

Tukwila Housing Background Report

Introduction

This background report consolidates essential information about Tukwila housing stock, households, future trends, and regional targets to inform the development of the Housing Element.

It is organized into the following sections:

Section 1 – Planning Context reviews regional planning for land use, transportation, and housing, as well as recent action by the state legislature that altered city powers and responsibilities regarding housing.

Section 2 – Community Profile provides an overview of demographics of Tukwila residents and workers.

Section 3 – Housing Inventory reviews the unique characteristics of Tukwila’s housing stock.

Section 4 – Housing Needs explores Tukwila’s 2044 growth targets and progress, housing needs by income level, and the cost-burden to residents. This section also identifies gaps in the City’s housing stock.

Section 5 – Land Capacity Analysis reviews land availability for needed housing in Tukwila.

Some key findings from this report include:

- **Growth targets:** After slow housing growth between 2006 and 2018, Tukwila has seen significant new development between 2018 and 2023, helping to close the gap towards the 2044 housing target of 14,239 total units. As a result of slow growth, Tukwila must implement “reasonable measures” to ensure sustained housing production. As of 2023, Tukwila must build 5,045 units, or about 240 per year, to meet the target.
- **Income band allocation:** Income-band allocations negotiated between the City and King County place 51% of new units of Tukwila’s 2044 growth target in the greater than 120% area median income (AMI) category. This reflects County goals to balance low- and high-income housing across the county.
- **Housing size:** The size, in terms of bedrooms, of Tukwila housing units is poorly aligned to the size and tenure of Tukwila households, i.e., renter households tend to be significantly larger than homeowner households, but renter units tend to be smaller.
- **Building age:** Almost half of Tukwila housing units are more than fifty years old, and most units were constructed between 1960 and 1980. If well-maintained and protected from displacement, these units offer a naturally-occurring affordable housing reservoir.
- **Racially Disparate Impacts:** Some policies in the 2015 Comprehensive Plan favored exclusive neighborhoods of individual housing types and included ambiguous references to views, character, and architectural design that could exacerbate racially disparate

impacts in housing. These policies have been updated and revised in the current planning cycle.

- **Vacancy rates:** Tukwila has very low vacancy rates, which indicates a constrained housing market that doesn't have enough supply or provide households with ample choices as their housing needs change. In 2021, the rental vacancy rate was 1.3% and the ownership vacancy rate was 1.4%.

Section 1 – Planning Context

Growth Management Act and HB 1220

King County and its cities and towns are required to meet Growth Management Act (GMA) planning requirements. In addition, in 2021, the state legislature passed House Bill 1220, which amended the GMA and instructed local governments to “plan and accommodate” for housing affordable to all income levels.

Per the Department of Commerce, cities must now:

- Plan for and accommodate housing that is affordable to all economic segments; including emergency housing, shelter, and permanent supportive housing;
- Promote a variety of residential densities and housing types;
- Encourage the preservation of existing housing stock;
- Provide housing units necessary to meet statewide projections for moderate, low, very low, and extremely low-income households;
- Report on actions taken to provide housing and increase affordability and diversity in supply; and
- Demonstrate how local housing policy is linked to adjacent city, county, regional, and statewide housing efforts.

In response to this update, the Department of Commerce and King County have provided guidance and housing need targets with a focus on affordability and racially disparate housing impacts. Tukwila must take the requirements of HB 1220 into account during the 2024 Comprehensive Plan periodic update.

Regional Planning and Growth Targets

The City of Tukwila's Comprehensive Plan must align with regional growth strategies – Puget Sound Regional Council's VISION 2050 and VISION 2050's Multicounty Planning Policies, and King County's Countywide Planning Policies (CPP) and Urban Growth Capacity (UGC) Report.

Puget Sound Regional Council VISION 2050

- VISION 2050, passed in October 2020, is the region's plan for growth and sets the stage for updates to countywide planning policies and comprehensive plans developed by cities and counties.
- VISION 2050 calls for cities and counties to support building more diverse housing types, especially near transit, services, and jobs. The plan also calls for more housing that's affordable to moderate, low- and very low-income households, including homeownership options.

- Tukwila is one of the 16 Core Cities in PSRC's VISION 2050. It is the smallest Core City, in terms of population, in King County. The Regional Growth Strategy calls for King County's Core Cities to accommodate a large share of the county's population and employment growth through the year 2050.

King County Countywide Planning Policies

- RCW 36.70A.210 requires Washington counties to adopt countywide planning policies in cooperation with the cities within its jurisdiction.
- King County and each of its 39 cities recently ratified the 2021 King County Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) in preparation for the 2024 statutory updates of city comprehensive plans and in conjunction with the region's growth plan, VISION 2050.
- Under the Growth Management Act, King County, in coordination with the cities in King County, adopts growth targets for the next 20-year planning period. The growth targets are adopted in the CPP and represent policy statements about the amount of housing and job growth each jurisdiction is planning to accommodate in its comprehensive plan. The allocations of growth are consistent with the VISION 2050 Regional Growth Strategy.
- King County classifies Tukwila as a Core City and sets a growth target of a minimum of 6,500 new housing units and 15,890 new jobs in Tukwila for the period between 2019 and 2044. These growth targets were adopted in the Countywide Planning Policies and ratified by the Tukwila City Council.

Tukwila Community Renewal Area

In 1998, the City adopted the Pacific Highway Revitalization Plan, a subarea plan for the Tukwila International Boulevard (TIB) corridor that documented unsafe, unattractive, and declining conditions in the area and conveyed a positive vision for the corridor's future. Building on that effort, in 2000, the City adopted an urban renewal plan that designated an urban renewal area of approximately 64 acres. The designated renewal area allows the City greater latitude to buy and condemn property and conduct site master planning. The City acquired land and worked with developers, nonprofits, and agency partners to create a successful mixed-use development, Tukwila Village, that includes public gathering spaces, a King County Library System (KCLS) public library, and senior housing. The renewal area is still in place and allows the City to undertake similar actions on parcels within the boundary.

Regional Transit Planning

Tukwila is located within the area served by Sound Transit, formally known as the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority. Sound Transit has passed three ballot measures within its service area since 1996 to create and expand high-capacity transit systems, including express bus service, light rail, bus rapid transit (BRT), and commuter rail. Tukwila is currently served by Link light rail at the Tukwila International Boulevard Station and by Sounder commuter rail at the Tukwila Station. In 2016, voters passed the Sound Transit 3 ballot measure, which proposed creating an I-405 BRT line, adding a light rail station in north Tukwila at Boeing Access Road, and improving Sounder commuter rail frequency. The Boeing Access Road station is planned to open in 2031 and will bring high-capacity transit to this area. "Stride" BRT on I-405 is planned

for 2028 and will improve transit access to Burien, Renton, and Bellevue from Tukwila International Boulevard Station. Delays in opening both projects are possible.

State Planning Preemptions

In April 2023, the Washington State Legislature passed several housing-related preemptions and regulations. State preemption constrains local government power around certain actions. The following are the most relevant to Tukwila.

2023 & 2024 Legislation Directly Impacting City Government

- [HB 1110](#) – Reduces zoning and permitting barriers to middle housing.
- [HB 1337](#) – Preempts common regulations on accessory dwelling units (ADU).
- [SB 5258](#) – Requires a short plat procedure for unit lot subdivisions, which is a division of a parent lot into separately owned unit lots (often a useful tool for middle housing).
- [SB 5258](#) – Requires lower impact fees for smaller unit residential development;
- [SB 5491](#) – Encourages cities to allow single-stairway residential buildings up to six stories and with up to four units per floor (currently allowed in buildings up to three stories).
- [HB 1042](#) – Prohibits cities from using development regulations (such as density limits or parking) to prevent added housing within an existing building envelope in a zone that allows multifamily use.
- [HB 1998](#) – Legalizes co-living housing on lots allowing at least six units.
- [HB 1181](#) – Requires comprehensive plans to include a Climate Change & Resiliency Element, starting with planning for the 2045 cycle. This doesn't apply to Tukwila's 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update, but may impact housing policies and implementation.
- [SB 6015](#) – Limits restrictions placed on orientation and type of parking required.

2023 & 2024 Legislation Indirectly Impacting City Government

- [HB 1771](#) and [SB 5198](#) – Strengthens rules to give mobile home park residents an opportunity to purchase the property when proposed for closure or conversion, and for displaced residents to receive relocation assistance.
- [SB 5258](#) and [SB 5058](#) – Encourages construction of small condominium buildings by modifying the procedures for construction defect actions and warranty claims and exempting buildings with 12 or fewer units and two or less stories from condo defect provisions such as extra inspections.
- [HB 1474](#) – Creates a statewide down payment assistance program for first-time homebuyers with income less than the area median who were themselves, or are descendants of someone who was, excluded from homeownership in Washington by a racially restrictive real estate covenant prior to 1968.
- [HB 1074](#) and [SB 5197](#) – Strengthens tenant protections upon move-out or eviction.
- [SB 5290](#) – Creates a consolidated permit review grant program that jurisdictions can apply for to help install a faster permitting process for residential applications for permits covered by the international residential code (IRC).

Federal Development Incentives

Two federal designations subsidize development in certain parts of Tukwila by making tax credits available under certain conditions.

Opportunity Zones

The Opportunity Zone program included in the federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 was designed to provide tax incentives to investors who fund businesses in underserved communities. Investors in Qualified Opportunity Funds that are invested in distressed communities in designated Opportunity Zones can defer paying taxes on capital gains. The program expires in 2026.

In Tukwila, census tracts 272, 282, 281, and 273, generally located in the northeast/central part of the City, are designated Opportunity Zones. Eligible areas can be seen in Figure 1.

Qualified Census Tracts

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development designates census tracts where 50% of households fall under 60% AMI as “qualified census tracts”. Federal low-income housing tax credits (LIHTC) have increased value when used to finance affordable housing developments in these tracts. Eligible Areas can be seen in Figure 2.

Tracts 271, 272, 273, 281, 282, and 264 are qualified census tracts.

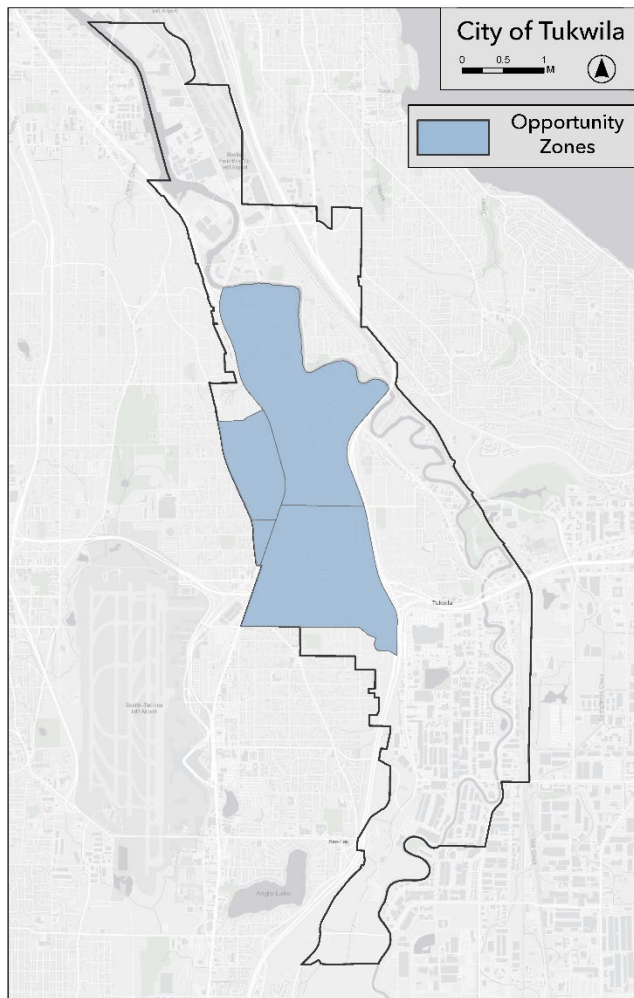


Figure 1. Opportunity Zone eligible tracts

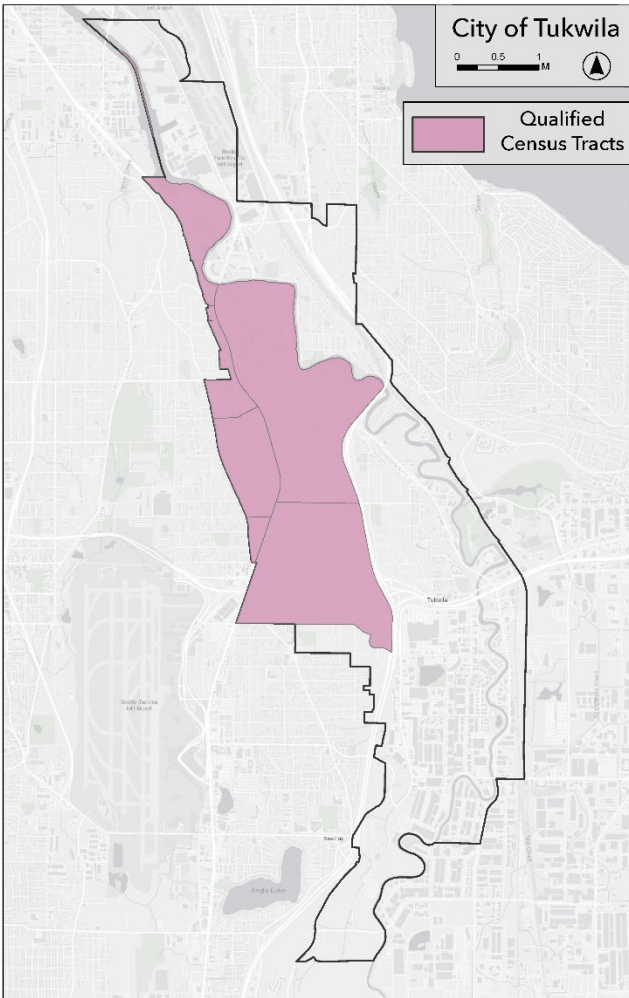


Figure 2. Qualified census tracts

Section 2 – Community Profile

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

Population and Demographics

Historic and Future Population

Tukwila’s population in 2020 was 21,798 according to the Washington Office of Financial Management (OFM). The OFM Postcensus 2024 population estimate for the City is 22,930 residents, and 9,231 housing units. In the last 20 years, the City has experienced a relatively

stable growth rate of about 1% per year. For comparison, King County has experienced a growth rate of about 1.4% per year over the last 20 years.

Age, Race/Ethnicity, and Language

Figure 3 shows the racial and ethnic breakdown of the Tukwila and King County populations. Tukwila is a much more diverse community than most of King County, with about 67% of the population identifying as people of color, compared with 40% in King County. The City has a higher proportion of Hispanic/Latino, Asian, and Black residents than the county as a whole.

