

The success of the Urban Center will be supported by the city actions and investments outlined in this chapter of the Tukwila Urban Center Plan. Unlike private investment, City actions and investments can be strategically timed, scheduled and directed to specific areas and projects to further revitalization. The intertwining of regulatory control (contained in Book II) with the strategic investment of limited public resources (planned in this chapter, Book III) is intended to accelerate the redevelopment strategies (contained in Book I) and add to the appeal and success of Southcenter as a great place.

City actions will be guided by the Goals and Principles described in Book I, flexible enough to allow for opportunities that cannot be predicted, and clear enough to prioritize actions and investments on an ongoing basis. As vision becomes reality, new and different actions may be required and implemented. **Planned projects will be undertaken as opportunities and resources permit.**

Capital Improvement Projects & Actions

The City will invest in capital improvements or will work jointly with the public sector and/or private sector to create public spaces, new streets, and streetscape conditions that are supportive of envisioned development, will enhance the pedestrian environment, and create an attractive setting for the City's urban center. Table 3.1 Capital Improvement Projects & Actions identifies a set of actions and capital improvement projects related to transportation, circulation, and pedestrian amenities that will benefit the Urban Center and support the anticipated levels of development.

- The Public Space and Amenity projects are specifically intended to instigate the types of land use changes in the northern part of the TUC that are envisioned by the community – attracting housing, stimulating a new level and quality of development within the TUC, creating more pedestrian-friendly areas, and strengthening pedestrian connections between activity areas.
- The actions related to Streets, Circulation and Mass Transit are required to support the goals of the TUC Plan for enhancing access for transit and automobiles, breaking up the mega-blocks in the planned pedestrian-oriented areas, improving circulation within and access to the urban center, improving transit service and facilities, and enhancing streetscapes.
- The Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility projects are intended to extend the network of existing trails and paths within the TUC, connect activity areas (including Tukwila Station, the Green River and Tukwila Pond to neighborhoods and shopping areas), and provide a viable transportation alternative to the car as the area becomes more pedestrian-friendly.

These actions are prioritized in terms of level of need and timing. Table 3.1 Capital Improvement Projects & Actions should be viewed as a flexible planning tool that allows re-prioritization of projects based available resources and changing circumstances, needs and conditions. More detailed project descriptions of the identified capital improvements are provided in the following sections.

TABLE 3.1 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS & ACTIONS

I. Public Space and Amenities
1. Pedestrian infrastructure/path between Baker Blvd and Tukwila Station
<i>Short Term Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pedestrian bridge over the Green River ○ Pedestrian path leading to Tukwila Station ○ Pedestrian underpass beneath the UP & BNSF railroads (City of Renton & Sound Transit project)
<i>Mid Term Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Construct an at-grade, signalized pedestrian connector across West Valley Hwy (City of Tukwila & WSDOT project)
2. Green River Riverwalk
<i>Short Term Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Planning, design & engineering study
<i>Mid Term Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Construct Riverwalk
3. Tukwila Pond Improvements
<i>Short Term Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Path/floating boardwalk connecting east & west sides ○ Wetland buffer enhancement along APW ○ Tukwila Pond Park enhancements
<i>Mid Term Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wetland buffer enhancements
<i>Long Term Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tukwila Pond Esplanade
4. Tukwila Pond Water Quality
<i>Short Term Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Alum treatments, air circulation, & aquatic vegetation plantings
<i>Mid Term Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improve bioswales on north side of pond
<i>Long Term Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Monitor water quality & bioswales ○ Install alternative stormwater treatment on north side
5. TUC public parking Structure
<i>Short Term Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Feasibility & location study
6. Multifamily Housing Incentives
<i>Short Term Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Feasibility study & implementation

II. Street & Circulation Network & Facilities
1. Street and Circulation Network Improvements
<i>Short Term Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wayfinding program • Finely grained street network • On-street parking in Pedestrian-Oriented Areas • Klickitat/Southcenter Parkway Improvements • New S.168th St & Andover Park West/Tukwila Pond frontage improvements
<i>Mid Term Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend Strander Blvd (Cities of Renton & Tukwila project)
<i>Long Term Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements needed to accommodate forecasted growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Widen westbound Southcenter Blvd between the I-5 ramps and 61st Ave ○ Add eastbound lane on Tukwila Pkwy between Andover Park West & East ○ Add northbound right turn lane on Andover Park East south of Tukwila Pkwy • WSDOT I-405 widening projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Widen the eastbound & westbound approaches to the intersection of Southcenter Boulevard & West Valley Highway ○ Extend northbound left turn lane on West Valley Highway, south of Southcenter Boulevard ○ Reconstruct the 61st Avenue and 66th Avenue South overpasses ○ Extend Tukwila Parkway from 66th Avenue South to West Valley Highway

III. Mass Transit Network & Facilities
1. Capital Improvements
<i>Short Term Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southcenter Transit Center (City of Tukwila, King County Metro & private development projects) • Permanent Tukwila Commuter Rail Station (Sound Transit project) • Bus shelters in locations with high ridership (King County Metro project)
<i>Mid Term Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TUC trolley
2. Service Improvements
<i>Short Term Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Route 126, 128, 140, 154 & 155 span, frequency & routing improvements (King County Metro project) • Sounder Commuter Rail frequency improvements (Sound Transit project)
<i>Long Term Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amtrak frequency improvements (Amtrak project) • BRT Routes (King County project)

IV. Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities
1. Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements
<i>Short Term Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wayfinding program
<i>Mid Term Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bicycle lanes on Baker Blvd, Andover Park E, Minkler Blvd, S. 180th, Tukwila Pkwy, and S. 168th • Pedestrian Signal Crossing Enhancements at key intersections
<i>Long Term Actions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convert Rail Corridors to Trails

3.1 PUBLIC SPACE AND AMENITY PROJECTS

A key element of the Tukwila Urban Center Plan is the creation of a strong public realm with a variety of public places that offer a wide range of experiences and settings to choose from. While many of these places will be created as a part of new development over time, there are several open spaces - public parks, plazas, new streets and pedestrian ways- that are critical to the creation of this public realm.

The TUC Plan implements the community's intention to place highest priority on actions that support and promote the continued success and enhancement of the northern half of the Plan area. A primary aspect of this is to facilitate the addition of high quality public amenity and recreation space to attract housing development, stimulate new levels and quality of development, and complement the retail and other mix of uses in the TUC. As such, the northern TUC is intended to be the most public part of the TUC, containing three key destinations – the existing Mall, Tukwila Pond, and the Sounder Commuter Rail/Amtrak station. Improvements will be focused on enhancing and connecting these major destinations, so that they may be easily accessed and enjoyed.

3.1.1 PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE/ PATH BETWEEN BAKER BOULEVARD & TUKWILA STATION

1) Short Term Actions

To insure that the neighborhoods and primary anchors of the TUC are well-connected to transit, the City shall pursue the development of new access ways and pedestrian paths leading to Tukwila Station. These new public ways will link with required streets provided by private development, to ensure a fine-grained network resulting in improved public access to the train station from all parts of the TUC.

The City's pedestrian connection between TUC and Tukwila Station consists of three major components - a pedestrian bridge over the Green River, a pedestrian underpass through the relocated Union Pacific and Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad right-of-ways to access the station platforms, and a pedestrian path connecting the Mall, bridge, underpass, and the station.

The primary components of this network the City will pursue include:

a) Pedestrian Bridge over the Green River

i) Elements:

- (1) Location: The bridge must provide a connection across the Green River to link Baker Boulevard to the train station. The bridge shall be directly accessible from the Baker Boulevard/pedestrian path and the Green River Trail.
- (2) Dimensions: The bridge shall be a minimum twenty (20) foot wide, providing separate lanes for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- (3) Lighting: Sufficient lighting will be provided to create a safe and pleasant night-time environment. Along the bridge, pedestrian height street lights shall be provided at a maximum spacing of every 60 feet.
- (4) Design: Decorative bridge railings and integrated lighting will give the bridge a distinctive character and will add an attractive local element to the Green River.

b) Pedestrian Path leading to Tukwila Station

i) Elements:

- (1) Location: The pedestrian path will link Baker Boulevard, the pedestrian bridge, and Tukwila station, terminating at the western entrance to the station. As it leaves Christensen Road, the path should be generally aligned with the Bow Lake Pipeline right-of-way; however alignment is subject to change to ensure alignment with the pedestrian bridge. The path shall also provide connections to the Green River Trail, the planned Riverwalk along the Green River, and the Interurban Trail.
- (2) The portion of the path from the western boundary of the Sound Transit property to the pedestrian underpass will be constructed by Sound Transit. The City shall coordinate with Sound Transit to ensure that the path is appropriately aligned and configured to achieve the City's goals.
- (3) Dimensions: The pedestrian way shall be a minimum twenty (20) foot wide, providing separate lanes for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- (4) Lighting: Sufficient lighting will be provided to create a safe and pleasant night-time environment. A combination of street lights and bollard lights should be used, with pedestrian height street lights shall be provided at a maximum spacing of every 60 feet.
- (5) Design: Special materials like concrete pavers or decomposed granite should be used where possible along the pedestrian path. Both sides of the pedestrian way shall be landscaped, and lined with grass, shrubs, and trees.
- (6) Accessibility: The pedestrian path shall meet all ADA requirements and connect to adjacent public streets and pathways.

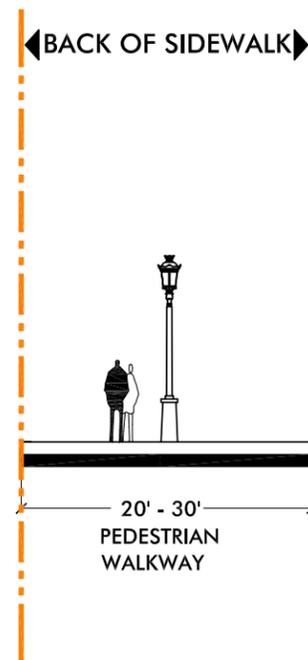


FIG. 3.1.1 PEDESTRIAN PATHWAY

c) Pedestrian Underpass beneath the Union Pacific and BNSF Railroad Tracks (City of Renton & Sound Transit project)

i) Elements (illustrated in Figure 3.1.1):

The City will coordinate with the City of Renton and Sound Transit during the design and construction of the Strander Boulevard Extension and the permanent commuter rail station to ensure that the pedestrian underpass beneath the railroad berms achieves the following:

- (1) Location: The UPRR underpass must connect the pedestrian path (above) under the railroad tracks, to the station platforms.
- (2) Dimensions: The underpass shall be a minimum twenty (20) foot wide. The length of underpass below grade should be as short as possible to maximize visibility and safety.
- (3) Lighting: Sufficient lighting will be provided to create a safe and pleasant night-time environment. Along the underpass, ceiling or wall-mounted lights shall be provided at a maximum spacing of every 30 feet.
- (4) Design & Amenities: The underpass shall be well-designed and a sufficient amount of amenities provided to create an attractive, pleasant, and high quality environment for pedestrians accessing the platforms.
- (5) Accessibility: The underpass shall meet all ADA requirements.

2) Mid Term Actions

a) An at-grade, signalized pedestrian connector across West Valley Highway (City of Tukwila & WSDOT project)

West Valley Highway acts as a barrier to the pedestrian path linking the Mall to the Station. To span this barrier and facilitate pedestrian and bicycle circulation, the City will coordinate with WSDOT installing an at-grade connector on West Valley Highway.

i) Elements:

- (1) Use jug handle turns on approach, with grade to slow and orient bicyclists toward threat.
- (2) In median, use 45 degree cut to orient trail users toward threat.
- (3) Use medians on approach to fully separate directions of travel.
- (4) Use lean rails to assist crossings.
- (5) Colorize center lanes for 200 feet before and after median.
- (6) Maintain current number of lanes.

3.1.2 GREEN RIVER RIVERWALK

The Green River Riverwalk shall be developed adjacent to the east and west sides of the Green River, creating a comprehensive public environment for both pedestrians and bicyclists along the river, as well as stimulating redevelopment of the parcels at the riverfront. Over time, a “loop” shall be established down the west side of the River (south of Tukwila Parkway), crossing the River via Strander Boulevard, traveling up the east side of the River, and eventually crossing over the River on the north end via the extended Tukwila Parkway. The pedestrian bridge (described under Public Space & Amenity projects, above) will also be connected to the Riverwalk and provide a midpoint river crossing between Strander and Tukwila Parkway.

