

# **Building a Healthy Community**

**City of Kent  
Human Services Master Plan  
2013**

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## **Executive Summary**

### **Vision for building a healthy community...**

Kent will be a place where children, individuals and families can thrive, where neighbors care for each other, and where our residents share the responsibility of ensuring a safe and healthy community for all.

We will strive to improve lives across our diverse communities by:

- Forming innovative and effective partnerships with other organizations and jurisdictions.
- Strategically investing resources to make lasting change.

The City of Kent's first Human Services Master Plan was crafted to bring a broad scope and long-range view to the vital work of serving Kent residents. It was designed to serve as a policy guide for the Housing and Human Services Division (HHS) to do their part in fulfilling the City's overall goal of building a healthy community. HHS and the City of Kent's Human Services Commission use the policy focus areas and priorities to prepare funding recommendations as part of the City's two-year budget cycles.

The 2013 update of the Human Services Master Plan was developed in consultation with the city's Human Services Commission, human services providers, community leaders, interested citizens, and City staff. Input from the community was considered and incorporated into the recommendations in the Plan. The Master plan also draws on data from the 2010 Census and American Community Survey data, as well as a variety of existing plans and published documents that relate to human services.

### **Noteworthy Changes**

Since the original Human Services Master Plan was developed in 2007, the City of Kent has experienced significant change. Some primary examples include:

- Increasing Diversity – In 2007 an estimated 31% of Kent residents spoke a language other than English at home. By 2011, that percentage had risen to 43%.
- Increased Number of Families in Poverty – In 2007 approximately 37% of Kent School District students qualified for free and reduced lunch. That percentage has risen to nearly 52%.

- Economic Recession – A nationwide recession began in late 2007, touching off years of economic uncertainty and in some cases, budget crises. Layoffs occurred, budgets were slashed, waiting lists for services grew, and nonprofits were expected to meet increased need with less than ever before.
- Panther Lake Annexation – On July 1, 2010 the City of Kent annexed the Panther Lake area northeast of Kent. This added approximately five square miles and 24,000 residents to the City of Kent, making it the sixth largest city in the state of Washington.
- The City Council developed a long-term vision statement for the city looking out to 2025: *"Kent is a safe, connected and beautiful city, culturally vibrant with richly diverse urban centers."* The Council's Strategic Goals for the City include:
  1. Develop and Implement a Sustainable Funding Model
  2. Create Neighborhood Urban Centers
  3. Create Connections for People and Places
  4. Foster Inclusiveness
  5. Beautify Kent

### **Community Input**

A data scan was conducted to update resident needs and is incorporated in this plan. Community stakeholder input for the original Master Plan and the update was gathered through a combination of focus groups, interviews, and online surveys. This data informs the policy makers in adopting HHS funding and policy priorities. A number of issues related to human services were identified by those who participated in the planning process. Themes that emerged include:

- The demand for services has increased, and at the same time funding is declining.
- Delivering services to a diverse population is challenging.
- Kent's large inventory of low-cost housing ensures that our city will continue to have a large percentage of families who are struggling to meet ends.
- Accessible transportation is critical for residents and is difficult for non English speaking residents to navigate.
- More after school opportunities for youth are needed.
- The economic recession significantly impacted the ability for teens to gain entry level job experience.
- Kent's increasing diversity creates very real challenges for the community, but also opportunities for embracing a dynamic multicultural community.

HHS will continue to focus on a number of strategies to strengthen community response to human services needs over the next several years. These include working collaboratively with community stakeholders to:

- Continue breaking down the traditional funding silos, addressing problems in a more systemic manner
- Participate in regional committees working towards changes that address persistent issues – including school readiness, homelessness, etc.
- Participate in regional human services planning processes that strengthen the human services system
- Continue ensuring that Kent and South King County receive regional attention in terms of human services needs and funding.

To that end, all City human service investments will be measured against the City's clear criteria for funding, which are included in this plan and are designed to ensure that programs:

- Address the City's funding priorities
- Are of high quality and fiscally sound
- Reflect the continuum of human services needs
- Are collaborative in nature
- Are accessible to all residents who need to access services

### **Human Services and the Recession**

An economic recession gripped the nation beginning in December 2007. Layoffs occurred, budgets were slashed, waiting lists for services grew, and nonprofits were expected to meet increased need with less than ever before. Temporary reductions in funding at the State level gradually led to deeper cuts and the weakening of the basic infrastructure for health and human services.

The capacity of our local nonprofits has been and continues to be significantly impacted by the cutbacks in government funding. The corresponding rise in demand that accompanied rising unemployment and poverty during the economic downturn has compromised individual well-being and the stability of our community. While foundations, the faith community, and volunteers have stepped up efforts, private donations, and volunteerism cannot replace the loss of public funding

The recession continues to take a toll on our residents significantly increasing the number of residents who are just one job loss, medical emergency, or eviction away from homelessness. Even those who escaped job loss and foreclosure have still been impacted by the recession in other ways. Stagnating wages and widening income inequality are trends that will not be overcome for many years to come, particularly for those who are not employed with livable wage jobs. Even with full-time jobs many are unable to stretch their wages to pay for basic necessities. Many of these families lack enough income to meet the rising costs of food, housing, transportation, health care, and other essentials. This led to many who have never had to ask for assistance being forced to navigate the social service system at a time when it is already overwhelmed and increasingly underfunded.

The foreclosure crisis was slow to hit Washington State, but once it hit the impact on our communities was staggering. Western Washington was hit especially hard. In 2009 Washington ranked 24<sup>th</sup> highest in the nation for total foreclosed properties. By late 2010 our state ranked 10<sup>th</sup> highest in the nation.

The large number of foreclosures forced many homeowners back into the rental market, leading to lower vacancy rates and increased rental costs. Many young families postponed buying homes in the spiraling housing market further exacerbating the issue. As more middle income people lost their jobs and homes to foreclosure, they reached out for help to meet their basic food and housing needs. Food bank usage rose by 44% between 2007 and 2010, reflecting an increase in people without adequate food, some of whom had previously been volunteers. As the economy haltingly continues to recover, the safety net provided by our nonprofit community will continue to be a vital component of survival for many of our residents.

### **City of Kent Roles**

The City of Kent fills a number of roles in order to address the needs of its residents in terms of human services. This includes:

- Invests approximately \$2 million annually to support human services.
- Facilitates collaboration between human services providers.
- Partners with other jurisdictions and with local agencies to develop comprehensive responses to community issues.
- Provides technical assistance to build the capacity of human services providers.
- Increases coordination amongst homeless services providers by co-hosting a monthly form on homelessness in South King County.
- Increases participation in the community and cooperation amongst immigrant and refugee organizations and residents by hosting the monthly Kent Community Diversity Initiative Group (KCDIG).

***The Roles of HHS*** to meet resident needs and support the City's goals include:

1. ***Leader and partner*** – make strategic community investments to create opportunities and provide critical services'
2. ***Funder*** – contract with community organizations to provide programs and services'
3. ***Service provider*** – except for a few service types provided directly by HHS, its' service roles are strategic and systemic:
  - Partnerships with other City departments, King County, the Kent School District and community agencies

- Regional planning and coordination – ensure accessibility of a continuum of services for Kent residents
- Subregional planning and coordination – address common human service issues that result from resident mobility with other South King County jurisdictions
- Shared responsibility with King County in provision of regional services
- Public awareness of housing and human service needs and initiatives
- Community and civic engagement – ensure all residents feel connected to the community
- Targeting – target HHS programs and services to those most in need
- Immigrants – focus on ensuring access to services and community life.

## **POLICIES TO BUILD A HEALTHY COMMUNITY**

The Human Services Commission is charged with recommending Human Services policies to City Administration and Council. The Commission develops policy recommendations based on guiding principles, funding priorities and policy focus areas that will result in a stronger community.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations will help shape policies, strategies and funding decisions that best adhere to the City of Kent’s values and goals for building a healthy community. They will inform the priorities for HHS in fulfilling its roles as collaborator and funder, and two-year updated needs assessments will support funding allocations and strategies that can best achieve positive community outcomes.

The recommendations include:

- Mission and guiding principles that frame what services are made available and to whom;
- HHS funding priorities;
- Priority policy areas and long term outcomes to build a healthy community.

## **Mission Statement**

The Human Services Commission exists as part of the conscience of the City of Kent in its recognition of the value and diversity of all citizens including the various cultures and ethnicities and the City's desire that their basic needs be met.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES:**

- **Healthy Communities:** Build healthy communities, through mutually supportive connections and building on the strengths and assets of all residents.
- **Self-Reliance:** Support all residents in attaining their maximum level of self-reliance.
- **Collaborations:** Value collaborations at all levels and seek the most strategic approaches to meeting the needs of Kent residents.
- **Equal Access:** Support equal access to services, through a service network that meets needs across age, ability, culture and language.
- **Respect and Dignity:** All people are treated with respect and dignity.
- **Accountability:** Oversee City resources with consistent ethical stewardship, fairness in allocating funds, and strong accountability for maximizing effective services.

## **Funding Priorities:**

The Master Plan lays out the City's funding priorities; in which the City will invest human services funding. While five priorities were identified in the original Master Plan, an additional funding priority will be added for 2013-2018. Funding priorities are in place to ensure that Kent invests in the continuum of human services needs – from prevention and early intervention to job training and basic needs such as food and shelter. The priorities include:

- **Meeting Community Basics**  
Ensuring that people facing hardship have access to resources to help meet immediate or basic needs.
- **Increasing Self-Reliance**  
Helping individuals break out of the cycle of poverty by improving access to services and removing barriers to employment.
- **Strengthening Children and Families**  
Providing children, youth and families with community resources needed to support their positive development, including early intervention & prevention services.
- **Building a Safer Community**  
Providing resources and services that reduce violence, crime, and neglect in our community.



- **Improving Health and Well-Being**  
Providing access to services that allow individuals to improve their mental and physical health, overall well-being, and ability to live independently.
- **Improving and Integrating Systems**  
Leading efforts to ensure that human services systems meet demands and expectations by increasing capacity, utilizing technology, coordinating efforts, and sharing resources.

## **Policy Focus Areas**

Policy focus areas are issues that we recognize will require targeted attention over time. The focus areas included were selected based on existing service gaps, unmet needs, and important system improvements identified through community input. The 2013 update of the Master Plan includes the overarching goal of ensuring that services are inclusive and available to all citizens.

### **SELF RELIANCE SUPPORT:**

- Link residents with livable wage jobs
- Eliminate barriers to employment
- Increase family financial literacy
- Increase opportunities for advancement from entry level jobs

### **CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVICES:**

- Quality Child Care services
- Birth to 5 services
- School readiness
- Prevention and early intervention services
- After school activities
- Opportunities for teen internships and employment

### **FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES:**

- Collaborations to serve the whole family
- Immigrant and refugee transitions for success
- Access for working families: hours, locations, co-located services
- Access to parent education classes and life skills classes

### **SENIOR SERVICES:**

- Active and connected seniors
- Support for vulnerable seniors
- Intergenerational programs
- Services to keep seniors in their homes
- Access to transportation
- Access to chore services

### **ENSURE EQUAL ACCESS TO SERVICES:**

- Improved transportation network
- Multi-lingual and culturally competent services
- Flexible services
- Co-located services

### **MAINTAIN SAFETY NET AND BASIC NEEDS SERVICES:**

- Access to emergency assistance
- Basic food support
- Emergency and transitional housing
- Access to medical services
- Access to mental health services
- Violence prevention and intervention

### **SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS:**

- Effective collaborations
- Innovative approaches to solving persistent issues
- Sharing agency resources to reduce overhead
- Increased collocation of agencies and programs

### **HOUSING:**

- Provide a full range of housing
- Move individuals and families from shelter into housing
- Promote home ownership
- Maintain existing housing stock
- Continue regional efforts

### **HOMELESS PREVENTION AND HOMELESS SERVICES:**

- Prevent homelessness
- Maintain homeless services
- Increase homeless outreach to ensure homeless individuals and families are utilizing existing services

## **Funding Strategies**

To continue making progress on the vision of a healthy community, additional resources to implement these strategies are essential. Historically the City allocated 1% of the General Fund to non-profit agencies and programs providing services to Kent residents. Over the course of the first Master Plan the Human Services Commission worked with City Administration and City Council to identify strategies to increase the available funding. This work reached a new level of significance when the recession began to impact the 1% allocation as city revenues declined. A perfect storm was generated when a number of factors converged that had the potential to drastically reduce the City's investment in human services. This included the creation of the Regional Fire Authority (which

reduced the City's General Fund Budget), the recession, and a significant increase in the City's population due to the annexation of the Panther Lake community. In 2011 (for the 2012 budget) Human Services requested a budget adjustment of \$95,000.00 due to a significant decrease in the human services 1% funding allocation. This request kept funding at an even level. Administration and the City Council very generously approved the budget adjustment and directed staff and the Human Services Commission to work on the development of a new funding strategy to be presented to Council in 2012.

The Human Services Commission spent many months researching and reviewing other funding strategies and settled upon a per capita approach as the best option. The per capita creates a stable funding source that is predictable from year to year. At its highest the human services fund was \$9.30 per capita. The 2012 allocation was \$6.96 per capita, and based on the baseline budget projection for 2013 the per capita rate would have dropped to \$6.03.

The Human Services Commission proposed to maintain the \$6.96 per capita funding rate in 2013, increasing it to \$7.20 in 2014 with a CPI escalator increase every funding cycle commencing in 2015. The CPI would not exceed 3% or drop below 0% and would be applied against the former year's per capita rate. Using a per capita funding model eliminates the significant swings in funding levels caused by the economy. The Human Services Commission worked with staff and Administration to ensure that the new funding strategy represented a balanced approach to solving the issue, recognizing the pressure the economy has on the City while also understanding the critical need to provide services to the residents of the city particularly during this difficult economy. For this reason, the Commission did not request any increase in funding for 2013.

## **Introduction and Process**

The Human Services Master Plan is intended to be used as a policy guide for the City of Kent Housing and Human Service Division (HHS) for the next six years. With each two-year funding cycle, HHS staff and the Human Services Commission will assess changing needs and resources to determine funding decisions.

HHS Manager Katherin Johnston and HHS Senior Human Services Coordinator Merina Hanson managed the project, with input and guidance from the City of Kent Human Services Commission.

A data scan was conducted to assess City of Kent needs, including Census 2010, American Community Survey data, Public Health Communities Count, housing and homeless statistics, school district data and relevant planning documents. Regional plans were also reviewed.

Community input over the course of the Master Plan has been gathered through focus groups, key informant interviews, and online surveys geared towards a number of different stakeholder groups.

- Customized surveys were developed to garner input representing the following groups: City of Kent Council Members
- City of Kent Human Services Commission members
- Leaders of local non-profit human services agencies
- Local high school youth
- Seniors
- Kent Cultural Diversity Initiative Group
- Local business
- Kent residents and individuals who work in Kent

Key informant interviews with more than twenty community members were conducted to inform the original Master Plan. Included were City leaders, representatives from United Way of King County, Kent School District, Public Health of Seattle-King County, and Renton Technical College. Leaders of a number of minority communities were also interviewed as part of that process. A complete list can be found in Appendix A.

