5 Human Services



What You Will Find in this Chapter

- Information about human services needs in Burien.
- A description of the City's role in the regional human services delivery system.
- Goals and policies that direct the City's Human Services General Fund and other city investments.

Our Human Services Vision

Burien will support, fund, and advocate for human service agencies and programs working to better the lives of our residents and their families. These efforts, with particular emphasis on initiatives that are responsive to and accessible by communities who have faced significant barriers, are essential to the growth and vitality of our city.

Introduction

Human Services enable individuals and families to meet basic human needs (physical, economic, and social) and offer a continuum of support including intervention, prevention, and enhancement. In order to address the needs of community members, Burien has identified the following community conditions of well-being important to thriving in the community:

- Attain secure, affordable housing,
- Be safe from violence and healthy physically, mentally, and emotionally,
- Have living wage jobs,
- Be ready for school, experience school success, and have positive connection to their community, and
- Feel a sense of community and belonging.

This Human Services Element shares Conditions and Trends, a plan for Human Services, Goals and Policies, and Implementation actions.

Conditions & Trends

Current Conditions

Demographic Trends

The City of Burien's population continues to grow and diversify. See **Exhibit 5-1**. Average household size continues to shrink but there are more single-person households and more 3-person and 4-or-more person households than previous years. As noted in the Housing Element, the city has seen an increase in families and older adults.

About 34.7% of residents over age five speak a language other than English at home in 2020 compared to 28% in 2010 and 20% in 2000. Increasing numbers of immigrants from Asia and Latin America, and families in poverty make up a large share of Burien's population. Regions of birth include Latin America (41.7%), Asia (34.9%), Africa (16.1%), Europe (4.3%), North America (1.8%) and Oceania (1.2%). Latinx and Asians are Burien's fastest growing community groups.

Over one third of Burien residents speak a language other than English ~~and~~ at home, and nearly 20% speak English less than very well. The language spoken at home for Burien-area students includes many languages, particularly Spanish, Vietnamese, and Somali. Other languages identified include Amharic, Cambodian, Arabic, Punjabi, Tigrinya, and Tagalog. This list is limited to students within the Highline School District, but likely reflects trends of the larger population.

Exhibit 5-1. Burien Community Demographics

Demographic Factors	2000 Census	2010 census	2020 census/ACS
Population	31,744	33,313	52,121
Percent Persons of Color	28.5%	36.7%	52.4%
Percent of population that are foreign born	15.2%	21.7%	24.9%
Median age	38.8	38.1	38.1
Percent of population age 65 and over	14.0%	12.1%	14.4%
Household median income (in 2021 inflation adjusted dollars)	$65,424	$64,612	$79,797 (2021)
Percent of individuals with incomes below poverty line	9.3%	14.2%	11.7% (2021)
Average household size	--	3.04	2.66

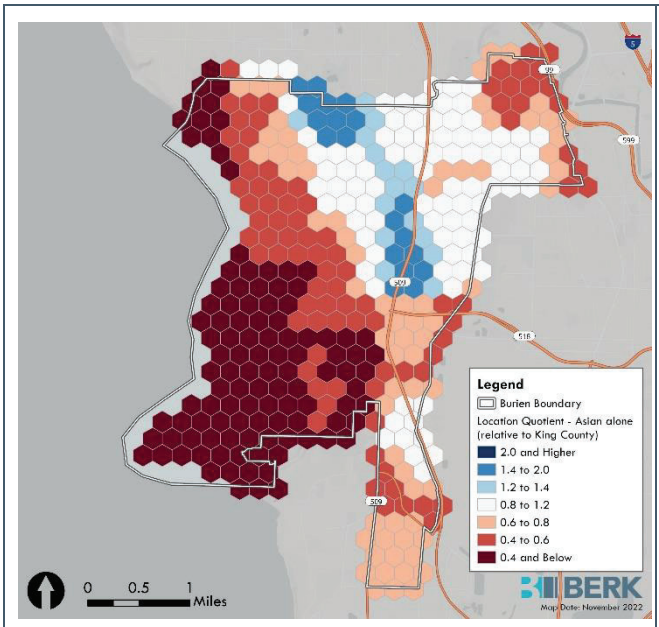
Source: US Census Bureau

As noted in the Housing Element, Burien has an especially higher share of Hispanic and Latino residents compared to the county as well as other pockets with higher shares of Black and Asian residents. Maps in **Exhibit 5-2** illustrate the locations in Burien that have a higher share of non-White populations.