1) Short Term Actions

a) Feasibility and Location Study

The City shall advance this project by preparing a planning, design and engineering study for the Riverwalk. With design and engineering completed, the project will be ready and competitive for construction grants, and/or construction by private developers as redevelopment occurs along the River (as required in Section 18.28.042.).

i) Elements (Illustrated in Figure 3.1.2):

- (1) Location: The first phase of the Riverwalk installed by the City shall be created along the west side of the river on the parcel located alongside Christensen Road between Tukwila Parkway and a riverfront park on the north side of Riverview Plaza. Additional phases of the Riverwalk may be installed by the City on private property as resources become available.
- (2) Dimensions: The Riverwalk shall be a minimum twenty-five (25) foot wide.
- (3) Seating: A continuous seating wall shall be provided along the riverside edge of the Riverwalk. The wall shall be a maximum of eighteen (18) inches high from the finished grade of the Riverwalk, and approximately twenty-four (24) inches deep to provide comfortable seating. This seating wall will be broken at regular intervals to provide connections to the adjoining pedestrian and bicycle path at the water’s edge. It will also be used to mediate between elevation changes.
- (4) Lighting: Sufficient lighting will be provided to create a safe and pleasant night-time environment. Along the Riverwalk, pedestrian height pole top street lights shall be installed in plinths that occur along the seating wall at a maximum spacing of every 60 feet. Plinths should be approximately thirty (30) inches square and project from the seating wall.
- (5) Amenities: Street furnishings such as benches and trash receptacles should be provided.
- (6) Design: Between the river and the Riverwalk, areas should be landscaped with groundcover, shrubs and trees native to the Pacific Northwest to maintain a riparian environment along the river. The design and materials of the Riverwalk should reflect the character of the Pacific Northwest – see Section II.5.
- (7) Accessibility: The Riverwalk shall meet all ADA requirements.

2) Mid Term Actions

When resources are available, the City shall advance the construction of the Riverwalk at a key location to be determined by the planning, design and engineering study. As additional resources become available, the City may also elect to instigate redevelopment of the riverfront by assisting initial projects with the construction of this Riverwalk.

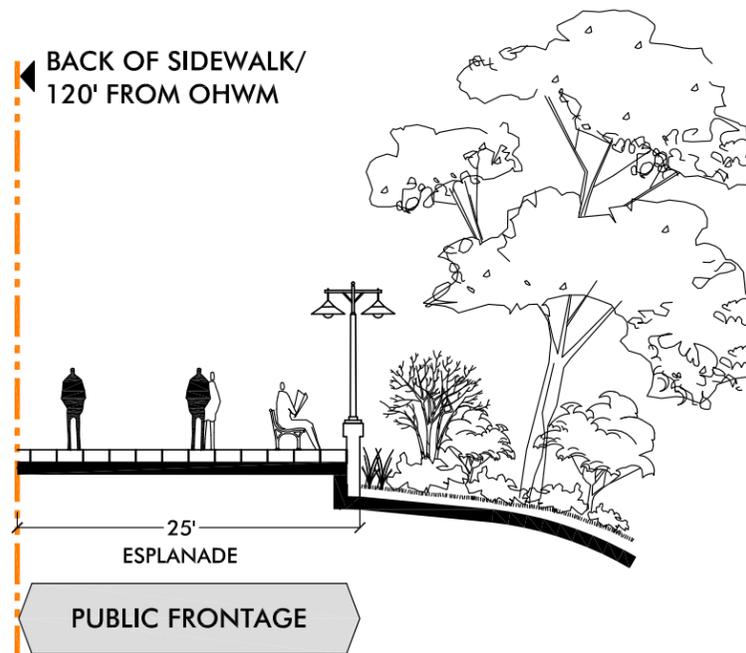


FIG. 3.1.2 GREEN RIVER RIVERWALK SECTION

3.1.3 TUKWILA POND IMPROVEMENTS

Tukwila Pond Park is a 25-acre City-owned park in the middle of the TUC’s retail district. Nearly 23 acres of the park have been left in a natural state and serve as a passive recreation and wildlife preservation area. The westernmost 2.3 acres have been developed and feature picnic tables, trails, viewing platforms, green belt and restrooms. About 19 acres of the park are open water, used by a variety of waterfowl and other birds and wildlife all year round.

In 2006, members of the Tukwila City Council, Planning Commission, Parks Commission, and City staff participated in an intensive design workshop to generate ideas and a vision for the future of Tukwila Pond, which were then incorporated into the Tukwila Pond Conceptual Design Report. The conceptual design is based on the intersection of the urban environment with the natural environment and the public’s interaction with both. The intersection of these two environments provides an opportunity to explore the edge of each and for people to weave in and out of this edge. The design encourages pedestrians to walk “on the edge” along the eastern and southern boundaries of the Park; to sit “at the edge” along the northern shore; and be “within the edge” in the Tukwila Pond Park. Some of the key elements of the design include installation of a boardwalk across the northern edge of the pond, walkways on the southern end of the pond property, extension of viewing platforms, and additional viewpoints into the pond and adjacent wetlands.

Improvements to Tukwila Pond Park should be accomplished simultaneously with the pond water quality improvements described in Section 3.1.4. Water Quality.

1) Short Term Actions

The City will pursue the following projects in the first phase of Tukwila Pond improvements:

- a) **A path/floating boardwalk connecting the east and west sides of Tukwila pond to Andover Park West via the Pond’s northern edge.**
- b) **Wetland buffer enhancement along Andover Park West, including installation of a woodland trail through the buffer and interpretive signage.**
- c) **Tukwila Pond Park enhancements on the western edge of the Pond (additional pathways, extension of viewing platforms, additional plantings, wetland restoration).**

2) Long Term Actions

The City’s final phase of Tukwila Pond related actions include the enhancement of the northern edge of the Pond. The City will coordinate with developers to ensure that these projects take place as new retail or mixed-use development occurs on parcels adjacent to the park.

a) Tukwila Pond Esplanade

An attractive public esplanade will be designed and funded (in part or in its entirety) by the City, when the parcels at the northern pond edge are redeveloped with new pond-fronting retail development. The esplanade shall be located on private property adjacent to the existing retaining wall, and shall be integrated with enfronting retail and restaurant activities, providing an active waterside promenade to augment the shopping, eating and other uses in the TUC. A primary facet of its intended role is its ultimate envisioned connection to the regional shopping area and the Mall to its north.

i) Elements:

- (1) Location: This esplanade shall be located along the pond’s northern shore, and stretch from the park along the western side of the pond to the public sidewalk on Andover Park West on its eastern end.
- (2) Orientation: The esplanade shall be connected to Strander Boulevard and to the Mall along a grand public street, designed with public amenities and preferably with a central median as a linear open space connection.
- (3) Dimensions: The esplanade shall be a minimum twenty-five (25) foot wide.
- (4) Lighting: Sufficient lighting will be provided to create a safe and pleasant night-time environment. Along the esplanade, pedestrian height double-head pendant street lights shall be provided at a maximum spacing of every 60 feet.
- (5) Amenities: Street furnishings such as benches, trash receptacles, kiosks and stands for vendors, banners, and flowering pots will be integrated into the design.
- (6) Design: The northern esplanade is envisioned as an urban water edge, with hardscape, street trees and lighting, and other street amenities. The creation of a grand monument at the lynchpin of the Mall connection and the pond edge is recommended as a focal point and central gathering place. The pond edge beyond the esplanade shall maintain the pond’s riparian environment. The design and materials of the esplanade should reflect the character of the Pacific Northwest, with wood deck and railings to reflecting Pacific Northwest design character – see Section 18.28.085.
- (7) Accessibility: The esplanade shall meet all ADA requirements.

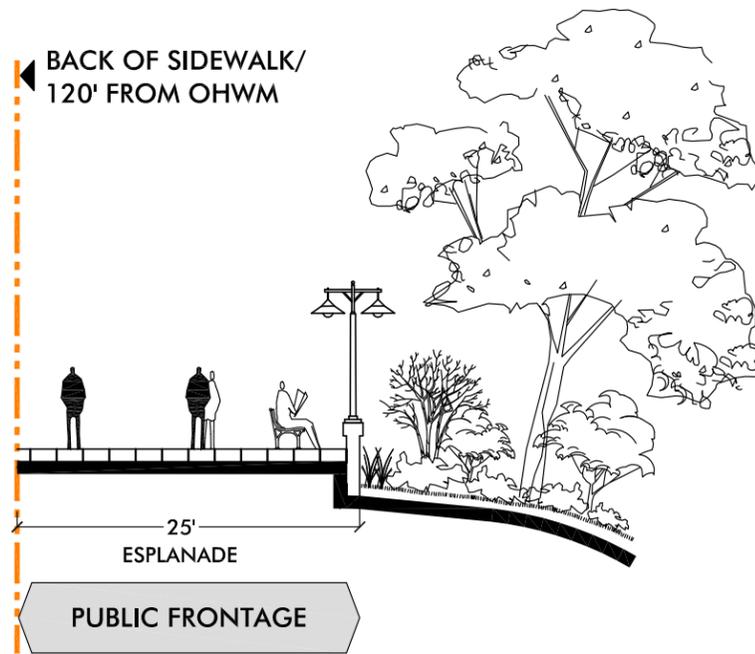


FIG. 3.1.3 TUKWILA POND ESPLANADE SECTION

3.1.4 TUKWILA POND WATER QUALITY

Tukwila Pond suffers from poor water quality, primarily due to elevated levels of phosphorus, which cause algal blooms in the dry summer and early fall months. This is due to a combination of factors that include: lack of freshwater input and air circulation through the pond in the dry months of the year; inputs of phosphorus from seasonal stormwater run-off, and accumulation of phosphorus in the sediments of the pond during the year, which serve as an ongoing “source” of this nutrient to the pond water. In addition, the lack of shade and the shallowness of the pond allow high water temperatures in the summer and light penetration through the whole water column, both of which promote algal growth. These conditions also contribute to low levels of dissolved oxygen in the water, a factor that limits fish and other aquatic organisms and can cause fish kills. Algal blooms, in addition to being visually unattractive, can cause unpleasant odors and can become toxic (to pets or humans, if ingested).

1) Short Term Actions

Water quality improvements to be implemented by the City shall include the following measures:

- i) Alum treatment (a substance that is pumped into the pond, settles to the bottom and prevents phosphorus from being released into the water column);
- ii) Air circulation using pumps to push air out into the pond along lines laid on the bottom to improve the levels of dissolved oxygen in the water; and
- iii) Aquatic vegetation plays a significant roll in the water quality of ponds. An increased variety of aquatic vegetation to use excess nutrients, along with the installation of shading wetland vegetation, would moderate algae blooms in the pond, while also increasing diversity for wildlife enhancement.

2) Mid Term Actions

- i) The City will work with property owners on the north side of the pond to improve the functioning of the existing stormwater treatment system (bioswales) thus increasing the retention of phosphorus and other pollutants.

3) Long Term Actions

- i) Once the alum injection and air circulation systems are installed, the City will monitor water quality and will continue to operate the systems during the summer and fall months to maintain the desired water quality in the pond.
- ii) The City will monitor performance of the stormwater bioswales.
- iii) Over the very long term, install alternative stormwater treatment as the area on the north redevelops.

3.1.5 PUBLIC PARKING STRUCTURE

1) Short Term Actions

a) Feasibility and Location Study

Currently an adequate supply of parking exists within the TUC. However, as the area designated for a more urban mix of uses in the TUC intensifies, and businesses are faced with the physical limitations of surface lot and on-street parking, there will be a growing demand for an increase in the supply of conveniently located parking. A public parking structure located on a site in the area designated for pedestrian-friendly, walkable development north of Strander Boulevard, would allow visitors and shoppers to park once and walk to their destinations, and provide additional needed capacity for future growth. The City shall prepare a study investigating the overall feasibility of developing a public parking structure on a site located north of Strander Boulevard in the TUC area, and to determine the most feasible and strategic site for the structure. The study should include the following tasks:

- An assessment of current and future parking demand in the area;
- Parking structure site criteria and analysis;
- Recommendation of preferred site(s) for a parking structure;
- An assessment of the potential for integration of mixed uses into the site(s); and
- Preliminary identification of costs and possible funding sources (e.g., public/private partnership).

3.1.6 MULTIFAMILY HOUSING INCENTIVES

1) Short Term Actions

In addition to investing in amenities that are needed to attract housing (such as enhancing Tukwila Pond and constructing the Riverwalk along the Green River), the City will research the feasibility of implementing financial incentives that would further encourage multifamily housing development in the TUC. One example of this type of program is the multifamily tax abatement program, which forgives property tax payments for a period of time.

3.2 STREET / CIRCULATION NETWORK AND FACILITIES

This section describes actions the City of Tukwila will take to improve the capacity and efficiency of the network of vehicular thoroughfares, in support of existing and new development. The projects will create a more finely grained street network as redevelopment occurs, and improve the pedestrian environment by adding on-street parking in areas planned for higher density development.

Where a regional transportation agency is responsible for an identified capital project or service improvement, the City's role in ensuring that these projects are implemented is described.

3.2.1 STREET AND CIRCULATION NETWORK & FACILITIES

1) Short Term Actions

a) Wayfinding Program

The City will pursue implementing a Wayfinding program to assist drivers in finding their way into and around Southcenter. Signage unique to Tukwila will be placed at key entry points into the directing traffic to key destinations within the TUC. The way finding program will also be used to redistribute traffic off the more congested main north-south corridors and on to alternative routes within Southcenter.

b) Finely Grained Street Network

Arterials are currently spaced approximately 1,200 to 2,500 feet apart to form a grid pattern in the TUC. The blocks are very wide, with few collector streets serving the properties within the blocks. Numerous access driveways and dead-end streets act as collector streets.

