



# CHAPTER TWO

## LAND USE ELEMENT

### What you will find in this chapter:

- Foundation and framework for the Element;
- How anticipated future growth of households and employment can be accommodated; and
- Goals and policies for vibrant commercial centers, well-designed neighborhoods and job centers and consideration of healthy environment and lifestyles.

### Purpose Statement:

Foster a growth pattern that ensures Kent is a safe, connected and beautiful city, culturally vibrant with richly diverse urban centers.

## Purpose

The Land Use Element guides the general distribution and location of various land uses, as well as the scheduling of capital improvement expenditures. It also will guide the character of the development pattern which has impacts on aesthetics, mobility, housing, environmental and public health, and economic development. Finally, the Land Use Element provides the internal consistency among all the elements which translates into coordinated growth for the City of Kent.

## Issues

### Creating Places

What is that place called home? What attracts people to Kent and what keeps them here? As the City accommodates growth, it must be creating vibrant places.

### Coordination with Adjacent Jurisdictions

The City must coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions to ensure land use decisions of one jurisdiction are not adversely affecting other jurisdictions.

### Communication

Open, interactive and transparent communication with Kent residents and businesses creates our City.

## Background

The Growth Management Act (GMA) is concerned with the conservation and wise use of our lands and infrastructure; that growth occurs in a compact and livable urban form; the creation of a sustainable economy; and the opportunity for the residents of the state to enjoy a healthy lifestyle. State, regional and county land use policies provide the statutory framework for the Land Use policies and how they relate to other chapters in the Comprehensive Plan (the Plan); how the City identifies Kent's Potential Annexation Area; and the need to coordinate with surrounding jurisdictions and regional agencies.

The GMA requires cities to inventory, designate and protect critical areas and resource lands through development regulations. Kent's Critical Areas Ordinance, Shoreline Master Program and development regulations protecting Agricultural Resource Lands fulfill those GMA requirements.

### Existing Zoning Pattern

The City of Kent has five general categories of land use plan map designations: agricultural, single-family residential, multi-family residential, commercial and industrial. Within each of these general categories, there are several zoning districts which allow varying levels of land uses, bulk and scale of development. *Table LU.1* shows the land area of each of these zoning categories and *Figure LU-1* shows the distribution of these zoning districts.

**TABLE LU.1**  
**2015 CITY OF KENT LAND USE DESIGNATIONS**

| SUBJECT                      | LAND USE        | AREA (ACRES)    | % OF TOTAL AREA | ALLOWED ZONING                         |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--|
| <b>AGRICULTURAL</b>          | AG-R            | 53.5            | 0.3             | A-10                                   |
|                              | AG-S            | 223.7           | 1.0             | AG                                     |
|                              | <b>Subtotal</b> | <b>277.2</b>    | <b>1.3</b>      |  |
| <b>SF RESIDENTIAL</b>        | US              | 1,580.2         | 7.4             | SR-1                                   |
|                              | SF-3            | 252.9           | 1.2             | SR-3                                   |
|                              | SF-4.5          | 2,301.5         | 10.8            | SR-4.5                                 |
|                              | SF-6            | 6,797.9         | 31.9            | SR-4.5, SR-6                           |
|                              | SF-8            | 630.1           | 3.0             | SR-4.5, SR-6, SR-8                     |
|                              | MHP             | 158.8           | 0.7             | MHP                                    |
|                              | <b>Subtotal</b> | <b>11,721.3</b> | <b>54.9</b>     |  |
| <b>MF RESIDENTIAL</b>        | LDMF            | 818.7           | 3.8             | SR-8, MR-D, MR-G, MRT-12, MRT-16, MHP  |
|                              | MDMF            | 840.4           | 3.9             | MR-D, MR-M, MR-H, MRT-12, MRT-16, MHP  |
|                              | <b>Subtotal</b> | <b>1,659.1</b>  | <b>7.8</b>      |  |
| <b>COMMERCIAL</b>            | MU              | 677.9           | 3.2             | GC, CC, MRT-16, M2 (legacy)            |
|                              | NS              | 15.9            | 0.1             | NCC, MRT-12, MRT-16                    |
|                              | C               | 563.6           | 2.6             | GC, CC, CM-1, CM-2, MRT-12, MRT-16     |
|                              | UC              | 492.0           | 2.3             | DC, DCE, GC, MRT-12, MRT-16, MR-M, MHP |
|                              | TOC             | 294.3           | 1.4             | MTC-1, MTC-2, MCR, MHP                 |
|                              | <b>Subtotal</b> | <b>2,043.7</b>  | <b>9.6</b>      |  |
| <b>INDUSTRIAL</b>            | I               | 2,281.6         | 10.7            | M1, M2, M3, M1-C                       |
|                              | MIC             | 1,992.9         | 9.3             | M2, M3, M1-C                           |
|                              | <b>Subtotal</b> | <b>4,274.5</b>  | <b>20.0</b>     |  |
| <b>PARK &amp; OPEN SPACE</b> | OS              | 1,362.3         | 6.4             | All                                    |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                 |                 | <b>21,338.1</b> | <b>100.0</b>    |  |

## Potential Annexation Area

Kent's Potential Annexation Area (PAA) identifies areas within the unincorporated King County Urban Growth Area (UGA) that the City has committed to annex. There have been 13.6 square miles annexed into Kent since the PAA was established. There is approximately nine-tenths of a square mile remaining to be annexed. Kent city limits and the PAA together form the Planning Area for the City's Land Use Plan Map (see *Figure LU-2*).

## Critical Areas and Resource Lands

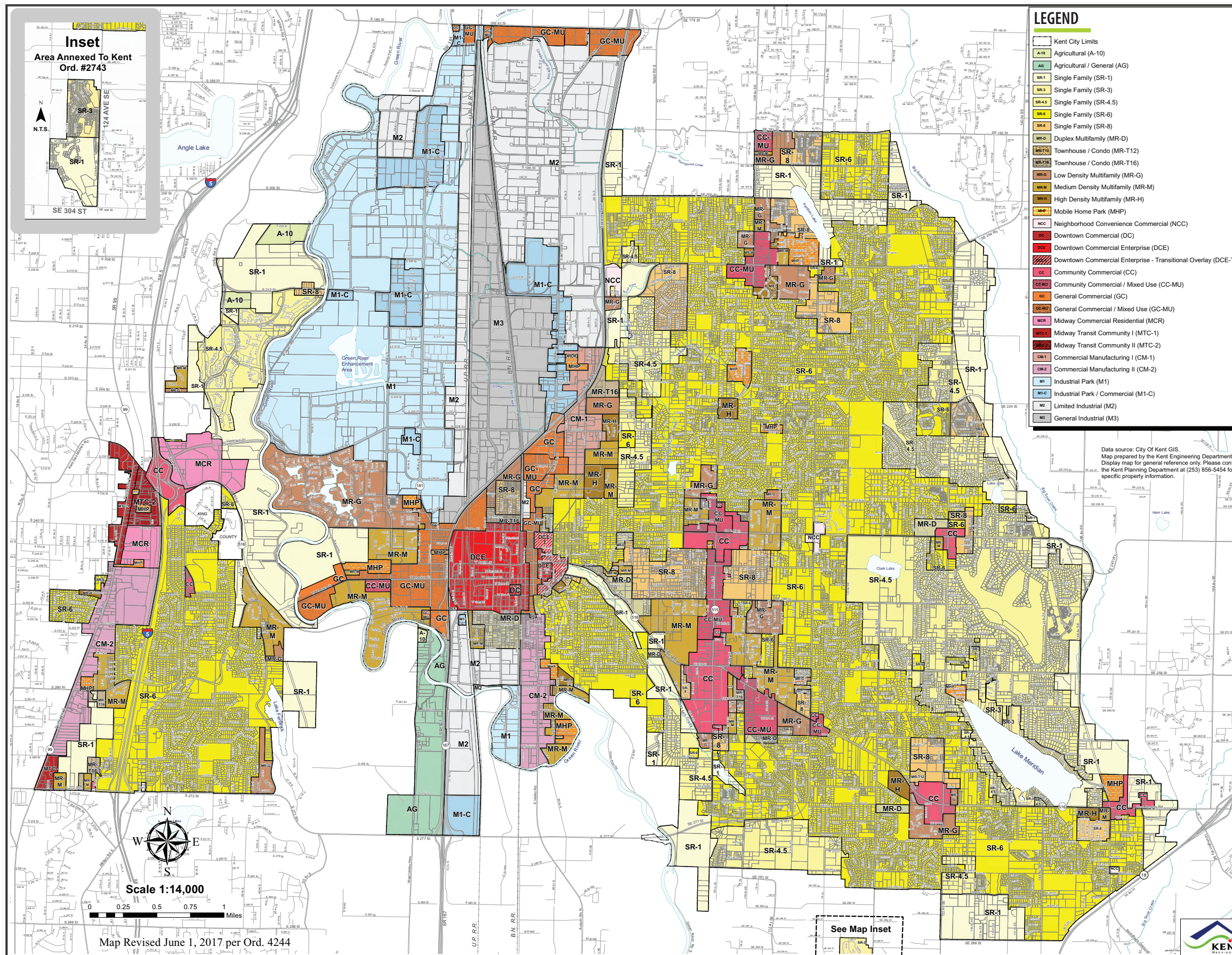
The City of Kent contains numerous areas that can be identified and characterized as critical or environmentally sensitive. Such areas within the city include wetlands, streams, wildlife and fisheries habitat, geologic hazard areas, frequently flooded areas and critical aquifer recharge areas. Designated "Resource Lands" within Kent are agricultural in nature and are considered to have long-term commercial significance. The development rights for the Agricultural Resource Lands in Kent were purchased under King County's Agricultural Preservation Program during the 1980's, ensuring they will remain in agricultural land use in perpetuity.

