

# Advancing Equity in Planning through Public Health Partnerships

Presented by:

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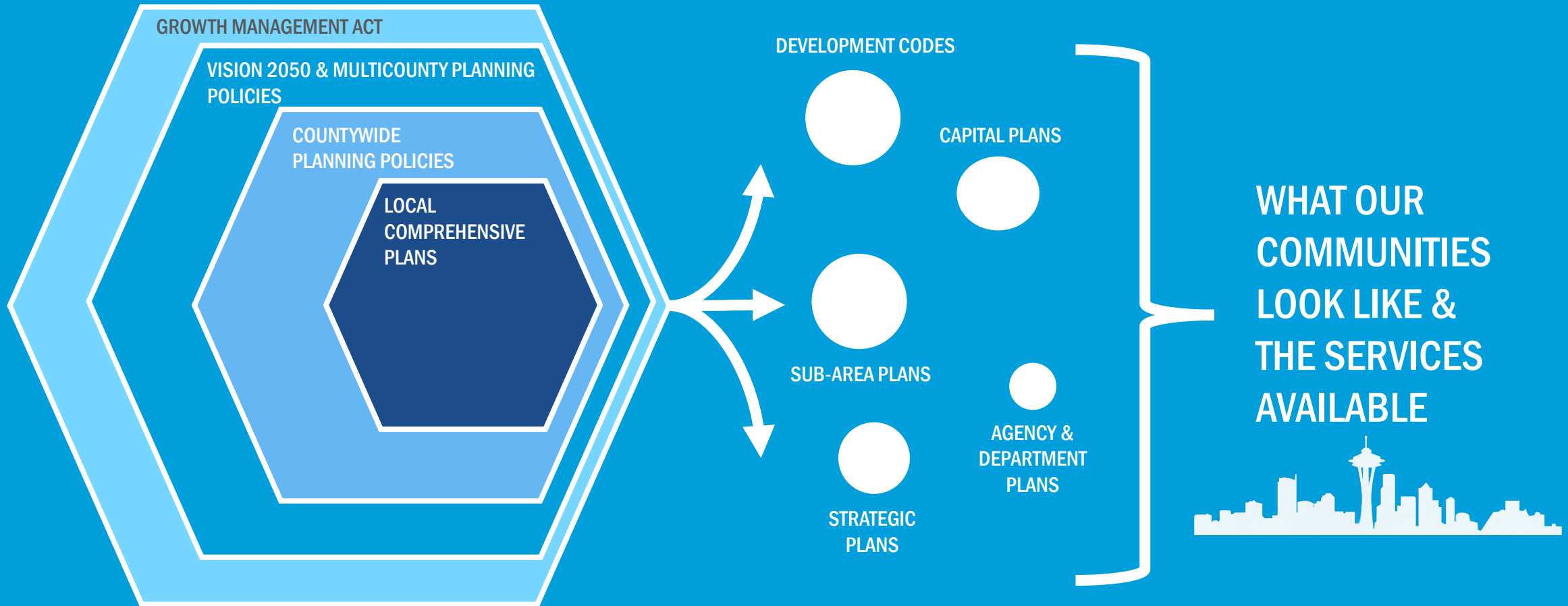
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Thursday, October 9th, 2025

# Learning Objectives

- ✓ Understand how planning decisions influence community determinants of health.
- ✓ Know how community health promotion assessments using a targeted universalism framework can support alternatives analyses.
- ✓ Understand the complexities involved in planning for growth while addressing existing community health disparities and how public health data and partnerships can help inform decision making.

# Our communities are shaped by multiple layers of planning policy.



# Planning decisions influence community health

## Community risk factors

- Pollution exposure
- Housing and business (in)stability
- Pedestrian injuries & vehicle collisions
- Violence

