



**STAFF REPORT TO THE COUNCIL**

**Prepared July 15, 2015**

HEARING DATE: August 10, 2015

FILE NUMBERS: PL13-0051—2015 Comprehensive Plan Update  
L13-0052 – Housing Element  
L13-0053 – Residential Neighborhoods Element  
L13-0060 – Transportation Corridors/Tukwila International Boulevard District Element  
L15-0017 – Introduction, Vision, Glossary, and Land Use Map Legend

APPLICANT: City of Tukwila

REQUEST: 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update—The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on proposed amendments to the Housing Element and the Residential Neighborhoods Element of the Comprehensive Plan. This is part of the periodic review and update of the Plan required by the Washington Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.130. )

LOCATION: Policies apply throughout the City of Tukwila

NOTIFICATION: Hearing Notice published in the Seattle Times and posted on the City of Tukwila website on July 27, 2015

SEPA DETERMINATION: Addendum to the 1995 Comprehensive Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) issued July 6, 2015 (E15-0009)

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ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Planning Commission Recommended TIB District Element
- B. Planning Commission Recommended Housing Element
- C. Planning Commission Recommended Residential Neighborhoods Element
- D. Planning Commission Recommended Vision for the Comprehensive Plan
- E. Planning Commission Recommended Introduction for the Comprehensive Plan

## **BACKGROUND**

The City of Tukwila's Comprehensive Plan, first adopted in 1995, establishes goals and policies that guide the community as it grows and changes over time. Its policies and land use map lay out the community's long range vision. The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) gives Tukwila the opportunity to amend the Comprehensive Plan once a year, unless it is an emergency. The Comprehensive Plan has been amended periodically to keep up with changing requirements, and to respond to requests from the public.

In addition to these regular amendments, the state Growth Management Act (GMA) requires counties and cities periodically to conduct a thorough review of their plan and development regulations to bring them up to date with any relevant changes in the GMA and to respond to changes in land use and population growth. The last required systematic review and update was completed in 2004. Tukwila's required updates will be complete by fourth quarter, 2015.

Tukwila has been preparing the required update over several years, and is reviewing the Comprehensive Plan elements in phases. The update is proceeding according to a general schedule, work plan and public participation program adopted via Resolution 1792 (March, 2013). To date, update work has been completed on the Manufacturing/Industrial Center element, and the goals and policies in the Shoreline element in 2011. In 2013, the Capital Facilities, Utilities, Natural Environment, Southcenter/Urban Center, Shoreline element supporting text and Transportation elements were updated. Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS), Roles and Responsibilities, Community Image and Identity, Economic Development, and Tukwila South were updated and adopted in 2014.

In 2015, the remaining elements will be completed including Transportation Corridors/Tukwila International Boulevard (TIB) District, Housing, and Residential Neighborhoods, as well as the technical updates to the Introduction, Vision, Glossary and Map Legend.

## **OUTREACH**

Outreach on the proposed Comprehensive Plan elements occurred during 2014 and 2015. During 2014, City staff made significant efforts to reach out in new ways to bring Tukwila's diverse community into the City's planning process. This included identifying and training community liaisons ("Community Connectors"), who are part of language and cultural populations within Tukwila, including Spanish, Somali, Arabic, Tingrya, Amharic and Burmese, that have not been traditionally involved or heard. The liaisons conducted 194 in-person surveys with their community members about topics relevant to the Comprehensive Plan update including issues associated with housing and development in residential areas.

The Connectors invited community members to attend Community Conversation meetings, which were also promoted via email, print and website. The two meetings had a combined record attendance of approximately 180 community members. Participants gathered in small groups to talk about community priorities, neighborhood quality and ways to promote healthy living.

**TIB District:** Staff conducted a walking tour of the Tukwila International Boulevard area with the Planning Commission on September 11, 2014. Joint City Council/Planning Commission work sessions, open to the public, were held on January 8, 2015, and February 26, 2015. Input from prior community meetings was used to help develop a new vision for the area, as well as policy directions.