New public and private streets will be implemented by the City and/or private developers on an on-going basis as redevelopment of the TUC occurs, based on the requirements set forth in Book II of the Tukwila Urban Center Plan. The added access streets will make the TUC's street grid pattern a more finely grained network, improving mobility for pedestrians and autos. New access streets will also reduce the number of curb cuts needed on the major arterials, thereby reducing the number of traffic accidents. Traffic flows on the arterials will be more orderly and a majority of the left-turns will take place at the signalized intersections.

See Section 18.28.052. for possible streetscape design of Urban Streets, City Streets, and Sub-urban Streets.

c) On-street Parking in the Pedestrian-Oriented Areas (See Urban Form Map, Book II)

The City will reconfigure existing thoroughfares to provide two lanes of on-street parking, two travel lanes, and one center-turn lane on Andover Park East and Baker Boulevard. This project will support the City's goals for serving pedestrian-oriented areas and connections, and ensuring that these streets have the right combination of on-street parking, tree-lined sidewalks and public amenity to serve their neighborhood. Restriping of these streets to accommodate bicycle lanes shall occur simultaneously.

d) Klickitat/Southcenter Parkway Improvements

The City will actively pursue the funding and reconstruction of Klickitat Boulevard/Southcenter Parkway intersection to improve access to and within the TUC.

i) Project description:

- (1) Two lane widening of Southcenter Parkway from Strander Boulevard to Nordstrom entrance, achieved by constructing new fill and retaining walls. Additional width shall be provided for widening the pedestrian corridor.
- (2) Southbound lanes of Southcenter Parkway will be re-profiled to provide grade separation at the Klickitat Drive intersection by constructing soldier pile walls and excavating existing grade.
- (3) New bridge structure, supported by soldier pile walls, will maintain the connection between the existing surface grades of Klickitat Drive and northbound and southbound Southcenter Parkway.
- (4) New signal on Southcenter Parkway 600 feet south of Strander Boulevard shall be installed, for access management and accident reduction.
- (5) Traffic signal interconnect of four intersections will be installed to facilitate signal coordination and improve operations.

e) New South 168th Street & Andover Park West/Tukwila Pond Frontage Improvements

The City will pursue the construction of a new street on the south side of the Tukwila Pond between Southcenter Parkway and Andover Park East (See Book II). This new street should be designed to accommodate three vehicle lanes, on street parking on the south side of the roadway, and bicycle lanes. This roadway should be constructed as the adjacent land areas to the south are redeveloped. This roadway will reduce the projected traffic congestion on Strander Boulevard and provide local access and appropriate streetscapes for the adjacent properties.

Andover Park West sidewalk improvements adjacent to the wetland buffer on the east side of the Pond shall be designed and constructed concurrently with the S. 168th Street project. This project supports the recommended Tukwila Pond conceptual design and planned improvements. The sidewalk configuration shall be as follows:

- An 8 foot sidewalk separated from the street by a 10 foot planting strip planted with native vegetation and with trees 25 feet on center, on average.

2) Mid Term Actions

a) Extend Strander Boulevard (Cities of Renton & Tukwila project)

The City will work with the City of Renton to extend Strander Boulevard eastward to Oakdale in Renton. The extension of Strander Boulevard easterly, over the BNSF and UP railroad tracks, will provide additional access to the Tukwila Urban Center and relocate the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way to the east, adjacent to the Burlington Northern Santa Fe right-of-way.

The City will continue to coordinate with Sound Transit and the City of Renton in pursuing construction of a ramp connecting the Strander Boulevard overpass to Tukwila Station. This will provide improved access to the Station for auto and transit traffic. The overpass should include sufficient sidewalk width to accommodate pedestrians.

3) Long Term Actions

Improvements Needed to Accommodate Forecasted Growth

Based on the 2020 land use forecasts for the Tukwila Urban Center (Draft Tukwila Urban Center Study – 2020 Traffic Forecasts and Recommendations, April 27, 2004), the City will pursue constructing the following street improvements to accommodate the 2020 traffic forecasts and conditions:

- Widening of westbound Southcenter Boulevard between I-5 ramps and 61st Ave South
- Add northbound right turn lane on Andover Park East south of Tukwila Parkway
- Addition of one eastbound lane on Tukwila Parkway from the west of Andover Park West to Andover Park East

a) WSDOT I-405 Widening Projects

The WSDOT's I-405 corridor widening project proposes a number of changes to the local network in the TUC area. The City will continue coordinating with WSDOT to ensure that the following projects proposed by WSDOT are constructed as part of the I-405 project:

- Widen the eastbound and westbound approaches to the intersection of Southcenter Boulevard and West Valley Highway.
- This corridor provides access to the TUC and acts as a bypass road to I-405, but the current intersection does not provide sufficient capacity for the current traffic volumes.
- Extend the existing northbound left-turn lane on West Valley Highway south of Southcenter Boulevard
- Reconstruct the 61st Avenue and 66th Avenue overpasses.
- These are two of the key entry points into the TUC, but do not provide good visual aesthetics as gateways or appropriate pedestrian facilities and amenities. The City will work with the WSDOT to ensure that adequate sidewalk widths and bicycle lanes are provided as part of the project. The City will also recommend that a southbound, one-way, inbound entrance to Southcenter Mall at the 61st Avenue/ Tukwila Parkway intersection be included in the project.
- Extend Tukwila Parkway from 66th Ave S/Andover Park East to West Valley Highway.
- WSDOT has proposed a five-lane road. The City will work with the WSDOT to ensure that bicycle lanes and appropriate sidewalk widths are provided as part of the project.

3.3. MASS TRANSIT NETWORK AND FACILITIES

Capital projects and service enhancements related to transit are intended to better meet the needs of the communities, residents, employers, employees, and visitors to and within the TUC area. Overall goals are to improve and maximize usage of all transit service in the area, make service faster and more efficient, and assist the TUC meet its development potential.

3.3.1 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

1) Short Term Actions

a) Southcenter Transit Center (King County Metro project)

The Tukwila Transit Plan (2004) calls for relocating and improving the existing transit center at the intersection of Andover Park West and Baker Boulevard. This location is both adjacent to Southcenter Mall, a major destination for both shoppers and employees, and at the western end of the “Mall to Tukwila Station corridor”.

The new transit center should be an on-street facility with expanded transit capacity, high quality waiting facilities, and enhanced pedestrian infrastructure that will promote transit ridership and improve passenger safety and security.

Construction of the new Transit Center should include the following:

- An expanded southbound stop on Andover Park West featuring three bus bays with independent pull-in/pull-out
- A relocated northbound stop on Andover Park West featuring two bus bays with independent pull-in/pull-out
- An improved curbside stop on Baker Boulevard for eastbound routes

In addition, the existing waiting area should be improved to incorporate the following features:

- **Widened Sidewalks** – During large parts of the day, the existing sidewalk is crowded with waiting passengers. Passengers spill into the Mall parking lot to avoid the crowded sidewalk conditions. Sidewalk width should be widened by at least 4 feet to 14 feet wide.
- **Sitting Areas** – Currently, there are few opportunities for waiting passengers to be seated. Visual inspection has showed that waiting passengers often sit on the curb separating the sidewalk and the Mall parking lot.
- **Shelters** – There are two standard sized shelters at the existing Southcenter Mall stop. Given over 1,000 daily patrons at this stop, two shelters provide inadequate shelter. A larger canopy type shelter should be considered in lieu of adding additional standard transit shelters.

b) Permanent Tukwila Commuter Rail Station (Sound Transit project)

The City will continue coordinating with Sound Transit on the design and construction of a permanent Tukwila Commuter Rail/Amtrak station to ensure that the final design incorporates the railroad track relocation of the Union Pacific railroad, the extension of Strander Boulevard, and off-site stormwater detention and treatment, and preserves the opportunity for redevelopment of the site with more intensive mix of transit-supportive uses that complement the City’s plans for surrounding transit-oriented development. The station design shall include a direct connection to the pedestrian path crossing West Valley Highway and the Green River, and leading to the Mall.

The City shall also strive to ensure that the Station becomes more visible in the community and acts as an anchor for a Transit Oriented Development. This will necessitate changing the station design from its current auto-oriented incarnation into more of a pedestrian destination. A more placemaking, visible station should lead to increased ridership. In addition, a visual connection between Tukwila Station and the Tukwila Urban Center are vital to address the public perceptions that no connections between the two locations exist.

The City shall pursue construction of an access ramp from Strander Boulevard overpass to the Tukwila Station as part of Sound Transit’s permanent station planning, design and construction. In addition to improving auto and transit access to the Station, such an access will provide travel time advantages if an I-405 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route serves Tukwila Station.

c) Bus Shelters in Locations with High Ridership (King County Metro project)

The City will pursue having Metro Transit install bus shelters at stops with high ridership where facilities do not currently exist. Within the TUC, there are three locations where shelters are warranted; the relocated northbound stop on Andover Park West, and on both east- and westbound Strander Boulevard just west of Andover Park West. The City will pursue a design that ensures that the shelters architecturally fit in with the rest of the corridor.

2) Mid Term Actions

a) TUC Trolley

The City shall pursue the development of a rubber-tired trolley route connecting Tukwila Station with other activity areas (including shopping, hotels, parks and employment areas) in the TUC. A trolley that is frequent (every 10 minutes or better) plus fun (either a modern futuristic design or a classic wooden trolley replica), will improve frequency of service between the Station and the TUC, and attract people to park once in the TUC and use the trolley to visit other destinations. This approach has been used successfully to carry passengers and enhance the image of other lifestyle centers, downtowns, and suburban shopping centers.

Because it is unlikely that a TUC Trolley will rank highly as part of King County Metro’s overall South King County transit priorities, the City shall pursue public/private partnerships with local businesses in the TUC as a means of funding.

3.3.2 SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

1) Short Term Actions

a) Route span, frequency & routing improvements (King County Metro project)

To improve mobility and better serve existing and projected travel patterns, the City shall continue pursuing improvements in span, frequency, and routing for Routes 126, 128, 140, 154 & 155 with King County Metro. A more complete description of these improvements can be found in the Tukwila Transit Plan (2004).

b) Sounder Commuter Rail Service (Sound Transit project)

Sound Transit’s Sounder commuter rail service currently serves the Tukwila Station with four northbound/1 southbound trains in the morning and four southbound/1 northbound trains in the afternoon. The service runs between Tacoma and Edmonds. The City will support Sound Transit’s long range commuter rail service plans for 16 roundtrips per day starting in September 2008, and 18 roundtrips per day beginning in June 2009. The City will also coordinate with Sound Transit on ensuring sufficient parking is provided at the station, and with Metro on providing appropriate transit connections and service, as commuter rail service levels increase.

2) Long Term Actions

a) Amtrak Service (Amtrak project)

Amtrak Cascades service, running between Eugene, Oregon and Vancouver, British Columbia, currently serves the Tukwila Station with three trains in each direction daily. The City will support Amtrak’s future plans include increasing service to 26 trains per day by 2023. The City will also support accommodating Amtrak’s request for a shelter for Amtrak passengers at the Tukwila Station, as part of the permanent station planning and design.

b) Bus Rapid Transit (King County Metro project)

Two different Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) processes have been proposed for the TUC. The King County Metro BRT line outlined in the existing Six-Year Plan would connect Federal Way with SeaTac Airport and Tukwila Station. One of the options for the I-405 BRT Study connects Renton and Bellevue with Tukwila Station and the TUC.

For the purposes of long-range transportation needs, both alignments are necessary to provide high capacity transit to the TUC and to provide an all-day destination for the BRT. Park-and-rides will not generate all-day ridership for transit lines – active land uses such as the TUC will.

Routing for the BRT through the TUC should follow Strander Boulevard between Tukwila Station and Southcenter Mall, and continue north to the Airport via Strander Boulevard, Klickitat, and SR 518. For the purposes of this plan, either Sound Transit or King County Metro can operate either BRT line.

3.4 BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

The goal for the TUC is for a livelier 24-hour neighborhood with housing and more employment. With more people-intensive uses, the City needs to make the area more walkable through a system of trails that will enhance the street network to connect parks and open space with employers, retail and new housing.

The City's Comprehensive Plan calls for identifying "bicycle friendly" streets and creating improvements that will allow trips both in the community and outside the city to jobs or other destinations. It expands the idea of transportation from simply keeping cars and trucks moving to the idea that the TUC's streets should be for everyone, whether motorist or bicyclist, walker or wheelchair user, bus rider or shopkeeper. This "complete streets" perspective will ensure that Tukwila residents and visitors can get around as freely as possible with a range of both motorized and non-motorized choices. In addition, community goals call for improving bicycle and pedestrian connections to the existing system of regional trails (e.g. the Duwamish/Green River and Interurban Trails).

3.4.1 BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

1) Short Term Actions

a) Way finding program for pedestrians and bicyclists.

The City will provide clear pedestrian and bicycle route information by installing quality way finding signs at all locations where choices in travel are made, and by publishing system maps. Signage shall guide pedestrians and bicyclists to key locations, such as Tukwila Pond, Southcenter Mall, and the Duwamish/Green River and Interurban Trails.

