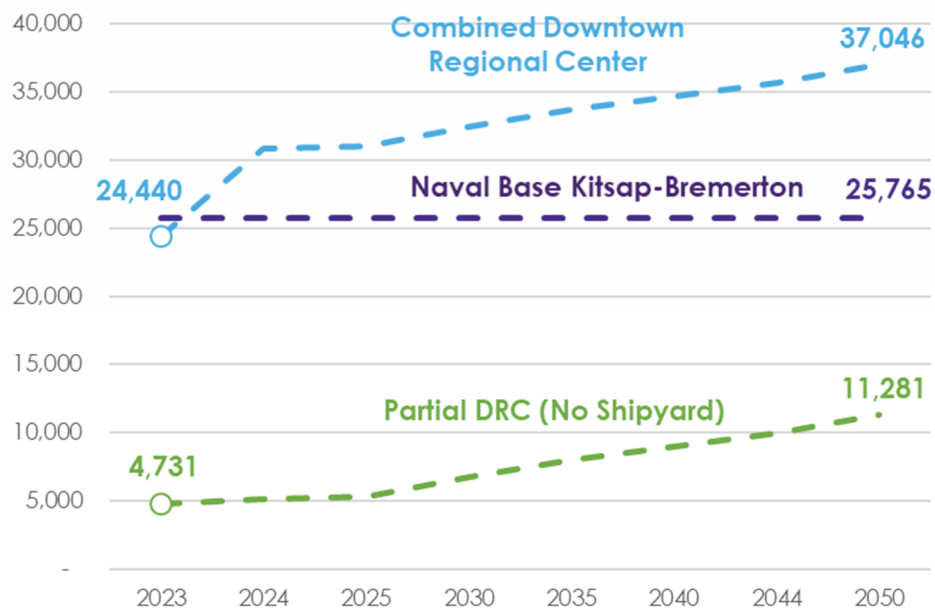
Downtown Regional Center Forecast

The following forecasts use a series of assumptions to estimate future employment and population growth in the DRC. 2023 data for all metrics is derived from ESRI Business Analyst. Growth rates use the same growth rates provided by the Puget Sound Regional Council’s Land Use Vision – Implemented Targets (LUV-it) land use model for Kitsap County as a whole.

Employment

Exhibit 32 shows the total forecasted employment growth in the DRC. There are an estimated 24,440 jobs in the DRC (excluding enlisted personnel) in 2023 with 25,765 of those attributed to the Naval Base Kitsap-Bremerton. The Naval Base Kitsap is not under City jurisdiction, and the forecasted estimates for future years keep employment constant. However, taking the portion of the DRC that does not include the shipyard, the PSRC forecasts a compound annual growth rate of 3%, more than doubling the employment in this partial section of the DRC from 2023 to 2050. Employment in the entire combined DRC is projected to reach 37,046 jobs by 2050.

Exhibit 32. Forecasted Total Employment Growth, Downtown Regional Center, 2023 – 2050

