

ATTACHMENT A.2

CITY OF TUKWILA

COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN

**PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE BACKGROUND
REPORT**

2015 GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT

UPDATE TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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I INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

The State of Washington's Growth Management Act (GMA) provides comprehensive guidance for land use, development and public participation throughout the state, including goals specifically for parks and recreation. Among all 14 goals, the State's goal for open space and recreation is: "Retain open space, enhance recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks and recreation facilities."

A parks and recreation element remains officially optional since the State of Washington did not provide funding to assist in developing local elements when this was added to the GMA. However, the GMA recognizes the significance of parks, recreation and open space and it is important to plan for these systems.

Tukwila recognizes the importance of parks, recreation and open space opportunities to the overall well-being of the community, and has chosen to prepare a parks, recreation and open space element for its Comprehensive Plan. Per the GMA, a jurisdiction's parks and recreation Comprehensive Plan element shall be consistent with the city's capital facilities plan. This element shall include:

- Goals and policies to guide decisions regarding facilities;
- Estimates of park and recreation demand for at least a ten-year period;
- An evaluation of facilities and service needs; and
- An evaluation of intergovernmental coordination opportunities to provide regional approaches for meeting park and recreation demand.

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element Background Report supports the state-wide goal and follows related guidance found in the Multi-County Planning Policies, King County's Countywide Planning Policies and other elements of Tukwila's Comprehensive Plan. This Report summarizes conditions facing the existing parks, recreation and open space system. It includes a description of relevant planning policies, the City's park system and a summary of key issues identified through an analysis of the existing system and feedback from the public. Together, this information forms the basis for parks, recreation and open space planning in the Comprehensive Plan's Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element.

The Background Report and Comprehensive Plan Element are largely based on community discussions that occurred during Tukwila's Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan, adopted February 2014. The PROS Plan included opportunities for public engagement throughout the planning process. This process and its creative forms of discussion encouraged involvement from a wide cross section of the city. These activities reached specific audiences, targeted and broad, and collected ideas from both involved citizens, and those who have been outside of past planning efforts. Comments from two Community Conversations meetings, held in March 2014, also provide input.

II INTEGRATION WITH OTHER PLANNING EFFORTS

This Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element supports other related planning efforts including the State's GMA, Vision 2040, King County Countywide Planning Policies and Tukwila's Capital Facilities Element.

The Growth Management Act also requires the protection of resource lands - those lands that have "long-term commercial significance" for agriculture, fisheries, timber production and mineral extraction. Since Tukwila does not have lands used by resource-based industries, goals and policies for these types of lands are intentionally absent from this chapter. Although agricultural activity was practiced until recently in the newly annexed Tukwila South area, the area is being developed for urban uses, and agricultural activity has ceased.

The Growth Management Act allows the use of non-regulatory measures to protect or enhance functions and values of critical areas. These may include public education, stewardship programs, pursuing grant opportunities, joint planning with other jurisdictions and non-profit organizations, and stream and wetland restoration activities. Tukwila has been employing all of these measures and the updated Chapter contains goals and policies addressing them.

Growth Management Act

The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires parks and open space Comprehensive Plan elements to include estimates of park and recreation demand for at least a ten-year period based on adopted levels of service and population growth. Tukwila's Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan, is the primary background source for the Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) element of the Comprehensive Plan. By adopting the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan (PROS) Plan, the City assesses recreation demand through an analysis of access to park sites amenities and services throughout the system. Those areas that lack access to the specified facility or feature within the desired distance are considered to have a gap in service. This analysis is based on a typical walking or biking distance to reach parks, generally a ¼- to ½-mile distance or a five to ten minute travel time.

Vision 2040 (Multi-County Planning Policies) and King County County-wide Planning Policies

Vision 2040 (Multi-County Planning Policies) articulates the growth strategy for the Puget Sound region. This direction is reflected King County's Countywide Planning Policies which, in turn, frame how the comprehensive plans of the County, and all cities and towns within the County, will be developed and coordinated. Policies related to parks, recreation and open space are presented below and inform the overall direction of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element.

- The quality of the natural environment in King County is restored and protected for future generations.
- The Urban Growth Area accommodates growth consistent with the Regional Growth Strategy and growth targets through land use patterns and practices that create vibrant, healthy and sustainable communities.
- King County grows in a manner that reinforces and expands upon a system of existing and planned central places within which concentrated residential communities and economic activities can flourish.

- The built environment in both urban and rural settings achieves a high degree of quality design that recognizes and enhances, where appropriate, existing natural and urban settings
- The region is well served by an integrated, multi-modal transportation system that supports the regional vision for growth, efficiently moves people and goods, and is environmentally and functionally sustainable over the long term.
- A well-integrated, multi-modal transportation system transports people and goods effectively and efficiently to destinations within the region and beyond.
- County residents in both urban and rural areas have access to the public services needed in order to advance public health and safety, protect the environment, and carry out the Regional Growth Strategy.

Capital Facilities Element

A major concept of the GMA and capital facilities planning is concurrency i.e. that specific public facilities will be available when the impacts of development occur, or within ten years of development. This is achieved through standards and fees. Capital facilities for parks are reviewed, prioritized and funded through the City's regular Capital Improvement Program (CIP) process. The capital facilities policies that are addressed in the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element include:

- The design of infrastructure improvements shall include conservation of resources, such as water reuse and energy-efficient electric fixtures.
- Minimizing the costs of maintaining, operating and other life cycle costs shall be used as a criterion in the design and funding of any capital facility.
- The design and construction of capital projects shall:
 - Use best practices for a crime free environment;
 - Create high quality built places;
 - Have a strong landscape component;
 - Maximize environmental and economic benefits;
 - Minimize environmental costs; and
 - Promote public health by providing opportunities for safe and convenient daily physical activity.

III Existing System and Key Issues

The City of Tukwila's parks system inventory includes 32 parks totaling 273 acres (Table 1). The Existing System Map shows the location of all parks and recreation resources in the system, comprising developed and undeveloped park lands. (Figure 1)

Tukwila's developed parks function as either local parks or special use parks. There are also nearly 29 acres of open space lands.

- **Local Parks:** Local parks provide for a range of opportunities, such as soccer or playground play, and are generally intended to serve the surrounding neighborhood.
- **Special Use Parks:** As their name suggests, special use parks focus on a unique or singular attraction such as a water feature, garden or community center. These park types vary in size according to the amenity that they showcase.
- **Open Space:** Open spaces are parks that protect natural system benefits such as wildlife habitat and water quality. Open space sites can also provide for public use such as trail activities, education and interpretation and water access. These sites include riverfront lands, wooded areas and/or steeply sloped hillsides.

Table 1: Tukwila's Existing Park Land

	Total Parks	Total Acreage
Local Parks	10	48.1
Special Use Parks	10	196.2
Open Space	12	28.8
<i>Total</i>	32	273.1

The City currently partners with several neighboring jurisdictions, as well as public and private agencies locally and throughout the region to provide recreation opportunities for Tukwila residents. Trails, schools and recreation sites owned by other providers are part of the system and add to the number of resources available to Tukwila residents, businesses and visitors. Some features such as the Interurban Trail are a regional resource and require collaboration with King County and neighboring jurisdictions. These partnerships are critical to meeting the goals and policies of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element.

Key Issues

Several issues will impact Tukwila's park, recreation and open space system over the ten year planning horizon.

