



STAFF REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Prepared May 6, 2015

HEARING DATE: May 28, 2015

FILE NUMBERS: PL13-0051—2015 Comprehensive Plan Update
L13-0060 -- Transportation Corridors/Tukwila International Boulevard
District Element

APPLICANT: City of Tukwila

REQUEST: 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update—The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on proposed amendments to the Transportation Corridors Element of the Comprehensive Plan. This is part of the periodic review and update of the Plan required by the Washington Growth Management Act.

LOCATION: Policies apply throughout the City of Tukwila

NOTIFICATION: Hearing Notice published in the Seattle Times on May 14, 2015 and posted on the City of Tukwila website on May 12, 2015

SEPA DETERMINATION: An environmental determination will be issued prior to City Council consideration in the fourth quarter of 2015.

STAFF: Lynn Miranda, Senior Planner
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ATTACHMENTS: A. Proposed Tukwila International Boulevard (TIB) District Element
B. Edited Transportation Corridors Element (Strikeout/Underline)

BACKGROUND

The City of Tukwila's Comprehensive Plan, first adopted in 1995, establishes goals and policies that guide the community as it grows and changes over time. Its policies and land use map lay out the community's long range vision. The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) gives Tukwila the opportunity to amend the Comprehensive Plan once a year, unless it is an emergency. The Comprehensive Plan has been amended periodically to keep up with changing requirements, and to respond to requests from the public.

In addition to these regular amendments, the state Growth Management Act (GMA) requires counties and cities periodically to conduct a thorough review of their plan and development regulations to bring them up to date with any relevant changes in the GMA and to respond to changes in land use and population growth. The last required systematic review and update was completed in 2004. Tukwila's required updates will be complete by fourth quarter, 2015.

Tukwila has been preparing the required update over several years, and is reviewing the Comprehensive Plan elements in phases. The update is proceeding according to a general schedule, work plan and public participation program adopted by the Council in March, 2013. To date, update work has been completed on the Manufacturing/Industrial Center element (6/11), and the goals and policies in the Shoreline element (8/11). In 2013, the Capital Facilities, Utilities, Natural Environment, Southcenter/Urban Center, Shoreline element supporting text and Transportation elements were updated. PROS, Roles and Responsibilities, Community Image and Identity, Economic Development, and Tukwila South were updated and adopted in 2014.

In 2015, the remaining elements will be completed including Transportation Corridors/Tukwila International Boulevard (TIB) District, Housing, and Residential Neighborhoods, as well as the Vision, Glossary and Map Legend.

OUTREACH

Outreach for the Tukwila International Boulevard District element has occurred during 2014 and 2015. During 2014, City staff made significant efforts to reach out in new ways to bring Tukwila's diverse community into the City planning process. This included identifying and training community liaisons ("Community Connectors"), who are part of language and cultural populations within Tukwila, including Spanish, Somali, Arabic, Tingrya, Amharic and Burmese, that have not been traditionally involved or heard. The liaisons conducted 194 in-person surveys with their community members about topics relevant to the Comprehensive Plan update including issues associated with the Tukwila International Boulevard district.

The Connectors invited community members to attend Community Conversation meetings, which were also promoted via email, print and website. The two meetings had a combined record attendance of approximately 180 community members. Participants gathered in small groups to talk about community priorities, neighborhood quality and ways to promote healthy living.

Local businesses on or in close proximity to TIB were also surveyed from in 2014 to assess their needs and attributes since they are a dominant factor in the character of the neighborhood, and staff held a business outreach session during fall, 2014. This input, in addition to the comments gathered at the Community Conversation meetings, was used to develop policies and strategies for Tukwila International Boulevard District element, as well as the other remaining elements.

Staff conducted a walking tour of the Tukwila International Boulevard area with the Planning Commission on September 11, 2014. Joint City Council/Planning Commission work sessions, open to the public, were held on January 8, 2015, and February 26, 2015. Input from prior community meetings was used to help develop a new vision for the area, as well as policy directions. A Community Open house is scheduled for May 20, 2015.

Planning Commission and City Council hearings, mailings, City website, print publications, and community events continue to be used to receive public comments and to inform the public about the Comprehensive Plan update.

REVIEW PROCESS

A work session on the refocused Transportation Corridors/Tukwila International Boulevard District element will be held on May 21, 2015. Staff will review the proposed elements with the Commission, concentrating on changes. There will be a public hearing on May 28, 2015 to receive comments from the community. The Commissioners will have an opportunity to consider public input carefully and propose further changes, if desired. After the hearing, the Planning Commission will be asked to make a recommendation that will be forwarded to the City Council for consideration, a public hearing and adoption.