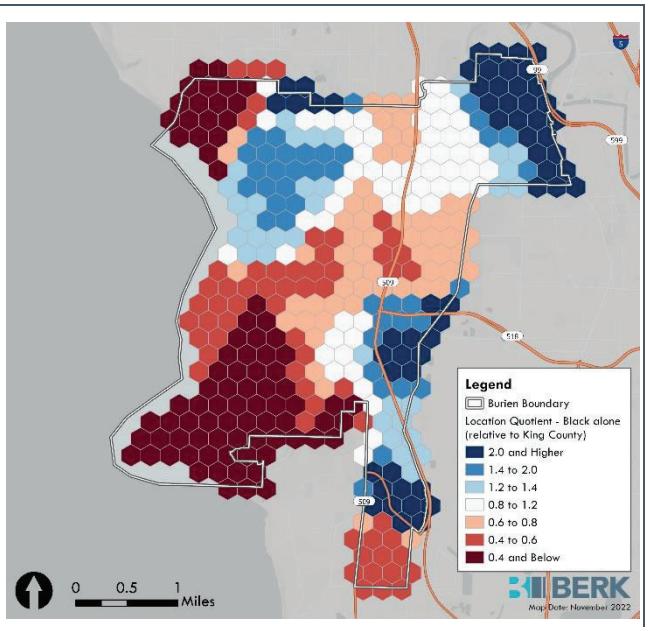
Burien's need for human services has grown while the diversification of Burien's population has increased the complexity of meeting that need.

Exhibit 5-2. Concentrations of Race in Burien – Relative to King County

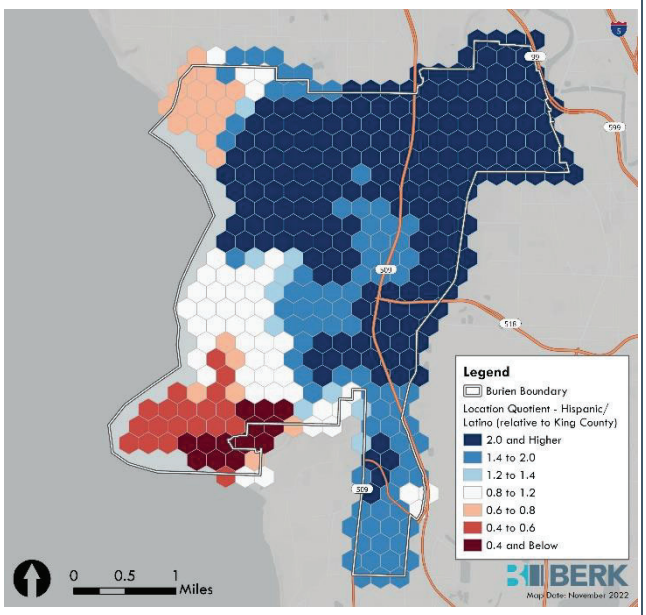
Blue Greater than County, Red less than County



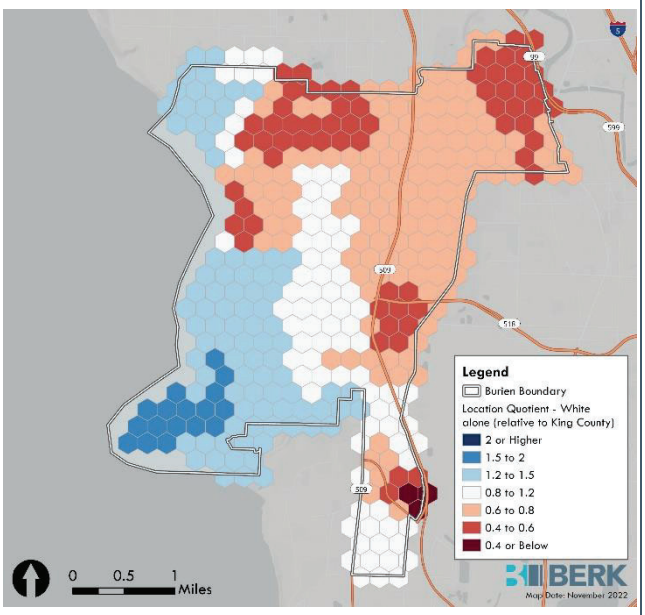
Asian Alone



Black Alone



Hispanic/Latino



White Alone

Source: US Census 2020, BERK 2023.

