



CITY OF TUKWILA PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA JUNE 26, 2025 - 6:30 PM

Join **in-person** at: 6200 Southcenter Blvd, Council Chambers, Tukwila, WA. 98188. To participate in the **virtual meeting** at 6:30 pm:

By Phone: Dial [+1 253-292-9750](tel:+12532929750), Access 779 253 241#

Online: To join this meeting virtually please click on Planning Commission on the 6/26/25 calendar date on the events page located at <https://www.tukwilawa.gov/events/>

For Technical Support during the meeting, you may call 1-206-433-7155

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call
- III. Amendment of the Agenda, if necessary
- IV. Approval of Minutes – 5/22/25
- V. General Public Comments (acknowledge non-hearing-related written comments received)
- VI. Unfinished Business
 1. Tukwila International Boulevard Regulations – Isaac Gloor
- VII. New Business (none)
- VIII. Director's Report
- IX. Adjournment

General Public Comments: Persons wishing to provide general comments on any non-public hearing, planning- related topic may submit their written comment to BoardsComms@TukwilaWA.gov. Comments received before 5:00 p.m. the day before the PC meeting will be forwarded to Commissioners prior to their meeting. Materials received after that time will be forwarded prior to the next meeting.

Reminder: Staff are available to address PC questions regarding packets. Please call or email PC Secretary Wynetta Bivens, (206-431-3654 Wynetta.Bivens@TukwilaWA.gov) to be connected with a staff member. Thank you!



CITY OF TUKWILA PLANNING COMMISSION (PC) MINUTES

Date: May 22, 2025
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Location: Hybrid Meeting - via Microsoft Teams / Public, In-Person
Attendance, Council Chambers, 6200 Southcenter Blvd., Tukwila,
WA 98188

I. **Call to Order**

Chair Durant called the Tukwila PC meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. **Roll Call**

The PC Secretary took roll call.

Present: Chair Ann Durant; Vice Chair Alex Kaehler; Commissioners Louise Strander, Martin Probst, Richard McLeland Wieser, Jane Ho, and Jacob Halverson.

Staff: Mayor Thomas McLeod, Department of Community Development (DCD); Director Nora Gierloff, American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP); Emily Romanenko, Deputy City Attorney; Senior Planner Isaac Gloor, DCD; Economic Development Administrator Derek Speck, and Planning Commission Secretary Wynetta Bivens

III. **Amendment of the Agenda**

No changes to the agenda were requested.

IV. **Approval of Minutes**

Commissioner McLeland Wieser moved to adopt the 5/22/25 minutes. Commissioner Ho seconded the motion. The motion carried.

V. **Written General Public Comments**

No submittals.

VI. **Old Business**

None

VII. **New Business**

1. PC Procedures Refresher (Emily Romanenko, Deputy City Attorney)

Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) - An overview was provided of governmental actions, and the intent of delegating authorities, legislative declaration, and rules. The following are some takeaways:

- It is necessary to determine when the PC is required to have a quorum of a minimum of four PC present to act on official business.
- Is there an inadvertent serial meeting occurring? A serial meeting may occur when a majority of four PC communicate outside of a meeting via phone or email.
- Passive receipt of information is fine. The PC is not discussing or making a decision.
- The PC should have conversations about City business when they are in a meeting that has been properly noticed.
- The PC should contact staff or the City Attorney if they have questions.
- One-way email communication is allowed, but it was suggested that emails are Bcc'd to recipients so there are no responses to communication between the PC.
- Information was provided regarding open meetings via social media. PC shall not speak on the behalf of other PC.
- Protocol was provided and discussed on public comments, which is required in any meeting when a vote is taken on final actions. It is important and strongly recommended that the PC does not ask questions when individuals are giving public comments during a public hearing.
- There may be penalties for non-compliance. This may include personal liability, public agency liability, improper actions in violation may be voided and potentially grounds for recalls.
- When public comments are given, PC are to make sure you are in listening/hearing mode.

Public Records Act (PRA) - The PRA is a strongly worded mandate for broad disclosure of public records, and it requires strict compliance. Agencies must disclose all public records. The following are some takeaways:

- A Public Records Officer must be appointed; this individual resides in the City Clerk's Office.
- Records are considered, prepared, owned, used, or retained by a state or local agency.
- If City business is conducted on personal devices, they are subject to disclosure.
- There are no general privacy exemptions in the PRA.
- Packet information are secondary copies and PC do not need to keep them. Staff retain public records.
- Do not mix business and personal records.

Appearance of Fairness - Legal standards for making decisions. The following are some takeaways:

- The PC no longer sits in the quasi-judicial capacity and appearance of fairness does not apply in the legislature capacity.

- When voting on code amendments PC are setting direction and policy and there are limited safeguards needed because there is a fair amount of discretion.
2. Tukwila International Boulevard (TIB) Neighborhood: Introduction, History, and Future (Isaac Gloor, Senior Planner)

Background Overview

Senior Planner Isaac Gloor provided background on the potential modifications to the development standards within the zoning district associated with the TIB neighborhood. He said that staff have been working on this for a long time and provided an overview of the work already done on zoning code amendments and how that work may guide their future decisions. He said that the TIB neighborhood or corridor are referred to as different things sometimes in different code or documents and it pertains to all the parcels in a particular area. The area contains the City's sole Link station, which provides connections to Seattle, Snohomish County, the airport, points south in the future, and to the eastside across Lake Washington. It has two bus rapid transit lines serviced by other King County routes that provide access to Renton, Burien, and Federal Way but despite the strong investment in transit in the area, it is still mostly low-density, auto-oriented neighborhoods. Development of property has not been quick and has generally required labor intensive development agreements, which are one-off deals that are not predictable or transparent.

There have been 30 years of planning for TIB starting in 1995 and continuing in 2015, TIB got its own subarea Element within the Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan). One of the goals for the 2024 Comp Plan that was recently adopted was that "The TIB District is a thriving, walkable, well-rounded neighborhood and a desirable place to live, work, shop, worship, or play." There was lots of community outreach pertaining to this goal.

In an effort to implement the goal, in 2017 the City contracted with Congress for New Urbanism (CNU), and the CNU gave their recommendations to the City Council (CC) regarding what the City should do. The recommendation included physical changes to the streetscapes and changes to the zoning code, which would allow greater capacity and greater development, and greater diversity of uses and development patterns that are more consistent with the recommendations. The CC established a moratorium on certain auto-oriented uses. There was much work done by staff and consultants in the three years following. The CC decided not to make any zoning changes until a decision was made regarding the final shape of the road itself. In March 2020, in part due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was decided that this question would be reviewed later. Because a clear timeframe was not established, the topic was dropped.

This meeting is primarily to discuss the development standards for what happens on private property. In 2017, the CC adopted measures that would align with the CNU recommendations on an interim capacity. They established an immediate moratorium on auto-oriented uses, which were deemed incompatible, such as hotels, motels, gas stations, etc. That effort remains the only outcome of the work done from 2017-2020 that was implemented. None of the concepts produced in 2017 for zoning changes were adopted.

Commissioner McLeland Wieser asked staff and Mayor McLeod, who had joined the discussion, where the bottleneck is and why this work is taking so long. Mayor McLeod said that this CC currently wants to do something. And there were members of the past CC that wanted to do something, but the CC could not come to a consensus and the community didn't want it. There were various challenges. He said that he has always been in favor of this, and the charette program done in 2017 was a great idea and he doesn't know why the administration at the time wasn't trying to push it forward more. He said when he was on CC that they pushed for the addition of flashing crosswalks, which were put in around 142nd and 41st Street, but it wasn't enough. He said this is long overdue and that is the reason it's come back to the PC. When asked what the PC could do, he said PC could consider making a recommendation to the CC. He encouraged the PC to have robust conversation. Commissioner McLeland Wieser also asked if PC could advise the CC to move faster on this. Staff said that first the PC needs to determine what they want to move faster on. Mayor McLeod said he has asked the CC and staff to get this done by the end of November. Director Gierloff said that ideally, they would be moving on the PC recommendation stating what changes they think should be made to the code and in what ways. Then PC would forward their recommendation to the CC for their review. Commissioner Ho said what PC should do is figure out what their priority is, focus on it and have a discussion.

The following are Comments, Recommendations, Questions, and/or Requests Raised during discussion:

(Further discussion and responses are available in the [video](#) of the meeting.)

