

HOUSING

WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS CHAPTER:

- Estimates of current and future housing needs.
- Policies to preserve and improve the existing housing stock; encourage new housing that meets the community's needs; and develop thriving, equitable neighborhoods.
- Strategies to encourage housing that is affordable to all income levels and for all current and projected residents in our community.

PURPOSE

This Housing Element describes how Tukwila's housing needs will be satisfied through 2031. Projected housing needs were determined by a joint committee of cities and the County, as required by state law. The importance of these needs were highlighted in the development of the City's 2012 [Strategic Plan](#) and guided by the Community Conversations outreach efforts of the 2015 Comprehensive Plan update. This element is based on a detailed analysis of Tukwila's housing needs contained in the [Housing Background Report](#).

Tukwila will continue to grow over the next twenty years, projected to accommodate an additional 4,800 households and 15,500 new jobs by 2031. By 2035, Tukwila is projected to accommodate an additional 768 households and 2,480 new jobs, for a total of 5,568 new households and 17,980 new jobs over the next twenty years. Tukwila's zoning can accommodate this projected growth as the City has capacity for over 6,000 new housing units. The goals and policies presented here identify the steps the City of Tukwila can take in response to the housing issues found within our community. These steps are necessary to plan for growth that will ensure the sustainability and vitality of the existing housing stock, to reduce barriers that prevent low and moderate income households from living near their work or transit, and to preserve housing that is affordably priced for all

households, including low-income households. Tukwila's growth and future must include policies that create thriving, equitable neighborhoods and homes where all people have the opportunity to live in a safe, healthy, affordable home *in the city of opportunity and the community of choice*.

ISSUES

In developing the goals and policies for this Housing Element, the following issues were identified for Tukwila:

Housing Affordability

While Tukwila continues to have affordable units for those at 50-80% of area median income (AMI), more and more households are struggling to meet their housing costs. Community poverty has tripled in Tukwila over the past ten years as evidenced in Census figures and [Tukwila School District](#) demographics (see the Housing Background Report for more information). Almost half of City residents are burdened by housing costs, paying more than 30% of their income for housing. In particular, households who make 30% or less of the AMI face the greatest struggle to find affordable housing.

SIDEBAR: What is Affordable Housing?

Total housing expenditures in excess of 30% of household income is considered "excessive" and viewed as an indicator of a housing affordability problem. This definition of affordability was established under the United States National Housing Act of 1937. Average housing costs in Tukwila – \$1191 for monthly rent or \$992 for monthly housing payments for a three bedroom unit – are affordable to households making at least 50-80% AMI, about \$33,120 annually or \$16.56 per hour. Many of the common occupations in Tukwila pay less than \$16.56 per hour, these include: cashiers: \$13.55; childcare workers: \$11.59; food service workers: \$12.25; and retail salesperson: \$15.28. Occupations that provide a wage needed to afford market rate housing include book keeping clerk: \$20.53; medical assistant: \$18.75; machinist: \$25.82; and painter: \$19.86. (Washington State Employment Security Department, 2013)

The majority of Tukwila's affordable housing is 'naturally occurring', meaning that factors such as location and age of the home result in below regional average costs. Because future housing development will likely include redevelopment of existing affordable housing and the development of new higher cost housing in the Urban Center, efforts to address the lack of affordable housing for residents earning less than 30% AMI, will most likely require

subsidized housing through partnerships with non-profit housing groups and other housing stakeholders. Relying on market forces to provide affordable housing for very-low income residents will not provide an adequate quantity, as defined by King County affordable housing targets, of quality affordable housing.

