

*City of Tukwila, Washington*  
**Public Workshop #1**  
**On**  
**Tukwila Urban Center Plan**

**Summary of Public Comments**

DoubleTree Suites  
May 21, 2003  
1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The first public workshop on the Tukwila Urban Center Plan was held on May 21, 2003. Approximately sixty people attended. The workshop focused on presenting how existing land use, economic and transportation conditions and opportunities could shape the various directions that the Southcenter area can begin to grow. A series of questions was posed to the attendees regarding the future of the area. Public responses to these questions were recorded as “bullet points” during the workshop. These comments have been organized below into four sections: Urban Design, Transit & Transportation, Market and General. Also included is a summary of written comments received after the workshop.

**Questions to the Community:**

1. How do you react to what you saw?
2. What do you want to see more of? What works? What doesn't? What do you want to see less of?
3. What do you see in your mind as success?

**Workshop Comments:**

**Urban Design**

- Uses bordering the TUC on the north side of I-405 should be part of TUC area.
- Underground infrastructure such as storm drainage is hindering opportunities for development while fiber optics need to be considered for future development; all infrastructure considerations should be part of the ongoing planning process.

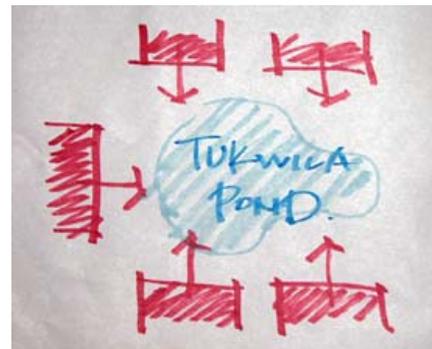


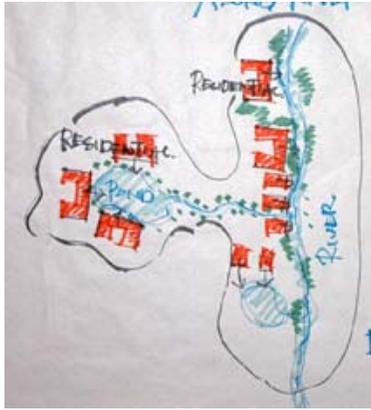
- How can the “public realm” emerge? Is it huge buildings; changes in Land use, or Code, or Zoning?  
(Response: Zoning requirements and market power.)
- The Idea of “District” as shown in Land Use & Development Opportunities diagram is a good idea; good for retailers. The size of the existing blocks is a point of frustration. The spine connecting Tukwila Parkway on the north through the shopping center to the south is intriguing idea. This is also supported by an east-west spine connecting Strander Boulevard to the Sounder Station.
- Southcenter Parkway can be another good spine. The idea of a shuttle bus is good. Freeway access is a problem.



- There could be clustered nighttime activities with theaters as anchors to draw people.
- Residential is an important component in an urban center, to create nighttime population and safety. Detroit and Phoenix moved residential uses out of their centers, but there was a lack of safety and activity; residential is now being re-introduced in these communities.

- What type of residential would be appropriate? The Plan cannot dictate housing types but can identify areas, which would be conducive as locations for specific residential housing types: river-oriented townhouses, flats, condos, at a cost range of \$180 to \$190/SF, but no high-rise residential in the near future.
- Create amenity, to make it attractive for housing (and other uses).
- Should be a “town”.
- Centralize Tukwila Pond; make the Pond a major focus.
  - Plano, TX: community with focus on a lake with major plaza.
  - Las Colinas and Fort Worth also have lakes and plazas as focus - large draw for people.
- There are not enough pedestrian connections from the hotels on the eastside of the Green River to TUC center. Should there be an additional bridge for pedestrians?
- The Green River Trail is an asset, but underutilized, as uses and buildings back onto the trail.