- PC requested documentation from 2017 on the opinion of the community and the PC.
- Commissioner Kaehler said they can save some time with existing information and can get up to speed on some things without reinventing the wheel – and that scope is really going to be key. Knowing what is in their scope and what is not in their scope is part of going fast. Hopefully, staff can provide gentle and kind guidance to keep PC within a reasonable scope. Also, the November timeline sounds achievable, reasonable and fast. He feels that this is one of the most important things he has seen in recent PC history. He said he is looking forward to taking it seriously and pushing.
- Commissioner McLeland Wieser said it is not in the best interest of the City to keep “kicking this can down the road”. Isaac said he appreciated the scope comment because the topic could snowball into an enormous conversation about every zoning district within the whole City. Trying to stay on target to the specific things they are talking about that they can have the most impact on in a short time would be very helpful. Commissioner Strander requested that staff provide comparisons of what is in the code/re-channelization/municipal code.
- Commissioner Durant requested staff to provide case study information on the code amendment process, how to engage with consultants to help understand the potential and explain information on Bothell case studies.
- Commissioner Halverson said that he would really like to see the zoning modified; at least on the south side of TIB to more multi-family, whether it is single use or multi-family use. He said allowing someone to build a giant apartment building would probably be important on the McDonald site because it is a very challenging site, and it is very expensive. It's tricky developing on a major arterial and amending the code would allow

development.

- Commissioner Probst said it would be great to look at some examples of mixed and single-use development from other cities that have been successful in implementation. Then determine whether Tukwila must amend the code to make it feasible and make sure it fits with the division of the community. He said the part that he is missing is what the community said previously and what do they want now, since the light rail is there. He said that he really would like to dive into that and envision with PC and CC how they can make it a living, thriving, walkable space for everyone. He said there is a captive audience coming off the light rail during the day. It's such a wonderful place to potentially succeed and have the community live in a space that is beautiful and fun, and he is excited about it. Isaac said the current standards do not allow a lot of flexibility. It's a very specific and strict standard, as to how they can build in a lot more flexibility whether it is mixed or single use while still achieving those goals and allowing development where people will build.
- Commissioner Durant said that issues at that end by the light rail have been security, concerns about parking and parking garages. The diversity of uses in activating that end of TIB is going to be essential to have that kind of all-day engagement from coffee shops to midday, into some sort of evening activities, so that it feels like a vibrant place where people are always engaged. It will be interesting to see how it can be achieved or how other cities are achieving that. She said that she would love to see more third spaces (place where social connections can be made other than home or work). She said we need to have great places along TIB.
- Commissioner McLeland Wieser asked if one person could spearhead this and guide it. The Mayor suggested that the PC review the charrette study that was completed in 2017, which provided a lot of community input, and he thinks it's a good study that would still be relevant. He said, maybe that can be sent out and PC can start digging into it and make the most of their time between now and their next meeting. He said he would like to see the CC vote on this in November and that he thinks that Director Gierloff noted it well, when she said that they were trying to do so much. He said that it almost became paralyzing and then COVID happened.
- Director Gierloff said that next month staff can bring PC a draft code of things to change and why.
- Commissioner Ho suggested prioritizing safety for the people in the community especially when they are walking to stores or businesses. She asked what the protocols are for potentially reducing the speed limit if a crosswalk cannot be put in for now until finances can be figured out. She said if they can get that started it would show the community that they are actively trying to make a change. Isaac said that DCD does not have the authority to regulate aspects of the road itself but can require developers to install improvements along their frontages or incentivize the installation of safe infrastructure. Commissioner Kaehler said the PC will have to do their part with the highest quality of code update within their purview and trust that Public Works will do their part in the re-channelization and creating safe streets.
- Isaac said another type of street improvement that they can consider requiring along frontages are pedestrian-protecting bollards.
- Commissioner Durant said because they are running parallel, if PC could have updates or

reports as it will inform them that the densities PC are proposing stay at maybe the south end to the village. It will also help with understanding what the current conversation is and the trajectory of those conversations in formulating the PC recommendations. Commissioner Ho was in consensus, she said it would keep them on task.

- Commissioner Halverson asked staff to provide PC with a recommendation for removing some of the overlays. He suggested the first step could be to review the residential commercial (RC) component and review the three zones one at a time. Then recommendations could be forwarded to CC, because it seems like easy improvements to make to promote development. Further, allowing multi-family projects next to the light rail would be beneficial and that seems to be in line with a walkable city. He said a big development like that would create revenue for improvements. Director Gierloff said traffic impact fees can go towards the public improvements. Commissioner Halverson mentioned a potential opportunity on the west side of the school on 42nd, which is a secondary road or arterial road.
- Commissioner Durrant said as part of the requirements for the Comp Plan update, Tukwila was targeted for increasing housing due to being behind on housing construction. The City should allow TIB to serve this community and future residents and not be afraid to have those conversations. Isaac said the goals and policies of the Comp Plan are very supportive of TIB being more of a main street for the area, and that it's not Tukwila's function to provide a mechanism to get to other places easier, but instead to help achieve the City's goals and visions.
- Director Gierloff suggested that the PC provide staff with some feedback on what they would like for them to incentivize. She said that they do not want to overburden development by adding a lot of requirements that may not work. For instance, ground floor retail can work well, but if you make everyone do it, it dilutes and may not be successful. If there is something PC want to incentivize in a place where it would work, you give a little something to make the developers want to do the extra work. Maybe there could be an incentive offered if developers build two- or three-bedroom units. Staff asked if there were things they would like staff to build into the code to sweeten the pot.
- Commissioner McLeland Wieser asked if the City was trying to please all the people all the time. He said it seems like they want to make everybody happy, but that's not going to happen. Decisions need to be made and move forward.
- Commissioner Kaehler said changes can be made that move away from expensive auto-oriented uses to fiscally responsible land use and uses of the space. Not everything has to be about throwing money into the problem, it could be a smart investment to save money.
- Commissioner McLeland Wieser asked if staff already have plans and whether there are recommendations. Director Gierloff said what they are trying to bring before the PC is code. They don't want to redo their vision but what they want to do is determine setbacks and height requirements. The issue with the recommendations from years ago is that the building codes changed and the state regulations around transit have changed, so it will not do them any good to try and adopt those. Staff will consolidate what they have been working on with the PC feedback and start bringing partial draft code to the PC for their review. Once review is completed a recommendation with specific development standards can be forwarded to the CC for their review and adoption.
- Commissioner Halverson made the following additional comments regarding the overlay.

He asked if they could zone everything high density and suggested doing a charette next time they are working on code amendments. Isaac said that the good news is that the Comp Plan already includes all the things that Commissioner Halverson is interested in, and it is the Zoning Code that is out of sync. He said they can change the underlying standards for the zoning district without needing to make any broad policy changes again.

- Commissioner Durant requested that staff allow the PC a month to review the past work that has been done before they decide what to adopt. She said it's such an incredible opportunity to bring the code into alignment with the Comp Plan. Commissioner Halverson was in consensus and suggested making the next meeting a study session. Staff said that this is a priority and agreed to hold a review work session in June. Staff said that the PC homework is to review the actual documents in preparation for the June PC meeting and they will really dive into the development standards at the July meeting. Commissioner McLeland Wieser said that DCD staff are experts and that he relies on them. He would like staff to provide the PC with a proposal that the PC can decide on. Director Gierloff said that there have been a lot of studies, proposals and plans that are distilled in the Comp Plan Update that PC has worked on and spent time thinking about. She suggested that PC could look at some pictures of Bothell and some excerpts of their code and see what they built. Commissioner Probst said that he was interested in the idea to review the past code, but he had some reservations. He inquired about the use of a development agreement, which staff said could involve a lot of risk and cost and potentially get to the final stage only to be denied. Commissioner Kaehler encouraged staff to move at a rigorous pace due to the lack of progress so far, saying he thinks they owe it to the community to move fast. Staff said if they stay targeted this could be a manageable project this year.
- There was an inquiry regarding low density commercial to create uses for more small restaurants, staff said it would be possible to incentivize such spaces.

Next Steps:

- Staff will provide PC with some case studies.
- The PC will be provided with in-depth details about past work.
- Staff will continue to work on the code.
- Review of development standard proposals for the Regional Commercial and Neighborhood Commercial Center zoning districts in July.

VIII. Director's Report

None.

IX. Adjournment

Commissioner Ho moved to adjourn, and Commissioner McLeland Wieser seconded the motion.

Adjourned at: 8:32 p.m.

Submitted by: Wynetta Bivens, PC Secretary



TO: Tukwila Planning Commission

FROM: Nora Gierloff, AICP, Community Development Director

BY: Isaac Gloor, Senior Planner, DCD
Neil Tabor, AICP, Senior Planner, DCD

DATE: June 26, 2025

SUBJECT: Tukwila International Boulevard: Regulation Workshop

ISSUE

The City is proposing potential modifications to development standards within designated zoning districts associated with the Tukwila International Boulevard (TIB) neighborhood. In May, the Commission reviewed the history of the City's efforts to implement the community's vision for the TIB neighborhood, and the regulatory barriers that contribute toward the neighborhood's lack of development. This meeting aims to provide a more in-depth review of the work performed by the Congress on New Urbanism (CNU), examine the context for development in our region, and begin review of the proposal for development regulation changes.