Appendix A summarizes major themes from the focus groups and interviews. The major themes included; the need for stronger community linkages and connections, increased community diversity, and the need for more attention to youth needs.

## History and Purpose

The City of Kent has a strong commitment to human services and has been a leader in South King County in the human services arena. Kent's consistent funding of human services agencies, the establishment of a Human Services Commission, one percent funding base for human services, and the creation of the division of Housing and Human Services evidences this.

The City of Kent has been providing funding for human services since 1975. The City of Kent funded its first human service agency in 1975 with a portion of its federal revenue sharing funds. The revenue sharing funds ceased in 1986, but the City continued to provide funding for human services from the General Fund budget.

In its 1985 and 1986 work programs, the City Council targeted the establishment of a Human Services Policy as a top priority issue. To aid in this process, a Human Services Study Committee was formed consisting of service providers, a member of the Kent Ministerial Association, and City staff involved in the administration of human services. The charge of this study group was to formulate policy recommendations to the City Council in regard to how the City of Kent could best respond to local human services needs. The study resulted in preparation of the document, Report of the Human Services Study Committee on Human Services Policies, which included policy statements to guide the City's efforts in human services, and criteria and priorities for human services funding. This report was adopted by the City Council in 1986.

In 1986, the City established a Human Services Commission as recommended by the Study Committee. The Commission serves in an advisory capacity to the Mayor, City Council and Chief Administrative Officer on setting priorities, evaluating and making recommendations on funding requests, evaluating and reviewing human service agencies, and responding to City actions affecting the availability and quality of human services in Kent. The Commission consists of nine (9) appointed members including representation from the business community, the religious community, recipient of human services, a regional human service provider, a service club representative, a youth member, and a City Council representative.

In 1989, the City of Kent took a major step and committed one (1) percent of the general fund to human services -- a powerful statement of commitment on the City's part. This further demonstrated the City of Kent's leadership in human services in South King County. Not only was it the only city in South King County with a human services policy plan, but it also implemented the plan and became the first city to form a Human Services Commission. In 1992, the City established an Office of Housing and Human Services, now known as the Housing and

Human Services Division of Parks, Recreation and Community Services. The Division develops and implements City human services policies and administers the activities and functions concerning housing and human service issues in the City.

In 2011 (for the 2012 budget) Human Services requested a budget adjustment of \$95,000.00 due to a significant decrease in the human services 1% funding allocation. The decrease occurred when a number of factors converged that had the potential to drastically reduce the City's investment in human services. This included the creation of the Regional Fire Authority (which reduced the City's General Fund Budget), the recession, and a significant increase in the City's population due to the annexation of the Panther Lake community. This request kept funding at an even level. Administration and the City Council very generously approved the budget adjustment and directed staff and the Human Services Commission to work on the development of a new funding strategy to be presented to Council in 2012.

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## **Roles**

**Leader and Partner:** HHS is a leader in making community investments that create opportunities and provide services. HHS works with the community to identify current and emerging needs and develop systematic, coordinated responses to address those needs. Through collaborative partnerships, the division develops innovative solutions for the Kent community.

**Funder:** HHS contracts with community organizations to provide programs and services. In partnership with the Human Services Commission, HHS:

- funds services based on current community need;
- funds the most effective services possible, minimizing duplication of services;
- makes funding decisions based on competitive process;
- bases funding decisions on an organization's ability to deliver clearly defined funding outcomes; and
- makes funding recommendations to the City Council.

**Service Provider:** HHS limits its role as a provider of housing and human services with the exception of the following situations:

1. Providing services at the expressed desire of City administration,
2. Providing Resource and Referral services to guide citizens to appropriate services, or
3. Providing services that are best delivered by City staff (e.g., home repair)

## **INCLUSION**

The City of Kent is one of the most diverse communities in the state of Washington. As we continue to strive to meet the needs and expectations of our increasingly culturally and ethnically varied populations, a better understanding of cultural differences and their relationship to the quality service—respect, inclusiveness, and sensitivity—becomes essential. Serving diverse populations is not a “one size fits all” process. Diversity includes all differences, not just those that indicate racial or ethnic distinctions. Diversity transcends racial and ethnic factors to include groups, their members, and affiliations. The concept of diversity also refers to differences in lifestyles, beliefs, economic status, etc.

### Trademarks of Inclusive Services

1. Respect, inclusion, and sensitivity are the key trademarks of quality service.
2. Delivering services based on the population's norms, values and perceptions is at the core of successful service delivery.
3. Serving diverse populations is not a “one size fits all” process. It involves an intentional approach to help address the needs and concerns of any population.
4. Diversity goes beyond race and ethnicity. It includes individuals with disabilities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) individuals; the homeless; immigrants; refugees; and many other populations.

5. Diversity is a part of our daily life. It is all around us and provides us opportunities to grow and learn about others.

It is important to recognize that we all have a role in ensuring that our community is inclusive. Barriers exist and are difficult to break down without constant attention to how services are provided.

Structural and cultural barriers to services can include:

- Cultural values
- Language
- Geography
- Income
- Access to Transportation
- Health
- Access for individuals with disabilities
- Hours of operation

Strategies for breaking down barriers can include:

- Educating staff, board members, partnering agencies and volunteers about the community they serve;
- Tailoring services to meet the community's needs;
- Creating partnerships and coalitions with representatives from diverse groups;
- Providing opportunities for cross-training, consulting, and collaborative services;
- Evaluating current service delivery and the quality of services; and
- Ensuring that programs align with the values and needs of the client and the community they serve

## **COMMUNITY INVESTMENT**

Human Services programs are essential to the growth and vitality of the Kent community. By investing in the delivery of these services to Kent residents, the City of Kent is working to promote building a healthy community. The Human Services Master Plan is designed to articulate the City's strategies for this investment.

HHS invests in the community to create measurable, sustainable change and to improve the lives of its residents. Investments are focused in order to generate the greatest possible impact. They address the issues that matter most to our community and are targeted in order to deliver meaningful results.

To achieve community impact, investments are made in a variety of ways:



- direct emergency services to assist people in crisis;
- preventative services such as mentoring and home visiting services for teen mothers; and
- services that promote achieving self-sufficiency (including job training, child care scholarships, micro-enterprise, etc.)

To invest for the greatest possible impact, HHS fosters partnerships with a variety of organizations. Beyond working with direct providers of health and human services, the division also works with:

- economic development organizations that work with local businesses to create more jobs;
- organizations that help residents find the resources they need in the community;
- organizations and initiatives that bring people together through community forums, public awareness campaigns, or volunteer opportunities to become more engaged to our community;
- strategic initiatives comprised of a variety of partners in the community with the goal of working together to have a greater impact than any one organization can have by itself; and
- special initiatives that affect the whole community.

HHS makes community investments in nonprofit organizations in several different ways. We invest ongoing annual support for specific services, we make one-time grants to support new programs that are developing better ways to serve the community and we make grants to organizations that need training or technical assistance to improve their capacity and accessibility.

Volunteers from the community who comprise the City's Human Services Commission decide HHS' community investments using the following criteria:

- Address the City's funding priorities
- Are of high quality and fiscally sound with a track-record of achieving measurable results
- Reflect the continuum of human services needs
- Are collaborative in nature
- Provide an opportunity to leverage other resources for the greatest impact
- Are accessible to all residents who need to access services

## **SUSTAINABLE CHANGE**

HHS invests for sustainable change, recognizing that it is critical to complement support for emergency services that support people in crisis with support for programs and initiatives that increase individual's self-reliance and influence the community in a lasting way. The City's investments in the community are not only monetary in nature, but are also evidenced through the dedication of HHS staff time and resources to community work that will benefit the greater Kent community.

Examples of investments made in the past include:

- support of a forum that brought nonprofit groups together to develop a One Stop Human Services Center;
- support for a subregional plan for the community to address human service needs;
- co-hosted a forum for local agencies in 2009 with City of Renton HSS staff and the South King Council of Human Services to share in a peer-to-peer discussion of how the economic climate was impacting budgets, staffing, fundraising, and services, as well as strategies for keeping afloat in tough times;
- partnered with Kent Lutheran Church and Catholic Community Services to open a severe weather shelter at Kent Lutheran Church, giving homeless people and children a place to stay warm overnight during times of extreme weather;
- development of and support for a forum that brings together community stakeholders invested in ending homelessness (including service providers, the faith community, Committee to End Homelessness stakeholders, funders, and consumers);
- development of and support for a forum that consists of service providers and community members who have cultural and language-specific expertise working with immigrants and refugees. The group meets monthly and works toward influencing policy, enhancing collaboration, leveraging resources, developing a closer relationship with the City of Kent, and serving as a resource within the community; and
- support for capacity building work through the South King Council of Human Services with efforts focused on smaller grassroots organizations.

In some cases, HHS invests in the community by providing services itself. The division provides resource and referral services to residents who need assistance locating resources and programs to assist them. HHS increased the level of resource and referral services available to Kent residents by employing a full-time

Resource and Referral Specialist in 2010. Unfortunately this position was eliminated in November of 2012 as a direct result of declining city revenues.

HHS also operates a Home Repair Program for low and moderate income owners of single-family houses, mobile homes and condo units in the City. Repairs which help maintain the health and safety of occupants, preserve the dwelling or conserve energy to reduce heating costs through weatherization are eligible. Preference is given to households occupied by senior citizen, low-income and disabled residents. The program is funded entirely through the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).

**Partnerships:** HHS will continue to pursue partnerships with other cities King County, local school districts, and community agencies to improve service coordination.

**Regional Planning and Coordination:** HHS will continue its focus on regional planning and coordination to improve accessibility of services available to the Kent community.

**Jurisdictional Responsibility:** Responsibility for funding services should be based in part on the regional or local nature of the service. King County has responsibility for regional services, such as mental health, Public Health, etc. while the City of Kent is responsible for providing local services such as food banks, emergency assistance, mentoring, youth services, etc.

**Public Awareness:** HHS will promote community awareness and involvement in human service needs. The division is responsible for providing information, education and training on HHS initiatives designed to meet needs.

**Sense of Community:** HHS in conjunction with other City departments will continue efforts to enhance the community's sense of involvement through opportunities for participation in City government, development of strong neighborhoods, and involvement in HHS planning activities.

**Effective and Efficient Services:** HHS will work to improve access through coordination of service providers. This includes expanding on effective, ongoing collaborate efforts with other jurisdictions (such as aligning application forms, reports, joint contracting, etc.).

**Self Reliance:** HHS will promote developing programs and strategies to increase individual's self-reliance, improving the economic health of the community. Working with economic development, employment service agencies, and job training programs to enhance employment opportunities will move residents toward self-reliance.

**Funding:** HHS will continue to provide capital and operating support to community agencies that provide affordable housing and human services to Kent residents. Agencies will be required to meet community investment outcomes.

- **Human Services Per Capita Fund** - In 1989 the City of Kent committed one (1) percent of the general fund to human services. In 2013 this funding mechanism shifted to a per capita investment. In 2013 this translated to \$828,660. The entire amount is in turn allocated to non-profit agencies and programs who address the human services needs of Kent residents. Human service funding is on a two-year cycle, with second year funding contingent on contract performance and program outcomes.
- **Community Development Block Grant** - The City of Kent receives federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds annually from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In 2002 the City of Kent received an invitation from HUD to become a Metropolitan City. As a Metropolitan City, Kent is eligible for a direct formula allocation of funds from Housing and Urban Development. The amount of funds that Kent receives is based on an allocation formula that considers the City's population, the percent of low and moderate-income people and the condition of the housing stock. The dollar amount available varies from year to year depending on the U.S. Congressional Budget.

### ***CDBG Funding Levels***

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds have decreased significantly over the past 10 years. Initially the City received about \$1,000,000 and in 2012 the allocation was \$714,398. As of 2012 the allocation formula did not include the Panther Lake annexation area.

### ***Home Repair Program***

Kent's Home Repair Program, funded by CDBG, provides low-income home owners with access to repair services for their homes. The specific goals of the program include improving the health and safety of families and individuals and maintaining affordable housing.

The largest population group served is seniors. Fixed incomes (particularly those below 50% of median) prohibit the repair of critical systems in owner occupied homes. The cost of replacing a heating system, repairing sewer lines or putting on a new roof is more than many seniors can afford. The failure to properly maintain a house leads to further deterioration. Affordable housing is an important asset in Kent. Affordability is based on income. Housing costs should not exceed 30%

household income. The ability to assist home owners in maintaining the housing structure insures that the housing will be available for future generations.

### ***CDBG Public Services***

Additionally the city utilizes the CDBG Public Service portion of the grant to fund nonprofit agencies that provide services to residents at or below 50% of median. The services the City contracts for include health services for the homeless, eviction prevention, transitional housing, emergency assistance for immigrants and refugees and feeding programs.

- **Neighborhood Stabilization Program** - The City used Neighborhood Stabilization Program federal funds to contract with Habitat for Humanity to purchase, rehabilitate and sell three foreclosed properties to low/middle-income homebuyers. The homebuyers received zero-interest loans and were from refugee communities with large families who had been waiting for large homes. Habitat for Humanity was able to maximize the funds by leveraging donations to increase the number of foreclosed properties they were able to purchase, rehabilitate and move families into.
- **Other County, State, Federal grants as applicable**

**Evaluation:** HHS staff monitors and evaluates agencies funded for program effectiveness to ensure that services are successful in achieving the desired goals and outcomes. Staff monitors each program's progress toward funding goals on a quarterly basis and reviews the program's outcomes each year. If a program is having difficulty meeting contractual requirements, HHS staff works with the agency staff to determine how to bring the program into compliance. Programs that cannot sufficiently meet funding goals or other contractual requirements risk losing funding.

*In 2012, North and East King County cities collaborated with South King County cities to create a joint monitoring form to ensure that cities were coordinated in their monitoring and tracking of funded programs. Whenever possible, the cities have agreed to schedule joint monitoring visits for programs that are funded by several cities. This helps ensure that monitoring visits are comprehensive and more standardized. Agencies benefit as well from reducing the number of visits and the preparation and staff time that goes into a monitoring visit.*

**Program and Organizational Effectiveness:** HHS staff will evaluate the Human Services Master Plan investments every two years to coincide with the two year funding cycle. The evaluation will include an update on the process to determine funding recommendations.

**Community Need:** HHS staff will monitor community need and update the Human Services Master Plan as needed to include summaries of emerging trends impacting the City of Kent. Priorities for future investments may shift or be targeted in order to address the changing needs of the Kent community.

## **Human Services and the Recession**

The recession that began in late 2007 is now recognized as one of the worst economic downturns in decades. Communities throughout the state fell into economic crisis, and policymakers were forced to formulate strategies for stimulating the economy, generating revenue, and cutting spending while faced with competing priorities.

In this challenging time, human services programs in Kent were faced with a number of challenges:

- a sudden increase in demand that strained agency resources and their ability to serve those in need,
- historic cuts in state funding that eroded services, and
- a deteriorating economy that depleted city resources.

State and local program funding continues to be down. Washington's safety net for the poorest continues to suffer the effects of a long-term disinvestment by the State and King County. Because municipal revenues have also been in decline, the cities cannot backfill this growing gap. As governmental support for agencies declines, non-profits are often forced to adjust by freezing or reducing employee salaries, drawing down on reserves, laying-off staff, or reducing the number of programs offered.