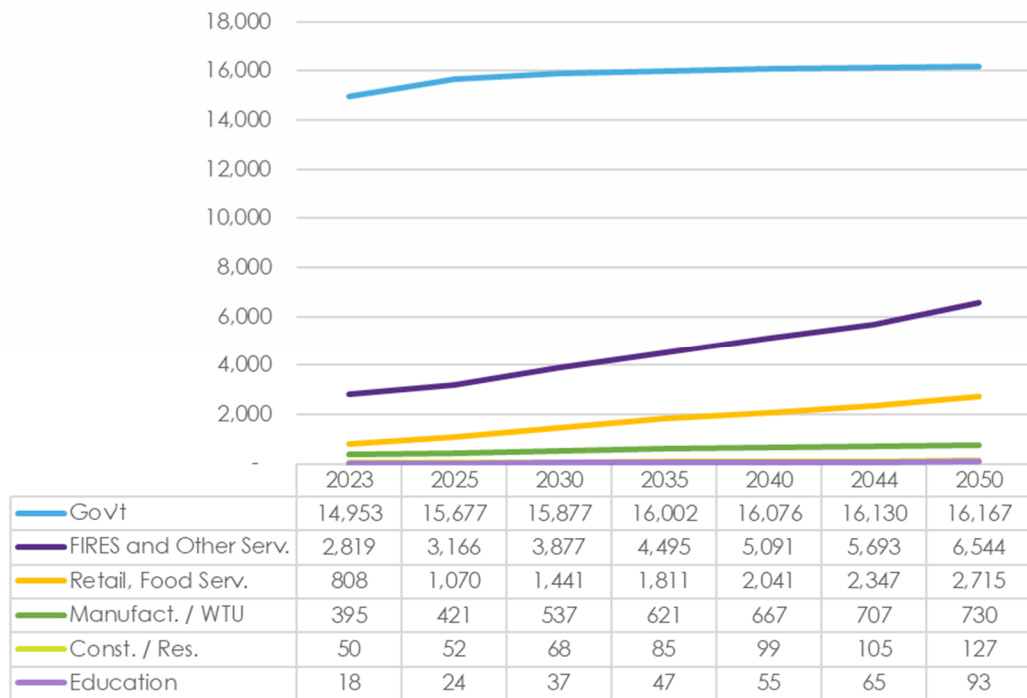


Source: PSRC, 2023; Naval Base Kitsap, 2024; CAI, 2024.

Exhibit 33 shows employment projections, by industry sector, as defined by the PSRC LUV-it model, for the Downtown Regional Center, excluding enlisted personnel and estimates from the Naval Base Kitsap- Bremerton, but including PSRC estimates for civilian employment within the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard. The largest employment sector, with 14,953 jobs in

2023 is government. By 2050, there are projected to be 16,167 jobs in government in the DRC. The next largest sectors of finance, insurance, real estate, and services (FIRES) and Retail and Food Services will grow to 6,544 and 2,715 jobs, respectively.

Exhibit 33. Forecasted Employment by Industry Sector, Downtown Regional Center Area, 2023 – 2050



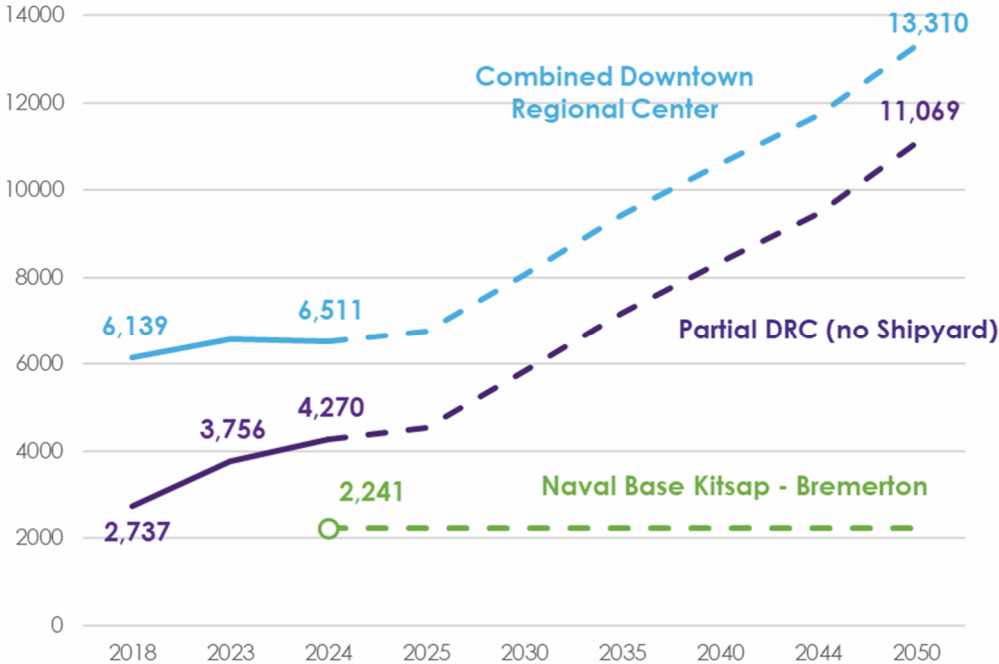
Source: PSRC 2023; CAI, 2023.