SIDEBAR: Countywide Affordability Targets

King County’s Countywide Planning Policies recognize that there is an unmet need for housing that is affordable to households earning less than 80% area median income (AMI), with the greatest need for households earning 50% or less of AMI. According to the Countrywide Planning Policies, the countywide need for housing by percentage of area median income is:

50-80% AMI (Moderate Income)	16% of Total Housing Supply
30-50% AMI (Low Income)	12% of Total Housing Supply
Less Than 30% AMI (Very-Low Income)	12% of Total Housing Supply

Housing Condition

Most existing single-family homes in Tukwila were constructed before 1970 and the majority of multi-family homes were constructed between the 1960s-1980s. Aging housing stock typically requires more money for maintenance, which can be difficult for residents who are already burdened by other economic stressors such as paying more than 30% of their income for housing. Condition is also linked to affordability. Naturally occurring affordable housing (housing with market prices that meet affordability metrics without policies or accompanying subsidies) is often a result of deteriorating and substandard housing conditions, smaller home size, and older housing stock.

Home Ownership Options

Having a range of housing types to choose from encourages home ownership. This in turn supports longer term residency and neighborhood stability. Based on 2010 US Census data, home ownership is relatively low among Tukwila residents, and is decreasing. While less than half of the housing units in Tukwila are apartments, almost 60% of housing units in the City are renter-occupied. The majority of the City’s housing stock consists of older 2 bedroom single-family homes and apartments in large multi-family developments. This range of housing options does not accommodate residents in all stages of life, including young adults, multigenerational families, older adults hoping to “age in place”, and older adults looking to downsize.

GOALS AND POLICIES

The following goals and policies guide Tukwila's approach to meeting the challenge of revitalizing residential neighborhoods and encouraging new housing development while maintaining affordable housing and meeting the needs of low-income and special-needs households.

Goal 3.1 The City of Tukwila provides the City's fair share of regional housing.

Policies

3.1.1 Provide sufficient zoned housing potential to accommodate future single- and multi-family households to meet the regional growth target of 4,800 new housing units by 2031.

3.1.2 Work with residents and property owners to consider housing options that meet current and future needs. Explore adopting smaller lot sizes, especially in neighborhoods where the historical lot pattern is smaller than the established 6.7 dwelling units per acre (6,500 square foot lots).

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SIDEBAR: **Housing Projections**

The Puget Sound Regional Council, the regional planning organization that develops growth projections, estimates that Tukwila will need 4,800 new homes by 2031, and a total of 5,568 new homes by 2035. Historically, there has been a large gap between the City's growth target and number of housing units constructed. Since the last Comprehensive Plan update, the City adopted a new plan and development regulations for its Southcenter urban center, and new development regulations in the City's redevelopment area on Tukwila International Boulevard. Over the next five years, approved projects in these two areas are expected to create over 700 new housing units. This development activity suggests the City will make substantial progress toward meeting the housing target of 2035.

Implementation Strategies

- With Council feedback, develop and implement an outreach program to receive public input from residents and property owners regarding

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~~housing development in residential neighborhoods. Outreach may include but is not limited to: citywide and neighborhood specific mailings, online and in-person surveys, flyers, open houses and other events. Meet with residents and property owners at the neighborhood level to receive input to help establish desired lot area minimums for the individual neighborhoods.~~

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- Following the ~~neighborhood outreach public input~~ process, consider flexible zoning ~~standards to promote housing options that meet current and future needs to allow prevailing lot size to remain and smaller lot sizes to be allowed as decided by Council decision.~~ Establish parameters for design characteristics such as height, lot coverage, home design features, and setbacks.

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Goal 3.2 The City of Tukwila has safe, healthy, affordable homes for all residents in Tukwila.

Policies

- 3.2.1 Provide zoning that allows a variety of housing throughout the City to allow for diverse, equitable neighborhoods.
- 3.2.2 Encourage a full range of housing opportunities for all population segments, including very-low income households earning less than 30% AMI, through actions including, but not limited to, revising the Tukwila's zoning map and development codes as appropriate, to enable a wide variety of housing types to be built.
- 3.2.3 Provide sufficient appropriate zoning for housing of all types, including government-assisted housing, housing for low-income families, manufactured housing, multi-family housing, and group homes and foster care facilities, subject to conditions that appropriately integrate them into existing neighborhoods.
- 3.2.4 Work with the owners and managers of Tukwila's new and existing permanent or long-term low-income housing to maximize desirability, long-term affordability, and connection with the community.