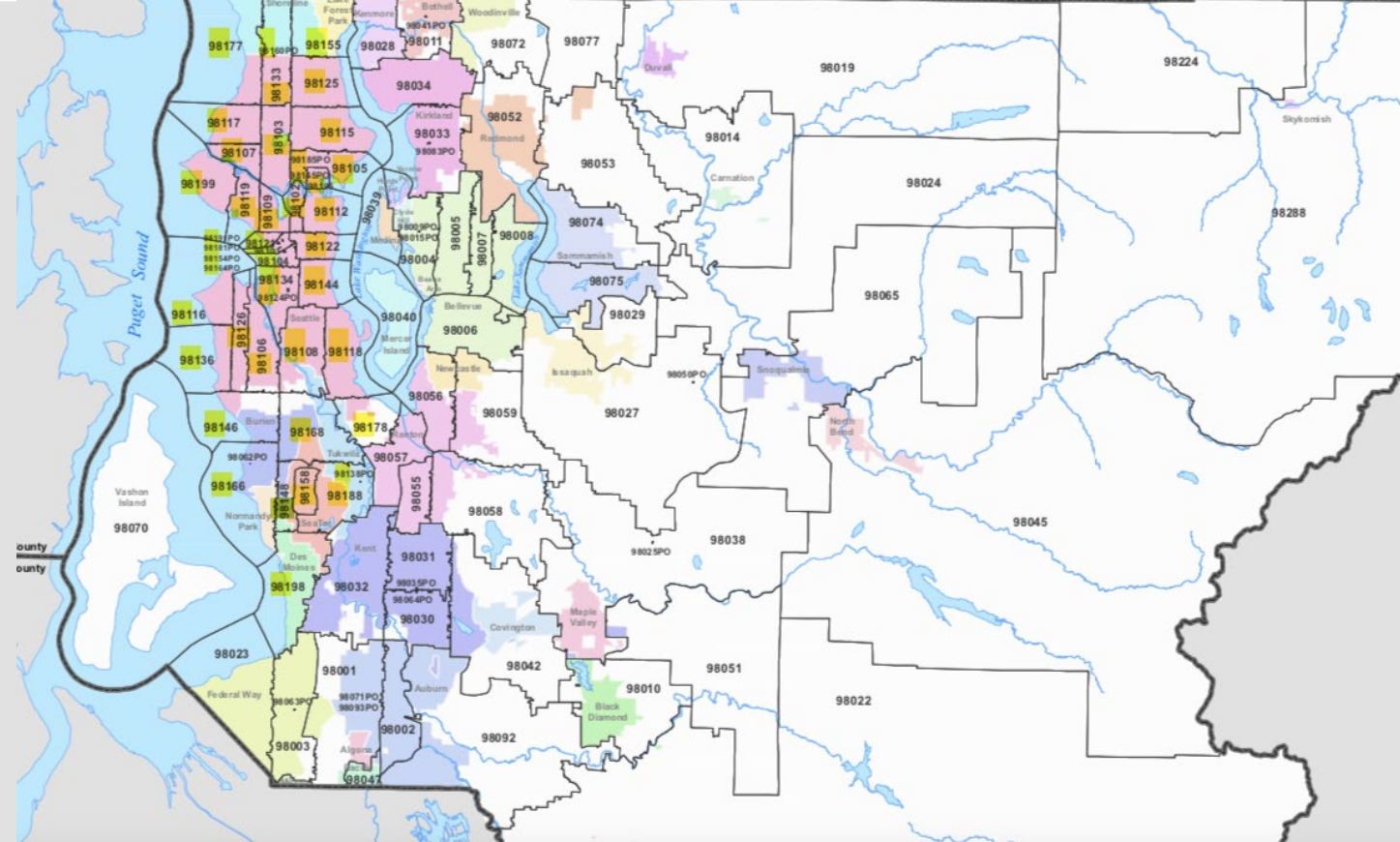
## Community protective factors

- Tree canopy cover
- Open spaces
- Transit service
- Proximity to healthy food
- Sidewalks, crosswalks & pedestrian lighting

## Health outcomes

- Life expectancy, average healthy years lived
- Rates of asthma, diabetes, COPD, heart attack, deaths, etc.

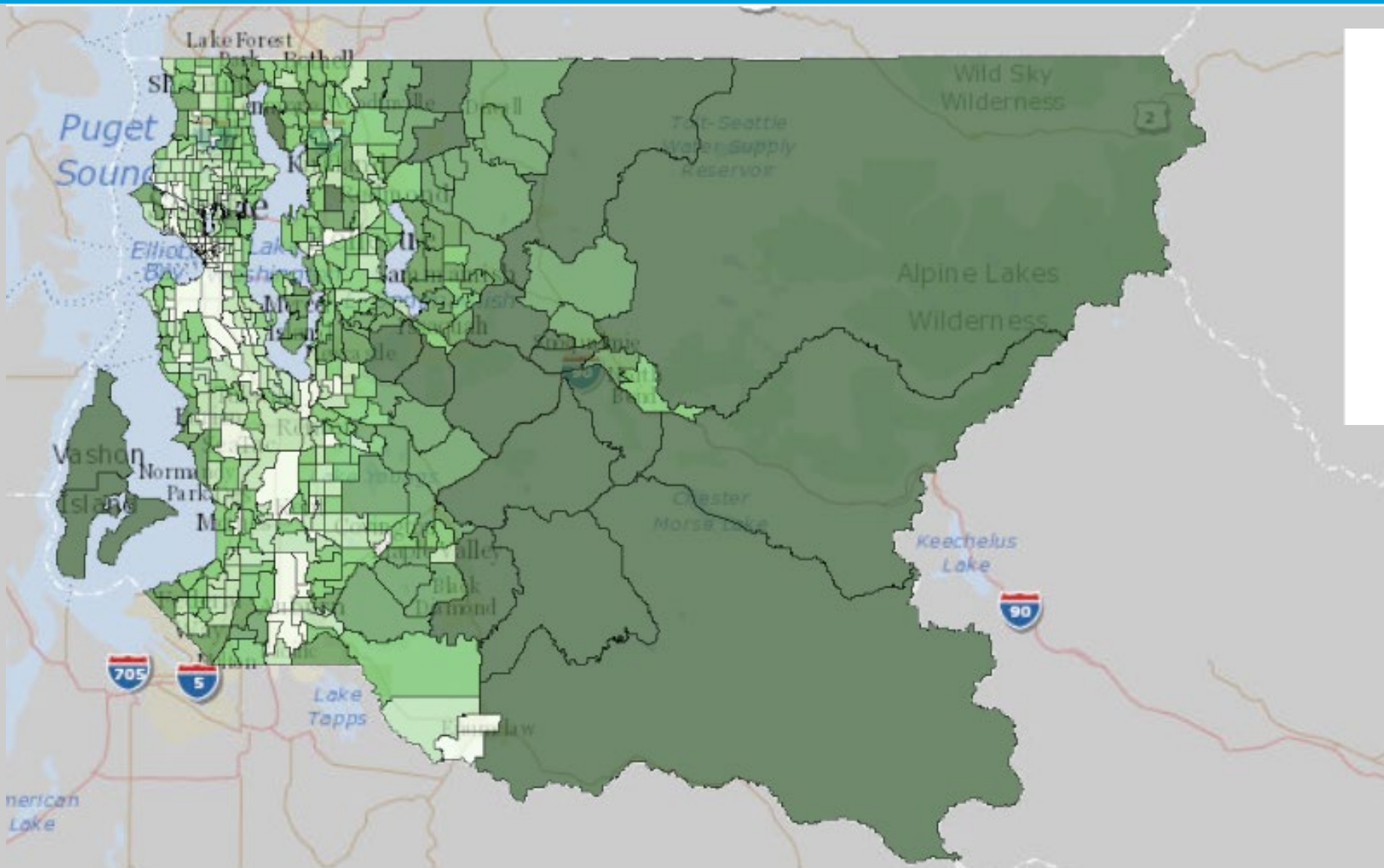




# Zip code has a greater influence over an individual's quality-and length of life than their genetic code.

Graham GN. Why Your ZIP Code Matters More Than Your Genetic Code: Promoting Healthy Outcomes from Mother to Child. *Breastfeed Med.* 2016 Oct;11:396-7. doi: 10.1089/bfm.2016.0113. Epub 2016 Aug 11. PMID: 27513279.