Population

Exhibit 34 shows current and projected population in the Downtown Regional Center. In 2024, there are 6,511 residents in the DRC. Assuming a 100% PSRC LUV-it growth rate, there will be 13,310 residents in the DRC by 2050. The population within the Naval Base Kitsap – Bremerton is assumed to stay constant. The Partial DRC area which does not include the shipyard is projected to grow from 4,270 in 2024 to 11,069 in 2050, an annual growth rate of 7%.

According to City of Bremerton records, there are currently 290 units in six developments within the Downtown Regional Center that are currently under construction or permitted. The 260 permitted units, falling within the DRC but not the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard are likely to begin construction between 2024 and 2025. With these planned units taken into account, population in the Downtown Regional Center, without the shipyard, is likely to exceed projections.

Exhibit 34. Historic and Forecasted Population Growth, Downtown Regional Center, 2018 – 2050



Source: PSRC, 2023; Naval Base Kitsap, 2024; CAI, 2024.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section, assessed areas of non-compliance with recent Vision 2050 and Regional Centers Framework guidance and requirements for Downtown Subarea Plan content are summarized in matrix format. Then, recommendations for new content and / or updates to the Plan are presented. This new content may be developed and / or incorporated in the process of the City of Bremerton’s Comprehensive Plan update process for 2024.

Summary of Actions Taken

Some areas of compliance with Vision 2050 and the Regional Centers Framework involved specific quantitative criteria which were re-assessed as a part of the current study. Others were addressed in other capacities through this document, through the engagement report, or elsewhere.

Exhibit 35. Summary of Actions Taken in Market Conditions Assessment

Reference Number	Source	Requirement	Action(s) Taken: Addressed in Market Conditions & Stakeholder Engagement	Re-Assessment Results	Implementation Mechanism
16	Regional Centers Framework	Include the size of the center and describe whether the center boundary changed as part of the planning process. The plan should fully encompass the designated regional center and demonstrate defined boundaries and shape for the center, including consistency with size requirements for regional centers. Urban Growth Centers should be between 200-640 acres in size. Metro Growth Centers should be between 320-640 acres in size (may be larger if served by an internal, high-capacity transit system).	Re-assessed size of DRC in the Activity Units Density section - MEETS REQUIREMENTS	DRC is 592 acres , which includes Naval Base Kitsap (pg 34).	Downtown Regional Center Market Study
18	Regional Centers Framework	Include the existing activity unit density of the center. Urban Growth Centers should have a minimum existing density of 18 activity units per acre. Metro Growth Centers should have a minimum existing density of 30 activity units per acre.	Re-assessed Activity Unit Density of DRC in the Activity Units Density section - MEETS REQUIREMENTS	A total of 22,822 activity units (individual jobs and residents) within the 592 acres of DRC equals an activity unit density of 67.4 (pg 35).	Downtown Regional Center Market Study
20	Regional Centers Framework	Establish residential and employment growth targets that accommodate a significant share of the jurisdiction’s growth, in support of VISION 2050 and the Regional Growth Strategy. Residential densities and building intensities should have capacity to accommodate higher levels of growth. 17 Urban Growth Centers should plan for densities of at least 45 activity units per acre. Metro Growth Centers should plan for densities of at least 85 activity units per acre. Complete the given Table.	Analysis of projected Employment and Population growth conducted - DOES NOT MEET REQUIREMENTS Methodology to complete the Growth Targets Table from the PSRC’s Regional Framework developed and proposed for inclusion in Comp Plan update	PSRC projected growth in the DRC predicts an activity unit density of 85.1 for the DRC in 2050 (pg 36). This meets the minimum value for compliance of 85 activity units per acre. Additional steps are needed to complete the given table and adopt targets.	2024 Comprehensive Plan Update
51	Vision 2050	Ensure availability of public services, including K-12 education, to meet the needs of businesses and residents.	Addition in progress for Comp Plan update		2024 Comprehensive Plan Update
	Redesignation Criteria, Transit	Existing or planned light rail, commuter rail, ferry, or other high capacity transit with similar service quality as light rail. Service quality is defined as either frequent (< 15-minute headways) and all-day (operates at least 18 hours per day on weekdays) –or– high capacity (e.g., ferry, commuter rail, regional bus, Bus Rapid Transit). Evidence the area serves as major transit hub and has high quality/high capacity existing or planned service.	Analysis of existing transit and transit plans for compliance - MEETS REQUIREMENTS . Additional strategies for more near-term compliance proposed for inclusion in Comp Plan update	Long-term plans for BRT, express bus route, and a new bus base in or along the DRC area.	Downtown Regional Center Market Study and 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update

Sources: CAI, 2023.