DISCUSSION

Background

In 2017, the City contracted with the Congress for New Urbanism (CNU) to kickstart implementation of the Comprehensive Plan with a community workshop. After reviewing existing conditions, plans, and the community goals and visions for the neighborhood, the CNU's work culminated in the Tukwila International Boulevard – Implementing the Vision document, which contains an analysis of the existing conditions in the neighborhood, as well as recommendations for regulations to help the community achieve neighborhood goals.

Figure 1

A CNU illustration depicting potential development on the site of the existing TIB Link station



Except for the moratorium on certain uses that were incompatible with the vision, the recommendations included in the CNU's report were never adopted by the City in any official way.

CNU Project: Engagement

In February of 2017, the CNU held a three day workshop where neighborhood residents and stakeholders shared ideas for the neighborhood. The workshop included tours of TIB and other main streets in the area, discussions of the neighborhood's opportunities and challenges, and in-depth dives into the dynamics in the corridor that drive development, investment, and urban design. The total attendance numbered in the hundreds- a list of some of the input that was received can be found [here](#).

In March of the same year, City staff held 5 separate focus group sessions with students at Foster High School. Students provided feedback about their most and least favorite parts of the TIB area, and their ideas for how to make the neighborhood more like the places they love the most. A summary of the feedback they provided can be found [here](#).

CNU Project and Beyond: Residential Market Analysis

As a component of the *TIB Rising* project, an analysis of residential market potential was conducted by Zimmerman/Volk Associates. The analysis found that an estimated 405-502 rental and for-sale housing units could be supported within the TIB study area over a five-year period (2017-2022). The analysis also projected ranges of costs of housing units by area median income (AMI) range, separated by housing and ownership type.

The analysis revealed a strong preference for multifamily rental units affordable to those earning 80% AMI and greater.

Due to the age and limited timeframe of this study, these data points should be taken with a grain of salt. Housing was underproduced compared to the projected market demands in the analysis period, while development in surrounding cities may have further impacted the current demand. Since this analysis was created, events such as legislative reforms to middle housing, condominium liability law changes, the COVID-19 pandemic, updates to state building codes and other changes in construction costs are all reflected in the current residential development market.

As part of the lead up to the Comprehensive Plan update, in 2021 the City contracted with ECONorthwest to produce a Transit-Oriented Development Housing Strategies Plan. This plan is intended to guide the City's policy development on housing within the Comprehensive Plan update and beyond.

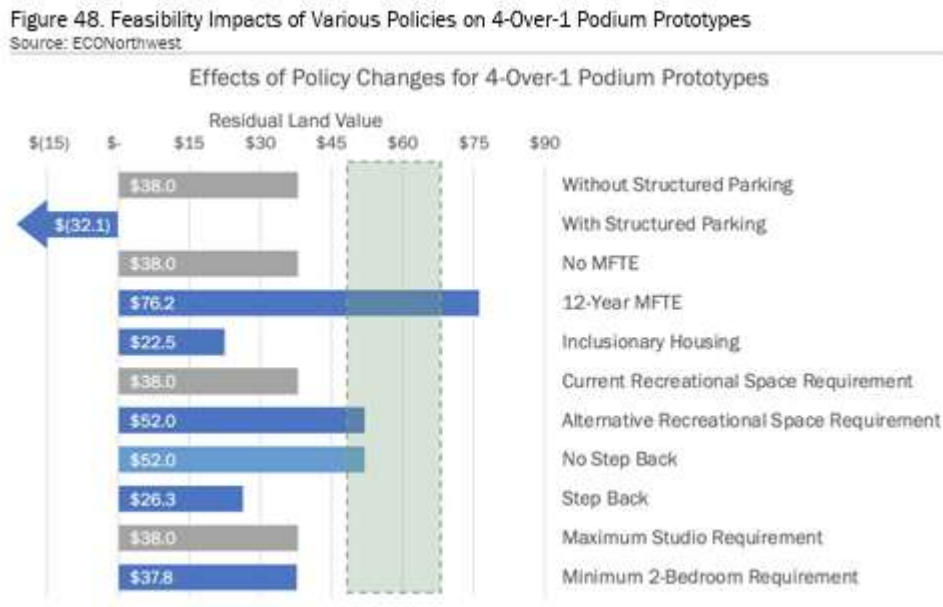
Differing from other citywide housing action plans, market conditions studied in this plan specifically focused on a half-mile radius around the TIB light rail station, generally within the TIB study area.

Within the TOD Housing Strategies Plan, development possibilities were evaluated using "Residual Land Value" (RLV). In basic terms, RLV determines whether the final value of a proposed development minus the costs of development make the project desirable for the developer. Very generally, this equation can be understood as:

$$\text{Project value after construction} - \text{Development Costs} = \text{Residual Land Value}$$

The RLV model can be useful in analyzing the impacts of policy or regulations on project viability. See the example from the TOD Housing Action Plan (HAP) below, with the green shaded box representing a minimum range of return to make a residential project viable.

Figure 2



The full Transit-Oriented Development Housing Strategies Plan can be found [here](#).

As a component of the City's housing efforts with other grants, the City subcontracted with Leland Consulting Group in 2023 to conduct a residential market analysis of select zoning districts within Tukwila, and specifically the TIB Study Area. The presentation to council can be found [here](#).

The study specifically evaluated the Medium Density Residential (MDR) and High Density Residential (HDR) zoning districts for residential development feasibility. The MDR zoning district is proposed to be consolidated into the Community Residential (CR) zoning district and is not intended to support high densities of residential development, the HDR zoning district standards are very similar to existing standards of the Regional Commercial (RC) and Neighborhood Commercial Center (NCC) zoning districts proposed for updated regulations.

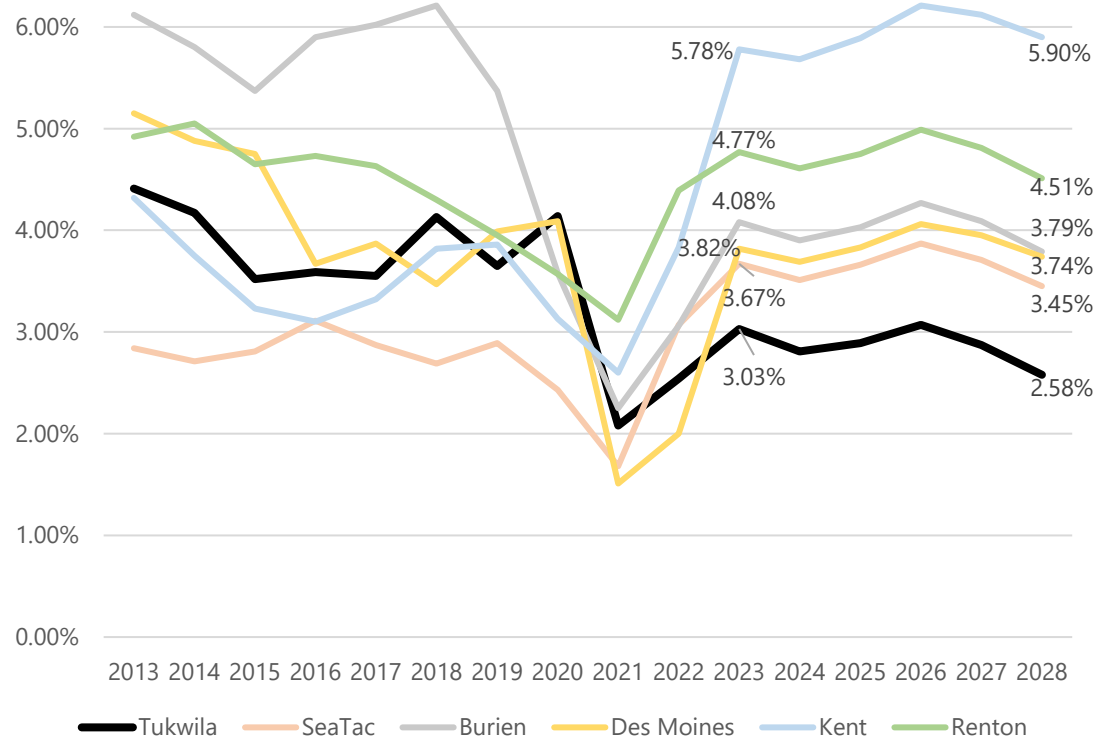
The study evaluated recent development within Tukwila and the surrounding market area, and the market conditions of multifamily residential development in South King County broadly. Townhomes, garden apartments and low-to-mid-sized podium construction were identified as the most common multifamily development types seen in South King County.