2) Mid Term Actions

a) Bicycle lanes on Baker Boulevard, Andover Park East, Minkler Boulevard, S. 180th Street, Tukwila Parkway, and S. 168th Street

The City will pursue implementing a network of bicycle routes in the TUC. There is sufficient width on existing streets to allow for re-striping to add bike lanes through a narrowing of turn and travel lanes. As a general principle, there is less need for marked bike facilities when speeds are at 25 mph or below, and a significant need for facilities if speeds are 30 mph or higher. The need for a facility increases with increased traffic volume and traffic complexity. As the urban form is built, traffic speeds will decrease. This will gradually eliminate the need for bike lanes along many streets and allow greater width for walking and parking transitions.

b) Pedestrian Signal Crossing Enhancements at Key Intersections

On wider streets and larger intersection crossings in the northern, more pedestrian-friendly part of the TUC, sufficient time should exist for pedestrians of all abilities to cross. The City will pursue installing countdown signals on intersection crossings greater than 40 feet, and install signals that automatically activate for pedestrians on each cycle at these intersections. Pedestrian signals shall automatically activate on all legs. Push button controls shall be used primarily on streets anticipated to be used less frequently by pedestrians, such as in the Workplace District.

3) Long Term Actions

a) Convert Railroad Corridors to Trails

Track locations within the TUC have been identified previously as opportunity areas for the construction of multi-use pedestrian and bicycle trails. While it is generally known that some of these spurs have been abandoned, the City will pursue further research to determine the ownership and disposition status of each specific spur. Once developed, these trails could extend the Green River and Interurban Trail system throughout the urban center, and connect to City neighborhoods. As redevelopment of the parcels of land containing railroad corridors occurs, the City shall pursue conversion of these corridors to trails.

This chapter sets forth definitions of certain words or phrases used in Chapter 18.28 in order to promote consistency and uniformity in their usage. The meaning and construction of words and phrases as set forth in this chapter shall apply throughout the Plan unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. Definitions contained in TMC 18.06 shall be applicable except when in conflict with definitions contained in this chapter, in which case this chapter's definitions shall prevail.

Active Living Spaces:

Habitable spaces such as dining rooms, living rooms, bed rooms, hotel rooms, or offices that accommodate living or working activities. Active living spaces do not include kitchens, bathrooms, partially submerged basements, or utility spaces.

Alley:

A vehicular way located within a block to the rear of parcels providing access to service areas and parking, and often containing utility easements.

Alley Setback:

The required minimum distance from an alley's edge of pavement to any building.

Articulation:

The use of architectural elements to create breaks in the horizontal and vertical surfaces or masses of buildings.

Base:

A base treatment is a horizontal articulation of the lower part of a building façade's design that serves to establish a human scale for pedestrian users and passers-by, and aesthetically "ties" a building to the ground.

Block Size:

A measure of the total length of all street-fronting property lines enclosed within the nearest surrounding publicly accessible streets.

Breezeway

A covered driveway or walkway penetrating a building to connect to courtyards, parking areas, or alleys at the interior or rear of a parcel.

Building Disposition:

The placement and orientation of a building or buildings on a parcel.

Building Orientation:

The direction that a primary building facade with an entrance that is part of a Private Frontage Type faces.

Building Placement:

The location of a building on a parcel.

Building Volume:

Part or all of a building's three dimensional bulk.

Context:

Physical surroundings, including a combination of architectural, natural and civic elements that establish a specific district, neighborhood, or block character.

Corridor:

The combination of all elements that characterize a roadway. This consists of all elements within the public right-of-way (the vehicular realm/thoroughfare and the pedestrian realm/public frontage) as well as each adjacent property's private frontage.

DCD Director:

The head of a city's planning department or other individual who has the authority to make decisions regarding the implementation of the regulations within this plan.

District:

An area whose urban form has a unique character within the Plan Area.

Driveway:

A vehicular lane within a parcel, usually leading to a garage or parking area.

Entrance or Entry

A point of pedestrian access into a building.

Façade:

The exterior wall of a building.

Façade Composition:

The relationship between individual elements of a façade as they relate to the façade's overall design, articulation, and organization.

Façade Offset:

A horizontal or vertical plane break spanning a façade where one portion of a façade sets back from another.

Main Entrance:

See primary entrance.

Front Setback

See Front Yard Setback

Front Street:

A street that a building's primary entrance is oriented towards.

Front Yard:

The area that results from a front yard setback.

Front Yard Setback:

The distance or range of distances (expressed in both minimum and maximum) required from the back-of-sidewalk to the primary building façade along a street.

Frontage Coverage:

The minimum percentage of the length of the frontage coverage zone that shall be occupied by a primary building façade(s).

Frontage Coverage Zone:

The space between the minimum and maximum front yard setback lines and the minimum side yard or side street setback lines.

Frontage Type:

A specific configuration of elements that define how public or private frontages may be designed.

Garage:

A building used for vehicular parking with no internal circulation.

Guidelines:

Principles that provide direction regarding the preferred method of addressing specified design considerations. Conformance with guidelines is recommended but not required.

Human Scale:

To have the size, height, bulk, massing, or detailing that creates a comfortable relationship to humans.

Liner Building/Uses:

A portion of a building, with distinct, habitable uses located along a property frontage such that it conceals the larger building behind. Typically, liner uses are located along parking garages or large format/anchor retail buildings.

Living Space:

See active living space

Parking Lot:

A paved area, usually divided into individual spaces, intended for parking vehicles.

Parking Structure:

A building used for vehicular parking with internal circulation.

Partially Submerged Podium:

A parking structure built below the main building mass and partially submerged underground.

Passage/paseo:

An at-grade pedestrian connector passing between buildings, providing shortcuts through long blocks and connecting sidewalks or front yards to rear yards, parking areas, and open spaces.

Path:

A pedestrian (or bike) way traversing a park or rural area, with landscape matching the contiguous open space.

Pedestrian Way:

A pedestrian only "Street Type" along which housing or shops may be oriented.

Plan Area:

The land whose boundary includes all the properties that must adhere to the regulations within this document.

Planting Strip:

An element of the public frontage, located in between the sidewalk and the thoroughfare curb face, which accommodates landscaping, including street trees.

Primary Building:

A main/principal building on a lot, including parking structures and excluding accessory buildings or structures, with a primary facade located within the frontage coverage zone.

Primary Building Façade:

The main/principal façade of a building that faces a street or open space.

Primary Building Mass:

The most prominent portion of the Primary Building's 3-dimensional bulk.

Primary Entrance:

The main/principal point of pedestrian access into a building configured as a Private Frontage Type.

Private Frontage:

- 1) The portion of a property between the back of sidewalk line and the primary building facade along any Street.
- 2) Portions of all primary building facades up to the top of the first or second floor, including building entrances, located along and oriented a street or active open space.

Physical elements of the Private Frontage include, but are not limited to a building's primary entrance treatments, setback areas and property edge treatments.

Property:

An individual/owner's land, including land improvements and any permanent fixtures on the land including buildings, trees and other fixtures.

Property Line:

The boundary that legally and geometrically demarcates a property.

Public Frontage:

The area between a thoroughfare curb face and the back of sidewalk line. Physical elements of the Public Frontage include, but are not limited to the type of curb, sidewalk, planter strip, street tree and streetlight.

Public Right-Of-Way:

Any area dedicated or subject to public fee ownership or an easement for public use for vehicular and/or pedestrian travel including, but not limited to, streets, alleys, and sidewalks.

Public Right-Of-Way Line:

The boundary that legally and geometrically demarcates the Public Right-Of-Way.

Rear Yard:

The area that results from a rear yard setback.

Rear Yard Setback:

The distance between a rear property line and any building.

Roof:

The top surface that covers a building.

Shopfront:

A specific private frontage type. Shopfronts are the primary treatment for ground-level commercial uses, designed for active ground floor activities including retail, dining, and personal services.

Shopfront Transparency:

Where a shopfront private frontage type is used, the minimum transparency requirement for the area between the height of 2 and 7 feet along the length of the building façade facing the street or public sidewalk.

Sidewalk:

The paved area dedicated exclusively to pedestrian activity.

Side Setback:

See Side Yard Setback

Side Street:

A street along a corner parcel that is not a front street.

Side Street Façade:

The façade of a building that typically faces a side street.

Side Yard:

The area that results from a side yard setback.

Side Yard Setback:

The distance between a side property line and any structure requiring a building permit.

Standards:

All required development specifications (such as permitted land use types, building height dimensions, and setback dimensions) that vary from one Zone or Corridor to another.

Street:

The combination of all elements within the public right-of-way: the vehicular realm/thoroughfare and the pedestrian realm/public frontage.

Street Type:

A specific configuration of elements that define how new streets may be designed.

Streetscape:

The composition and design of all elements within the public right-of-way: the vehicular realm/thoroughfare (travel lanes for vehicles and bicycles, parking lanes for cars, and sidewalks or paths for pedestrians) and the amenities of the pedestrian realm/public frontage (sidewalks, street trees and plantings, benches, streetlights, etc.).

Sustainability:

Physical or design elements that improve environmental performance, efficiency, and livability to "...meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." (quotation from the Our Common Future, World Commission on Environment and Development, United Nations 1987)

Thoroughfare:

The portion of the street between curbs that includes all vehicular lanes, including travel lanes, turn lanes, parking lanes.

Use (as a verb):

To occupy land or water in any manner or to establish, carry out, maintain or continue any activity or development on land or in water regardless of whether the activity or development is established, carried out, maintained or continued in a manner that utilizes buildings or structures on land or in water.

Wall Cladding:

The exposed materials of a façade that primary walls, base, wall accent, trim, and other articulation elements are made of or covered with.

Windows:

Openings in a building façade that allow light and/or air into the building.

THE CONDITION OF THE TUKWILA URBAN CENTER (TUC)/SOUTHCENTER AREA AT THE INCEPTION OF THIS SUBAREA PLAN IS DETAILED IN THIS SECTION. ULTIMATELY, THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLANNING FRAMEWORK WILL RESULT IN SUFFICIENT MODIFICATION OF THESE CONDITIONS AS TO MAKE THIS PLAN OBSOLETE. AT THAT POINT, A NEWLY UPDATED SOUTHCENTER SUBAREA PLAN WILL NEED TO BE PREPARED TO ENGAGE THE PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES PRESENTED BY THE MODIFIED EXISTING CONDITIONS. AS CHANGE OCCURS, THE COMMUNITY INTENDS TO MEASURE THOSE CHANGES AGAINST THE CONDITIONS RECORDED HEREIN TO MONITOR THE DEGREE TO WHICH THE PLAN REMAINS SUFFICIENTLY CURRENT.

A.1 INTRODUCTION

The City of Tukwila is located 12 miles south of downtown Seattle, 17 miles north of downtown Tacoma, and two miles from the Sea-Tac International Airport.

The Plan Area is comprised of approximately 1,000 acres located in the immediate southeastern quadrant formed by the crossing of Interstates 5 and 405 (see Fig.A.1.). It contains the City's primary commercial center – featuring by far the greatest proportion of the City's development and its primary source of sales tax revenue. The Plan Area contains a sufficiently wide range of retail offerings to make it the largest shopping destination serving the South King County region. Its primary shopping anchor is Westfield Southcenter Mall, the largest mall in the state of Washington (see Fig.A.2.). The Mall recently went through a substantial expansion and renovation.

In addition to the wide range of shopping venues, the Plan Area also contains a substantial amount of other commercial uses, especially distribution, warehousing, office and lodging.