The City has adopted policies and development regulations to protect critical areas. The Green River, a notable natural feature in Kent, is considered a Shoreline of Statewide Significance and falls under the jurisdiction of the City's Shoreline Master Program (SMP). Other water bodies subject to SMP policies and regulations are Lake Meridian, Lake Fenwick, the Green River Natural Resources Area, Panther Lake and portions of Big Soos Creek, Jenkins Creek and Springbrook Creek. (see *Figure LU-3*).

The other significant natural resources in Kent are protected by the Critical Areas Ordinance. The approximate location and extent of critical areas within the city are shown on the City's critical areas inventory maps. These maps are used for informational purposes and as a general guide only; the actual presence or absence, type, extent, boundaries and classification of critical areas on a specific site shall be identified in the field by a qualified professional and confirmed by the department, according to the procedures, definitions and criteria established by the Critical Areas Ordinance.





There are regulatory constraints placed on Agricultural Resource Land. When the development rights are purchased from Agricultural Resource Land, covenants dictate uses and some development standards. Because Agricultural Resource Land is protected for farming only, the GMA requires that adjacent property owners who propose development must be notified of the protected status of the Agricultural Resource Lands to ensure there are no conflicts between land uses. Kent's Agricultural Resource Land and the County's Lower Green River Agricultural Production District are illustrated in *Figure LU-4*.

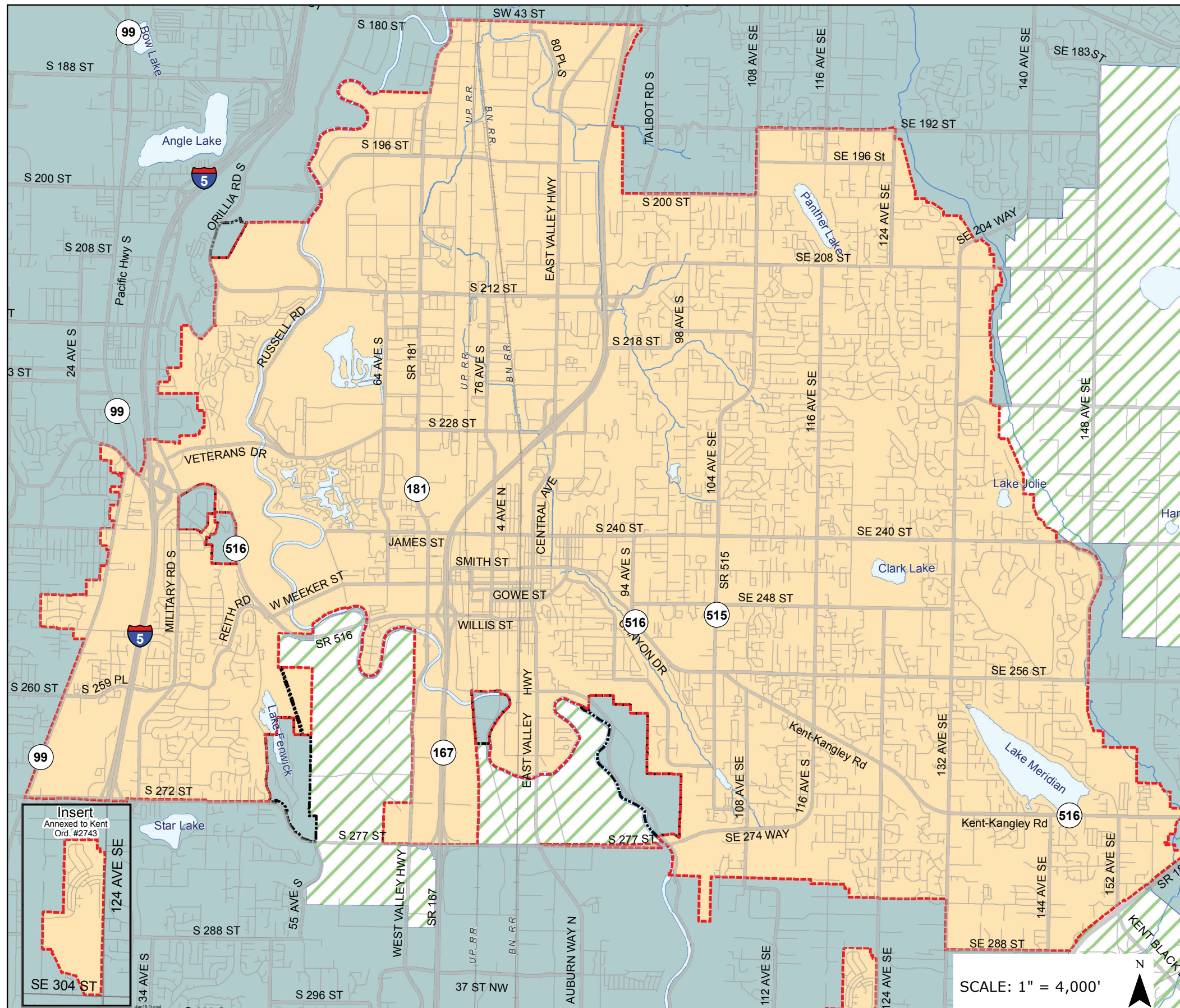
**FIGURE LU-1**  
**ZONING**  
**DISTRICTS**