Workers and Incomes

Most who commute into the City of Burien come from Seattle or other South King County communities. Most who commute outside of Burien for work go to Seattle or other South King

County communities with some going to Bellevue. Those who only live in Burien and work elsewhere tend to have higher incomes than those who only work in Burien. Those who live and work in Burien tend to be moderate or higher in income. See Exhibit 5-3.

Exhibit 5-3. Job Inflow/Outflow Income Characteristics in Burien, 2019 (All Primary Jobs).

		Monthly Income of Workers		
	Total Workers	$1,250 or less	$1,251 - $3,333	$3,334 or more
Live in Burien	20,723	10.7%	27.8%	61.5%
Work in Burien	11,887	14.7%	31.8%	53.5%
Live and work in Burien	3,358	18.5%	36.3%	45.1%

Sources: Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, Origin-Destination Employment Statistics, 2019; BERK 2022.

A monthly income of workers at $1,250 (or $15,000 per year) would be very low income. Assuming a household size of two, an annual household income of $40,000 would qualify for a Section 8 vouchers to help people with low incomes rent homes on the private market.[5]

Many jobs do not pay enough for residents to provide for their basic needs without assistance. As a result, social service agencies are experiencing a greater volume of requests.

Homelessness

Housing costs are rising across the state and region as noted in the Housing Element. With rising housing costs, the state and region have seen a rise in homelessness, including in Burien. Homelessness is difficult to measure accurately. Across King County about 10,767 households were estimated to have experienced homelessness and receive services through the homeless response system in King County as of April 30, 2023.[6] Burien may have 100-200 unhoused persons. (Patrick 2023) See also a more complete discussion of shelters and permanent supportive housing in the Housing Element.

What does it mean?

- Burien has seen an Increase in families and older adults.
- Burien's community is rich with cultural, racial, and linguistic diversity.
- The median household income in Burien is lower than in King County overall.
- Housing costs are rising, and employment opportunities with livable wages have not kept pace in Burien.

[5] See: https://www.kcha.org/housing/subsidized/eligibility.
[6] See: https://kcrha.org/data-overview/.

▶ As Burien's population continues to grow and become more diverse, the task of meeting human services needs will become more complex. Service providers will need to respond to the needs of a wider variety of age groups, income levels, cultural backgrounds, and lifestyles.

Projections

The increasing diversity of Burien's population points to a need for deeper analyses of the interconnectedness between traditional human services and other city services. For example, as the number of foreign-born residents increases, the need for culturally sensitive programs and in-language support systems increases. Persons of color, including foreign-born, are more likely to see barriers in attaining affordable housing.

Housing affordability is impacted by land use decisions. Transportation priorities and investments impact mobility and access. With the rising cost of living throughout the state, county, and in Burien, the ramifications of the growing number of residents who earn lower-incomes must be considered, with perhaps the city placing a greater emphasis on encouraging job creation. For example, the percentage of families in Burien living below the federal poverty level rose sharply between 2000 and 2010 and is beginning to level as of 2021. Increasing access to opportunity for all Burien residents will be critical for a vibrant and caring community.

Challenges

To create a community in which all members have the ability to meet their basic physical, economic, and social needs, and the opportunity to enhance their quality of life, the City must be future-focused and creative in planning for the provision of human services. Changing population demographics and economic realities present challenges as well as opportunities to maximize resources, improve access to services, and provide smart stewardship of funds.

Increasing Demand for Services

According to Census data, Burien's foreign-born population and overall population have increased in recent years. As a result, social service agencies are experiencing a greater volume of requests.

Funding

As funding from federal, state, and county sources becomes increasingly constrained, there is an urgent need for the formation of robust partnerships with non-profits, other government entities, private organizations, faith communities, philanthropic organizations, and interested community members to leverage resources for the greatest benefit.