Human services' spending is a vital part of the economy in more ways than one. Nonprofit agencies are large employers and their programs stimulate the economy. It is all too easy to overlook the fact that investing in these programs also substantially reduces the need for and cost of future services.

### **The State of Human Services in King County**

In response to the challenges of the recession, a group of local governments, funders, and providers in King County challenged all sectors to participate in a public discourse to:

- Understand the scope of the problem and the impact of the cuts
- Suggest policy changes that will help reenvision how government prioritizes, delivers and supports services
- Discuss how cities and sub-regions in King County can respond to their unique community needs.

The results of these discussions were posted on the United Way of King County website at:

<http://www.uwkc.org/ourfocus/public-policy/state-of-health-and-humanservices.html> along with any updates on future budget reductions.

Significant cuts impacting King County residents noted in the State of Human Services plan include:

- Reduction, then elimination of cash assistance for 6,200 people who are temporarily disabled and unable to work, resulting in increased homelessness and lack of money for housing, food and basic needs.
- Elimination of dental health coverage to tens of thousands of Medicaid beneficiaries.
- Loss of a housing stipend for about 3,500 low-income people receiving state-funded drug and alcohol treatment
- Loss of child care for more than 1,100 families through Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) program.
- As a result of reductions in the Basic Health Plan, almost 39,000 King County residents are now on the waiting list for this low cost health insurance coverage.
- 13,748 low income families on welfare (TANF) had their monthly income support reduced impeding their efforts to stay in school and obtain job training and employment. For a family of three, this means living on \$478/month instead of \$562/month.
- Loss of \$1.2 million in direct federal funds from the Emergency Food and Shelter Program that in 2010 supported 949,813 meals and 215,692 nights of shelter. While a small portion of these services were covered with \$224,000 of state set aside, there was no ability to cover the major losses.

In addition to the challenges created by the recession, in early 2013 sequestration further complicated the nation's bid for economic recovery. As of March 2013, the state government was still sorting out the effects of sequestration (\$85 billion in arbitrary budget cuts that began March 1, 2013 after Republicans and Democrats failed to agree on an overall budget), so the dollar figures and calculations of the effects were not yet final upon publication.

While Budget staff for the state continues calculating the actual effects of the federal spending cuts (known as sequestration), it is evident that our vulnerable residents – the disabled, seniors, low-income preschoolers – will feel the brunt. The cuts began taking effect March 1 and are expected to slash almost \$83 million out of state-administered programs over the remainder of 2013. As the cuts vary by program, staff will work with our local nonprofit providers to monitor the effects of sequestration on our community.

Potential effects of the federal sequestration on Washington State could include:

- \$11.6 million in lost federal education money that would put 160 teachers' and teachers aides' jobs at risk.
- 440 low-income students would lose their college aid. Another 180 would lose their right to work-study jobs to help pay for college.



- 1,000 children would lose access to Head Start and Early Head Start programs.
- 800 children would lose access to daycare.
- 2,850 fewer children would receive immunizations for measles, mumps, rubella, tetanus, whooping cough, flu and Hepatitis B.
- 3,800 fewer people would be admitted to substance abuse programs.
- 4,300 fewer people would receive free HIV testing.
- 500 domestic abuse victims would lose services.
- The state Employment Security Administration would lose the equivalent of 100 full-time employees by mid-2014.
- 1,300 low-income families would not receive energy-efficiency improvements to their homes.
- 10,000 people would lose some assistance from the Women, Infants and Children nutrition program.

### **Developing a Response**

Most of the cuts discussed above would not be fully reversed (or reversed at all) even if the economy and state revenues were to experience a sudden recovery. Community members and stakeholders need to continue advocating for the restoration of public funding, while increasing efforts to develop new and innovative approaches for the community and our local agencies to meet the human services needs. This will include strategies outlined in the State of Human Services:

- continued conversation about community priorities;
- how to direct resources; and
- ways for individuals to become more personally involved in helping those around us who are in need.

New priorities, efficiencies, approaches and resources will all play a critical part of the community's response. Perhaps the most critical response needed is a rededication to the concept of community.

## **The Suburbanization of Poverty**

The demographic changes that have taken place in Kent and the surrounding cities have had a broad impact on the provision of human services. It is evident that segments of Kent's population are growing more rapidly than others. Census 2010 data indicates that while the percentage of minorities in Seattle remained relatively flat, it skyrocketed in the suburbs south of the city limits, including Kent. The shift happened as people of color moved out of Seattle's historically lower-income and diverse neighborhoods, joining waves of immigrants who continue to relocate and settle in South King County. While Seattle is scarcely more diverse than it was ten years ago, Kent, Renton, SeaTac and Tukwila, are now communities where minorities either comprise a majority of the population or very close to it.

This trend is sometimes referred to as the *suburbanization of poverty* and its prevalence in South King County drew the attention of the Brookings Institution, a think tank based in Washington DC that conducts research and education in the social sciences, primarily in economics, metropolitan policy, governance, foreign policy, and global economy and development.

Kent and the surrounding cities are now home to a wide variety of people living in poverty. 68% of the poor in the three counties surrounding Seattle now live in the suburbs, particularly in South King County. That includes foreign born and native born, all races, people who lack a high school degree as well as college graduates. The suburbanization of poverty is now a defining characteristic of our community and it appears to be increasing across the nation.

Between 2000 and 2010, according to census data compiled by Brookings Institution researchers:

- The number of poor people living in the suburbs of major cities grew 53 percent, while the number in the cities themselves rose just 23 percent.
- By 2010, the suburbs were home to a third of all Americans living under the official poverty level — more than the numbers living in cities, smaller towns, and rural areas.
- Poverty rate rose in 27 South King County census tracts between 2000 and 2010; of the 21 tracts in all of King, Snohomish, and Pierce counties where it rose more than 10 percent, 13 are in South King County.
- Four South King County cities — Burien followed by Kent, Tukwila, and SeaTac — have the largest shares of residents receiving Medicaid (35 percent in Kent's case) in the Puget Sound region.
- Half the students in Kent and more than half in neighboring Auburn and Renton receive free or reduced-price school lunches.
- Kent's per capita income, \$26,470, is just 70 percent of the statewide average. Its official poverty rate, 14.5 percent, is half again as high as

King County's and, reflecting an average over the five years from 2005 through 2009, doubtless lags behind today's distressed reality.

Overall in South King County, the Caucasian population declined by more than 14%, while the number of people who identified themselves as either Asian, Hispanic, African American, Native American or belonging to two or more races increased 66 percent. Much of the change was driven by Latinos, whose population doubled, and even tripled, in some cities.

### **Implications of Demographic Changes**

The demographic changes in our community necessitate constant attention to how the City and our human services providers are delivering services and directing resources. Kent's growing senior population and child population will likely require additional resources to accommodate their numbers. In addition, the growing ethnic diversity of the population suggests the need to continue focusing on multi-lingual services. Finally, the increase in the number of families living in poverty suggests we need to continue shoring up our safety net and directing resources to basic human services such as health care, food and clothing assistance, and emergency shelter and transitional housing.

Many of the implications for Kent's human service network suggested by these demographic changes were confirmed through surveys with community members and key stakeholders.

### **Human Services Network**

The City of Kent benefits from a strong network of community-based service providers that serves their increasingly diverse population. Providers from the private, nonprofit, public and faith-based sectors have developed an array of programs and services to assist residents with basic needs and to contribute positively to their quality of life.

## **Policies to Build a Healthy Community**

The Human Services Commission is charged with recommending Human Services policies to City Administration and Council. The Commission develops policy recommendations based on guiding principles, funding priorities, and policy focus areas that will result in a stronger community.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The role of the Housing and Human Services Division is to provide support for residents to meet their physical, economic and social needs, and ensure that the City of Kent has a quality service system that is accessible and effective. The HHS Master Plan recommendations provide a guide for the next six years, articulating underlying HHS principles and the long-term vision and goals for building a healthy community.

The guiding recommendations will help shape policies, strategies, and funding decisions that best adhere to the City of Kent's values and goals for Building a Health Community. They will guide HHS in its roles: in collaboration with other City departments, in partnerships, as regional collaborator, and funder of human services. In the HHS two year funding cycles, the updated context of community needs, trends and regional changes will be considered to adopt strategies and priorities to best achieve positive community outcomes.

The recommendations include:

- Guiding principles that frame what services are funded;
- HHS funding priorities;
- Priority policy areas and long-term outcomes to Build a Health Community.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Human Services Commission exists as part of the conscience of the City of Kent in its recognition of the value and diversity of all citizens including the various cultures and ethnicities and the City's desire that their basic needs be met.

## **Guiding Principles:**

- **Healthy Communities:** Build healthy communities through mutually supportive connections, building on the strengths and assets of all residents.
- **Self-Reliance:** Support all residents in attaining their maximum level of self-reliance.
- **Collaborations:** Value collaborations at all levels and seek the most strategic approaches to meeting the needs of Kent residents.
- **Equal Access:** Support equal access to services, through a service network that meets needs across age, ability, culture and language.
- **Respect and Dignity:** Treat all members of the community with respect and dignity.
- **Accountability:** Oversee City resources with consistent ethical stewardship, fairness in allocating funds, and strong accountability for maximizing effective services.

## **FUNDING PRIORITIES:**

The Master Plan lays out the City's funding priorities; in which the City will invest human services funding. Funding priorities are in place to ensure that Kent invests in the continuum of human services needs – from prevention and early intervention to job training and basic needs such as food and shelter.

HHS will strive to create a balance between support for basic safety net services and services that strengthen individuals and families, decreasing their need for human services over time. A successful human services system provides for emergency needs while giving individuals opportunities to achieve their goals for a healthy and productive life. It provides support at the earliest and least invasive level of need, rather than as the last resort, which is often the most expensive and least desirable. While five priorities were identified in the original Master Plan, an additional funding priority will be added for 2013-2018. The priorities include:

### **SIX FUNDING PRIORITY AREAS:**

- **Meeting Community Basics**  
Ensuring that people facing hardship have access to resources to help meet immediate or basic needs.

- **Increasing Self-Reliance**  
Helping individuals break out of the cycle of poverty by improving access to services and removing barriers to employment.
- **Strengthening Children and Families**  
Providing children, youth and families with community resources needed to support their positive development, including early intervention & prevention services.
- **Building a Safer Community**  
Providing resources and services that reduce violence, crime, and neglect in our community.
- **Improving Health and Well-Being**  
Providing access to services that allow individuals to improve their mental and physical health, overall well-being, and ability to live independently.
- **Improving and Integrating Systems**  
Leading efforts to ensure that human services systems meet demands and expectations by increasing capacity, utilizing technology, coordinating efforts, and sharing resources.

## Policy Focus Areas

Policy focus areas are issues that we recognize will require targeted attention over time. The focus areas included were selected based on existing service gaps, unmet needs, and important system improvements identified through community input. The 2013 update of the Master Plan includes the overarching goal of ensuring that services are inclusive and available to all citizens.

**SELF RELIANCE:** Employment and education are two of the most direct pathways out of poverty. The City of Kent needs opportunities that enable residents to gain jobs skills through access to education, employment support and livable wage jobs in the community. A primary driver in chronic and growing need for human services is inadequate income. Programs, policies and partnerships that support residents' earning capabilities will help ensure they have the skills needed to attain self-sufficiency for themselves and their families.

"I really don't like to ask for help. I work two part-time jobs and get Social Security, but sometimes I can't afford to buy food and medicine."

- **Increased educational attainment among Kent residents:** One of the key factors in access to livable wage jobs is level of educational attainment. Kent residents need access to programs that increase post-secondary education and/or vocational training.
- **Increased access to livable wage jobs:** Services that create direct links for low-income Kent residents to livable wage jobs in Kent help residents on the path to self-reliance. Services may include job training, retention, and wage progression services, adult education opportunities in Kent for special populations geared toward employment, job retention, and wage progression.
- **Reduced barriers to employment:** Effective services are needed that eliminate barriers to employment, and partnerships with employers and Kent businesses will help ensure mutually beneficial outcomes that support healthy and competitive businesses and a skilled workforce. Services may include childcare subsidies, ESL, vocational ESL, and job readiness/job placement assistance that are offered both in the community and on the job-site.
- **Improved knowledge of financial literacy:** Kent residents need to have the knowledge, tools and access to community resources to manage their personal finances and achieve their financial goals. Money management is a basic life skill that is essential to avoid financial instability and to build financial assets, particularly for low and middle-income households. Services may include financial literacy training in topics as budgeting, banking, and predatory lending, as well as public promotion of resources such as the Earned Income Tax Credit program. Opportunities for educating our youth and young adults on the importance of financial literacy should be expanded in order to give them the best possible chance to avoid financial instability as they become independent.
- **Increased access to services:** Resource information should be widely available and accessible to all Kent residents; community and social support systems enable resident self-help, mutual support and create a network of care and nurturing that is vital in a healthy community. Services need to take into account the diverse population of our City and the need for services outside of the typical 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. workday. Those who need to access services benefit from services that are collocated and who share resources.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:** A key indicator to the health of a community is economic stability. The development of new business, diverse employment

opportunities, and an established work force provides adequate resources for individuals and families to be financially stable.

- **Increased micro-enterprise development:** Micro-enterprise development organizations support low-income entrepreneurs as they start or expand their businesses. This important economic development tool can increase the chance of business success by bridging the gap between individuals and providing the tools they need to start and grow successful businesses. For many low-income entrepreneurs, micro-enterprise development opportunities represent the only means to access the capital and business tools necessary for business start-up.
- **Improved accessibility to job training programs:** Job training programs that provide relevant quality training and education give Kent residents the skills and opportunity to compete in the job market. Access to job training programs is important, particularly when programs are able to provide hands-on training and link graduates to specific jobs readily available in the community.
- **Improved career path development:** A strong employment base is a key component for ensuring that families are self-sufficient. It is not enough to simply have a large number of entry-level jobs available in the community. While the availability of entry level jobs are a vital part of the health of our community, most entry-level jobs are part-time, and do not include employee benefits. Pathways from entry level jobs to better paying positions that pay a livable wage and include benefits are a critical component of lifting people out of poverty.
- **Increased youth employment opportunities:** The community must create opportunities for youth to develop the knowledge and skills for work, to help youth respond to the complex and changing nature of work, and address the cultural and social barriers that prevent youth from working. The benefits of a young person gaining job experience are numerous; including fostering lifelong learning, teaching them how to successfully hold a job and to manage money, helping them learn to make continuous successful transitions, and leading them to a life of self-reliance.

**CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVICES:** A foundation of a healthy community includes supportive environments for children to grow and flourish, social networks that guide children, and ample opportunities for young people to find a place for themselves and become productive members of society. These supports need to exist along the whole age spectrum of a child's development, from birth through the teen years.



- **Improved birth to 5 services:** Families with children age birth to five should be connected to the community prior to entering the public school system. Aligning children’s learning and development experiences in the home, in early education and care, and in school promotes the successful transition into kindergarten. Parents should have a clear understanding of what is expected of their children when they enter kindergarten and consequently the School District would be better equipped to serve the incoming students.
- **Increased availability of quality, affordable child care:** Working parents and their preschool children need access to child care that ensures children’s health and safety and provides activities for developmentally appropriate learning and school readiness. A network of funding resources is necessary to ensure that all children can receive quality child care regardless of income, and specialized programs are available for children with special needs.