Diverse Community with Changing Needs. The Tukwila's population is constantly changing as families and individuals, including refugees and immigrants from all over the world, enter the United States, begin their new lives in Tukwila, and join existing residents. The dynamic nature of the population brings constantly evolving interests and needs which impact the way parks are used and the types of programs that are desired. Many, especially members of the city's diverse language groups, feel that the City should play a larger role in providing services in different languages and that meet varied cultural needs. The language barrier has limited some residents in using parks and programs, or from knowing what resources are available.

Population Growth

Tukwila's population has experienced an average annual growth rate of 0.9% between years 2000 and 2011. This is similar to the county-wide average but only about one-third the rate of growth in the nearby jurisdictions of Renton, Kent and Burien. The city's Strategic Plan projects a future population of nearly 23,000 by 2030, based on a 1.1% average annual growth rate. Per King County's adopted Growth Targets, Tukwila and its proposed annexation area shall provide zoned capacity for 5,300 net new housing units by 2031.

Lack of Access to Local Parks and Recreation Areas. Based on public feedback, having nearby and convenient parks and recreation opportunities (between a ¼- to ½-mile distance) that are connected to homes, schools and other destinations is one of the community's most important needs. However, several locations in the city are farther from ¼ to ½-mile from local parks and schools.

Poor connectivity Poor street connectivity between east and west Tukwila may contribute to Tukwila's lower than average bike and walking commuter rate. Many Tukwila's parks, as well as the Tukwila

community center, are located on the east side of the Green River, or east of I-5. Due to the poor connectivity, these parks are somewhat inaccessible for residents on the west side of the city. Currently, South 144th Street provides the primary access to link the two sides of the city. The Southcenter Subarea Plan calls for breaking up lengthy blocks, and retrofitting streets to create more connected and walkable neighborhoods, which would help this area of Tukwila

Higher poverty level

Tukwila residents—with a median household income of \$43,887 (US Census, 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)—earn significantly less than the King County average of \$68,778. Notably, 21.2% of families are below the poverty level. The high poverty level indicates there may be a potential need in Tukwila for the parks and recreation system and programs to play a role in providing “safety net” services. Low income families may have limited transportation choices. Therefore, the City will need to consider carefully how families in need will gain access to these services, not only through pricing policies but also in choosing locations where the services are provided.

More residents overweight or in poor health. Based on data compiled for Tukwila’s Strategic Plan, more Tukwila residents have un-met health needs or are overweight or obese than the King County average overall. Sixty-five percent of adults in the Tukwila/SeaTac area are overweight or obese and 16% have unmet medical needs.

Constrained spaces. Many of the city’s developed parks are small and built out. The open spaces are environmentally constrained and there is little land available for expanded or additional parks in or near residential neighborhoods. Some sites, such as Riverton Park and Crestview Park, have the potential to accommodate additional recreation facilities and activities, but many others do not.

Condition of open spaces. Tukwila’s open space lands are a patchwork of small and disconnected spaces found predominantly along the Green/Duwamish River. Collectively, all of these sites hold value for surface water mitigation and water quality, wildlife habitat and scenic and recreation-based benefits and there is a need to manage these spaces as an integrated system.

Lack of spaces for social gathering. Many residents come from cultures that especially value and desire open and welcoming places to gather in small or large groups for socializing and celebrating. There are currently limited areas that can accommodate large public gatherings within Tukwila’s park system.

Unaffordable and inconvenient recreational opportunities. Residents feel strongly that recreation services and programs should be more affordable. Many also feel that programs and classes should be more flexible and available at different times and formats. Many of Tukwila’s parks, as well as the Tukwila Community Center, are located on the east side of the Green River, or east of I-5. Due to the poor connectivity, these parks are somewhat inaccessible for residents on the west side of the city.

IV Future Needs

The City’s Strategic Plan projects a future population of nearly 23,000 by 2030. King County’s Growth Targets require that Tukwila provide the zoned capacity for 4,800 new households by 2031. The City is directing much of this future growth to Tukwila South, as well as redevelopment efforts in the

Southcenter/Tukwila Urban Center area. However, matching the needs of this future population will be challenging due to limited opportunities to add additional acres to the park system.

Approach

Tukwila's approach to meeting future needs is to intensify underdeveloped lands and maximize the potential of existing resources, while partnering with local and regional providers to offset demand. Some existing parks have additional capacity for new recreational facilities, or can be improved to increase use. Based on this approach, the City addresses recreation demand for the planning period through an analysis of park and recreation area access for existing and planned land uses throughout the system. Areas that lack convenient access to these places now and into the next ten years are considered to have a gap in service. The City identifies "convenient access" as the typical walking or biking distance most people are willing to travel to reach a park. This is generally a ¼- to ½-mile distance.

In addition to having access to local parks and schools and recreational programming, residents desire the following five close-to-home recreational activities: 1) walking and biking; 2) social gathering; 3) organized sports; 4) unstructured play; and 5) river access. Management and protection of open space is another need identified in this Report and the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element. The analysis used GIS and the City's street system and trail network data to simulate the path of travel for pedestrians and bicyclists. It takes into account physical barriers to access, including incomplete or disconnected street networks and the Green/Duwamish River, as well as lack of park access points to give a more realistic assessment of the park system that is based on the way people actually get to parks.

The following discussion provides an overview of needs and recreation demand over the planning period. Identified gap areas indicate the general location where demand for parks and recreation activities are greatest. Figures illustrate the general geographic location of the gap areas graphically, as well as the summary of the future system concept.

Nearby Access to Local Parks and Schools

Parks in general provide benefits to residents and visitors and contribute to overall quality of life, positively impact property values and make Tukwila more attractive for business. However, local parks and schools provide a wider range of recreation opportunities than special use parks and open spaces give, offering more comprehensive park benefits for residents.

Five locations in the city are greater than a ¼- to ½-mile service area distance to local parks and schools. These locations indicate where improved access is needed over the next ten years. (Figure 2)

- P2: Rail lines and the hillside cut off this location in the Ryan Hill neighborhood from the rest of Tukwila. The gap is close to Seattle's Kubota Garden Park—however, there are no public school sites nearby.
- P5: There are no local parks near this location in the Foster neighborhood, but Foster High School and Showalter Middle School are in close proximity and provide sports fields, courts and playgrounds. Tukwila Pool is also nearby but does not offer the types of amenities available at local parks.
- P7: Crystal Springs Park is a local park close to this McMicken location, but there is no public access to its western parcel from the west side. There are also no public schools in close proximity.

- P8: This Tukwila Hill location has a higher than average density of housing but lacks convenient access to any local parks or schools. Tukwila Park is the closest local park, but it is not within the desired ¼- to ½-mile distance. The multi-purpose fields and playground at Tukwila Elementary School are nearby, but they lack direct access from this location.
- P10: Tukwila South has potential to accommodate a range of different land uses, including residential development. There are currently no parks or schools to serve this area.

Recreational Programming

The Tukwila Community Center provides the majority of public recreation programming and support services in the city. Along with City-sponsored programs, neighboring communities, public schools, private providers and non-profits expand the number of park and recreation related benefits available to Tukwila residents.