The following table summarizes areas of possible non-compliance with Vision 2050 and Regional Centers Framework guidance that required new or updated content to be incorporated into either the Comprehensive Plan update or into updates for the Downtown Subarea Plan.

Exhibit 36. Summary of Actions Taken in Recommendations

Reference Number	Source	Requirement	Action(s) Taken: New Strategy / Update Recommendations Developed	Implementation Mechanism
1	Vision 2050	Encourage coordination with tribes, ports, military installations, and special purpose districts, and adjacent jurisdictions, when applicable.	Expanded partners list developed and documentation strategy proposed for inclusion in the Comp Plan update.	2024 Comprehensive Plan Update
2	Vision 2050	Prioritize services and access to opportunity for people of color, people with low incomes, and historically underserved communities.	Strategies to prioritize services and access for underserved communities proposed for inclusion in Comp plan update.	2024 Comprehensive Plan Update
8	Vision 2050	Identify and minimize gaps in equitable access to parks and open spaces.	Additional outreach may be needed in the City's Equitable Engagement and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to explore equitable park access in the DRC	Draft Environmental Impact Statement
10	Vision 2050	Avoid or mitigate environmental impacts for vulnerable populations.	Additional outreach may be needed in the EIS to address environmental impacts for vulnerable populations in the DRC.	Draft Environmental Impact Statement
13	Vision 2050	Expand electric transportation infrastructure.	Existing electric transportation infrastructure and plans to expand it in the County are explored. Opportunities to build upon these are proposed for inclusion to the Comp Plan update.	2024 Comprehensive Plan Update
19	Vision 2050	Recognize the role of the center in achieving the adopted VISION 2050 goal of attracting 65% of regional population growth and 75% of employment growth to centers and high-capacity transit station areas.	Role of the DRC in Vision 2050 sample statement developed for inclusion in the Comp Plan update.	2024 Comprehensive Plan Update
24	Regional Centers Framework	Increase access to opportunity, including employment and education opportunities and improved neighborhood quality of life.	Additional analysis in the City's EIS may be necessary to determine access to opportunity for historically underserved communities in the DRC. Findings and strategies surrounding this topic are proposed for inclusion in Comp Plan update to inform prioritization of services.	Draft Environmental Impact Statement
28	Regional Centers Framework	Demonstrate how housing targets and goals will be met.	Methodology to complete the Growth Targets Table from the PSRC's Regional Framework developed and proposed for inclusion in Comp Plan update.	2024 Comprehensive Plan Update
29	Vision 2050	Reduce the risk of residential displacement through a variety of anti-displacement strategies, including leveraging growth opportunities to provide new affordable units and preserving existing affordable housing.	Engagement on displacement risk proposed to inform potential anti-displacement strategies in the Comp Plan update.	2024 Comprehensive Plan Update
33	Regional Centers Framework	Encourage the use of economic development tools to promote retention, expansion, and growth of employment opportunities within the center.	Analysis and engagement-identified economic development tools and additional industry and job retention strategies are proposed for inclusion in Comp Plan update.	2024 Comprehensive Plan Update
34	Vision 2050	Reduce the risk of commercial displacement through a variety of anti-displacement strategies.	Commercial anti-displacement tools and strategies are suggested for consideration in the Comp Plan update.	2024 Comprehensive Plan Update
35	Vision 2050	Expand access to economic opportunities through actions such as adopting a priority hire ordinance, encouraging workforce development partnerships, and identifying pipeline education or training opportunities.	Developed workforce development and training strategies to supplement the SAP via Comp Plan update.	2024 Comprehensive Plan Update
Multiple		Requirements which include updated data or references.	Recommendations to regularly update planning documents to reflect updated data.	2024 Comprehensive Plan Update and Planning Beyond

Sources: CAI, 2023.