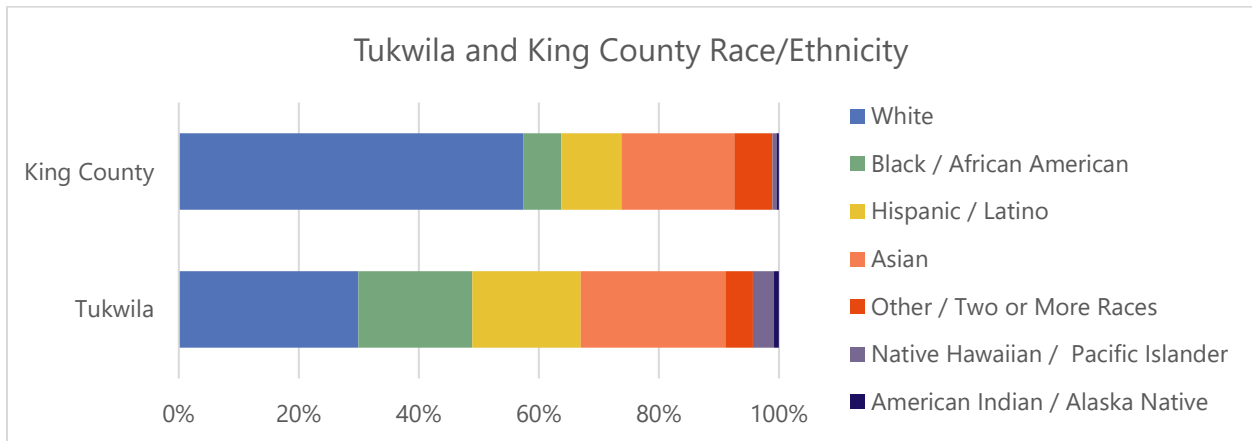


Figure 3. Racial and Ethnic Distribution in Tukwila and King County, 2021. Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table DP05. Note: all categories except "Hispanic/Latino" show non-Hispanic portions of population for each racial group.

Figure 4 shows age by sex in Tukwila and King County. The Tukwila population is somewhat younger than the county population, having around 65% under 45 years old, compared to 62% countywide, and 11% older than 65, compared to 13% countywide. Tukwila also has a significantly larger share of male residents than the county (54% versus 46%). Approximately 9.6% of Tukwila Residents are estimated to have some form of disability (2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table S1810).

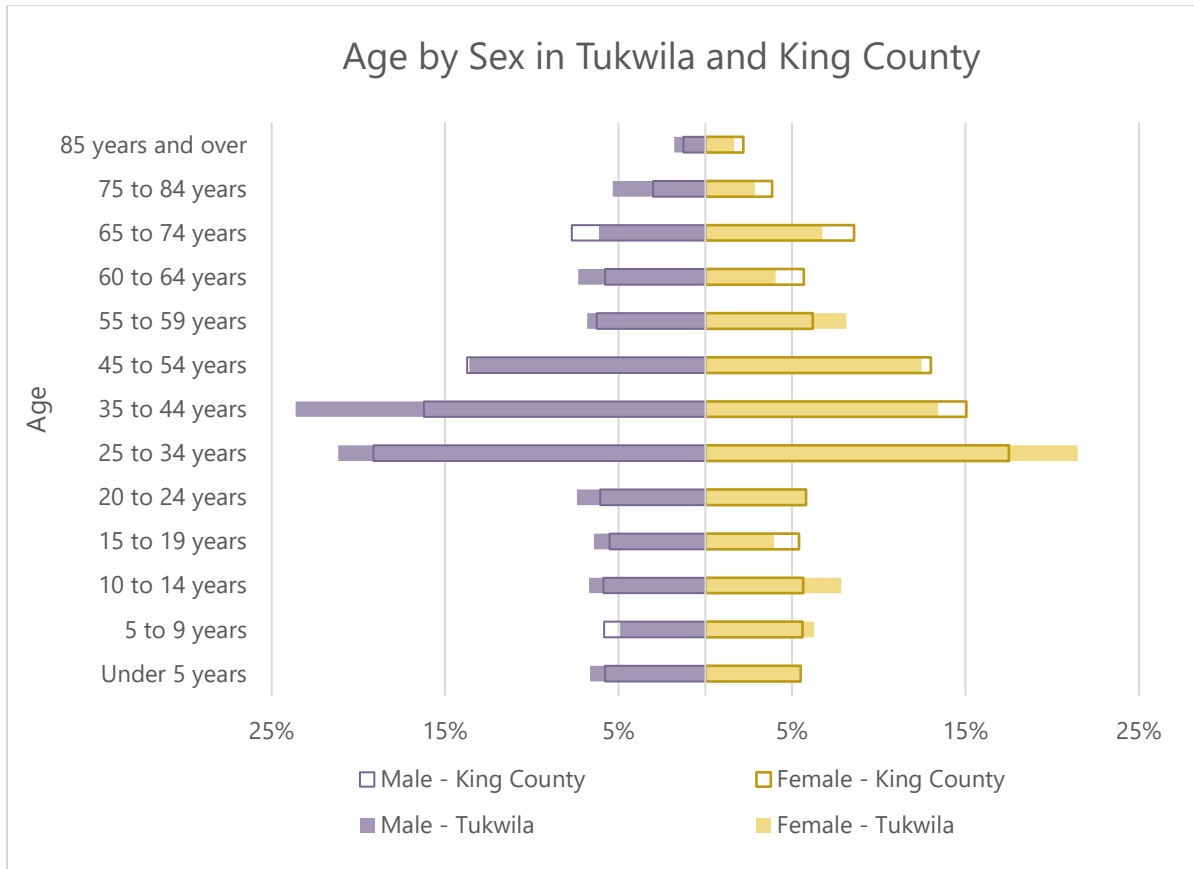


Figure 4. Age Distribution by Sex in Tukwila and King County, 2021. Source: 2021 American Community Survey, Table S0101

Nearly 40% of Tukwila residents were born in a country other than the United States. A little more than a third of Tukwila residents were born in the state of Washington and 22% were born in another U.S. state or territory. A significant number of Tukwila residents were born in Asian, African, and Latin American countries, as shown in Figure 5. Among those that were born in other nations, 55.0% are naturalized U.S citizens (2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table B05002).

Place of Birth	Percent	Total
Native Born	60.8%	13,099
USA (same state)	37.3%	7,821
USA (other state)	22.3%	4,805
Foreign Born	39.2%	8,446
Europe	2.9%	616
Asia	17.4%	3,754
Africa	8.5%	1,839
Oceania	1.8%	388
Latin America	8.2%	1,772
Northern America	0.4%	76

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

Figure 6 shows further differentiation of place of birth, and U.S. citizen status by race and ethnicity. Significant discrepancies between racial and ethnic groups can be seen, with over half of non-native born White, Black, Asian and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander residents having gained U.S. citizenship, while a far smaller proportion of residents identifying as Some Other race, or as ethnically Hispanic or Latino have become naturalized U.S. citizens.

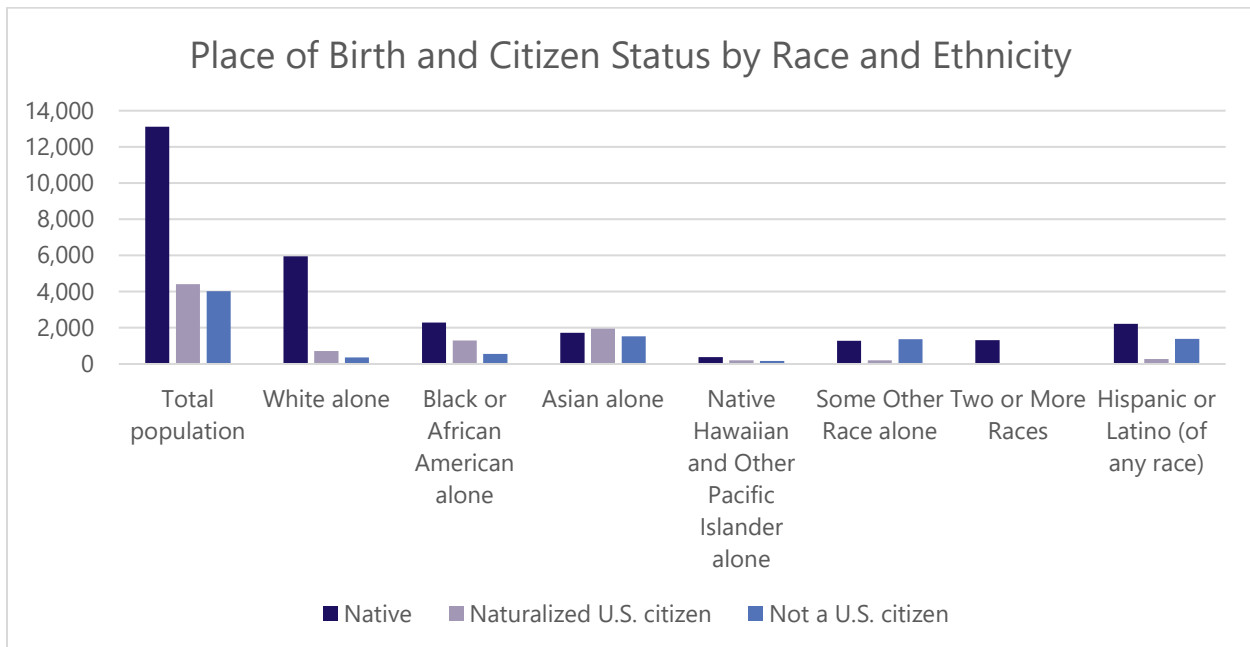


Figure 6. Place of Birth and Citizen Status by Race and Ethnicity, 2021. American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table B05002

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

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

Figure 7. Language Spoken at Home, 2021. Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table S1601

Household Characteristics

Household Size, Type, and Tenure

The U.S. Census Bureau defines a household as “all the people who occupy a housing unit.” Households can be comprised of any combination of related family members, unrelated people, or individuals.¹ The 2021 American Community Survey estimated about 7,755 total households in Tukwila (note: the current figure is higher, due to increased housing production between 2018 and 2024).

Figure 8 shows household composition in Tukwila and King County. Overall, the shares of family and non-family households are very similar to county averages, with 59% of households classified as family households. A smaller percentage of Tukwila family households are married couple families (40%), compared with King County family households (48%). Similar to King County, about 28% of Tukwila residents live alone and 8% of nonfamily households are residents over 65 years old. Household composition data can provide insight into the types and sizes of housing that will best meet City residents’ needs.

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

Figure 8. Household Composition in Tukwila, 2021. Source: 2021 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, Table S2501

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

owner and renter households has remained relatively flat over the last few decades, with owner occupancy rates of 39%, 42%, and 43% reported in the 1990, 2000 and 2010 censuses respectively (1990 Census, 2000 Census, 2010 Census). A higher distribution of renter households also means increases in rental housing prices can have an immediate impact on most Tukwila households, and, since renters are more likely to be Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) and lower-income households, a disproportionate impact on those populations.

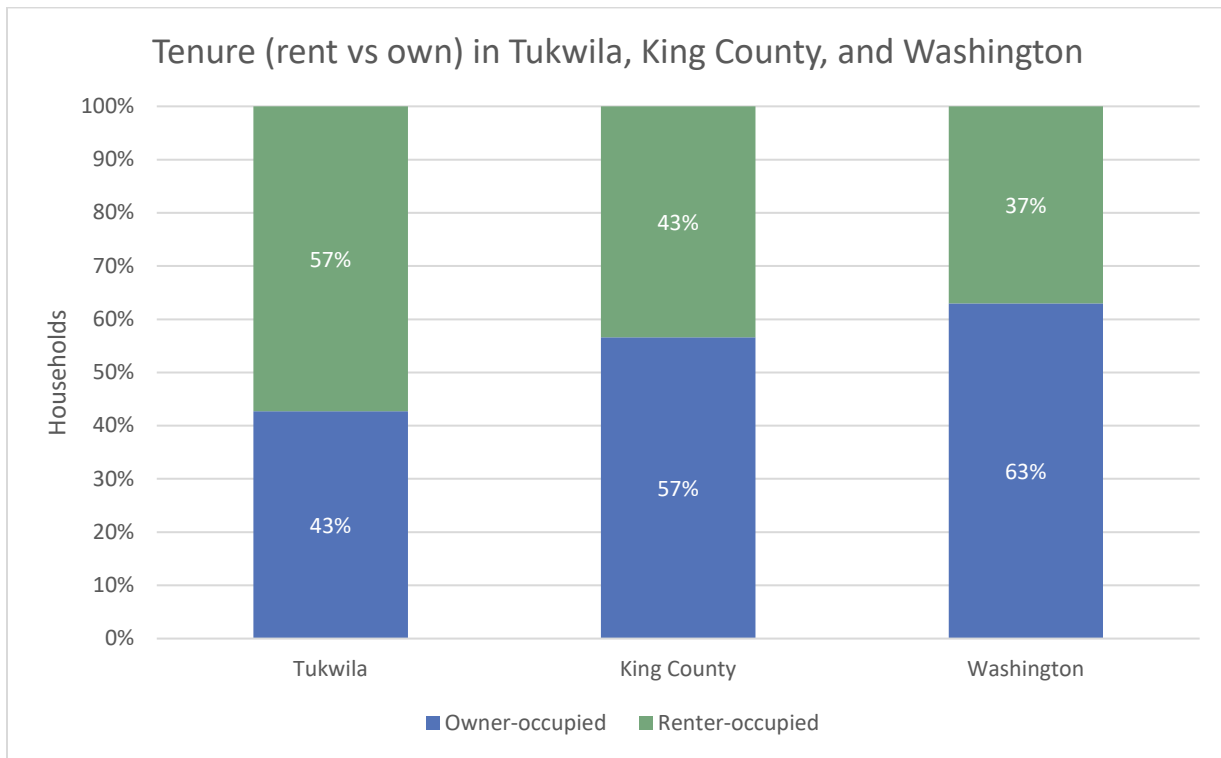


Figure 9. Tenure in Tukwila, King County, and Washington State, 2021. Source: 2021 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, Table DP04

As shown in Figure 10 **Error! Reference source not found.**, in Tukwila, White households are significantly more likely to be homeowners than renters, as are Asian households, to a lesser degree. Hispanic, Black, and other non-White or Asian households are more likely to rent.