FIG.A.1

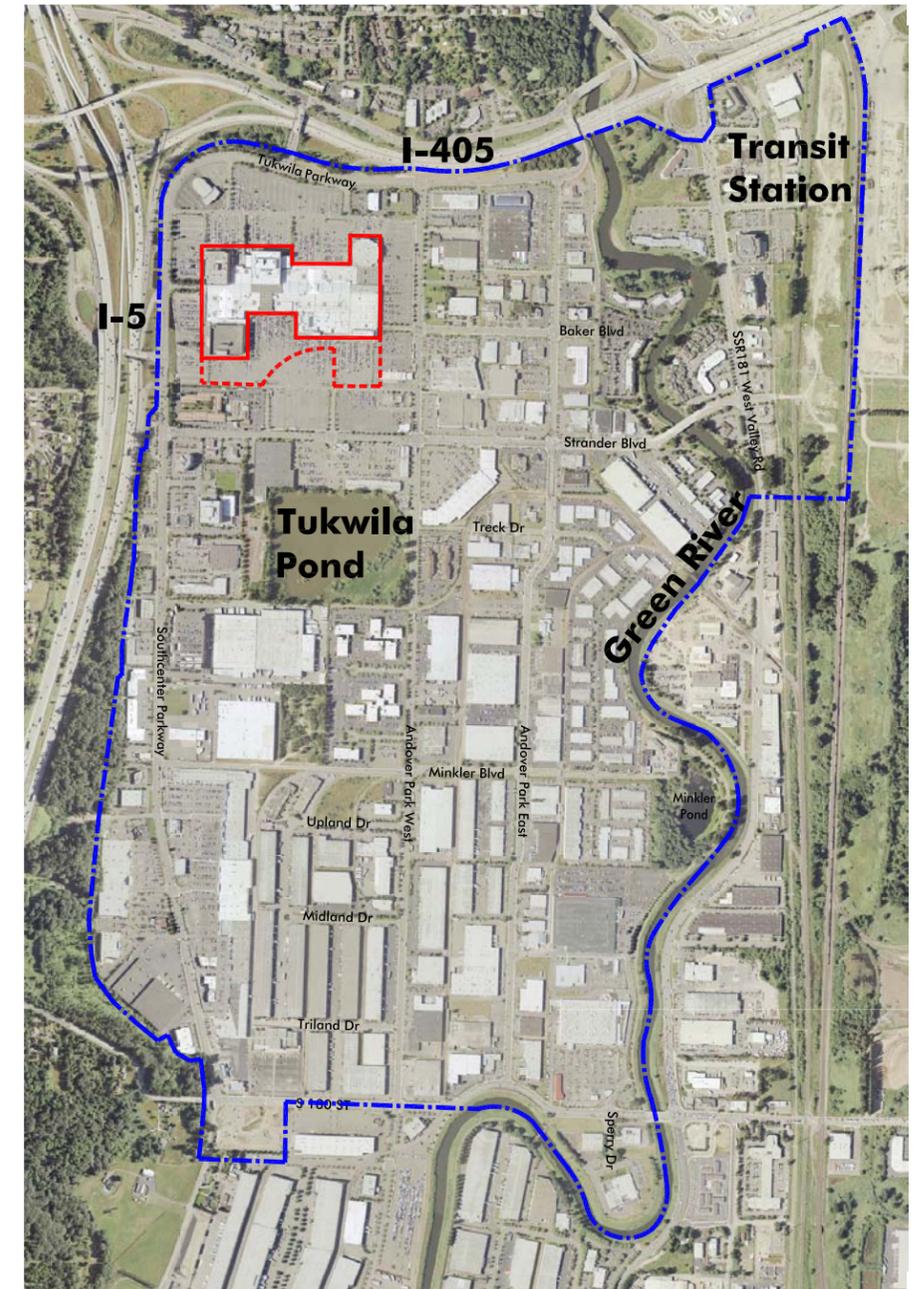


FIG.A.2

A.2 CONTEXT

1) History

The land area of Tukwila was inhabited in the 1850's by the Duwamish, the Native Americans who made their homes along the Duwamish River. They were followed by Euro-American settlers, who began the development of a small community based on farming and coal mining. Tukwila was incorporated in 1908, and its development was spurred accessibility from the Duwamish, Green and Black Rivers; then by train lines that connected it to the major cities of Seattle and Tacoma, and finally by the construction of a regional freeway system. Over time, Tukwila has grown as a center of commerce due to its location at the crossroads of rivers, trails, highways and railroads.

The majority of growth in the City, and especially in the Plan Area, has occurred over the last fifty years. The construction of Interstate 5 and 405 in the mid 1960's opened the area up for commercial development, and instigated a rapid transformation of what was largely undeveloped open land and dairy farms (see Photo 1). The area to be known as the Tukwila Urban Center was annexed to the City as an industrial park in 1956. The Southcenter Mall (currently the Westfield Southcenter Mall) opened in 1968, becoming a commercial anchor for the area. Over the subsequent twenty years, more industry and commerce located in the area, providing space for over 1000 businesses.

2) Community

Population in Tukwila has almost doubled in the last 13 years, due to new residential construction and a land annexation in the early 1990's, to a current estimation of 17,930 (2008). While growth has slowed since the 1990's, population is again expected to increase rapidly over the next twenty years, at a rate of almost 5% from the year 2010 and 3.7% from 2020. Using these projections, ECONorthwest estimates Tukwila's population may grow to approximately 23,518 people by 2010, and almost 38,000 by 2020. Many of Tukwila's newer residents are immigrants from outside the country, and this is expected to continue. Spanish-speaking people, particularly from Mexico, are one of the fastest-growing new groups. Median family income for Tukwila was \$42,442 in 2000, compared to \$66,035 in King County.

3) Regional Circulation

The City of Tukwila is well positioned in the regional transportation network: it is located immediately along the two primary regional freeways, I-5 and I-405 (see Photo 2). It is highly visible and accessible to motorists moving through on these major regional thoroughfares to and from downtown Seattle, downtown Tacoma and SEATAC International Airport.

Two regional transit operators provide service within Tukwila. King County Metro provides both local bus and paratransit services to Tukwila and the surrounding region. Sound Transit operates a three-county bus network, and a light rail and commuter rail system. The commuter rail line directly serves the Southcenter area. Sound Transit's 14 mile light rail line will run between Seattle and the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, stopping at South 154th Street and Tukwila International Boulevard, approximately two miles west of the urban center area. King County Metro will provide frequent bus service between the light rail station, the Southcenter Mall area, and the Sounder Commuter Rail Station.



PHOTO 1



PHOTO 2

A.3 LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

Development in the Southcenter area is exclusively commercial, with retail, office, lodging, and warehouse and industrial uses. There is minimal residential development. As the City's residential population has grown in recent years, Southcenter has become a commercial center for the City and the region, and many chains that draw on a regional audience, such as Office Depot, Home Depot and Target, have located within its boundaries. Major destinations include the Westfield Southcenter Mall, the largest covered mall in Washington State (see Photo 7). The retail "power" centers lining Southcenter Parkway (see Photo 6) and portions of Strander Boulevard, and big-box retail along Andover Park East in the southeastern portion of Southcenter (see Photo 4).

A large proportion of Tukwila's jobs are located in the Southcenter area. More than half of these jobs are in retail, with the remainder primarily oriented towards manufacturing and industrial work. Boeing, located just outside of the Southcenter area and directly to the east of the proposed TOD area, provides over 12,000 jobs for the region.

As a result of Southcenter's role as a popular commercial center, land values in Southcenter are rising. The lower value office and warehouse uses (see Photos 3 and 5) that make up a large part of Southcenter's land area are potential locations for higher-value uses, and various sites have transitioned to retail use. As a testament to the rising land values, the owners of Westfield Southcenter Mall have intensified their property site with an expansion that increased its size by another 500,000 square feet, including a cinema, an expanded food court, additional smaller retail stores, and the first structured parking garage serving retail to appear in the Southcenter area.

Development potential for the Southcenter study area for the near future was projected to include demand for more retail, more restaurants, and more industrial uses, with more office and lodging to follow in the long term. Market analysis of land constraints and demand pressures in the area pointed to the possibility of denser development and structured parking, justified by rising land values. (See *Tukwila Urban Center Market Analysis (March 2002)*, prepared as a part of the planning process and bound under separate cover). More specifically, this analysis indicated:

- i) Retail demand is expected to remain strong, with growth projected to include a net additional 1.5 to 3.6 million square feet of retail space by the year 2020.
- ii) Demand for entertainment uses in the region is low due to overall economic conditions; gambling (card rooms and casinos) is the only entertainment sub-sector showing growth in King County. Thus far, some entertainment venues require large-scale parcels, the lack of available land in the Southcenter area has operated as an additional barrier to entertainment investment in the area. However, existing entertainment businesses are reportedly happy with their location in Southcenter, and demand for space for recreation and entertainment uses is likely to rise with the general shift in consumer preferences for an amenity driven "lifestyle center".
- iii) Office is oversupplied throughout region, but Southcenter shows lower vacancies and stronger rental rates than the rest of South King County. Whereas demand for additional office space is projected to grow by as much as 680,000 square feet by 2020, Tukwila will need to compete for these offices with nearby areas, many of which have large vacant sites with good auto access.
- iv) Lodging is also currently in surplus, but while no new hotel development is projected for the next six to eight years, demand for lodging in the Southcenter area will remain consistent.

v) Demand for light industrial and warehousing space will remain high in Southcenter due to its proximity to Bellevue, Seattle, and Tacoma. However, traffic and circulation problems are an impediment to such operations, and with rising land values caused by retail demand, it may be increasingly difficult for these uses to remain in the area.

vi) Projected growth in the region's populations indicates a substantial demand for attached and multifamily units. Much of this growth will have to go into mixed-use areas, particularly the Southcenter area. While initial studies concluded that housing development in Southcenter was unlikely due to high land prices driven up by the demand for retail uses, and while housing will have to contend with the negatives inherent in an urban environment such as noise, traffic problems, industrial uses, and heavy truck usage, final analyses concluded that the demand for owner-occupied multifamily housing may be high enough to make such development viable. In order to encourage residential development, however, the City will need to enhance Southcenter's appeal as a potential location for homes, particularly in the vicinity of the commuter train station.



PHOTO 3



PHOTO 4



PHOTO 5



PHOTO 6



PHOTO 7

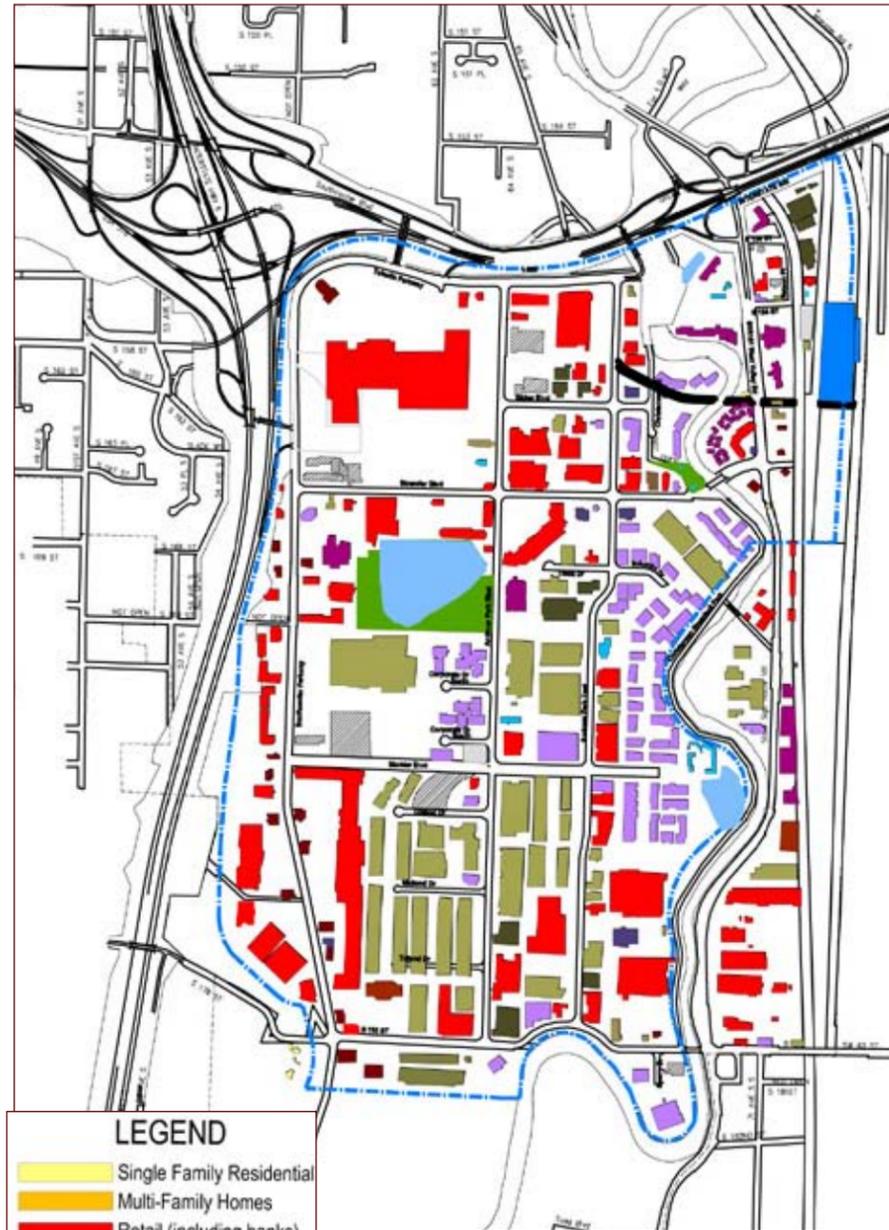


FIG.A.3 EXISTING LAND USE

- LEGEND**
- Single Family Residential
 - Multi-Family Homes
 - Retail (including banks)
 - Restaurant
 - Entertainment
 - Hotel/Motel
 - Professional Office
 - Medical Office
 - Warehouse/Distribution
 - Manufacturing/Industry
 - Server Farm
 - Transit Center
 - Civic
 - Parking
 - Open Space
 - Auto Service
 - Mixed Use
 - Vacant
 - TUC Boundary



