0 Vision & Plan Introduction



What You Will Find in this Chapter

- The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan,
- The Burien planning area,
- The Comprehensive Plan values and vision

Introduction

This Comprehensive Plan considers the voices and needs of our Burien community to address growth and coordinate capital investments and city functions through the year 2044. It establishes values and a vision, and a land use plan providing opportunities for living, working, and enjoying Burien's natural and cultural environment. The Comprehensive Plan addresses Burien's housing and jobs trends and expected growth. To support current residents and businesses and future growth, the Plan provides a statement of policy across the following elements: Land Use, Transportation, Housing, Human Services, Economic Development, Community Health and Well-being, Sustainability and Natural Environment, Climate Change, Parks, Recreation, and Open Space, Utilities, and Capital Facilities. This Plan fulfills the requirements of the Growth Management Act (GMA).

Our Values

Values are core principles or beliefs. They are cross-cutting statements that support multiple elements.

Equitable

People of all backgrounds, races, languages, genders, and abilities are provided full and equitable access to achieve their full potential and to thrive. Burien acknowledges that past inequitable planning led to injustices we have today.

Prosperous

Burien fosters an economic environment that provides opportunities and resources for all kinds of businesses that provide a wide range of jobs, goods, services, workforce and youth education and skills training, and cultural connections that enrich the lives of people now and into the future.

Fiscally Responsible

City government carefully manages public resources, weighs fiscal impacts with City priorities, and delivers high quality services that are supported by sustainable levels of staff and funding.

Environmentally Sustainable

Burien supports improving the health of natural systems, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and pollution, and increasing our ability to adapt to the impacts of a changing climate.

Resilient

The Burien community cultivates social networks, infrastructure, and economic systems that are resilient to economic or political disturbances, natural disasters, and climate change.

Safe

Burien aims for people to be safe from physical harm, theft, violence, harassment, discrimination, pollution, and natural hazards in our community.

Innovative

Burien is not afraid to try new methods or processes and embraces creative solutions, including responsibly adapting to and leveraging ever-changing technology.

Our Vision

A vision statement describes Burien's shared aspirations for its best future regarding the community's physical and economic development and social well-being. Elements have their own statement as a guiding framework.

Guiding Vision

Burien aims to be a prosperous, equitable, sustainable, resilient, innovative, and safe community where people of diverse backgrounds lead fulfilling lives with friends and family, business and work opportunities, and rich cultural and recreational activities with programs for and by our youth, elders, and all ages. As the city grows, quality of life improves for current and future residents.

Land Use

Growth in Burien contributes to the vibrancy of downtown and neighborhood centers, supports local businesses, increases housing opportunities for all, improves community and cultural spaces, and supports a healthy environment.

Transportation

People are able to get around Burien safely and comfortably by walking, biking, rolling, riding transit, or driving. Transportation assets including streets, sidewalks, bike facilities, and trails are well-maintained, connected, and vibrant community spaces that enrich public life, health, and the environment. Transportation decisions are made equitably to prioritize investments for those who

have the least access. Make accessible improvements and enhance safe mobility of people with disabilities.

Housing

All types of homes are affordable, abundant, safe and accessible to all Burien residents—now and in the future—regardless of income, race, family structure, household size, personal ability, or life stage.

Human Services

The City of Burien will support, fund, and advocate for human service agencies and programs working to better the lives of our residents and their families reaching all ages and abilities. 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.

Economic Development

Burien's economic development landscape is welcoming and inclusive, supporting entrepreneurs and business owners as they start, build, and grow their companies. Burien's diverse businesses provide a well-balanced jobs market (including a full range of wages and skills), ample access to culturally relevant goods and services, and provide a strong revenue base for a growing city.

Community Health and Well-being

Burien's physical environment and social programs allow community members to weather challenges, live healthy and hopeful lives, and develop and maintain positive human interactions. Homes, businesses, recreation, cultural arts, and schools offer culturally relevant ways to access healthy food options, interact spontaneously, build trust amongst neighbors, and gather together.