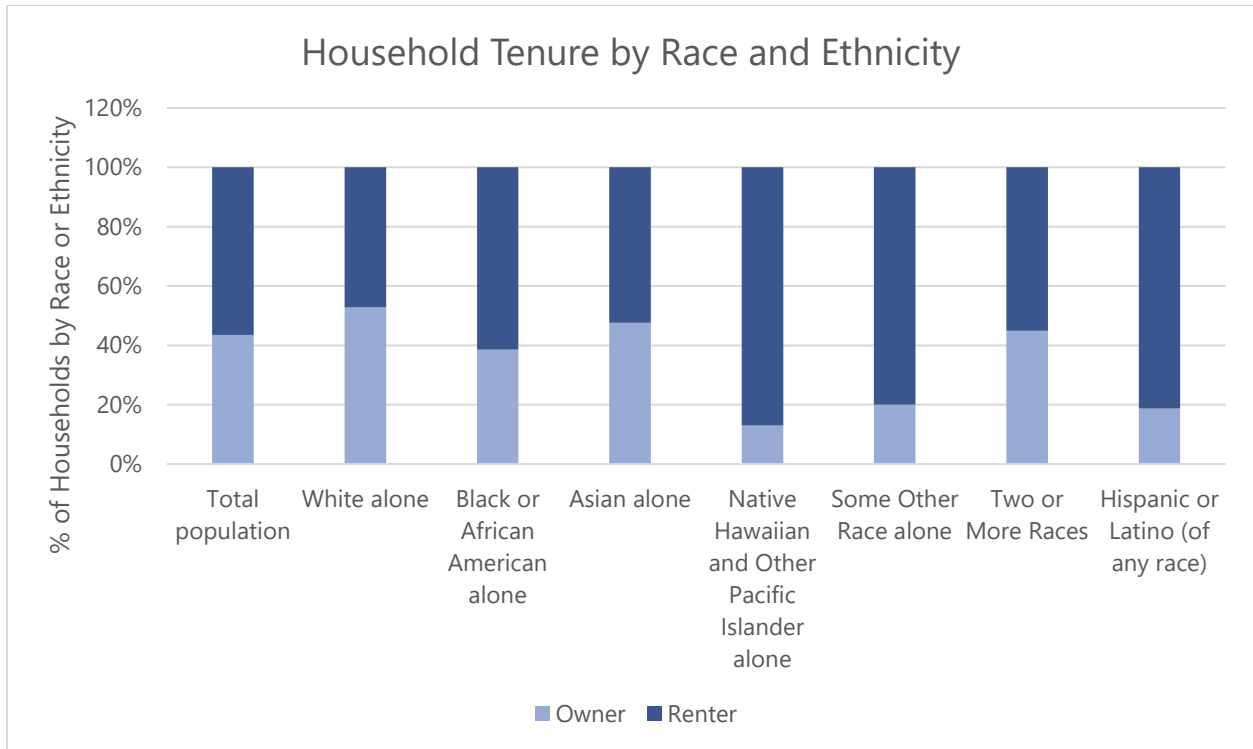


Figure 10. Tenure by Race in Tukwila, 2021. Source: 2021 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, Table DP04

Figure 11 shows the breakdown of Tukwila’s households by tenure and household size. Of the 7,755 total households in Tukwila, 15% are three-person households, and the remaining 85% are equal proportions of the one-person, two-person, and four- or more person households, at about 28% each.

The majority of Tukwila’s one-, two-, and three-person households are renters (58%, 53%, and 50%, respectively). Almost two-thirds (64%) of those living in four- or more person households are renters.

Of the 3,315 households owning a home, 59% live in one- or two-person households.

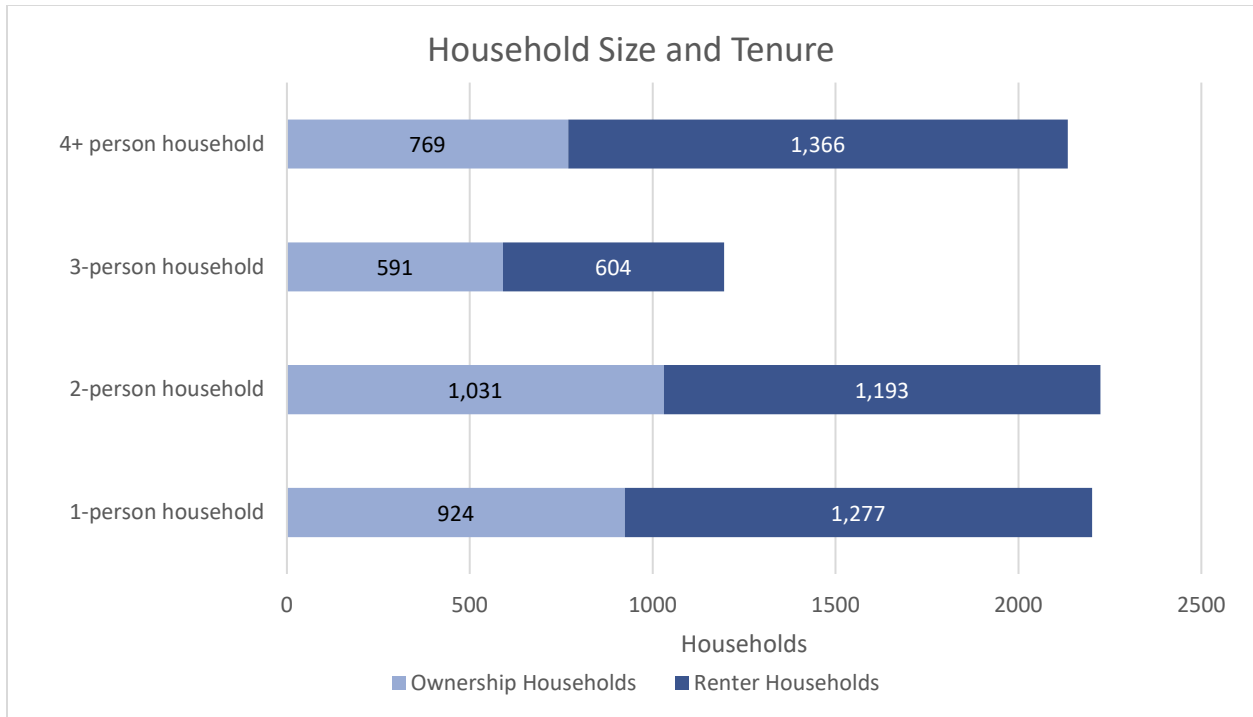
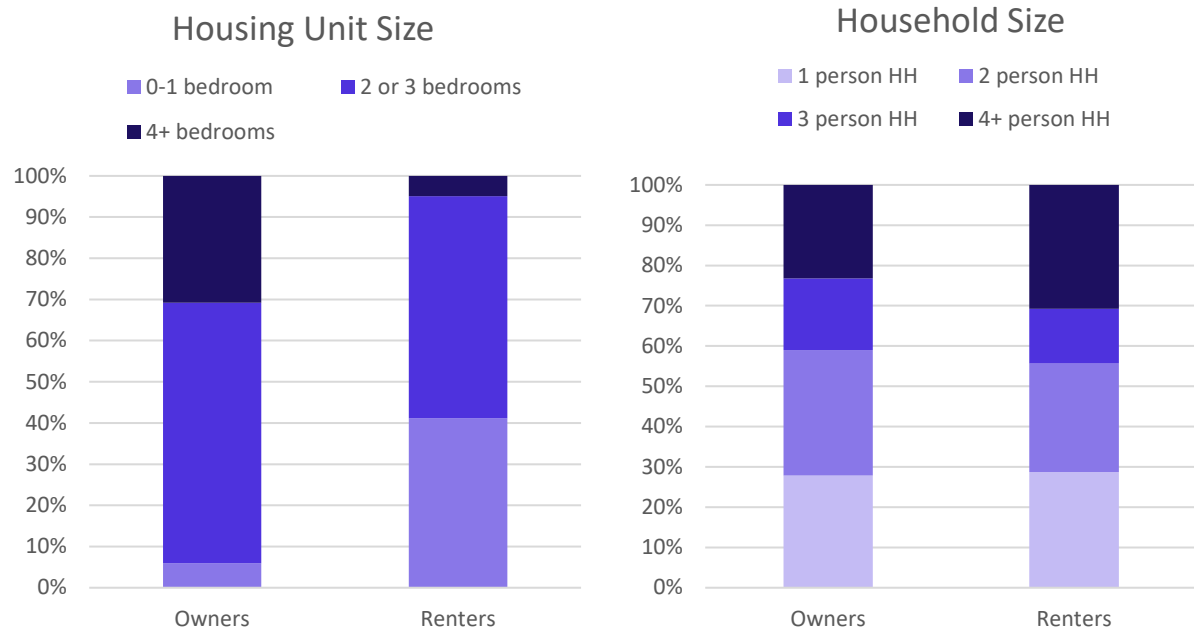


Figure 11. Tukwila Tenure by Household Size, 2021. Source: 2021 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, Table S2501

As shown in Figure 12, there is a mismatch between the percentage of households with four or more people and the percentage of housing units having four or more bedrooms. Such a disparity likely creates pressure and increases competition for three- and two-bedroom units from households with four or more people. The lack of housing for larger households also suggests the potential for overcrowding among larger households or multi-generational families.

When analyzed by tenure, the mismatch between the number of four or more person households and the number of housing units with four or more bedrooms indicates the impact is felt most acutely by households that rent. Figure 11, shows that there are sufficient four or more-bedroom units in the ownership market, but very few such units in the rental market.



Figures 12. Household Size and Housing Unit Size by Tenure in Tukwila, 2021. Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Tables S2501, S2504

Income

As shown in Figure 13, the median household income (MHI) in Tukwila was \$71,688 in 2021, \$38,898 less than the King County MHI and \$12,559 less than the statewide average. Additionally, renters in Tukwila earn less than homeowners, with the median household income for renter households being \$62,929 in 2021, compared to \$89,653 for ownership households.

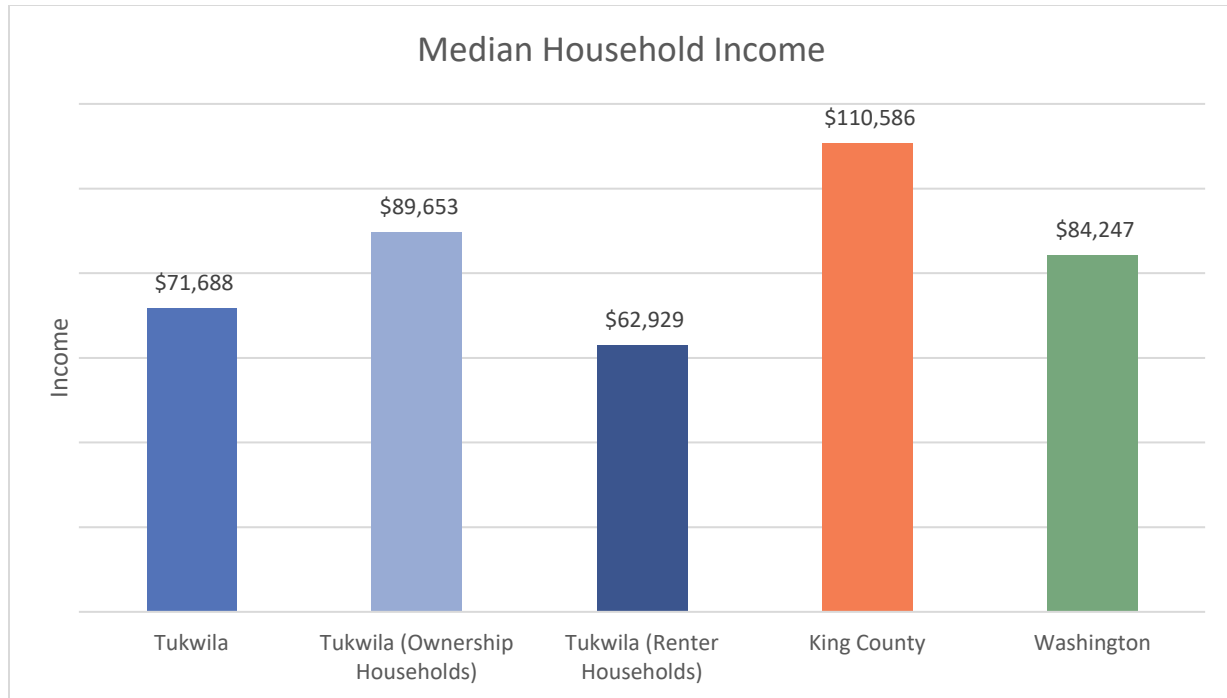


Figure 13. Inflation-Adjusted Median Household Income in Tukwila and Region, 2021. Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table S2503, CPI Inflation Index

As seen in Figure 14, significant discrepancies exist between the incomes of Tukwila households by race and ethnicity, with the median Black Households earning almost \$20,000 less per year the median White Household, and almost \$30,000 less per year than the median Asian Household.

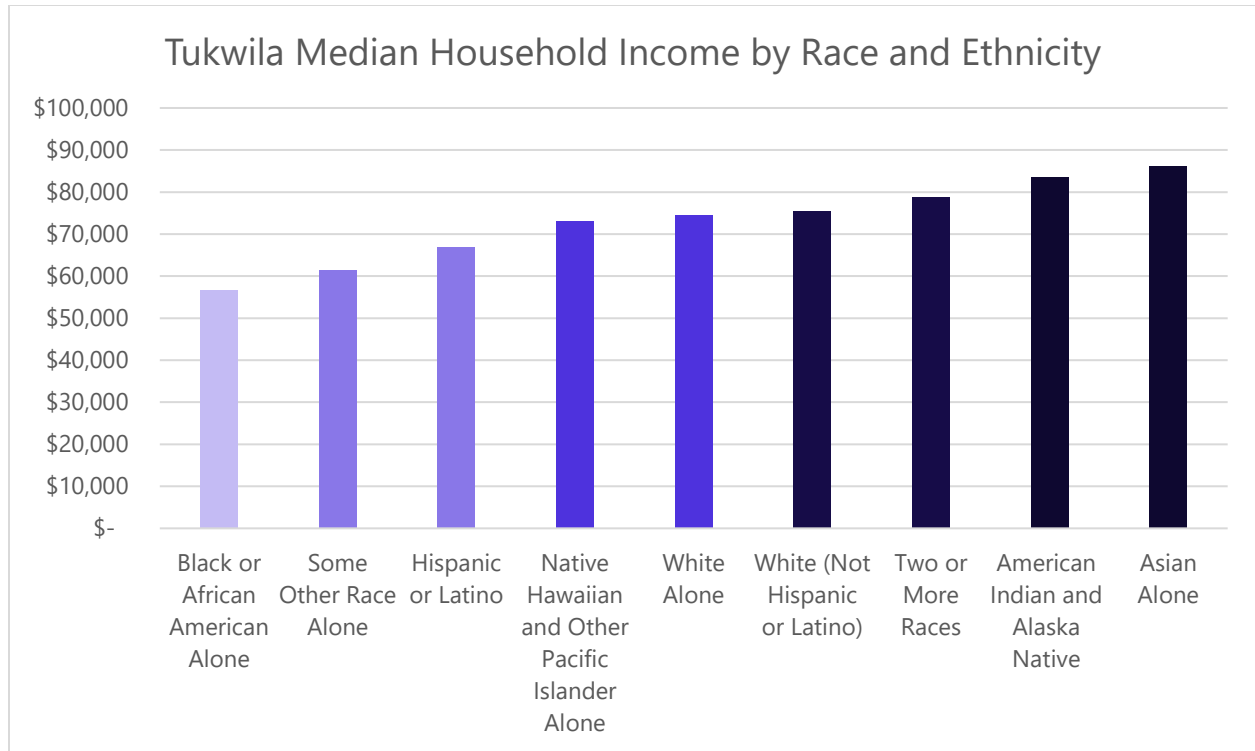


Figure 14. Inflation-Adjusted Median Household Income in Tukwila by Race, 2021. Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table B19013.