**Housing and Residential Neighborhoods:** A joint City Council/Planning Commission work session, open to the public, was held on March 27, 2015 to gain consensus on the issue to be explored in the updates to the Housing and Residential Neighborhoods elements. A Community Open house showcasing the proposed updates to the Tukwila International Boulevard District element and more information on the Housing and Residential Neighborhoods elements was held on May 20, 2015. This input was used to develop policies and strategies for Housing and Residential Neighborhoods elements.

Planning Commission and City Council hearings, postal and electronic mailings, City website, print publications, and community events continue to be used to receive public comments and to inform the public about the Comprehensive Plan update.

### **REVIEW PROCESS**

A work session on the updated TIB District, Housing, and Residential Neighborhoods elements, Vision, and Introduction will be held on July 27, 2015. Staff will review the Planning Commission recommended elements with the Council, concentrating on changes. The Planning Commission recommended drafts of the Glossary and Map Legend will be provided at the July 27<sup>th</sup> work session, as they will be reviewed at the July 23, 2015 Planning Commission Public Hearing. City Council will hold a public hearing on August 10, 2015 to receive comments from the community. The Councilmembers will have an opportunity to consider public input carefully and propose further changes, if desired, at a review session on August 24, 2015. City Council will be asked to adopt the finalized elements and supporting Comprehensive Plan materials during the fall of 2015.

### **SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CHANGES**

The Comprehensive Plan update assumes that:

- Primary goals and objectives remain relevant and will be maintained from the current Plan;
- Updates will focus on elements that require revision per changes to the Washington Growth Management Act, and Countywide Planning Policies;
- Tukwila Strategic Plan's vision and goals will be reflected and incorporated in the Comprehensive Plan;
- Policies and descriptions will be updated, simplified and edited to increase clarity and consistency throughout the document;
- The document's elements may be reorganized or consolidated for greater readability and conciseness;
- The format will be updated to improve on-line functionality and attractiveness.

### **TIB District Element**

The Transportation Corridors Element is part of the Comprehensive Plan's required land use section. As the name suggests, the current Transportation Corridors element includes policies and strategies for the Tukwila International Boulevard, Southcenter Boulevard and Interurban areas. With this update, it has been refocused on Tukwila International Boulevard area exclusively and renamed "Tukwila International Boulevard District" element. This change reflects the importance of this neighborhood to City redevelopment efforts. Policies for the remaining transportation corridors have either been

accomplished, relocated into other Elements, or in certain cases, deleted. The majority of the goals, policies, and implementation strategies in this draft element are new.

The proposed policies and implementation strategies reflect updates to other Comprehensive Plan elements, and incorporate community priorities expressed in the Strategic Plan, through Community Conversations meetings and the City Council/Planning Commission work sessions, and comments received during the May 28, 2015 Planning Commission public hearing.

Specifically, the proposed Tukwila International Boulevard District element will:

1. Add a new Vision for the TIB District that reflects community comments and joint City Council/Planning Commission work sessions, and sets the framework for the proposed goals and policies.
2. Include land use policies focused on developing a more intensive mix of uses in mid to high rise developments in two key areas (“nodes”) along the Boulevard:
  - a. Village Node--Near the S. 144<sup>th</sup> St/TIB intersection – A mix of residential and community-serving commercial uses;
  - b. Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Node--Near the Tukwila International Boulevard Link Light Rail Station – Transit-oriented development that leverages the “one stop from the airport” location, and includes more regional-serving office, services, and housing.
3. Outside of node areas, policies encourage a variety of low to mid rise uses including residential and neighborhood-serving services; limited new retail development.
4. Add new policies to support the community’s vision for the TIB District:
  - a. Develop a unique, authentic character for the TIB District that promotes the area’s ethnic diversity and attracts local and regional visitors to the area.
  - b. Make TIB a “main street” or spine of the neighborhood with on-street parking, slower vehicular speeds, and more crosswalks, and with buildings oriented to the street.
  - c. Improve pedestrian safety, walkability, and connectivity by expanding the sidewalk network from TIB to adjacent neighborhoods and linking activity areas.
  - d. Shift market perception and economics via “placemaking”.
  - e. Continue efforts to reduce crime, stabilize neighborhoods, and actively engage residents and businesses in the TIB District redevelopment efforts.
  - f. Guide public and private investment to catalyze additional projects and business success, and increase the pace of redevelopment.

