



# *City of Tukwila*

## *Department of Community Development*

*Jim Haggerton, Mayor*

*Jack Pace, Director*

### **PROJECT TITLE:**

City of Tukwila Comprehensive Plan Environmental Impact Statement: Addendum Addressing 2015 Update to the Comprehensive Plan

### **PROPOSED ACTION:**

The City of Tukwila is proposing amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Development Code to address changes in the Growth Management Act, and desired revisions. Comprehensive Plan amendments can be adopted by the City Council once per year, except in cases of emergency, as authorized by the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A) and the Tukwila Municipal Code Chapter 18.80. The amendments discussed in this Addendum will be adopted prior to June 30, 2015. This is a non-project (programmatic) EIS Addendum.

### **PROPONENT AND LEAD AGENCY:**

City of Tukwila Department of Community Development  
6300 Southcenter Boulevard, Tukwila, WA 98188

### **SEPA RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL:**

Jack Pace, Director  
Tukwila Department of Community Development  
6300 Southcenter Boulevard, Tukwila, WA 98188  
206-431-3670

### **CONTACT PERSON:**

Rebecca Fox  
Telephone: 206-431-3683  
Email: [Rebecca.fox@tukwilawa.gov](mailto:Rebecca.fox@tukwilawa.gov)

### **LOCATION OF DOCUMENTS:**

City of Tukwila Department of Community Development  
6300 Southcenter Boulevard, Tukwila, WA 98188  
Office hours: 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Online at: <http://www.tukwilawa.gov/dcd/dcdcompplan.html>

### **SEPA COMPLIANCE:**

The Draft EIS (DEIS) for the Comprehensive Land Use Plan was issued on June 27, 1995. It was circulated to adjacent jurisdictions, affected agencies and other parties with an interest. Comments were due on August 11, 1995 (extended from July 27, 1995). After comments were reviewed, the Final EIS (FEIS) was issued on October 9, 1995. An addendum to the FEIS addressing Zoning Code amendments was issued on November 15, 1995. Both the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Zoning Code were adopted on December 4, 1995. In 2004, an addendum to the FEIS was prepared. The addendum addressed: 1) revisions to the sensitive areas ordinance incorporating Best Available Science; and 2) limited technical revisions to several other elements to reflect changes to the Growth Management Act. The addendum to the FEIS was issued on April 4, 2004.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW—SCOPE OF EIS ADDENDUM:**

The EIS analyzed environmental impacts of the Comprehensive Plan in order to assess the impacts of the Plan on Tukwila and its growth area. The EIS did not analyze the significance of site-specific impacts; rather it focused on area-wide impacts for this non-project/programmatic document.

The City of Tukwila is using phased environmental review in preparing an Addendum to the EIS as it prepares to amend the Comprehensive Plan to address changes to the Growth Management Act, and regional growth policies. The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and rules established for the act, WAC 197-11, outline procedures for the use of existing environmental documents and preparing addenda to environmental decisions.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS:**

All environmental elements were adequately addressed by the 1995 Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statement for the City of Tukwila Comprehensive Plan, and 2004 Addendum. Further, subsequent “project” actions will require the submittal of separate environmental review. These will be analyzed for consistency with the original mitigating conditions and could require new mitigation based on specific conditions. Changes to Comprehensive Plan policies addressed in the 2015 Addendum reflect regional policies contained in documents (Vision 2040 and King County Countywide Policy Plan) that have received environmental review, and whose intent is to minimize environmental impacts through sustainable development, and compact regional growth patterns.

## **SUMMARY OF AMENDMENTS**

The proposed amendments discussed in this addendum address six of the Comprehensive Plan’s 15 elements. Overall Comprehensive Plan priorities remain unchanged. In general, the elements have been reorganized and the policies regrouped and edited for greater clarity. Policy language from King County’s Countywide Planning Policies (2012) has been incorporated, as well as language from Tukwila’s Strategic Plan (2012). The most extensive revisions are contained in the Natural Environment Element.

## **Amendments to Comprehensive Plan goals and policies:**

### **Natural Environment:**

Proposed policy changes primarily update, reorganize, consolidate and/or clarify existing policies. Discussion of Urban Forestry is added. Policy changes are as follows:

- Update, clarify and move the goal and policies for archaeological and paleontological resources out of the Natural Environment Element and into the Community Image Element to be combined with the section that addresses historic preservation.
  - Add a policy related to identifying and protecting sites with cultural significance.
- Reorganize the Natural Environment Element by major subjects. Add a new Urban Forestry section. Revise goals and policies as follows:
  - Environmental Quality and Stewardship: Add goals for restoring and protecting the natural environment, expanding efforts to educate and encourage the public to protect and participate in restoration of sensitive areas, urban wildlife habitat and provide good environmental stewardship of our natural resources.
  - Water Resources: Add goals and policies to better incorporate best available science to address protection and restoration of watershed functions such as:
    - Improve wetland protection, mitigation and voluntary restoration programs;
    - Allow off-site mitigation, wetland mitigation banks, and possibly fee-in-lieu programs for wetland mitigation;
    - Eliminate existing and preventing new fish passage barriers in our watercourses;
    - Enhance riparian habitat through voluntary efforts and required mitigation;