“I was able to find a job, but couldn’t afford daycare and was going to make too much to qualify for DSHS help. The City’s child care scholarship allowed me to go back to work.”

- **Increased availability of children and youth activities:** Children and youth should be encouraged to be active, explore and learn in ways that build self-esteem, and set the foundation for individual and group social skills. Kent children and youth need access to a diverse variety of programs and activities throughout the City that support their healthy development. Community assets should be maximized throughout the city, and may include neighborhood centers, school buildings, parks, and other public use spaces.
- **Increased access to prevention and early intervention services:** The teen years can be a difficult time of transition and a pivotal period in youth development, as youth assess their options and define their place in society. A network of services and partnerships is needed that focuses on providing positive resources for youth: such as internships, jobs and technology access to prepare youth with the skills for the workplace, before and after-school activities for all ages, and collaborations between schools, city programs, nonprofits and other community services.

When problems for youth do arise, providing services during the early warning signs is most effective and least costly, both financially and socially. Early intervention programs that may include tutoring, mental health services, and specialized youth programs are critical.

**FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES:** Families in today's world live with many chronic stresses: balancing work and family time, meeting family needs with the high costs of living, juggling schedules and being involved in children's schools are just a few. A network of supports that includes strong social and neighborhood ties, responsive institutions and programs that work in partnership to support the whole family is critical. Services are needed that strengthen these supportive networks and collaborate to provide effective services for families. Family support services may include parent education, cultural transition services for Kent's culturally and linguistically diverse families, as well as mental health services. In order to help people achieve economic and social success, investments in prevention programs that help vulnerable individuals build a path to long-term success and self-sufficiency, as well as address crisis prevention, are critical.

- **Collaborations to serve the whole family:** Linkages, referral relationships, joint projects and co-location of services are all ways in which programs can effectively meet the multiple needs low-income families often have, increasing parent and children success for long-term health and stability. For example, partnerships between the City, school districts and nonprofits, can bring services to schools and provide early intervention support to students and their parents.
  
- **Immigrant and refugee transition services:** Refugees and immigrants from every region of the world are settling in our community. With them comes a myriad of languages, cultures and skills that create a vibrant multicultural environment. Some also come with a need for additional services to help stabilize their lives and transition to self-reliance. It is important to meet the challenge of delivering accessible, efficient and cost-effective services to our community's multicultural residents. Coordinated service delivery is needed help residents connect to resources that provide for the health, safety, education and self-reliance of immigrants and refugees choosing to resettle in our community.

Services that orient parents to U.S. school expectations, offer ESL with parenting education, opportunities to express their culture while learning new ways, and small business support are examples of transition services that help immigrant and refugee families become self sufficient.

- **Improved access for working families:** Traditional nine-to-five office hours for human services often do not match the schedules of working families. Long work hours, lack of evening and weekend child care availability, and transportation issues compound the challenges working parents have to access services and utilize the support that they need. Non-traditional hours for service delivery, community locations, such as schools and shopping areas, and co-location of services can enable working parents to get support.
- **Decrease social isolation and strengthen neighborhoods:** Ensure that families feel connected to their community and build support systems within their neighborhoods. Positive social interaction and volunteerism opportunities help ensure that families develop neighborhood pride.

**SENIOR SERVICES:** Increased community capacity to address the needs of seniors and dependent adults is critical. The Kent community values its elders, welcomes their contributions, and needs to ensure that their needs are addressed as they age. Senior citizens need to have options for community involvement and independence at their level of ability, and ensure services are in place to attend to their needs.

- **Improved community involvement:** Older adults who remain active, pursue their interests and maintain healthy community relationships live longer and can contribute to society for many years beyond retirement. Participation in Senior Center activities encourages community involvement for seniors from diverse cultural groups.
- **Increased knowledge of community resources:** More seniors today live alone, live longer, and rely on services for episodic health concerns or ongoing support services. Accessing appropriate levels of support, such as home-based services, can help seniors stay continue to enjoy a level of independence.
- **Explore intergenerational programs** that engage seniors and acknowledge their continuing contributions to community life.
- **Increased knowledge of health care resources:** Many senior citizens face complicated health care issues as they age. Ensuring that seniors know the health conditions associated with aging, know their own personal risk factors, and are aware of the rights and responsibilities of a senior patient for health management are critical. Ensuring that seniors know where to go for appropriate care and how to access appropriate health care coverage will improve the ability of seniors to maintain their

health. Community members who interact with seniors need to be able to identify and refer at-risk seniors to available services.

- **Improved/maintained independent living:** Most seniors prefer to live independently as long as possible. While many are able to maintain their health and have sufficient funds to continue to live independently, others require community assistance to age in place. Ensuring that senior citizens are aware of the many programs available to help them maintain their independent living will increase their ability to age in place. Transportation, meal programs, chore services, and counseling are all critical components to ensure our senior citizens can live independently as long as possible.

**EQUAL ACCESS TO SERVICES:** In a healthy community, services are equally accessible to people in need, and access barriers are overcome through service design and responsiveness to changing needs.

- **Improved transportation services:** Public transportation services are necessary that offer efficient connections between major areas of the city and region, connecting major hubs, housing, employment and business centers. Improved transportation routes would enable residents to more easily access regional services.
- **Improved knowledge of transportation services:** Transportation services are critical for customers with special needs due to age or disabilities. Ensure that available programs are well-publicized and that individuals in need can access the services.
- **Increased availability of multilingual services:** Whenever possible, programs should provide access to multilingual services, increasing the chances that families will understand the process and receive appropriate services.
- **Increased access to services:** Services should be accessible to residents through a variety of locations, with flexible hours to serve the working poor. Co-location of services such as the Alliance Center, a One-Stop service building, will continue to be encouraged to provide a range of services in one location.

**MAINTAIN SAFETY NET AND BASIC NEEDS SERVICES:** Access to basic needs for food, shelter, health and safety should be available to all residents, with increased attention to linking people to long-term solutions.

- **Reduced barriers to receiving food assistance:** Increased attention to food insecurity is critical. Programs that increase access to nutritious foods among our vulnerable populations include food bank services, food stamps, WIC program, free and reduced lunch, community suppers, weekend food backpacks for youth, summer lunch programs, etc.
- **Increased access to emergency assistance:** An increased focus on ensuring that a network of assistance is available to residents who need assistance with basic needs. This includes access to utility assistance, bus tickets, gas vouchers, rental assistance, etc.
- **Reduced risk of homelessness:** An increased focus on homeless prevention, including activities such as partnerships with landlords, eviction prevention education, and funding for emergency rental assistance can help prevent homelessness. While short-term emergency and transitional housing will continue to be a necessary service for people in need in our community, prevention of homelessness is less traumatic for people in crisis and less costly for funders.
- **Maintained permanent housing:** Services that help individuals and families maintain their permanent housing improve individual/family stability and reduce the strain on the shelter system. Access to early intervention programs like Housing Stability, resource and referral, and rent assistance are critical.
- **Increased access to medical services:** Local community clinic services that provide medical care to all, including those without health insurance, are a critical service for residents. When individuals have access to medical services, they are more likely to seek preventative care and avoid costly emergency services. Services that include hours of operation that meet patients' needs and meet the needs of diverse populations are needed.
- **Increased access to mental health services:** Sufficient resources to adequately serve people with mental illness and chemical dependency are essential. When individuals in need of mental health services do not receive the services they need, they end up in our jails, juvenile detention facilities, and hospitals – costing our community more than providing appropriate intervention services would have cost.

**SAFE COMMUNITIES:** Physical and mental health is impacted by the experience of violence or fear of violence. All residents should have access to quality crisis intervention for victims of violence, including physical and mental

health services, and support for legal protection and intervention. There should be an increased focus on services preventing violence.

- **Increased parenting abilities among expectant parents and parents of young children:** Increased access to evidence-based home visiting programs and/or parent education for high risk families can reduce the chance that families will experience violence.
- **Increased youth violence prevention activities:** Youth involvement programs are an important aspect of a healthy community. Keeping youth engaged in positive after-school activities can lead to improved self-esteem, increased sense of responsibility, improved relationships with adults and peers, and reduced involvement in juvenile crime.
- **Improved understanding of family violence:** Family violence continues to be a pervasive community problem. Ensuring that services (including community advocacy, legal advocacy, safety planning and shelter) are readily available for victims of family violence is critical. It is important for both victims of family violence and those who witness it to understand how to recognize abusive tactics, access advocacy services, create a safety plan, and access other community resources.
- **Increased knowledge of sexual assault:** A healthy community is one where sexual assault does not exist. Sexual assault (which includes rape, attempted rape, child molestation, child sexual abuse and sexual harassment) is a widespread problem. Studies continually suggest that one-third of girls and one-fifth of boys are sexually assaulted by age sixteen and one-third of adult women experience assault as an adult. For a variety of reasons, most victims do not report to law enforcement and 40% of female victims do not seek assistance. A higher number of male victims remain silent. Changing the community climate regarding sexual assault and sexual violence is essential. Education and outreach provide tools to ensure that more people understand the risks of sexual assault, profiles of offenders and offending behavior. It is important for services to be available for victims and their families, which will mitigate long-term repercussions, and enhance the victim's ability to regain control. Services such as crisis intervention, informational resources, legal advocacy, medical advocacy, parent education and support, and individual therapy are critical in helping victims become survivors.

**SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS:** Adequate infrastructure and linkages between systems are necessary to economize effort and maximize effective outcomes for both residents in need and programs that serve them.

- **Improved partnerships and collaborations:** Connections between service types and sectors enables “all the pieces of the puzzle” to be in place to improve outcomes and ensure residents’ vital needs are met. These linkages may include periodic joint meetings, program referrals and collaborative services. Whenever possible, community sectors should provide complementary services, and collaborate to achieve positive results with less effort. These efforts may include an ecumenical council for church collaborations, business and nonprofit partnerships for job skills training and worker retention, schools and city-funded programs for effective youth and family support.

**Increased service integration:** Service providers need to continually self-examine their programs and works towards providing more effective and efficient services. Services continue to be offered in a piecemeal manner and more work is needed to ensure services are delivered in a more coordinated manner. Program innovations and a focus on best practices increase the likelihood that clients will benefit from those services.

#### **Example: A Dynamic Collaboration**

Dynamic Partners is a unique collaboration between nonprofit organizations and for-profit companies – all staffed with passionate individuals devoted to improving the lives of children with special needs...individuals who have developed an international reputation for unparalleled standards of excellence. All earnings from our for-profit ventures are channeled back to support our nonprofit enterprises.

Members of the partnership don’t need to worry about facilities or administration – those responsibilities are all handled by Dynamic Partners. Therefore, **Children’s Therapy Center**, **SKIP Early Intervention Program**, **Dynamic Orthotics**, **SPIO** and **Dynamic Labs** are able to focus on what they do best – helping kids and families reach their full potential. As a member of the collaboration, each Partner saves over \$200,000 a year in administration and overhead costs.

This savings is then re-invested back into our collective mission – enabling us to:

- Improve efficiency
- Improve capacity
- Improve sustainability
- Improve effectiveness

**HOUSING:** Community residents need housing that is affordable at all levels of the economic spectrum. Housing should be safe and located in supportive neighborhoods.

- **Increased availability of affordable housing:** The City of Kent needs a variety of adequate housing opportunities that meet the needs of its residents, including low and moderate-income residents. Strategies include: partnerships with nonprofit and profit developers; housing alternatives that provide a range of options for income levels and household sizes, and inclusion of affordable housing options in new developments in Kent, particularly near transportation hubs and employment centers.
- **Increased home ownership opportunities:** Home ownership is one of the strongest factors in strengthening a sense of community belonging and commitment. Home ownership is a foundation of financial asset building and has a positive impact on the whole family. Making the transition from renter to owner is a challenge for many working families. Promoting community education for first-time homebuyers and first-time homebuyer programs is a key step in making residents aware of the opportunities that exist in the community
- **Maintained existing housing stock:** Kent has a significant proportion of old and deteriorating housing stock. Maintaining these resources is critical to the health of the City and the stability of its residents, particularly low-income senior citizens. The City of Kent's offers a Home Repair program that works to maintain the existing stock of affordable housing in the City. The program provides a variety of home repair services to low and moderate income owners of single-family houses, mobile homes and condo units.
- **Increased regional efforts:** Housing costs, housing availability and the need for affordable housing are major regional issues that require regional solutions. Development of countywide housing resources and distribution of affordable housing to all income groups throughout the County is critical. Improved coordination among the county, other jurisdictions, housing providers, service providers, and the financial community is also needed to identify, promote and implement local and regional strategies to increase housing opportunities for people with special needs.
- **Maintained appropriate level of homeless services:** Support shelter and transitional housing while the need still exists, while expecting agencies to focus on permanent housing solutions. This is an important part of working to break what can become a cycle of homelessness.



Encourage supported housing linked to case management, for persons who are mentally ill, and/or recovering from substance abuse.

## **Kent City Council Strategies and Human Services**

### **Vision for Kent in 2025**

***Kent is a safe, connected and beautiful city; culturally vibrant with richly diverse urban centers***

#### STRATEGIC GOALS:

##### **Develop and implement a sustainable funding model**

*Create a plan to analyze current operations to identify and implement efficiencies. Research new revenue sources to sustain current operations. In light of new economic realities, prioritize public services and implement new fund reserve policies.*

In 2012 the Human Services Commission presented Council with a proposal for a new funding mechanism that would not be subject to the revenue swings of the economy. The new strategy, a per capita model, was approved by Council in December 2012 and the rate was set at \$6.96 with an annual increase based on the consumer price index.

##### **Create connections for people and places**

*Develop and implement a plan to improve government processes. Identify a funding source and revenue generating opportunities using fiber optics throughout the community. Create connections for people and places by improving and expanding trails and roadways. Design a Gateways Plan to create more friendly and welcoming entries into Kent. Continue to identify neighborhoods.*

##### **Create neighborhood urban centers**

*Transform zoning and planning to support the creation of new urban centers. Transform the regulatory process to be efficient and eliminate redundancy. Improve streetscapes and signage. Identify a niche, uniqueness for Kent to develop.*

Human services staff has organized a group to determine the feasibility of opening a multicultural resource center in Kent or South County; the committee is convening listening sessions with organizations and individuals to gauge the interest in such a facility and will research options for funding the space through a non-profit.

##### **Foster inclusiveness**

*Promote inclusiveness and broaden the opportunities to celebrate and showcase the diversity of our community. Seek ways to educate employees, employers*

*and the community on the cultural diversity of Kent. Remove barriers to increase hiring to match the city's diverse population.*

Human Services staff continue to work with the immigrant/refugee community to expand services and increase opportunities for the individuals and families moving to the community. Staff work with regional groups to address issues such as education, employment, transportation and health care for new immigrants that may have limited English skills and not understand the systems they must traverse. Kent Cultural Diversity Initiative Group (KC-DIG) brings together a coalition of providers, individuals, businesses and organizations on a monthly basis to learn about the needs and opportunities in our community. Informative presentations provide committee members with information about education, city services, employment, housing services, medical services and opportunities for collaborations. KC-DIG hosted a Seattle Foundation GiveBig training to increase donations for ethnic-based non-profits working in Kent.