Figure 15 shows the income distribution of Tukwila households. In Tukwila, 55.8% of households earn less than 80% of the area median income of \$116,255, the maximum threshold to be eligible for most income-restricted affordable housing units.

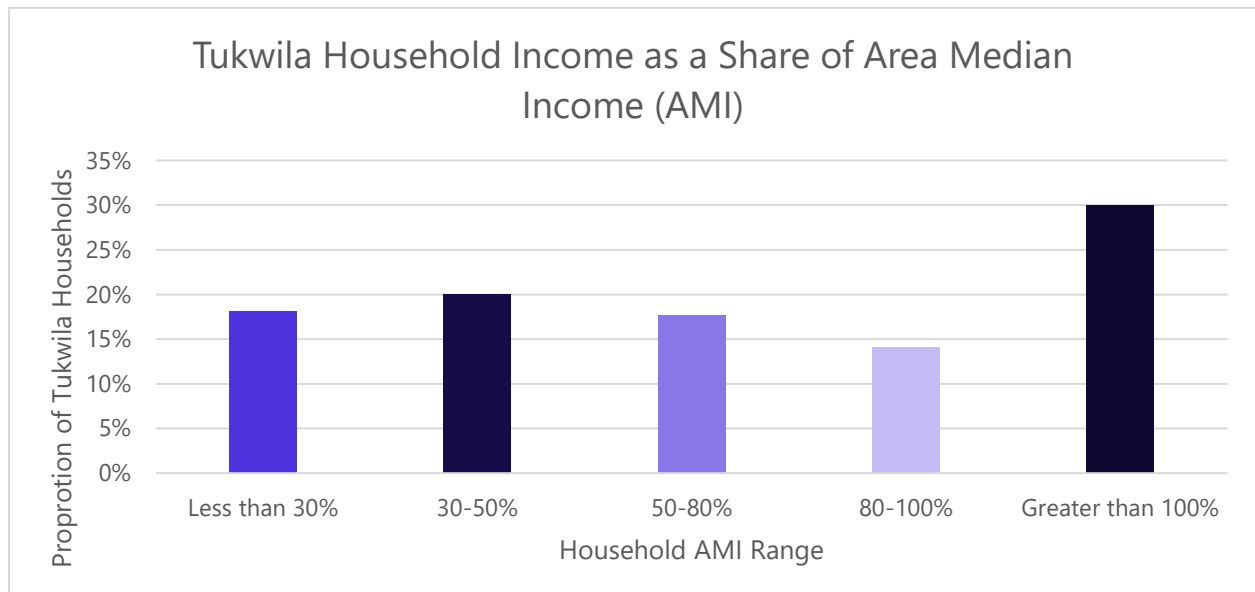


Figure 15. Share of Households by Income Level in Tukwila, 2016-2020. Source: HUD CHAS

Workforce Profile

Tukwila's workforce is significantly larger than its residential population; the City has 42,989 jobs as of 2023, compared to a population of 22,930; a ratio of 1.87 jobs/residents, far higher than the County average (PSRC Covered Employment).

The demographic composition of the workforce is less racially diverse than the City's residential population, but it is broadly like the countywide workforce composition in terms of age, race, and ethnicity. Compared to the county, Tukwila's workforce is more concentrated in manufacturing, wholesale trade, retail, and transportation/warehousing, and less concentrated in information technology, professional services, education, healthcare, and other services. Overall Tukwila's workforce is lower income and less educated than the county's as a whole (Source: 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table S1501).

Residence Location of Tukwila Workers

Just 1.9% of persons working in Tukwila live in Tukwila, while 8.2% of Tukwila residents work within the City. Roughly, 64% of persons working in Tukwila commute more than 10 miles to their jobs, primarily travelling from the north or south. About one quarter of persons working in Tukwila live in other south King County cities (Kent, Renton, Federal Way, Auburn, Burien, or SeaTac), and one-eighth live in Seattle.

Residence Location of Tukwila Workers	Share
Seattle	12.8%
Kent	7.2%
Renton	5.5%
Tacoma	4.2%
Federal Way	4.1%
Auburn	3.6%
Burien	2.5%
Bellevue	2.4%
SeaTac	1.9%
Tukwila	1.9%
Other	53.9%

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

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

Race and Hispanic Ethnicity of Workers in Tukwila	Tukwila Share	King County Share
White Alone	71.2%	72.7%
Black or African American Alone	7.8%	6.1%
American Indian or Alaska Native Alone	0.8%	0.9%
Asian Alone	14.8%	15.7%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Alone	1.2%	0.7%
Two or More Race Groups	4.3%	3.9%
Hispanic or Latino	89.8%	91.6%
Not Hispanic or Latino	10.2%	8.4%

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

Section 3 – Housing Inventory

Total Housing Units

According to OFM, Tukwila has 9,231 housing units as of 2024. The approximate breakdown of unit types is shown below in Figure 16. Tukwila has a lower proportion of housing units that are single-family detached units (40%), compared to the County’s proportion of single-family detached units (52%). Tukwila also has a noticeably higher proportion (24%) of middle density (having 5-19 units) multifamily buildings than the County, which only has 12.2% of similar buildings with a total of 5-19 units. In Tukwila, the percentage of 5-19 unit multifamily buildings is actually a slightly higher share of housing structures having more than 20 or more units (21.8%).

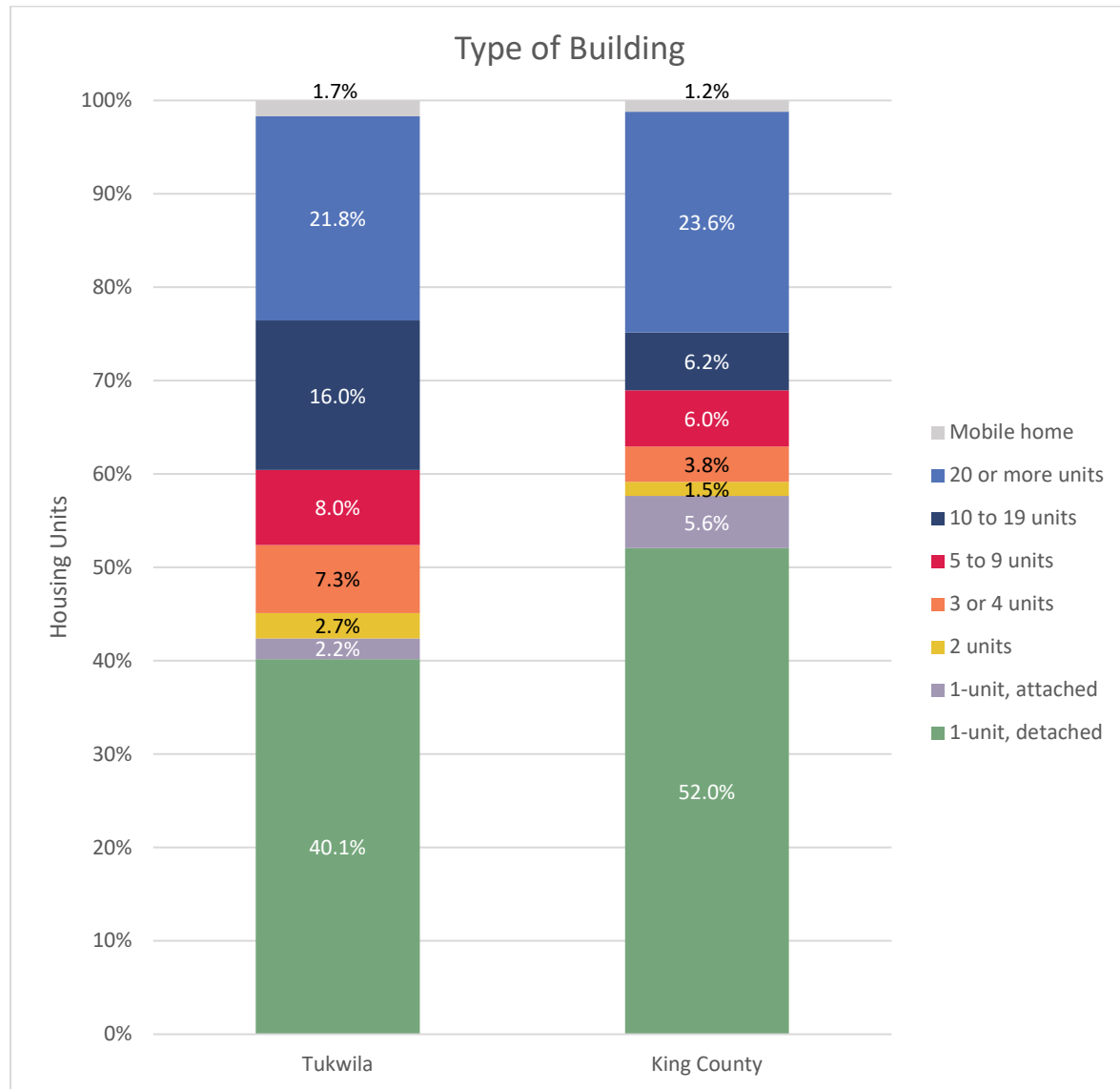


Figure 16. Housing Unit Type in Tukwila and King County, 2021. Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table DP04.

Housing Age and Production

Figure 17 shows the age of the housing stock in Tukwila in comparison to King County, as of 2021. Tukwila generally has an older housing stock than the County. Most of Tukwila's housing stock was built between 1960 and 1989, and 45% is more than fifty years old (compared to 34% of County housing stock). Only about 22% of Tukwila's housing stock has been built in the last 30 years, about half the countywide rate (40%).

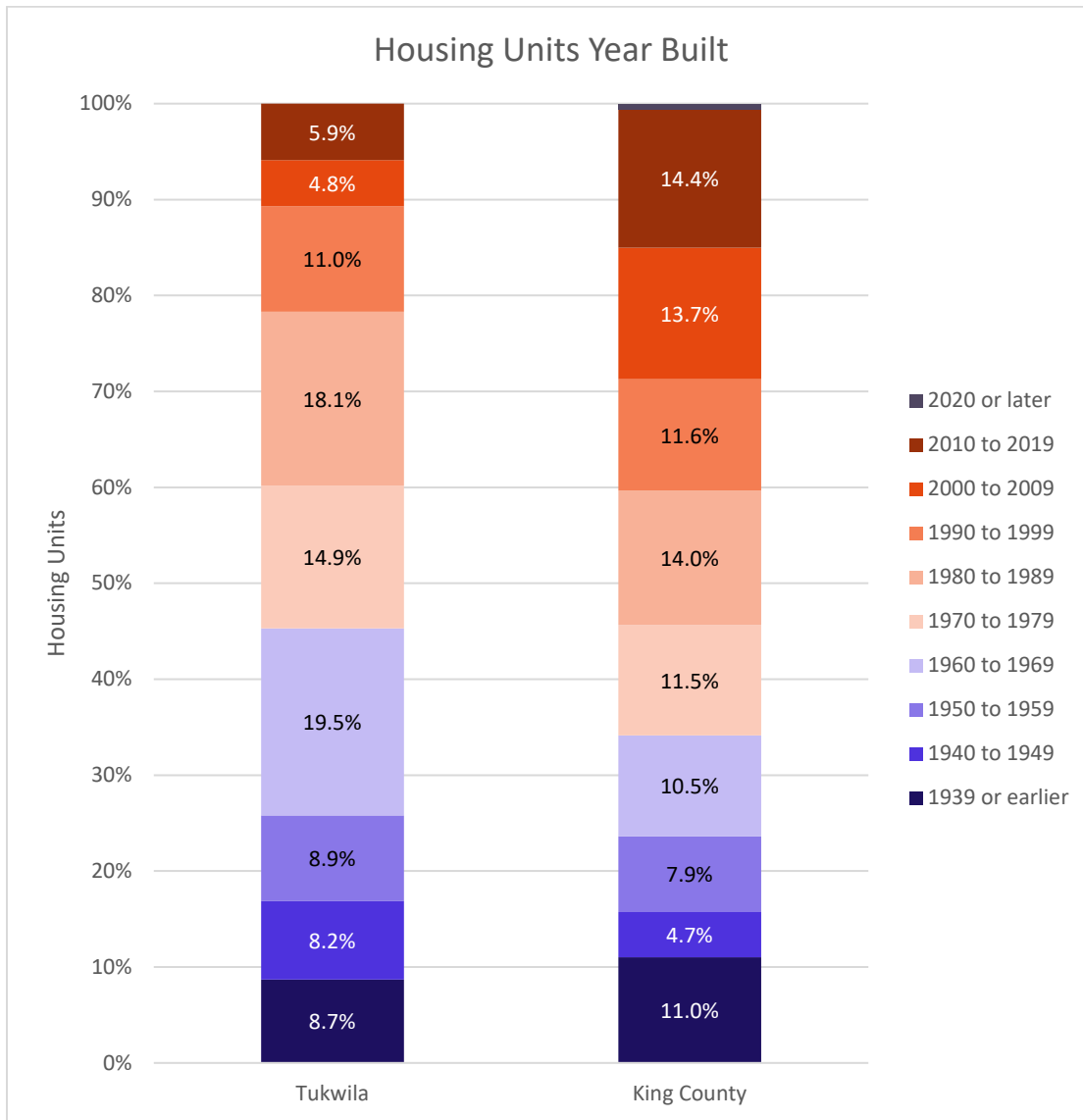


Figure 17. Age of Housing in Tukwila and King County, 2021. Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table DP04

Building permit issuance data shown below in Figure 18 captures the 1980s as a period when a higher proportion of Tukwila's housing stock was built. It also shows that most of the recent

multifamily development has happened within the last five years, though not all recent multifamily development is captured in the totals. This data shows issued permits, not completions, so some of the development in the last three years may not be captured in the data.