### Tree Canopy by tract

Percent

60.9% – 88%

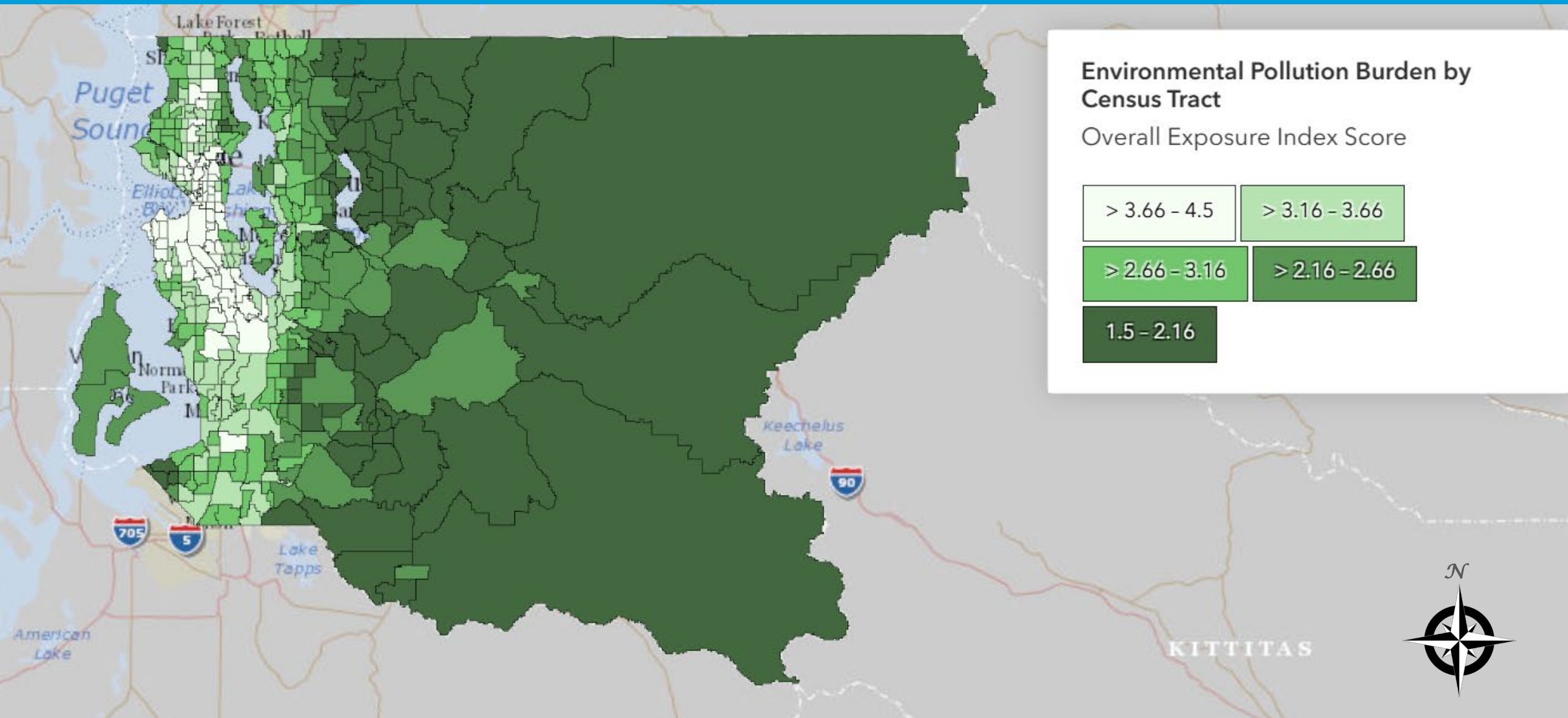
42.8% – 60.8%

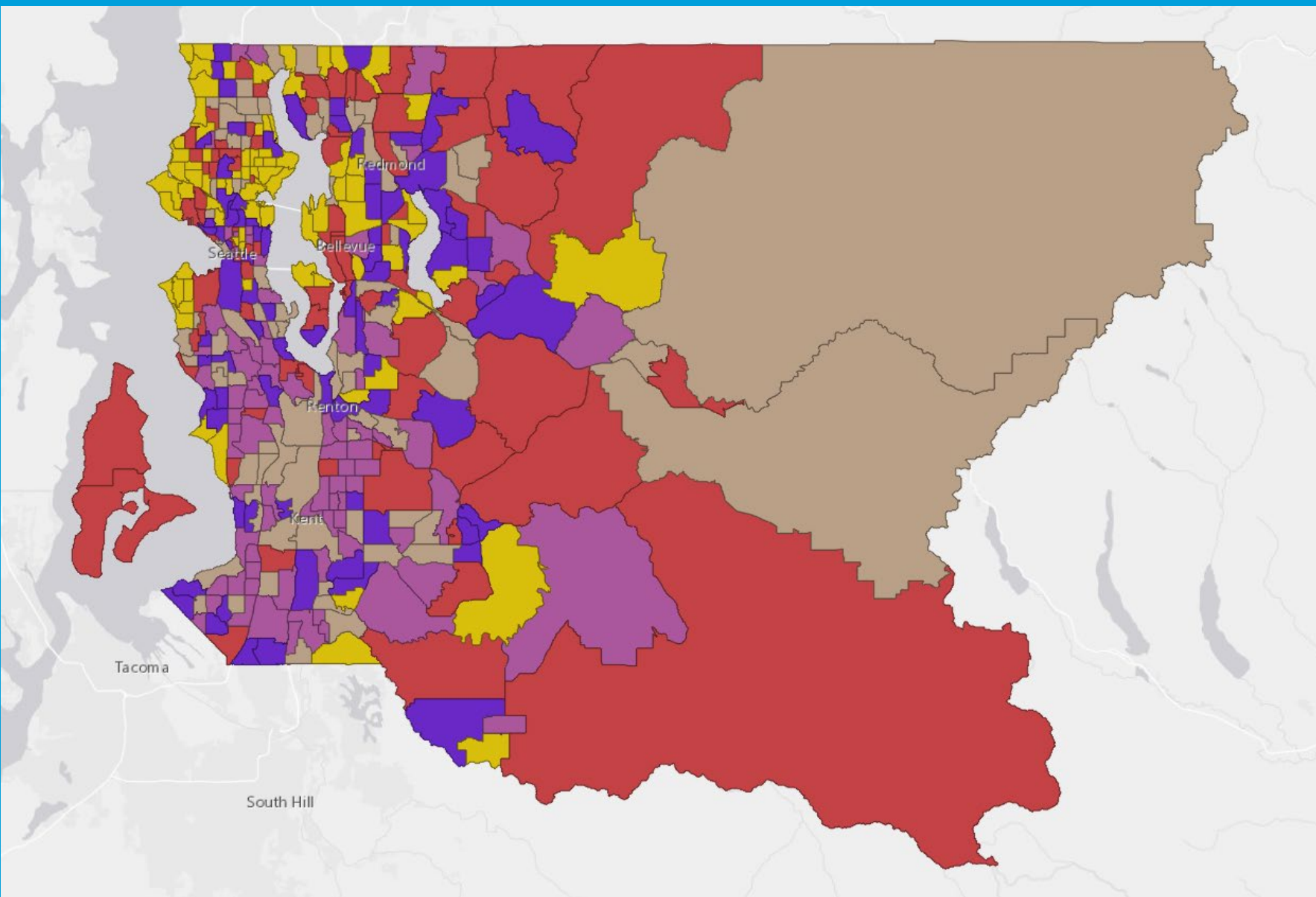
30.5% – 42.7%

19.4% – 30.4%

4% – 19.3%



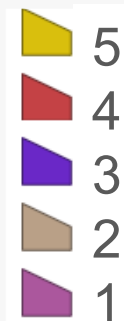




## Legend

WADOH Environmental Health Disparities Index  
Calculated for King County / wadohehdindex area