**FIGURE LU-2**  
**POTENTIAL ANNEXATION AREA**

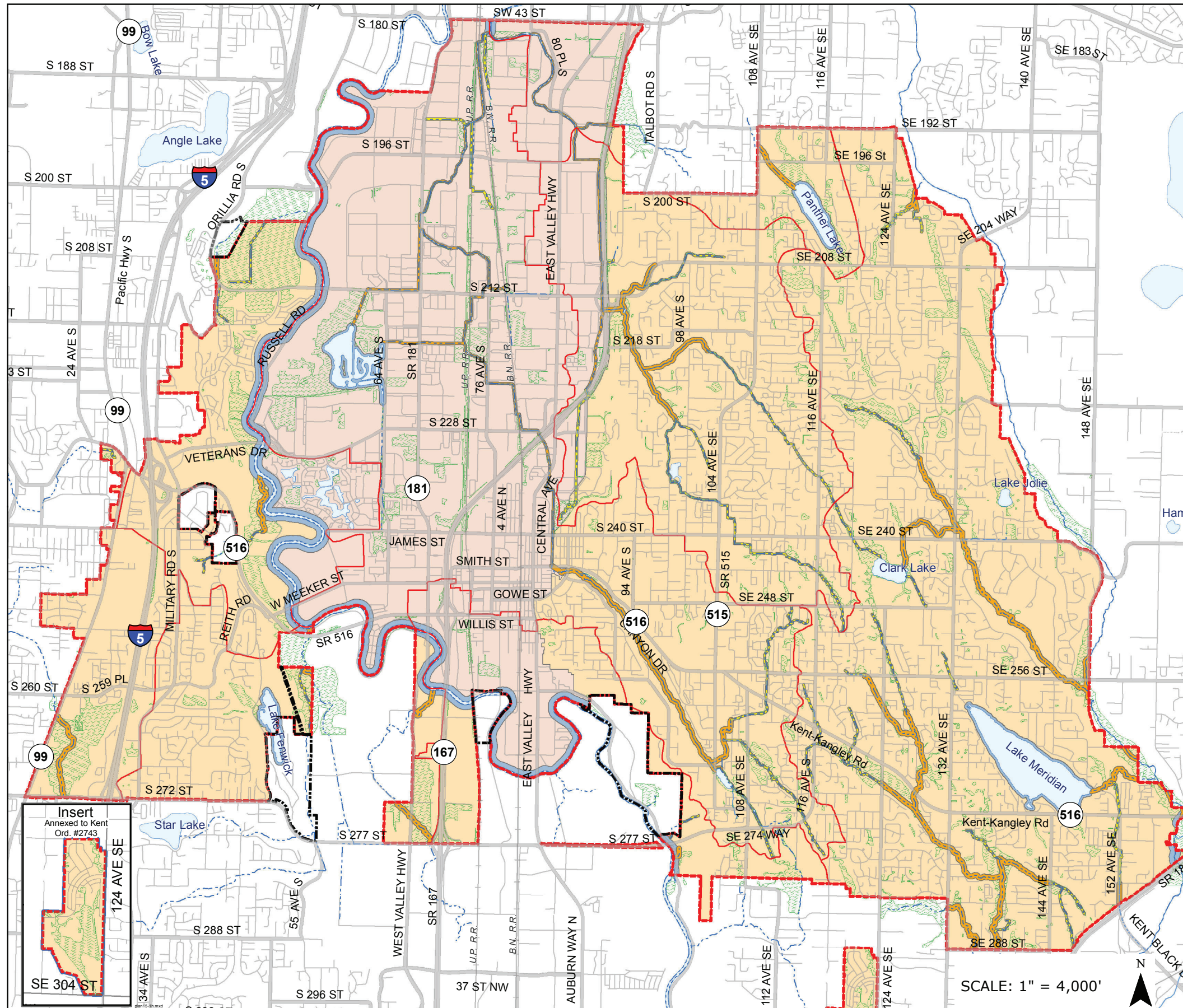
**LEGEND**

-  POTENTIAL ANNEXATION AREA
-  CITY LIMITS
-  RURAL GROWTH AREA
-  URBAN GROWTH AREA



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**FIGURE LU-3**  
**STREAM CLASSIFICATION**  
**AND BUFFERS**



**LEGEND**

- POTENTIAL ANNEXATION AREA
- CITY LIMITS
- WATERSHED BOUNDARY
- SHORELINES—CLASS 1  
 OTHER SHORELINES INCLUDE LAKE FENWICK,  
 GREEN RIVER NATURAL RESOURCES AREA  
 AND LAKE MERIDIAN
- SALMONID—CLASS 2
- NON-SALMONID—CLASS 3
- INVENTORIED WETLANDS
- VALLEY OVERLAY

SCALE: 1" = 4,000'









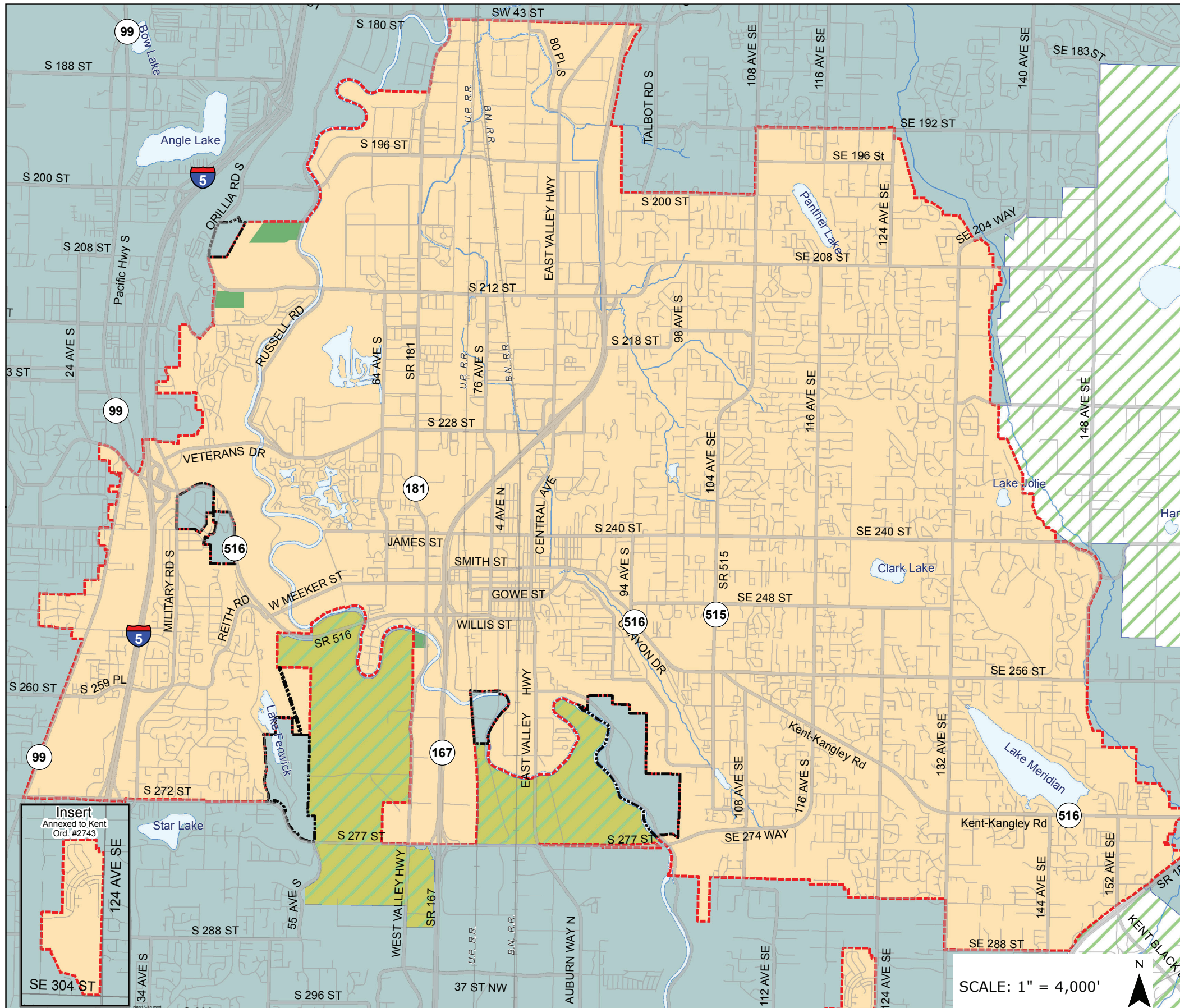
**Insert**  
 Annexed to Kent  
 Ord. #2743

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**FIGURE LU-4**  
**AGRICULTURAL**  
**RESOURCE LANDS**