- Explore acquiring property to land bank for affordable housing.
- Develop specific statements regarding location, type, and characteristics of desired housing affordable to a variety of incomes to present to local for-profit and non-profit developers.
- Include supportive services, including but not limited to, employment training and/or other economic development services, in affordable housing programs.
- Partner with non-profit organizations and for-profit developers to acquire, rehabilitate, construct, preserve, and maintain permanent affordable housing and support services.
- Explore and develop incentive zoning, a housing trust fund, density bonuses, parking exemptions, deferred or reduced payment of impact fees, multi-family tax exemptions and/or other tools to develop or maintain affordable housing that meets the needs of the community, specifically units sized and priced for low and very-low income residents.
- Participate at the regional level, by supporting a South King County Housing & Neighborhood Planner position to work collaboratively with the Planning, Code Enforcement, and Human Services divisions. This position would aid in the achievement of identified housing needs. Responsibilities could include: pursuing and overseeing grant opportunities, developing relationships with for-profit and non-profit stakeholders for city and regional affordable housing development, increasing representation in regional efforts to fund affordable housing, supporting land use and rental housing programs to improve the condition of affordable housing for Tukwila's residents, and exploring establishing a neighborhood council/liaison program.

Goal 3.3 The City of Tukwila supports and collaborates with other jurisdictions and organizations to assess housing needs, coordinate funding, and preserve and create affordable housing opportunities.

Policies

- 3.3.1 Support the equitable distribution of regional funds, such as Community Development Block Grants and other federal, state, and county funding, to support needed affordable housing.
- 3.3.2 In a “State of Housing” report periodically review regional low-income housing goals to evaluate the City’s compliance with regional standards and to ensure that the City’s affordable housing units are being preserved and maintained. Adjust policies as needed if affordable housing goals are not being met.
- 3.3.3 Continue supporting very-low, low and moderate income housing, as defined by King County income levels, to address the countywide need by supporting regional affordable housing development and preservation efforts.

Implementation Strategies

- Partner with other jurisdictions to support regional funding for affordable housing that serves homeless individuals and families, and those earning less than 30% of the area median income.
- Engage with non-profit developers and King County to pursue Federal and philanthropic funds for affordable housing.
- Enhance and encourage effective partnerships between land use planners and human service planners.
- Foster relationships with owners of privately-owned multi-family housing to encourage their participation in voucher programs and partner with them to preserve and enhance safe, healthy, and affordable housing options.
- Support and encourage legislation at the county, state, and federal level that promotes affordable housing goals.

Goal 3.4 The City of Tukwila has an improved and continually improving housing stock in support of enhanced neighborhood quality.

Policies

- 3.4.1 Continue to improve the condition of rental housing through administration of the rental licensing program.
- 3.4.2 Continue to support the maintenance, weatherization, rehabilitation, and long-term preservation or replacement of existing housing for low and moderate income residents.

SIDEBAR: Rental Housing Inspection Program

The Rental Housing Inspection Program, implemented in 2011, requires all rental unit owners to obtain an annual residential rental business license and complete an inspection every 4 years. Rental units must meet code standards, and violations must be addressed within 30 days. The program seeks to improve substandard and unsanitary residential buildings that do not meet state and local housing and technical codes.

The end of 2014 marked the end of the first four-year cycle of inspections, meaning that inspections were completed for rentals in each quadrant of the City. A total of 3,641 inspections were conducted during this period, 148 of which failed and were brought into compliance to pass a subsequent inspection.