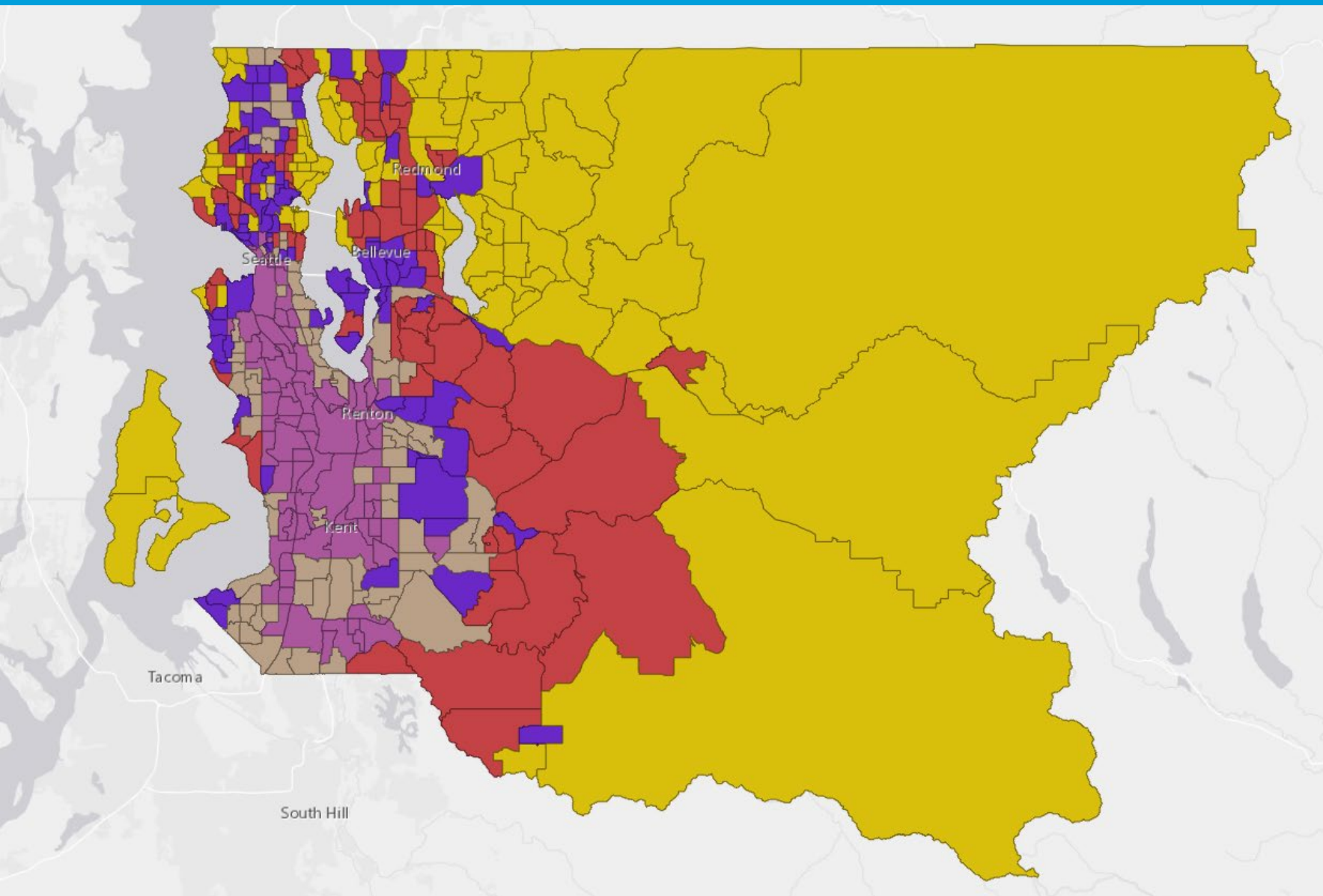
sen\_pop\_quintile



*\*higher values equal higher  
rates of sensitive populations*







Legend

WADOH Environmental Health Disparities Index  
Calculated for King County / wadohehdindex area

EHD Quintile

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Yellow      | 5 |
| Red         | 4 |
| Purple      | 3 |
| Brown       | 2 |
| Dark Purple | 1 |

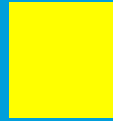
*\*Lower quintile values equal higher rates of disparities*

# Key geographic areas



## Urban Growth Area (UGA)

Housing and job growth is focused in the UGA to protect rural and resource lands and deliver efficient services, characterized by higher density development