### **Beautify Kent**

*Update design standards for residential, commercial and downtown areas of Kent. Implement a plan for "Green Kent", targeting greenways to include better use of open space and trees. Leverage code enforcement to rid the city of unsightly areas. Implement a plan for maintenance and resource management of our existing public and private infrastructure.*

## HOUSING AND HUMAN SERVICES BUDGET

### 2013-2014 Human Services Funding Recommendations (General Fund)

Agency	Program	Funding
Catholic Community Services of W Washington	Volunteer Chore Services	\$10,000
Catholic Community Services of W Washington	Homeless Services Program	\$55,000
Child Care Resources	Child Care Financial Assistance	\$26,000
Children's Home Society of Washington	Early Head Start in South King and North King	\$20,000
Communities in Schools of Kent	Mentorship and Service Coordination	\$35,000
Crisis Clinic	Community Information Line	\$5,000
Domestic Abuse Women's Network (DAWN)	Domestic Violence Continuum of Services	\$65,000
Dynamic Family Services	Children with Special Needs	\$55,000
HealthPoint	Dental Program	\$15,000
HealthPoint	Medical Program	\$15,000
Jewish Family Service	Refugee & Immigrant Service Centers	\$10,000
Kent Food Bank and Emergency Services	Kent Food Bank	\$70,000
Kent Youth and Family Services	Head Start and ECEAP Preschool Programs	\$15,000
Kent Youth and Family Services	Outreach	\$10,000
Kent Youth and Family Services	Clinical Services	\$85,000
Kent Youth and Family Services	Watson Manor Transitional Living Program	\$10,000
Kent Youth and Family Services	Infant Mental Health	\$5,000
King County Bar Foundation	Community Legal Services (CLS)	\$10,000
King County Sexual Assault Resource Center	Comprehensive Sexual Assault Services	\$22,660
Mercy Housing	Homeless Case Management	\$10,000
Multi-Service Center	Housing Continuum	\$126,000
Multi-Service Center	Emergency Assistance	\$25,000
Neighborhood House	Employment & Family Self Sufficiency	\$10,000
Pediatric Interim Care Center Inc	Interim Care of Drug-Exposed Infants	\$10,000
Senior Services	Volunteer Transportation	\$10,000
Sound Mental Health	Path Program	\$12,000
South King Council of Human Services	Capacity Building Project	\$10,000
Ukrainian Community Center of Washington	Russian/Ukrainian Refugee Assistance Project	\$10,000
Valley Cities Counseling and Consultation	Senior Counseling at Kent Senior Center	\$32,000
Washington Women's Employment & Education	REACH Plus	\$35,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$828,660</b>

## HOUSING AND HUMAN SERVICES BUDGET

### Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) 2013 Human Services Funding Recommendations

#### CDBG Funding Public Services 2013

Catholic Community Services	Katherine's House and Rita's House	\$10,000
HealthPoint	Health Care for the Homeless	\$10,000
YWCA-Seattle-King-Snohomish	Anita Vista Transitional Housing	\$18,000
Refugee Women's Alliance	ReWa Senior Nutrition and Wellness Program	\$10,000
Multi-Service Center	Housing Stability	\$49,050
Refugee Women's Alliance	Case Management and Emergency Assistance	\$15,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$112,050</b>

#### Capital

Washington Community Alliance for Self-Help	Kent Microenterprise Initiative	\$25,000
Home Repair	Home Repair Services	\$460,550
<b>Total Capital</b>		<b>\$485,550</b>

<b>Planning and Administration</b>		<b>\$149,400</b>
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<b>TOTAL PROJECTED CDBG 2013</b>		<b>\$747,000</b>
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## **2013-2014 Services by Funding Category**

### **Meeting Community Basics**

*Ensuring that people facing hardship have access to resources to help meet immediate or basic needs.*

- Catholic Community Services – Emergency Assistance
- Catholic Community Services – HOME Homeless Men’s Shelter
- Catholic Community Services – Katherine’s House
- Crisis Clinic – 211/Crisis Line
- Kent Food Bank – Food Bank and Emergency Services
- Kent Youth and Family Services – Watson Manor Transitional Housing
- Multi-Service Center – Housing Continuum

### **Increasing Self-Reliance**

*Helping individuals break out of the cycle of poverty by improving access to services and removing barriers to employment.*

- Catholic Community Services – Volunteer Chore
- Child Care Resources – Child Care Financial Assistance
- Jewish Family Service – Refugee and Immigrant Service Centers
- King County Bar Foundation – Pro Bono Services
- Mercy Housing Northwest – Homeless Family Case Management
- Neighborhood House – Employment & Family Self Sufficiency
- Senior Services – Volunteer Transportation
- Ukrainian Community Center of WA – Refugee Assistance Program
- WWEE – Reaching Employability & Achieving Career Habits (REACH Plus)

### **Strengthening Children and Families**

*Providing children, youth and families with community resources needed to support their positive development, including early intervention and prevention services.*

- Children’s Home Society – Strengthening Children & Families
- Communities in Schools of Kent – Mentoring Program
- Dynamic Family Services – Children with Special Needs
- Kent Youth and Family Services – After School
- Kent Youth and Family Services – Clinical Programs
- Kent Youth and Family Services – Early Childhood Education
- Kent Youth and Family Services – Infant Mental Health

### **Building Safer Communities**

*Providing resources and services that reduce violence, crime, and neglect in our community.*

- DAWN – Community Advocacy Program
- DAWN – Housing for Domestic Violence Survivors
- King County Sexual Assault Resource Center – Comprehensive Sexual Assault Services

### **Improving Health and Well-Being**

*Providing access to services that allow individuals to improve their mental and physical health, overall well-being, and ability to live independently.*

- HealthPoint – Primary Dental Care
- HealthPoint – Primary Medical Care
- Pediatric Interim Care Center – Interim Care of Drug-Exposed Infants
- Sound Mental Health – PATH Homeless Outreach
- Valley Cities Counseling and Consultation – Senior Counseling Program

### **Improving and Integrating Systems**

*Leading efforts to ensure that human services systems meet demands and expectations by increasing capacity, utilizing technology, coordinating efforts, and sharing resources.*

- South King Council of Human Services – Capacity Building

## Demographic Profile

The City of Kent has experienced dramatic population growth over the past ten years. Furthermore, the city's population is becoming increasingly diverse—in terms of race and ethnicity, as well as income. Refugee resettlement and immigration has enriched the community with new cultures, languages, foods and art. Diversity also brought challenges the city has worked to meet. Meeting the needs of such a diverse community requires some new approaches and applying proven strategies to new scenarios. The following are some of strategies used to improve the quality of life and assist new residents.

- In 2009, the City organized the Kent Cultural Diversity Initiative Group (KCDIG) after a summit with service providers and community members with cultural and language-specific expertise necessary to work with immigrants and refugees. KCDIG provides opportunities for continuing education, networking, collaboration, understanding and sharing across cultures. Participants and organizations represent a myriad of cultures—Somali, Somali Bantu, Kenyan, Burmese, Peruvian, Indian, Iraqi, Sudanese, African American, Bhutanese, Russian, Ukrainian, Chinese, and European.
- Cultural difference change how programs are offered. For example the Kent Pool provides a bimonthly Women Only Swim for women who need this option for religious/cultural reasons.
- Coming together to share a meal with previously isolated Somali and Bhutanese seniors resulted in a human services grant to support the Senior Nutrition and Wellness Program for these populations. As funds are available, the program will be supported by a CDBG grant
- Several ethnic-based organizations were provided technical assistance on grant applications to increase funding to serve refugees.
- The Preserving and Strengthening Specialized Community Organizations Committee (PSSCO) met to develop a strategy for contributing to the long-term viability of small and emerging organizations that specialize in providing human services to Kent immigrant and refugee communities. PSSCO conducted capacity assessment interviews with nine ethnic-based community organizations; a report is being prepared which will be shared with funders and the agencies. Members of the committee include representatives from Seattle Foundation, South King Council of Human Services, United Way of King County, and a community volunteer of the Seattle Foundation Neighbor to Neighbor Small Grant Fund.
- Human services staff is working with a committee organized to determine the feasibility of opening a multicultural resource center in Kent or South County. The committee is convening listening sessions with organizations and individuals to gauge the interest in a facility and research options for funding the space through a non-profit.



In the coming years, many of the challenges, as well as strengths, confronting the city lie in this expanding diversity. As a result, the demographic findings described below have significant implications for individual service providers and the region’s human service network as a whole. Kent’s changing demographics highlight where resources need to be enhanced to reach segments of the population with the greatest social and economic need.

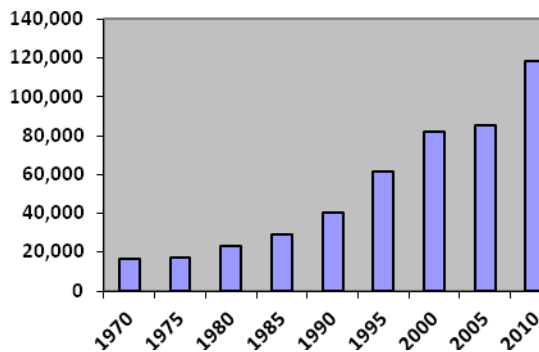
**Major demographic trends**

*Increasing senior citizen population; larger families, high percentage of children; increasing racial and ethnic diversity; and increasing poverty and financial insecurity, working families burdened by high costs for basic necessities, lack of health insurance.*

**Population**

Kent’s population has grown by 4.9% annually, over the last thirty years. Kent now ranks as the third largest city in King County.

Historic Population Growth, 1970-2010



Historic Population Growth  
Population

- The population increase of 16,000 in 1997 was due to the Meridian Valley annexation
- In July 2010, the Panther Lake annexation added an addition 25,458 people.

(Source: WA Office of Financial Management). Population is for April 1 each year.

**Household and Families**

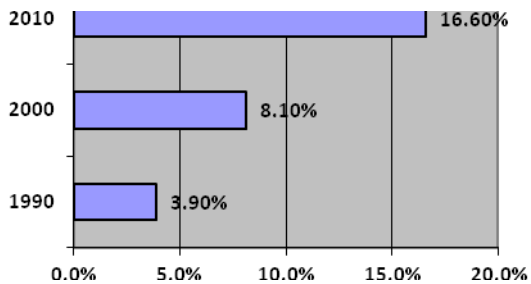
In 2009-2011 there were 39,000 households in Kent and the average household size was 2.8 people. Families made up 66% of the households and includes both married-couple families (47%) or other families (19%). Of other families, 10% are female householder families with no husband present and own children under 18 years. Nonfamily households made up 34% of all households in Kent. Most of the nonfamily households were people living alone, but some were composed of people living in households in which no one was related to the householder. 39% of all households had one or more people under the age of 18; 19% of all households have one or more people 65 years and over. Among persons 15 and older, 49% of males and 48% of females are currently married. 3,000 grandparents lived with their grandchildren under 18 years old and of those grandparents, 18% of them had financial responsibility for their grandchildren.

## Racial Diversity

	More than one race	Other	Asian/Pacific Islander	Native American	Black	White
1990	0*	1.2%	4.4%	1.4%	3.8%	89.2%
2000	5.4%	9.8%	10.2%	1%	8.2%	70.8%
2010	6.6%	8.5%	17.1%	1%	11.3%	55.5%

\*More than one race was not an option in the 1990 Census.

## Hispanic Origin of any Race



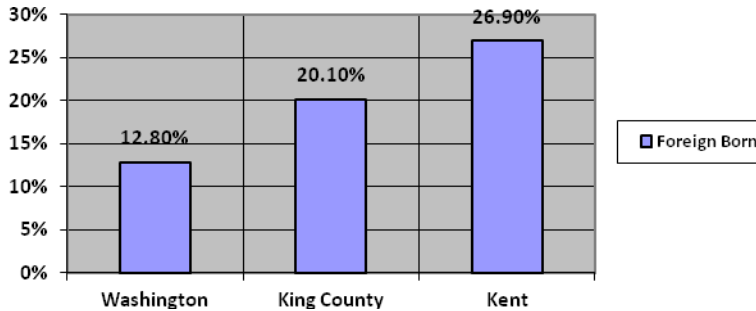
In addition to the racial and ethnic classifications, Kent’s diversity picture also includes immigrants and refugees, which include various racial and ethnic classifications. For example, Eastern European immigrants and African immigrants are included in the White and Black racial categories. The following chart illustrates the large percentage of foreign-born residents in Kent.

## Nativity and Foreign Born Residents

73% of Kent residents in 2009-2011 were native residents to the United States. 27% of our residents were foreign born. Of the foreign born population, 43% were naturalized United States citizens, and 55% entered the country before the year 2000. 45% of those who were foreign born entered the country in 2000 or later.

## Foreign-Born Residents

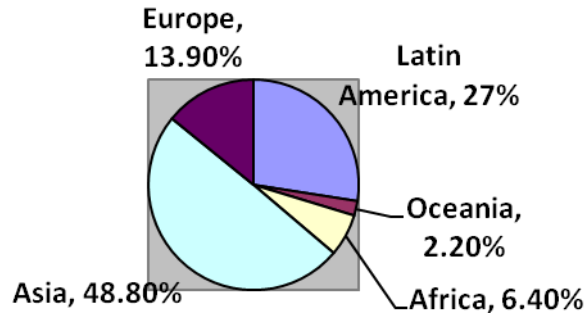
Percentage of foreign born population 2007-2011



Source: US Census Bureau: State and County QuickFacts – Data derived from Population Estimates, American Community Survey, Census of Population and Housing

Foreign born residents of Kent come from all over the world.

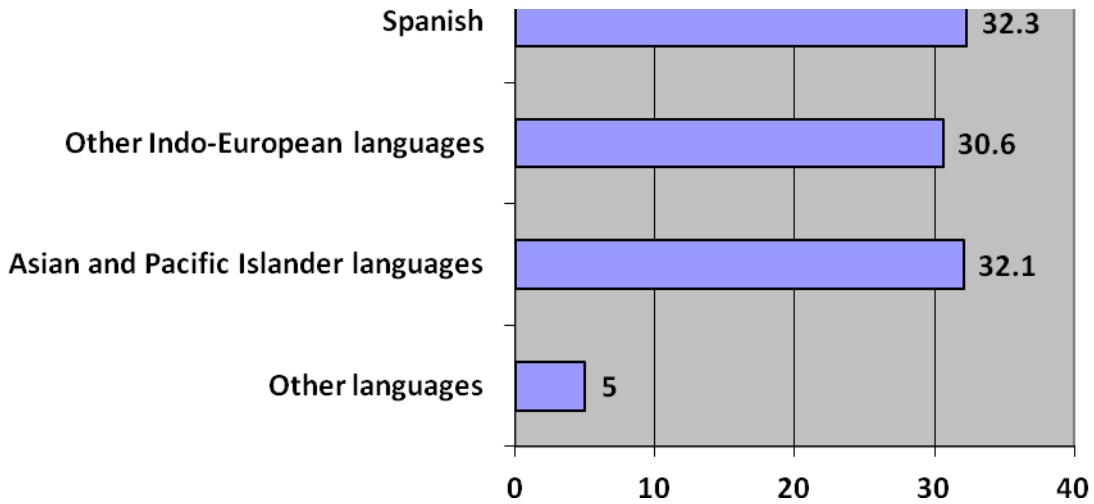
### Regions of the World



## Language

Among people at least five years old living in Kent in 2009-2011, 38% spoke a language other than English at home. Of those 32% spoke Spanish and 68% some other language. 49% reported that they did not speak English “very well.”

