

DATE: December 8, 2023

SUBJECT: WorkSource Redmond Office Closure Information Item

SUMMARY

As the Workforce Development Council (WDC) continues to put the Regional Strategic Plan (RSP) into action, WDC staff are analyzing the WorkSource system for ways to improve service accessibility and delivery for communities that have historically been underserved. That work requires the WDC and partners to look at the entire WorkSource system in a new way. This includes all areas of operations, including where WorkSource offices are located in King County.

WorkSource Redmond is one of four sites in our regional network managed by the Employment Security Department. After a review of data on the WorkSource Redmond customer base, lease requirements, and partner discussions, the decision to close this location has been made. WorkSource Redmond will be closed by **June 30, 2024**.

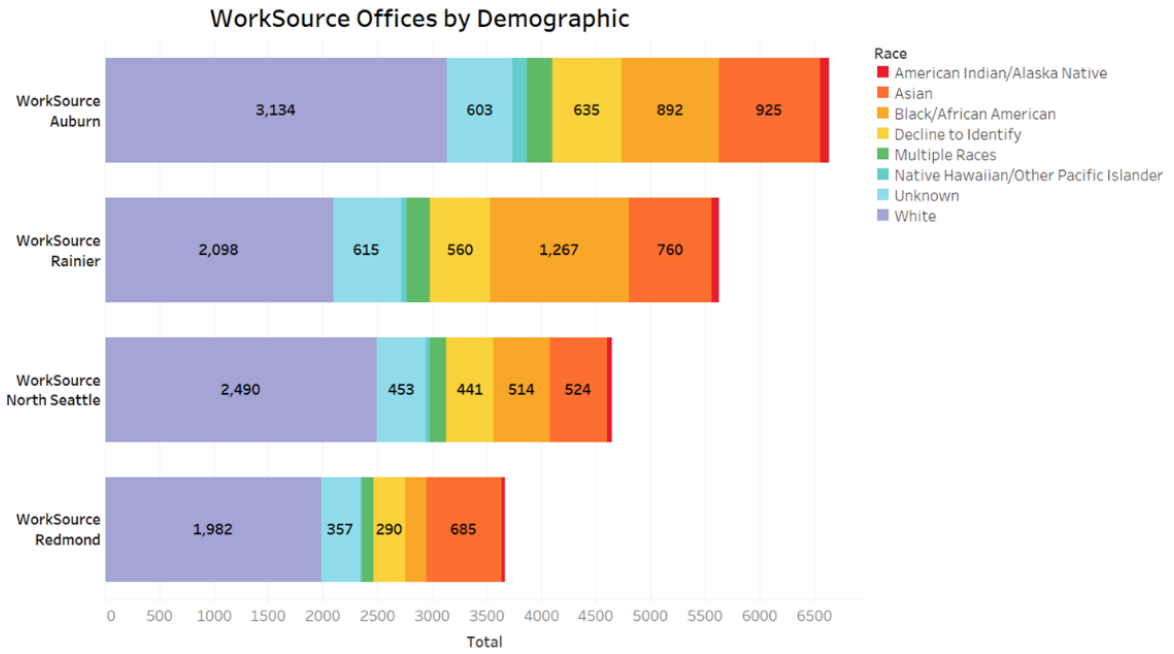
BACKGROUND

With the lease for the WorkSource Redmond location expiring June 30, 2024, negotiations with the property owner were pursued. A request was made to reduce the office footprint. The current location has more space than needed to support operations. Reducing the office space would have allowed for more efficient use of space at a reduced cost. The owner refused this proposal.

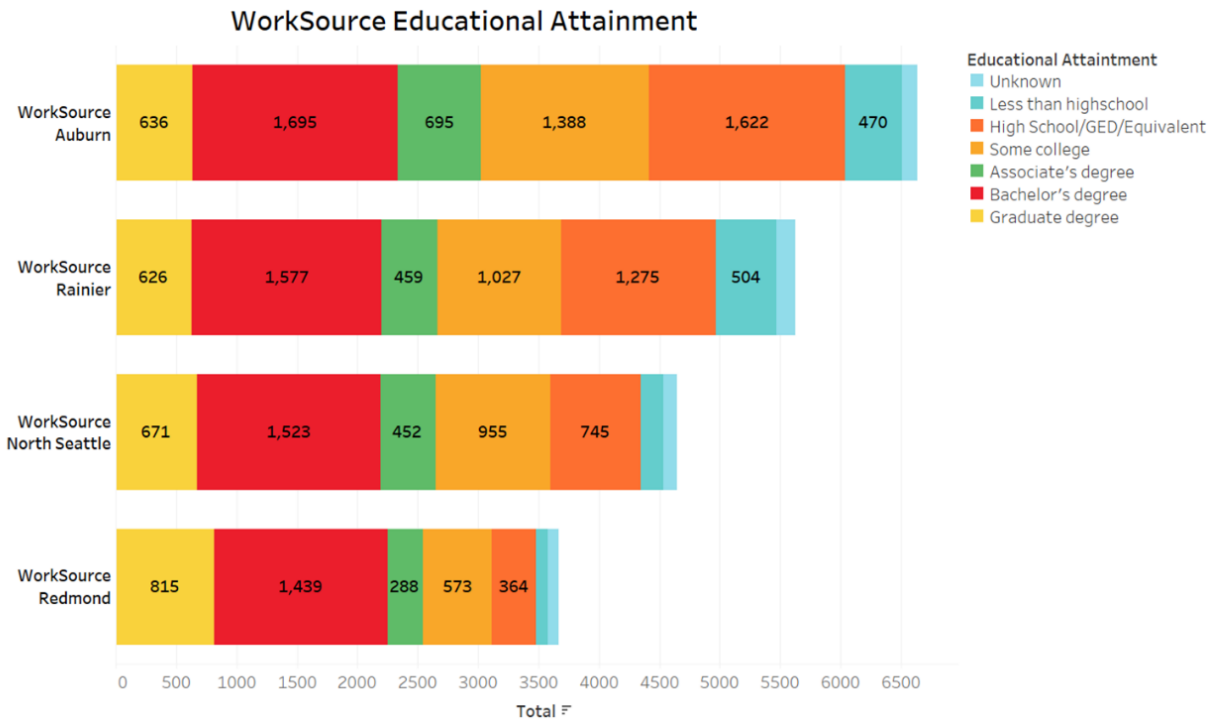
Concurrently, WDC staff began analyzing the WorkSource Redmond customer base and service delivery to determine if the location was the most viable to meet the needs of our target populations, outlined in the RSP. The results of that analysis showed:

- *WorkSource Redmond had the smallest number of job seekers served on-site by staff of the ESD-managed sites*
- *Most of the job seekers assigned to WorkSource Redmond, based on residence location, were accessing virtual services (70%), not in-person staff-assisted services (30%)*
- *The customer base of WorkSource Redmond did not reflect the populations identified in the RSP as the target populations for the system*
- *A location in Bellevue would provide more access for targeted populations on the east side of the county*

When comparing the ESD-managed sites around the county, the data show that the customer base for WorkSource Redmond is predominantly White (54%) and highly educated (61% have a bachelor's degree or higher). Only 198 Black/African American customers (5% of the total) received staff-assisted services at WorkSource Redmond in Program Year 2022 (PY22). The following graphs display racial and educational

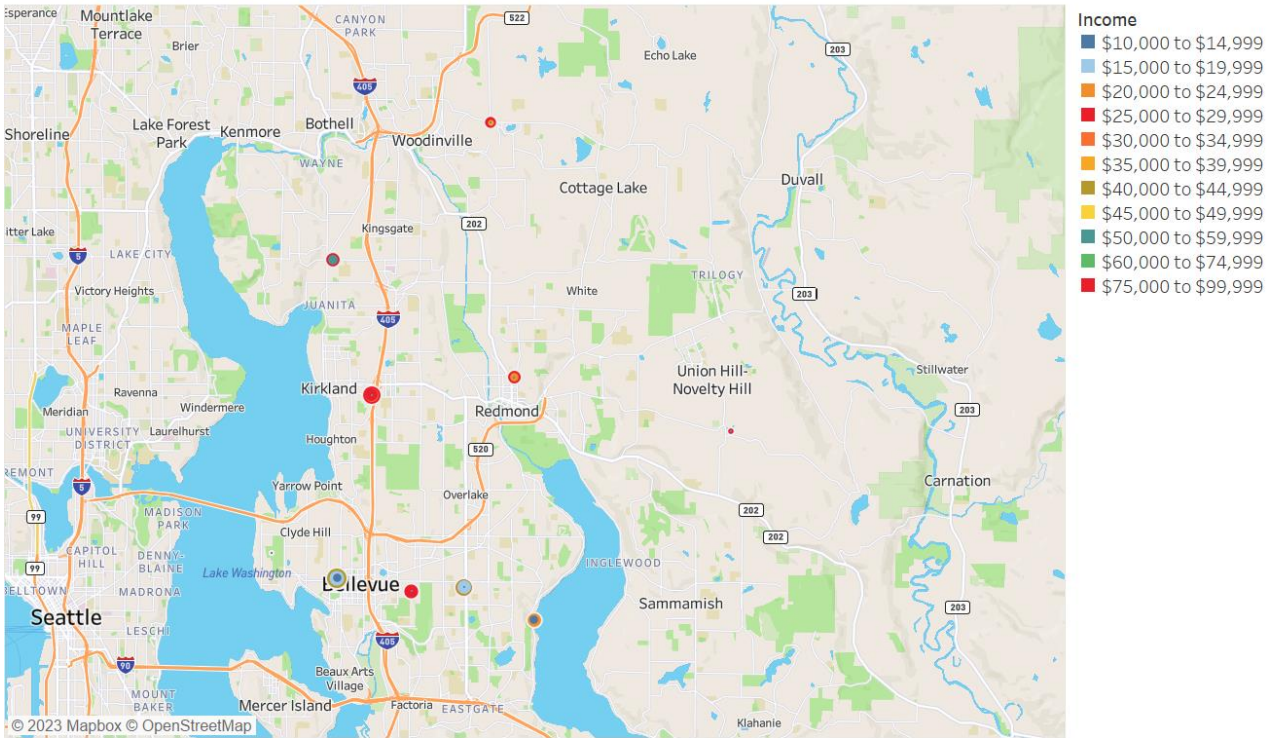


attainment data for the various WorkSource offices for PY22 in support of these conclusions.



This data prompted questions about where a viable location on the east side of the county would be for a WorkSource office. WDC staff gathered data from the US Census Bureau’s American Community Survey to isolate specific households by race, income, and location (ZIP Codes) for Kirkland, Bellevue, and Redmond. The following map distinctly shows that, of the east side cities, Bellevue has the largest concentration of Black/African American households with lower income levels. This target population directly aligns with the strategies outlined in the Regional Strategic

Black Households by Income for Specific Zipcodes



Plan (RSP).

THE WAY AHEAD

WorkSource Redmond will close by the end of the current program year. There is a multi-organization working group established to work through the details involved. Planning is underway to manage the transfer/relocation of ESD and contracted WIOA service provider staff to other offices and to work through the logistics of closing the office. WDC and ESD staff are also exploring options in Bellevue to house a new location that would be more accessible for clients and reach out to the populations in most need of services.