Sustainability, Natural Environment, and Climate Change

Burien is a community that mitigates and adapts to a changing climate.Burien is aresilient community that protects its natural environment, improves the health of our watersheds, and expands social services to ensure environmental justice and equity as we transition to a carbon-free world. Tree canopy, natural areas, biodiversity, watersheds, and green infrastructure are protected and enhanced over time. Negative environmental impacts such as exposure to sea level rise, flooding, air and noise pollution, and urban heat effects are mitigated.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

Community members have equitable access to high quality and safe parks, recreation, and cultural facilities in their neighborhoods. This allows for increased walkability and more access to active

recreation, passive gathering spaces, trees and natural spaces, water, public art, events, and cultural activities that reflect the changing needs and desires of Burien's population.

Capital Facilities and Utilities

Capital facilities and utilities are well-maintained, equitably distributed, efficiently managed, and sufficiently funded to support the daily needs of a thriving and growing city.

Plan Area

The City of Burien is 10.04 square miles in area and located in southwest King County, south of Seattle and White Center. Its western border is the Puget Sound, and its eastern border includes SR 99/Tukwila International Boulevard, and Des Moines Memorial Drive S. See Exhibit 0-1.

SR 509 provides north-south regional connections while SR 518 links the city eastward, connecting to I-405 and east King County. Arterials providing north-south connections across Burien include Ambaum Boulevard SW, 1st Ave S, and 4th Ave SW, and arterials providing east-west connections include S 128th, 136th, 146th, 148th, 152nd, and 160th Streets.

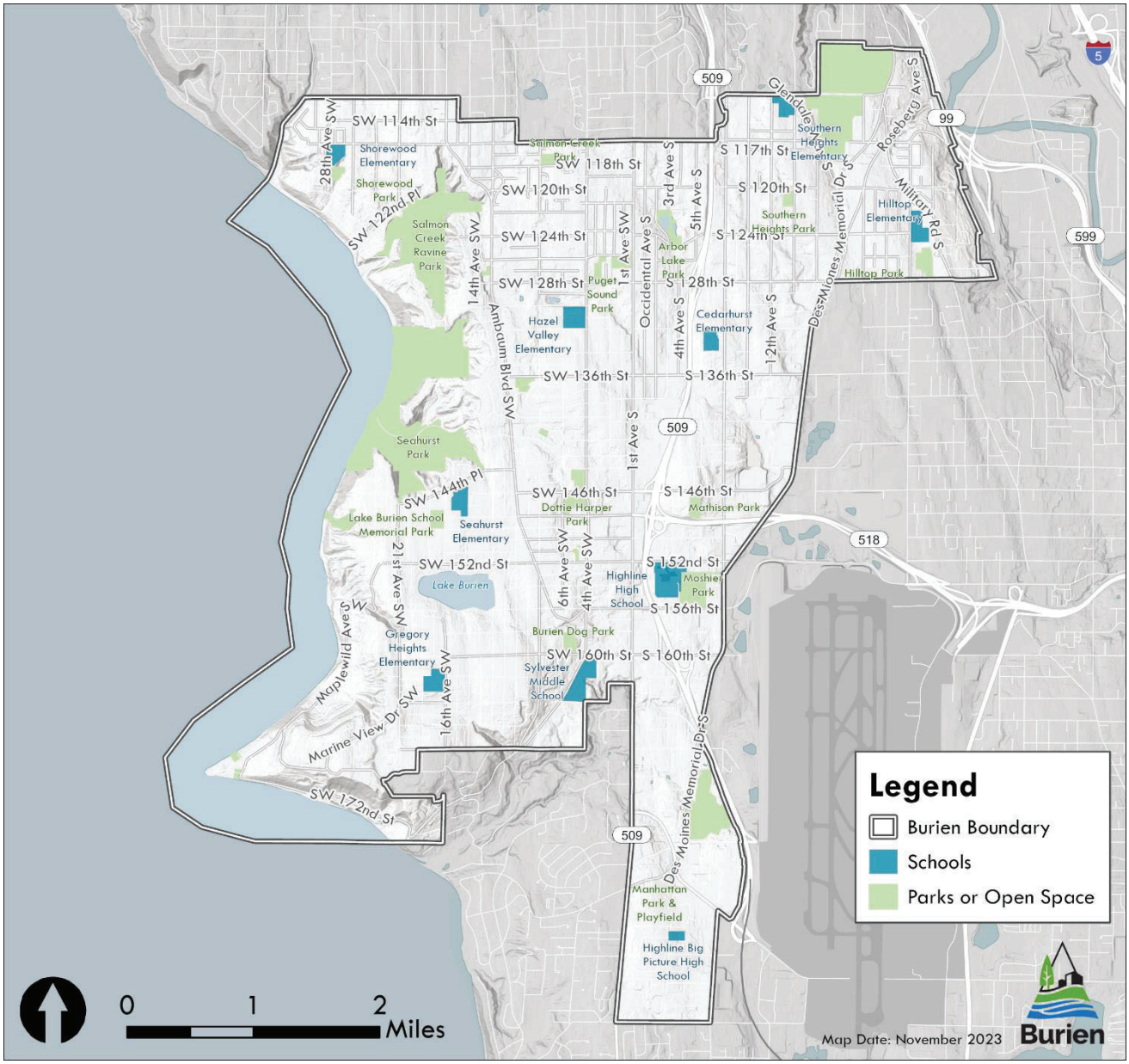
Burien was incorporated in 1993, and today is home to a diverse population. It is known for flagship features such as a walkable downtown and creative district, international restaurant scene, health care hub, waterfront parks, and Puget Sound views.