**Percent of the population 5 years and over who speak a language other than English 2009-2011**



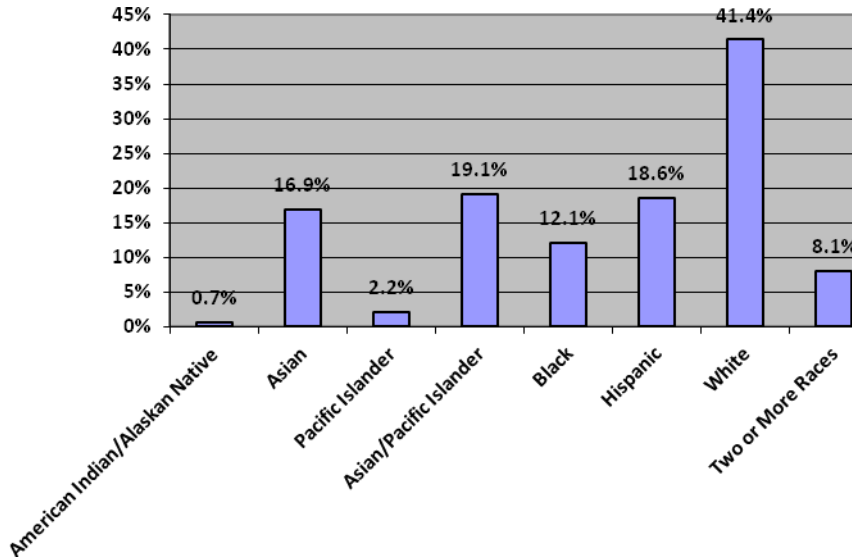
**Kent School District**

The increasing diversity in Kent is even more pronounced when examining school statistics.

Kent School District is the fourth largest school district in the state of Washington. Currently, the district consists of 4 large comprehensive high Schools, 6 middle schools, 28 elementary schools and 2 academies. Kent School District benefits from a wealth of diversity as at least 138 languages are spoken within its boundaries, with the top five languages other than English including: Spanish, Russian, Somali, Punjabi, and Vietnamese.

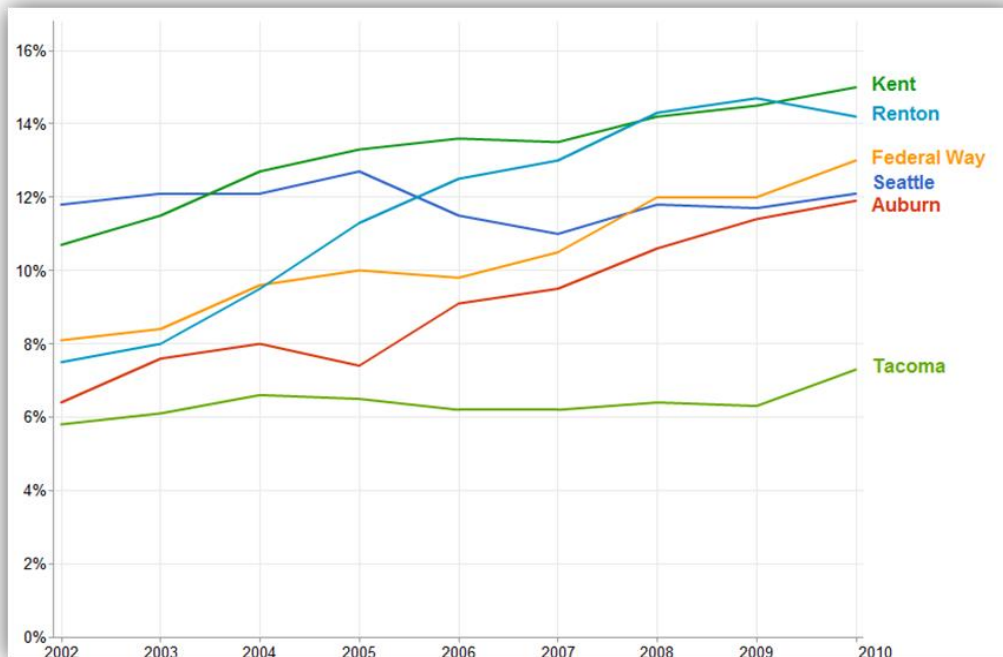
As of May 2012, 13,991 students in the Kent School District qualified for free or reduced-price meals, representing 51.9% of the student population.

The race/ethnicity makeup as of October 2011 was:



Source: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction 2011-2012 Report Card

### Center for Education and Data Research (CEDR) Percentage of English Language Learners



Source: Kent School District's [State of the District 2011-2012](#)

## **Graduation Rates**

Improvements in reviewing and analyzing district data resulted in Kent School District (KSD) developing a clearer picture of the graduation rates and drop-out percentages. The district's annual dropout rate has continued to decline to approximately 4%. Graduation rates have seen steady progress shifting from just 67.4% in 2006 to 82.3% in 2010 and effectively increased in 2011. KSD is launching new programs to offer students who did not graduate on time new degree opportunities. SAT scores for KSD college-bound students were higher than the state average and Washington has the highest average in the nation.

### *Innovative Approach:*

*The Kinder To College program takes KSD's youngest students and their families to a college campus and delivers the message, "You can do this!" The students visited local college campuses where they took the "College Pledge" to work hard in school, listen to their teachers and families, and graduate from high school prepared for college. Parents reported they saw the enthusiasm in their children and saw the program as a great way to start talking with their children about the importance of what they are learning in school and what they need to do to prepare themselves for college and life. The goal is to eventually have kindergarten students from all 28 elementary schools participate and go to college for a day.*

## **Education**

According to American Community Survey data, in 2009-2011, 26% of people 25 years and over had at least graduated from high school and 25% had a bachelor's degree or higher. 16% were dropouts and not enrolled in school or had not graduated from high school.

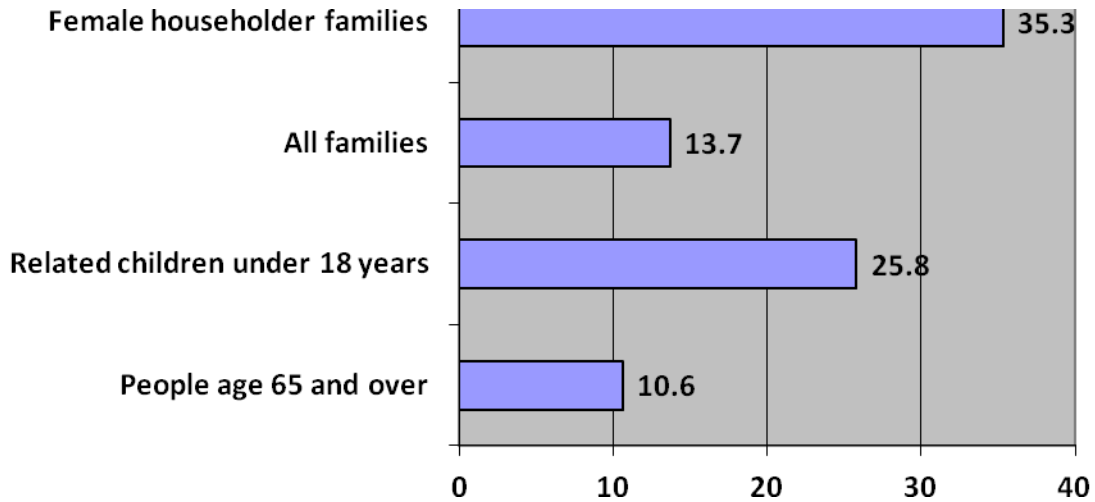
### Educational Attainment

- 16.3% - Less than a high school diploma
- 25.6% - High School diploma or equivalency
- 24% - Some college, but no degree
- 8.7% - Associate's degree
- 19.1% - Bachelor's degree
- 6.4% - Graduate or professional degree

## **Income**

The median income of households was \$57,902. 10% of households had income below \$15,000 per year. In 2009-2011, 16% of people were in poverty. 26% of related children under 18 were below the poverty level, compared with 11% of people 65 years and older. 14% of all families and 25% of all families with a female householder and no husband present had incomes below the poverty level.

## Poverty Rates in Kent in 2009-2011



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2009-2011 American Community Survey 3 Year Estimates.

### Child Care Costs:

Monthly cost (4-week month)

#### Average Rates - South King County

	Infant (0-1 year)	Toddler (1-2 1/2 years)	Preschool (2 1/2 - 5 years)	School Age
Centers	\$1,020	\$864	\$764	\$468
Family Child Care	\$808	\$784	\$668	\$392

Source: Child Care Resources Data, April 13, 2012

For a family with two children, one infant and one toddler, the monthly average cost for licensed child care would average \$1,592 per month for family child care, which is typically less expensive than a child care center: the equivalent of \$9.95 per hour for a 40-hour week. The annual cost for pre-school childcare is \$8,016. The annual cost for full-time child care in a center for families with two children under the age of 5 can easily cost over \$20,000 per year.

## **HOUSING**

Kent's housing mix is nearly split down the middle in terms of 50% single family housing and 50% apartments and condos. Kent's housing stock includes a greater share of apartments and condos than King County and the region overall.

Households that pay a high percentage of their income for housing have little left for other necessities. The quest for affordable housing (costing less than 30% of income) can mean moving far from family, friends, work, school, and childcare arrangements. People who live in unaffordable housing may scrimp on food and forego necessary healthcare and medications.

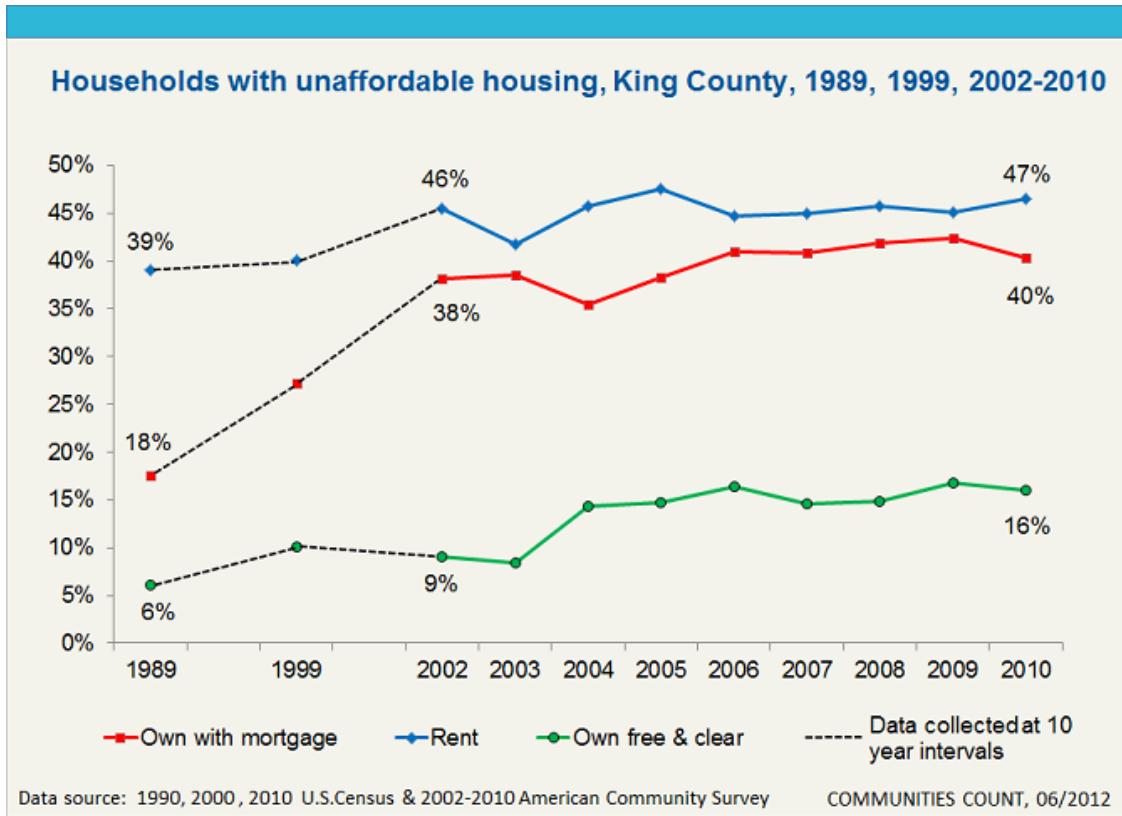
### **2010 Housing Costs**

As of 2006-2010, median price of a house in Kent was \$303,100, which was higher than the state average of \$271,800 and much higher than the national average of \$179,900. The Kent median house value has grown by 70.28% since 2000. The growth rate for the price of a house in Kent is higher than the state average rate of 61.50% and is higher than the national average rate of 50.42%. The median year that a house in Kent was built is 1984, which is newer than the median year for a house built in the state which is 1979 and is newer than the median year for a house built in the USA which is 1975.

Cost of housing burden

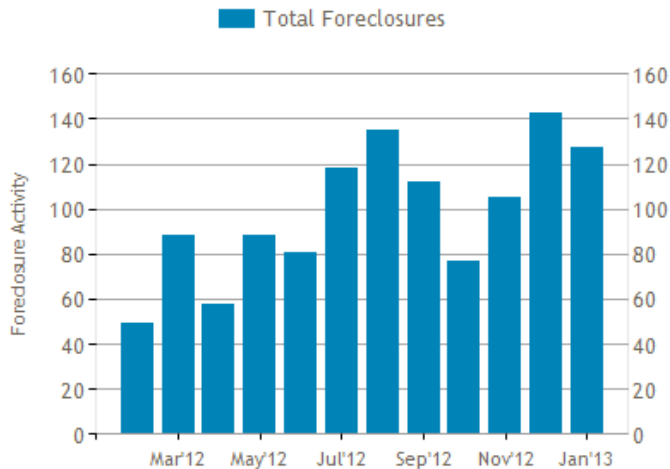
- 45% of all renter households in King County pay more than 30% of their income for rent.
- Less than 5% of apartments in King County are affordable to households earning less than 30% of median income (\$26,400 for a family of four).
- King County has a 4% vacancy rate, and the average rent for a two-bedroom apartment in King County is \$1,069. A worker must earn over \$20 per hour to afford this housing (housing is considered affordable when it costs 30% of one's income).





## Foreclosures

Another consequence of the recession was the unprecedented number of foreclosures across the nation. The national mortgage crisis began in 2008 and was characterized by a rise in subprime mortgage delinquencies and foreclosures. The foreclosure crisis was slow to hit Washington State, but the impact has been staggering. In 2009 Washington ranked 24<sup>th</sup> highest in the nation for total foreclosed properties. By October 2010 the state jumped to 10<sup>th</sup> highest.