It was found that Tukwila had seen less multifamily development than peer cities, had numerous older multifamily buildings that exceed the permitted density in their underlying zoning districts, and that most newer multifamily development similarly had to be permitted through a development agreement, as the underlying zoning did not permit the density of units and other site features desired by the developer.

Vacancy rates for larger multifamily units were also shown to be the lowest for Tukwila out of all peer cities, a trend that was projected to continue, as shown in the graphic below. Generally, a residential vacancy rate of 5% represents a constrained housing market, while a rate of 2% represents an extremely constrained housing market.

Figure 3

Historical & Projected Multifamily Vacancy Rate, Medium and High Density Zoning Analysis



Although differing in overall scope and timeframe, many themes were consistent across the studies, including:

- Market demand exists to support additional residential development within the TIB area at different housing types and ownership structures.
- Current regulations impose major impediments to construction of denser housing types. Some of the regulation limitations identified include:
 - High recreation space requirements
 - High parking requirements (Partially reduced with recently adopted middle housing regulations)
 - Upper-story setbacks (Removed with middle housing update)
 - Further separation from lower density zones (Removed with middle housing update)
 - Arduous design review process (Changed with previous code update)
 - Lack of an available multifamily tax exemption (MFTE) program
 - Lack of flexibility for mix of parking (structured and surface) and mix of unit types
- Many peer cities have more permissive standards, which better support new residential development.

CNU Project: Report Details

The CNU report contains a concept plan for zoning code amendments. Their recommendations included:

- Replacing the Regional Commercial (RC) zone with a new zoning district, named “TIB-1”.
- Replacing the Neighborhood Commercial Center (NCC) zone with a new zoning district, named “TIB-2”.
- Replacing the High-Density Residential zone within the TIB neighborhood with a new zoning district, named “TIB-3”.

These conceptual zoning districts featured more urban uses and development standards than the existing zoning. For example, the proposal would have prohibited most industrial uses and allowed a greater variety of residential and mixed uses.

However, the concept proposed only small adjustments in some areas, a reflection perhaps of the different real estate market and development pressures of the time. For example, the maximum heights in the concept were set at 4 stories. The plan also included large stepbacks for upper stories, and sizable setbacks for certain properties. Some of those setbacks reached 20 feet.

The concept included lower parking minimums than were in place at the time; it required 1 parking space for each dwelling. However, in the eight years since, residential parking requirements have been adopted city-wide that match the proposal.

See [pages 36-43 of the CNU report](#) for the full conceptual development standards.

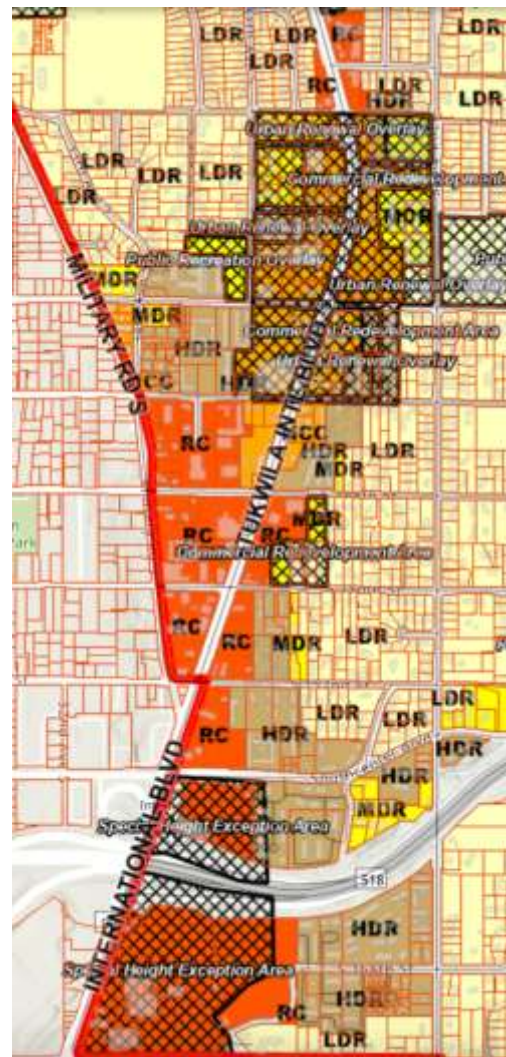
8 Years Later: What’s Changed?

The CNU project represented a major effort to attempt to create a regulatory framework that would accomplish the vision of the TIB neighborhood. If adopted at the time, it may have been a revolutionary shift to the standards for the neighborhood.

However, in the years since, the neighborhood, the region, and the real estate market have shifted in innumerable ways. Any 8-year-old development code would likely be due for an update; this is even more true for a development code that did not go through a vetting process with the Department of Community Development and was never adopted.

Some examples of ways in which the CNU project’s concept development standards may not adequately implement the goals and policies of today’s Comprehensive Plan are below:

Figure 4



- **Building Heights:**

Figure 5: CNU Concept Height Requirements

HEIGHT	4 stories above average sidewalk grade. Ground floor stories, from finished floor to finished floor, exceeding 20 feet are considered two stories. Mezzanines exceeding 30% of the ground floor area is considered a story. Stories above ground floor, from finished floor to finished floor, exceeding 16 feet are considered as two stories. Structure height is limited to the maximum permitted height of the adjacent district within 50 feet of the nearest lot.
--------	---

- The maximum height proposed by the CNU concept was 4 stories. This height limit conflicts with the Comprehensive Plan, which envisions high-rise transit-oriented development near TIB Station. See the policy below:
 - Policy LU 11.7: *“Prioritize this area [the area around TIB Station] for a more intensive, transit-oriented mix of mid- to high-rise office, multifamily residential and hospitality uses and services, with structured parking that builds on the momentum of the Tukwila International Boulevard Station’s proximity to SeaTac Airport and generates jobs for the community.”*
- 4 stories (45-60 feet), has become an uncommon height for new construction in the Seattle area. This is largely due to land and construction costs.
 - The cost to purchase land is high. Land costs influence building heights because the increased investment required to purchase land necessitates larger buildings that can recoup that cost, either with more leasable commercial space or more homes to rent or sell. This generally results in a minimum height of new buildings of 5 or 6 stories (55-70 feet).
 - Construction costs influence building heights because the life-safety requirements for buildings change in thresholds with increased height. The high cost of installing elevators, multiple fire-rated stairwells, and concrete lower floors is usually only borne when building heights are higher than 4 stories.

- **Setbacks and Stepbacks:**

- The setbacks and stepbacks proposed by the conceptual plan apply largely to properties adjacent to parcels in the (now defunct) Low-Density Residential (LDR) zoning district. The reasoning for this is not provided in the document; however, it reflects a traditional belief that single-family homes should be treated as a special class and “protected” from the impacts of higher-density construction.

The following 8 years have shifted understanding of best practices. For example, in accordance with State law, almost all jurisdictions in the State (Tukwila included) have removed restrictions on denser housing within zones that previously exclusively allowed single-family homes, rendering the restriction from the concept plan less relevant. Additionally, the prior focus on buffering higher density homes from single-family homes triggers a question: Should the City’s regulations limit new housing construction for the purpose of buffering Tukwila’s most expensive form of housing?

- **Parking:**

Figure 6: CNU Concept Parking Requirements

OFF-STREET PARKING AND LOADING	
Residential	1 for each dwelling unit, 1 for every 2 dwelling units for senior housing.
Commercial	2 for each 1,000 square feet of usable floor area.
Lodging	1 for each room.
Restaurant, Tavern	1 for every 4 persons based on occupancy load.

- The concept plan envisions the area retaining parking requirements (See Figure 3). The concept standards are generally similar to the current requirements, but do not necessarily help implement the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan. Goal 13 of the Land Use Element states:

“TIB parking requirements are based on urban, rather than suburban, densities and needs and balance the need for parking with TIB urban design goals and policies that encourage transit use and walking.”

Additionally, policy LU 13.1 states:

“Parking requirements encourage dense development supported by major transit facilities and reflect the availability of transit service while accommodating the needs of residents, workers and visitors frequenting the area.”

Parking is one of the primary cost-drivers of new development. A [report by the Sightline Institute](#) found that in Washington, surface parking can cost between \$5,000 and \$20,000 per space, and structured parking often has a per-space cost more than \$60,000. Surface parking is cheaper to build than structured parking but uses valuable land area; after adding the area required for vehicle maneuvers, each parking stall requires about 330 square feet of space.