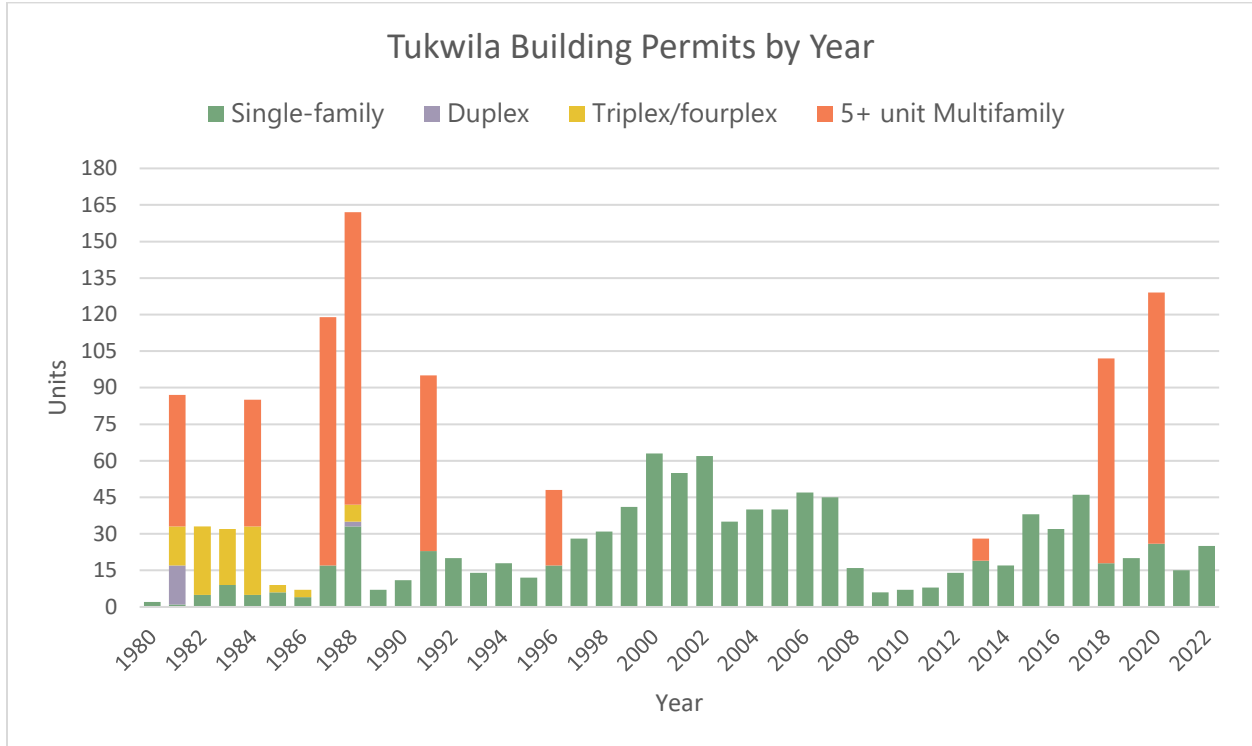


Figure 18. Tukwila Building Permits Issued by Unit Type, 1980-2022. Source: HUD State of the Cities Data Systems (SOCDS)

Vacancy Rates

Tukwila's vacancy rate for rental and ownership properties are shown in Figure 19. In 2021, the rental vacancy rate was 1.3%, a rate that has decreased drastically over the last decade, dropping from 7.3% in 2010. A rental vacancy rate of 5% is considered healthy, allowing units to turn over and offering renters choice among available stock. The ownership vacancy rate was 1.4% in 2021, and that rate has stayed mostly stable over the course of the last decade.

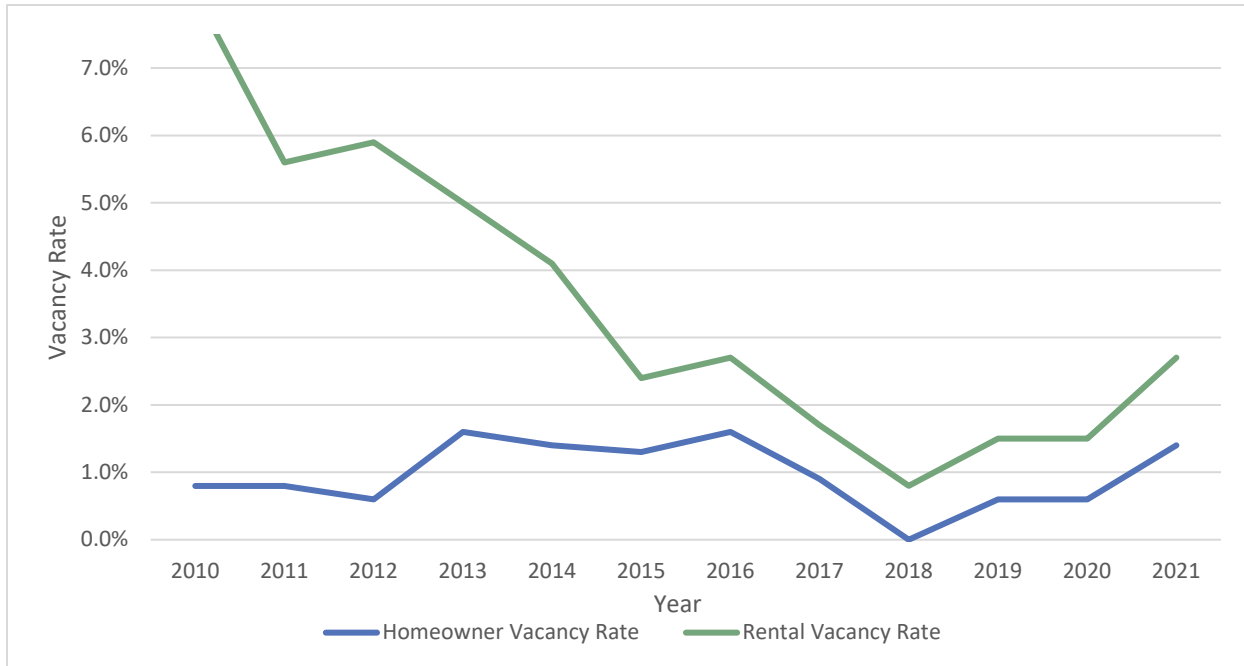


Figure 19. Vacancy Rates in Tukwila, 2010-2021. Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table DP04

Affordable Housing – Subsidized

Affordable housing is a term that is used in different ways in different contexts. “Subsidized affordable housing” is housing supported by government or private subsidy and reserved for people earning below a certain income (other interrelated terms include low-income housing, subsidized housing, public housing, or rent-restricted housing). “Naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH)” refers to market-rate housing, often in older buildings, having low rents. This section addresses subsidized affordable housing in Tukwila and will refer to it as affordable housing within this section.

Affordable housing properties may be reserved for people meeting a range of criteria, such as families with children, seniors, people with physical or intellectual disabilities, or people with substance abuse disorders. Affordable housing is important to support community members who face barriers in the private housing market, especially those who are on the edge of, or transitioning out of, homelessness. This type housing is subsidized and mostly operated by government or nonprofit organizations.

The main affordable housing provider in Tukwila is King County Housing Authority (KCHA), a government agency that provides housing assistance for families who need affordable alternatives to the private market. KCHA operates countywide. In Tukwila, King County Housing Authority’s portfolio includes 283 housing units across three properties.

In addition, Homestead Community Land Trust, a nonprofit, is building 11 subsidized housing units for low-to-moderate-income buyers as part of an 18-unit housing development. Other

nonprofits including, Bellwether Housing, and Sustainable Housing for Ageless Generations (SHAG) have built 100 and 235 housing units, respectively, in Tukwila.

Property Name	Units	Housing Type	Resident Criteria
King County Housing Authority			
Riverton Terrace	60	Multifamily	Subsidized housing; Open to families, seniors 55+, and disabled persons
Villages at South Station	191	Multifamily	Moderate-income housing
Pacific Court	32	Multifamily	Persons exiting homelessness (PSH)
Homestead Community Land Trust			
The Southard*	11	Semi-attached cottages	Subsidized housing for sale
Bellwether			
Confluence	103	Multifamily	Subsidized housing; Income qualified residents
Sustainable Housing for Ageless Generations – SHAG			
Tukwila Village	235	Multifamily	Subsidized housing; Open to seniors 55+ and disabled persons
Other Providers			
Miscellaneous	165	Middle Housing & Multifamily	Varied

Figure 20. Tukwila Affordable Housing Inventory (King County Housing Authority)

Note: (*) The Southard is currently under construction and is not occupied as of the completion of this report.

Section 4 – Housing Needs

Market Rate Housing

Per the King County Countywide Planning Policies, Tukwila has a 2044 housing growth target of 6,500 units above the 2006 level of 7,739 to reach a total of 14,239 units. As of 2023, Tukwila has 9,231 housing units, so 5,008 units of the target remain. To achieve this target by 2044, it will require that roughly 240 net additional units be built per year. If met, Tukwila’s population would increase to approximately 36,000 residents in 2044 based on current OFM assumptions for persons per household.

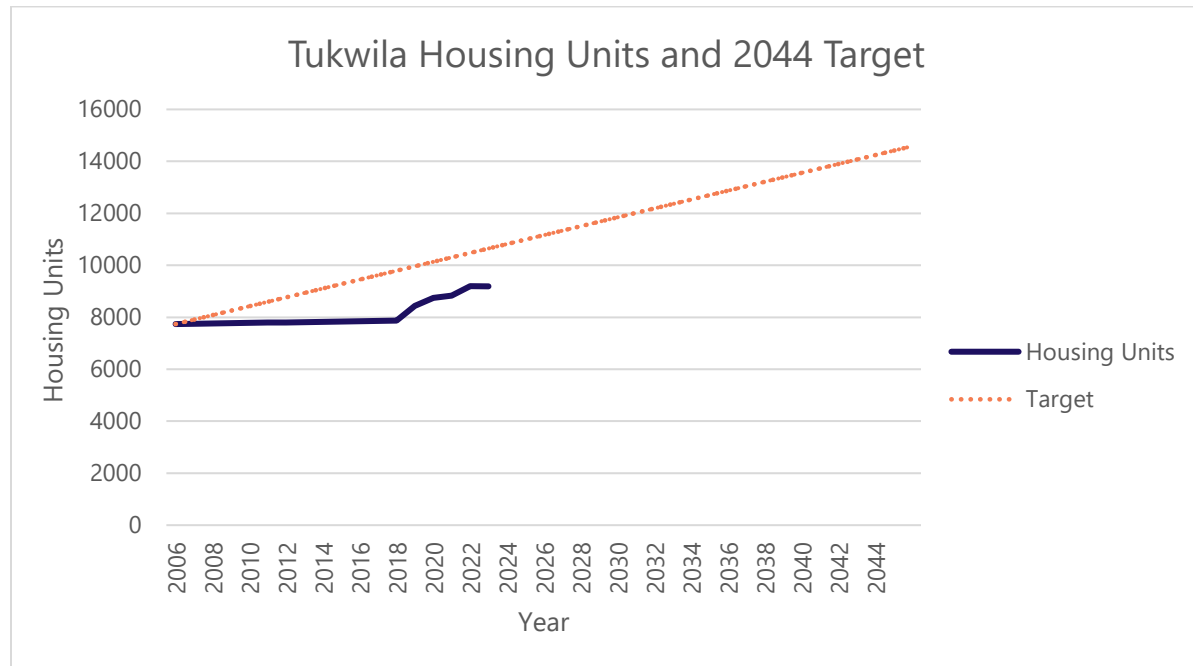


Figure 21. Tukwila Housing Units and 2044 Growth Target. Source: OFM, 2023 and 2021 King County Urban Growth Center Report.

As a result of the limited past progress that occurred between 2006 and 2018 in meeting the previous 2035 housing target, Tukwila has been recommended to adopt “reasonable measures” to increase growth of both housing and employment. The 2021 King County Urban Growth Capacity Report recommended the following broad measures:

- Action(s) to encourage and/or incentivize residential development
- Action(s) to encourage and/or incentivize non-residential development

The past several years have seen a significant increase in housing production in Tukwila, however, measures to ensure continued production are still warranted. The Housing element recommends changes to residential zones to encourage development of denser multifamily and middle housing.

Collaboration with Community around Housing Needs

In the interest of better understanding the housing needs for Tukwila Community members most disproportionately impacted by housing cost, City Staff emphasized multiple strategies to better reach impacted groups that may not have been as likely to participate in policy decisions. Some of these strategies included focusing more in-person outreach opportunities closer to concentrations of these populations, such as along Tukwila International Boulevard, and providing translation services and food at said events. Staff also coordinated with community groups and leaders to better reach certain communities. This included contracting with community groups such as the Somali Health Board and African Community Housing & Development, to hear their housing challenges and experiences firsthand. During the comprehensive plan update the City also signed on as a member of the Black Home Initiative.

Cost-Burdened Households & Income Bands

HUD uses a measurement of “cost burden” to further determine which subset of a community’s residents are most in need of housing support or most at risk of displacement or housing hardship.

A household is considered to be “cost-burdened” if they are spending more than 30% of monthly income on housing costs (including rent/mortgage and utilities). A “severely cost-burdened” household spends more than 50% of their monthly income on housing costs.

Figure 22 shows a breakdown of Tukwila’s households by tenure and cost burden status. Overall, about 41% of Tukwila’s households are considered cost-burdened. Half of all renter-occupied households are considered cost-burdened, while one quarter of owner-occupied households are considered cost-burdened.

As is the case nationwide, renters are significantly more at risk of economic hardship and displacement than homeowners. With rental rates increasing dramatically in recent years and income growth failing to keep up, it appears that renters are suffering the consequences in terms of cost burden. There is a clear need for more rental housing that is affordable to all income levels.

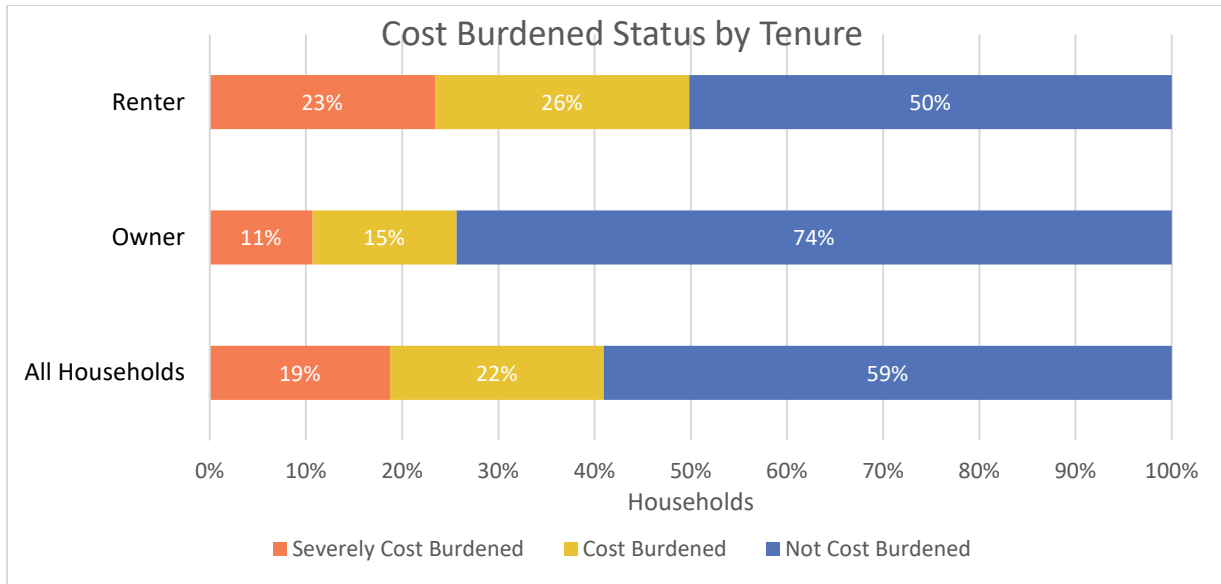


Figure 22. Household Tenure by Cost Burden in the City of Tukwila, 2020. Source: HUD CHAS 2016-2020.