## Livable Wages

Policy makers and human service providers often talk about the need for livable wage jobs for individuals and families. For families with children, full-time, year-round employment at a minimum-wage job brings in less than half of a “living wage” – the income needed to cover necessities and save for the future.

- A family of 4 with 2 adults working full-time for minimum wage would fall almost \$50,000 short of a living-wage income
- This same family’s income would fall below 200% of the Federal Poverty Threshold.

For most households, the income needed for a living wage continues to rise. Despite modest overall inflation since 2007, the costs of basic necessities have increased substantially. Fewer than half of Washington job openings in 2010 paid a living wage for families with children.

**Living Wage Job Openings in Washington State, 2010**

	King County 2010 Hourly Living Wage (per adult)	WA State 2010 Hourly Living Wage (per adult)	WA State Living Wage Openings in 2010	WA State Job Seekers per Living Wage Opening	WA State % of All Jobs Paying Less than a Living Wage
<b>Household with Single Adult</b>	\$16.72/hr	≥\$15.28/hr	64,349	7:1	42%
<b>Household with 2 Adults (both working), 1 School-aged Child, &amp; 1 Toddler</b>	\$20.62/hr	≥\$18.76/hr	56,151*	8:1**	54%*
<b>Household with 1 Adult and 1 School-aged Child</b>	\$22.90/hr	≥\$20.97/hr	43,241	11:1	61%
<b>Household with 1 Adult, 1 School-aged Child, &amp; 1 Toddler</b>	\$32.01/hr	≥\$28.00/hr	27,159	17:1	76%
<b>Household with 2 Adults (1 Working), 1 School-aged Child, &amp; 1 Toddler</b>	\$30.18/hr	≥\$28.70/hr	25,427	19:1	77%

*Ratio of total job seekers to total job openings was 475,000 to 111,573, about 4:1*

*Source: Searching for Work That Pays, 2010 Job Gap Study, Dec. 2010*

*\*Estimated*

Among Washington job openings in 2010, fewer than half paid a living wage for families with children. Only 23% paid a living wage for a household with 2 adults (1 working), 1 school-age child, and 1 toddler. Although job-supply data are only available at the state level, 41% of all non-farm employees live in King County. For households with pre-school-aged children, the primary routes to making ends meet in 2010 were:

- Maintaining a full-time job that paid more than \$30 an hour (with one wage-earner).
- Maintaining full-time jobs for two wage-earners, each making more than \$20.50 an hour.
- Working multiple jobs (often with more than one wage-earner).

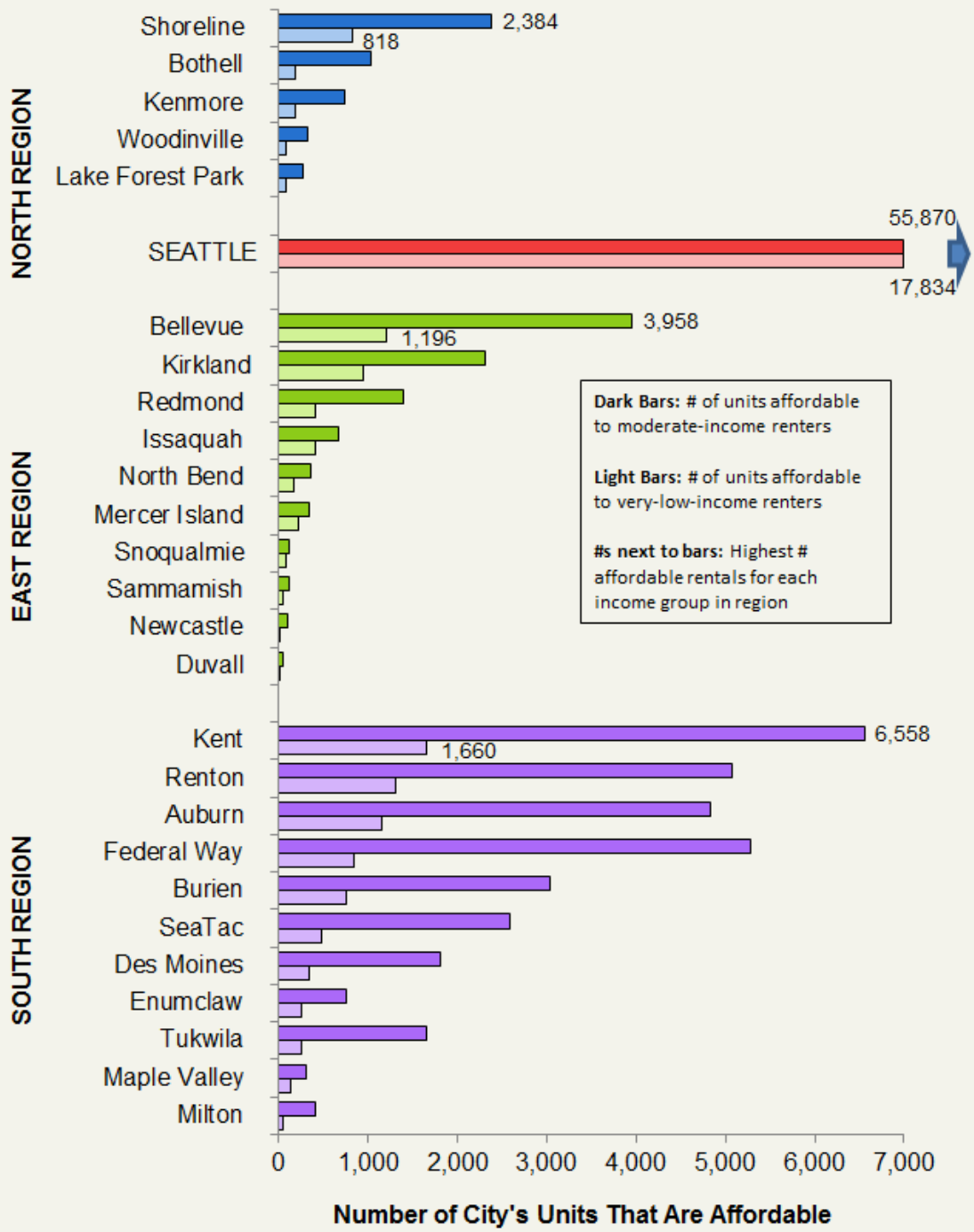
*NOTE: Because expenses are higher in King County than in Washington State overall, workers had to earn more to make a living wage in King County than in Washington State. For households with 1 adult, or with 2 adults working fulltime, child care expenses can take a significant portion of annual income.*

Finding affordable rental housing depends on both household income and the supply of apartments or houses at a range of prices. Based on actual rents paid in King County between 2006 and 2010 (including both market-rate and subsidized units):

Seattle has the greatest number of rentals affordable to very-low-income and moderate-income renters; followed by South Region, East Region, and North Region. Within each region, the greatest number of affordable rentals can be found in ...

- **Kent** for South Region
  - **Bellevue** for East Region
  - **Shoreline** for North Region
- Affordable rent for **very-low-income renter** households (earning less than \$19,900) is no more than \$496 a month.
  - Affordable rent for **moderate-income renter** households (earning \$19,900 to \$33,100) is no more than \$827 a month.
  - The numbers of affordable rentals in Seattle were truncated in the chart to preserve a scale that shows the smaller contributions of other King County cities.

## Number of rentals affordable to moderate and very-low-income renters by city, region, King County (2006-2010)



Data source: 2006-2010 American Community Survey

COMMUNITIES COUNT, 7/2012

Data Table for Numbers and Percentages of Affordable Housing by King County City

City By Region	# Rental Housing Units	Affordable for Very Low Renters		Affordable for Moderate Income Renter	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>North Region</b>					
Woodinville	1,553	78	5%	328	21%
Bothell (King County part)	4,823	181	4%	1,033	21%
Lake Forest Park	895	75	8%	266	30%
Kenmore	2,117	179	8%	744	35%
Shoreline	6,723	818	12%	2,384	35%
<b>Seattle</b>	143,368	17,834	12%	55,870	39%
<b>East Region</b>					
Sammamish	1,568	50	3%	117	7%
Newcastle	996	7	1%	98	10%
Redmond	10,558	410	4%	1,398	13%
Issaquah	4,287	407	9%	671	16%
Mercer Island	2,152	224	10%	345	16%
Bellevue	21,126	1,196	6%	3,958	19%
Kirkland (Greater*)	12,257	948	8%	2,318	19%
Duvall	207	13	6%	42	20%
Snoqualmie	530	83	16%	120	13%
North Bend	864	161	19%	353	41%
<b>South Region</b>					
Maple Valley	1,131	139	12%	304	27%
Milton	1,418	39	3%	409	29%
Renton	15,214	1,301	9%	5,075	33%
Federal Way	14,121	846	6%	5,276	37%
Kent	17,011	1,660	10%	6,558	39%
Tukwila	3,982	249	6%	1,650	41%
Enumclaw	1,660	256	15%	760	46%
Des Moines	3,899	343	9%	1,806	46%
Burien	6,547	748	11%	3,039	46%
Auburn	10,417	1,150	11%	4,839	46%
SeaTac	4,662	487	10%	2,578	55%

\*Greater Kirkland includes CDP areas annexed since the last Census: Juanita Kingsgate and Inglewood Finn Hill.

## **Transportation**

As a result of the recession, many public transportation routes were reduced while prices to utilize public transportation have increased. This resulted in a decrease in accessibility for low-income individuals. Additionally, navigating the public transportation system continues to be a barrier for numerous reasons; including language, cultural norms, convenience of routes, etc.

In response to these issues the King County Mobility Coalition was formed. Members include special needs transportation service providers, clients and funders, from both the governmental, non-profit, and for-profit sectors from rural and urban areas throughout King County.

Kent HHS staff participated on the King County Mobility Coalition (KCMC) Refugee and Immigrant Elders Transportation Sub-committee. After convening a transportation summit and community conversations to solicit ideas for increasing transportation access for newly arrived refugee and immigrant elders and their families, KCMC created a multi-lingual series of three (3) travel instructions videos covering the following topics: *Riding the Bus, Paying to Ride the Bus and Light Rail, and Other Ways to Travel*. The videos are in English and seven additional languages - Spanish, Russian, Amharic, Somali, Burmese, Nepali, and Tigrinya. (Kent Human Services staff narrated the English version.) Copies of the videos were provided to community organizations and to local government and are available on the KCMC website.

## **HOMELESSNESS**

Kent staff has participated on the Committee to End Homelessness since its inception. Staff participate on the Inter Agency Committee, attend the Governing Committee meetings, participate on a variety of subcommittees, and provide input to planning efforts throughout the county. Staff co-chaired the Shelter Task Force convened to develop strategies for providing emergency shelter in King County.

The City has recognized for many years the impact of homelessness on the community and its residents. Homelessness impacts individuals, families, children and youth. The reasons for and causes of homeless are numerous. Nationally there has been an emphasis on addressing chronic homelessness particularly for single adults. 2012 saw a call from national leaders to focus on the plight of homeless veterans, particularly those returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. The recent recession has left an increasing number homeless in Kent as well as the balance of the county. Unemployment coupled with the high cost of rent, utilities and food in the region made it difficult for some families to maintain their housing. The difficulty in determining accurate numbers rests in the fact that

many families share housing, double up with grandparents, or couch surf with family and friends.

The recession also caused a decrease in funding levels. The decreased funding coupled with the increased need resulted in a more visible presence of the homeless particularly in urban centers. Kent, like its neighbors, saw more street homeless in the downtown area. Addressing the needs of the chronically homeless that struggle with mental health and/or addiction issues is difficult. Best practices, such as Housing First, are expensive programs. These types of programs offer the best results with positive long term outcomes.

Human Services staff work with a network of providers and community members to develop a continuum of homeless services that are available to Kent residents. City funds support some of the programs while other programs such as PATH, Housing First and the Mobile Medical Van are supported by federal, state or county funds. The common element with these programs is the collaborative and supportive services offered to clients. In order to successfully move into housing participants need a range of services that provide support and treatment. The most cost effective way to provide this is through program collaborations.

### **Coordinated Entry**

In April 2012 King County launched the Coordinated Entry "Family Housing Connections" system for all families county wide experiencing homelessness. Families searching for housing use a single entry point facilitated by 2-1-1. All families are served through Catholic Community Services who uses the full range of housing providers to place the family. During the first year of the project a number of issues have emerged and planners are working on the best strategies to resolve the issues.

The City of Kent is experiencing increasing numbers of homeless individuals. The One-Night Count, conducted annually by the Seattle-King County Homeless Coalition and Operation Nightwatch, conducted their count of people sleeping outside in January 2013. Fifty four people were found on the streets, a much smaller number than anticipated. 104 persons were counted in 2012. In addition to the homeless individuals sleeping outside, many homeless people are not visible – many families are in "doubled up" housing conditions, in shelter, or in hotels. Since the beginning of the recession in 2007 the number of homeless children in the Kent School District has been between 400 and 500.

### **Refugee and Immigrant Families**

In King County, refugee and immigrant families are also being seen in increasing numbers. They have many issues that affect their housing stability, including limited English proficiency, lack of documentation, medical issues and lack of

formal education. In addition, the eligibility criteria for most subsidized housing programs prevent undocumented families from accessing housing assistance.

## **HEALTH INDICATORS**

The following selected indicators from Public Health's Communities Count data released in 2012 and early 2013 illustrate important factors for healthy communities. The data refers to South King County as a region, and will be generally applicable to challenges faced by the City of Kent:

- 13% of adults experience "food insecurity", reporting that household food money did not last the whole month. Of those reporting food insecurity, 38% were Latino, 21% African American, 13% were Multiple Race, 6% Asian and 7% white.
- 15% of adults in South King County reported that their household could not afford to eat balanced meals or went hungry during the past 12 months. This compares to 9% of King County residents on average.
- Households with children in South King County are far more likely to experience food hardship than those without children. (18% compared to 8%.)
- At 27.7 per 1,000, West Kent had one of the highest teen birth rates in King County. All neighborhoods and cities with teen birth rates greater than the King County average were found in South King County and South Seattle. These areas had teen birth rates 1.5 to almost 3 times higher than the county average.

South King County and the City of Kent face challenges of increasing poverty, decreasing affordability of housing, and a decrease in family wage jobs. Strengthening community health and vitality for the City must be built on a foundation of living wages, affordable housing, and access to quality child care and health care.



## KEY TRENDS AND ISSUES

Factors highlighted above demonstrate that Kent is experiencing a major growth in low-income households and families, including large families. Housing cost in part fuels this growth and, although housing in Kent is less expensive than other parts of King County, it is still not affordable for many (defined as a threshold of 30% of income). Kent has a large inventory of old housing, both apartments and single-family homes. This housing stock is in need of upkeep and improvements in order to maintain an appropriate level of livability. Low-income households are too often crowded in older apartments not intended for their family size, and home ownership opportunities are limited for working families.

**Jobs:** Kent is home to more than 60,000 jobs and includes a diverse mix of industrial jobs in manufacturing, wholesale, transportation and utilities, as well as service jobs. Connecting local residents to these local workforce opportunities can provide employers with a reliable labor pool, and also reduce transportation and commute challenges for workers.