There is a need for expanded recreation programming and services in several locations using a combination of mobile programming with classes and activities held at City-owned and school-owned locations. Environmental education, community gardening and skill-building programs can all occur within parks. In particular, the City should focus attention on the following seven focus areas. (Figure 3)

- PG1: Continue to offer programming at the Tukwila Community Center.
- PG2: Consider adding programming at Cascade View Elementary School.
- PG3: Consider partnering with Tukwila's Metropolitan Park District (MPD) to add non-aquatic programs at Tukwila Pool, and partner with schools to provide programming at school-owned property during non-school hours.
- PG4: Partner with Thorndyke Elementary School to consider adding programming during non-school hours.
- PG5: Consider offering mobile programming in nearby parks to meet the needs of this area.
- PG6: Partner with Tukwila Elementary School to consider adding programming during non-school hours.
- PG7: Demand for programming and public services in the Southcenter/Tukwila Urban Center area will continue to increase in the future as new residential growth occurs. Consider traditional place-based offerings, such as programming at a park or building, as well as alternative options such as mobile programming, to meet the needs of this area.

Walking and Biking

Walking and biking are among the most popular and desired activities in Tukwila. Tukwila's Green River Trail is the City's primary trail system, providing a north/south connection along the Green/Duwamish River. The Interurban Trail provides access to neighboring cities. Several railways and rail branches have potential for future use as trails. However, busy streets, the Green/Duwamish River, and steep slopes create safety barriers to pedestrians and cyclists in reaching parks. In addition, there are few east/west cross city connections.

There are ten areas where convenient and safe walking and biking access is needed over the planning period. (Figure 4) These broad locations are greater than ¼- to ½-mile from the Green River Trail. They also also highlight connections-- identified in the Tukwila's Walk and Roll Plan and supported by public demand-- that could greatly improve access for walking and biking connectivity.

- WB1: Connect the Tukwila Community Center from the south and west through a modification to the Allentown Bridge, or new pedestrian/bicycle bridge.
- WB2: Cross Tukwila International Boulevard to access Southgate Park.
- WB3: Cross South 144th Street and connect north/south to improve access to Cascade View Community Park.
- WB4: Connect opposite sides of State Highway 518.
- WB5: Cross I-5 and connect east/west.
- WB6: Cross I-5 near the Southcenter Mall.
- WB7: Connect the Southcenter Mall and Southcenter Transit Center with the Green River, Interurban, and Lake to Sound trails. This linkage will connect with the Sounder Commuter Rail Station and the City of Renton via a pedestrian walkway and bridge over the Green River.

Social Gathering

Opportunities and places that allow for socializing and gathering strengthen the social fabric. Many residents feel that these activities are central to a sense of community and overall feeling of well-being. Tukwila's diverse cultural groups also desire both formal and informal settings to meet, celebrate and socialize. Places and programs that offer youth sports are some of the most needed types of offerings. Five areas have a greater need for nearby places for social gathering or to hold community events. A combination of picnic areas and shelters, plazas and other supporting amenities should be added to these areas to meet this identified need. (Figure 5)

- SG1: Add picnic areas and/or an open lawn when developing Ryan Hill Park.
- SG2: Partner with Cascade View Elementary School to provide space for public gathering during non school hours.
- SG3: Create a small "parklet" or seating area along public street frontage.
- SG4: Improve access to Tukwila Elementary School to accommodate this type of activity.
- SG5: Improve access to the picnic tables and shelter at Tukwila Pond Park as called for in planned improvements to the site.

Organized Sports

Most parks do not offer the variety of organized sports facilities, such as sport fields and ball courts, required to meet the needs of nearby residents. Residents desire open and available soccer fields, with a decrease in interest for fee-based leagues. Services and programs for children and places to play nearby are especially needed in Tukwila. Residents—particularly area youth—seek affordable places to play.

There is unmet demand for sports such as indoor/outdoor soccer and basketball throughout Tukwila. With limited space to add new facilities, the City should continue to partner with organizations such as school districts and Starfire Sports for providing access to sports facilities and programs. Special attention should be placed on two focus areas that currently have the least amount of access to organized sports.

(Figure 6)

- OS1: Partner with Rainier View Elementary School to allow public use of school facilities during non school hours.
- OS2: Improve access to Tukwila Elementary School, and partner with the district for use of school facilities during non- school hours. Programming at Starfire Sports would also be convenient to this location.

Unstructured Play

There is unmet demand for unstructured play throughout the city. The City should create more places for safe, unstructured play through new features and partnerships in areas that lack convenient access.

(Figure 7)

- U1: Add a nature play area with development of Ryan Hill Park.
- U2: Partner with McMicken Heights Elementary School for use of school facilities during non school hours.
- U3: Improve access to Crystal Springs Park and add a nature play feature to this park.
- U4: Improve access to Tukwila Elementary School to allow for use of school facilities during non-school hours.

River Access

Tukwila residents have a strong connection with the Green/Duwamish River and desire expanded opportunities to access and enjoy the river. In some ways, Tukwila is defined by the Green/Duwamish River which runs the entire length of the city. Many of the City's parks and historic sites are located on or adjacent to this waterway. The Southcenter Subarea Plan calls for increased access and connectivity to the river. It calls out a bridge to connect with the Sounder Station and future park near this location on the east bank of the river.

Over the planning period, the following general locations will need greater connectivity to the river.

(Figure 8)

- R1: Work with willing property owners to identify opportunities to connect to the river in this general location west of Starfire Sports/Fort Dent Park.
- R2: Implement planned trail within this general area east of SR 99 to increase connectivity to the river.

Open Space

The State of Washington requires that all cities planning under the Growth Management Act (GMA) identify "open space corridors" useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails, and connection of critical areas (or, as defined in Tukwila, sensitive areas). The word "corridors" tends to imply a passageway, whereas

Tukwila recognizes that movement through the entire open space corridor is not necessary. The City, therefore, chooses to identify an “open space network” that consists of public and privately owned lands.

A network of open space is a concept that comes from the State’s Growth Management Act, and was developed through the Tukwila Tomorrow process that developed the 1995 Comprehensive Plan. The presence of a high quality natural system – interconnected and accessible for recreation, where appropriate – is part of the overall quality of life goal for the City of Tukwila and is a county-wide goal for all urban areas within Puget Sound.

Based on these requirements and in alignment with community priorities, an interconnected open space network is needed in Tukwila. The City should identify properties that would increase greenway and/or habitat and park land connectivity through inventory of desirable properties and through conversations with willing property owners and/or partnering with other land managers.

