

COMMUNITY IMAGE AND IDENTITY

PURPOSE

The Community Image and Identity element establishes a framework that celebrates our history, builds upon our diversity, and fosters civic engagement, while accommodating growth in a way that furthers the community's vision. The goals and policies of this element are intended to enhance the overall Community Image and Identity to which every element of the Plan contributes in some degree. The citizens of Tukwila have expressed a strong interest in strengthening this identity and image through the original Vision Tukwila and Tukwila Tomorrow processes in the 1990s and the recent strategic planning process and Community Conversations. The strategic planning process culminated in the approval by the City Council of the City of Tukwila Strategic Plan 2012 (Strategic Plan). The goal and policy recommendations in this chapter reflect this interest in promoting a positive community character and identity. They are based on the image of the community as seen not only by the citizens of Tukwila, but also by visitors and those who come here to work.

Comment [RF1]: "Identity" added to emphasize how Tukwila is experienced and perceived both from within the community and outside the community.

With little available vacant land other than the Tukwila South subarea, much of Tukwila's future residential population growth will occur in mixed use commercial areas. Ensuring that these increasingly dense areas are vibrant, attractive places to put down

¹City of Tukwila Comprehensive Plan – Community Image Element

roots is key to achieving Citywide goals. As Tukwila transitions from being a suburban community to a more urban place, the importance of well-designed commercial and multifamily spaces is recognized. The value of preserving and celebrating the area’s diverse cultural and historical heritage is also broadly appreciated.

ISSUES

Comment [CL2]: Subsections have been added under "Issues" to provide a brief narrative to support the goals and policies that follow later in the chapter.

Tukwila is an economically and geographically unique community. It has a large proportion and expanse of commercial and industrial activity compared to the amount of residential development. It is divided into distinct areas by freeways and crisscrossing arterials, with the Green/Duwamish River winding throughout the entire length of the City. The hillsides and valleys in the area further split the City into numerous, almost disconnected segments. Local streets and major arterials do not follow a predictable grid pattern. Large industrial and commercial developments, together with associated parking, tend to dominate the City’s landscape when seen from freeways and major arterials. This persists as the overall image of the City despite the community’s many areas of quiet residential streets and abundant vegetation. This geology also contributes to a sense of fracture between neighborhoods resulting in the challenge of developing solutions that serve all the residents.

Spectacular views of Mount Rainier, the Cascade Mountains, and even the Seattle skyline are available from many hillsides around the City. In addition, numerous streets run along the hillsides and afford sweeping vistas of land and greenery. And finally, the Green/Duwamish River and Tukwila Pond offer unique natural amenities whose potential as a prominent and dramatic elements of the community image have yet to be fully realized.

Historic Preservation and Cultural Awareness

While Tukwila has a rich history that has involved farming, rail transportation, and the development of the aircraft industry, there are few visible indications of its earlier days. With the exception of the Museum of Flight, the Duwamish Hill Preserve and some interpretive markers along the Green/Duwamish River, there are no explanations or celebrations of the major features of the community's heritage, such as the Interurban rail line. Only a few places are given any degree of commemoration with respect to their role in the growth of Tukwila.

Due to Tukwila's location on the Green/Duwamish River, the area has been home to many Native American settlements, and played an important role in local Native American history and culture. Development along certain portions of the river has exposed artifacts from the days when Native Americans travelled the river and camped along its banks. These artifacts require protection from future development, and improved interpretation so that the public can appreciate their origin and significance.

Cultural Diversity

Comment [CL3]: Discussion in this section adapted from the Strategic Plan narrative.

Tukwila's demographics have changed significantly in the 20 years since the original Comprehensive Plan was adopted. Similar to changes seen throughout all South King County, Tukwila has become home to a diverse mix of people from many backgrounds and countries. Our challenge is to create a community where residents, including the long-term and the recently-arrived, with varied backgrounds, traditions, languages and countries of origin, feel connected and committed to each other, their neighborhoods, their community groups and organizations, and to the City as a whole.

Many people feel involved in their own piece of Tukwila, be it a block, a neighborhood, a business park or a particular linguistic, cultural or interest group. Throughout the development of the City's five to ten year Strategic Plan (2012), there was a clearly expressed desire to increase a shared sense of belonging and involvement in Tukwila as a whole. This desire will be carried forward in the Comprehensive Plan through goals and policies which promote robust outreach on Comprehensive Plan activity and other City actions to the entire community. This outreach includes not only working with groups and individuals who have been involved in land use issues in the past, but reaching out to individuals and groups whose ideas have not traditionally been heard. "Community Conversation" meetings were held to hear about issues important to the many different cultural communities in Tukwila. This engagement involved talking with immigrant community members through interpreters to identify the issues most important to them and to ensure that diverse views were represented. The City will continue to explore ways to engage all citizens in its planning efforts.