**Support for working poor:** Most of our human service system is geared to a traditional 9-to-5 schedule. Access to services is therefore much more difficult for the working poor and transportation challenges compound this issue. Creative strategies are needed to provide services during nontraditional hours in neighborhood settings.

**Focus on early learning:** There is broad and in-depth focus currently on early childhood development and support for pre-K school readiness. Developmentally appropriate strategies designed to provide early childhood opportunities should be encouraged in the community.

**Youth services and activities:** Additional activities are needed that appeal to the diversity of Kent's youth. Particularly needed for teens are jobs, training programs, internship opportunities, and connections that can lead to employment. More neighborhood-based resources are needed for youth, as well as creative ways in which they can express their varied cultures and interests.

**Seniors:** While seniors are living longer, federal support systems such as Medicare/Medicaid, retirement and pension funds, and other support systems, are reducing benefits. We anticipate the numbers of seniors will continue to grow and support services, including transportation assistance, medical services, home-based services, will be essential.

**Increasing Diversity:** The City of Kent's rich diversity is expected to continue to grow in the coming years, as it has in the past decade. In addition to the King County southward migration of low-income individuals due to housing costs, the Puget Sound region is a major relocation site for immigrants and refugees. Washington State is also the second largest state in the nation for secondary migration (immigrants relocating here from their first place of U. S. settlement).

**Health and Mental Health:** 18% of South King County residents are uninsured. This large percentage of uninsured individuals creates strains on many different systems in our society including: health care systems, employment, schools and financial stability. The federal Affordable Care Act (Health Care Reform) was passed in 2010 and HHS staff will continue to monitor the effects on our local nonprofits and residents. While insurers were prohibited right away from excluding children with pre-existing health conditions, adults will have to wait until 2014 to be assured of coverage.

Additionally, mental health services continue to be a vital need, for both those with diagnosed mental health conditions, and those with episodic need for mental health support.

**Regional Initiatives:** Regional efforts in South King County have strengthened steadily over the past several years, particularly for high priority issues such as housing, transportation and human services. Low-income people have migrated south but the proportion of public funds has not followed. The call to rectify this imbalance is intensifying, while disinvestment in human services by King County government requires regional approaches. A successful campaign to move more resources to South King County would benefit each city in the area.

**Building on Kent Assets:** The City of Kent is a leader in its commitment to human services. Its' longstanding commitment through dedicating funding for human services and its' leadership in prudent grant making and human services oversight are just a few examples.

**Higher Education:** Kent has several high quality community colleges in the area (Green River Community College, Highline Community College, and Renton Technical College) which provide a range of education and training opportunities accessible to low-income adults and job seekers. For example: Adult Basic Education (ABE), General Equivalency Diploma (GED) completion and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes are offered in several Kent community locations by Renton Technical College, including the Alliance Center in downtown Kent. Green River Community College's campus at Kent Station offers credit classes, professional education, job skills training, no-cost small business counseling and continuing education in business, computers, and technology.

**Public Schools:** The Kent School District and Federal Way School District (which serves Kent residents on the West Hill) are proactive in establishing services to support education of their diverse student population. They provide services for English Language Learners (ELL), translation and interpreter services, before and after school programs, and a number of specialized programs.. However, the need far exceeds the capacity and school-sponsored assistance is focused on student achievement. Collaborations, communication and partnerships with nonprofits, City-funded programs, City initiatives and other community partners are essential to adequately assist students and their families. School buildings and facilities are important neighborhood assets for a wide range of community endeavors.

**Active Faith-based communities:** Kent faith-based institutions are very active in a wide range of services, including food and emergency assistance, mentoring, tutoring, family support, and senior assistance. Since the beginning of the recession in 2007, the faith community in Kent has made great strides building partnerships and working together to help residents in need and support our community's safety net. Several churches partnered to provide the severe weather shelter and for the first time in 2012 offered a women's winter shelter. The faith community continues to provide support to the HOME homeless men's shelter as well, providing volunteers, church space and meals.

## City's Role in Human Services

The City of Kent provides leadership in human services as planner, facilitator, educator and funder. The City plans for human service needs by assessing the current needs of the community, as well as anticipating future needs. The City facilitates and convenes community partnerships to address needs. The City educates others on the resources available and the value of these services. Kent funds programs through both General Fund dollars and Federal Community Development Block Grant dollars to support and enhance existing services, as well as to address emergent needs.

**Build a Healthy Community - Support Citywide Strategic Priorities:** The City of Kent Human Services Division fulfills its roles and functions, including providing leadership and being a collaborative partner, with one overall aim: to Build a Healthy Community. As a division within the City focused on the most vulnerable populations, Human Services will support the City's strategic plan and collaborate with other city departments and initiatives to ensure the greatest benefit for low income and vulnerable residents.

Housing & Human Services, a division of Kent's Parks, Recreation & Community Services Department, is responsible for human services planning at both the regional and local levels, facilitating human services activities and allocating funding through the Human Services Commission. Housing & Human Services also operates the City's Home Repair program funded entirely by Federal Community Development Block Grant money.

Several Kent departments are involved in providing human service programs and assistance. The Parks, Recreation & Community Services Department provides a variety of education, recreation, prevention and intervention services for children, youth, seniors, and people with disabilities. The Police Department and Regional Fire Authority regularly assist the community with a broad range of human services, from locating social services to providing useful training to citizens. The Police Department administers a successful volunteer homebound visitation and check-in program, and coordinates the annual Game of Life Youth Conference. The Regional Fire Authority provides the FDCares program, a growing community assistance program that is based in the arena of solving issues for people before an emergency takes place.

### **Coordination with Other Planning/Implementation Efforts**

The City of Kent's desire to build a healthy community requires participation from all facets of the community. Engaging other city departments/divisions,

governmental agencies, community businesses, and organizations in planning and implementation efforts is an ongoing focus area for HHS.

The following lists organizations that are either currently involved or that will be engaged in the future. Areas of work in which coordination could create new service opportunities, greater efficiencies or improved service to the community will be evaluated on an ongoing basis.

### **Community**

- Community Based Nonprofit Agencies
- United Way of King County
- Committee To End Homelessness
- South King Council of Human Services
- Chamber of Commerce
- Comcast Cable
- Kent Downtown Partnership
- Service Clubs
- Faith Community
- Neighborhood Home Owners Associations

### **Partnerships with other City Departments**

- Economic and Community Development
  - Economic Development
  - Code Enforcement
  - Planning Services
  - Building Services
- Municipal Court
- Probation
- Legal
- Mayor's Office
  - Neighborhoods
- Parks, Recreation & Community Services
  - Senior Center
  - Cultural Arts
  - Resource Center
  - Planning and Development
  - Recreation
- Public Works
  - Transportation
- Police
- Customer Services
- Economic Development

## **Other Governmental Agencies**

- Regional Fire Authority  
FDCares
- King County Library – Kent branch
- Public Health of Seattle-King County
- Local Schools
- Department of Social & Health Services – Kent Community Services Office
- Washington State Department of Community, Trade & Economic Development
- Puget Sound Educational Service District
- King County
- Community Colleges
- King County Housing Authority
- Regional Justice Center

## **Conclusion**

The City of Kent has an opportunity to build a healthy community in the coming decades, with adequate investment now in human services and a concerted effort with City Departments and partners to create the conditions for success for the community, families and individuals in Kent.

The priorities and focus areas in this Six-Year Master Plan can be used as a compass to focus attention and resources for positive outcomes. With two-year funding allocations, the City can specify community investments to meet the greatest need and build on strengths and assets. Over time, it is the hope that these strategies will build a momentum of community collaboration and partnership that enhances the results of City efforts and builds the foundation for a healthy, diverse community that supports the contributions of all its residents.

## **KEY COMMUNITY INITIATIVES TO WATCH**

### **Innovation in Action**

#### **Human Services Funders Collaborative/Share1App**

The vision for share1app began more than a decade ago. Human service agencies' staffers were applying to so many different municipalities (mailing or hand-delivering their applications to several city halls on varying due dates). Each city had different application forms and different reporting forms. Municipal funding staffers knew their city was funding the same human service agencies and programs as other cities, and that the cities had common objectives with respect to their applications and reporting. With so many different processes intended to accomplish the same thing, human service agencies and municipalities began to push for more coordination.

Over the years, the various cities across East, North, and South King County worked together and developed increasingly coordinated processes, including joint application processes and joint contract management. They began to align their application questions and reporting criteria. By 2010, 17 cities across East, North, and South King County came together in a cooperative effort called the Human Services Funding Collaborative (HSFC).

That year, HSFC used one common application website to receive requests for funding. The 17 participating cities received over 1,000 funding requests contained in 250 program applications submitted by 130 agencies. Two years later, with a new common application website, the 18 participating cities received over 900 funding requests contained in 370 program applications submitted by 160 agencies. If an agency was applying for one program to 10 of the cities, the agency did not have to write 10 applications. They wrote one application to be seen by the 10 cities. If an agency was applying for four programs to 10 cities, the agency did not have to write 40 applications. They wrote four applications to be seen by the 10 cities.

The use of share1app is now expanding to performance reporting. Instead of completing a different quarterly performance report for each city, agency program staffers will now use one report form in share1app to be seen by all the cities. If an agency has to report on four programs to 10 cities, they do not have to fill out 40 forms each quarter. That agency will fill out one form out per program, or four forms. The cities are now also joining together in contract management and monitoring, to minimize the disruptions that can be caused by multiple municipal site audits.

Share1app and these continuing coordination efforts are best regarded as steps toward continued process improvement. Share1app reduces redundant activities across the various municipalities, and in turn will reduce redundant activities as human service agencies work with these municipal funders. While any change comes with periods of transition and learning, these changes are opportunities to continually reduce the redundancies and progressively move efforts to activities such as direct services to clients.

### **iGrad Partnership**

The Kent School District and Green River Community College partnered to create iGrad, a program aimed at helping students who dropped out earn a high school diploma, college credentials or career skills. iGrad is short for Individualized Graduation and Degree program and is located on the East Hill of Kent. The program relies on a more personalized and supportive approach to helping students succeed. Participating students can choose from four options: Kent School District high school diploma; Washington State high school diploma; GED; and associate's degree or certificate. All four choices are intended to help students come back into education and advance career prospects. The program was the first to be formally approved to implement legislation called the Youth Re-Engagement Act, House Bill 1418 passed in 2010, which created a statewide dropout retrieval system with a single regulatory framework.

### **Regional Collaboration**

#### **Community Center for Education Results (CCER) Road Map Project**

The Road Map Project is supported by the Community Center for Education Results (CCER), a nonprofit organization. The Road Map Project is a community-wide effort aimed at improving education to drive dramatic improvement in student achievement from cradle to college and career in South King County and South Seattle. Fewer than one in four of the region's high school graduates are getting a college degree or career credential despite the fact that by 2018, 67% of the jobs in the region will require it.

**The Goal:** The Road Map Project's goal is to double the number of students in South Seattle and South King County who are on track to graduate from college or earn a career credential by 2020. The collaboration is committed to closing the unacceptable achievement gaps for low-income students and children of color, and increasing achievement for all students from cradle to college and career.



**Why South King County and South Seattle?** The Road Map Project is committed to supporting King County’s areas of highest need. Too often communities of color and low income communities are marginalized and disconnected from decision-making processes that affect them. The Road Map Project includes Auburn, Federal Way, Highline, Kent, Renton, South Seattle, and Tukwila school districts, which are home to:

- 70% of King County’s low-income students
- 69% of King County’s English Language Learners (ELL) students
- 58% of King County’s students of color

The Road Map Project is neither a new program nor an attempt to compete with any of our region’s existing organizations. In December 2011, the Baseline Report was released. The Baseline Report is an in-depth look at the state of education in South King County and South Seattle—from early childhood to college graduation. The report clearly shows the need to make dramatic improvements in student learning and identifies where work is needed in order to meet the goal. It is a tool for community action. The report is available on the CCER website at [www.ccedresults.org](http://www.ccedresults.org).

**Race to the Top:** A grant application written jointly by the seven school districts won \$40 million in federal Race to the Top funds in late 2012.

The Auburn, Federal Way, Highline, Kent, Renton, Seattle and Tukwila school districts competed together as “The Road Map District Consortium.”

The King County districts’ application was among 16 winners selected out of 372 applications. Awards ranged from \$10 million to \$40 million, depending on the number of students served by the plan. The Road Map District Consortium was one of only two applicants to win the maximum award of \$40 million. The grant is \$10 million per year for four years. The Puget Sound Educational Service District (PESD) will serve as the lead agency responsible for overall project management and function as the fiscal agent. The districts will use the four-year Race to the Top grant to implement plans to help students “Start Strong,” be “STEM Strong” and “Stay Strong”. For more information visit: <http://www.roadmapproject.org/collective-action/race-to-the-top/>

## Grassroots Efforts

### **KENT EAST HILL REVITALIZATION**

This committee was formed to work on promoting and addressing issues on the East Hill and their overall mission is to facilitate the revitalization and unity of the diverse community within the East Hill. The group seeks to work to better

promote and market the East Hill businesses and area and the committee has a strong community focus.

The Kent East Hill Revitalization project aims to draw on the strengths of the Kent East Hill residents and businesses to improve and build an area that celebrates our diversity, and encourages strong local, public, and private investment. The City of Kent was awarded a \$20,000 grant from the United Way King County's New Solutions Fund to initiate the Kent East Hill Revitalization Project. The Pomegranate Center, a regional non-profit that helps people to build better communities throughout the United States, was selected as the consultant and facilitated the first step in a three phase community-driven revitalization process.

### **ENVISION MIDWAY**

Positive momentum is also coming to the West Hill via the Envision Midway project. Kent is working to revitalize the Pacific Highway Corridor into a new urban village. The recently adopted Midway Subarea Plan, Design Guidelines and code changes ensures redevelopment will compliment the future light rail coming in 2023. Kent City staff will work closely with Sound Transit over the next four years as they plan the south corridor extension.

## **Neighborhood Efforts**

### **NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAM**

Kent's Neighborhood Program is going strong and is filled with residents who are making Kent a great place to live. With 22 officially recognized Neighborhood Councils, the community is beginning to see the results of their beautification and community-building efforts. The Neighborhood Program was created to promote and sustain an environment that is responsive to resident involvement while building partnerships between the city and its residents. Neighborhood Councils are organized groups that work to improve communication and provide opportunities for residents to participate in the civic process.

## **Community Health**

### **Kent4Health**

The Kent4Health Committee is a group of volunteers with a common interest to encourage healthy lifestyles. Their mission is to encourage personal and community wellness through physical, mental, spiritual, and environmental activities.

Activities include: indoor walks at ShoWare Center, outdoor walks, and the Kent International Festival.

## **Community Celebrations:**

### **Kent International Festival:**

The festival provides a great platform for different cultures to gather and demonstrate their talents that they have been practicing all year. All performances are provided by local and regional studios, organizations and the Kent School District students on a volunteer basis.

### **You Me We**

A festival of free family fun that celebrates our families and agencies who work with and support youth and teen development in Kent. Prompted by being named one of the nation's "100 Best Communities for Young People" in 2011, the celebration itself was such a hit; the community insisted we do it again. For the third year in a row, You Me We, a festival of free family fun drew over 4,000 people to ShoWare Center.