

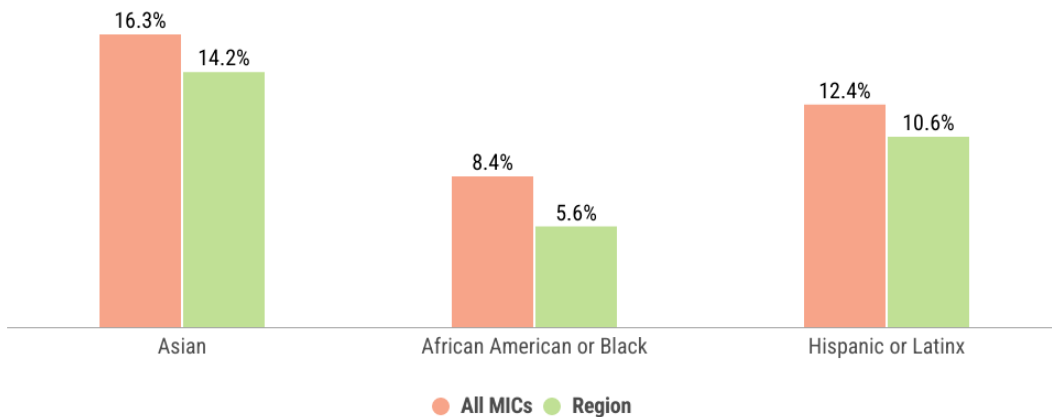
People of Color and Industrial Lands



The region’s industrial lands are a major source of the region’s employment and prosperity. But these areas of concentrated manufacturing and industrial uses don’t mix well with residential use. Neighborhoods near these lands are exposed to higher levels of air, groundwater and soil pollutants.

Data from the American Community Survey shows that communities near the region’s designated Manufacturing Industrial Centers (MICs) are disproportionately people of color. The population living within a mile of MICs is 47% people of color, compared to 39% for the region overall.

Share of People of Color Living Within a Mile of the Region’s Industrial Lands



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2022 5-Year Estimates; PSRC, Parcel Estimates Program

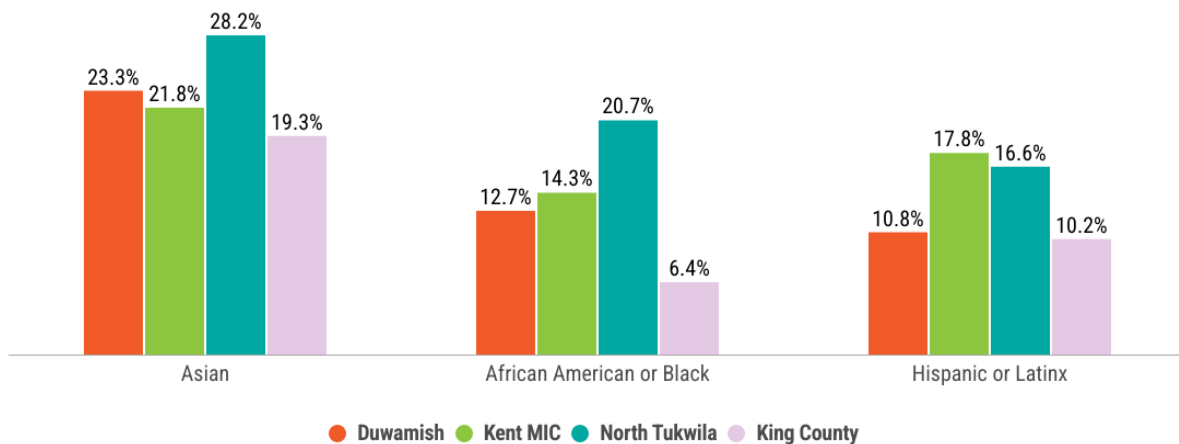
MICs are places where land zoned for industrial uses is designated to be preserved to ensure an adequate supply of land for future and current

industrial needs. PSRC is analyzing data about MICs as part of an update of the region's [Industrial Lands report](#).

The racial/ethnic groups disproportionately overrepresented in these communities include Asian (16.3% vs. 14.2% regionwide), Black (8.4% vs. 5.6% regionwide) and Hispanic/Latinx (12.4% vs. 10.6% regionwide). By comparison, white residents make up around 53.4% of the population living near the region's MICs, about 7 percentage points lower than the region as a whole.

Some communities near MICs have a majority of people of color. The North Tukwila and Kent MICs have nearly three quarters and two thirds, respectively, of their surrounding communities being people of color. Generally, the neighborhoods around MICs are more diverse than their counties. The Ballard-Interbay MIC and Cascade MIC are the only industrial areas that are significantly less diverse than their overall counties.