The CNU concept’s commercial parking space requirement of 2 spaces per 1000 square feet of floor area means that a potential developer would be required to dedicate approximately 650-700 square feet of area for parking for each 1000 square feet of commercial use. If that parking is surface parking, it detracts from the walkable, dense, and urban nature envisioned for the neighborhood, and reduces the buildable area of properties. However, if the parking is structured, it could add between \$100,000-\$200,000 to the cost of each 1000 square foot commercial area. To highlight the challenges with parking requirements, consider urban format grocery stores. These are often found in walkable and dense areas and can range in size between 7,000 and 14,000 square feet. They typically primarily serve local customers and are a necessity for livability in urban areas. These uses, in an area with these parking requirements, would require between 14 and 28 parking spaces. Those spaces would take up between 4,700 and 10,000 square feet of area, or two-thirds of the area needed for the grocery store itself. If that parking was provided in a garage, it could add between \$800,000 and \$1.7 million to the development cost.

Residential parking minimums in urban settings pose similar challenges. Studies have found that each parking space in an urban setting can add upwards of \$200 to monthly rents. Flat parking requirements mandate that all households pay for parking, regardless of whether they drive. Even with Tukwila’s current parking requirements mandating 2 parking spaces for most homes, between 6% and 10% of all households within the City do not own cars. A King County study of multi-family apartment buildings found that 40% of all spaces in multifamily buildings sit empty

overnight.

Part of the reasoning for requiring parking relies on the assumption that without parking minimums, developers will include no parking at all. This is rarely the case. A study of apartment buildings in developed portions of Seattle with no parking minimums found that 70 percent of new multifamily buildings still provided off-street parking. The study examined 868 new developments and found that they provided about 40% less parking than was previously mandated — exactly in-line with the previously mentioned King County study.

Removing parking minimums is a growing trend in Washington. Within the past few years, Bellingham, Port Townsend, Bremerton, and Spokane have completely removed parking minimums citywide. Many other cities have removed parking minimums within dense and transit-rich areas, including Tukwila's neighbor Seattle.

Figure 7: Shea Apartments, Seattle

32 apartments and 12 parking stalls (0.3 spaces per home)



A bill passed by the legislature in 2025 will require a parking-requirement-overhaul for all jurisdictions in the State with a population of 30,000 or more. The new requirements will apply to all of Tukwila's immediate neighbors (SeaTac, Burien, Kent, Renton, Seattle, and unincorporated King County) and most other jurisdictions in our vicinity (Auburn, Des Moines, Federal Way, Puyallup, Tacoma, etc). The new law establishes that a jurisdiction cannot require more than 0.5 parking spaces for multifamily dwellings, and prohibits any parking minimums for the following uses:

- Buildings undergoing a change of use.
- Residences with less than 1,200 square feet.
- Commercial spaces less than 3,000 square feet.
- Affordable housing.
- Senior housing.
- Child-care facilities.
- Ground-Level commercial space in mixed-use buildings.

While Tukwila's population is currently below the threshold for compliance with this bill, the City is located within an urban area that is entirely affected. When considering parking minimums in the City's urban areas, it is important to note that any developer would compare the cost of construction in Tukwila with our neighbors. Parking minimums that exceed those of neighboring jurisdictions may make developing in the TIB area less desirable than other areas in the region.

Procedural Challenges

In addition to the standards themselves, which may not reflect the City's current goals or policies, implementation of the CNU proposal also posed procedural challenges. The concept envisioned the creation of three new zoning districts and an area-wide rezoning effort. This process would require a major update to the City's Comprehensive Plan. These kinds of updates are time-consuming and heavily restricted by State law; a City only has a single chance each year to adopt updates to their Comprehensive Plan.

After reviewing the depth of the outreach and work performed by the CNU and evaluating the community-shaped policies of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan, City Staff proposes a path forward that retains the existing RC and NCC zoning districts but re-writes the underlying development standards to better conform with the vision. It would remove the neighborhood overlays (Commercial Redevelopment, Special Height, and Urban Renewal) and adopt new multifamily design standards that comply with current state law. Additionally, the proposal includes amendments to the parking requirements and the table of allowed uses, and the introduction of a development incentive program and a residential tenant displacement program.

This pathway would allow the Department to accomplish the goals of this project without requiring major updates to the Comprehensive Plan.

City Staff Proposal

Regional Commercial (RC) District

Of the two TIB zoning districts, the RC has the greatest potential for transit-oriented development. The district includes properties within a half mile walking distance of the Link light rail station, two King County metro bus rapid transit lines, and the future Sound Transit Stride bus rapid transit that will provide service to Burien and Bellevue.

When looking at peer city development, the following differences are noted in transit-oriented, high density districts. Typically, no maximum residential density is set. Setbacks are not typically considered necessary, unless certain uses are located on the first floor that require privacy, such as first-floor homes. Height limits do not usually prohibit buildings from reaching at least 8 stories and often permit structures to achieve desired market-based heights.

See the table on the next page for the proposed development standards within the RC zoning district:

Figure 8: RC Zoning District (Red)



RC DIMENSIONAL AND DENSITY STANDARDS <i>(Proposed)</i>			
Minimum Lot Area:	None.		
Residential Density:	No Maximum		
Setbacks:	Fronts, Sides, Rear – Portions of Structure Below 85 feet	Front, Sides, Rear – Portions of Structure Above 85 feet	
	<u>Entrances of Street Facing First-Floor Homes</u> Minimum: 6 feet Maximum Average: 10’ <u>All other Uses:</u> Minimum: 0 feet Maximum Average Along Frontages: 10 feet	<u>Abutting Street or Alley</u> Minimum: 10 feet <u>Abutting Adjacent Property</u> Minimum: 20 feet	
Maximum Site Coverage	Portions of Buildings Above 85 Feet in Height		
	65%		
Maximum Tower Floorplate	Average must not exceed 12,000 square feet		
Maximum Building Width	130 feet		
Landscaping	Landscaping would be required by the City’s landscaping code and frontage improvement requirements.		
Base Heights and Incentive Heights	Parcels south of 148 th Street	Parcels north of S 148 th Street & south of S 146 th Street	Parcels north of 146 th Street
	<u>Base Height:</u> 85 feet <u>Incentive Height:</u> Limited by the FAA	<u>Base Height:</u> 65 feet <u>Incentive Height:</u> 125 feet	<u>Base Height:</u> 65 feet <u>Incentive Height:</u> 85 feet
Tower Separation	Above 85 feet, where building exceeds 100 feet		N/A
	60 feet		

These standards reflect the current Comprehensive Plan's goals to allow high-rise development. At the same time, limitations on maximum tower floorplates and site coverage above 85 feet incentivize slimmer buildings known as "point towers". These kinds of buildings narrow as they increase in height, ensuring that light can reach the street below.

While the proposed standards would, in theory, permit high-rise buildings, it is unlikely the current development market would be supportive of their construction. This standard would align code with the Comprehensive Plan and "future-proof" the code should economic conditions change in a way that makes high-rise construction feasible. It's

Figure 9: Point Tower Example



important to note that the maximum height of any structure would also be limited by the requirements of the Federal Aviation Administration; the neighborhood's proximity to SeaTac airport would likely provide an upper limit on the height of any future construction.

As an example, the City of SeaTac permits structures adjacent to TIB Station to achieve unlimited heights. However, SeaTac's newly constructed Polaris development, located kitty-corner to TIB Link Station, achieves only 7 stories.

Properties within the RC district would be permitted lower heights further from TIB Station.

Figure 10: NCC Zoning District within TIB Neighborhood

Neighborhood Commercial Center (NCC) District:

The portion of the neighborhood within the NCC district is slightly further from the neighborhood's most valuable transit assets, although all are still within a short walk of frequent King County Metro service. The Comprehensive Plan envisions this neighborhood building on the success of the Tukwila Village project, which is a 6-story high-density development with ground floor retail and public amenity space. This zone contains several parcels outside of the TIB neighborhood. For this reason, the standards have two separate tiers.



See the table below for the proposed development standards within the NCC zoning district:

NCC DIMENSIONAL AND DENSITY STANDARDS (Proposed)		
Property Location:	Parcels Within 500 Feet of Tukwila International Boulevard	All Other Parcels
Minimum Lot Area:	None	
Residential Density:	Unlimited	
Setbacks:	Fronts, Sides, Rear	Front
	<u>Entrances of Street Facing First-Floor Homes</u> Minimum: 6 feet Maximum Average: 10 feet	Minimum: 6 feet
	<u>All Other Uses</u> Minimum: 0 feet	Sides & Rear
	Maximum Average Along Frontages: 10 feet	Minimum: 10 feet
Maximum Site Coverage	75%	
Maximum Building Width	130 feet	
Landscaping:	Refer to TMC 18.52, "Landscape Requirements," Table A, for perimeter and parking lot landscaping requirements.	
Base Heights and Incentive Heights	<u>Base Height:</u> 65 feet <u>Incentive Height:</u> 85 feet	<u>Base Height:</u> 45 feet <u>Incentive Height:</u> 65 feet

When compared to the proposal for the RC district, these standards reflect a reduction in intensity of uses in the neighborhood from south to north. The NCC zoning district would not be eligible for high-rise development, but could be developed with 6-8 story buildings, similar to the existing Tukwila Village development. Both districts would similarly require buildings to front along streets, typical of more urban development

Areas further than 500 feet from Tukwila International Boulevard are the portions of the NCC zoning district that are not located within the TIB neighborhood (See Figure 11). The standards in those areas would allow moderately more density than current standards allow, but in-keeping with their less urban nature, be less permissive than within the TIB neighborhood.