Of the most defining features of this network is the Green/Duwamish River. In keeping with the goals of the open space network, a separate corridor management plan is needed to enhance and protect the Green/Duwamish River Corridor. The plan should provide direction for integrating trails, street and river crossings and riverfront parks along the corridor, as well as a prototype design for public and private spaces along the river. Locations and recommendations specified in the Shoreline Master Program should be included in development of this vision.¹

Future Concept

A summary graphic shows the Parks, Recreation and Open Space system concept map, and incorporates the preceding discussion of future needs. (Figure 9)

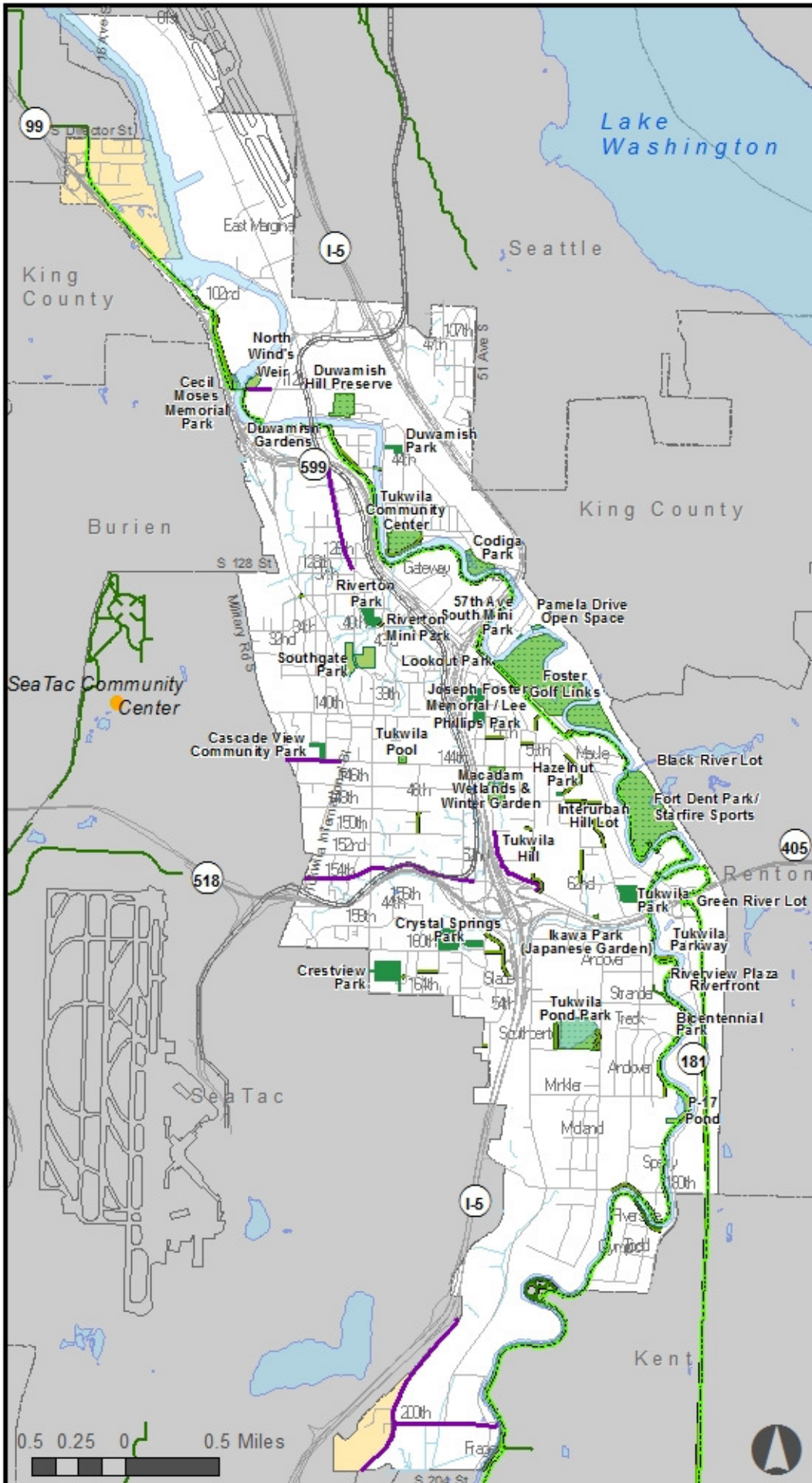
¹Identification of lands as part of the open space network does not restrict the use of the land to public recreation. Identification means that these lands have value to the network. Private use would preserve that value whether it’s a sensitive area (critical area as defined by the State) has an identified public access function, or has a significant vegetative/topographic function. In addition, land identified within the network shall have high priority for future public purchase of lands for recreation/open space.