## Urban Unincorporated Area

Portions of the UGA outside of city limits



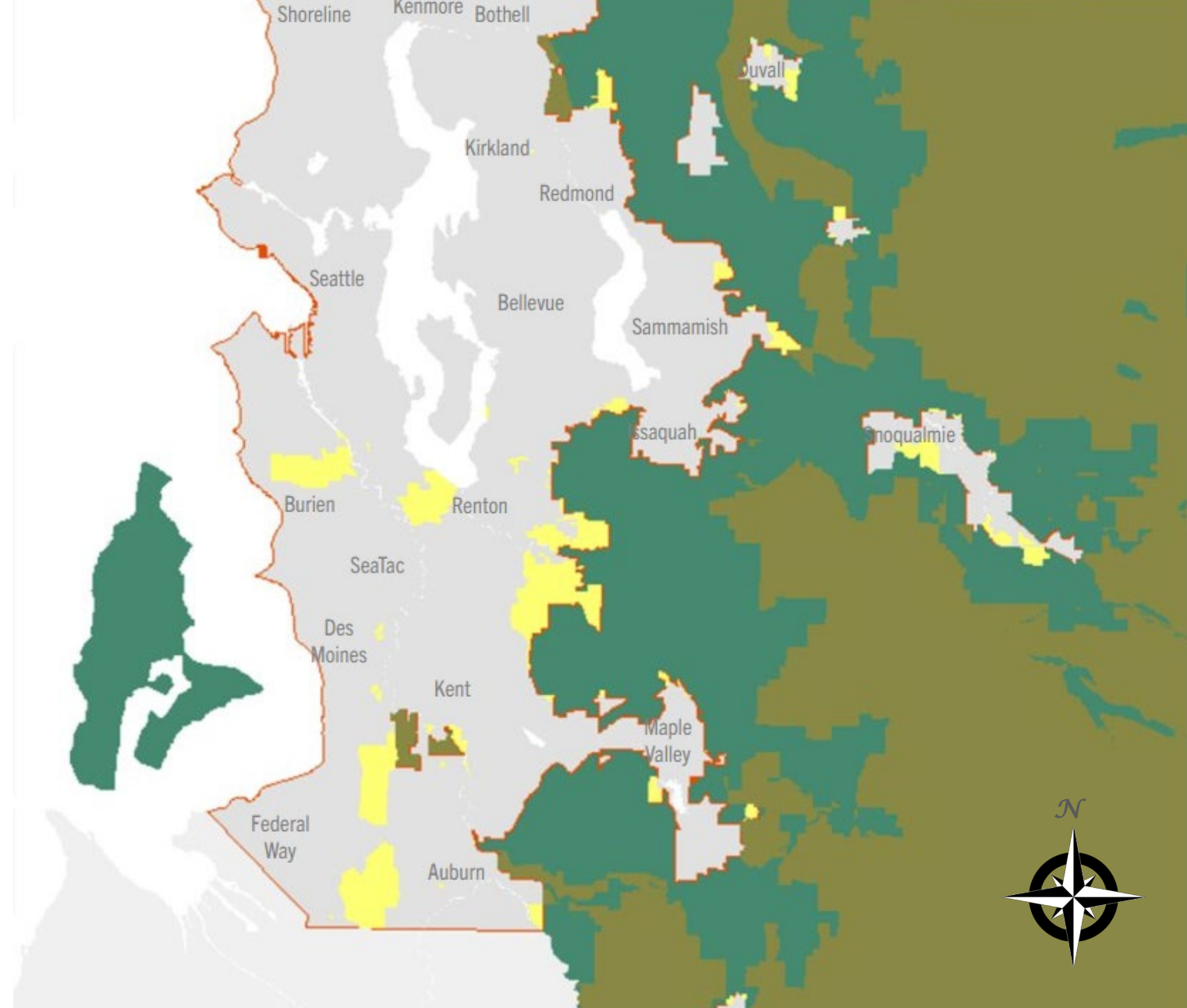
## Rural Area

Outside the UGA and Resource Lands, characterized by small-scale farming and forestry and low-density residential development

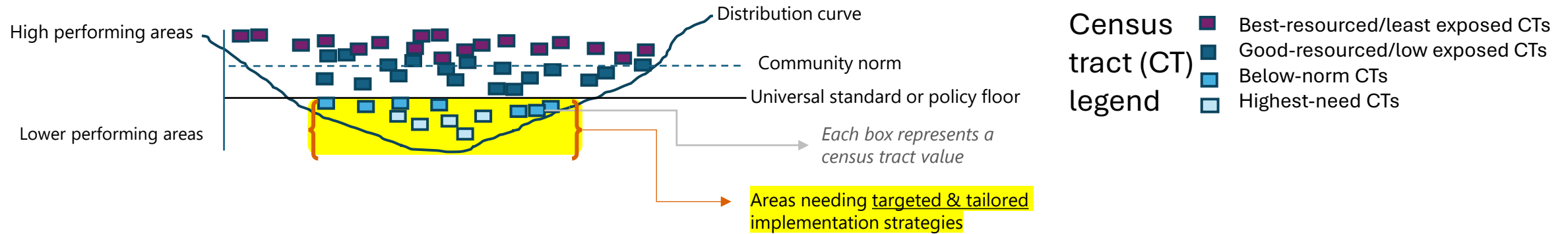


## Natural Resource Lands

Designated for agriculture, forestry, or mining



# Integrating community health assessments in planning decision making using a targeted universalism framework.



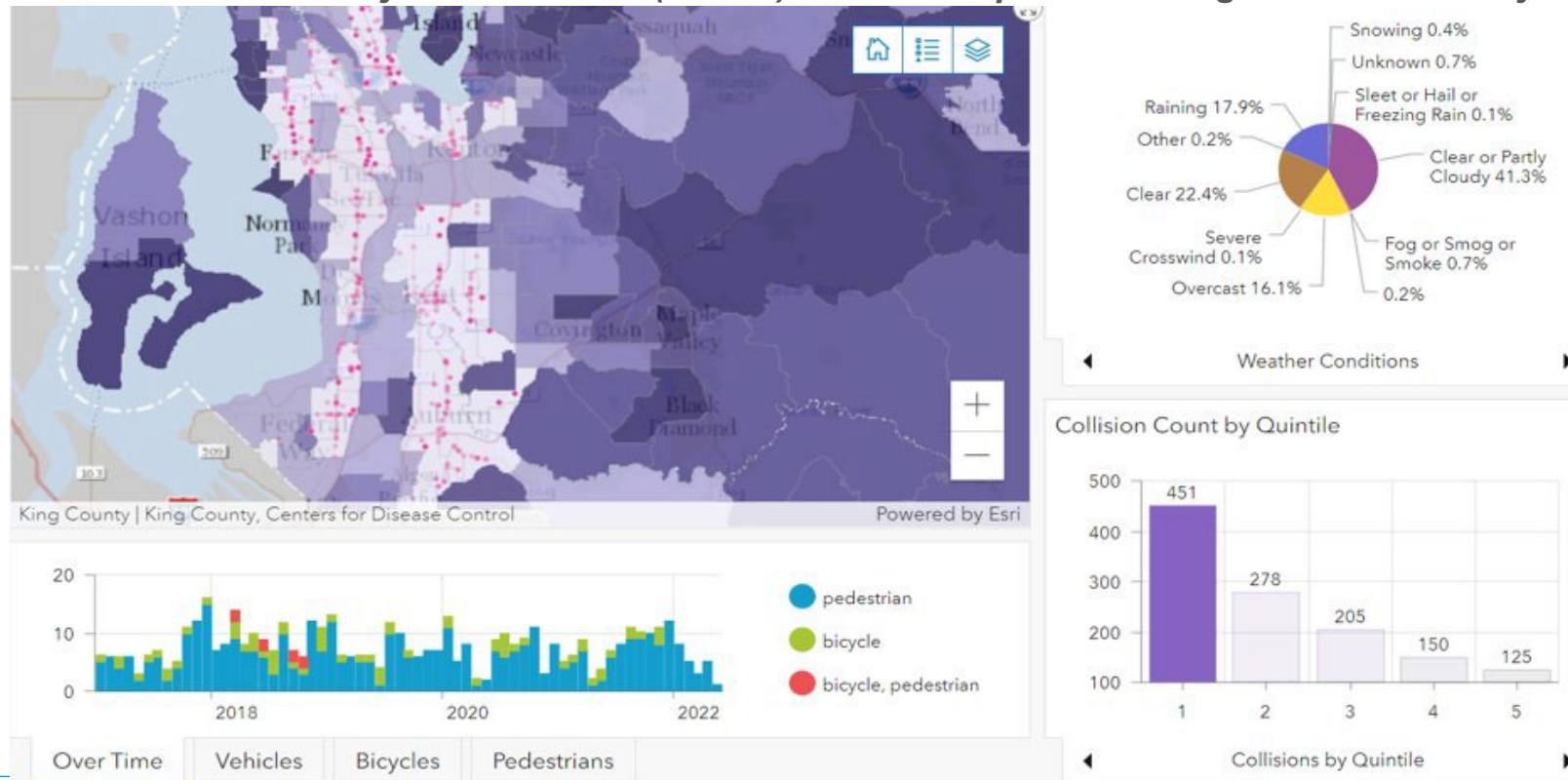
Establishing universal policy goals with targeted and tailored implementation strategies to meet unique needs of different populations.

