

Frequently Asked Questions On the Tukwila Urban Center Plan

1. What *is* the Tukwila Urban Center (TUC)? The TUC encompasses the area known as “Southcenter”, and is bounded by I-405 to the north, I-5 to the west, Tukwila city limits to the east, and approximately South 180th St. to the south (See Figure 1).

2. What’s the “problem” with the Southcenter area? Why is the City trying to “fix” it? Southcenter is not “broken”. However, we are at a critical juncture in Southcenter’s future. The City needs to actively coordinate our response to a number of significant transportation and land use pressures that provide both risks and opportunities for the long-term well-being of the urban center. These pressures include:

- **Growing competition** in the region in retail, office and entertainment uses (for example, from Kent Station, Renton Landing, and the Burien Town Center). We need to determine how to maintain/increase the Southcenter area’s current market share.
- **On-going redevelopment** of existing commercial and warehouse/distribution uses. We need to consider how to make the most of these investments, address associated traffic impacts, and, given limited funding, identify and prioritize supporting actions and investments.
- **Future Bus** routes need to directly serve, rather than bypass, the urban center, including the commuter rail station and the transit (bus) center on Andover Park West.
- **Design of a permanent Sounder Commuter Rail and Amtrak Station.** This station is predicted to become one of the busiest train stations in Washington. We can capitalize on development opportunities associated with this site, and strengthen local and regional transit connections.

By setting forth a redevelopment strategy *now* that addresses these issues, we can influence these projects and protect our interests and investments in the urban center.

3. Congestion is getting worse. How is the City going to deal with transportation issues affecting the Southcenter area?

Transportation issues are among our biggest concerns. Continued economic success in the Southcenter area depends on:

- **Getting in and out of the urban center easily.** Traffic on surrounding interstates is steadily growing and congestion is increasing. We need to investigate the possibility of additional access points into the center.
- **Making it easier to move around within the urban center.** Peak times for congestion are the noon hour during the week, and Saturday’s congestion is even greater around the Mall. We need to find ways to reduce congestion, for example, by adding more east-west streets to improve our public street network.
- **Providing other options for getting to and around the area - by foot, bicycle and transit, as well as by car.** The predominant way to get to the center will always be by automobile, particularly for shopping. As the area grows, employees, office workers, residents, bicyclers and pedestrians will seek other ways to travel

here. We need to work with regional agencies to develop the infrastructure and services that support a range of transportation choices that are just as viable as by car. Improvements could include a transit center, trails, shuttle buses, and stronger connections to the airport, light rail, commuter rail, and Amtrak passenger station.

4. What is the TUC plan? A strategic plan that will guide the transition from the current pattern of suburban development to a more urban one. To accomplish this, the plan will **reinforce the area's existing strengths and open new opportunities**. The plan will also foster the type of high density, pedestrian oriented development served by high capacity transit called for in urban centers, as set forth by the City's comprehensive plan, the Tukwila Economic Development Task Force, and the Washington State Growth Management Act.

The TUC plan will include a new set of development standards and design guidelines for the urban center area.

4. How will this plan benefit business and property owners?

As a result of the plan, it will be easier and more enjoyable to do business in the center due to:

- Improved access and circulation for customers, employees and delivery trucks
- A higher quality environment for workers, shoppers, visitors and residents.
- Continued economic strength, which will attract new businesses and support existing ones.

At the same time the City is preparing the TUC plan, we will conduct a detailed review of associated environmental impacts. This more detailed review of impacts early in the process will result in:

- **More certainty** early on in the permitting application process as to how environmental impacts are addressed and the City's mitigation requirements.
- **Reduced** permit-processing time.