Parking Requirements

City Staff recommends simplifying the section of the TMC that controls mandatory parking minimums and reducing or removing minimum parking requirements for certain uses. The proposed parking table mirrors the requirements that will be implemented by Tukwila's neighbors, as required by State law ([SB 5184](#)). The provisions continue to include requirements for parking in large commercial spaces and residential homes that are further than half a mile from major transit. See the proposal below:

Figure 11: NCC Zoning District Not Within TIB Neighborhood



Use Types	Minimum Parking
Within Half a Mile from a Major Transit Stop (Link Light Rail or Bus Rapid Transit)	
All Uses	None
Greater than Half a Mile from a Major Transit Stop	
Residential Uses which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet the definition of affordable (RCW 36.70A.030); or Limit occupancy to senior citizens or those with disabilities; or Meet the definition of Accessory Dwelling Units; or Contain less than 1,200 sf of interior livable floor area. 	None
Residential Uses which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet the definition of middle housing or multi-family housing. 	1 space / unit
Residential Uses which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet the definition of single-family home. 	2 spaces / unit
Commercial and Industrial Uses which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serve alcohol for on-site consumption; or Contain less than 3,000 sf of usable floor area (UFA); or Are childcare uses, such as commercial daycares. 	None
All Other Commercial and Industrial Uses	1 space / 1000 sf of Useable Floor Area
All Uses which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are in existing / vacant buildings that are proposed for new occupancy or change of use. 	None
All Uses which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require conditional or unclassified use permits. 	The provision of parking may be required as a condition of approval to mitigate potential impacts.

These standards would allow uses near high-value transit assets to include as much or as little parking as the developer believes is required. It also preserves the City's ability to require parking to mitigate potential impacts that may be associated with uses requiring conditional or unclassified use permits.

Permitted Uses

Goals and policies from TIB documents and the City's Comprehensive Plan all envision the neighborhood being home to a wide variety of dense and walkable uses. With that in mind, the following uses are proposed to be permitted within both zoning districts:

- Retail
- Restaurants
- Cafes
- Personal services (barbers, nail salons, etc.)
- Mixed-use multi-family buildings
- Stand-alone multi-family buildings
 - Single-use multi-family buildings would be required to develop their first floor to be convertible to commercial space in the future.
- Senior citizen housing
- Offices
- Schools
- Cultural facilities
- Parks and playgrounds
- Other similar non-auto-oriented uses

In addition, the NCC zoning district would allow middle housing, such as townhomes or stacked flats. The RC district may be suitable for hotels, given its proximity to transit and the airport.

Industrial uses, low density uses, and uses that typically require the use of automobiles would not be permitted in either of the zones. These uses include:

- Gas stations, auto shops, car dealers
- Drive throughs
- Warehouses
- Bulk retail
- Cemeteries, morticians, funeral homes
- Light or heavy manufacturing
- Self-storage

The area is currently home to many businesses that would be made nonconforming by these updates, including fast food restaurants and commercial parking areas. The zoning code contains provisions for nonconforming uses that would permit those businesses to continue to operate indefinitely. Nonconforming uses and structures could also undergo routine maintenance. Conformance with the new standards would only be required if the building owner proposes improvements to the building that exceed 25% of the building's value, or if the use vacates the building for a period of 6 consecutive months or a total of 365 days in a 3-year period.

Development Incentive Program

New development should provide as much benefit to the community as possible. That benefit can be as simple as the provision of new housing; in Tukwila, one of the primary needs of our community is additional housing supply. However, that benefit could also be community spaces, enhanced streetscapes, larger family size units, green building or infrastructure techniques, or more.

Some jurisdictions take the approach of requiring all new development to provide these kinds of amenities. In areas where development pressure is incredibly high, this can make sense; if development is an inevitability, it may make sense to mandate specific public benefits for all new development.

In Tukwila, however, requirements like that may not be feasible at this time. Each requirement imposed by the City layers increased costs onto a project. Development costs in Tukwila are not significantly cheaper than they are in Bellevue, Kirkland, or Seattle, but asking rents or sale prices are lower. For this reason, development in Tukwila can be inherently riskier than in some of our more affluent neighbors; if our regulations demand costly additions to housing developments, we run the risk of disincentivizing development altogether. With this in mind, City Staff proposes to implement a Development Incentive Program. This program would allow projects to develop taller buildings in exchange for the provision of community benefits. The types of benefits that a developer could choose to include are the following:

- Family sized homes:
 - 5% of all homes containing 3+ bedrooms, and 20% of all homes contain 2+ bedrooms; or
 - 10% of all homes contain 3+ bedrooms; or
 - 40% of all homes contain 2+ bedrooms.
- Affordable homes:
 - Participation in the 12-year Multi-Family Tax Exemption program and its affordability requirements.
- Enhancements to the streetscape:
 - Providing at least 4 feet of extra frontage beyond the requirements.
 - Could be used for residential patios or stoops, restaurant or café seating, retail patios, or public street furniture.
- Midblock promenades:
 - This would be a pedestrian promenade that breaks up large blocks, creating pedestrian spaces and more activity corners than might otherwise exist.
 - May be appropriate on sites more than 150 feet from intersections.
- Active recreation areas:
 - These would be required to be open to the public during business hours. Fees could be charged for use, but membership couldn't be required.
 - Could be used for sport courts, child play areas, dog relief areas, climbing walls, or exercise equipment.
- Enclosed plazas:
 - A publicly accessible continuous open space located within a building and covered to provide overhead weather protection, while providing substantial natural daylight. Examples are atriums or galleries.
- Green infrastructure / architecture:
 - Construction meeting the standards of the Living Building Challenge (LBC).
 - The LBC is an international green building certification program, administered by the International Living Future Institute (ILFI), that

defines an advanced measure of sustainability for buildings and landscapes. The LBC's goal is to create buildings that generate more energy than they use, capture and treat all water on site, and are made using healthy materials.

- Neighborhood serving uses:
 - Allocation of space for noncommercial neighborhood serving uses that bolster livability for residents. Eligible neighborhood serving uses include childcare, community meeting rooms, or nonprofit space.

The baseline height limits proposed would allow the development of 6-8 story buildings in the Regional Commercial zone and 4-6 story buildings in the Neighborhood Commercial zone. A project participating in the proposed Development Incentive Program would be eligible to achieve 6-8 stories within the NCC and the furthest north portions of the RC, and 8 stories within the central RC area. Building height would not be restricted by the zoning code for buildings participating in the incentive program south of S 148th Street.

Residential Tenant Displacement Program

The TIB neighborhood is home to many of Tukwila's existing apartment buildings. Many of the buildings located within the area are older, and may not feature up-to-date amenities, features, or appliances. These homes provide valuable housing at rents affordable to those on lower incomes; however, some may provide subpar living conditions. If a building's condition means that asking rents are much lower than market-rate rents, the building's owner can sometimes fail to perform needed maintenance and improvements, causing a slow deterioration in housing quality.

These naturally occurring affordable homes (NOAH) face development pressures as the region's housing market continues to tighten. As market rate rents increase, the difference between what a building owner is capable of charging for the existing home and what they could potentially charge for a new one continues to widen. Additionally, a new [2025 state law](#) limits a landlord's ability to increase rents for existing units; a landlord is prohibited from raising rents higher than 7% + inflation, or 10%, whichever is lower, each year. This cap on rent increases may provide relief for tenants from high annual increases, but it also may incentivize owners of NOAH properties to pursue redevelopment. Even without the increase in development capacity that this code update would provide, over time, naturally occurring affordable homes face unavoidable threats.

The City is limited in its ability to preserve these homes — doing so would require large-scale funding. Additionally, many of these buildings do not necessarily help achieve the goals and visions of the Comprehensive Plan; they may have auto-oriented designs, with large surface parking areas on their street frontages, or they may achieve a much lower density than envisioned.