Complexity of Service Provision

Human services are provided by a complex network of small and large organizations providing varied services according to their individual missions. It is a challenge to bring together these varied perspectives and approaches to addressing human service needs. Burien has the opportunity to align efforts through a collective impact model in which human services providers support common goals.

Access to Services

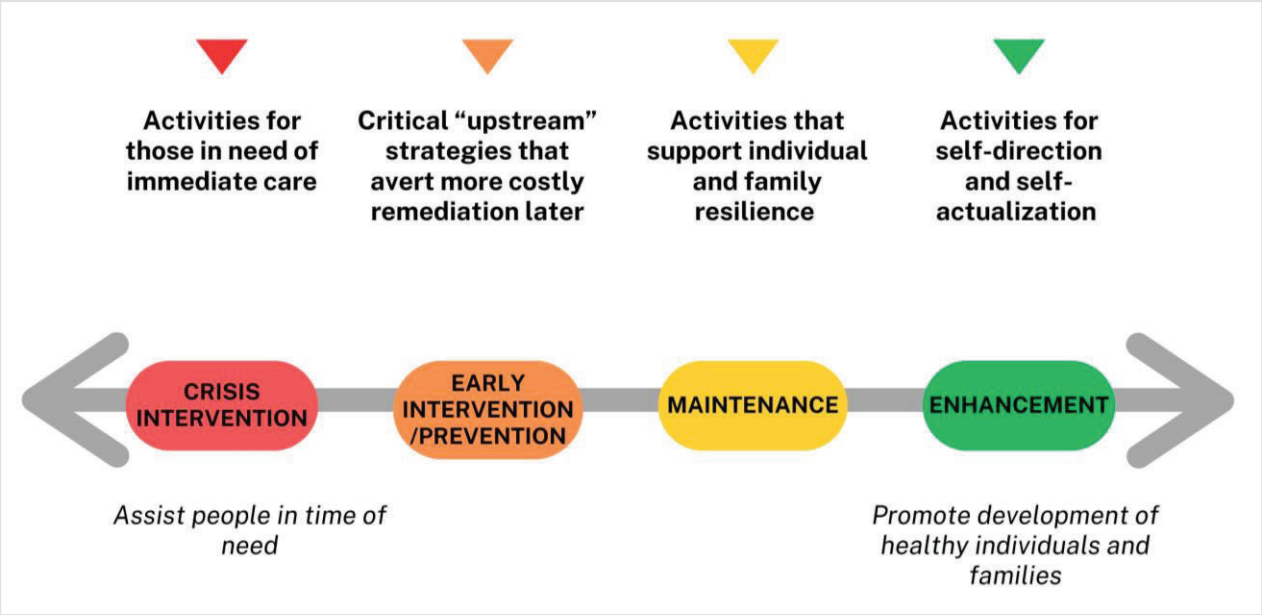
It is vital residents are able to access services when they need them. Residents may experience barriers to services due to geographic location, eligibility criteria, income, transportation, lack of information, language, past involvement with the criminal legal system, gender identity or sexual orientation, or limited mobility. The increasing diversity of Burien residents makes providing culturally competent and accessible human services more complex. A service that is successful for one group of individuals will not always be as successful for another group due to differences in age, needs, or language. Opportunities exist to address many access challenges through improved planning and coordination both within and beyond the city.

Marginalized communities – including persons of color, immigrants, non-English speakers, persons that identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA), persons experiencing homelessness, and others – may be underserved, and at greater risk for poverty, food insecurity, unstable housing, barriers to health care, discrimination in housing/healthcare/employment, or subject to abuse or assault .

Human Services Continuum

It is an ongoing challenge to provide services for serious crisis-oriented issues that need attention in the present while also making strategic investments in prevention and early intervention services. The "human services continuum" model that is already in place seeks to strike an appropriate balance. See **Exhibit 5-4**. Prevention and early intervention services are critical "upstream" strategies that avert more costly remediation later. Maintenance includes activities that support individual and family resilience (e.g. health care, child care). Enhancement activities promote the development of healthy individuals and families, such as activities for self-direction and self-actualization.