Growth Management Goals

State goals guide the City's Comprehensive Plan and development regulations. These goals address in summary:

- Guide growth in urban areas.
- Reduce sprawl.
- Encourage an efficient multimodal transportation system.
- Accommodate housing for all economic segments.
- Promote economic development and opportunities.
- Recognize property rights.
- Ensure timely and fair permit procedures.
- Protect agricultural, forest, and mineral lands.
- Retain and enhance open space, recreation, and habitat.
- Protect and enhance the environment.
- Foster community participation including overburdened populations.
- Ensure adequate public facilities and services.
- Encourage historic preservation.
- Adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.
- Manage shorelines of the state.

Exhibit 0-1 Burien City Limits



Sources: City of Burien, BERK 2023.

State and Regional Framework

Growth Management Act

The Burien Comprehensive Plan is required to be updated periodically every 10 years to meet the Growth Management Act requirements and regional and countywide requirements. A 5-year progress report is due in between updates.

The Washington State GMA was adopted in 1990 in response to concerns over uncoordinated growth and its impacts on communities and the environment. The GMA includes 15 planning goals to help guide its implementation. See side bar on page 1-5. The GMA requires local governments to prepare comprehensive plans to accommodate 20 years of expected growth. Required elements include land use, housing, capital facilities, utilities, transportation, economic development, parks and recreation, and climate change and resilience. The GMA and other state and regional policies provide specific guidance for the contents of these elements.

VISION 2050

Adopted in October 2020, the PSRC VISION 2050 provides a framework for planning for future development within the four-county region.[1] Within this framework, the VISION 2050 regional growth strategy envisions a future where the region:

- Maintains a stable urban growth area.
- Focuses the great majority of new population and employment within the urban growth area.
- Maintains a variety of community types, densities, and sizes.
- Achieves a better balance of jobs and housing across the region.
- Within the urban growth area, focuses growth in cities.
- Within cities, creates and supports centers to serve as concentrations of jobs, housing, services, and other activities.
- Builds transit-oriented development around existing and planned infrastructure.
- Uses existing infrastructure and new investments efficiently.