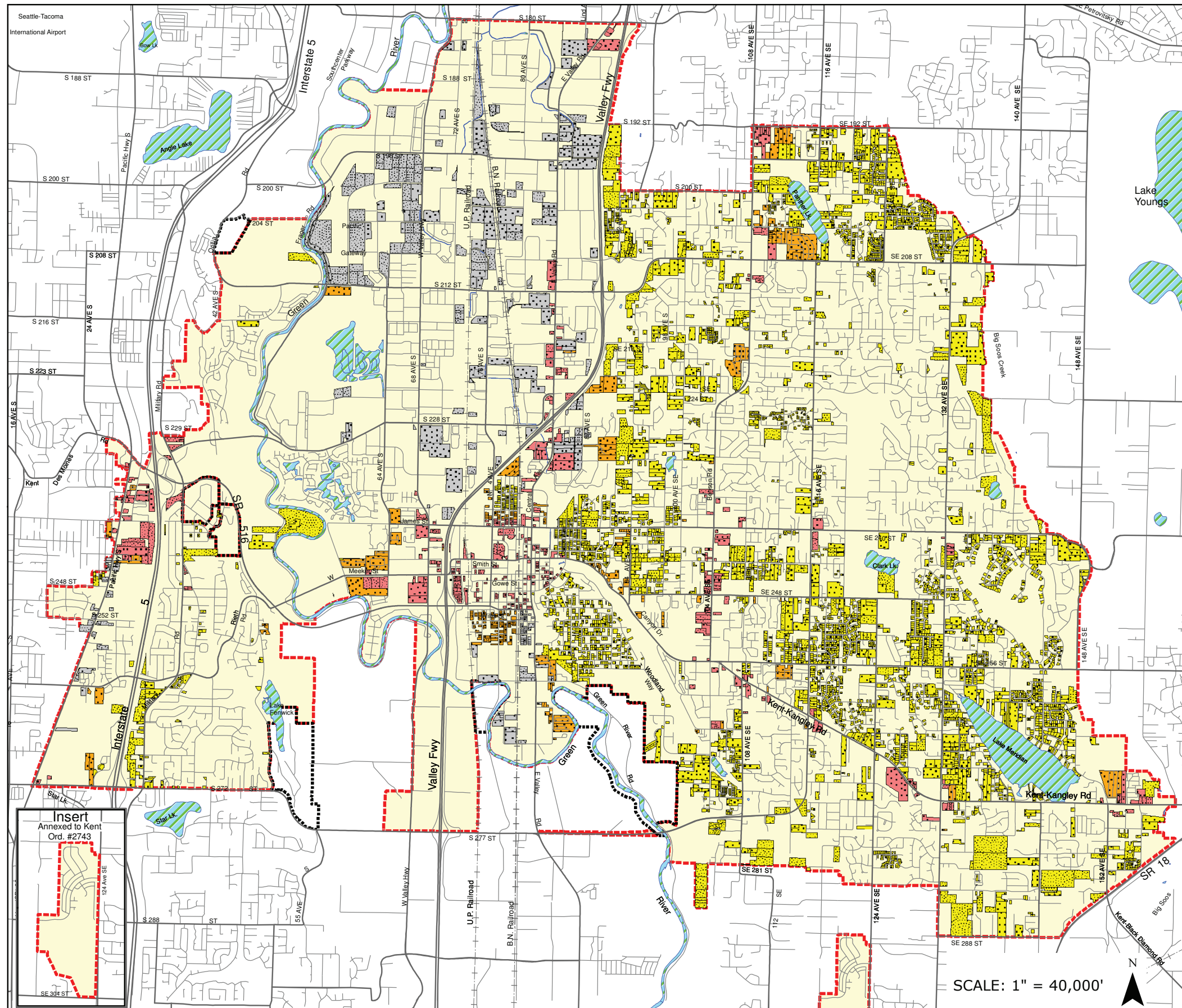
**LEGEND**

-  POTENTIAL ANNEXATION AREA
-  CITY LIMITS
-  RURAL GROWTH AREA
-  URBAN GROWTH AREA
-  KENT AGRICULTURAL RESOURCE LAND
-  LOWER GREEN RIVER AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION DISTRICT



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**FIGURE LU-5**  
**VACANT AND REDEVELOPABLE LAND**

**LEGEND**

- CITY LIMITS
- POTENTIAL ANNEXATION AREA
- DEVELOPMENT STATUS**
- COMMERCIAL-REDEVELOPABLE
- COMMERCIAL-VACANT
- INDUSTRIAL-REDEVELOPABLE
- INDUSTRIAL-VACANT
- MULTIFAMILY-REDEVELOPABLE
- MULTIFAMILY-VACANT
- SINGLE-FAMILY-REDEVELOPABLE
- SINGLE-FAMILY-VACANT

SCALE: 1" = 40,000'



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## Analysis of Development Capacity

The GMA requires jurisdictions to plan for and accommodate the forecasted 20-year growth of households and employment. Working with the State and local jurisdictions, the Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) established household and employment targets for 2031. Because the GMA planning horizon is to 2035, Kent extended the CPPs growth target on a calculated straight line out an additional four years from the 2031 targets.

A critical component of determining future development potential is the analysis of development capacity. Development capacity refers to an estimate of the amount of development which could be accommodated on vacant and re-developable land based on existing zoning and environmental constraints. It serves as a benchmark from which to gauge to what extent current land use and zoning policies can accommodate growth.

The 2014 methodology to estimate capacity for household and employment is based on the Buildable Lands Program (RCW 36.70A.215). Under Buildable Lands, the City is required to conduct a review and evaluation of the current supply of “lands suitable for development” and to evaluate the effectiveness of local plans and regulations. The Buildable Lands Program collects annual data to determine the amount and density of recent development, an inventory of the land supply suitable for development and an assessment of the ability to accommodate expected growth for the remainder of the 20-year planning horizon.

Figure LU-5 shows the location and extent of vacant and re-developable sites in Kent. Table LU.2 summarizes the household and employment capacity for the Kent Planning Area based on Buildable Lands Analysis, and provides the existing household and employment as of 2010.

**TABLE LU.2**  
**KENT PLANNING AREA 2010 AND 2012 RESIDENTIAL AND EMPLOYMENT CAPACITY**

| ACTIVITY TYPE | 2010 EXISTING | 2012 CAPACITY* | TOTAL  |
|---------------|---------------|----------------|--------|
| Households    | 42,793        | 10,732         | 53,525 |
| Employment    | 61,654        | 23,283         | 84,937 |

\*Source: 2014 King County Buildable Lands Report

## Evaluation of Development Capacity & Growth Targets

As stated in the Kent Profile and Vision chapter, the Kent Planning Area’s growth target for residential from the King County Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) is 9,360 housing units, and its employment target is 13,490 jobs to the year 2031. The planning horizon for Kent’s Comprehensive Plan is 2035 which required a mathematical extension of CPPs targets, although these targets may be adjusted during the next countywide target update process. The result is a residential 2035 target of 10,858 housing units and an employment target of 15,648 jobs.

**TABLE LU.3**  
**EVALUATION OF HOUSING & EMPLOYMENT CAPACITY TO MEET TARGETS FOR CITY OF KENT**

|                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Residential Target   | 10,858 housing units |
| Residential Capacity | 10,732 housing units |
| Employment Target    | 15,648 jobs          |
| Employment Capacity  | 23,283 jobs          |

Targets are not inherently a reflection of market trends in a specific city. Over the next two decades Sound Transit will continue to expand the Link Light Rail which could dramatically shape the communities with stations. Midway (the Kent-Des Moines area along the SR 99/I-5 corridor) is slated to have a rail station by 2023. Midway is also an area that had no new developments from which to predictably calculate capacity in the 2014 Buildable Lands Analysis. Similarly the capacity in Kent’s Downtown Urban Center is difficult to predict out to 2035. The Downtown Subarea Action Plan adopted on November 19, 2013, is based upon a moderate growth scenario of 8,908 activity units (5,419 households and 3,489 jobs). Within the plan’s expanded urban center of 550 acres is the 142-acre planned action area with an envisioned density of

about 39.5 units per acre. As Downtown and Midway continue to develop into the compact mixed-use centers envisioned in their subarea plans, there will be a clearer picture of the capacity to accommodate the growth targets; those capacity numbers then can be incorporated into the next plan update. The City believes there is substantial capacity in both of these areas to accommodate the 2035 targets.<sup>1</sup>

## Summary

The Land Use Element provides the vision for the City's growth for the next twenty (20) years. The vision is established in both the land use map and the land use goals and policies. It reflects the state, regional, and local policy framework previously identified, as well as the City's policy documents and capacity analysis. More importantly, it reflects the preferences and views of the citizens as they were expressed in the City's public participation process.

## Goals and Policies

The land use goals and policies cover a broad spectrum of issues. However, it is important to note that all of the goals and policies function together as a coherent and comprehensive vision of future growth in the community. This is reflected in the Purpose Statement for this Element.

## Urban Growth

The Land Use Element provides the overall comprehensive vision of future growth for the community. As mandated by the Growth Management Act, it is fundamentally important to establish the policy framework for managing this growth, particularly with regard to controlling and discouraging urban sprawl. The following goals and policies establish and reinforce that framework.