FIG.A.4 EXISTING BUILDING PATTERN

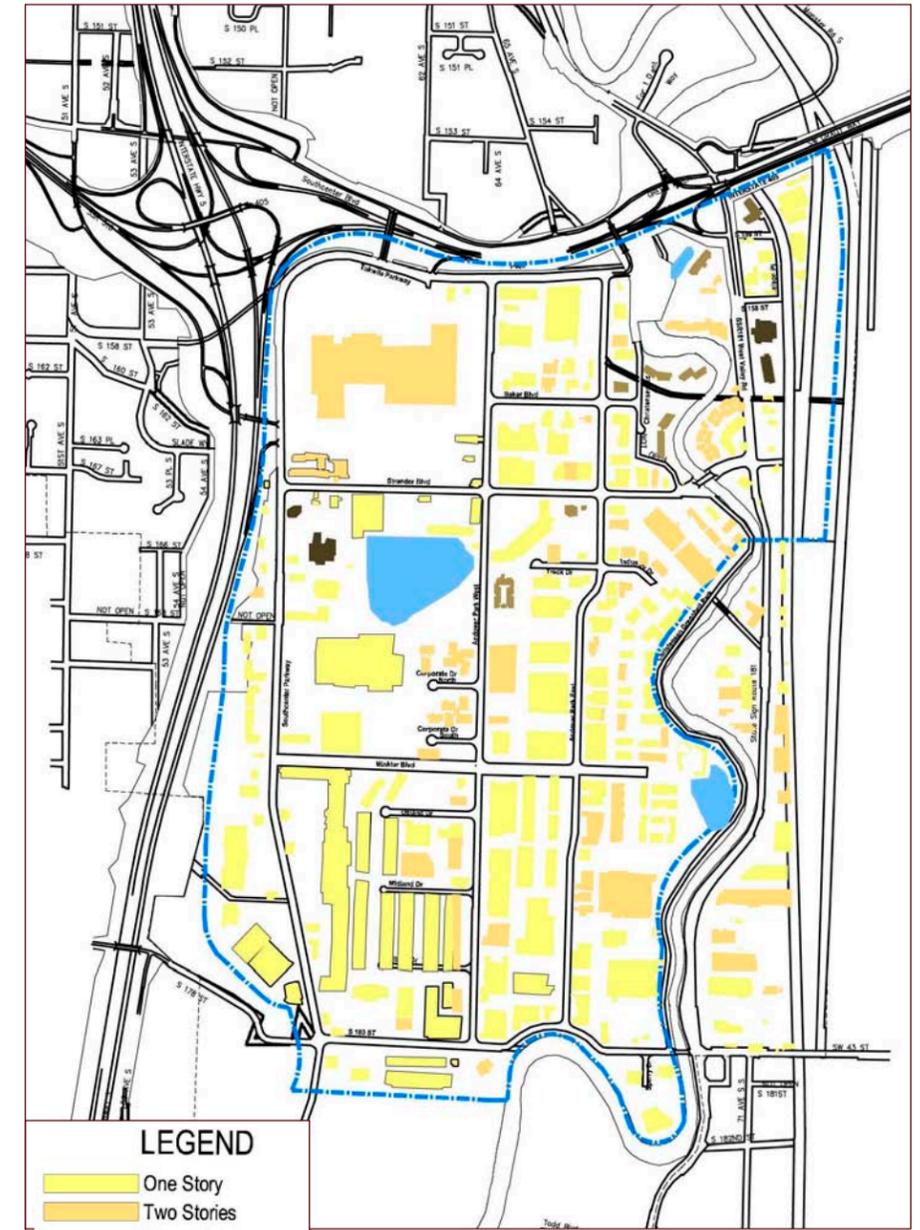


FIG.A.5 EXISTING BUILDING HEIGHTS

- LEGEND**
- One Story
 - Two Stories
 - Three Stories
 - Four Stories
 - Five or More Stories
 - TUC Boundary

A.4 EXISTING LAND USE POLICY

The Tukwila Zoning Code is set forth in Chapter 18 of the City's Municipal Code. All of the land area under study is contained within the area designated by the City's Comprehensive Plan and the City's Zoning Map as the Tukwila Urban Center. The stated purpose for this zoning district is "intended to provide an area of high-intensity regional uses that include commercial services, offices, light industry, warehousing and retail uses. Development is intended to be pedestrian-friendly, with a strong emphasis on a safe and attractive streetscape." Uses permitted in the district include an extremely wide range of retail, entertainment, commercial and industrial uses. Residential uses are conditionally permitted on areas within 500 feet of the Green River, Tukwila Pond, or Minkler Pond (a maximum density of 22 units per acre; 100 units per acre for senior housing), and in mixed-use developments within one-quarter mile of the Sounder Commuter rail/Amtrak Station property (maximum density of 65 units per acre). Most of the uses that support residential, like churches, schools and recreational facilities, are also conditionally permitted. Buildings are allowed to a maximum height of 115 feet. There are few policies setting standards for building design, orientation, massing, location of parking, block size, or the creation of new streets.

The Zoning Code requires design review for all commercial structures larger than 1,500 square feet and for all multi-family development, as well as for exterior repairs, reconstructions, alterations or improvements to buildings over 10,000 square feet.

A.5 DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT POSSIBILITIES

Southcenter is almost 100% developed, with very little vacant developable land. The few areas that are untouched by development are either preserved as open space, environmentally sensitive wetlands and river areas, or dedicated towards public uses, such as utility sites. The most significant piece of vacant land that is available for new development lies on the eastern border of Southcenter, adjacent to the Tukwila Sounder Commuter Rail Station (see Fig.A.6 Vulnerability to Change).

While there is very little undeveloped land in Southcenter available for new investment, the low-density nature of its development pattern points toward redevelopment opportunities. Its high-visibility location at the juncture of two freeways makes it a desirable location, especially since there is little developable area elsewhere. The other quadrants bordering the freeway intersection are filled with low-density residential neighborhoods, with little to no land open for development.

With heightened demand for retail space in Southcenter, and the rising land values that result from this demand, much of Tukwila's industrial and warehouse space is vulnerable to conversion to office (see Photo 8) or retail. Some of Tukwila's industrial uses have already shifted to retail uses (see Fig.A.7 Patterns of Development and Change), as evidence by Costco Wholesale, Lowe's Home Improvement, Home Depot and Circuit City, all of which are located in former warehouse buildings.

Specific areas identified by the City as possible sites for future redevelopment or infill include the retail parcels along Evans-Black Drive and Strander Boulevard, the Levitz Furniture warehouse at the southern end of Southcenter on Southcenter Parkway, and the parcels located just south of Tukwila Pond currently housing warehouse and office uses.

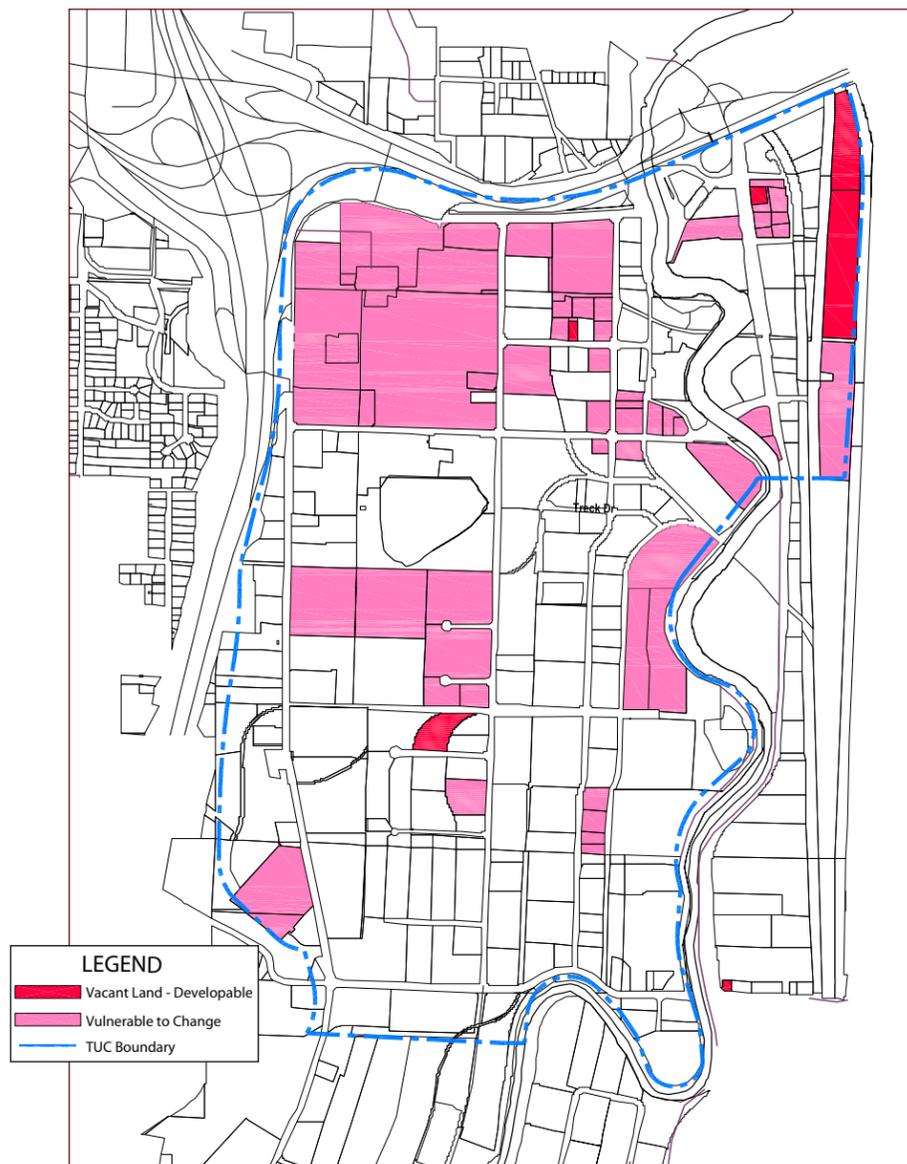


FIG.A.6 VULNERABILITY TO CHANGE (2007)



PHOTO 8

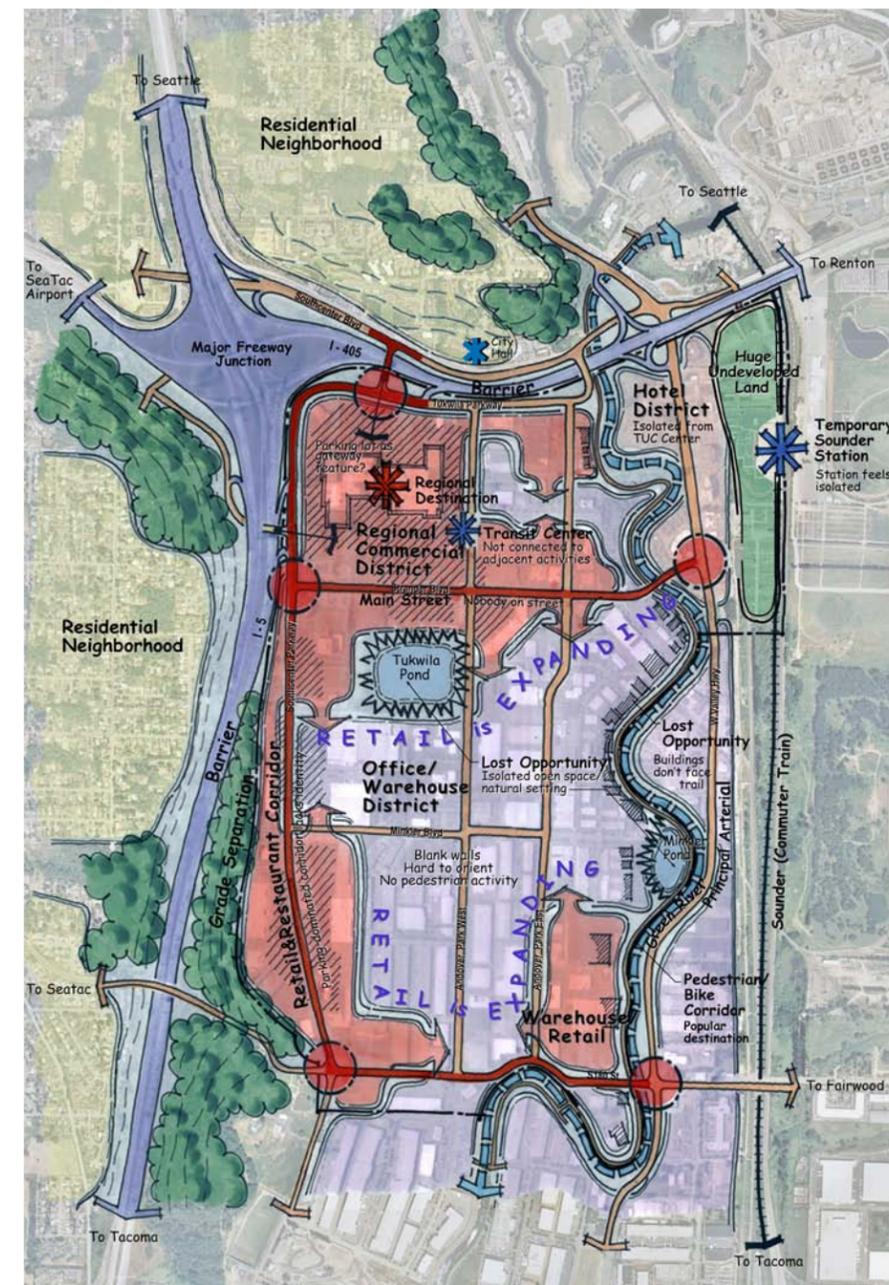


FIG.A.7 PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE

A.6 LOCAL TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

1) Vehicular Circulation

Because Southcenter is geographically bound by the two freeways and the Green River, primary entrance points into the study area are limited. From the north, traffic can enter over I-405 at 61st and 66th Avenues. From the south, access is limited to Southcenter Parkway, Andover Park West and East, and West Valley Highway. Traffic from the west can enter from I-5 at Southcenter Parkway, Klickitat Drive and South 178/180th Street, and traffic from the east is limited to Strander Boulevard and South 178/180th Street. Because of this limited access to the area and the small number of streets serving development, there can be delays at the entrance/exit ramps to the freeway, and there are frequent bottlenecks at the Klickitat Drive and Southcenter Parkway intersection and other intersections near Westfield Southcenter Mall. Traffic on the surrounding interstates is expected to increase in the future, which may be alleviated with the proposed expansion of the I-405 corridor. Proposed improvements include the relocation of the I-405 on-ramp from the Southcenter retail area to the east of 66th Avenue, extending Tukwila Parkway to West Valley Highway, and at the 188th Street freeway interchange. Also, with the expansion of the Mall and other retail development in the works, the City is studying possible projects to improve overall access to the area.