City Boundaries

Comment [P4]: This section moved from Annexation Element as that element may be eliminated by 2015.

There is little sense of entering or leaving either the community as a whole or individual neighborhoods, because in many areas the City limits are irregular or do not coincide with natural boundaries. In addition, Tukwila's growth through petitioned annexations has created certain boundary anomalies:

- **City of Seattle:** The border configuration between Tukwila and Seattle in the King County Airport area, in which the boundary crosses Interstate 5 more than once and splits certain industrial properties, creates a number of jurisdictional issues, including police response.
- **City of SeaTac:** On the southwest, the boundary between Tukwila and SeaTac crosses Interstate 5 and other streets

⁴City of Tukwila Comprehensive Plan – Community Image Element

in several places, creating difficulties for the reasonable provision of services.

With major expansion largely ended, there is an opportunity to make Tukwila's size and extent more visible by providing identifiable boundary markers.

Commercial Development and Urban Design

Four strategies from the City's Strategic Plan were identified that could be used to develop a community of inviting neighborhoods and vibrant business districts. During the strategic planning process and the Community Conversations that informed the Comprehensive Plan Update, the City heard consistently that residents and businesses want a safe and visually attractive community. The design of residential and commercial development is key to accomplishing this goal. Visually attractive development occurs through the application of design criteria that are functional, attractive and safe. Safe and visually attractive communities are also achieved through the enforcement of existing standards.

City planning and investment in infrastructure promotes safe, attractive neighborhoods and business districts, and supports and enhances Tukwila's position as a major shopping and employment center. Areas of focus include making the City more accessible for bicyclists and walkers, and engaging residents and businesses in setting expectations for how Tukwila's public and private spaces will look.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space System

A community's identity is also drawn from the green spaces that make up a system of parks, recreation and open space. For the first

Comment [CL5]: The majority of this section has been deleted as open space is addressed in the new Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element of the Comprehensive Plan

time, the Comprehensive Plan addresses this important community feature in a separate Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element.

Healthy Living

Comment [RF6]: Addressing this topic was requested by the Tukwila City Council during the 2013 Comprehensive Plan review and identified as important in the Community Conversations. This section is also added to reflect the focus on healthy living and food access that is expressed in Puget Sound Regional Council's Vision 2040/Multi-County Planning policies and the King County Planning Policies.

The urban form – including the infrastructure and built environment – affects the health of residents and workers, as well as the community identity overall. The proximity of trails, sidewalks for safe walking, transit connections to reduce the use of single occupant vehicles that contribute to air pollution, the availability of recreation programs and access to healthy and affordable food choices all contribute to the health of a community.

The importance of providing healthy living choices is reflected throughout the Comprehensive Plan especially in this element, as well as in the Parks, Recreation and Open Space, Economic Development and Transportation elements.

The City hosted Community Conversations to identify issues as part of the update to the Comprehensive Plan, and Community Conversation outreach meetings when developing the 2012 Strategic Plan. As part of these efforts, community members consistently expressed their desire for better access to recreational opportunities, safer routes to schools for children, and better access to affordable, good quality food, including fresh fruits and vegetables.

Seeking to expand access to healthy food and provide job training opportunities, the City has provided use of the Tukwila Community Center's facilities by Project Feast, an organization that empowers immigrants by equipping them with hands-on vocational training to gain their footing in the food industry. The organization also connects trainees to opportunities to make a living in the food industry and share their wealth of knowledge about their native

country’s food with the greater Seattle community. In the process, the participants become integrated into local communities and economies.

The City is also exploring, in conjunction with the City of SeaTac, establishing a Food Innovation Network in this area. A Food Innovation Network is a governance structure that promotes increased food sector investment and employment opportunities. A food innovation district is a geographic concentration of food-oriented businesses, services and community activities that local governments support through planning and economic development initiatives in order to promote a positive business environment, spur regional food system development and increase access to local food. As the primary mechanism for establishing this type of program is economic development, further discussion and proposing goals and policies is deferred to the Economic Development element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Community Image

Comment [RF7]: Strategic Plan issue

Tukwila’s image as perceived within the community and region, and portrayed by the media is often at odds with its many positive attributes. The City faces challenges in shifting negative perceptions about public safety and crime to create and communicate an image that better reflects reality, engages residents and attracts visitors and businesses.