### Goal LU-1

Kent will ensure a land use pattern that provides overall densities in the Planning Area that are adequate to efficiently support a range of public facilities and urban services.

**Policy LU-1.1:** Establish land use map designations that accommodate a portion of the City's overall growth targets into Kent's Potential Annexation Area.

**Policy LU-1.2:** Do not extend any urban services to adjacent Unincorporated King County Rural Areas.

**Policy LU-1.3:** Monitor household and employment growth trends and consider changes to the land use plan map and development regulations to ensure Kent meets the density on net buildable acreage allowed by the zoning district designation.

### Goal LU-2

Kent will locate public facilities and services with sensitivity to community needs and environmental conditions.

**Policy LU-2.1:** Work with regional and state entities when public capital facilities are considered for location in or near the City to ensure that impacts and benefits are equitably dispersed.

**Policy LU-2.2:** Promote and support public transit, bicycle and pedestrian circulation within compact urban settings.

**Policy LU-2.3:** Give funding priority to capital facility projects that are consistent with the City's Land Use Element and support projected housing and employment growth targets.

**Policy LU-2.4:** Via a public participation process, allow certain public and private infrastructure, community open space and social service facilities that serve the general population the freedom to locate throughout the City.

<sup>1</sup> Land Use Scenario 4.0 in the Midway Subarea Plan adopted on December 13, 2011 anticipated a light rail station, with transit-oriented development and future capacity for 11,821 housing units and 9,481 jobs in the Midway Subarea. The Downtown Subarea Action Plan adopted on November 19, 2013 looks toward a dense, mixed-use urban center that complements transit. The plan expanded the downtown subarea to approximately 550 acres and considered different growth alternatives ranging from 5,285 – 20,001 for households and 23,496 – 30,076 for jobs from the 2006 base year to 2031.

## Urban Land Use

Downtown Kent is the heart of Kent. The Downtown Planning Area contains Kent's Urban Center as recognized by Countywide Planning Policies and the Puget Sound Regional Council, and affirmed by the Downtown Subarea Action Plan (DSAP). There are other urban nodes and corridors in Kent that contain a mix of residential and commercial uses. The Midway Subarea Plan focuses on an important node that by 2035 will contain a light rail station near Highline Community College. The following goals and policies reflect community values and are consistent with the Plan's framework.

### Goal LU-3

Kent will focus household and employment growth in the Urban Center and designated Activity Centers to provide adequate land and densities to accommodate a large portion of the adopted 20-year housing target of 10,858 new dwelling units and 15,648 new jobs within Kent's Planning Area.

**Policy LU-3.1:** Encourage mixed-use development that combines retail, office, or residential uses to provide a diverse and economically vibrant Urban Center and designated Activity Centers.

**Policy LU-3.2:** Encourage medium- and high-density residential development in the Urban Center that supports high-capacity transit and is affordable to all ranges of income.

**Policy LU-3.3:** Utilize the Downtown Subarea Action Plan and Downtown Design Guidelines to ensure development in the Urban Center is attractive, constructed with high-quality materials, maximizes livability and reinforces a sense of place.

**Policy LU-3.4:** Designate Activity Centers in areas that currently contain concentrations of commercial development with surrounding medium-density housing, are supported by transit, or have an existing subarea plan.

**Policy LU-3.5:** Periodically evaluate household and employment forecasts to ensure that land use policies based on previous assumptions are current.

**Policy LU-3.6:** Monitor economic trends and consider land use changes and incentives to maintain the vitality of the Urban Center and designated Activity Centers.

### Goal LU-4

Kent will plan and finance transportation and other public infrastructure that support medium- and high-density mixed-use development of the Urban Center and designated Activity Centers.

**Policy LU-4.1:** Establish transportation levels of service (LOS) that facilitate medium- to high-density development in the Urban Center and designated Activity Centers consistent with concurrency requirements.

**Policy LU-4.2:** Focus future public transportation investments in the Urban Center and designated Activity Centers.

**Policy LU-4.3:** Enhance pedestrian circulation systems and bicycle lanes in the Urban Center and designated Activity Centers with an emphasis on circulation systems that link adjacent neighborhoods to centers.

**Policy LU-4.4:** Take actions to ensure that adequate public parking is available to facilitate development in the Urban Center and designated Activity Centers, and monitor the effectiveness of actions taken.

**Policy LU-4.5:** Plan and finance City water and sewer systems to support medium and high-density development in the Urban Center and designated Activity Centers, and work with outside purveyors where necessary.

**Policy LU-4.6:** Redesign existing downtown parks, and expand the system where feasible, to maximize recreational opportunities for residents, employees and visitors in the Urban Center in support of a healthy lifestyle.

**Policy LU-4.7:** Ensure designated Activity Centers provide recreational opportunities for a diversity of residents, employees and visitors to support a healthy lifestyle and create a livable community.

**Policy LU-4.8:** Designate a portion of Midway as an Activity Center to ensure that local and regional infrastructure investments are captured in order to prepare and transform the neighborhood into a dense mixed-use center served by Sound Transit Link Light Rail.

### Goal LU-5

Kent will emphasize the importance of good design, pedestrian-first, and healthy living for development in the Urban Center and designated Activity Centers.

**Policy LU-5.1:** Adopt and maintain policies, codes and land use patterns that promote walking, biking, public transportation and social interaction to increase public health and sense of place.

**Policy LU-5.2:** Ensure that the street standards in the Kent Construction and Design Standards support and are consistent with the Downtown Subarea Action Plan and Downtown Design Guidelines.

**Policy LU-5.3:** Ensure that the Kent Construction and Design Standards support the community vision for designated Activity Centers, including enhanced pedestrian and cyclist circulation, public transit opportunities and an emphasis on aesthetics and public safety.

**Policy LU-5.4:** Continue to undertake beautification projects in the Urban Center and designated Activity Centers, including pedestrian amenities, street trees, art and parks.

**Policy LU-5.5:** Implement design review for development in designated Activity Centers.

**Policy LU-5.6:** Encourage development of public or semi-public spaces for retail, office or residential areas in designated Activity Centers.

**Policy LU-5.7:** Develop site and parking design standards in designated Activity Centers that support public transit and are pedestrian-friendly.

**Policy LU-5.8:** Promote food security, local food production and public health by encouraging locally-based food production, distribution and choice through urban agriculture, community gardens, farmers markets, food access initiatives and shared resources.

## Housing

There are many factors that influence the development of housing in Kent. The central issue is how to accommodate the City's 2035 housing target while supporting the diversity of households found in the community (e.g., household size, age, ethnicity, marital status, income, special needs). There is also a desire to balance jobs and housing in the Urban Center and designated Activity Centers. Additional factors that influence housing are detailed in the Housing Element. The following goals and policies create a framework to support a wide variety of housing choices as Kent grows:

### Goal LU-6

Kent will provide adequate land and densities to accommodate the 20-year housing target of 10,858 new dwelling units within the Kent Planning Area.

**Policy LU-6.1:** Evaluate, monitor and modify, if necessary, existing land use plan map designations to ensure adequate capacity to accommodate 20 years of household and employment growth.

**Policy LU-6.2:** Establish flexible regulatory methods, such as shadow platting and minimum densities, to ensure future land division that supports urban densities.

**Policy LU-6.3:** Locate housing opportunities with a variety of densities within close proximity to employment, shopping, transit, human and community services.

### Goal LU-7

Kent will provide opportunities for a variety of housing types, options and densities throughout the City to meet the community's changing demographics.

**Policy LU-7.1:** Ensure residential development achieves a substantial portion of the allowable maximum density on the net buildable acreage.

**Policy LU-7.2:** Allow and encourage urban density residential development in the designated Urban Center and designated Activity Centers.

**Policy LU-7.3:** Allow and encourage a variety of multifamily housing forms and densities within designated commercial mixed-use land use areas.

**Policy LU-7.4:** Allow a diversity of single-family housing forms and strategies in all residential districts (e.g., accessory dwellings, reduced lot size, cottage or cluster housing), subject to design and development standards, to ensure minimal impact to surrounding properties.