Strategies and Recommendations

This section details recommendations for new or augmented content to be incorporated into updates to the Downtown Subarea Plan. Where not explicitly developed below, recommendations for further study, engagement, or content development are described. Such work may be undertaken via the City of Bremerton’s 2024 Comprehensive Plan update process in advance of the 2025 PSRC monitoring cycle.

Coordination with Partners and Adjacent Jurisdictions (Reference #1)

The Comprehensive Plan planning process should include outreach and collaboration with additional community partners. Planning in Bremerton evidenced through plans such as the in-progress Joint Compatibility Transportation Plan or Joint Land Use Study has been collaborative with many groups. For the 2024 Comprehensive Plan update, the City should identify additional partners, such as those identified in the following extended partners list, and document engagement with each in the course of outreach and strategy development.

Expanded Partner List:

- Suquamish Tribe
- Port of Bremerton
- Utility Special Purpose District
- Bremerton Housing Authority
- Bremerton Chamber of Commerce
- Kitsap Economic Development Alliance
- Bremerton Downtown Business Association

Services and Access for Marginalized and Underrepresented Groups (Reference #2)

In support of the 2024 update to its Comprehensive Plan, the City is undertaking a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Additional outreach in this statement may be needed to clearly define and include data about people of color, people with low incomes, and historically underserved communities. The Comprehensive Plan Update should show prioritization of these groups for planned services and equitable investment. In addition, each section of the Comprehensive Plan might include goals and / or strategies related to equity and inclusion, with special emphasis given in the City Services Element, within the EIS, or within an Appendix to the Comprehensive Plan Update. This concept is expanded upon in item 24.

Equitable Access to Open Space and Environmental Impact for Vulnerable Groups (Reference #8 and #10)

Additional outreach in the EIS should include geospatial analysis of park proximity and access for Bremerton's various communities as well as potential adverse environmental impacts to vulnerable populations within and adjacent to the DRC and the shipyard at Naval Base Kitsap. Such impacts might include noise, odors, traffic, air or water pollution, ground water contamination, or other effects related to commercial and industrial activity in the Subarea as well as to transportation and other infrastructure.

Electric Transportation Infrastructure (Reference #13)

Updates to the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan update should include identification and summarization of existing electric transportation infrastructure as well as local or regional plans or efforts to expand electric transportation infrastructure in Bremerton and the DRC.

The city of Bremerton has 28 public charging station ports (Level 2 and Level 3), of which, 11 offer free charges for electric cars.⁴ The Kitsap Transit Sustainability Plan also outlines plans to receive and integrate electric battery-powered coaches into their fleet from 2022-2030. While the fast ferry currently running the Bremerton-to-Seattle route is a hybrid electric boat with a diesel generator, the Sustainability Plan also includes plans for an all-electric battery-powered ferry and an electric battery-powered hydrofoil fast ferry.

The Transportation Element's Goal T (Transportation) 4 is to "*Enhance Bremerton's quality of life through transportation investments that promote energy conservation, healthy communities, aesthetics and protect the environment.*" The City may consider expanding Goal T4 to address opportunities to partner with and build upon regional plans and efforts to expand electric transportation infrastructure in Bremerton and the DRC. Specific topics of consideration may include:

- Advocate on behalf of the DRC to Kitsap Transit for nearer-term funding, planning, and construction of planned long term electric transportation infrastructure upgrades for the Center.
- Partner with Kitsap Transit to incorporate planned electric transportation infrastructure improvements into local planning documents
- Explore funding sources for electric transportation infrastructure improvements the Center such as grant applications, increasing taxes or fares, organizing local employers to provide annual contributions to operating expenses, and building transit infrastructure or purchase fares in bulk.

Role of the DRC (Reference #19)

An update to the Downtown Subarea Plan or Bremerton's 2024 Comprehensive Plan should explicitly reference the intention for the DRC to achieve the Vision 2050 goal to attract 65% of regional population growth and 75% of employment growth to centers and high-capacity transit station areas. Draft language for such an update might include the following:

The Downtown Regional Center (DRC) is aligned with regional plans and goals such as Kitsap County Countywide Planning Policies, and Puget Sound

⁴ According to chargehub.com data published in 2023.

Regional Council Vision 2050. As a designated Metropolitan Growth Center and a planned transit center, the DRC will absorb 65% of Kitsap County’s population growth and 75% of its employment growth.