GOALS AND POLICIES

Comment [CL8]: Implementation Strategies now are grouped at the end of each subsection.

Overall Community Identity

Goal 1.1 A community of inviting neighborhoods and vibrant business districts.

Comment [RF9]: Goal from Strategic Plan

Policies

1.1.1 Encourage the creation of locations and facilities where residents of all ages can gather for activities and events, such as parades and festivals.

Comment [CL10]: Tukwila is becoming more of an urban area and less of a small suburban enclave. The new Urban Center plan will focus development, including residential in the urban core. Tukwila Valley South will also include residential development. Staff needs direction from the Planning Commission on whether Tukwila has a small town feel, and if so, how is it physically characterized and should there be a policy that addresses this?

1.1.3 Strengthen the image and character of Tukwila’s separate and distinct areas and neighborhoods.

1.1.4 Capitalize on the potential that public projects have for serving as symbols of the community, and for expressing the identity and special character of the area where they are located.

1.1.5 Regulate the location and operation of adult entertainment establishments.

1.1.6 Expand the system of incentives, tools and supports that encourage investment in and maintenance of private and public spaces.

Comment [CL11]: These two new policies, 1.1.6 and 1.1.7, are adapted from the Strategic Plan (2012).

1.1.7 Focus City planning and investments on creating a connected, dynamic urban environment.

Implementation Strategies

- Foster public life throughout the City by providing neighborhood focal points and open spaces that are well-integrated into the neighborhoods they serve.
- Create and enhance public spaces for community use.

- Develop and use residential and commercial design standards and guidelines that respond to local climate conditions, emphasize conservation, and draw on the region’s cultural heritage.
- Continue to implement the “Walk and Roll” Plan.
- Support and advance enforcement of existing codes and regulations.
- Design and install signs that identify residential neighborhoods by name.

Comment [CL12]: Former policy 1.3.3, rewritten and converted to an implementation strategy.

Goal 1.2 Tukwila has a positive community identity and image.

Comment [RF13]: Strategic Plan Goal 5

Policies

1.2.1 Take a proactive role in generating positive media coverage of the community.

Comment [CL14]: New policies 1.2.1-1.2.3 to support new goal 1.2 on positive community identity and image.

1.2.2 Implement a long-term and consistent effort to shift negative perceptions of crime and public safety in Tukwila.

1.2.3 Promote Tukwila’s international diversity as a strength.

Implementation Strategies

- Utilize the City’s Communications Division to develop a strategy to promote Tukwila’s amenities, cultural dynamism and central geographic location.
- Establish a graphics standard and unified look for City documents and communications.
- Develop common themes that recognize and promote Tukwila’s many positive attributes.

Historic Preservation and Cultural Awareness

Goal 1.3 A heritage conserved and interpreted so that Tukwila’s citizens recognize connections with the past and celebrate the diverse cultures represented in the community.

Policies

1.3.1 Identify and protect historically significant properties, structures and sites, in either their present or a nearby location, as determined in a city-wide survey and designation process.

Comment [CL15]: Formerly Policy 8.3.9 from Transportation Corridors chapter of 1995 Comprehensive Plan.

1.3.2 Provide prominent public art and interpretive markers at highly visible locations, explaining the history of the Interurban Trolley, the Green/Duwamish River, Duwamish Hill Preserve and other important buildings, sites, events, or persons.

Comment [P16]: This was formerly Policy 8.3.8, which as been revised and moved from the Transportation Corridors element.

1.3.3 Establish a process for providing incentives and designating certain structures as landmarks.

- 1.3.4 Include consideration of features that reflect characteristics of Tukwila’s history and cultural diversity in the design review of commercial, public, and multiple-family buildings.
- 1.3.5 Develop and implement plans, projects, and programs to protect and promote the historical legacy of the Green River Valley and its natural and built environment.

Cultural Diversity

Comment [RF17]: Recognizes and incorporates Strategic Plan priorities

Policy 1.3.6 Encourage and support communities in celebrating, preserving and transmitting their traditions through cultural and heritage activities, and education.

Policy 1.3.7 Develop programs and City-wide events to celebrate the City’s cultural diversity.

Comment [RF18]: Strategic Plan Goal 5 B.2

Policy 1.3.8 Enhance linkages with the Tukwila School District to recognize and support the strengths of Tukwila’s multi-lingual student body.

Implementation Strategies

- Contract with King County Landmarks Board for historic preservation services.
- Develop and implement a historic resources designation procedure and program to ensure that these sites continue to be part of the community.
- Seek certified Local Government status to secure funding and technical assistance for historic preservation.
- Develop incentives, such as fee waivers or code flexibility, to encourage preservation of historic resources, including

those that are currently known and those that have yet to be identified.