V APPENDIX



PROS Existing System Map

Figure 1



Legend

Existing Trails

- Other City
- King County
- Tukwila
- Bike Routes

Parks

- Local Park
- Open Space
- Special Use Park

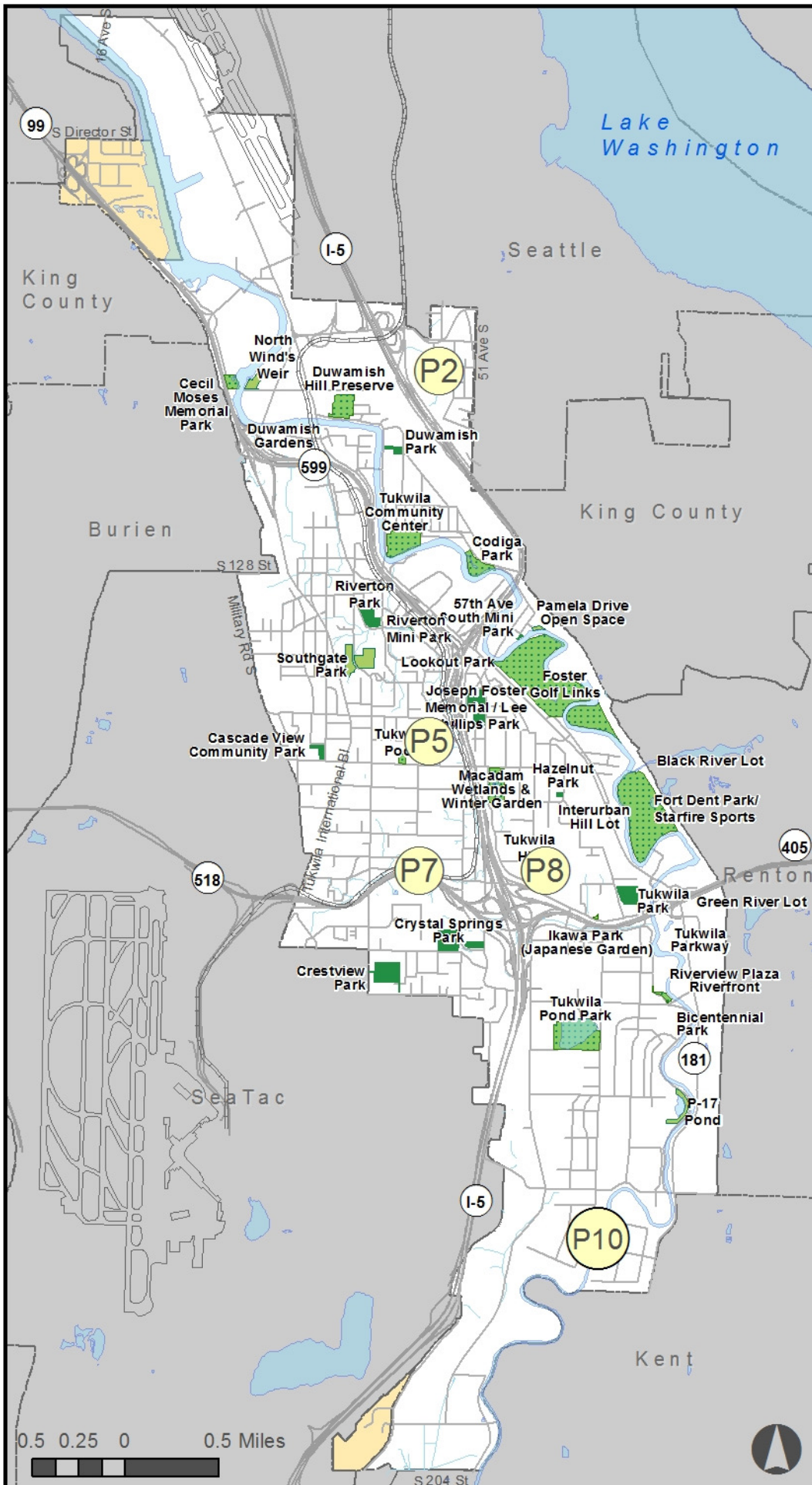
Roads

- Roads
- River / Streams
- Annexation



Access to Parks Gap Areas

Figure 2



Legend

Parks

- Local Park
- Open Space
- Special Use Park

Roads

- Roads
- River / Streams
- Annexation

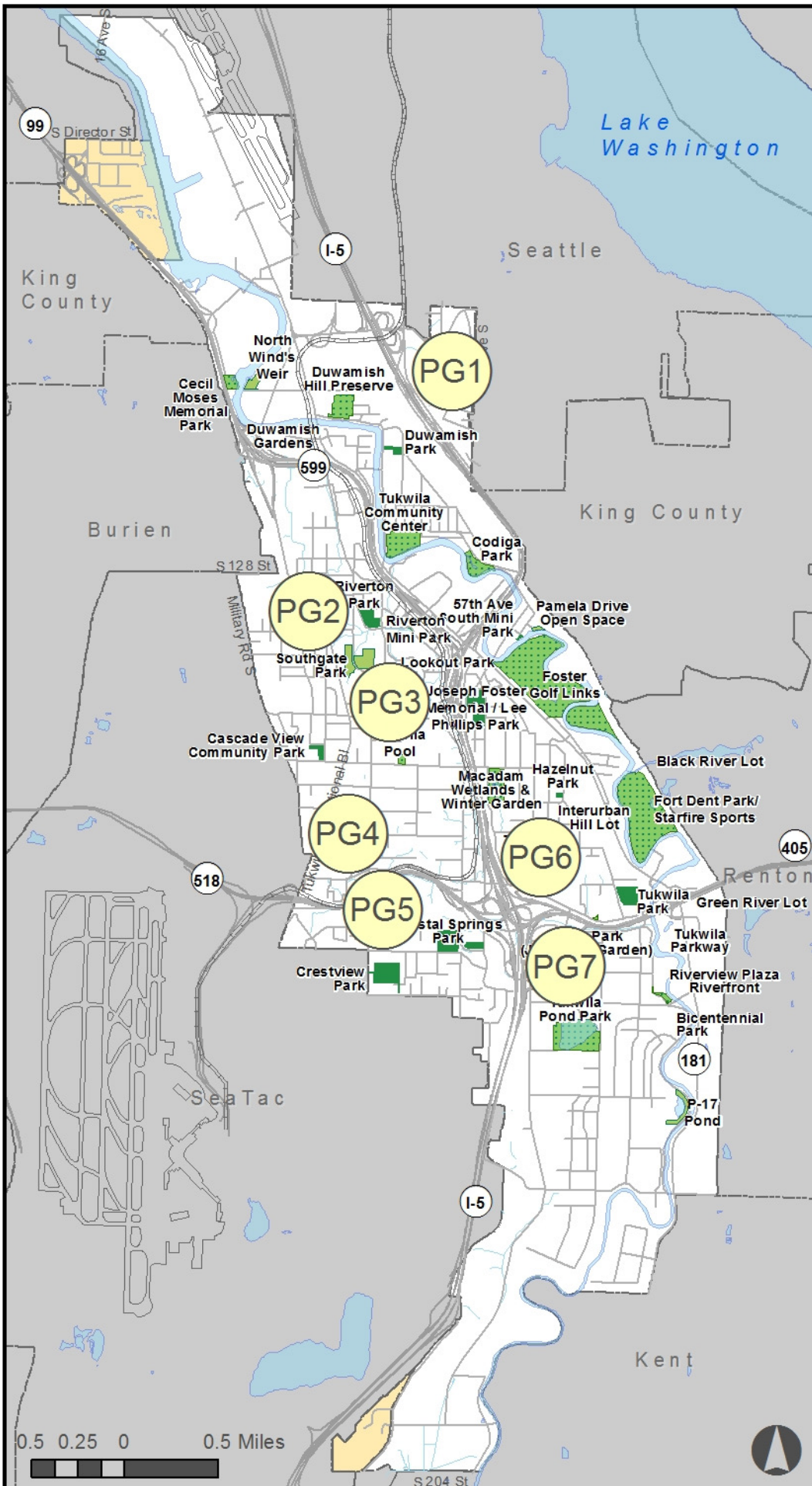
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Programming Focus Areas