Establish Growth Targets (Reference #20)

The City should complete the Table 1 below, or the Growth Targets Table from PSRC’s Regional Centers Framework for Metropolitan Growth Centers. The analysis completed in the **Downtown Regional Center Forecasts** section of this report includes existing baseline population and employment conditions for the DRC. The existing housing unit count will need to be determined in collaboration with PSRC.

Next, the City will need to determine how much of Bremerton’s Growth Management Act housing, population, and job growth targets will need to be accommodated within DRC. The **Activity Units and Density** section of this report shows that the PSRC projections for population and employment growth in the DRC through 2050 are enough to bring the DRC into compliance with PSRC requirements. The DRC’s projected activity unit density in 2050 is projected to reach 85.1, a value which just exceeds the 85 activity units per acre minimum established in Vision 2050. As the City works to fill Table 1 below and determine appropriate growth targets, these values should meet or exceed these projections by PSRC for the DRC to achieve compliance(Table 1).

Finally, the City should consider the development capacity of the DRC to accommodate the growth target for each metric within the Bremerton zoning code and in consideration of ongoing and planned projects in the Subarea. Modifications to the zoning code may be required if the current zoned capacity is insufficient to accommodate the growth targets.

Table 1. Regional Centers Framework Growth Targets

	Existing (Baseline) Conditions	Adopted Center Growth Target	Zoned Development Capacity	Page Reference
Population				
Housing Units				
Employment				

Source: Puget Sound Regional Council.

Access to Opportunity (Reference #24)

In addition to identifying marginalized and historically underserved communities outlined in reference #2, the City’s DEIS, which informs the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update should engage in additional outreach and geospatial analysis on access to opportunity in Bremerton and in the DRC.

Building upon findings from the DEIS, the Comprehensive Plan Update should develop goals or policies to expand access to opportunity in the identified areas with a focus on Prioritization of Services, Employment, Education, and Neighborhood Quality of Life. Such goals or policies can be included within the City Services Element, within the DEIS, or within an Appendix, as outlined in reference #2.

Residential Anti-Displacement Strategies (Reference #29)

Updates to the Housing Element of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan update should address the risk of residential displacement through a variety of anti-displacement strategies. Increased engagement with residents on residential displacement risk in Bremerton and the DRC should be conducted to inform the development of anti-displacement strategies and goals.

Strategies or goals that Bremerton may consider based on engagement include items such as:

- Identifying funding sources, partnerships, and programs to expand the inventory of affordable units.
- Preserving existing naturally affordable housing stock.
- Increasing protections for renters against displacement.
- Investing in community-owned or community-driven development by communities at high risk of displacement.
- Building flexibility into policies so they can meet community-specific needs.⁵

Employment Retention, Expansion, and Growth (Reference #33)

Updates to the Economic Development Element of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan update should identify and actualize additional economic development tools to promote retention, expansion, and growth of employment opportunities within the Center. Based on the analysis and engagement conducted for this Market Study, the following selection of economic development strategies are recommended for inclusion and / or further consideration:

Target Industry Identification and Strategies

Data analysis in collaboration with the Port of Bremerton, industry leaders, and economic development organizations such as the Kitsap Economic Development Alliance, Bremerton Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Business Association, can further develop a concerted and targeted effort to catalyze growth in the downtown, possibly through a downtown authority or development corporation. Strategies may involve boosting Bremerton's

⁵ Strategies referenced in the Seattle Planning Commission's 2022 *Addressing Displacement in Seattle's Comprehensive Plan*. Web: [SPC Anti-displacement Issue Brief March2022 Web.pdf \(seattle.gov\)](#)

economy through investments in strong and growing existing industries such as boat manufacturing, recreation, and Defense, or targeting new, high-potential industries to assist in the downtown area through recruitment and development.