Major north-south arterials through the study area are Southcenter Parkway and West Valley Highway; east-west arterials are South 180th Street and Klickitat Drive/Strander Boulevard. However, arterial routes are treated no differently than other streets in the network. All of the streets appear to be the same in width, design, and even in the types of buildings that line their edges. No priority is given to entrance routes or to important thoroughfares; there are no custom signs incorporated into the streetscape; and no landmarks or monuments mark special places along the street lengths.

The street network in the Southcenter area is designed solely for the automobile, and follows an oversized grid that limits internal circulation (see Fig.A.8. Existing Streets). The smallest blocks in the study are 1,000 feet in length by 1,000 feet in depth; and many extend for up to a half a mile in length. East-west streets are particularly limited. With increased success on this limited street network, congestion within Southcenter is becoming more common – peak times for congestion are the noon hour during the week, and Saturday's congestion is even greater around the Mall.

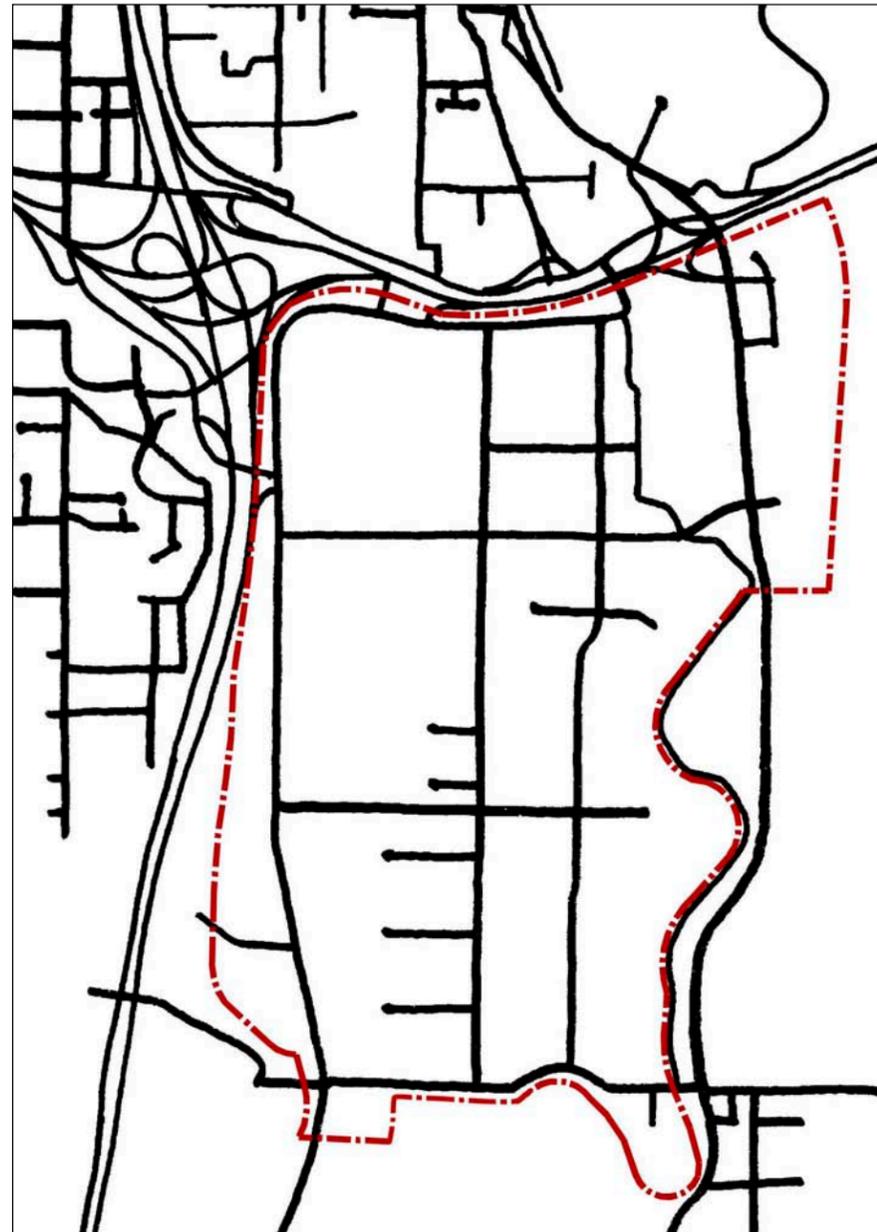


FIG.A.8. EXISTING STREETS (IN BLACK)

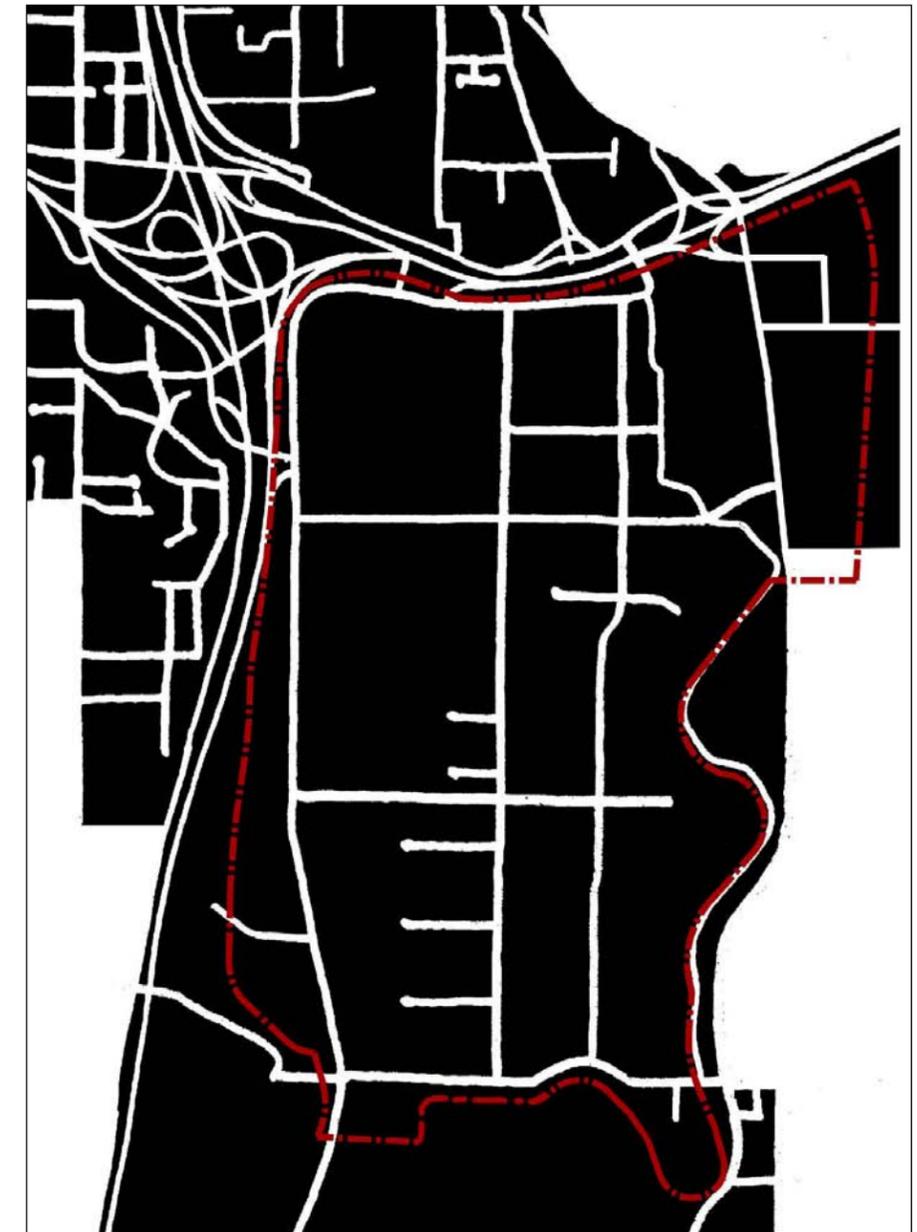


FIG.A.9. EXISITNG BLOCKS (IN BLACK)

2) Pedestrian Circulation

Pedestrian activity is almost nonexistent in Southcenter, limited to the brief walks taken by people walking to their jobs or to shopping destinations from transit. There are several reasons for this - a street network scaled to the automobile creating block sizes that are too large to walk (see Fig.A.9. Existing Blocks), long distances between destinations, narrow unprotected sidewalks along wide highly trafficked roads, and the fact that there are no residential uses in the area. In some areas, sidewalks were created as a part of adjacent development and end at the parcel limits, creating a pedestrian network that is interrupted and sporadic. Pedestrian access to the Sounder station is not clearly legible, but this should improve with the installation of a permanent station, and subsequent planned redevelopment of the area as a Transit Oriented Development (TOD). Access to park and open spaces in the area can be difficult to find on foot, and the primary pedestrian routes in Southcenter, the Green River and Interurban Trails, are hidden behind buildings for a good deal of their length.

3) Transit

Transit is provided to the area through King County Metro bus service, and Sound Transit's "Sounder" commuter rail service. King County Metro routes 110, 126, 128, 140, 150, 154, 155 and 160 serve the Southcenter area. Routes 110, 126, 140 and 154 all connect to the Tukwila Sounder Station during Sounder regular operating hours. Route 110 connects the Tukwila Station area at Longacres Drive with north Renton. Route 126 provides connections between Tukwila Station, Southcenter, west Tukwila, and South Seattle. Route 128 provides connections between Southcenter and White Center and West Seattle. Route 140 is a major east-west bus route connecting the mall to Burien, Sea-Tac Airport, and Renton. Route 150 is the major north-south route connecting Tukwila with Auburn, Kent, and Seattle. Route 154 serves the Boeing Industrial site and connects to the Sounder Tukwila rail station. Route 155 provides service between Tukwila and north Kent, and Route 160 provides service to downtown Seattle.

Sounder offers commuter rail service between Tacoma and downtown Seattle with stops in Puyallup, Sumner, Auburn, Kent, and Tukwila. An interim station is located just south of Longacres Way (see Photo 9); a permanent station is to be completed by 2012, and will accommodate Amtrak service as well as the commuter trains. A study by Mirai Associates indicates that transit accounts for about 2% of all trips into and out of the area. A great number of these trips are to and from the Westfield Southcenter Mall; the stop at this mall is the most highly used, and accounts for more than half of the total riders in the study area. Long-range plans for the regional Sound Transit light rail line include the possibility of a spur line to serve the Southcenter area. This, combined with a permanent Sounder station, (and its subsequent TOD development) should make transit a more appealing option for the area.



PHOTO 9



PHOTO 10

A.7 OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

There are many natural resources within the Tukwila Urban Center, the most noteworthy of which is Tukwila Pond (see Photo 13), a body of water created by a high water table and the runoff from all of the impervious surfaces of the area's rooftops and parking lots, that is now a significant wildlife habitat and a stop-over point for migrating waterfowl. Access to the pond's edges is restricted around most of its perimeter (see Photo 12), but a 25-acre park has been preserved along the Pond's western edge. Tukwila Pond Park is located behind the commercial development along Southcenter Parkway and the Target store on Strander Boulevard, and accessed along foot trails from these roadways.

Other amenities in the area include Minkler Pond and the Green River (see Photo 11). Minkler Pond is a smaller waterbody at the eastern terminus of Minkler Boulevard that flows into the Green River, but is inaccessible from the west because it is trapped behind several industrial buildings. The Green River Trail is a 2.6-mile-long trail that winds along the west bank of the Green River, providing recreational space for bike riding, jogging, walking and inline skating. Most of the trail is also hidden behind the industrial development that lines the riverfront for most of its length through Southcenter.