Recognizes existing disparities are inherent in communities and providing different pathways to equitably advance community health, safety & wellbeing.

# Quintiles offer a standard method for considering ‘where needs are greatest’

using CDC Social Vulnerability Index (SVI), WA State Environmental Health Disparity Index (EHD Index), or locally recalculated version of the WA EHD Index to reflect better spatial resolution of community conditions.

## Occurrences of traffic injuries & deaths ('17-'22) within SVI quintile 1 – highest vulnerability





# Applying a comparative ‘community health promotion assessment’ to alternatives analyses

Example framework for considering community health effects of transportation project alternatives to guide development of tailored and targeted project implementation.

| Measures most directly influencing public health   |           |                  |             |             |                  |
|--|-----------|------------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|
|  | Weighting | Remove & Replace | Boulevard 1 | Boulevard 2 | Bridges & Trails |
| HW 1: Air Pollution                                | 5         | 0                | 3           | 0           | 1                |
| HW 2: Noise Pollution                              | 3         | 2                | 2           | 2           | 1                |
| HW 3/MC 5: Street Safety for Vulnerable Users      | 5         | 3                | 1           | 2           | 1                |
| HW 4: Access to Green Space                        | 3         | 3                | 2           | 2           | 1                |
| MC 2: Improved Walking and Biking Infrastructure   | 4         | 3                | 1           | 2           | 3                |
| MC 3: Public Transit Connections                   | 4         | 1                | 3           | 2           | 1                |
| HE 1: Runoff Reduction & Water Quality Improvement | 1         | 3                | 1           | 2           | 1                |
| HE 2: Climate Resilience                           | 3         | 3                | 1           | 2           | 1                |
| HE-3: Available Green Space                        | 3         | 3                | 1           | 3           | 1                |
| AE roll-up: Stability/influence                    | 5         | 3                | 2           | 3           | 1                |
| Total  |           | 24               | 17          | 20          | 12               |
| Average (no weighting)                             |           | 2.4              | 1.7         | 2.0         | 1.2              |
| Weighted Score                                     |           | 2.3              | 1.8         | 1.9         | 1.2              |

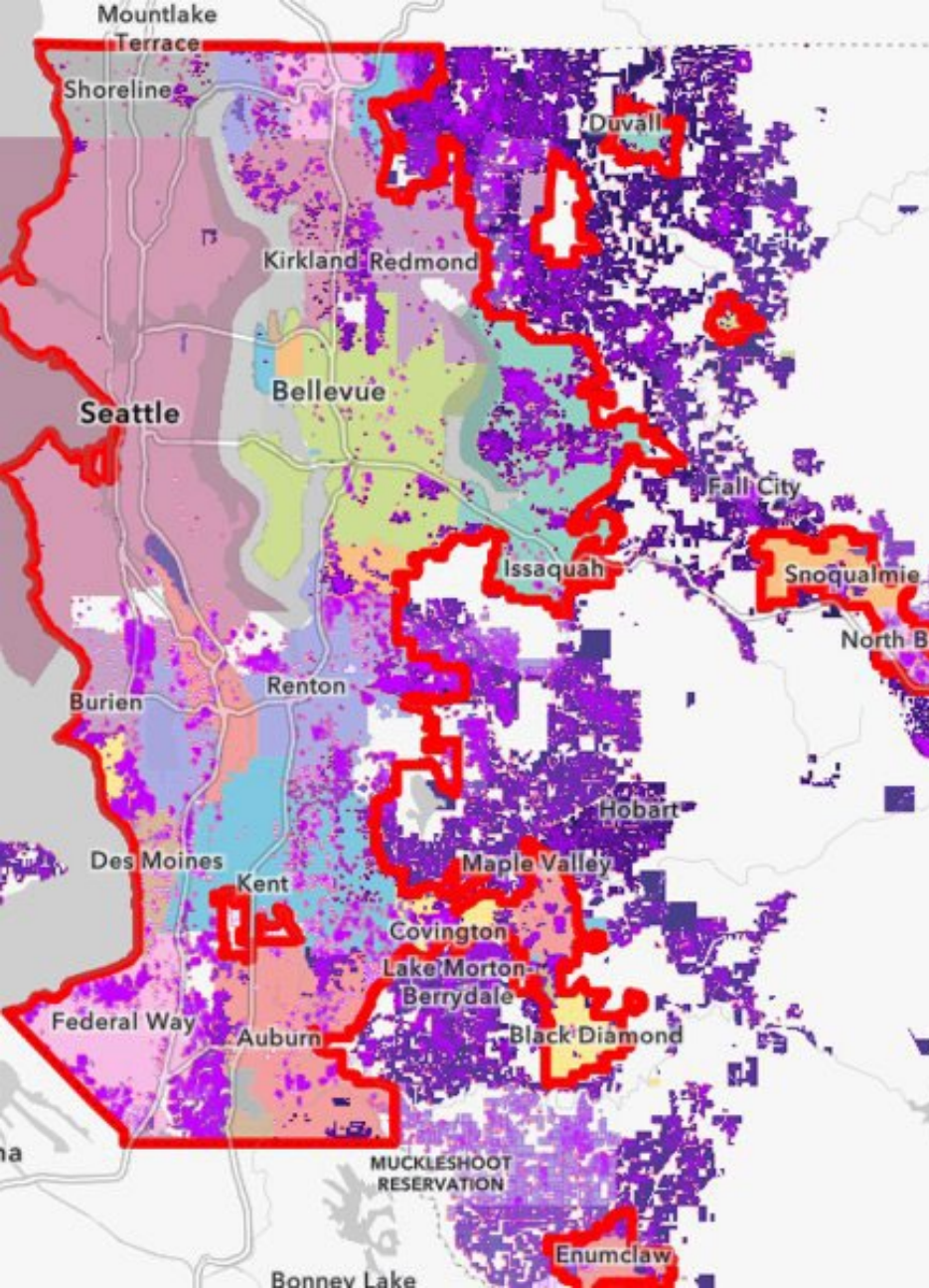
| Alternatives community health promotion value rubric |   |
|--|---|
| High   | 3 |
| Medium   | 2 |
| Low  | 1 |
| No Change  | 0 |

## Community health driver considerations

- ☐ Physical health / Ecosystem health
- ☐ Mental health
- ☐ Safety
- ☐ Active living
- ☐ Social connections
- ☐ Access to healthy food