The roles of different communities are described in the Regional Growth Strategy. Five types of urban geographies are identified based on their size, function, and access to high-capacity transit: Metropolitan Cities, Core Cities, High-Capacity Transit Communities, Cities and Towns, and Urban Unincorporated Areas. Burien is one of 16 cities/urban areas in the Core Cities designation. Core Cities are described as containing designated regional growth centers, with the majority connected

[1] King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Kitsap counties.

to the region's high-capacity transit system. Together with Metropolitan Cities, Core Cities currently are and will be the most intensely urban places in the region.

Consistent with the GMA, VISION 2050 contains multicounty planning policies. VISION 2050 contains the following key land use development requirements. A full list can be found at the PSRC website (VISION 2050):

- MPP-DP-1 Develop high-quality, compact urban communities throughout the region's urban growth area that impart a sense of place, preserve local character, provide for mixed uses and choices in housing types, and encourage walking, bicycling, and transit use.
- MPP-DP-2 Reduce disparities in access to opportunity for the region's residents through inclusive community planning and targeted public and private investments that meet the needs of current and future residents and businesses.
- MPP-DP-3 Enhance existing neighborhoods to provide a high degree of connectivity in the street network to accommodate walking, bicycling, and transit use, and sufficient public spaces.
- MPP-DP-9 Support urban design, historic preservation, and arts to enhance quality of life, support local culture, improve the natural and human-made environments, promote health and well-being, contribute to a prosperous economy, and increase the region's resiliency in adapting to changes or adverse events.
- MPP-DP-11 Identify and create opportunities to develop parks, civic places (including schools) and public spaces, especially in or adjacent to centers.

Specific goals for accommodating growth are provided through the Regional Growth Strategy and include:

- **MPP-RGS-9** Focus a significant share of population and employment growth in designated regional growth centers.
- **MPP-RGS-12** Avoid increasing development capacity inconsistent with the Regional Growth Strategy in regional geographies not served by high-capacity transit.

The Comprehensive Plan is reviewed for consistency with VISION 2050, and the Transportation Element must be certified.

Countywide Planning Policies

The CPPs were developed by the King County Growth Management Planning Council in collaboration with cities and were most recently updated in 2021, with ratification occurring in April 2022. Housing related policies and targets were adopted in 2023.

The CPPs address growth management issues, provide a countywide vision for the future and support regional planning and the GMA. The GMA requires that local comprehensive plans be consistent with the CPPs.

The 2021 CPPs include the following vision statements:

- Communities across King County are welcoming places where every person can thrive.
- All residents have access to opportunity and displacement from development is lessened.
- The cities are vibrant and inviting hubs for people with a safe, affordable, and efficient transportation system that connects people to the places they want to go.
- Housing is characterized by a full range of options that are healthy, safe, affordable, and open to all.
- The county's critical areas are protected and have been restored.
- Open spaces are well distributed and inviting to all users.
- The Rural Area is viable and permanently protected with a clear boundary between urban and rural areas.
- The county boasts of bountiful agricultural areas and productive forest lands.
- The economy provides opportunities to everyone and includes Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color-owned businesses; immigrant- and women-owned businesses; locally owned businesses; and global corporations.

The CPPs include a centers strategy that is consistent with and supports the VISION 2050 regional growth strategy. The strategy aims to concentrate housing and employment growth in designated centers, providing urban and industrial places with higher intensity development and concentrations of services and amenities to support growth.

Burien must plan to accommodate the growth allocation assigned to it through the countywide growth target allocation process. Housing targets are further disaggregated by income band. In addition, the City must plan for emergency housing. See the **Housing Element**.

The Comprehensive Plan Housing and Land Use Elements are reviewed for consistency with Countywide Planning Policies regarding housing provisions and policies, and the City will report annually on its progress in plan implementation.