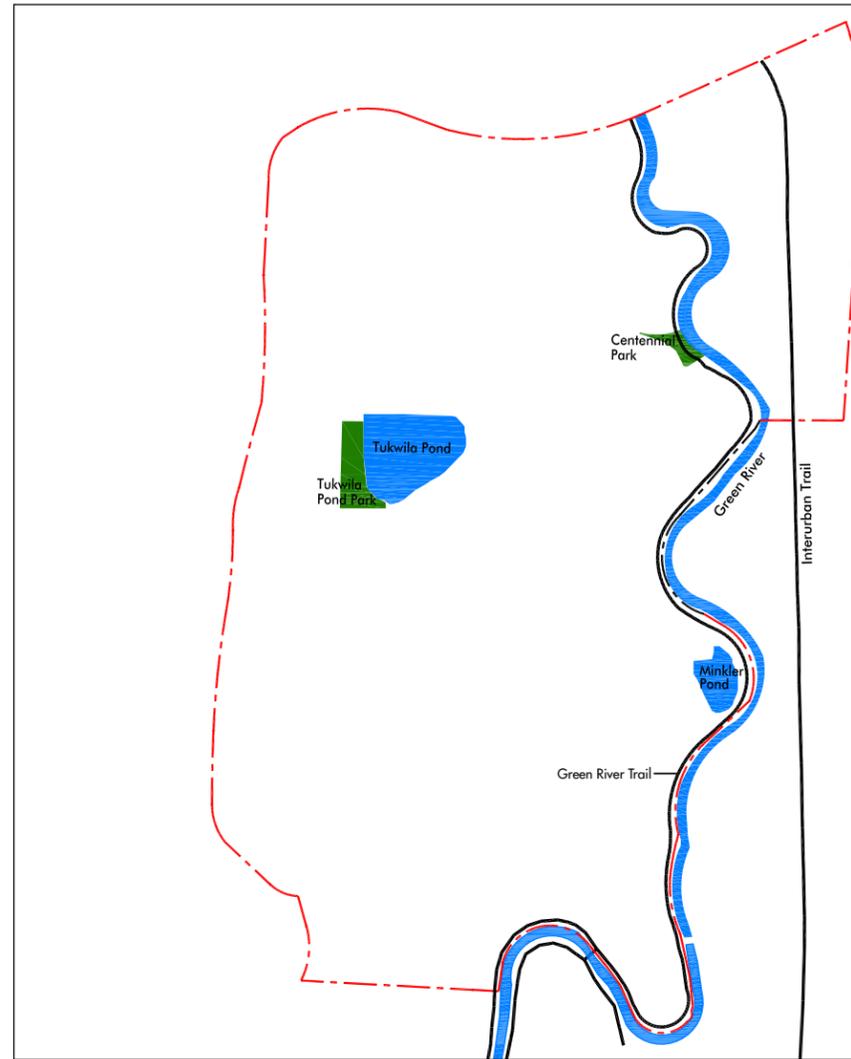


FIG.A.10 EXISTING OPEN SPACE NETWORK



PHOTO 11



PHOTO 12



PHOTO 13

A.8. ARCHITECTURAL AND LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

While a distinctive building and landscape design has evolved in the Pacific Northwest region, the region has had little influence on the design of buildings in Southcenter. Buildings are often separated from the street by large parking lots, and their entrances are hard to find. The newer buildings that are well-designed are lost in the overall mix, and there are too few of them to create a visible theme that could unify the district with any sort of identity. The result is an unrelated hodge-podge of unarticulated buildings with little ornamentation or design. The highly distinctive design context of the Pacific Northwest landscape (see Fig.A.11. Design Context) stands in stark contrast to the existing character of the Plan Area's built environment.

1) Buildings

Buildings within Southcenter are reflective of auto-oriented development. Structures are reduced to the simplest, most economical form: usually tilt-up construction, simply massed buildings with a box-like appearance. While buildings are allowed to a maximum height of 115 feet, few are more than 50 feet tall. The number of stories on most of the taller buildings is indiscernible as their architecture is not articulated by typical design cues like windows per floor or cornice lines. Ornamentation across the facades is minimal, except for signage.

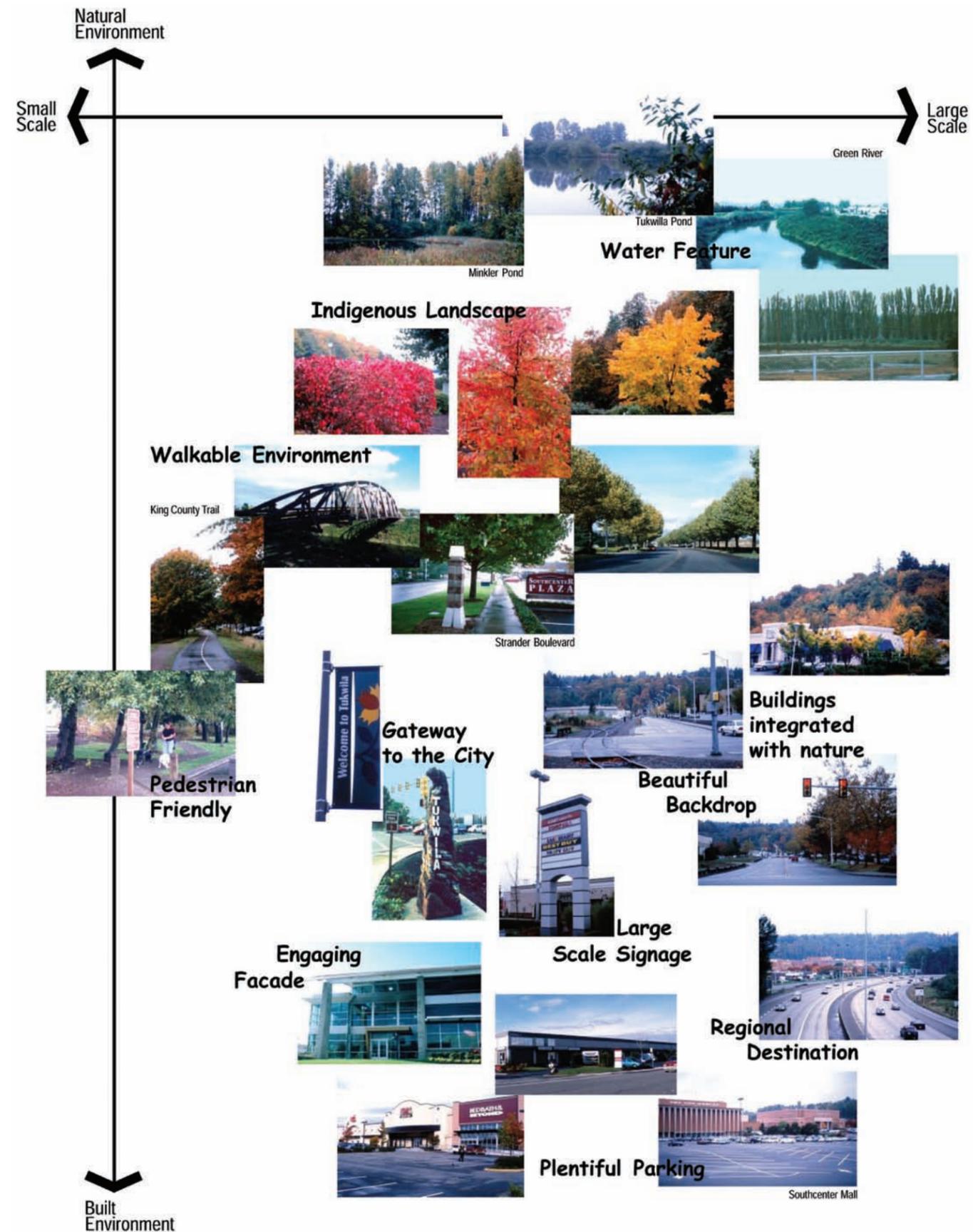


FIG.A.11. DESIGN CONTEXT

2) Streetscape

The site layouts and streetscapes surrounding the area's development are primarily oriented towards the needs of motorists (see Photos 13-16). Primacy is placed on signage visibility and availability of parking. Parking fronts or surrounds the building, distancing the building from the street and the public realm. The overall impression of the area's development pattern is of large, simple buildings fronted by asphalt, announcing convenience and ease of movement for automobiles. Very little effort is made to create site layouts that are amenable to the pedestrian, or to use pathways, trees or other site design elements that contribute to the pedestrian realm. While there are a few individual projects that have successfully used landscaping, streetscape and lighting along their edges, these fragments do not add up to create any consistent feeling throughout the district.



PHOTO 13. ANDOVER PARK WEST



PHOTO 14. MINKLER BLVD.



PHOTO 15. SOUTHCENTER PARKWAY



PHOTO 16. STRANDER BLVD.

A.9 CONCLUSION

The Tukwila community has seen its presumptive “Urban Center” transform from farms and undeveloped open land to an industrial hub, and again to its current incarnation as an industrial and regional retail center. Southcenter is very successful as a commercial district - it is “the place to shop” for the City and a large portion of the region. Tukwila is the sixth-largest city in the state for sales tax collections, and most of those dollars come from the stores located in Southcenter, with up to two billion dollars worth of retail activity generated annually by retailers in the Southcenter area. However, the success of the district has led to rapid growth that has sprawled in haphazard fashion across the enormous land area of Southcenter, resulting in a diffuse and exclusively auto-oriented environment that is confusing to shopping and featuring little connection to the rest of the community.

Whereas Southcenter is the economic engine of the City, it does not function as any real center for the community. It is only active in the daytime, and there are few nighttime uses. Despite the presence of hotels in the area, there are only scattered dining and entertainment opportunities. Development within Southcenter is exclusively commercial. Developments are characterized by low-rise structures surrounded or edged by surface parking. There are very few places to gather or meet other than in the hallways of the Mall.

Southcenter is bound by substantial natural and manmade features that separate the district from the residential neighborhoods to its north and west, and from commercial development to the east and south. Because of a lack of other connections to the district, most people get to Southcenter by car. Its development pattern is entirely oriented to automobile, with very little consideration given to the pedestrian. Wide streets are unrelieved by trees or landscaping, and not enlivened by interesting signage or architecture. While the City’s Zoning Code states that the TUC is intended to be “pedestrian-friendly”, the large scale of the district’s blocks and the stark quality of its streets create powerful disincentives to walking in the district. Sidewalks are inconsistent and narrow. Street crossings are few and far between, and the streetlights are timed for cars, not for pedestrians. This pattern of development is vulnerable to loss of value likely to stem from increasing gasoline prices and the popular embrace of sustainable pattern of development.

The City of Tukwila is a memorable natural setting, and Southcenter has several notable, if hidden, resources, including Tukwila Pond, Minkler Pond and the Green River. But these resources have thus far been a missed opportunity for the district - hidden from view, difficult to access, and therefore rarely used by most of the City’s population. Aside from these amenities, few natural site features remain - most have been developed and paved over with asphalt. Southcenter’s visual character stands in stark contrast to the context that surrounds it - the incongruence between the green residential fabric of the City and the hard asphalt of its Urban Center is heightened by the lack of connections between them.

Tukwila’s Urban Center does not reflect any design character that is indigenous to the region or to the City. Buildings are similar in height and massing, and no different than those that can be found at any successful retail center in the country. The streets that make up the network of Southcenter are indistinguishable from one another in both aesthetics and importance. There are no landmarks to indicate important locations and anchors in the district, and no visual or physical connections to link these places together. Unremarkable building design, spread-out development patterns, and undefined streetscapes contribute to the character of a “placeless” setting.

But the opportunities inherent in Southcenter are strong. The area is easily reachable from surrounding cities, with good access via the interstate freeways, and as result, the regional mall remains successful. The recreational and natural amenities of the area make good incentives for residential development throughout the district, providing potential anchors for new neighborhoods. A planned residential mixed use development adjacent to the Tukwila Sounder Station will provide an anchor for further residential development in Southcenter. Transit options, including the King County bus system and Sound Transit’s commuter rail and the planned regional light rail, can be improved and built upon, and combined with an improved pedestrian realm to provide an alternative to automobile travel. All of these factors provide the framework for positive change and offer the opportunity to direct future growth, to make Southcenter a true “Urban Center” for its community. The *Tukwila Urban Center Plan* is intended to build upon and extend these assets while improving the character, connectivity and range of experiences offered in Southcenter for the community and the region.



Economic Studies – Prepared by EcoNorthwest

- 1) Tukwila Urban Center Market Analysis (March 2002)
- 2) Tukwila Urban Center Supplemental Market Analysis (Month 2002)
- 3) Initial Assessment of Recent Market Developments in TUC (March 2003)
- 4) Northern TUC Forecasts for Transportation Modeling (November 2003)
- 5) Assessment of Fiscal Case for Investment and Retail Entitlements (September 2003)
- 6) City of Tukwila Fiscal Context for Potential City Core Improvement (November 2003)
- 7) Public Cost Assessment of TUC Catalyst Projects (May 2004)

Traffic Studies – Prepared by Mirai Associates

- 1) Draft City of Tukwila Urban Center Existing Conditions Report (September 2002)
- 2) Draft Tukwila Urban Center Study, 2020 Traffic Forecasts and Recommendations (April 2004)
- 3) Draft Existing and 2020 Level of Service Analysis – Outside of the TUC (September 2004)

Transit Studies – Prepared by Perteet, Inc.

- 1) Final Transit Network Plan – Tukwila Urban Center Subarea (December 2004)

Studies on Tukwila Pond – Prepared by City of Tukwila

- 1) Tukwila Pond Report (August 2006)
- 2) Tukwila Pond Conceptual Design (September 2006)



SEPARATELY BOUND TECHNICAL REPORTS

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