### **Housing Element**

The Housing Element is a required part of the Comprehensive Plan. The element must be consistent with the GMA’s housing goals to: 1) Encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of this state; 2) Promote a variety of residential densities and housing types; 3) Encourage preservation of existing neighborhoods.

The proposed policies and implementation strategies reflect updates to other Comprehensive Plan elements, and incorporate community priorities expressed in the Strategic Plan, through Community Conversations meetings, the April 27, 2015 City Council/Planning Commission work session, and comments received during the June 25, 2015 Planning Commission public hearing.

Specifically, the proposed Housing element will:

1. Continue to provide sufficient housing

- a. Update development regulations to accommodate future growth
2. Provide safe, healthy, affordable housing for all residents
  - a. Support the creation and preservation of affordable housing through partnerships and leveraging new and existing resources
  - b. Allow for a greater variety of housing options by reinstating innovative housing demonstration projects (past Housing Options program)
3. Support regional collaboration to preserve and create housing opportunities for all residents
  - a. Assess housing at the regional level as housing issues go beyond city boundaries
  - b. Coordinate on regional funding efforts
4. Enhance neighborhood quality through an improved housing stock<sup>1</sup>
  - a. Continue to improve the condition of rental housing through the Rental Housing Inspection Program
5. Provide housing for persons in all stages of life
  - a. Partner with local groups to better reach historically hard to serve populations
6. Increase long-term residency
  - a. Support neighborhood associations and groups
  - b. Explore partnerships with the school districts serving Tukwila

### **Residential Neighborhoods Element**

The Residential Neighborhoods Element is part of the Comprehensive Plan's required land use section. The element seeks to consider the character of the neighborhoods and how development looks and functions. Additional aspects of residential neighborhoods are integrated throughout the Comprehensive Plan, including the Community Image and Identity, Transportation, Tukwila International Boulevard District, and Natural Environment elements.

The proposed policies and implementation strategies reflect updates to other Comprehensive Plan elements, and incorporate community priorities expressed in the Strategic Plan, through Community Conversations meetings, the April 27, 2015 City Council/Planning Commission work session, and comments received during the June 25, 2015 Planning Commission public hearing.

Specifically, the proposed Residential Neighborhoods element will:

1. Group compatible and mutually supportive land uses
  - a. Update the Comprehensive Plan map to preserve and support stable residential areas
2. Enhance and preserve neighborhood quality
  - a. Improve public infrastructure, including financing the development of sidewalks
  - b. Replace vegetation and open space lost to development
  - c. Support proactive Code Enforcement efforts related to neighborhood quality and livability
3. Enhance and revitalize neighborhoods to encourage social and environmental sustainability
  - a. Utilize City and non-City funding to promote neighborhood revitalization efforts including infrastructure improvements
  - b. Decrease greenhouse gas emissions by promoting active transportation
4. Encourage neighborhood development with a high-quality, pedestrian character
  - a. Develop infill standards by neighborhood to encourage compatible development
  - b. Develop multifamily development standards to better integrate development into the

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<sup>1</sup> Housing repair/maintenance and weatherization addressed in Roles and Responsibilities, - 'Safety and Security'  
15.1 Implementation Strategies

- surrounding community
5. Support the development of neighborhood-supportive commercial areas
    - a. Promote commercial and mixed-use development that reflects the scale and architect of surrounding residential structures and promotes a pedestrian character
    - b. Ensure appropriate transitions between commercial and residential zones
  6. Protect neighborhoods from undue noise impacts
    - a. Coordinate with the Port of Seattle and King County Airport to decrease the adverse effects of airport operations
    - b. Discourage incompatible land uses adjacent to residential neighborhoods

### **Introduction and Vision**

While the Introduction and Vision sections are not elements of the Comprehensive Plan, they need to be updated to reflect how the document and Tukwila's circumstances have changed over the past 20 years.

