

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

One of the most important, yet underappreciated elements of daily life is travel. People must travel to meet nearly every need: work, recreation and social activities, eating, and shopping. The fact that mobility affects quality of life and economic vitality is barely noticed until travel becomes difficult. To meet this need for mobility, the City of Tukwila plans, develops, and maintains the transportation network in the City. The transportation system includes everything from roadways and sidewalks, to bicycle lanes and trails. In addition, the City works in conjunction with other agencies like the Washington State Department of Transportation and King County Metro to provide connections to the regional highway system and services like public transit. Ultimately, Tukwila is committed to providing a transportation system that is efficient, convenient, and safe for all users.

Tukwila's Vision for Transportation

Given the importance of travel, a long range vision for the transportation system is critical to ensure that future residents of Tukwila have good access to jobs, services, and recreation. The Transportation Element of Tukwila's Comprehensive Plan represents the City's vision for transportation. The Transportation Element identifies goals and policies to help achieve that vision and it also defines a transportation funding program for implementation.

The last update of the Transportation Element occurred in 2005. Since that time, a number of major roadway projects from the previous plan were completed, Sound Transit commenced Link Light Rail service in the city, the economic climate in the region has changed, and the Tukwila South area has been annexed. Considering all these changes, the City determined that it was time to update the Transportation Element.

In addition to updating the Transportation Element to reflect the changes above, it is the goal of the City to incorporate a more multi-modal emphasis in the Transportation Element. A key element of this approach is the implementation of a "Complete Streets" concept where travel by all modes—walking, bicycling, transit, and cars/trucks—is accommodated throughout Tukwila.

Background Report

As a basis for updating the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan, Fehr & Peers has prepared this Background Report. The intent of the Background Report is to provide the technical details to assist City staff and decision makers in identifying and prioritizing the transportation capital project needs. These new transportation projects will provide the infrastructure necessary to accommodate the next 20 years of growth in the City and will also help Tukwila's transportation network mature into a more multimodal system. The Background Report covers all modes of transportation that are provided in the City. However, as transit services are provided by King County Metro and Sound Transit, the report does not include extensive evaluation of transit services in the City.

To facilitate project identification, the Background Report includes the following:

- An inventory and description of the existing transportation system for all modes (pedestrian, bicycles, roads, and transit)
- Existing conditions level of service analysis for pedestrians, bicycles, roadways, and intersections.
- Forecasts of future traffic growth and its impacts to the transportation network in Tukwila.
- Assessment of how future traffic growth might impact the ability to meet concurrency requirements.

- Transportation improvement projects identified as needed to satisfy City's concurrency standards.
- Integration of the bicycle and pedestrian projects identified in the Walk and Roll Plan.
- Descriptions of recommended transportation projects.
- Project prioritization framework.
- A strategy that identifies funding resources for prioritized projects.

In addition to providing technical information to help identify and prioritize potential projects, it is envisioned that the Background Report will assist the City in developing the Capital Improvement Program and the Transportation Improvement Program. Also, information in the Background Report can be used for applying for various Federal and State grants.