- Increase awareness of the community’s heritage by promoting cultural preservation programs and/or educational activities.
- Develop public art and markers that incorporate local historical references, events and individuals.
- Promote partnerships between the City and community cultural heritage groups, such as the Tukwila Historical Society.
- Encourage both public and private stewardship of historic sites and structures.
- Recognize Tukwila’s heritage by naming or renaming parks, streets or other public places with their original names or after major figures and events.
- Continue the use of Community Connectors, or some other appropriate mechanism to provide outreach to the City’s culturally diverse communities on a regular basis.
- Expand the linguistic and cultural competencies of City staff through training and hiring.
- Continue and enhance the relationship with the Tukwila School District through classroom visits and partnerships, internships, scholarship program.

Comment [RF19]: Strategic Plan Goal 5.B.2

Goal 1.4 : Paleontological and archaeological artifacts and sites with cultural and Native American significance are protected and preserved.

Comment [CL20]: This goal and its supporting policies have been moved from the Natural Environment chapter. Text has been modified from 1995 Comprehensive Plan Goal 4.6.

Policies

Comment [P21]: All the policies in this section are implemented through SEPA review and/or existing City, State and Federal regulations

1.4.1 Implement existing regulations to ensure that paleontological and archaeological materials and site details are preserved for posterity.

Comment [P22]: Modified from Policy 4.6.1

1.4.2 Ensure that the potential for the existence of paleontological and archaeological sites is considered during development of new construction projects.

Comment [P23]: Proposed new policy from the Tree and Environment Advisory Committee.

1.4.3 Identify and protect archaeological resources and culturally significant sites and develop interpretive information that fosters public appreciation of historical traditions and practices.

Comment [P24]: Proposed new policy 1.4.3 from the Tree and Environment Advisory Committee.

City Boundaries

Comment [CL25]: Incorporates Strategic Plan priorities.

Goal 1.5 Logical and identifiable boundaries for Tukwila so that residents, workers, and visitors know they are entering the City.

Policies

1.5.1 Maintain, improve and expand distinctive gateway features located at freeway off-ramps and at City limit lines where they cross major arterial streets; use graphics, orientation maps, informational signage, lighting, specimen trees, plantings with seasonal color, artwork, monument forms, or combinations thereof.

Comment [P26]: Policy revised to recognize that gateway features have been installed in many areas of the City.

1.5.2 Work with affected citizens, property owners and the neighboring cities of SeaTac, Kent, and Seattle to develop interlocal agreements that adjust border anomalies

Comment [CL27]: This is Policy 6.1.4, moved from Annexation element and revised as that element may be eliminated by 2015. Edited for clarity.

Implementation Strategies

- Expand community markers at City boundaries, and at key points throughout the community, establishing a clear community signature.
- Develop a consistent City graphics protocol and program.

Comment [RF28]: Strategic Plan 5.C.2

Commercial Areas

Goal 1.6 Tukwila’s vibrant commercial districts are visually attractive, draw visitors, add value to the community and encourage employees and customers to walk, bike and use transit.

Policies

1.6.1 Enhance the pedestrian environment with street improvements that include curbs, sidewalks or trails, and regularly spaced street trees.

Comment [P29]: This is former Policy 8.1.1, moved from Transportation Corridor element

1.6.2 Develop streetscape design guidelines that support an urban built form and commercial districts with pedestrian oriented amenities.

Comment [CL30]: Language of policy has been changed to substitute “Enhance” for “Improve” to avoid using the work “improve” twice in the same “entence.”

1.6.3 As major new development or redevelopment occurs, require through-block pedestrian connections that follow adopted guidelines.

Comment [CL31]: The original language of this policy is obsolete as it is implemented through Public Works adopted street standards. The new wording better reflects the goal for how the urban area looks.

Comment [CL32]: Policies 1.6.3 and 1.6.4 are currently policies 1.8.5 and 1.8.8 and have been moved from the “Transportation Corridors” section of this chapter.

- 1.6.4 Encourage facilities and improvements that support transit use in new development, redevelopment, and street projects.

Implementation Strategies

- Encourage “welcome signs” and information kiosks.
- Development standards that support all modes of travel.
- Develop through-block pedestrian guidelines.

Urban Design and Development

Goal 1.7 Tukwila’s retail areas are characterized by high quality urban design that accommodates a mix of compatible residential, commercial and light industrial uses.

Comment [CL33]: The text of existing goal 1.8 has been completely revised.