Implementation Strategies

- Enforce the International Property Maintenance Code.
- Advocate for rehabilitation and weatherization programs for rental units.
- Continue the Residential Rental Licensing and Inspection Program.
- Explore adoption and enforcement of the National Healthy Housing Standard.
- Explore partnerships with non-profits to facilitate the purchase and upgrade of poorly maintained rental housing.
- Support the education of tenants about cost-efficient choices they can make to improve the health of their housing.

- Educate property owners about available resources they can access to improve their rental housing.
- Explore establishing a Housing Trust Fund to assist low-income homeowners connect to sewer.

Goal 3.5 The City of Tukwila includes a full range of housing for persons in all stages of life and for all members of our community.

Policies

- 3.5.1 Adapt housing design standards to address the needs of all populations.
- 3.5.2 Assist in providing residents of the community with the human services, economic development, and transportation needed to increase access to housing options.
- 3.5.3 Continue to develop relationships with populations that have been historically underserved and continue to support investment to better serve their needs.

SIDEBAR: Minor Home Repair Program

The City administers the Minor Home Repair Program which provides and promotes the repair and maintenance of housing for low and moderate income home owners. The program is funded through a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). The City receives approximately \$25,000 in annual funding and 20-25 homeowners use the program every year. While this program is a great resource for residents, Tukwila Human Services estimates the program only meets about 10% of existing need for home repair and maintenance. Additional funding and partnerships can help to improve the look and quality of housing throughout the city.

Implementation Strategies

- Continue to support and support the Community Connector/Community Liaison program.

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- Pursue collaborations and meaningful dialogue with organizations that work with diverse and historically underserved populations.
- Continue to coordinate City planning and programming among departments as related to housing options and access.

Goal 3.6 Increase long-term residency in the City.

Policies

- 3.6.1 Encourage long-term residency by improving neighborhood quality, health, and safety.
- 3.6.2 Encourage long-term residency by providing a range of home ownership options for persons in all stages of life.
- 3.6.3 Support neighborhood associations and groups that actively work to improve neighborhood quality and strengthen sense of community within the neighborhood.
- 3.6.4 Continue and expand partnerships with the school districts serving Tukwila students, in support of programs that seek to improve school performance and student success.

SIDEBAR: Family Sized Housing

A city that is good for children is good for all. Family-sized, family-friendly housing units contain more than two bedrooms and include features critical for families, such as spaces where family members can gather for meals and other activities, and where children can play and engage in activities such as homework; easy access to outdoor play and recreations space, and sufficient storage. Many types of low-density housing, such as cottage or clustered housing and duplexes, provide compatible, attractive and affordable alternatives to traditional single-family homes. Allowing a broader mix of housing in single-family neighborhoods with access to transit and near schools, parks, and other child-oriented infrastructure, can enable and attract a larger number of families with a wider range of incomes to live in Tukwila.

Implementation Strategies

- Encourage and help market private and public assistance and education programs for first time homebuyers.
- Design guidelines.
- Development regulations.
- Develop small neighborhood grants for clean-up and community-building events.
- Explore creating and supporting a neighborhood liaison program to help develop neighborhood associations.
- Develop relationships with existing homeowner and neighborhood associations.
- Include shared public spaces in new public buildings in neighborhoods that allow neighborhoods gatherings.
- Develop a program that allows street closures for block parties.
- Develop a neighborhood block party “kit” for community use to encourage neighborhood interaction.

- Work with school districts serving Tukwila students to promote a positive image and reputation of Tukwila's schools and educational programs.

Related Information

Washington State Housing Needs Assessment

<http://www.commerce.wa.gov/commissions/AffordableHousingAdvisoryBoard/AffordableHousingNeedsStudy/Pages/default.aspx>

VISION 2040

<http://www.psrc.org/growth/vision2040/pub/vision2040-document/>

King County Countywide Planning Policies

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/property/permits/codes/growth/GMPC/CPs.aspx>

Tukwila Strategic Plan

<http://www.tukwilawa.gov/strategicplan.html>

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