



CITY OF TUKWILA PLANNING COMMISSION (PC) MINUTES

Date: June 26, 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: Department of Community Development (DCD) Director Nora Gierloff, American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP); Long Range Planning Manager Nancy Eklund, AICP, DCD; Senior Planner Isaac Gloor; and PC 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 Halverson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

V. **Written General Public Comments**

No submittals.

VI. **Unfinished Business**

1. Tukwila International Boulevard (TIB) Regulations – Isaac Gloor

Isaac Gloor, Senior Planner, DCD, provided an overview of the PC's May discussion, which covered the general history of planning efforts in the TIB corridor. He discussed why the City has not changed any of the development standards in the Regional Commercial (RC) and Neighborhood Commercial Center (NCC) zoning districts, which makes up most of the land that runs along TIB. He further discussed the Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) goals and policies that reflect the communities' vision for TIB and how the current zoning standards do not help accomplish those goals. He reminded the PC that their discussion solely focuses on the changes to the development standards that live within the zoning code.

Key Points in the 6/26/25 PC Packet Information Memo:

- Outreach residential analysis was conducted over several years; the purpose of the analysis was to gauge the demands from developers to build new development in the TIB and across the City.
- The studies determined there is market demand for residential development in TIB. The current regulations Tukwila imposes on new development are impeding any dense housing from being built.
- Many of Tukwila's peer cities have less restrictive regulations.
- Congress for New Urbanism (CNU) proposed changes, which were not adopted, in 2017. The CNU concept plan might not adequately implement the goals and policies that were adopted into the Comp Plan eight years later.
- Standards for minimum quantities of required parking can be onerous and can stifle development. Staff discussed the land use and financial impacts of Tukwila's parking requirements and highlighted the ability of property owners and developers to determine the appropriate quantity of parking for any project.
- New statewide parking requirements adopted in 2025 do not directly affect Tukwila. However, all of Tukwila's municipal neighbors must comply. Staff suggested that it may be desirable for Tukwila to re-evaluate parking requirements to ensure that our standards are not out of sync with the region, as this could reduce the City's competitiveness for development.
- The CNU proposal included the creation of three new zoning districts, which if adopted, would require a Comp Plan update. To avoid Comp Plan amendments, staff are proposing retaining the existing zoning districts and instead changing the development standards. The changes would allow those zoning districts to better comply with the current Comp Plan.

Staff Proposals:

- Includes changes to the RC and NCC zoning districts.
 - Increases to maximum height limits, tapering in height as distances increase from TIB Link Light Rail station. Heights range from 4-6 stories in some areas to no maximum height limit near TIB station.
 - Reduction in setbacks.
 - Changes to permitted uses to allow more mixed-use and housing and fewer low-density auto-oriented uses.
- Removes the neighborhood overlays that exist in the district that are outdated.
- Adopts new multi-family design standards that comply with the current state law for clear and objective design standards.
- Includes amendments to the parking requirements and the permitted uses.
- Introduce an incentive program to encourage private development to provide community benefits in exchange for increased development capacity.
- Includes a residential displacement program, either specific to TIB or across the City. In scenarios where a low-income tenant is being displaced due to redevelopment, the developer would be required to pay the total amount of two months' current rent or \$4,000 to tenants. A question was raised regarding an assistance program to encourage tenants to work. An inquiry was made regarding whether there are any examples of existing displacement apartment buildings. It was mentioned that it's a burden to developers, as well as controversial and could affect the whole City. Staff stated that it could be equally controversial not to have the program. There was extensive discussion on this program. The request was made that this topic be separated from the other proposals, with a separate City Council (CC) review. Staff said if this topic is separated it could be tabled until 2026. It was noted that it was a well thought out proposal. A suggestion was made for different sections of the code to be put on different ordinances on separate agendas, which would keep it moving.

Requests from PC:

- To hold a work session to meet with the Building Official and the Fire Chief to discuss the potential of amending codes to permit single-stair buildings. Staff informed the PC that it is not necessary to make a motion to meet; staff can schedule a work session between PC, the Building Official and Fire Chief. Staff will follow up.
 - Staff said they have discussed this with the Building Official before and there was no opposition. A bill was passed by the state legislature to direct the building code council to explore allowing single stairwell buildings as part of the baseline statewide building code for the next building cycle in 2029.
- To increase the baseline height from 65 ft. to 70 ft. in the RC and NCC. Staff will bring examples of height limits from other jurisdictions back to PC.
- To increase baseline maximum building widths to 150 ft. and incentive maximum building widths to unlimited.
- That staff investigate accessible parking and ensure that ADA requirements continue to be met regardless of the City's parking requirements.
- That staff consider methods to create or incentivize small retail spaces and investigate building code barriers to small retail spaces.
- That staff consider ways to offer developers incentives to make TIB more vibrant.
- That staff consider whether requiring buildings to be environmentally friendly should be a community benefit.

Comments, Recommendations, Questions, and/or Requests Raised During Discussion:

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

- A question was raised on the comparison of the various King County cities analysis.
- How can Tukwila explore providing tools for creating healthy and desirable development to optimize innovation for multi-family housing in Tukwila?
- An inquiry was made regarding whether there are existing step backs in the high-density residential (HDR).
 - Staff said there is not.
- Staff was asked if they received feedback on parking requirements at the Middle Housing open house.
 - Staff said there was advocacy for both more and less parking, and that generally, people want to be able to park but don't enjoy all the trade-offs inherent to parking requirements.
- A question was asked about drive-throughs being grandfathered.
 - Staff responded that drive-throughs would become permitted nonconforming uses and could remain in operation until substantial demolition or a change of use occurs.
- A question was asked about the definition and necessity of mid-block promenades.
- A question was raised about a twelve-year, multi tax exemption program.
- A question was raised regarding social housing.
- A clarifying question was raised regarding a height bonus.
- A question was raised regarding incentivizing multi-development buildings to not create huge blocks with empty or industrial backs.
- Are there any unforeseeable consequences from moving the three overlays?
 - Staff responded that there would not be.

Next Steps:

- Staff will bring the actual code to PC for their review and feedback and determine their recommendation to the CC.
- It was determined that staff will continue working on the code for the residential displacement program and provide PC with a recommendation, then they can decide when they review this topic if they want to forward the recommendation to the CC for their review.

VII. New Business

None.

VIII. Director's Report

- The upcoming schedule is provided in the PC staff report.
- Staff will bring code language to PC in July. There will be a public hearing in August and PC will make a recommendation to forward to CC. If PC needs more discussion, that will happen in September and then PC will make a recommendation to CC.
- At Mayor McLeod's request, staff handed out information to the PC regarding the People's Project, which will be provided to all Boards and Commissions. There is \$50,000 available in funding for the People's Project that the City can utilize for a variety of community projects. The PC were encouraged to please inform their friends and neighbors, the City is interested in getting all ideas on the table.

IX. Adjournment

Commissioner Halverson moved to adjourn, and Commissioner Kaehler seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Adjourned at: 9:09 p.m.

Submitted by: Wynetta Bivens, PC Secretary