The major edits to the sections involve:

1. Adding a discussion about the Strategic Plan
2. Referencing new outreach techniques such as the website and community liaisons
3. Changes references from "citizen" to "resident" to reflect that not all of our resident are US citizens
4. Updating the discussion to reflect how the Plan has been updated and implemented over the past 20 years

Overall, the original focus and direction of the Comprehensive Plan remains very relevant to today's issues.

### **Map Legend and Glossary**

While the Glossary and Land Use Map Legend sections are not elements of the Comprehensive Plan they need to be updated to reflect how the document, state regulations and Tukwila's zoning have changed over the past 20 years.

The major edits to the sections involve:

1. Editing the Glossary to ensure that terms and definitions are up-to-date and relevant to the reader
2. Removing specific density limits in residential designations to allow for greater Zoning Code flexibility
3. Adding TUC subdistricts developed as part of the subarea plan
4. Changing the Tukwila South Master Plan Area to include a discussion of the Tukwila South Overlay
5. Deleting Transportation Corridors subarea and adding Tukwila International Boulevard District
6. Deleting Tukwila Urban Center Mixed use Residential
7. Deleting Tukwila Valley South Mixed Use Residential

Eliminating the density language in the Comprehensive Plan Designations will allow development of zoning for residential housing types such as cottage housing without requiring Comprehensive Plan amendments. Increased Zoning Code densities could also be a tool to encourage redevelopment in specific areas.

## **MATERIALS AND FORMAT**

The packet contains:

1. A Planning Commission recommended draft of the TIB District Element with explanatory notes.
  - 1a. TIB District Element Revision Matrix of comments from 5/21/15 Planning Commission work session and 5/28/15 Planning Commission public hearing
  - 1b. Comment letters received for 5/28/15 Planning Commission public hearing
2. A Planning Commission recommended draft of the Housing Element with explanatory notes
  - 2a. Housing Element Revision Matrix of comment from 6/18/15 Planning Commission work session and 6/25/15 Planning Commission public hearing
  - 2b. Comments received for 6/25/15 Planning Commission public hearing
3. A Planning Commission recommended draft of the Residential Neighborhoods Element with explanatory notes
  - 3a. Residential Neighborhoods Element Matrix of comments from 6/18/15 Planning Commission work session and 6/25/15 Planning Commission public hearing
4. A Planning Commission recommended draft of the Vision for the Comprehensive Plan
5. A Planning Commission recommended draft of the Introduction for the Comprehensive Plan

## **OTHER MATERIALS:**

The Planning Commission recommended drafts of the Glossary and Map Legend will be provided at the July 27<sup>th</sup> work session, as they will be reviewed at the July 23, 2015 Planning Commission Public Hearing.

The TIB District Background Report, Housing Background Report, and Residential Neighborhoods Background Report provide additional supporting information for the elements and the goals and policies. The reports were provided to the Planning Commission and City Council prior to the respective work sessions in January and April 2015. They may be accessed on the City's website at <http://www.tukwilawa.gov/dcd/dcdcompplan.html>.

These materials are intended to encourage discussion and provide background. The Comprehensive Plan documents will be formatted and links to pertinent documents added after the City Council takes final action to adopt all the updated elements.

## **REQUESTED ACTION**

The City Council is asked to hold a hearing on the proposed changes to the TIB District Element, Housing Element, Residential Neighborhoods Element, Vision, Introduction, Glossary, and Map Legend to make revisions as needed and adopt the finalized Comprehensive Plan.