When analyzing by race/ethnicity and by tenure, further discrepancies were revealed as shown in Figures 23, 24 and 25. White Tukwila households are far more likely to not be cost burdened compared to households of color, and particularly Black Households.

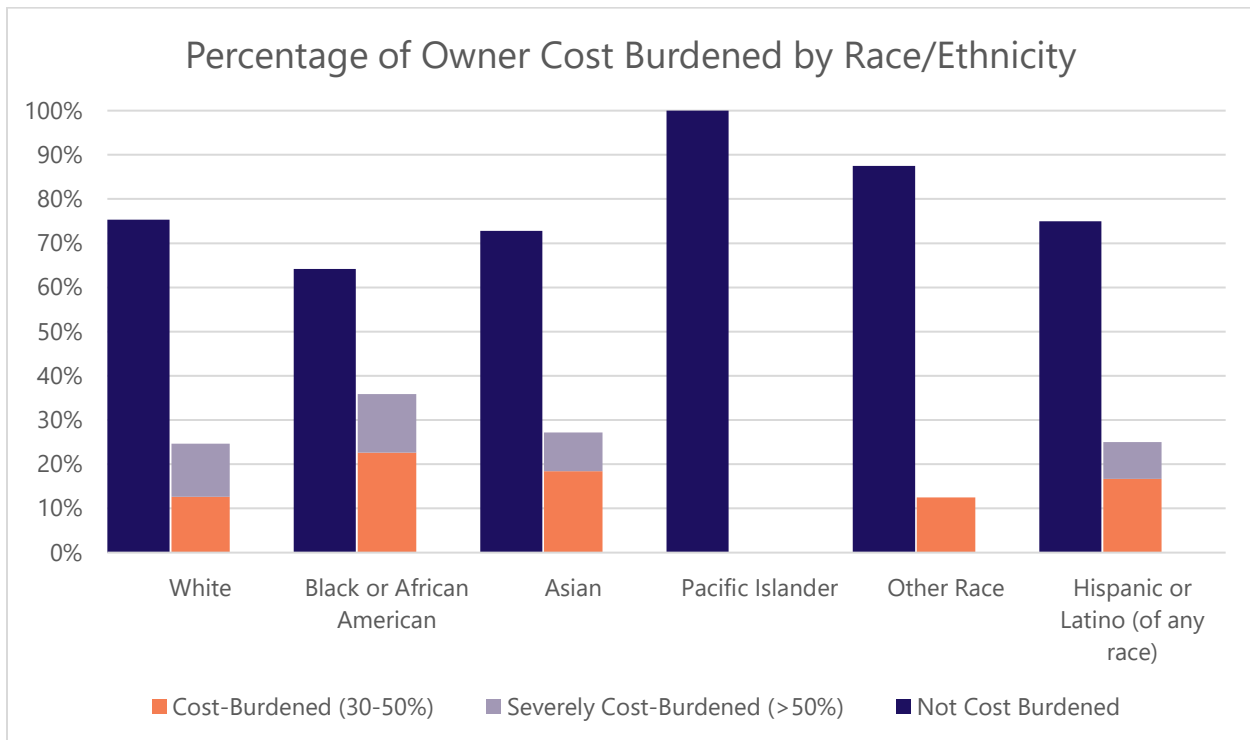


Figure 23. Race/Ethnicity by Owner Cost Burden in the City of Tukwila, 2019. Source: HUD CHAS 2015-2019.

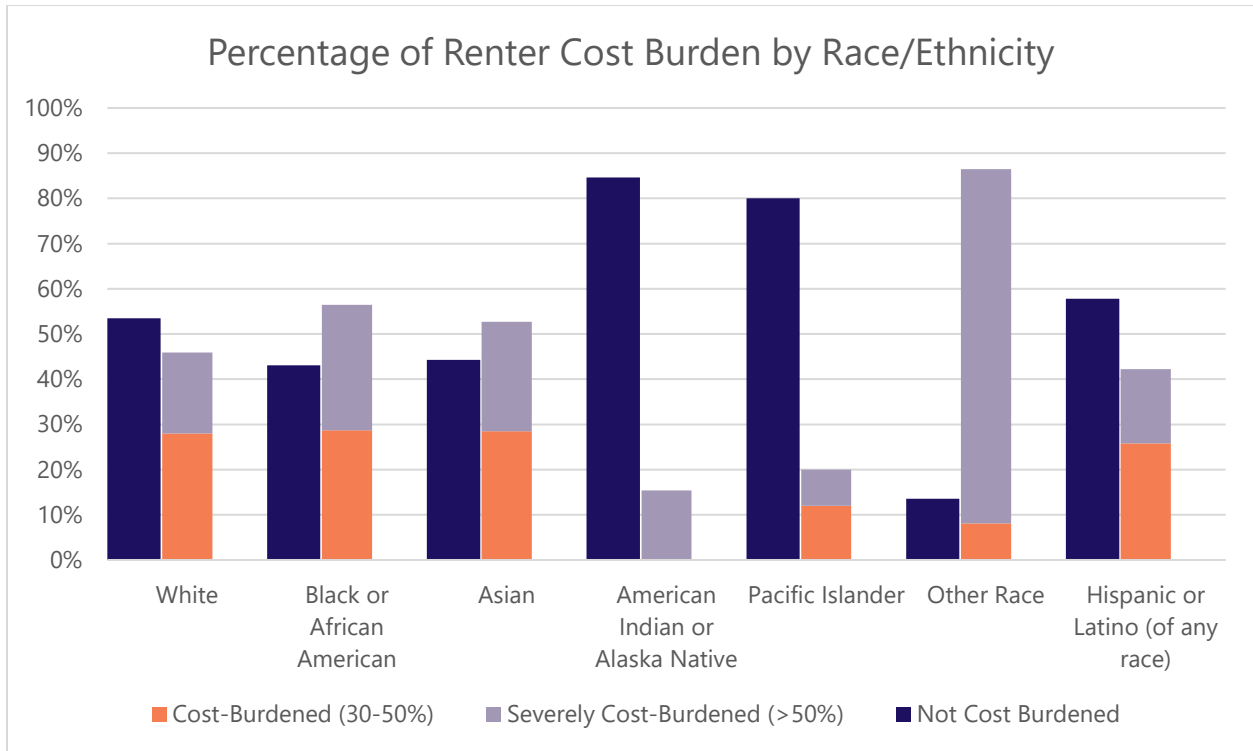


Figure 24. Race/Ethnicity by Renter Cost Burden in the City of Tukwila, 2019. Source: HUD CHAS 2015-2019.

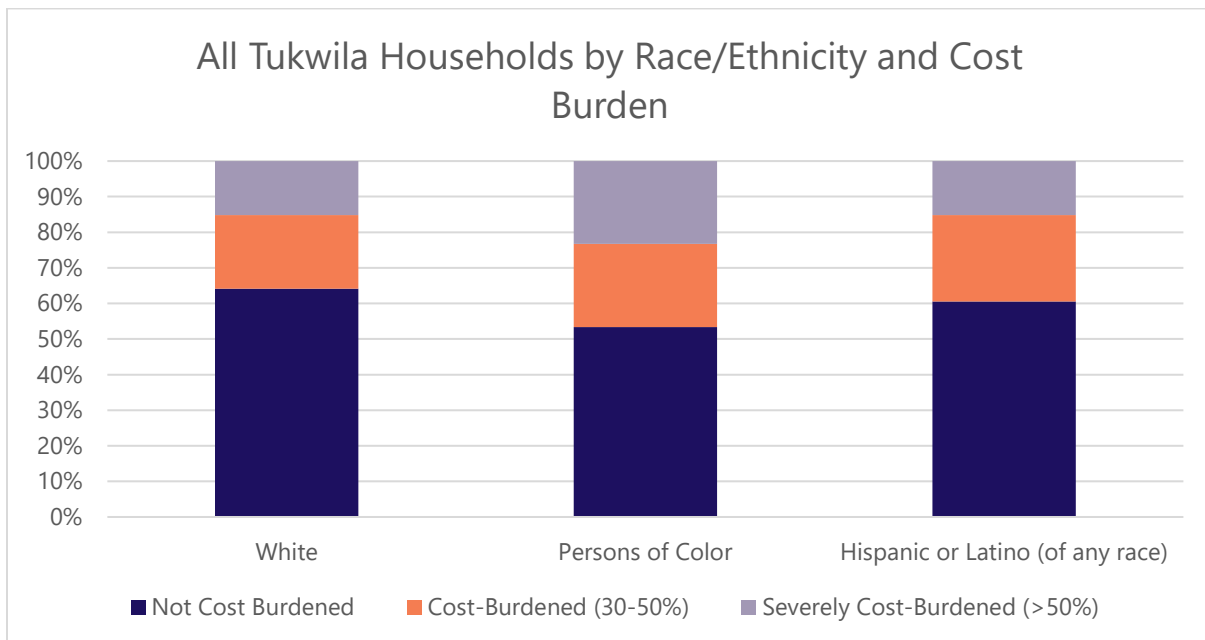


Figure 25. Race/Ethnicity by Cost Burden in the City of Tukwila, 2019. Source: HUD CHAS 2015-2019.

As amended by HB 1220 in 2021, RCW 36.70A.070 requires that cities planning under the Growth Management Act (GMA) inventory and analyze projected housing needs for specific sectors of the population based on income. King County countywide planning policy H-1 establishes county level housing targets. From the targets provided to King County by the Washington Department of Commerce, King County produced city-specific targets. The targets for Tukwila are shown below.

Income Band	Share of Existing Households by AMI	Share of Existing Unit Affordability by AMI	Needed (2019-2044) Units	Share of Target Units (2019-2044)
Extremely low (0-30% AMI)	23%	4%	1367*	21%
Very low (30-50% AMI)	19%	26%	274	4%
Low (50-80% AMI)	16%	35%	214	3%
Moderate (80-100% AMI)	12%	18%	610	19%
Higher (100-120% AMI)	30%	10%	692	11%
High (> 120% AMI)		7%	3,343	51%

Figure 26. Tukwila Housing Target Allocations by Income Band. Source: King County Housing Needs Dashboard.

* Includes 471 permanent supportive housing units

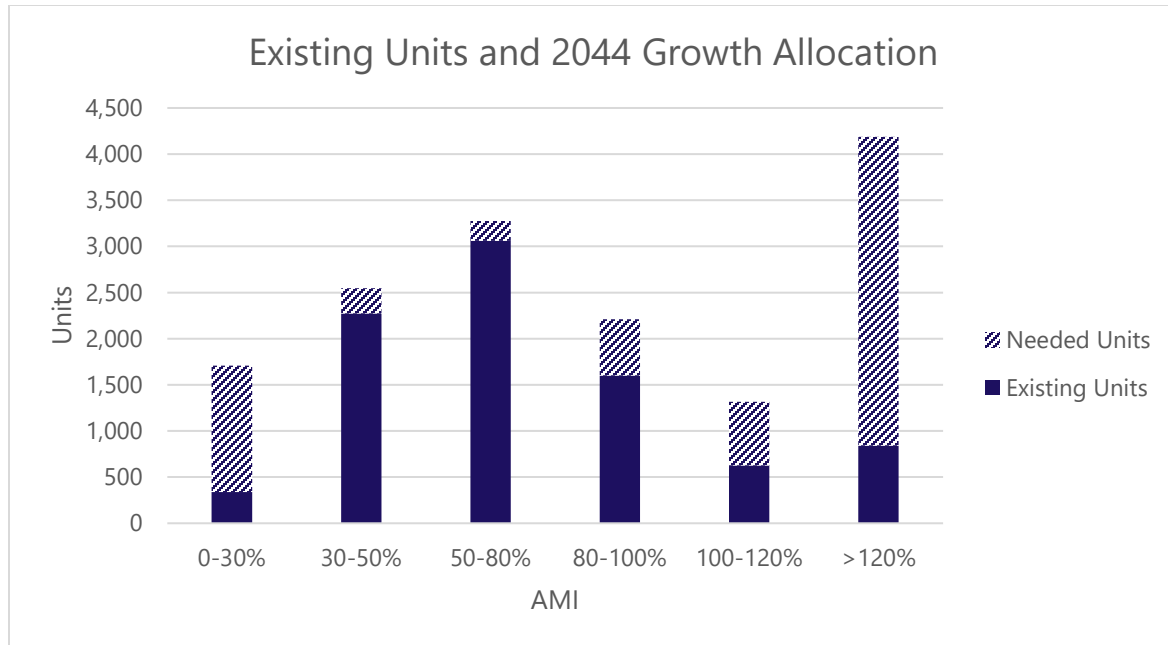


Figure 27. Tukwila Existing Housing Units and 2044 Growth Allocation. Source: Existing units by income band from Housing for All Planning Tool (HAPT) by Washington State Department of Commerce, Growth Management Services. Needed units from King County Housing Needs

These allocations place the bulk (51%) of housing growth in the highest income range, 120% AMI and above. This would represent a significant departure from the affordability of existing housing stock, and indicates a desire to more evenly distribute lower- and higher-income housing throughout the County. With a significant supply of relatively affordable market-rate housing already present in Tukwila, the City is already contributing significantly to countywide affordability. It is important to note that, at present, market-rate rental housing produced in Tukwila is priced for affordability, around 80 – 120% AMI, and county staff have indicated that the > 120% AMI category is intended to be flexible; if newly developed units come in at more affordable levels, city growth targets will still be satisfied.

Emergency Housing and Emergency Shelter

The Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI) operates a 28-unit tiny house shelter program at Miracle Temple Church of God in Christ, and a 20-unit tiny house shelter program at Riverton Park United Methodist Church. The two tiny house shelters provide shelter for approximately 35 people at Miracle Temple Church of God and 40 people at Riverton Park United Methodist Church.