This proposal aims to assist tenants by establishing a tenant displacement program. Any project that will require a tenant to vacate a dwelling due to demolition, rehabilitation, change of use, or removal of rent or income restrictions, would be subject to the program. Below are the proposed requirements:

- The developer would be required to provide all tenants, at a minimum, a ninety-day notice of the requirement to vacate. This would allow all tenants regardless of income three months to find a new rental unit.
- Tenants who can verify that their household income is 50% or less of the area median income would be eligible for relocation assistance.
 - Relocation assistance would be paid by the developer or property owner.

- The amount of relocation assistance would be equal to or exceed 2 months' rent costs or \$4000 (in 2025 dollars), whichever is greater.

This program aims to provide tenants with more information earlier in the process and provide lower-income tenants with the resources needed to help with their moving costs.

Multifamily Design Standards

Currently, projects within the TIB neighborhood and subject to design review are required to use the [TIB Design Manual](#). This document was adopted in 1999, and the guidelines it contains are no longer compliant with statewide requirements that all design standards be "[clear and objective](#)".

For example, the document requires projects to "*Provide for visual and functional continuity between the proposed development and adjacent and neighboring structures when these structures demonstrate an appropriate level of architectural quality.*" This standard is unclear and not objective; what appears to be visually and functionally continuous to one beholder may appear incongruent to another, and "architectural quality" is a purely subjective statement.

The TIB Design Manual is not alone; many of the City's design standards do not meet the "clear and objective" requirement. City Staff proposes to adapt the requirements of the City's existing design review standards, including those located in TMC 18.60, *Design Review*, those located within the *Tukwila Urban Center Design Manual*, and the *TIB Design Manual*, into new multifamily design standards that comply with State law. The new design review standards would include requirements around the following design features:

- Minimum percentages for ground floor transparency for commercial and residential spaces
- Prohibitions on blank walls
- Locations of public entrances
- Weather protection
- Vehicular Areas
 - Above-ground structured parking screening
 - Sidewalk and walkway features
 - Locations of vehicular access points
- Ground floor residential stoops or porches
- Building modulation
- Building corner features, such as corner towers or projecting or recessed entrances
- Standards for the design of waste disposal areas, loading docks, and utility apparatus
- Exterior lighting requirements

To allow for design creativity, the standards would allow an applicant to request design departures from the standards. Departures would only be permitted if the project meets certain criteria, including that allowing the departure would accomplish the Comprehensive Plan goals to a similar or greater extent than compliance would, and that the project is participating in the Development Incentive Program.

Tukwila's Neighbors

How would these standards compare to our peer cities and the region as a whole? Many of Tukwila's surrounding jurisdictions have development allowances near major transit stops, such as light rail stations or King County Metro Rapid Ride stops, which far exceed the current allowances near the TIB Station.

The table below represents the predominant standards found around the identified subareas. Many of the standards, especially height and density, illustrate how current standards found within the Regional Commercial (RC) and Neighborhood Commercial Center (NCC) zones in Tukwila make development far less feasible than in other jurisdictions within the area.

Jurisdiction (subarea)	Max Height	Max Density	Parking Requirements
SeaTac (Angle Lake)	No Maximum (FAA Limited)	Unlimited	Parking study required
SeaTac (TIB Station)	No Maximum (FAA Limited)	Unlimited	1 per studio, 1.5 per 1 bd, 2 per 2-3 bd (Reductions available)
SeaTac (Airport Station)	No Maximum (FAA Limited)	Unlimited	Maximum 1 space per bedroom or 2 spaces per unit (Reductions available)
Burien (Downtown)	85 feet – 95 feet	Unlimited	1 per unit (Reductions available through parking study or fee-in-lieu)
Des Moines (SR 99 Neighborhood)	Minimum: 55 feet Maximum: 200 feet	Unlimited	- Two parking spaces per dwelling. - One guest parking space shall be provided per each 10 dwellings. - For one-bedroom dwellings within the PR Zone: one and one-half parking spaces per dwelling.

The basic development standards proposed for the TIB neighborhood would be broadly similar to the standards that exist in neighboring jurisdictions. While Tukwila's peers currently have variable parking requirements, their standards are soon to change under the requirements of State law.

Case Studies

See Attachment 1 for an examination of case studies.

Next Steps

The intended outcome of this meeting is for City Staff to receive direction from the Commission regarding the proposed code updates. Using that direction, City Staff will draft the amendments and present draft proposed text of the TMC to the Commission at the July meeting.

The tentative meeting schedule for this project is below:

- June 26th Planning Commission Meeting:
 - Regulation proposal workshop
- July 24th Planning Commission Meeting:
 - Review of TMC text amendments
- August 28th Planning Commission Meeting:
 - TIB project public hearing

- September 25th Planning Commission Meeting:
 - Review of final code proposal, if necessary
- October and November:
 - City Council work session and final decision

Attachments:

1. Costs and Case Studies



TO: Tukwila Planning Commission

FROM: Nora Gierloff, AICP, Community Development Director

BY: Neil Tabor, AICP, Senior Planner, DCD

DATE: June 26, 2025

SUBJECT: Attachment 1 – Costs and Case Studies

Multifamily Construction Costs

Cost of construction can vary greatly as the height of structures change. Additional height of structures may require or lead to greater financial viability of one construction type, or combination of construction types used, i.e., wood frame, podium (combining a type V wood frame above a type I concrete podium) or steel frame construction. Transitioning from less intensive construction types to more intensive construction types, or combination of types, will generally increase construction cost per square foot. However, increasing the number of stories within the same construction type may reduce the cost per square foot of construction. A generalized example, displaying the average cost of construction by building stories (both least and most expensive projects) can be seen in graphic that follows.

Within the context of amending regulations on height, although incentivizing one additional story of height from seven to eight may seem like a generous concession, and limiting a structure to six stories instead of seven may seem like a minor restriction, these thresholds can be far more impactful for overall project cost and viability than a single-story modification would suggest. Pairing development regulations with both community good and market realities is key for creating positive housing production outcomes.

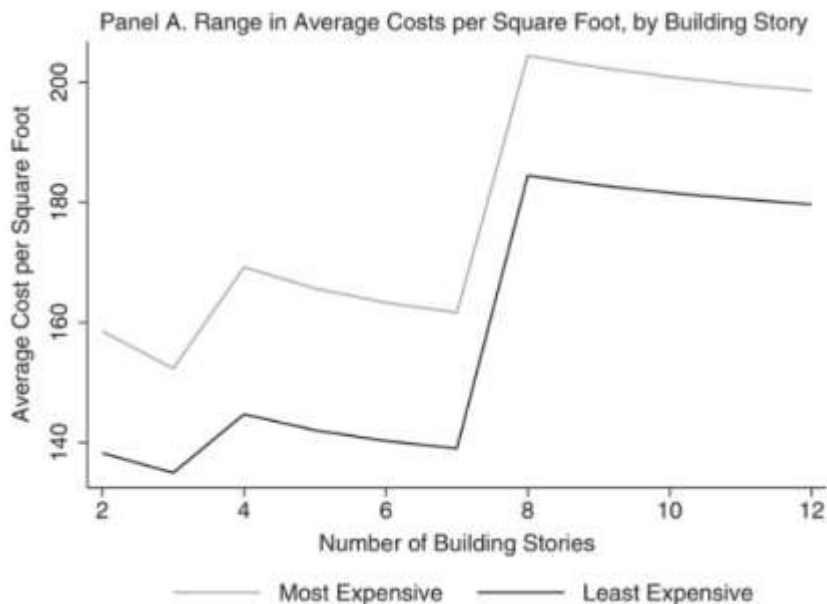


Figure 1. [Cost per Square Foot by Building Stories, A. Orlando](#)

The amount of parking and type of parking (structured or surface) required can also have profound impacts on the financial viability of a project. As the graphic below illustrates, additional parking requires either use of an additional portion of a site for surface parking, or construction of structured parking at a significant cost premium. This concept can, of course, be applied to other requirements such as recreation space vs. reductions or in-lieu fees for recreation space.

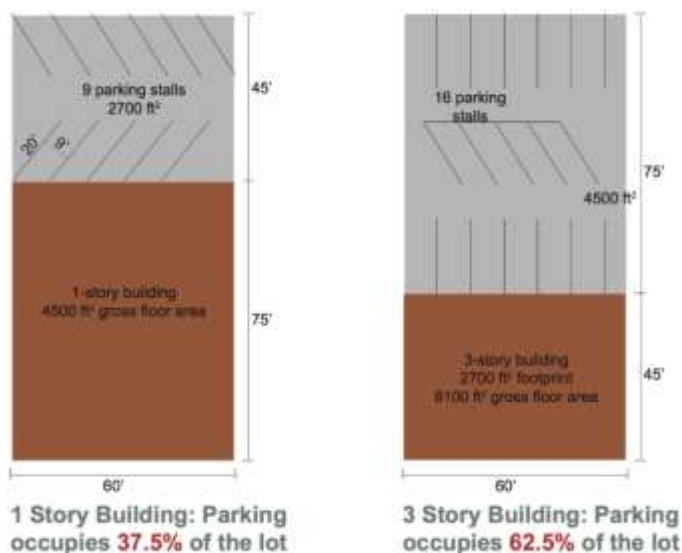


Figure 2. [Parking allocation example](#)

Case Studies

While there is never an exact comparable location in evaluating the market or redevelopment potential of an area, staff feel these two examples represent subareas within relative proximity to TIB that have amended development standards to leverage nearby transit investments into transit oriented development (TOD), expanding residential options, economic growth and overall offerings for the community. It is important to note that these are living case studies at different phases of overall redevelopment and starting points.