Share of People Living Within a Mile of Industrial Lands in King County



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2022 5-Year Estimates; PSRC, Parcel Estimates Program

Industrial uses and their pollutants

Communities near industrial lands are exposed to higher levels of air pollutants such as PM2.5 and PM10 particulates, sulfur dioxide, ozone, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide and diesel particulate matter. Soil and groundwater contamination from industrial use can also expose surrounding populations to lead, other metals, volatile organic compounds and arsenic.

A [University of Washington Urban Freight Lab study](#) found a significant correlation between people of color living near industrial lands and exposure to freight pollutants. The findings were in-line with other research that also finds a strong relationship between race and industrial siting.

Health consequences of these pollutants include respiratory and cardiovascular disease, cancer and other damage and disease. In 2023, a [Washington State Department of Ecology report](#) identified six communities overburdened by air pollution in the central Puget Sound region. Residents in these communities experience higher rates of asthma and lower life expectancies compared to the rest of Washington state. Four of these communities overlap MICs, including Paine Field/Boeing Everett, Duwamish, North Tukwila, Kent, Sumner–Pacific and the Port of Tacoma.

Population by Race and Ethnicity Within One Mile of MICs

| | American Indian and Alaska Native | Asian | Black or African American | Hispanic or Latinx | Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander | White | Other | People of Color |
|---|-----------------------------------|-------|---------------------------|--------------------|--|-------|-------|-----------------|
| Ballard-Interbay | 0.2% | 16.3% | 2.4% | 6.9% | 0.1% | 66.9% | 7.3% | 33.1% |
| Duwamish | 0.6% | 23.3% | 12.7% | 10.8% | 0.5% | 44.8% | 7.2% | 55.2% |
| Kent MIC | 0.8% | 21.8% | 14.3% | 17.8% | 3.6% | 33.6% | 8.1% | 66.4% |
| North Tukwila | 0.7% | 28.2% | 20.7% | 16.6% | 0.9% | 27.7% | 5.2% | 72.3% |
| Sumner Pacific | 0.5% | 4.6% | 0.7% | 11.3% | 4.2% | 66.1% | 12.7% | 33.9% |
| Puget Sound Industrial Center-Bremerton | 0.5% | 6.1% | 10.0% | 18.3% | 2.9% | 52.1% | 10.2% | 47.9% |
| Frederickson | 0.3% | 7.7% | 5.3% | 13.0% | 2.8% | 63.2% | 7.7% | 36.8% |
| Port of Tacoma | 1.8% | 9.4% | 9.5% | 13.4% | 1.9% | 54.3% | 9.6% | 45.6% |
| Cascade | 1.2% | 6.5% | 1.2% | 13.6% | 0.3% | 69.6% | 7.7% | 30.4% |
| Paine Field / Boeing Everett | 0.3% | 15.8% | 6.8% | 15.1% | 0.6% | 54.0% | 7.3% | 46.0% |
| MIC Total | 0.6% | 16.3% | 8.4% | 12.4% | 1.1% | 53.4% | 7.7% | 46.6% |
| King County | 0.4% | 19.3% | 6.4% | 10.2% | 0.7% | 55.9% | 7.1% | 44.1% |
| Kitsap County | 0.9% | 4.7% | 2.5% | 8.5% | 1.0% | 74.6% | 7.9% | 25.4% |
| Pierce County | 0.8% | 6.5% | 6.8% | 11.9% | 1.5% | 63.7% | 8.8% | 36.3% |
| Snohomish County | 0.7% | 12.2% | 3.4% | 11.1% | 0.5% | 65.5% | 6.7% | 34.5% |
| Region | 0.6% | 14.2% | 5.6% | 10.6% | 0.9% | 60.6% | 7.4% | 39.4% |
| Difference: MIC Total vs. Region | 0.0% | 2.1% | 2.8% | 1.8% | 0.3% | -7.3% | 0.3% | 7.3% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2022 5-Year Estimates; PSRC, Parcel Estimates Program

Past practices, intentional or unintentional, have led to the disparity in race and

industrial lands today. Through redlining, people of color residing in industrial areas were denied financial services. This systematic denial of mortgages exacerbated residential segregation. Redlined neighborhoods in Seattle and Tacoma suffer greater levels of air pollution, according to a [University of Washington study](#).

Historical practices that have shaped the built environment today are outlined in PSRC's [Legacy of Structural Racism report](#). PSRC data shows that this relationship between greater numbers of marginalized communities and industrial lands and their effects still exists.

The central Puget Sound region is projected to grow to 5.8 million people and 3.3 million jobs by 2050. How the region's jurisdictions guide this growth will impact who will be affected by industrial pollution in the future. The region's plans for future growth can mitigate the effects of redlining and other practices that have led to this inequity. PSRC's work on industrial lands and other focus areas will continue to highlight racial inequities, to help guide the planning needed to tackle them.