Per King County Planning policies and county growth allocations, Tukwila is required to demonstrate capacity for 1,242 emergency shelter beds.

Gap Analysis

Available Housing Units by Income Bracket

While Tukwila households are spread between different income bands, the City's housing stock is clustered in the 50-80% AMI range. This creates a mismatch between household

incomes and units available, and forces many households to pay for housing they can't easily afford. Almost 90% of extremely low-income households in Tukwila are cost-burdened.

In addition to cost-burdened households, some higher income households occupy housing much cheaper than what they could afford to pay. This creates the opportunity for new, market rate housing to move higher income households out of affordable units, reducing competition on more affordable older units.

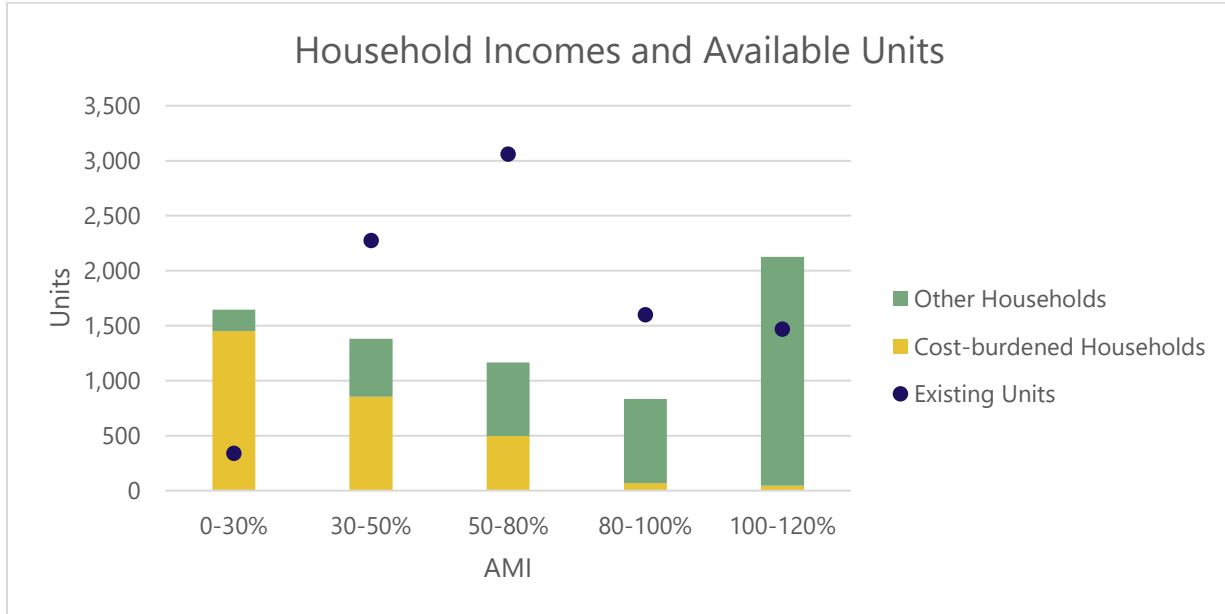


Figure 28. Household Incomes and Available Units. Source: Households and cost-burden from HUD CHAS 2016-2020. Existing units by income band from Housing for All Planning Tool (HAPT) 2022 by Washington State Department of Commerce, Growth Management Services.

Permanent Supportive Housing

There are very few, if any, units of permanent supportive housing available in Tukwila.

Alignment of household size to housing unit size

Although overall household sizes are roughly in alignment with available housing units in Tukwila, there is a significant gap when compared by tenure (renter vs owner). Renter households tend to be significantly larger than owner households in Tukwila, for instance almost twice as many four-plus-person households rent, versus own, their home. By contrast, units on the ownership market tend to be significantly larger than units available to rent.

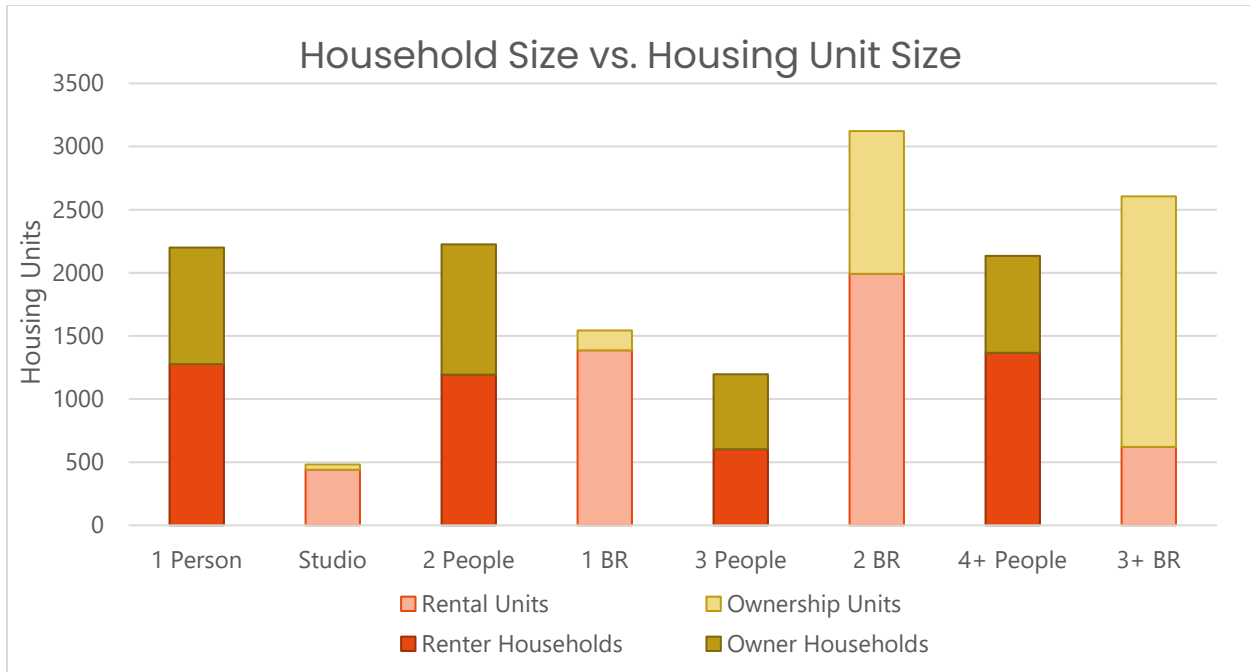


Figure 29. Household Size and Housing Unit Size. Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table B25042 and S2501.

Barriers to Align Housing with Income Bracket

There are several barriers to align housing with income brackets in Tukwila. Housing development below 80% AMI is extremely unlikely to occur in Tukwila as a market rate development. High land and construction costs are a barrier to adding low- and very low-income housing; a subsidy would encourage affordable housing providers to build housing that serves this income bracket. Overly restrictive residential zoning standards are also a barrier to housing development, which can be remedied with residential zoning code updates. Lastly, a reputation for long permitting timelines due to inconsistent staffing and poor coordination between departments has discouraged housing development in Tukwila. Simplifying codes, removing unnecessary political steps in the permitting process, investing in adequate staffing, and streamlining process will help remove this barrier.

Racially Disparate Impacts

Policy Review

Review of 2015 Comprehensive Plan Policies related to housing, displacement or exclusion found 17 policies supportive, 5 approaching support, and 14 that challenge the goals of racial inclusion. In a more holistic review of whether goals and policies address all housing needs of the community, and equitably distribute burdens and benefits, a number of necessary changes emerged, including:

- Limit or remove references to exclusively single-family neighborhoods.
- Increase specificity, or remove references to new development blending with existing development, whether through ambiguous references to design, neighborhood character, views or overall quality. Current references do not comply with state law

updates in design review and could easily be used as a vague criteria to restrict future development.

- Update housing requirements associated with new housing targets and HB 1220 requirements for income levels and types of housing.
- Consider disproportionate impacts based on clusters of racial, cultural, religious or socioeconomic groups, which are currently only hinted at in a few areas of the housing element.

These changes were incorporated into the periodic update of housing goals and policies.

Racially Disparate Impacts

Staff identified at least six racially restrictive covenants that directly restricted BIPOC homeownership within the City of Tukwila². However, this does not confirm there were not additional racially restrictive covenants that have not been documented. Informal racially restrictive practices are also likely to have taken place in the areas that are now Tukwila.

Similar to much of south King County, Tukwila has historically had lower incomes and a more diverse population than the rest of the county and region. Due to this, BIPOC communities are naturally more impacted by regional and localized decisions. Areas of previously unincorporated King County subsequently annexed by Tukwila often lack alleys, grid connectivity and frontage improvements, creating lack of walkability, reducing pedestrian safety and overall neighborhood connectivity. Proximity to regional features, such as airports and a superfund site (the Lower Duwamish Waterway) also disproportionately impact health outcomes of BIPOC communities.

Exclusion

Regulatory and development patterns in the City's housing stock have created economic barriers to homeownership. Single-family detached houses on large lots, one of the most expensive housing products, are the only housing type allowed in a significant area of the City. Rapidly rising single-family home prices – up more than 50% over the last five years - has further separated the average Tukwila household from potential homeownership within the City. Limited housing availability raises prices on available homes, increasing cost burdens for lower income households. Since renters are disproportionately people of color, housing instability for the City's BIPOC population is further exacerbated as rent increases occur.

Displacement Risk

Consistent with staff understanding, census tracts, and block groups along Tukwila International Boulevard were identified as most vulnerable to displacement due to a combination of a high proportion of renters, cost-burdened households, lower income households, a proportion of high foreign-born residents, lower educational achievement levels and a lower rate of English proficiency. From these criteria, staff identified the three block groups shown in Figure 30 below as the most susceptible to displacement. Data used to identify block groups most susceptible to displacement can be found in Figure 31.

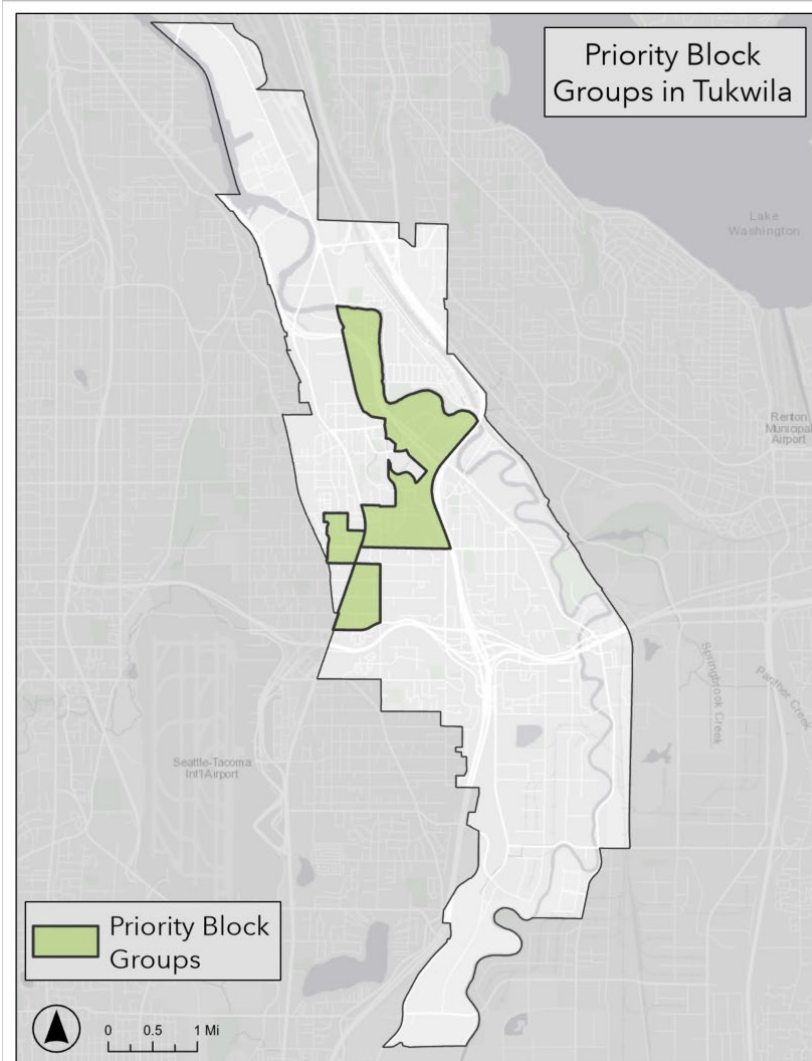


Figure 30. Priority Block Groups of Highest Displacement Risk

	Data Source, ACS Table	Block Group 2, Census Tract 272	Block Group 2, Census Tract 273	Block Group 3, Census Tract 282
Total Persons		1,104	867	614
Total Households		546	402	307
English Limited Households	C16002	26%	54%	13%
No Vehicle Access	B25045	9%	15%	11%
% in Poverty	B17101	25%	29%	45%
% Foreign Born	B99051	49%	77%	47%
Non-White	B02001	73%	88%	75%

	Data Source, ACS Table	Block Group 2, Census Tract 272	Block Group 2, Census Tract 273	Block Group 3, Census Tract 282
Educational Attainment	S1501			
Less than HS Diploma	S1501	22%	60%	26%
HS Diploma or some college, no degree	S1501	47%	26%	56%
Associate's Degree	S1501	13%	3%	5%
Bachelor's Degree	S1501	11%	11%	7%
Master's or Professional Degree	S1501	7%	0%	6%
Overcrowded	B25014	10%	59%	8%
Severely Overcrowded	B25015	1%	39%	0%

Figure 31. Displacement Risk Data

Restorative Actions

To begin to correct racially disparate impacts on housing brought by past housing discrimination, staff has identified focus areas for restorative actions the City can influence in its housing policy. While it is difficult to pair specific City actions to racially disparate impacts on housing in Tukwila due to the City's relatively small geography, amount of post-1968 annexations, and lack of strong documentation of formalized housing discrimination with its boundaries, this does not prevent the City from taking actions that can benefit the BIPOC population that currently reside in Tukwila, will reside in the City within the planning period, or the broader regional BIPOC population.

General areas of focus, further outlined in individual Housing Policies and Implementation Strategies, include:

- Amending standards to encourage production of more owner-occupied housing at lower entry points to capitalize on home ownership covenant funds for qualifying buyers to purchase property in Tukwila.
- Preservation of naturally occurring affordable housing through transition to income-restricted housing or other methods.
- Increasing supply of income restricted housing.

Section 5 – Land Capacity Analysis

Land Capacity Analysis

The 2021 King County Buildable Lands Report found that Tukwila had capacity for 5,577 units, with projected pipeline development of 2,642 units. The remaining 2044 target of 5,008 units can be accommodated within existing land based on current zoning, before even taking into

account pipeline development. The 2021 King County Urban Growth Capacity Report recommended additional reasonable measure actions be taken to increase housing production, due to historic underproduction of housing.