The City Council will hold its review and take action only after it receives the Planning Commission's recommendations for all the remaining elements, because the Growth Management Act allows the Comprehensive Plan to be amended no more than once each year unless there is an emergency. After review, the remaining elements will be reviewed with changes adopted during Fall, 2015.

The Comprehensive Plan update assumes that:

- Primary goals and objectives remain relevant and will be maintained from the current Plan;
- Updates will focus on elements that require revision per changes to the Washington Growth Management Act, and Countywide Planning Policies;
- Tukwila Strategic Plan's vision and goals will be reflected and incorporated in the Comprehensive Plan;
- Policies and descriptions will be updated, simplified and edited to increase clarity and consistency throughout the document;
- The document's elements may be reorganized or consolidated for greater readability and conciseness;
- The format will be updated to improve on-line functionality and attractiveness.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CHANGES

Tukwila International Boulevard District Element:

The Transportation Corridors Element is part of the Comprehensive Plan's required land use section. As the name suggests, the current Transportation Corridors element includes policies and strategies for the Tukwila International Boulevard, Southcenter Boulevard and Interurban areas. With this update, it has been refocused on Tukwila International Boulevard exclusively and renamed "Tukwila International Boulevard District" element. This change reflects the importance of this neighborhood to City redevelopment efforts. Policies for the remaining transportation corridors have either been accomplished, relocated into other Elements, or in certain cases, deleted.

The proposed policies and implementation strategies reflect updates to other Comprehensive Plan elements, and incorporate community priorities expressed in the Strategic Plan, through Community Conversations meetings and the City Council/Planning Commission work sessions.

Specifically, the proposed Tukwila International Boulevard District element will:

1. Add a new Vision for the TIB District that reflects community comments and joint City Council/Planning Commission work sessions.
2. Include land use policies focused on developing a more intensive mix of uses in mid to high rise developments in two key areas (“nodes”) along the Boulevard:
 - a. Village Node--Near the S. 144th St/TIB intersection – A mix of residential and community-serving commercial uses;
 - b. Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Node--Near the Tukwila International Boulevard Link Light Rail Station – Transit-oriented development that leverages the “one stop from the airport” location, and includes more regional-serving office, services, and housing.
3. Outside of node areas, policies encourage a variety of low to mid rise uses including residential and neighborhood-serving services; limited new retail development.
4. Add new policies to support the community’s vision for the TIB District:
 - a. Develop a unique, authentic character for the TIB District that promotes the area’s ethnic diversity and attracts local and regional visitors to the area.
 - b. Make TIB a “main street” or spine of the neighborhood with on-street parking, slower vehicular speeds, and more crosswalks, and with buildings oriented to the street.
 - c. Improve pedestrian safety, walkability, and connectivity by expanding the sidewalk network from TIB to adjacent neighborhoods and linking activity areas.
 - d. Shift market perception and economics via “placemaking”.
 - e. Continue efforts to reduce crime, stabilize neighborhoods, and actively engage residents and businesses in the TIB District redevelopment efforts.

MATERIALS AND FORMAT

The packet contains:

1. A Tukwila International Boulevard District element with explanatory notes. There is no strikeout/underline version since it is largely new. Comments provide staff review and identify policies that have been carried over from the former Transportation Corridors element.
2. A significantly edited version of the current Transportation Corridors element. This version shows the rationale for proposed changes, and lets the reader follow the revision process. Revised language is shown in a variety of colors as a number of staff reviewed and edited the element. Strikeouts indicate language that has been deleted because it has been accomplished, relocated to another element, or out-of-date. Underlining indicates revisions to language that has been carried over to the new Tukwila International Boulevard District element. Comments reflect staff review.

A Background Report that provides additional supporting information for the Tukwila International Boulevard District element and the goals and policies was provided to the Planning Commission and City Council prior to the January 8, 2015 Joint City Council/Planning Commission work session. It may be accessed on the City’s website at <http://www.tukwilawa.gov/dcd/dcdcompplan.html>.

These materials are intended to encourage discussion and provide background. The Comprehensive Plan document will be formatted and links to pertinent documents added after the City Council takes final action to adopt all the updated elements.

REQUESTED ACTION

The Planning Commission is asked to hold a hearing on the proposed changes to the Transportation Corridors/Tukwila International Boulevard District Element, develop Planning Commission recommended versions of the elements, and forward them to the City Council for final action.