Figure 3



Legend

Parks

- Local Park
- Open Space
- Special Use Park

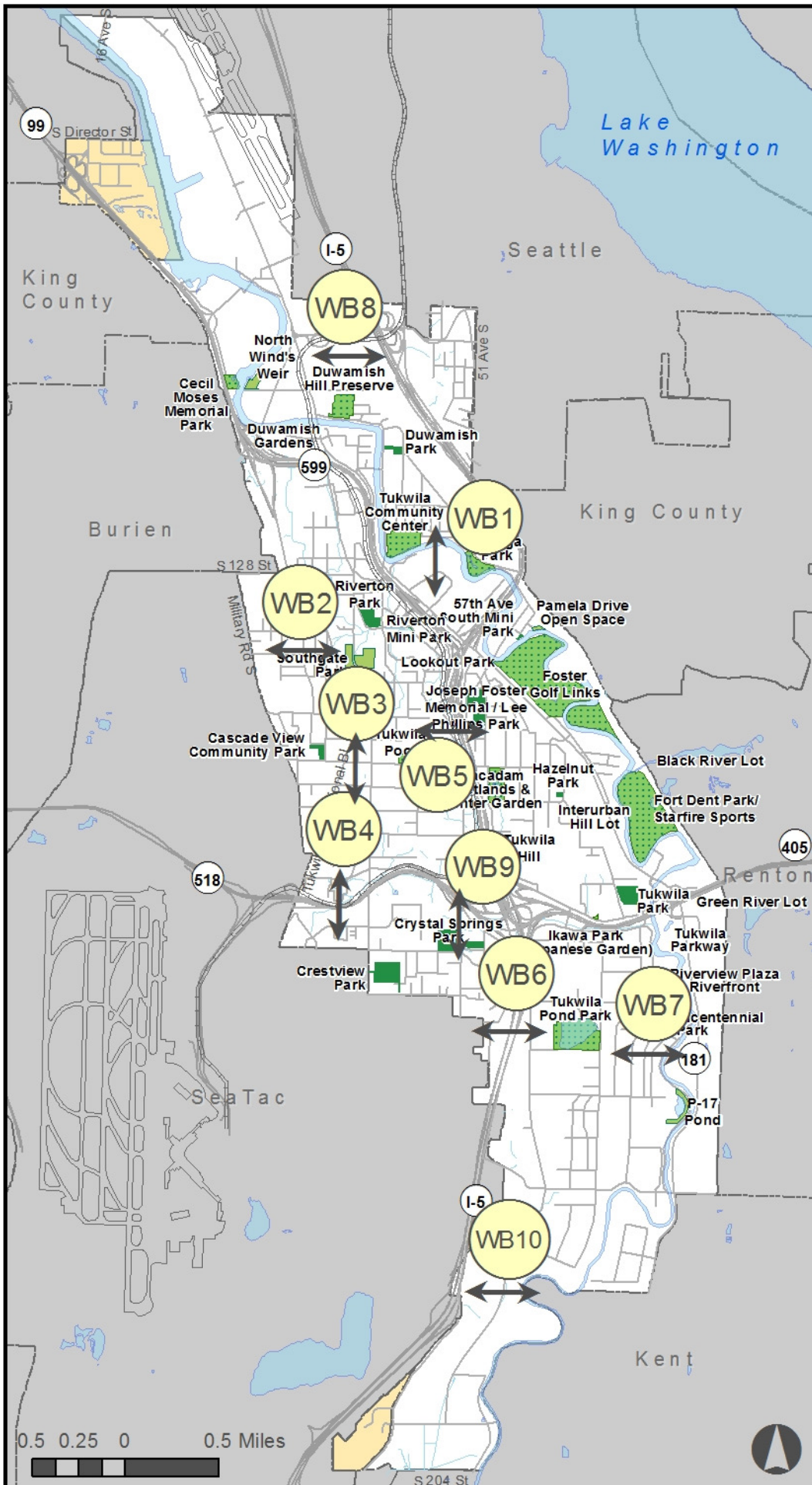
Roads

- Roads
- River / Streams
- Annexation



Walking and Biking Focus Areas

Figure 4



Legend

Parks

- Local Park
- Open Space
- Special Use Park

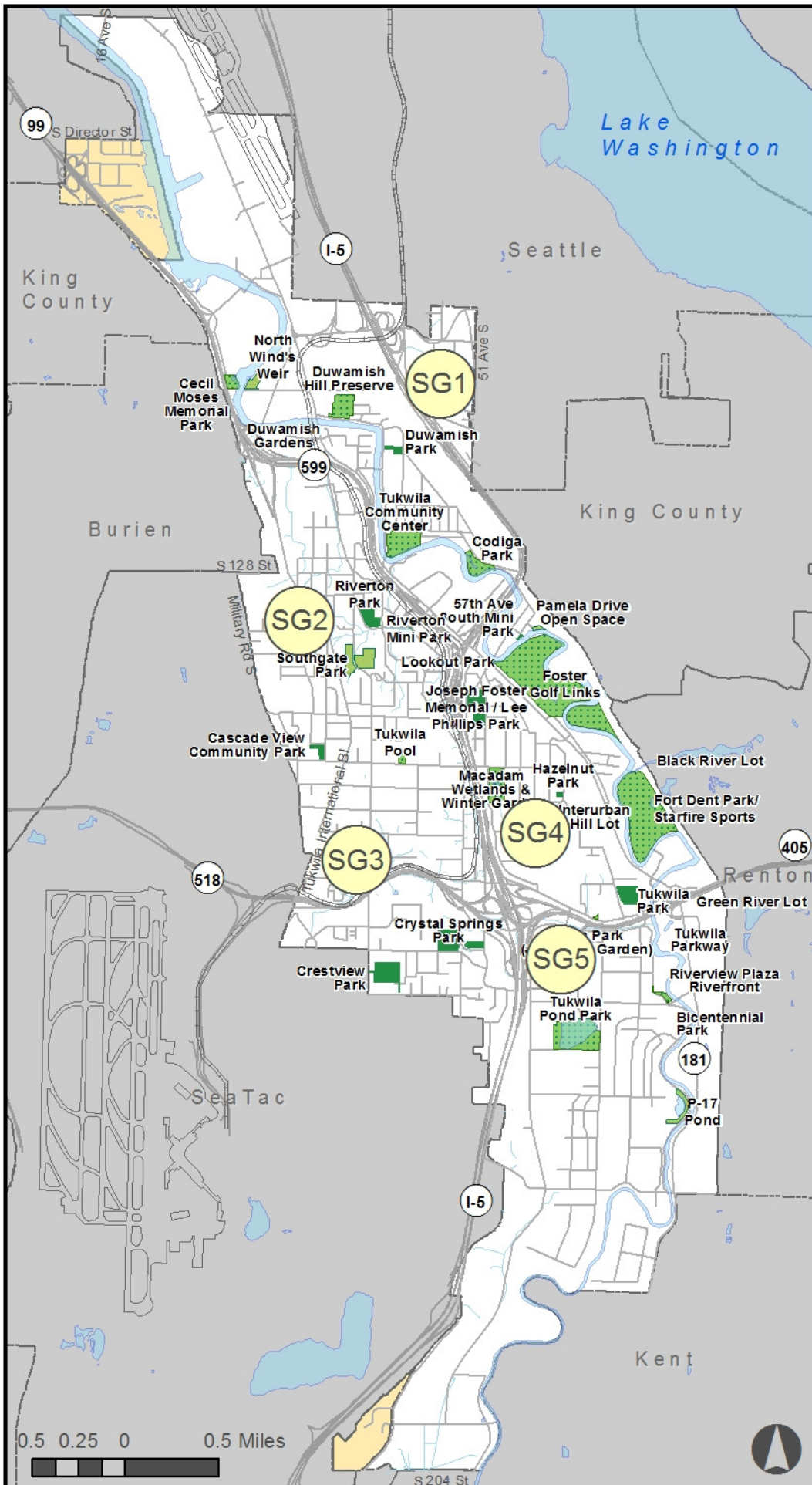
Roads

- Roads
- River / Streams
- Annexation



Social Gathering Focus Areas

Figure 5



Legend

Parks

- Local Park
- Open Space
- Special Use Park

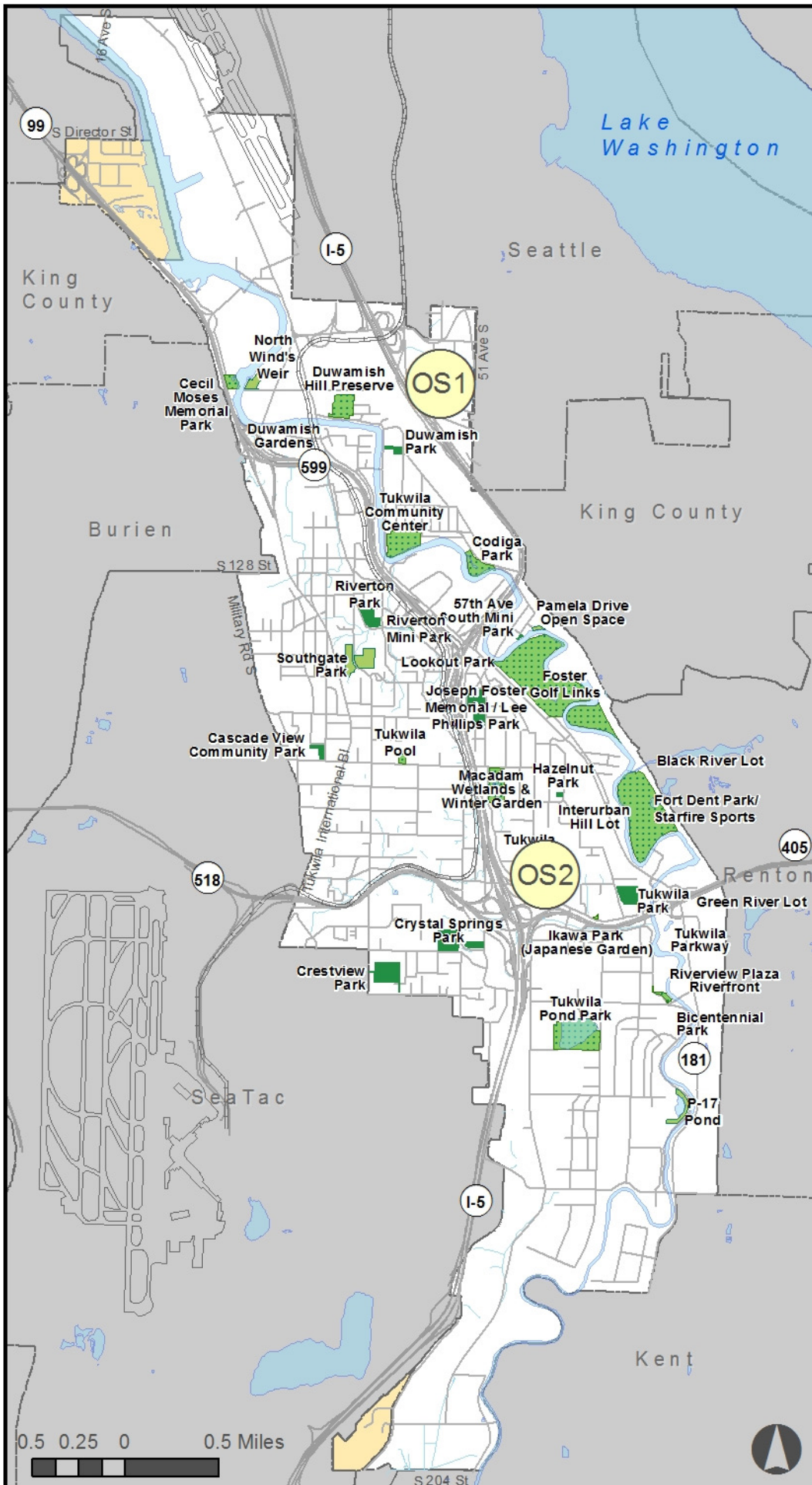