Identity, Promotion, and Marketing

Engagement conducted for this Market Study revealed an opportunity for stronger community branding. Participants indicated branding of downtown Bremerton needs realignment to highlight and properly represent the value of Bremerton's assets, including over 40 parks, access to the shorelines, comparative affordability, and a sense of community, and to address the misperception of heightened crime levels. Participants also cast a re-conception of downtown Bremerton's identity as a regional gathering place in which the waterfront serves as the gateway to Bremerton and the peninsula, and is activated as an economic and communal space, with businesses that welcome residents, visitors, cruise ships, and ferry guests into the DRC. Specific topics the City may consider as it updates its Comprehensive Plan may include:

- Develop a compelling DRC identity.
- Expand DRC-specific promotion and marketing that seeks to pivot existing perceptions and promotes a collectively established identity founded in community values and outstanding assets.

Small Business and Entrepreneurial Support

The Comprehensive Plan currently includes goals to support and diversify Bremerton's commercial base including start-ups and small businesses. Furthermore, engagement for this Market Study revealed that local business owners and the burgeoning art and culture scene in Bremerton's downtown area are considered some of Bremerton's best assets. Economic development strategies that can further support local businesses and creatives include establishing a line of communication between the entrepreneurial and small business community and the City to improve processes and better respond to needs, as well as providing an accessible way for businesses to understand regulations and permitting.⁶

Enhancement of Sense of Place

The Downtown Subarea Plan takes a comprehensive urban design approach to development with the intent to create a unique sense of place in the DRC. While downtown has strong urban design guidelines and design principles adopted, engagement conducted for this Market Study indicates that downtown Bremerton's sense of place may be hindered by a lack of some essential services, such as grocery stores or childcare services. Other

⁶ National League of Cities Center for Research and Innovation (2012), *Supporting Entrepreneurs and Small Business, A Tool Kit for Local Leaders*. Web: [RI_SmallBizToolkit-2012-Web.pdf \(nist.gov\)](https://www.nlc.org/~/media/Files/2012-Web.pdf)

strategies to boost the DRC's sense of place could include creating more opportunities for businesses and office spaces, and further leveraging access to Seattle as an essential part of Bremerton's identity and sense of place.

Business Recruitment, Retention, and Expansion (BRE)

Engagement conducted for this Market Study revealed that though the DRC has capacity for more businesses, business recruitment and retention has dipped since the pandemic. Participants believe that the lack of housing for workers remains a significant barrier to economic development and that high quality housing is central to recruiting new businesses to the region and attracting and retaining talent. Strategies to locate more multi-family housing downtown could be another way to increase workforce housing in the DRC and support business recruitment and retention.

Mitigate Commercial Displacement Risk (Reference #34)

Updates to the Economic Development Element of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan update should consider a variety of anti-displacement policies and strategies to provide temporary and long-term solutions that keep businesses in place. Increased engagement with the commercial business and retail community on commercial displacement risk in Bremerton and the DRC should be conducted to inform the development of anti-displacement strategies and goals. Nationally, a number of tools have emerged to help protect small businesses from displacement. Examples of commercial anti-displacement strategies or goals that Bremerton can consider include:

- Provide additional assistance to businesses in areas experiencing displacement, such as lease consulting.
- Explore the use of rent caps or rental subsidies for small commercial tenants.
- Expand access to ownership to marginalized small business owners and non-profits by offering tailored financial products for property ownership.
- Connect vulnerable small business owners and tenants to technical assistance consulting and resources.
- Leverage the use of Community Benefits Agreements in future commercial center development in Bremerton to spur developers to provide amenities and spaces tailored to local community needs.
- Provide lease negotiation assistance, technical assistance, and protections for commercial tenants.
- Provide design and development guidance and incentives related to small and sub-divisible ground floor retail spaces.
- Invest in community-driven and community-owned development with BIPOC and low-income communities.
- Build flexibility into commercial development regulations so they can better meet community-specific needs.

Access to Economic Opportunity (Reference #35)

In order to enhance access to economic opportunities that the DRC represents for a wide range of communities in Bremerton and Kitsap County, additional strategies should be developed aimed at placing future workers in positions where they can prepare for the specific needs of future employers in the Center.

The engagement conducted during this Market Study revealed that the DRC experiences workforce shortages and gaps in training and education for its existing employment base. Trade, medicine, and the maritime industries are three of the highest areas of concern. The public sector has also been impacted, as police and fire forces have seen an increase in vacant positions, transit worker shortages span bus operators, mechanics, and other crew members.