Plan Framework

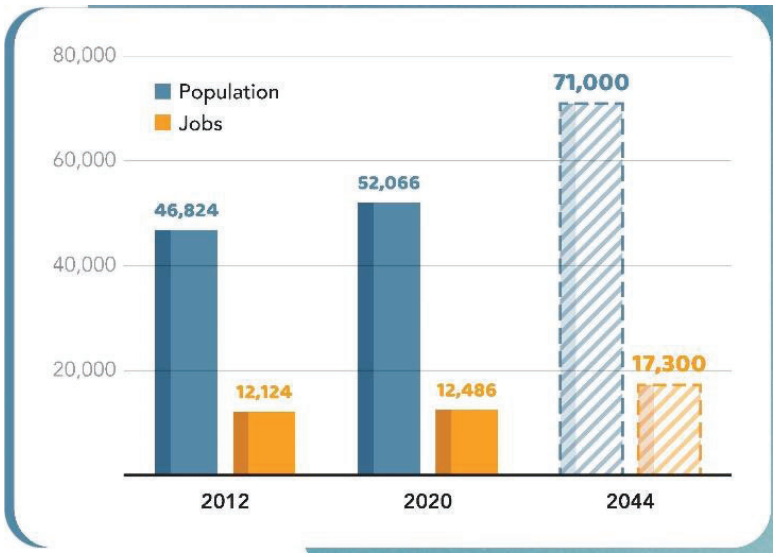
The Comprehensive Plan is the primary plan that guides and is supported by system plans like the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) and Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan (PROS), as well as by other City plans and development regulations. See **Exhibit 0-2**.

Exhibit 0-2. Comprehensive Plan and Supporting Plans and Regulations



The Comprehensive Plan is designed to assess existing conditions, look forward, and plan for the next 20 years. Burien is a city with over 52,000 residents as of 2020. From 2020–2044, the city is anticipated to add almost 19,000 new residents in 7,500 new households and another 4,770 jobs in that same time. This is over 36% growth. See **Exhibit 0-3**.

Exhibit 0-3. Twenty Year Growth Projections – 2044 Future



Source: King County, 2021; BERK 2022.

Planning Process & Public Involvement

The City developed the "Shape Your City" initiative to for coordinate community engagement around the Burien 2044 Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Master Plan, Parks, Recreation, and

Open Space Plan, and Economic Development Action Plan. The effort has three stages: Visioning, Stories & Strategies, and Plan Sharing with the Draft EIS and Draft Plan. See **Exhibit 0-4**. Engagement results are in Appendix A.

Exhibit 0-4. Engagement Phases



Source: Burien 2023, BERK 2023.

Key engagement themes have been folded into the values and vision in this chapter, and are reflected in the land use plan, and element goals and policies. Key ideas that have guided the development of plans and investments include:

- Increase affordable housing ownership and rental choices including middle housing, mixed use, and multifamily housing with access to amenities, and more.
- Create neighborhood centers with amenities that connect daily activities from homes to schools, parks, services and stores, and transit and jobs.
- Connect by foot, bike, transit, wheelchair, and auto within Burien and beyond.
- Provide places to meet and play and green spaces and trees throughout Burien.
- Increase prosperity and economic opportunity.
- Protect and enhance Burien's ecosystems and adapt and mitigate climate change.

Tribal Treaty Rights

Prior to White settlement, Burien was part of "winter towns inhabited by Lushootseed-speaking peoples, including the Duwamish, Suquamish, Muckleshoot, and Puyallup." (DeCoster 2013) The Treaties of Point Elliot and Medicine Creek in 1854 established reservations of land for signatory

tribes with the ability to continue fishing, hunting and gathering off-reservations. Chief Seattle signed for the Duwamish and Suquamish tribes. (The Muckleshoot Indian Tribe 2023)

The Muckleshoot Indian Tribe is a federally recognized tribe that are descendants of the Native people who inhabited the Duwamish and Upper Puyallup watersheds. The Tribe identifies its geographic area of interest to includes all Watershed Resource Inventory Areas 8, 9 and 10, which are the Lake Washington, Green-Duwamish & White-Puyallup River Basins. (The Muckleshoot Indian Tribe 2020) This includes the entirety of Burien which is in the WRIA 9 basin.