Roads

- Roads
- River / Streams
- Annexation



Organized Sports Focus Areas

Figure 6



Legend

Parks

- Local Park
- Open Space
- Special Use Park

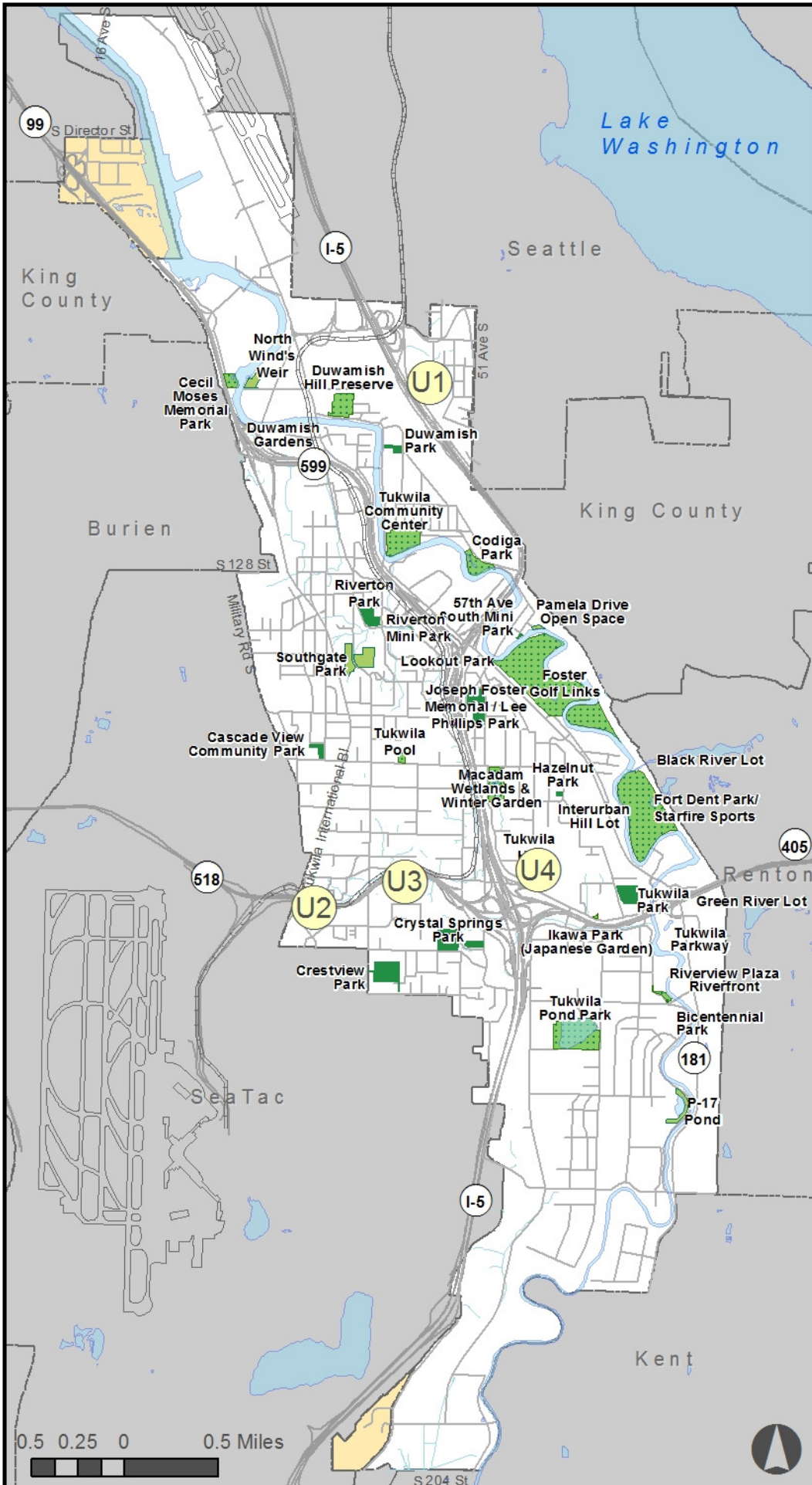
Roads

- Roads
- River / Streams
- Annexation



Unstructured Play Focus Areas

Figure 7



Legend

Parks

- Local Park
- Open Space
- Special Use Park

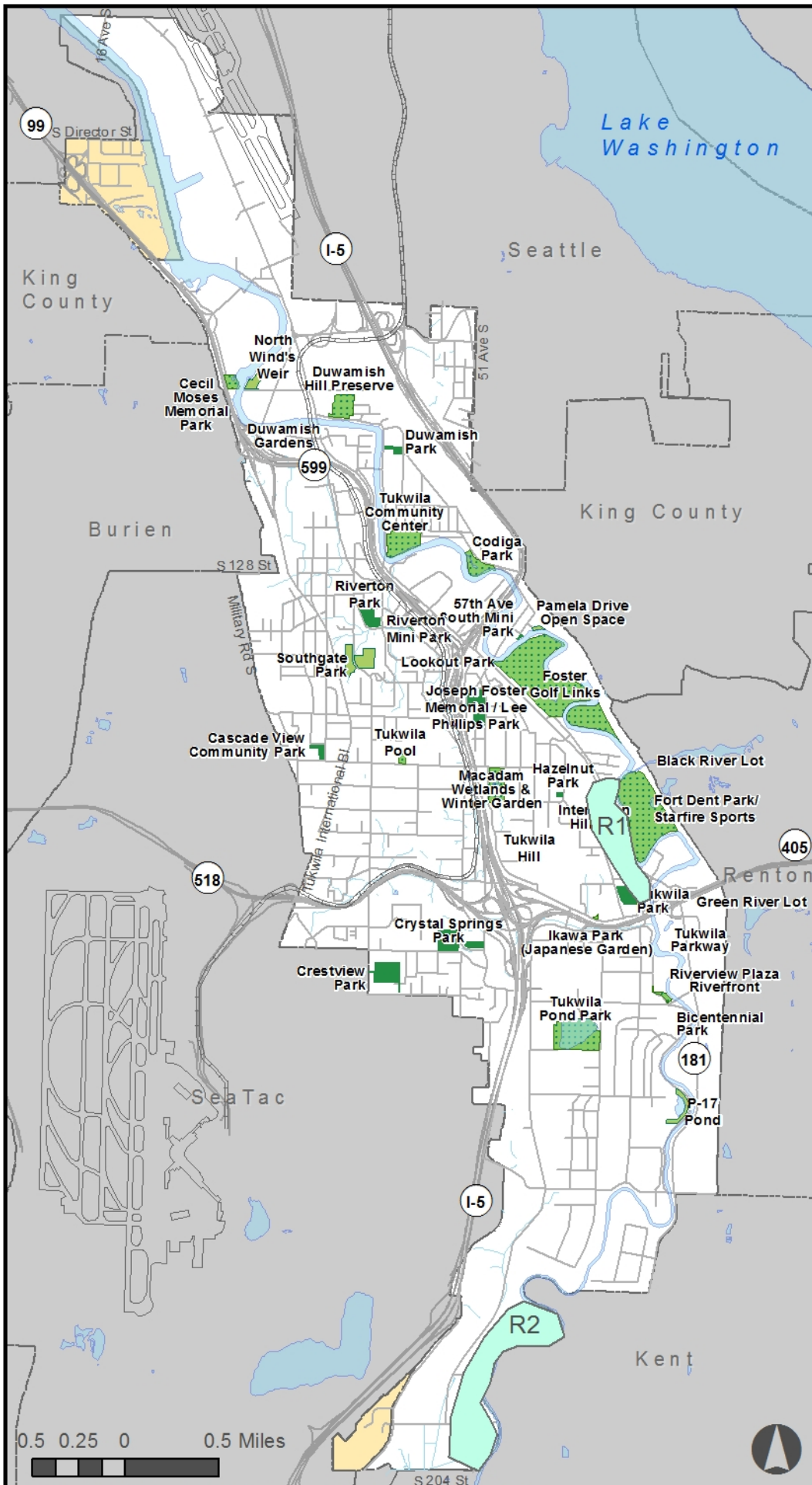
Roads

- Roads
- River / Streams
- Annexation



River Access Focus Areas

Figure 8



Legend

Parks