Zone	Net Acres	Gross Capacity (units)	Existing Units	Net Capacity (units)
LDR	284.1	1449	592	857
MDR	12.8	186	25	161
HDR	10.7	267	27	210
MUO	3.1	45	3	42
RC	28.6	485	3	482
RCC	0.7	8	0	8
NCC	13.4	375	16	358
TUC (all)	126.6	2,714	0	2,714
TVS	50.3	745	0	745
TOTAL	659.6	6,243	666	5,577

Figure 32. Tukwila Housing Capacity Source: Tukwila 2021 Buildable Lands Report documentation

Land Capacity & Subsidized Housing Near Transit

Due to the significant number of transit routes and stations within the City, much of Tukwila's residential zoned land capacity is within half a mile of at least one high-capacity transit stop. With the exception of portions of the currently LDR zoned properties, and TVS zoned properties, which are currently undeveloped and anticipate greater transit service with development, most all of the capacity within Figure 32 is within a half mile buffer of a high-capacity transit stop, as shown in Figure 33.

Of the existing subsidized housing in Tukwila about 650 units, or nearly all of the existing income-restricted housing stock, is within half a mile of a least one high-capacity transit stop.

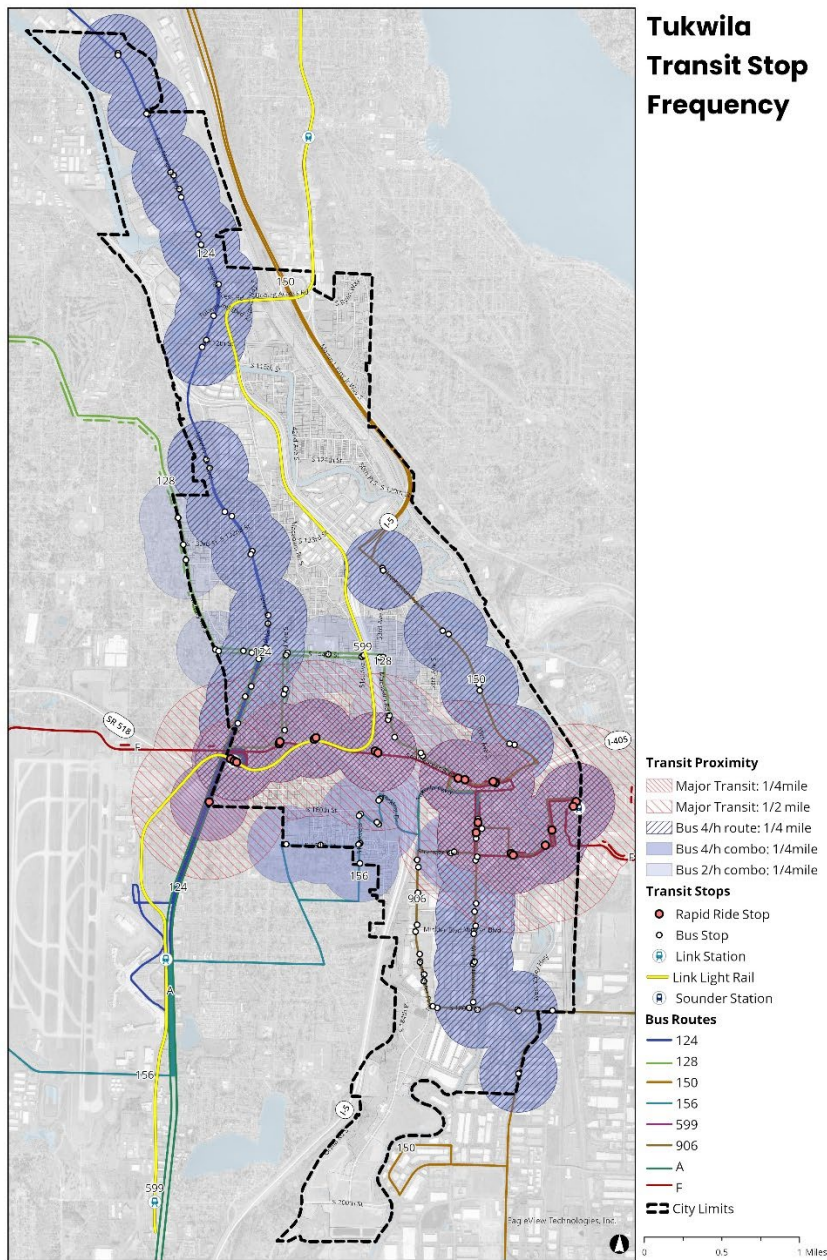


Figure 33. Proximity to Transit Map

Land Capacity by AMI Level

Without subsidy or forms of income-restriction, significant new housing development is very unlikely to develop at or below 80% AMI in the Tukwila Market, as either rental or ownership housing products. The City will commit to new policies and strategies to enable greater housing production at 0-80% AMI. Policy and strategy areas intended to enable greater affordable housing production include but are not limited to:

- Increasing density and height allowances, especially in areas within proximity to transit and within LIHTC qualified census tracts
- Combining LDR and MDR zoned land into single comprehensive plan designation and eventual zone to support middle housing updates
- Adopting expanded ADU allowances consistent with HB 1337 over a year and a half ahead of legislative deadline
- Density incentives for affordable housing units
- Reducing restrictive development requirements, including height allowances, massing and parking requirements
- Partnering with nonprofits and developers on income restricted housing development
- Streamlining development and design review processes, and eliminating unnecessary review processes
- Exploring further fee reductions for affordable housing projects

It is acknowledged that achieving market rate housing production at or below 80% AMI is unlikely for the foreseeable future. There is also a lack of funding available at the regional and federal level for affordable housing development that will be vital in producing deeply affordable housing. However, policies and implementation strategies described can support greater housing affordability than the status quo scenario.

Zone	Net Capacity (units)	New Market Rate Housing Types Expected	Expected Prevailing Market Rate AMI Level for New Housing	Assumed affordability level for capacity analysis
LDR	857	Single-Family and Middle Housing	120%+	120%+
MDR	161	Middle Housing	120%+	120%+
HDR	210	Middle Housing, Low-rise Apartments	80%+	0-80% & 100-120%
MUO	42	Low-rise and Mid-rise Apartments	80%+	0-80%
RC	482	Mid-rise Apartments	80%+	0-80%
RCC	8	Middle Housing	80%+	100%+
NCC	358	Mid-rise Apartments	80%+	0-80%
TUC (all)	2,714	Mid-rise Apartments and High Rise	80%+	0-120%
TVS	745	Mid-rise Apartments	80%+	0-80%

Figure 34. Market Rate Housing Types Expected by Zoning District

As displayed in Figure 34, all residential and mixed use zoning districts currently allow at least middle housing types, or will do so after middle housing requirements are adopted in the case of the Low Density Residential (LDR) zone. The City has already adopted accessory dwelling unit allowances consistent with HB 1337, across all residential zones.

With the implementation of aforementioned strategies greater variety of housing production is expected to increase capacity for additional housing production at lower AMI levels. However, significant challenges exist especially in producing housing at and below 50% AMI. As referenced in Figure 2, only select census tracts within the City qualify for projects financed using the low income tax credit (LIHTC). As the prevailing catalyst for extremely low income and very low income new housing development, this lack of LIHTC eligibility in the TUC and TVS zones greatly reduces the likelihood of producing 0-50% AMI new housing across the Southern portion of the City, which currently hold the majority of perceived housing capacity, without significant alternative subsidy. Strategies such as affordable housing density bonuses and fee reductions will be considered to attempt to further facilitate deeply affordable development outside of LIHTC eligible census tracts.

Using guidance provided by the Department of Commerce for housing types and income levels served in higher-cost communities was used to create capacity by AMI seen in [Figure 35](#), while Figure 36 provides an estimation of capacity for housing development at different AMI ranges with staff observations and assumptions based on market conditions integrated. Key assumptions integrated into the assessment of AMI capacity include:

- Only a very small subset of studio units are expected to be produced at or below 80% AMI. All other market rate development is expected to be produced above 80% AMI.
- Projects utilizing the twelve year multifamily tax exemption will produce some units within the 50-80% AMI range.
- Due to the TUC and TVS zoned parcels not existing within LIHTC qualified Census Tracts, little to no housing unit production between 0-50% AMI in these zones.

Zoning	Units by AMI Capacity (Commerce Guidance)						
	0-30% PSH	0-30% non-PSH	30-50%	50-80%	80-100%	100-120%	120+%
LDR	0	0	0	0	0	0	856
MDR	0	0	0	0	0	0	161
HDR	16	37	26	26	0	53	52
MUO	6	15	10	11	0	0	0
RC	72	169	120	121	0	0	0
RCC	0	0	0	0	0	4	4
NCC	54	126	90	89	0	0	0
TUC (all)	204	475	339	339	679	678	0
TVS	112	261	186	186	0	0	0
Total Unit Capacity	464	1,083	771	772	679	735	1,073

Figure 35. Housing Capacity by AMI Range by Commerce Guidance

Zoning	Units by AMI Capacity with (Market Conditions)						
	0-30% PSH	0-30% non-PSH	30-50%	50-80%	80-100%	100-120%	120+%
LDR	0	0	0	0	86	86	685
MDR	0	0	0	0	0	32	129
HDR	15	15	0	0	60	60	60
MUO	0	0	0	0	4	38	0
RC	70	120	51	24	0	157	60
RCC	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
NCC	45	45	90	0	0	179	0
TUC (all)	271	0	0	136	541	810	948
TVS	74	0	0	75	112	210	274
Total Unit Capacity	475	223	141	235	760	1,572	2,164

Figure 36. Housing Capacity by AMI Range with anticipated market conditions

Emergency Housing

Currently the City lacks adequate capacity to accommodate its target of emergency shelter and emergency housing space for 1,242 persons. Currently, regulations prohibit emergency facilities housing greater than 45 individuals per site, and place a restriction on non-religiously affiliated facilities operating within half a mile of another emergency housing facility. It is estimated that Tukwila's current capacity is 300-400 beds. Policies and associated implementation strategies in the Housing Element will rectify the gap in capacity.

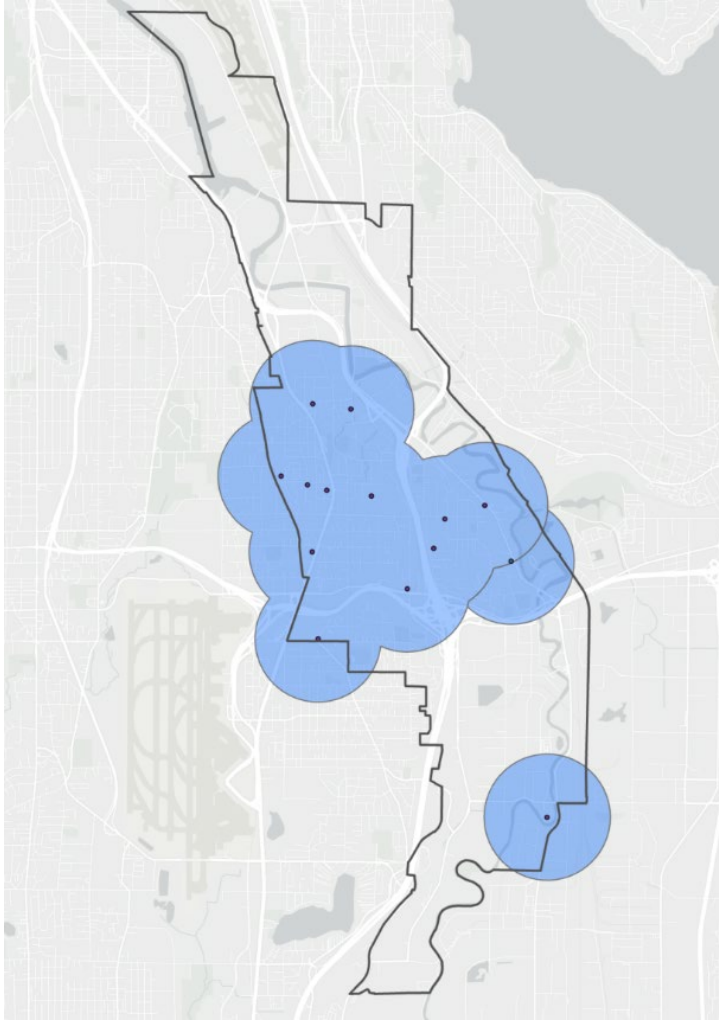


Figure 37. Half mile buffer from existing religious facilities

Development Since 2019

Between 2019 and 2022 according to the Office of Financial Management, a total of 1,248 units were added to the housing supply. Notably, this includes the Tukwila Village mixed-use development, the high-rise Interurban Hotel building, and the Mariblu at Southcenter podium building totaling 941 units between those developments.

Single Family Detached Units	Accessory Dwelling Units	Townhouse Units	Multifamily Units	Units Demolished	Net New Units
94	8	13	1,167	34	1,248

Figure 38. Tukwila housing development 2019-2022. Source: OFM, 2022

The substantial residential development experienced from 2019 to present is not accounted for in the King County Urban Growth Capacity Report or associated targets set for Tukwila. Below is an update of housing targets integrating recent residential development into housing allocation targets by AMI.

Income band	Target Units (2019-2044)	Share of Target Units (2019-2044)	Net New Units (2019-2022)	Target Units (2023-2044)	Share of Target Units (2023-2044)
Extremely low (0-30% AMI)*	1367	21%	0	1367	25%
Very low (30-50% AMI)	274	4%	120	154	3%
Low (50-80% AMI)	214	3%	372	-158	0%
Moderate (80-100% AMI)	610	19%	76	534	10%
Higher (100-120% AMI)	692	11%	385	307	6%
High (> 120% AMI)	3,343	51%	332	3011	56%

Figure 39. Updated Tukwila Housing Target Allocations by Income Band. Source: King County Housing Needs Dashboard, rental listings.

* Includes 471 permanent supportive housing units

Figure 39 displays the final estimated capacity by AMI range with recent housing development incorporated. Policies and implementation strategies seen in the housing element will work to address the capacity deficit seen within the 0-30% AMI non-PSH and 0-50% AMI housing targets.

AMI Range	0-30% PSH	0-30% non-PSH	30-50%	50-80%	80-100%	100-120%	120+%
Total Unit Capacity	464	1083	771	772	679	735	1073
Development 2019-2022	0	0	120	372	76	385	332
Growth Targets	471	896	274	214	610	692	3343
Capacity beyond growth targets	-7	187	497	558	69	43	-2270

Figure 40. Tukwila AMI Capacity & Targets including Recent Development

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

² [Racial Restrictive Covenants - Seattle Civil Rights and Labor History Project \(washington.edu\)](#)