**Policy LU-7.5:** Allow attached single-family housing within multifamily land use areas (e.g., MRT-12 and MRT-16), and as demonstration projects in mixed-use land use areas.

### Goal LU-8

Kent will revise development regulations to encourage single-family and multifamily development that is more flexible and innovative in terms of building design, street standards for private roads and site design.

**Policy LU-8.1:** Support the achievement of allowable density in single-family developments through flexibility and creativity in site design.

**Policy LU-8.2:** Establish residential streetscape patterns that foster more opportunities for healthy living and community interaction.

**Policy LU-8.3:** Develop design standards for high-quality, compact, innovative single-family housing to ensure such housing integrates well into surrounding neighborhoods.

**Policy LU-8.4:** Allow more flexibility in single-family and multifamily residential setbacks, vehicle access and parking, particularly on small lots, to encourage more compact infill development and innovative site design.

**Policy LU-8.5:** Lay out neighborhoods that are oriented to the pedestrian, provide natural surveillance of public and semi-public places and foster a sense of community by orientation of buildings, limiting block lengths, encouraging continuity of streets among neighborhoods, connectivity to public spaces and safe pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular movement.

**Policy LU-8.6:** Establish design standards and parking requirements for accessory dwelling units to ensure that the neighborhood character is maintained.

**Policy LU-8.7:** Integrate multifamily housing with the surrounding neighborhood, through site design, architectural features common to adjacent single-family design, pedestrian connectivity and landscaping.

**Policy LU-8.8:** Adopt minimum density requirements for residential development.

## Commercial

Kent consists of dispersed commercial nodes and corridors that serve the surrounding residents. Opportunities exist for infill development of vacant and re-developable properties throughout the City. The following goals and policies will contribute to economic vitality throughout the City.

### Goal LU-9

Kent will promote orderly and efficient commercial growth within existing commercial districts in order to maintain and strengthen commercial activity, and maximize the use of existing public facility investments.

**Policy LU-9.1:** Develop regulatory incentives to encourage infill development in existing commercial areas.

**Policy LU-9.2:** Develop City investment incentives to encourage infill development in existing commercial areas, which may include improved sidewalks, bike lanes, lighting and outdoor public spaces.

### Goal LU-10

Kent will examine the City's commercial districts based on regional, community and neighborhood needs to support economic vitality and livability.

**Policy LU-10.1:** Examine commercial nodes, corridors and subareas for existing attributes and opportunities to revitalize the commercial uses, connect with surrounding residential neighborhoods and support multimodal transportation facilities.

**Policy LU-10.2:** Ensure opportunities for residential development within existing business districts to provide support for shops, services and employment within walking distance.

**Policy LU-10.3:** Ensure in the Neighborhood Convenience Commercial (NCC) zoning district that all new development and redevelopment will employ building and site design elements that will minimize impacts to surrounding residential uses, include pedestrian-oriented amenities and develop with minimum parking provisions.

**Policy LU-10.4:** Promote redevelopment of existing commercial properties by limiting the conversion of additional residential land use plan map designations to commercial land use plan map designations.

**Policy LU-10.5:** Establish guidelines for design of edges where commercial and mixed-uses abut single-family and medium- to low-density multifamily residential uses.

### Goal LU-11

Kent will provide attractive, walkable, commercial areas that are focal points of community activity.

**Policy LU-11.1:** Establish design standards for commercial and mixed-use development that are complementary to the surrounding neighborhoods and accommodate transit, pedestrians and cyclists.

**Policy LU-11.2:** Revise Kent Design and Construction Standards to ensure the public streetscape associated with commercial and mixed-use development is attractive, safe and supports transit, pedestrians and cyclists.

**Policy LU-11.3:** Prepare comprehensive multimodal streetscape plans for commercial nodes and corridors to create a safe and inviting pedestrian environment.

**Policy LU-11.4:** Establish additional gateways into and within Kent.

**Policy LU-11.5:** Consider neighborhood urban centers where appropriate to add convenient commercial opportunities and gathering places.

## Manufacturing/Industrial

The Kent North Valley Industrial Area is over six square miles in size and represents nearly 20 percent of Kent's land base. This area provides a significant amount of manufacturing, industrial or other related employment. During the Great Recession of 2008, dozens of companies provided over 28,000 jobs in the North Valley Industrial Area. The City anticipates that by 2035, approximately 49,500 jobs will locate in the North Valley Industrial Area. Analysis indicates there is substantial capacity to accommodate the anticipated growth, which includes office parks, bulk retail and commercial activities along with manufacturing, warehousing and distribution.

Kent has designated 3.1 square miles as Manufacturing/Industrial Center (MIC). The MIC meets the Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) key components for a manufacturing center designation. At the lowest point during the Great Recession, the MIC provided over 12,000 jobs. In 2010 according to the Puget Sound Regional Council's Monitoring Report, the MIC had over 15,000 jobs and today that number is growing. The MIC is located in the North Valley Industrial Area, which is an extremely important part of both the City's and the region's economic and employment base.

### Goal LU-12

Kent will support the Industrial area and Manufacturing/Industrial Center for manufacturing, warehousing and related land uses.

**Policy LU-12.1:** Ensure the Manufacturing/Industrial Center boundaries reflect accessibility to truck and rail corridors.

**Policy LU-12.2:** Discourage and limit land uses other than manufacturing, high technology and warehousing within the boundaries of the Manufacturing/Industrial Center.

**Policy LU-12.3:** Provide for a mix of land uses that are compatible with manufacturing, industrial and warehouse uses, such as office, retail and service in the area designated Industrial.

**Policy LU-12.4:** Complete a comprehensive subarea plan for the Manufacturing/Industrial Center that will establish a Kent-specific vision and strategy for accommodating growth consistent with the regional growth strategy.

### Goal LU-13

Kent will plan and finance in the Manufacturing/Industrial Center those transportation and infrastructure systems that can accommodate high-intensity manufacturing, industrial and warehouse uses.

**Policy LU-13.1:** Work with the Regional Transit Authority and King County to facilitate mobility to and within the Manufacturing/Industrial Center for goods, services and employees.

**Policy LU-13.2:** Upgrade water, sanitary sewer and stormwater management facilities as necessary to support development in the Manufacturing/Industrial Center.

### Goal LU-14

Kent will utilize development standards in the areas designated Manufacturing/Industrial Center and Industrial to mitigate the impact of development, create an attractive employment center and support multimodal transportation alternatives.

**Policy LU-14.1:** Support commute trip reduction goals and multimodal forms of transportation via development standards pertaining to building setbacks, location of parking, parking standards, as well as amenities for pedestrians and bicyclists.

**Policy LU-14.2:** Utilize development standards that create an attractive streetscape, including street trees and pedestrian-scaled amenities.

**Policy LU-14.3:** Mitigate the overall size and scale of large projects through such means as sensitive massing, articulation and organization of building, the use of color and materials and the use of landscaped screening.

**Policy LU-14.4:** Utilize development standards and code enforcement that support a distinctive and orderly character along the Sound Transit Corridor.



**Policy LU-14.5:** Where appropriate, encourage context-sensitive design for the development or redevelopment of live-work units on smaller parcels within or adjacent to industrial districts.

**Policy LU-14.6:** When new development, re-development or maintenance of industrial and built retail complexes occur adjacent to environmentally sensitive areas, require landscaping improvements that will maintain or strengthen existing aesthetic qualities and environmental functions.

**Policy LU-14.7:** Design industrial and bulk retail developments in consideration of human scale.

## Parking

While parking may be linked to mobility, it is considered a land use issue because it is integral to land development patterns. Whether it is commercial, industrial or housing development, all must accommodate the vehicle by providing parking. The goals and policies found in this section apply to all forms of development and are intended to promote land development patterns that are less auto-dependent and that better support travel options. They recognize that compact large- and small-scale site design close to services and transit will reduce vehicular trips by supporting transit, ridesharing, bicycling or walking.

### Goal LU-15

Promote a reasonable balance between parking supply and parking demand.

**Policy LU-15.1:** Develop parking ratios that take into account existing parking supply, minimums and maximums, land use intensity, transit and ride-sharing goals.

**Policy LU-15.2:** Incorporate ground-level retail or service facilities into any parking structures that are constructed within the Downtown Urban Center.