- Local Park
- Open Space
- Special Use Park

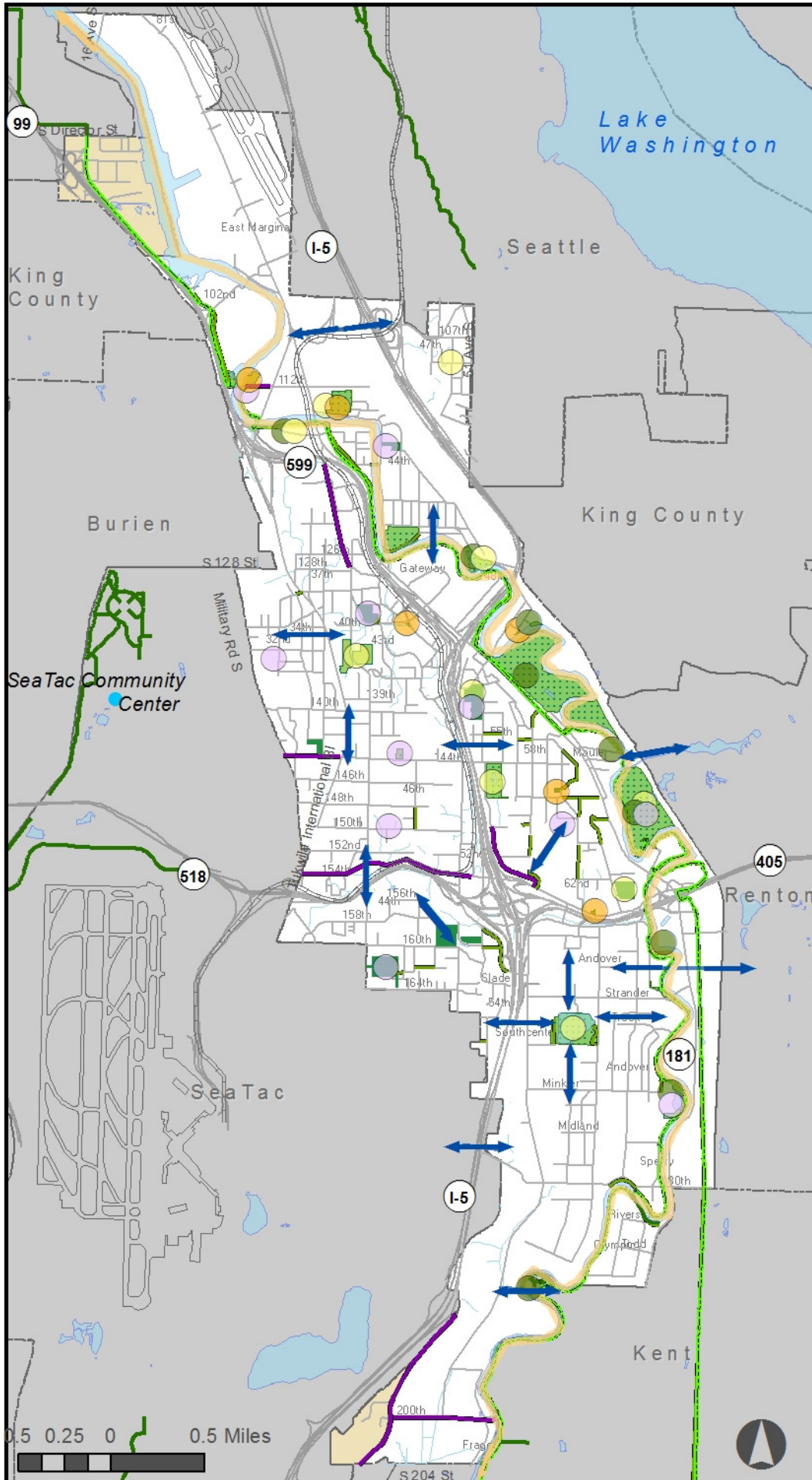
Roads

- Roads
- River / Streams
- Annexation



PROS System Concept Map

Figure 9



Legend

Project Type

- Expanded Capacity
- Partner Sites
- Riverfront Projects
- Sustainable Stewardship

Connections

- Connections
- Corridor Plan

Existing Trails

- Other City
- King County
- Tukwila
- Bike Routes

Parks

- Local Park
- Open Space
- Special Use Park

Roads

- Roads
- River / Streams
- Annexation