# Available public health datasets and community health indicator sources:

- **CDC Social Vulnerability Index (*\*temporarily available*)**  
<https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/place-health/php/svi/index.html>
- **WA DOH Environmental Health Disparities Map**  
<https://doh.wa.gov/data-and-statistical-reports/washington-tracking-network-wtn/washington-environmental-health-disparities-map>
- **Hospital Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNAs)**  
<https://doh.wa.gov/data-statistical-reports/healthcare-washington/hospital-and-patient-data/hospital-community-health-needs-assessment-and-community-health-improvement-services-addendum>
- **Local Health Jurisdictions**
  - Syndromic Surveillance (RHINO)
  - Environmental health permitting & compliance data
  - Additional community health indicator data

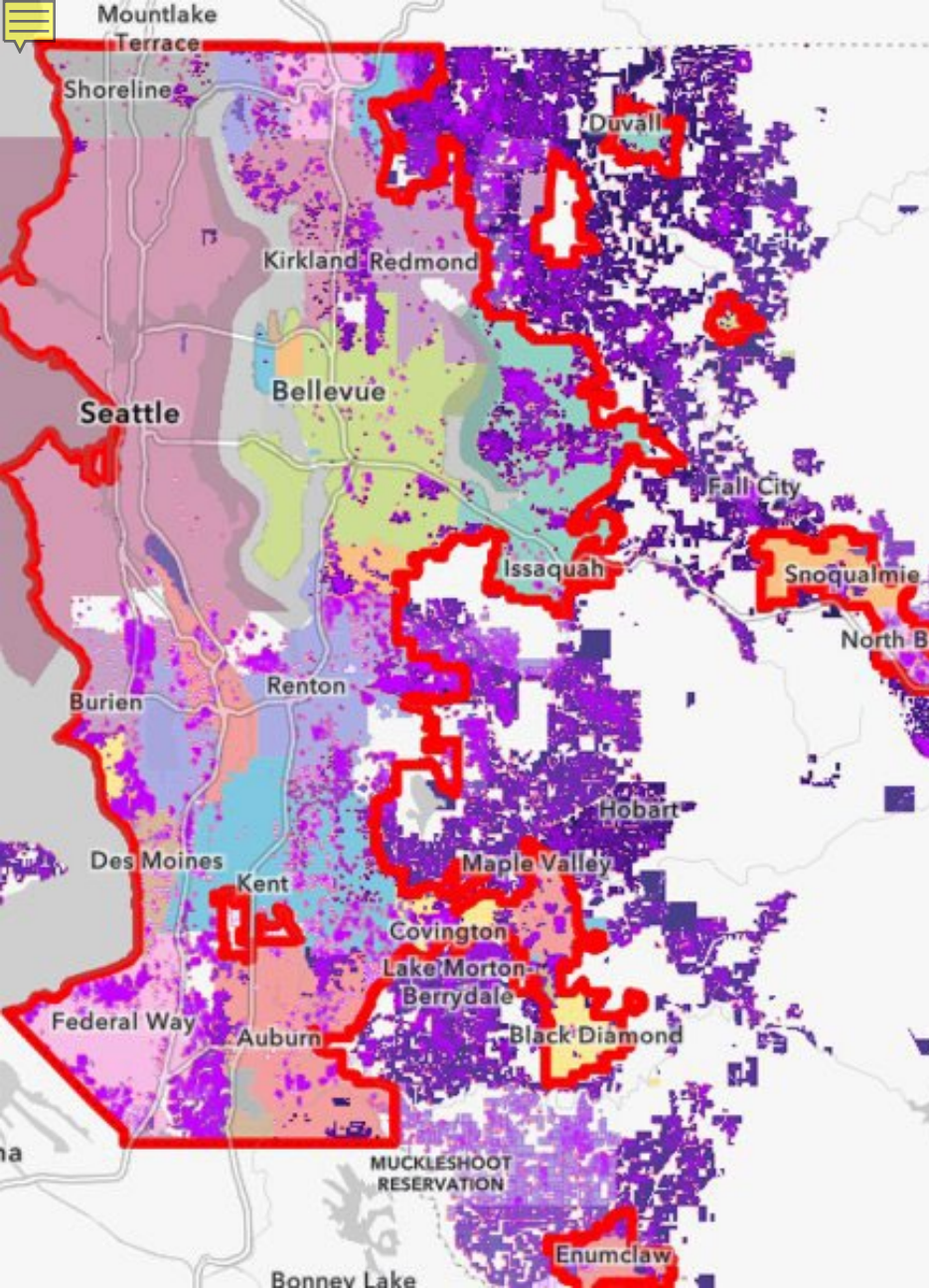


# Equitable Wastewater Futures (EWF) case study

## Planning overview:

- 37,000 septic systems (OSS) in urban KC (*bright pink parcels*)
- Social vulnerability, climate change resilience
- Age of OSS, lifespan
- Risk to public health
- Land-use restrictions