**Policy LU-15.3:** Provide an option for developers to construct the minimum number of parking spaces on-site or pay an in-lieu fee to cover the cost of the City's construction and operation of parking at an off-site location.

**Policy LU-15.4:** Evaluate and re-evaluate the parking requirements for all uses within the Urban Center and designated Activity Centers in accordance with the following factors:

- the potential of shared parking and transit facilities in proximity to the site;
- the employee profile of a proposed site, including the number and type of employees and the anticipated shifts;
- the potential for "capture" trips that will tend to reduce individual site parking requirements due to the aggregation of uses within concentrated areas;
- the Institute of Transportation Engineers Parking Generation report and other publications that provide parking generation indices; and
- any studies of similar specific uses conducted either by the City or the applicant.

**Policy LU-15.5:** Develop bicycle parking standards for remodeled and new commercial, office or industrial development.

## Natural Resources

Kent's natural environment resides in the Green River Valley and adjacent hillsides and plateaus, which together provide a unique and distinctive character to the City of Kent. Urban development has altered this environment, and the City is addressing the impacts. In consort with the GMA, Kent has established Critical Areas regulations and the Shoreline Master Plan to guide future development in and near sensitive areas. Kent also participates with federal, state and tribal governments, and other major stakeholders in the Puget Sound region, to identify early actions and develop long-range strategies to conserve and restore critical natural resources. Preservation of open space, fish and wildlife habitat and other critical areas occurs through the development process using Sensitive Area Easements. City stormwater is monitored for water quality conditions, and problems that are identified are addressed through capital improvement projects. Preservation and restoration of native plant materials, particularly near streams and wetlands, are considered for new development to enhance environmental quality for fish and wildlife habitat.

Kent is committed to a multi-faceted approach toward the protection and enhancement of local and regional natural resources. As such, the City will continue to protect natural resources through the promulgation of development standards, enhancement of natural resources through a variety of capital improvement programs and opportunities to support regional efforts to preserve our resources for future generations.

### Goal LU-16

Kent will coordinate with surrounding jurisdictions, regional and federal entities to retain the unique character and sense of place provided by the City's natural features. The coordination may include approaches and standards for the conservation and enhancement of terrestrial and aquatic habitat and recreational opportunities, protection of cultural resources and water quality and provision of open space.

**Policy LU-16.1:** Ensure the City's regulations designating and protecting critical areas are consistent with the Growth Management Act.

**Policy LU-16.2:** Coordinate with King County to produce critical area maps of the Potential Annexation Area that are consistent with the City of Kent Critical Areas Maps.

**Policy LU-16.3:** When jurisdictional boundaries are involved, coordinate wetland protection and enhancement plans and actions with adjacent jurisdictions and the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe.

### Goal LU-17

Kent will recognize the significant role the natural environment plays in shaping a sustainable community by contributing to human health, environmental justice and economic vitality.

**Policy LU-17.1:** Protect and enhance environmentally sensitive areas through City regulations, programmatic plans and capital improvement programs that encourage well-designed land use patterns such as higher urban density, clustering and planned unit development.

**Policy LU-17.2:** Conserve energy resources, improve air and water quality and support healthy lifestyles by establishing well-designed, compact mixed-use land use patterns that provide convenient opportunities for travel by transit, foot and bicycle.

**Policy LU-17.3:** Develop strategies and utilize funding opportunities to protect environmentally sensitive areas that contribute to wildlife habitat, open space and the livability of Kent.

**Policy LU-17.4:** Identify and mitigate unavoidable negative impacts of public actions that disproportionately affect people of color and low-income populations.

**Policy LU-17.5:** Ensure that the City's environmental policies and regulations comply with state and federal environmental protection regulations regarding air and water quality, hazardous materials, noise and protection of wildlife and fisheries resources and habitat.

**Policy LU-17.6:** Protect and enhance environmental quality via maintenance of accurate and up-to-date environmental data, and by City support of environmental management programs, park master programs and environmental education and incentive programs.

**Policy LU-17.7:** Minimize the loss of vegetation as new development occurs. Continue to recognize the value of trees and other vegetation in increasing the livability of Kent.

**Policy LU-17.8:** Protect established greenbelts to preserve existing natural vegetation in geologically hazardous areas, along stream banks and wetlands.

### Goal LU-18

Kent will ensure that uses, densities and development patterns on lands adjacent to the shorelines of the Green River support the goals and policies of the City of Kent's Shoreline Master Program and the Green-Duwamish Watershed Nonpoint Action Plan.

**Policy LU-18.1:** Protect the quality and quantity of groundwater used for water supply in accordance with the City of Kent Water Quality Program recommendations.

**Policy LU-18.2:** Maintain rivers and streams in their natural state. Rehabilitate degraded channels and banks via public programs and in conjunction with proposed new development.

### Goal LU-19

Establish Urban Separators to protect ecologically sensitive areas and to create open space corridors that provide visual, recreational and wildlife benefits within and between urban growth areas.

**Policy LU-19.1:** Ensure Urban Separators are low-density areas of no greater than one dwelling unit per acre.

**Policy LU-19.2:** Link Urban Separators within the City of Kent to those of adjacent cities and unincorporated King County.

**Policy LU-19.3:** Provide open space linkages within or to designated Urban Separators when new development occurs.

**Policy LU-19.4:** Coordinate with appropriate agencies and adjacent cities to create a regional approach to Urban Separators.

**Policy LU-19.5:** Inventory local- and county-designated Urban Separators in an effort to manage development regulations.

**Policy LU-19.6:** Encourage well-designed land use patterns, including clustering of housing units, zero lot lines and other techniques to protect and enhance Urban Separators.

## Essential Public Facilities

The City of Kent has established siting criteria for essential public facilities, which are defined by the State in RCW 36.70A.200(1) to "include those facilities that are typically difficult to site, such as airports, state education facilities and state or regional transportation facilities as defined in RCW 47.06.140, regional transit authority facilities as defined in RCW 81.112.020, state and local correctional facilities, solid waste handling facilities, and inpatient facilities including substance abuse facilities, mental health facilities, group homes, and secure community transition facilities as defined in RCW 71.09.020." Although the City does not have an airport within its jurisdictional boundaries, residents and businesses in Kent are served by the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport located north of the Midway area on Kent's West Hill. The continued viability of the airport is important to economic development of the region, including Kent, and the travel convenience for Kent residents. The following goals and policies reaffirm Kent's commitment to a fair process for locating essential public facilities.

### Goal LU-20

The City shall participate in a cooperative inter-jurisdictional process to determine siting of essential public facilities of a county-wide, regional or state-wide nature.

**Policy LU-20.1:** Proposals for siting essential public facilities within the City of Kent or within the City's growth boundary shall be reviewed for consistency with the City's Comprehensive Plan during the initial stages of the proposal process.

**Policy LU-20.2:** When warranted by the special character of the essential facility, the City shall apply the regulations and criteria of Kent Zoning Code Section 15.04.150, Special use combining district, to applications for siting such facilities to ensure adequate review, including public participation. Conditions of approval, including design conditions, shall be imposed upon such uses in the interest of the welfare of the City and the protection of the environment.

**Policy LU-20.3:** In the principally permitted or conditional use sections of the zoning code, the City shall establish, as appropriate, locations and development standards for essential public facilities that do not warrant consideration through the special use combining district regulations. Such facilities shall include but not be limited to small inpatient facilities and group homes.

### Goal LU-21

The City shall participate in a cooperative inter-jurisdictional process to resolve issues of mitigation for any disproportionate financial burden that may fall on the jurisdiction that becomes the site of a facility of a state-wide, regional or county-wide nature.

### Goal LU-22

Where appropriate, protect the viability of Seattle-Tacoma International Airport through development regulations consistent with RCW 36.70.547, Washington State Department of Transportation Aviation Airport and Land Use Compatibility guidelines, Federal Aviation Regulation Part 77 guidance and other best management practices.

## Land Use Plan Map

The Land Use Plan map is a vital part of the Land Use Element and the Comprehensive Plan as a whole, because it establishes the framework for amendments to the City's official zoning map. It also establishes the land use and zoning framework to be used as land currently in the Potential Annexation Area is annexed into the City.