Tribal members moved from their original homelands to the reservations, and White settlers took over non-reservation lands:

> *Following the establishment of the Muckleshoot Reservation in 1857, and as pressure from settlers increased, Indian people moved from their traditional villages throughout the Duwamish/Lake Washington and Upper Puyallup drainages to the Muckleshoot Reservation. (The Muckleshoot Indian Tribe 2023)*

The Duwamish Tribe is seeking federal recognition. It considers its aboriginal territory to include Seattle, Burien, Tukwila, Renton, and Redmond. It established the Duwamish Tribal Services, a registered non-profit organization in 1983. Other federally recognized tribes dispute the claim of federal recognition that the Duwamish seek. (Mapes 2022)

Not all Indians moved to the reservations; they faced loss of their lands and homes and discrimination. Those on the reservation too faced poverty and discrimination. Children were forcibly sent to boarding schools to assimilate and lose their language and culture. (Mapes 2022)

Another way tribal treaties were compromised is with environmental degradation. Some tribal members suggest that supporting the tribes' usual and accustomed places with properly functioning ecosystems is a way to honor the treaties. (Mapes 2022)

> *The treaty protects everyone living here today — and is why they live here not as visitors or squatters. Rather, Miller said, all people living here today are neighbors, bound together to uphold the treaty. Yet these are promises still not kept.*
>
> *Treaty tribes' rights were reserved forever to hunt, fish and gather where they always had, off the reservation. Lands and waters that today are paved, dammed, diked, dredged, filled and industrialized beyond recognition are increasingly bereft of salmon, game, roots, berries, plants and medicines central to Native cultures. (Mapes 2022)*

Planning and Consultation

Burien regularly notifies tribes of planning initiatives and land use permits. The City implements policies and regulations in its Shoreline Master Program that are meant to identify and protect archaeological or historic resources.

The City shared notices of a 60-day review of the Draft Plan and Draft EIS with several tribes. This Comprehensive Plan includes policies meant to promote protection and enhancement of ecosystems to meet tribal treaty rights and protect cultural resources.

Supporting Plans

The City of Burien has adopted the following subarea and system plans in support of this Comprehensive Plan, and these are incorporated by reference as amended:

- Ambaum Boulevard Park Community Plan (2024)
- Burien Climate Action Plan (2021)
- Burien Economic Development Action Plan (2024)
- Burien Housing Action Plan (2021)
- Burien Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan (2024)
- Burien Shoreline Master Program (2019)
- Burien Transportation System Plan (2024)
- Burien Urban Center Plan (2021, Amended 2024)
- Burien Urban Center Streetscape Plan (2021)
- Highline School District Capital Facilities Plan (2018)
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities Plan (2004)
- Salmon Creek Neighborhood Plan (2004)

Plan Amendment

Burien's Comprehensive Plan is an evolving document and will be periodically reviewed and revised over the next 20 years as better information becomes available and public interests and legislative policy change over time.

The GMA limits Comprehensive Plan amendments to no more than once per calendar year, except for certain exemptions and emergency actions.

The Plan is monitored at the five-year mark in between periodic updates due every 10 years. The progress report must include indicators, measures, and milestones addressing:

- The implementation of previously adopted changes to the housing element and any effect those changes have had on housing affordability and availability within the jurisdiction;
- Permit processing timelines; and
- Progress toward reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled.

Whenever the plan is amended it is important to verify that it is "internally consistent" and that development regulations are consistent with and implement the comprehensive plan.

Terms

- **Goal:** A broad, general statement of the desired long-term future state or outcome, toward which the Plan aims. Goals indicate what ought to exist in a community or what is desired to be achieved in the future.
- **Policy:** A principle, protocol, or proposal for action that implements a related goal. Decision-oriented statements that guide the legislative or administrative body while evaluating a new project or proposed change in ordinance.
- **Regulation:** A rule or directive found in City ordinances or the municipal code.