- Promote good stewardship practices to improve water quality;
  - Improve monitoring for water quality;
  - Promote low impact development techniques for surface water management; and
  - Promote environmentally-friendly techniques for stream bank stabilization and restoration.
- **Flood Control:** Add a new goal, update current policies and move these from the Utilities Element to the Natural Environment Element. The revisions recognize importance of protecting the natural flood attenuation function of wetlands, floodplains and floodways and support continued protection of flood plain functions and limiting or prohibiting development that could create a danger to health, safety and property.
  - **Earth Resources:** Update and add new policies for reducing erosion, protecting steep slope stability when development is proposed, and improving the City’s mapping of areas with potential geological instability.
  - **Urban Forestry:** Update and expand the goals and policies related to protection of trees. (Some of these policies are currently in the Community Image Chapter.) Create a new topic area in the Natural Environment Element that would include such goals and polices as:
    - Develop policies and programs that recognize the value of trees for their benefits to environmental quality, habitat for urban wildlife, climate change mitigation, economic development, surface water management, and social and aesthetic values;
    - Develop an urban forestry plan and seeking funding for its implementation, including creating a new urban forester or municipal arborist position in the City to assist citizens and support all City departments;
    - Develop goals for tree canopy coverage in various land use categories.
    - Consider a heritage tree program;
    - Revise regulations and add programs as needed to promote tree retention, increase tree planting, and improve tree care and tree health throughout the City.

**Transportation:**

Proposed policy changes primarily incorporate plans the City has adopted since the last Comprehensive Plan update, including the: Tukwila Strategic Plan, Multi-Modal Level-of-Service study, Walk and Roll Plan and associated Complete Streets Ordinance, Commute Trip Reduction Plan, Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers Plan.

Transportation-related policies from other Comprehensive Plan chapters have been moved and consolidated with other similar policies in order to have them in one location. Other proposed policies have been added to be consistent with Countywide Planning Policies and state requirements.

Specific proposed policy changes relate to the following:

- Maintain and preserve existing transportation facilities
- Promote complete streets designed to accommodate multiple modes of transportation including pedestrians and bicyclists
- Provide healthy transportation options
- Address the needs of non-driving populations
- Design considerations on different types of streets to ensure adequate emergency access, promote a healthy business environment, and provide a range of transportation options

- Work with regional agencies to improve transit service

### **Capital facilities:**

The proposed policy changes primarily:

- Move and consolidate the existing Capital Improvement Program (CIP) policies with Comprehensive Plan policies.
- Modify and add policies to address regional priorities, as well as the priorities that residents expressed in Tukwila's Strategic Plan (2012).
- Link growth targets and level of service standards with facility planning.
- Develop and use a decision matrix that selects projects that implement Comprehensive Plan Goals.
- Establish the following order of priorities for the City's capital facilities:
  1. Regular inspection of systems for evaluation and to ensure conformity with current safety standards;
  2. Prioritizing projects when making improvements if the public health and safety is at risk;
  3. Preventive maintenance and cost effective replacement of aging elements; and
  4. Planning for the orderly extension and upgrading of capital systems.

The Capital Facilities Background Report has been revised and contains:

- Updated maps and lists of City facilities;
- Discussion of capital facilities capacity that includes Tukwila's 2030 targets for housing and employment as specified in the Countywide Planning Policies.

### **Utilities:**

The policy changes primarily update, reorganize, consolidate and/or clarify existing policies and implementation strategies. Wording that furthers regional priorities for environmentally sustainable development, and/or incorporates the priorities that residents expressed in Tukwila's Strategic Plan (2012) has been added. Issue statements have been updated to add discussion of neighborhood and subarea vitality, systems maintenance, and sustainability.

Policy changes include the following:

- Relocate flood management policies that are now found in the Utilities element to the Capital Facilities, Natural Environment and Roles and Responsibilities elements where they are more appropriate, and to avoid duplication.
- Clarify requirements to place electric and telecommunication utilities underground, rather than overhead by specifying that :
  1. All new electrical and communication utilities shall be undergrounded unless the City Council determines that it is not financially practical; and
  2. Utility relocations that are necessitated by a public works project shall be underground unless it is not in the best public interest.
- Provide guidance for careful trimming of vegetation near electric utilities

### **Tukwila Urban Center:**

The Tukwila Urban Center element will be renamed as the Southcenter element to reflect the area's evolving identity. Issues have been updated to incorporate King County Countywide Planning Policies regarding urban centers, and to show specifically how Tukwila will accommodate the most recent housing targets. The development code will also be revised accordingly. Some transportation policies were deleted since they duplicated those found in the Transportation element.

The following policy changes are being made:

- Revise policies to include bicycle facilities, as well as auto, pedestrian & transit.
- Update implementation measures – removed those that had been accomplished and added some new ones.
- Provide policies for the Green River that support Shoreline Management goals
- Include the concept of complete streets and a finer grained street network. New implementation strategies
- Update Figures throughout the element with better ones that are more illustrative of what is being addressed.
- Focus the orientation of buildings and parking lots to create an area that is conducive to walking in the northern part of Southcenter area.
- Develop a wayfinding signage program to supplement existing sign regulations
- Establish distinct districts within the Southcenter, and support them by economic development efforts

**Shoreline:**

The Shoreline element descriptive narrative will be updated to make it consistent the Shoreline element’s policy revision in 2011. No policy changes are proposed.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The City of Tukwila Draft and Final EIS provided extensive analysis of the environmental impacts associated with implementing the 1995 Comprehensive Plan. The nature of the proposed changes is such that none results in significant impacts, some reduce potential environmental impacts and all remain within the range of alternatives examined in the DEIS and FEIS.

The City of Tukwila has reviewed and proposed amendments and has found that they are consistent with the scope of the EIS. Therefore, this action will not create additional or significant impacts and does not warrant separate environmental review as outlined in the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), WAC 197-11.

Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_

Jack Pace, Responsible Official

Dated:

\_\_\_\_\_