### Definition of Map Designations

There are several different Land Use Plan map designations. They relate to various types of land uses, such as residential, commercial, industrial and the like. These designations are found on the Land Use Plan map (*Figure LU-6*) and are explained below. One needs to bear in mind, however, that there are certain types of land uses that need relative freedom of location and, thus, should not be restricted to certain districts. These types of uses may be allowed via general conditional use permit in many of the listed districts, whether residential, commercial or industrial. The uses include utility, transportation and communication facilities; schools; public facilities; open space uses such as cemeteries, golf course and so forth; and retirement homes, convalescent facilities and certain other welfare facilities.

## Single-Family Residential (SF)

The Single-family Residential designation allows single-family residential development at varying densities and housing forms (e.g. cottage and cluster). In the city limits, there are four single-family designations: SF-3, SF-4.5, SF-6 and SF-8. These designations allow development of up to 3, 4.5, 6, and 8 dwelling units per acre, respectively, and could accommodate lower densities as well.

In the unincorporated area, there are two single-family designations: Urban Residential, Low (UR-1) allows one dwelling unit per acre, and Urban Residential, Medium (UR-4-12) allows development at a range of 4 to 12 units per acre.

## Multifamily Residential (MF)

Multifamily Residential areas allow multifamily and single-family residential development at varying densities and housing types. In the city limits, there are two designations: Low Density Multifamily (LDMF) and Medium Density Multifamily (MDMF). The Low Density Multifamily designation allows densities of up to 16 dwelling units per acre, while the Medium Density Multifamily designation allows densities of 17-40 dwelling units per acre. In Kent's PAA of Unincorporated King County, a multifamily designation of Urban Residential, High (UR12+) allows 18-48 dwelling units per acre.

## Urban Center (UC)

This designation identifies a portion of the Downtown area as an Urban Center. This designation allows high-density, mixed-use development. Retail, office, multifamily residential and public facility land uses are permitted outright.

## Mobile Home Park (MHP)

The Mobile Home Park designation allows mobile and manufactured homes and recreational vehicles within existing commercial mobile home parks.

## Mixed-Use (MU)

The Mixed-Use (MU) designation allows retail, office and multifamily residential uses together in the same area. The MU designation is distinguished from the Urban Center designation in that the mixed-use areas do not allow as much density as the Urban Center area. All residential development within a mixed-use area must be a component of a retail or office development. The MU designation also allows legacy M2 Limited Industrial zoning west of Central Avenue North.

## Neighborhood Services (NS)

Neighborhood Services allows for small nodal areas of retail and personal service activities to provide everyday convenient goods to residential areas.

## Commercial (C)

Commercial areas allow a variety of retail, office and service uses located along major thoroughfares that serve local residential neighborhoods or serve regional clients and customers and consists of a contiguous strip of commercial activities. Many areas on the Land Use Plan map, that were previously designated for commercial uses, now are designated as Mixed-Use areas.

## Manufacturing/Industrial Center (MIC)

The Manufacturing/Industrial Center is an area reserved for manufacturing, industrial and advanced technology uses, or those uses closely related to industrial development such as warehousing. Office uses related to the primary land use is permitted, but they are otherwise limited. Retail uses are also permitted, but limited in the Manufacturing/Industrial Center.

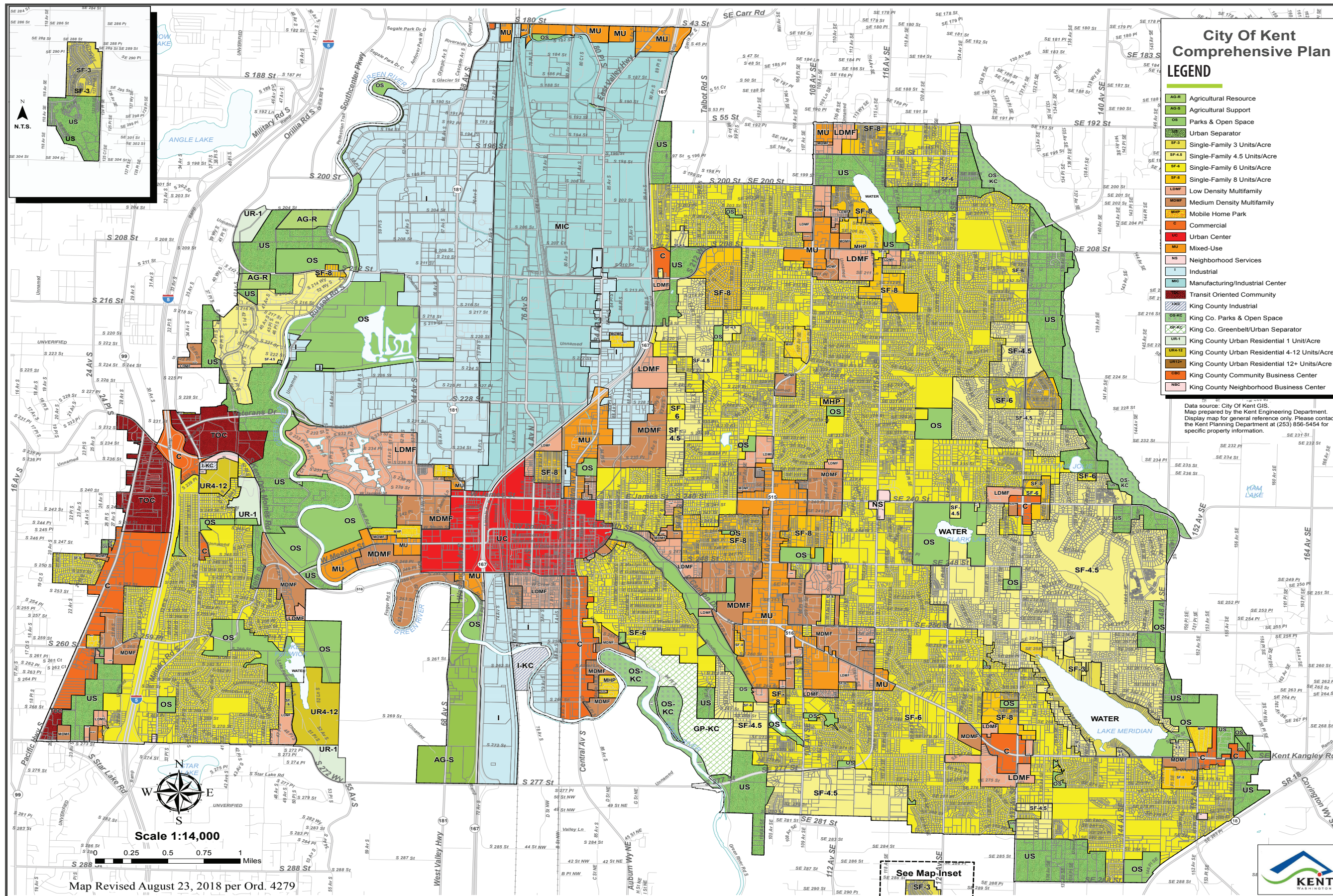
## Industrial (I)

The Industrial designation is an area for manufacturing and warehouse uses. However, office and business park development is allowed in this area, as are certain types of retail uses which serve the surrounding manufacturing and office park uses, and bulk retail.

## Transit-Oriented Community (TOC)

The Transit-Oriented Community allows retail, office and multifamily residential uses together in the same area or as a stand-alone use. This area allows high-density uses in support of high-capacity transit investments.

**FIGURE LU-6**  
**LAND USE**  
**PLAN**



### **Agricultural Resource (AG-R)**

The Agricultural Resource designation is for land reserved for long-term agricultural use. Single-family residential uses may also be allowed, but at very low densities.

### **Agricultural Support (AG-S)**

The Agricultural Support designation is reserved for agriculturally related industrial and retail uses near areas designated for long-term agricultural use.

### **Urban Separator (US)**

The Urban Separator designation is reserved for low-density lands that define community or municipal identities and boundaries, protect adjacent resource lands, rural areas and environmentally sensitive areas and create open space corridors within and between urban areas that provide environmental, visual, recreational and wildlife benefits.

### **Park and Open Space (OS)**

The Park and Open Space designation represents publicly owned land that is either large active park area or undeveloped or developed passive recreational open space land that may have environmental sensitivities.

#### ***Related Information:***

**Midway Subarea Plan  
Downtown Subarea Action Plan**