Basic data points are provided with each development for general context.

Angle Lake (SeaTac)

The Angle Lake station area, depicted within the blue polygon in the image below to the right was designated with the [Angle Lake District Station Area plan](#) adopted shortly before the opening of the Angle Lake Light Rail station, sets the subarea focus for future TOD near the station. The plan intends to maximize the economic benefit to the community with the station's opening, and align with community goals expressed through the comprehensive plan. With the adoption of this plan and opening of the station area, development standards were modified to better support the TOD desired within the subarea.

The subarea, unincorporated until the City of SeaTac's incorporation in 1990, has historically been characterized by lower density residential development and auto-oriented commercial development, including gas stations, vehicle rental, airport parking, hotels and other airport related businesses. As depicted in the examples of residential and mixed-use developments under construction, these projects exist within a transitioning environment, which currently limited commercial offerings catered to pedestrians, whereas three of four corners of the intersection of International Boulevard and S 200th Street are occupied by gas stations and associated convenience stores, while the other is vacant. Over time, increased density of residents, improvements of the streetscape, as well as ground floor commercial spaces will support increased walkable commercial development in this area. When compared to the TIB corridor, it could be argued that TIB has many advantages in transitioning to an area of more TOD, with more existing core commercial offerings, control over their section of TIB, better overall connectivity and a closer proximity to Seattle.



Figure 4. Projects around Angle Lake Station Area



Figure 3. Angle Lake Station Area Map

Rainier Lofts Phase I & II



Figure 5. Phase I construction looking SE, June 2025



Figure 6. Phase I & II Rendering looking NW

- Site: 6.2 acres at 20220 International Blvd
- Former Use: Kenworth Trucking Site
- Units: 770 (Phase I 355 units)
- Density: 125 units/acre
- AMI: Market Rate
- Parking: 732 spaces (342 phase I, some allotment for commercial in phase II)
- Status: Phase I under construction, anticipated opening early 2027

Amelia Apartments



Figure 7. Amelia Apartments looking SW, June 2025

- Site: 0.5 acres at 2929 S 200th St
- Former Use: Fire Station
- Units: 108, mix of studio, one and two bed units
- Density: 200 units/acre
- AMI: 20% of units reserved for no greater than 115% AMI households
- Parking: 78 spaces
- Status: Opened in 2023

Connection at Angle Lake



Figure 8. Connection at Angle Lake looking NE, June 2025

- Site: 0.8 acres at 2650 S 200th St
- Former Use: Surplus parcel from Angle Lake parking garage redevelopment
- Units: 130, mix of studio, one and two bed units
- Density: 168 units/acre
- AMI: 60% AMI households and lower
- Parking: None
- Status: Under construction, anticipated opening Summer 2025

Birchway



Figure 9. Birchway under construction looking NE, June 2025



Figure 10. Birchway Rendering looking NW

- Site: 2.1 acres at 19831 International Blvd
- Former Use: Self storage site
- Units: 289
- Density: 136.1 units/acre
- AMI: Market rate
- Parking: 238
- Status: Under construction, anticipated opening mid-2026

Hilltop (Tacoma)

The Hilltop neighborhood of Tacoma, is generally comprised of the area west of downtown Tacoma, bordered by Sprague Ave to the West, and Division St and S 27th St to the North and South respectively. The subarea of focus is a much smaller portion of the Hilltop neighborhood along MLK Way from roughly S 9th St to S 13th St. With the expansion of the Tacoma T-Line light rail completed in 2023, streetcar lines now run along MLK Way, with stop at S 3rd St, S 6th Ave, S 11th St and S 18th St along MLK Jr Way. Zoning changes in anticipation of this expansion permitted more dense housing development with far lower parking requirements.

The Hilltop neighborhood has historically been the center of the African American community in Tacoma, with a rich history in churches and other cultural centers still existing today. The neighborhood has also been subject to historic disinvestment through [restrictions in lending practices](#) and other racially restrictive practices in housing, ownership and investment. The area is characterized by a mix of single-family, middle housing, and small to medium apartments, with denser housing generally clustered along major arterials such as MLK Jr Way and S Yakima. The area also contains several health clinics and hospitals, a grocery store, schools, and commercial buildings largely clustered off of MLK Jr Way. While many auto-centric businesses still exist, significant investment has been made in improving pedestrian and cycling facilities within the area. Similar to TIB, this area also has a [higher risk of displacement](#) based on factors such as lower ownership rates, educational attainment, household income vs. city or area median, and rapidly increasing rents and land values. Beyond affordability levels provided with 12-year multifamily tax exemptions (MFTE) offered to qualifying new market rate multifamily development, specific focus on creating new income-restricted housing at deeper levels of affordability.



Figure 11. Subarea context map



Figure 12. Recent development in Hilltop

Koz on MLK



Figure 13. Koz on MLK looking NW, June 2025

- Site: 0.7 acres at 824 MLK Jr Way
- Former Use: Single-story offices/church
- Units: 161 studio through 3-bedroom units
- Density: 237 units/acre
- AMI: Market rate
- Parking: 30 spaces
- Status: Opened in 2022

Mercy Rosa Franklin Place



Figure 14. Rosa Franklin Place looking SW, June 2025

- Site: 0.22 acres at 802-804 MLK Jr Way
- Former Use: Single-story offices/church
- Units: 60 one-bedroom units
- Density: 268 units/acre
- AMI: 30% household AMI and below (Senior)
- Parking: None
- Status: Opened in 2021

Aspire 11



Figure 15. Aspire 11 looking NW, June 2025

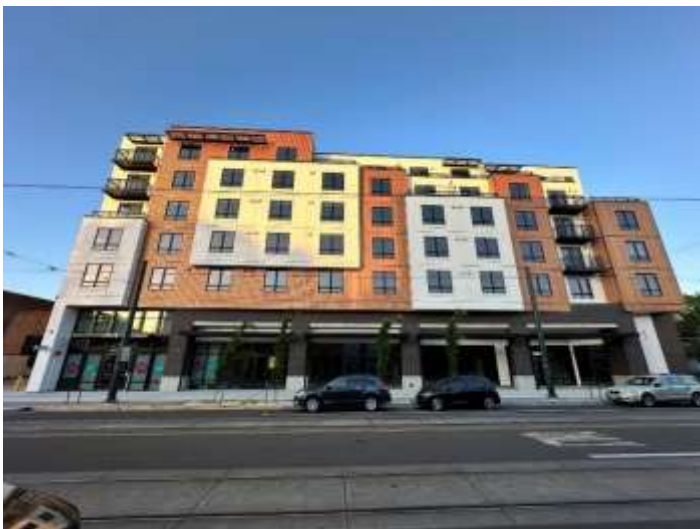


Figure 16. Aspire 11 looking East, June 2025

- Site: 1.2 acres at 1011 S 11th St
- Former Use: Some small retail, largely vacant in recent decades
- Units: 289 studio through three-bedroom units
- Density: 238 units/acre
- AMI: Market rate
- Parking: 228 spaces
- Status: Opened in 2025

Hilltop Housing North & South



Figure 18. Hilltop Housing North looking SE, June 2025



Figure 19. Hilltop Housing South looking SE, June 2025

- Site: 1.47 acres (combined) at 1011 & 1111 S L St
- Former Use: Largely parking lots, limited office/retail
- Units: 231 one to three-bedroom units
- Density: 157 units/acre
- AMI: Households at 50-60% AMI and less
- Parking: 103 stalls
- Status: Opened 2024-2025



Figure 17. Hilltop Housing Site Plan, North up

Shiloh New Life Apartments



Figure 20. Shiloh New Life Apartments looking SW, June 2025

- Site: 0.22 acre site at 1206 S I St
- Former Use: Three small lot single-family homes
- Units: 60 one and two-bedroom units (across two phases)
- Density: 267 units/acre
- AMI: 30-50% Household AMI or lower
- Parking: None
- Status: Phase I completed in 2025