Exhibit 5-4. Human Services Continuum



Source: City of Burien, BERK 2023.

Our Human Services Plan

Burien's Role

The City is uniquely positioned to provide leadership and influence community awareness, decision making, and allocation of resources for human services through:

- Planning - assessing and anticipating needs and developing appropriate policy and program responses.
- Facilitating - convening and engaging the community in problem-solving to develop and improve services.
- Funding - disbursing Community Development Block Grant and General Fund dollars to support a network of services which respond to community needs.
- Advising - promoting awareness of needs and resources through effective marketing and public relations.

The City of Burien recognizes that although the private human services network is the major provider of human services in the community, decisions and actions by federal and state agencies, local government, school districts, and other governmental entities also impact delivery of and access to services. The city views governmental cooperation and partnership with the private sector as critical to solving local and regional human service issues.

While all city departments are engaged in meeting human service needs; The Human Services Commission advises the City Council. It is responsible for providing advice and recommendations related to human services issues using lenses of equity and social determinants of health. Duties and responsibilities of the Human Services Commission include:

- Identify and assess the human services needs in the city.
- Recommend priorities and approaches to address human services needs within the city.
- Review human services funding requests submitted to the City and make funding allocation recommendations.
- Review performance of human services agencies and programs that are funded by the City.

The Commission listens to community concerns, assesses current service needs, forecasts future needs, and makes recommendations to the council on allocation of the city's human services and Community Development Block Grant funding.

Framework for Services

In fulfilling the City's role as a planner, facilitator, funder, and advisor of the community's human services, Burien's Human Services Division is guided by a framework – the Framework for Strengthening Families.

On August 6, 2018, the Burien City Council acknowledged that every child deserves the protection and support of both family and community. Healthy and safe families raise healthy and safe adults and adopted a holistic framework to support this vision. See **Exhibit 5-5**. By focusing on families, Burien is building a better future for our kids and our community. The vision is to ensure children, young adults, and families are healthy, safe, and thriving.

Exhibit 5-5. City of Burien's Framework for Strengthening Families



Source: City of Burien,2018.

The first step in the framework is to gather community feedback on what is working and not working with current services and identifying whether there are barriers to accessing existing services.

The City may learn that there are gaps in the services the City funds, lack of access to services, too few providers, or culturally inappropriate service provisions. Through conversations Burien can mobilize community strengths, formal resources, and informal supports to improve quality of life and achieve positive results for children and families. The framework organizes current services into a set of categories based on the Best Starts for Kids protective factors.

Burien's Strategies

The City has identified desired outcomes or "results" and strategies to create conditions of well-being in Burien. Strategies may change periodically to achieve the results. Burien considers the provision of services through the lens of equity and social determinants of health.[7]

Result: Have secure, affordable housing.

Strategies:

- Help residents improve their housing situation (moving along the continuum from unhoused to temporary housing to long-term housing to permanent housing)
- Provide low-barrier services that keep residents housed. (Examples: rental assistance, minor home repair, eviction avoidance, housing navigation help, placement services.)

Result: Be healthy physically, mentally, and emotionally and safe from violence.

Strategies:

- Provide services that address all aspects of physical or behavioral health needs with a restorative focus (includes medical, dental, and counseling programs.)
- Provide services and programs that reduce violence in all forms – physical, sexual, and emotional.
- Provide access and education that improves food security.
- Support programs that promote harm reduction, self-determination, and healthy relationships.

Result: Have living wage jobs.

Strategies:

- Provide pathways or opportunities to improve work skills and job status.
- Offer services and programs that remove barriers to obtaining and sustaining living wage jobs. (includes childcare services, assistance with clearing criminal history, skill-building, etc.)

[7] The Centers for Disease Control considers social determinants of health as: poverty, unequal access to health care, lack of education, stigma, and racism which are underlying, contributing factors of health inequities.

Result: Be ready for school, experience school success, and have positive connection to their community.

Strategies:

- Provide high-quality early childhood education to resident children.
- Provide services and support to parents and education staff of pre-school and school-age children.
- Address the needs of at-risk youth, especially those who are in foster care, LGBTQ, BIPOC, homeless, chronically out of school, speak a primary language other than English, or whose families face barriers related to their immigration or refugee status.
- Provide before-, during-, and after-school programs that help youth be successful in school.