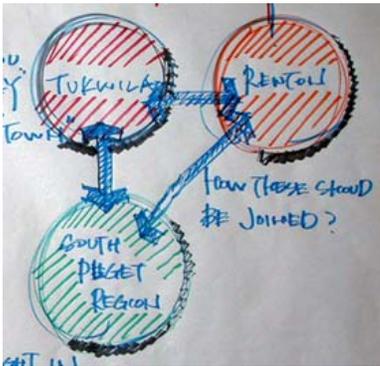
- Location is a major TUC asset! But accessibility is an issue.
- Civic Uses: should City Hall be in the TUC?
- Residential uses along the river and Tukwila Pond is a good idea, but not in anywhere else in the center of TUC. From a marketing point of view residential uses need to be located close to amenities.
- Residential and civic uses surrounding the pond; what about the pond's sensitive ecology? (Audubon Society)

## Transit & Transportation

- Residential – if people don't have a car, how can they get there?
- Two well-utilized transit routes already exist. They should be integrated into the area: north south (Seattle-Auburn) and east west (Renton-SeaTac).
- Traveling through the CBD without traffic congestion is important.
- Auto-oriented uses (such as auto repair) in the TUC depend on people getting there by car. Customers need to be able to reach other TUC destinations while they wait for their cars (31/2 hours).
- Coming in/out by car has to be better. Ease access and circulation conflict.
- Tukwila needs a bus system that moves people in and around the TUC – circulatory bus system.
- Commuter, shuttle-type service connecting facilities (auto-dealers to malls) and car pool area will be great assets.
- Tukwila is located at the crossroads of access by car, air and sea – this is a great asset.
- Invest in transit to provide easy accessibility to future destinations in the TUC.
- Addresses (and finding your way) need to be clear and consistent (often the same street has multiple names).
- Cars need to be able to move freely through the TUC (center) – don't create plans that would make it less accessible for cars.
- Accessibility is crucial for office businesses.
- Need "super" accessibility!



## Market



- Provide options for people to live and work (supported by multimodal accessibility).
  - Vacancy rate for office/ retail: “habitual” or “seasonal”?
  - What type of residential? Where do you put a Safeway?
  - How should Tukwila, Renton and South Puget be tied together in the region? Job creation with economic development (Renton/ Tukwila/ Kent) – it is of great importance to preserve jobs.
- Nighttime activity – what kind?
  - Get more people into the area.
  - Office growth should be oriented towards the center of TUC, instead of southward.
  - What will happen to businesses that are auto-oriented if more people are brought in?
- We are a mix of uses.
  - Tukwila does not have a strong “regional voice”. Tukwila is perceived as a 17,000 people community.
  - Retailers at south end of Southcenter Parkway consider it a good business day if 40% of the customers arrive by 3pm.
  - Tukwila makes money!!
  - What is success? Bellevue with high-rises and mix of uses.
  - Question: To bring in more people is what you want or what you need? Response: I think you should leave it, as it is, no need for residential (businesses that rely on car customers as Firestone and car dealers thrive as they are).
  - Response: Bring in more retail!
  - Consider other developments outside of TUC as potential liability – Segale property and their planning needs to be considered!
  - Identity of place rather than image of absentee landlords.
  - Need market support.
  - Who can stay and who needs to go to transform Tukwila Urban Center? Retail has to stay.
  - Protect employment in TUC.



## General

- A lot of family activities and a sense of community would be a great asset for the TUC.
- Residents should attend the TUC workshops, not only business representatives.



## Summary of Written Comments Received:

- Do not push out warehouse/ industrial. Keep in as much employment as possible.
- Do not drop the idea of having a light rail connection.
- Hotel occupancy is down. Need to do something to get folks to stay in TUC hotels, especially on weekends. Occupancy rates are terrible, particularly from Thursday through Sunday. The City has spent millions of dollars a year to market hotels in SeaTac and Tukwila.
- Do not turn the central Tukwila core into the ugly set of high-rises that now pollute the central Bellevue core. These buildings obliterate the view and beauty of the area. One of the strengths of the Tukwila area is its accessibility to smaller companies trying to get started, and to the wide diversity of people who live and work in the area. Wants to maintain a down home ambience. Envisions a more developed waterfront incorporating riverfront office & specialty retail. East side of river for hotels. Easy access to the river from the Southcenter area and Southcenter Parkway. Wants to find a way to find a viable place in the area for warehouse/distribution/light industrial facilities – don't push these uses out.