## EWF planning aim:

Where community needs are greatest, expand sewer infrastructure

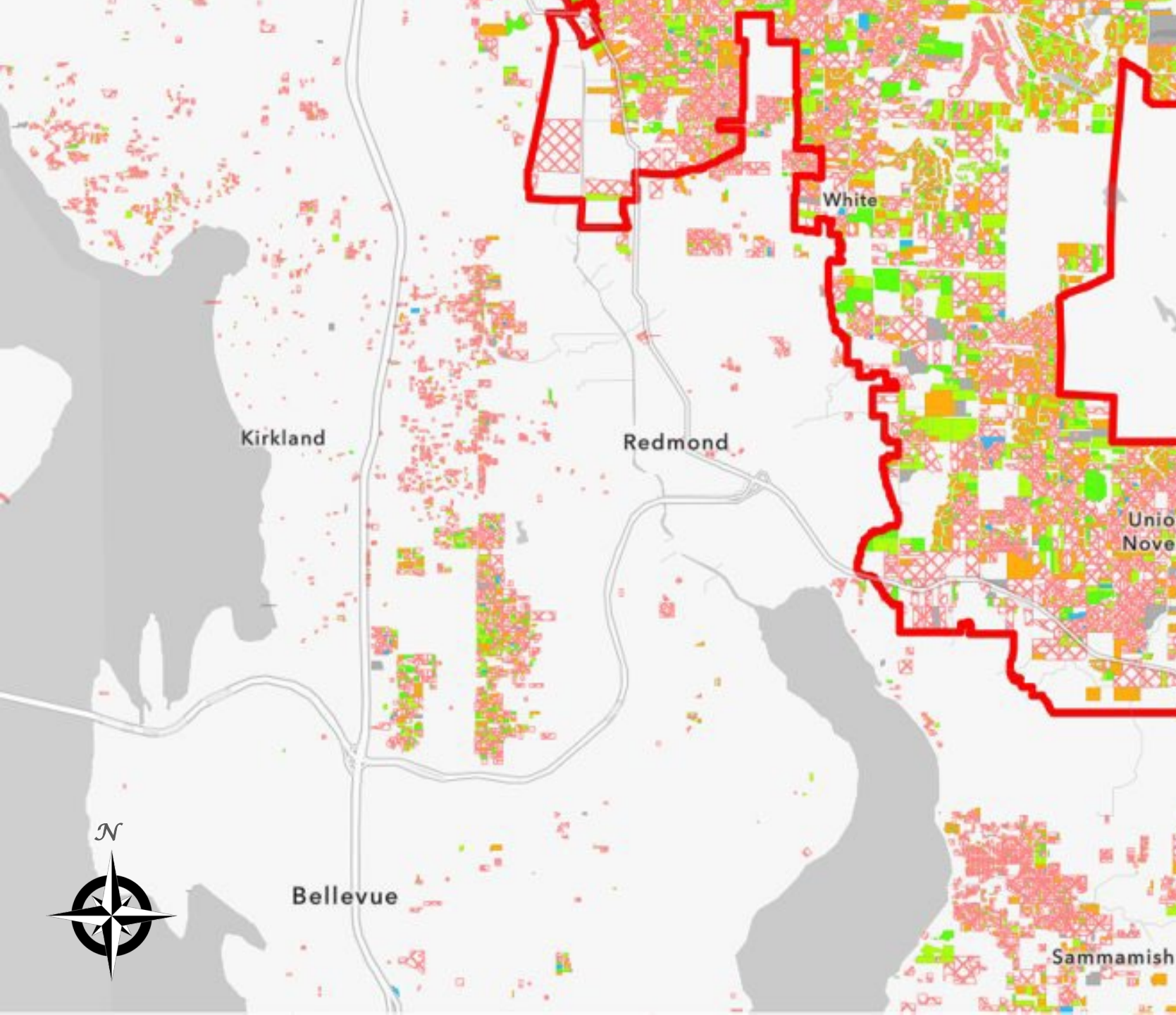
## EWF planning considerations:

- What are potential creative OSS solutions where infrastructure expansion is impossible?
- What are potential innovative policy solutions?
- Where and what kind of engagement is needed?
- What are the opportunities for middle and infill housing?
- How might growth projections need to be adjusted?
- What planning alternatives can accommodate infrastructure needs and meet housing density requirements?
- What are the health impacts of different planning scenarios?



# Scenario

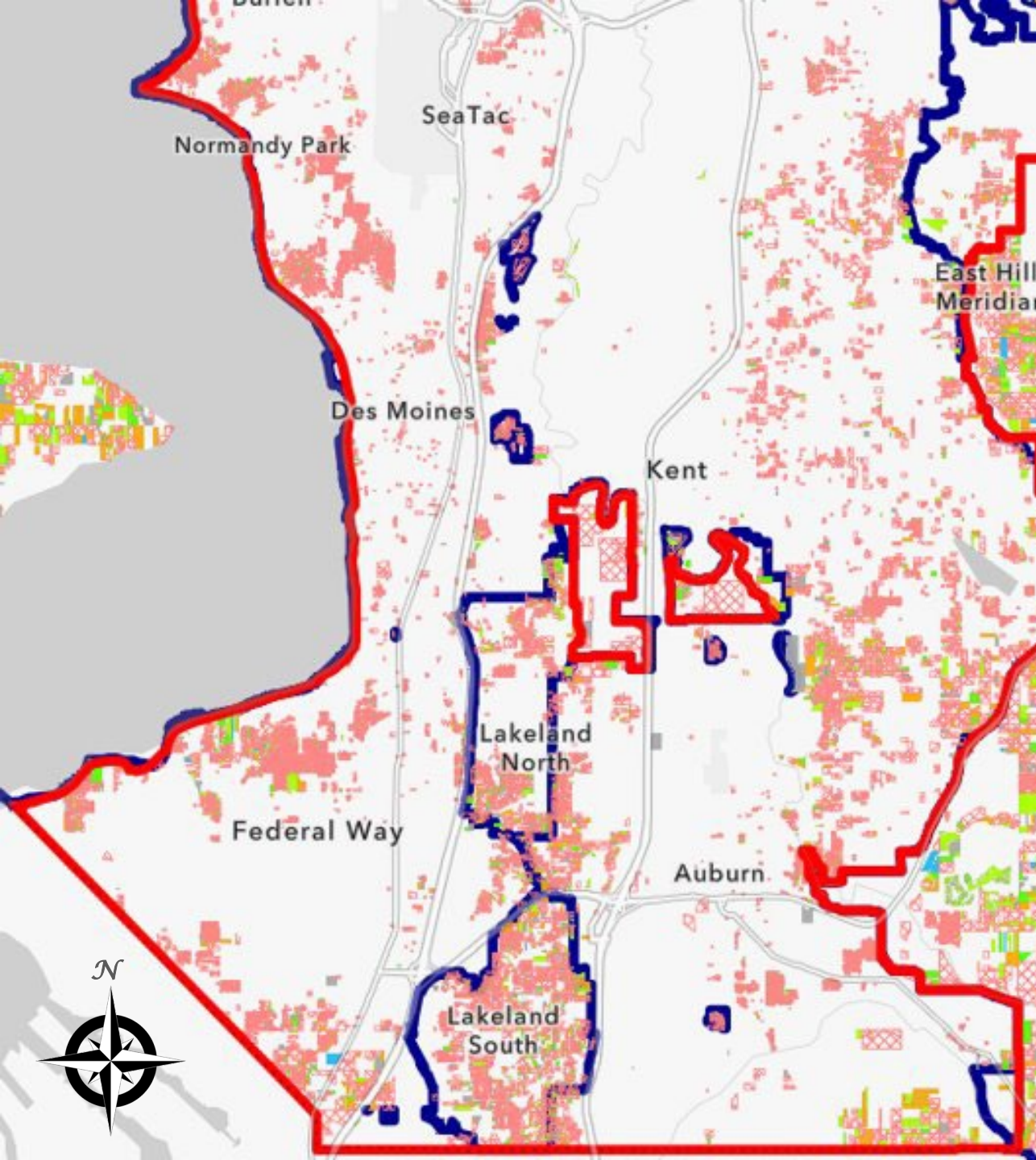
High prevalence of onsite-sewage systems in past average life-span in residential areas just outside the Growth Area Boundary.



# Scenario

High prevalence of onsite-sewage systems in past average life-span in residential areas within the Growth Area Boundary.

*Blue outline designates unincorporated areas of King County.*



# Questions?

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# Break Out Discussions