Result: Feel a sense of community and belonging.

Strategies:

- Provide safe spaces for community to gather.
- Work with people in their own environments and provide a mechanism for community feedback.
- Offer programming that builds inclusion, community connections, and common bonds.

What Success Looks Like

- Human service agencies align efforts and increase the collective impact of services provided in Burien.
- Culturally appropriate services are available to Burien's diverse population.
- Those who need services are able to access them.
- A continuum of human services are available at every level from early intervention to crisis response.

Goals & Policies

Goal 5.1 **Create a community in which each and every member has the ability to meet their basic physical, economic, and social needs, and the opportunity to enhance their quality of life.**

Policy 5.1-1 Encourage efficient use of public and private resources and develop a broad base of community support.

Policy 5.1-2 Identify opportunities and develop strategies that are preventive in their approach to human services needs.

Policy 5.1-3 Allocate funds and other resources across the continuum of human service needs by soliciting proposals from nonprofit agencies for services benefiting low- and moderate-income residents.

Policy 5.1-4 Maintain the city's role as a human services plannerand facilitator by engaging service providers and community organizations in dialogue regarding the functioning of the present service systems, emerging needs, and the building of a complete system of services.

Policy 5.1-5 Consider the human services impacts of proposed legislation prior to formal adoption.

Policy 5.1-6 Make Burien a welcoming, safe, and just community marked by fairness and equity provided to those disproportionately affected by poverty, discrimination, and victimization.

Policy 5.1-7 Use City Regulatory Powers to protect individuals' rights and advance community health and human service cbjectives.

Policy 5.1-8 Encourage culturally competent and accessible service delivery that respects the dignity of individuals and families, and fosters self-determination and self-sufficiency.

Policy 5.1-9 Support and actively coordinate with local, regional, and national efforts that address local human services needs to ensure local programs complement programs provided at the county, state, and federal level.

Policy 5.1-10 Encourage partnerships among public and private institutions, schools, human services providers, city parks and recreation, and others to collectively address needs of children and families.

Policy 5.1-11 Support agencies locating human services facilities in Burien and, where appropriate, encourage efficiencies through agency co-location and collaboration.

Policy 5.1-12 Provide leadership and work in partnership with community agencies to encourage and promote the development and expansion of the supply of affordable, accessible, and quality services which meet the diverse needs of the community in all areas of the city.

Policy 5.1-13 Encourage services that support Burien's workforce in maintaining or advancing their employment opportunities.

Policy 5.1-14 Support an intentional local community response to homelessness with housing and supportive services provided to families, youth, and single adults.

Policy Connections

The availability of human services requires a citywide approach to ensure equitable access. Policies in other elements of the Comprehensive Plan help to provide a coordinated approach to human services in Burien.

- The Equity Element includes policies that ensure service distribution and allocation based on need to those most at risk.
- The Land Use and Transportation Elements include policies on developing an environment that supports equitable access to human services.
- The Housing Element provides Specific policies on the provision of affordable housing.
- The Economic Development Element addresses economic opportunity and quality education for all.

Other Elements provide policies that will improve overall quality of life for those living in and relocating to Burien in the coming years. While policies in these elements are less explicitly connected to these Human Services policies, there are obvious connections to environmental sustainability, parks and open space, and community health and well-being that can help the Human Services Commission achieve its stated policy goals.

Implementation

The Comprehensive Plan is implemented through numerous actions, including day-to-day operations, capital investments, and review of new development projects. Relevant plans and funding sources used to implement the Human Services Element include allocation of general fund and federal community development block grant funds to non-profit agencies. These agencies support Burien residents by providing human services.

Burien participates in several regional human services bodies. Interagency partnerships bring shared resources and voices to achieve more impact to regional challenges, and include but are not limited to the following:

King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCRHA). King County and the City of Seattle formed an interlocal agreement to create the King County Regional Homelessness Authority. The agency is intended to unify and coordinate policy, funding, and services for people experiencing homelessness across all of King County. As of 2023, the KCRHA is creating a five-year plan on strategies to dramatically reduce unsheltered homelessness. City staff helped with the honing and implementation of the South King County Sub-regional Implementation Plan.