Workforce development strategies that fill training and education gaps and bring institutions, businesses, and workforce organizations together to partner in the creation of talent pipelines that encourage skilled workers to stay within the peninsula should be considered in the updated Economic Development Element of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan. Specific topics of consideration may include:

- Facilitate workforce development feedback loops, training, and retention that prepares and empowers the workforce for the specific needs of future employers in and around the DRC and increases access to economic opportunity.
- Expand internship, apprenticeship, and training programs and opportunities in coordination with local companies and educational institutions.
- Coordinate with Naval Base Kitsap, other major employers in the DRC, and educational institutions, to create a talent pipeline in target sectors with a strong presence in Bremerton.

Access to High-Capacity Transit (Redesignation Criteria)

The Comprehensive Plan's Goal T 5 is to, *“Continuously improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the transportation system.”* Implementation policies for this goal include coordinating with Kitsap Transit, WSDOT, and other transportation providers, and with regional plans from the PSRC, such as the Vision 2040. In order to comply with the newer PSRC's Vision 2050 guidance, the DRC needs to demonstrate existing high-capacity transit or planning for it, and evidence that the area serves or will serve as a major transit hub. Bus and ferry services in Bremerton's DRC currently do not run frequently enough (every 15 minutes) nor long enough (18+ hours a day) to meet the PSRC's requirements for service quality. The DRC also lacks high-capacity transit such as a BRT. Kitsap County's Long-Range Transit Plan for 2022-2042 now envisions a new and larger Bremerton bus base, an increase in bus frequency (to 30-minute headways), new local bus routes and circulators, and a Bremerton-Tacoma Express Route. The plan also increases Bremerton's docking capacity, while the Kitsap Transit Sustainability Plan outlines more plans for ferry investment. To respond to Vision 2050, the Comprehensive Plan Update should consider ways to include new strategies supportive of aspects of this long-range plan which bring the DRC into compliance in the near-term. Potential items of consideration include:

- Advocate on behalf of the DRC to Kitsap Transit for nearer-term funding, planning, and construction of planned BRT route SR 303 between Silverdale and Bremerton, the proposed Bremerton-Tacoma Express Route and the new Bremerton base.
- Organize large local employers in the DRC to advocate for funding sources for planned transit improvements such as increasing taxes, fares, or by partnering with Kitsap Transit to provide annual contributions to operating expenses, build transit infrastructure or by purchasing fares in bulk.

The City of Bremerton's in progress Joint Compatibility Transportation Study may also include more near-term transportation solutions. Other ways to support growth of high-capacity transit in the near term and bring transit in the DRC into compliance include increasing bus or ferry service frequency to every 15 minutes and weekday operation hours to more than 18 hours. Engagement conducted for this Market Study determined strong public support for increased ferry service in particular. The DRC can also strive to increase density to support high-capacity bus service in the downtown area.

Regular Updates (Multiple References)

Finally, many aspects of Bremerton's Comprehensive plan and the Downtown Subarea Plan fall into compliance with PSRC requirements currently but must be regularly updated to reflect changing and updated information and will need to be updated in future planning documents. For example, Item 25

in the compliance matrix requires documentation of existing housing units, which will change over time; Item 49 requires reference to local capital plans, which undergo frequent updates. Such data and plan reference updates can be achieved in a low-cost, ad hoc fashion through regular amendments to the existing planning document going forward.

Outside of the PSRC designation criteria, engagement conducted through this Market Study revealed several topics of high importance to stakeholders that may be considered in upcoming planning documents. These topics, aggregated across participants, do not represent formal recommendations but have been listed below for consideration in planning for the DRC.

Topics of interest to stakeholders included infill development, permitting timelines, improving working relationships with developers, and addressing homelessness. Some suggestions that were made regarding infill development and addressing vacancy included, incentivizing development to fill downtown core with housing, instituting a vacancy tax, reducing development charges for affordable multifamily projects and supporting denser housing in downtown. Some suggestions surrounding permitting timelines in the DRC included shortening permitting and entitlement timelines, potentially adding an administrator for the Building Department, or alleviating staffing issues by centralizing processes, communication, and project hand off between appropriate staff reviewers. And finally, participants suggested continued engagement and collaboration with developers to inform land use planning, and the removal of restrictive zoning requirements, such as high off-street parking minimums.