Policies

1.7.1 Maintain zoning regulations that allow mixed uses in appropriate commercial districts.

Comment [CL34]: This policy language revised to reflect that Tukwila’s commercial districts currently allow a mix of uses.

1.7.2 Encourage the development of corridor focal points, while ensuring high-quality design.

Comment [CL35]: This is former Policy 8.1.8, moved from Transportation Corridors chapter of the 1995 Comprehensive Plan.

1.7.3 Use design guidelines to encourage compatible location and configuration of buildings, parking, recreation areas and pedestrian facilities.

Comment [CL36]: Policy language modified from existing text.

1.7.4 Incorporate substantial landscaping both along street frontages and within parking lots in new development and redevelopment when the buildings are not brought up to the back of sidewalk.

Comment [CL37]: Existing Policy 1.8.6, language modified.

1.7.5 Provide pedestrian weather protection, see-through glass, and distinctive rooflines in new and redeveloped building facades.

Comment [CL38]: Language modified from existing Policy 1.8.7. Existing Policy 1.8.7 also has been split into two policies.

1.7.6 Incorporate interesting and pedestrian-friendly features on minor facades adjacent to secondary streets or pedestrian paths.

Comment [RF39]: Policy 1.8.7 split into two policies.

1.7.7 Encourage placemaking through creative use of signage, art and high quality materials.

1.7.8 Require that sites have adequate lighting and are designed using crime reduction principles to increase safety.

1.7.9 Seek opportunities to integrate public art into public improvements.

Comment [CL40]: Policy 8.1.13, moved from Transportation Corridors

Implementation Strategies

- Use Crime Prevention through Environmental Design principles to deter criminal behavior.

Goal 1.8 Tukwila's parking standards are appropriate for each use and provide flexibility for individual circumstances.

Comment [CL41]: This new goal and supporting policies provide Comprehensive Plan guidance and support for any needed revisions to the City's parking standards to reflect new research and thinking on "right sized parking".

Policies

1.8.1 Maintain and periodically revise parking standards so that they (1) are sufficient to meet typical daily demand, (2) reflect any significant shifts in transit usage, (3) encourage shared parking between mixed uses and sites, (4) accommodate car-sharing opportunities; and (5) allow off-site parking when adjacent uses are not affected.

1.8.2 Maintain and periodically revise standards for bicycle parking.

Comment [P42]: Policy 8.1.6, moved from Transportation Corridors

Healthy Living

Comment [RF43]: Addressing this topic was requested by the Tukwila City Council during the 2013 Comp Plan review and identified as important in the Community Conversations. This section is also added to reflect the focus on healthy living and food access that is expressed in Puget Sound Regional Council's Vision 2040/Multi-County Planning policies and the King County Planning Policies.

Goal 1.9 A healthy community where active living and access to affordable, culturally-appropriate and nutritious food is available to all.

Policies

- 1.9.1 Develop public, private and non-profit partnerships to support the goal of healthy eating and active living, including education and awareness.
- 1.9.2 Develop and implement a communication plan and Healthy Tukwila web site with information and links about healthy eating, active living and related topics – including strategies for reaching communities who do not speak English or use computers (e.g. translated written as well as verbal).
- 1.9.3 Provide healthy and culturally-appropriate (e.g. Halal, non-pork, vegetarian) food and beverages in City programs and facilities to promote healthy eating habits.

Goal 1.10. Food security, local food production and public health are promoted.

Policies

- 1.10.1 Explore incentives or regulatory changes to encourage location of healthy food purveyors in underserved areas.
- 1.10.2 Encourage locally-based food production, distribution, and choice through urban agriculture, community gardens, farmers markets and food access initiatives.
- 1.10.3 Support the Tukwila Food Pantry and other organizations that help provide food assistance to low-income residents so that all families, seniors, schools and community-based organizations are able to access, purchase and increase intake of fresh fruits, vegetables, and other nutritious foods.

Implementation Strategies

- Explore establishing a Food Innovation Network in conjunction with other jurisdictions.
- Explore establishing a farmers market, mobile produce truck or other forum for the sale of fresh in-season produce.
- Promote farmers markets, farmstands, community supported agriculture drop off sites, community gardens, school gardens, home gardens, cottage food businesses and urban farms.
- Encourage farmers markets, farmstands and other non-storefront sellers of food to accept WIC/SNAP benefits and “Double Your Bucks” programs.

- Review regulations to ensure there are no barriers to urban agriculture, farmers markets and other food access mechanisms.
- Research issues related to food trucks and develop regulations as appropriate.