South King Housing and Homelessness Partners (SKHHP). SKHHP is a joint board formed by an interlocal agreement between the jurisdictions of Auburn, Burien, Covington, Des Moines, Federal Way, Kent, Maple Valley, Normandy Park, Renton, Tukwila, and King County. Through SKHHP, South King County jurisdictions take a coordinated and comprehensive approach to increasing housing stability and producing and preserving quality affordable housing in South King County.

King County Department of Community and Human Services. The King County Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) manages a range of programs and services to help the county's most vulnerable residents while working to strengthen communities. The programs and divisions include: Adult Services; Behavioral Health and Recovery; Children, Youth and Young Adults; Developmental Disabilities and Early Childhood; Housing, Homelessness and Community Development; King County Veterans Program.

South King County Homelessness Action Committee. This Committee keeps South King County homeless services providers and City Human Services staff in touch with one another to share resources with service providers, receive updates and announcements of new or future projects and available funding, coordinate efforts to end homelessness, and advocate on behalf of the needs vs. available services in South King County.

South King County Human Services Planners. Human Services staff from South King County cities work collaboratively on funding, monitoring agencies, grants and outcomes, and on regional efforts and partnerships to advocate for the needs of residents ensuring that the voice of South King County is represented and heard.

This work very often involves strategizing to coordinate social services and response efforts with multiple city departments and/or service providers.

Regional Gun Violence Initiative. The Regional Gun Violence Program takes a public health approach to address gun violence in King County. The program collaborates with community leaders, local and state agencies, and national subject matter experts to coordinate and align community violence intervention efforts, partner across systems, and build capacity to sustain lasting community-led solutions to end gun violence.

CCYJ – LINC. Center for Youth Justice: CYJ brings together schools, law enforcement, policymakers, social service providers, and other organizations to form a Steering Committee that informs policy changes that impact gang/group involved youth, collects data, and develops an innovative, coordinated approach to address gang/group-involvement countywide. Through a coordinated team of service providers, LINC is intervening with young people and reengaging them in secondary education; connecting them to counselling, treatment services, and employment opportunities; and reducing gang/group involvement.

Performance Metrics

Every five years, Burien would provide a report on its progress implementing the Comprehensive Plan (RCW 36.70A.130(9). Per the Growth Management Act, a focus would be on housing affordability and availability, permitting, and reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled. With the interconnection of housing and human services, the City could consider developing performance metrics for human services. As well there is an opportunity to consider metrics that could inform the City's budgeting process. See **Exhibit 5-6**.

Exhibit 5-6. Potential Human Services Performance Metrics

Outcome/Result	Potential Performance Metrics
Result: Have secure, affordable housing.	Per Housing Element ▶ Annual production of housing units at or below 80% of AMI compared to target. ▶ Annual production of emergency beds and permanent supportive housing compared to target. ▶ Per capita resources (City) devoted to affordable, emergency, and permanent supportive housing. Other Possibilities: ▶ Rental assistance, weatherization/repair, and housing navigation referrals. ▶ Number of eviction warrant filings (King County Bar)
Result: Be healthy physically, mentally, and emotionally and safe from violence.	Examples: ▶ Population with Access to Preventive Health Services (Seattle-King County Public Health, City Profile Data). ▶ Assistance connecting individuals to services or providers to lower barriers to mental health, substance use disorder services, and violence and harm reduction. ▶ Referrals to access and education services regarding food security.
Result: Have living wage jobs.	Examples: ▶ Full-time workers earning less than a livable wage. (National Equity Atlas, $15/hour) ▶ Participation in skills training programs of targeted population. ▶ Job application completion support. ▶ See access to childcare below.
Result: Be ready for school, experience school success, and have positive connection to their community.	Examples: ▶ Youth participation rates in K-12 sports and arts programs, sills, and job training, etc. ▶ Childcare program waitlists or availability (https://childcaredeserts.org/). ▶ Participation rates in early childhood education programs available to resident children. ▶ Participation in Youth Support Resources.
Result: Feel a sense of community and belonging.	Examples: ▶ Number and diversity of businesses, cultural spaces, and parks/gathering places in key neighborhood centers. ▶ Housing in areas that also offer economic and social opportunities.