



# City of Tukwila

Jim Haggerton, Mayor

Department of Community Development Jack Pace, Director

## STAFF REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Prepared May 13, 2013

HEARING DATE: May 23, 2013

FILE NUMBERS: PL12-037—2015 Comprehensive Plan Update  
L12-047—Transportation Element

APPLICANT: City of Tukwila

REQUEST: 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update—The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on proposed amendments to the Transportation Element. This is part of the periodic review and update of the Comprehensive Plan that the Washington Growth Management Act requires per the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) Chapter 36.70A.130.

LOCATION: Policies apply throughout the City of Tukwila

NOTIFICATION: Hearing Notice was published in the Seattle Times on May 9, 2013, and posted on the City of Tukwila website on May 9, 2013.

SEPA DETERMINATION: Addendum to L92-0053, Final EIS for the 1995 Tukwila Comprehensive Plan, addressing 2015 Update to the Comprehensive Plan (E13-004) issued March 27, 2013

STAFF: Rebecca Fox, Senior Planner

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Transportation Element
  - 1. Proposed Transportation Element (Formatted)
  - 2. Proposed Transportation Element (Strikeout/Underline version)
  - 3. Transportation Background Report (excerpt)
  - 4. Walk and Roll Plan (excerpt)

### **REVIEW PROCESS TO DATE**

Planning Commission is continuing its phased review of the Comprehensive Plan in order to complete the periodic update that the Washington Growth Management Act requires by the June 30, 2015 deadline.

During a work session on April 23, 2013, and a public hearing on April 25, 2013, the Planning Commission considered proposed changes to Capital Facilities and Utilities Elements. After deliberation, the Planning Commission made recommendations for changes to the Comprehensive Plan. The recommendations will be forwarded to the City Council for review, public hearing and final action during the summer/early fall of 2013.

### **TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT BACKGROUND:**

The Transportation element is one of the elements that the Growth Management Act requires in all Comprehensive Plan documents. Having a complete and well-functioning transportation network is key to reduced sprawl, a strong economy and compact, attractive development.

The Transportation Element establishes Tukwila's transportation goals and policies for the 20-year planning period. It provides direction for transportation decisions regarding plan updates including the six-year Transportation Improvement Plan, the six-year Capital Improvement Program, and the annual budget. It also provides guidance for development review and approval, land use and zoning decisions, and continuing transportation programs and projects.

The Transportation Element is closely reviewed by the Puget Sound Regional Council, the regional transportation and land use planning agency, as part of its review and certification of the entire Comprehensive Plan.

### **KEY ISSUES:**

- Creating a connected, dynamic urban environment.
- Providing transportation choices for all ages, income levels, and abilities.
- Addressing any deficiencies and building for growth is expensive and often requires retrofitting existing streets. Challenges include: Competing needs for grants and City funding; limited grants that fund local street improvements; limited right-of-way.
- Balancing needs given limited funding. Needs include: maintenance and preservation; moving people and goods efficiently concurrent with new development; and making up for deficiencies in the complete street network.
- Providing active transportation options.
- Relying on regional agencies to fulfill transit needs of a small jurisdiction with large ridership, including youth and low income population.
- Addressing physical barriers to connectivity that create large infrastructure costs and the need for capacity improvements. Barriers include: the valley wall; Green/Duwamish River; and highways.
- Lack of fine-scaled street grid to provide connections throughout some neighborhood and commercial areas, especially in the Southcenter area. Areas with finer street grids are more connected to places that people are trying to reach, and encourage walking and other active transportation options for improved health.

## **PROPOSED POLICIES:**

The proposed policies address several plans that the City has adopted since the last Comprehensive Plan update. They include: 1) Tukwila Strategic Plan; 2) Walk and Roll Non-Motorized Transportation Plan and associated Complete Streets Ordinance; 3) Commute Trip Reduction Plan; and 4) Growth and Transportation Efficiency Centers Plan.

Transportation-related policies from other Comprehensive Plan chapters have been moved and combined with other similar policies in order to have them in one location. Other proposed policies have been added to be consistent with Countywide Planning Policies and state requirements.

Key proposed policies include:

- Continue to maintain and preserve existing transportation facilities
- Promote “complete streets” that accommodate many types of transportation including pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as cars, trucks and buses
- Promote healthy transportation choices, such as walking and biking
- Address the needs of all populations, including the young, old, disabled, and others.
- Design considerations on different types of streets to ensure adequate emergency access, promote a healthy business environment, and provide a range of transportation options
- Continue to work with regional agencies for improved transit service to Tukwila

## **MATERIALS AND FORMAT**

The packet contains:

1. A “clean,” newly-formatted version of the Transportation Element that shows all the proposed additions and deletions from the strikeout/underline version. This version reflects the appearance of the updated Comprehensive Plan;
2. A complete strikeout/underline version of the proposed element with all language that has been added to and/or deleted from the “base” of the current Transportation element. This version shows the rationale for proposed changes, and lets the reader follow the revision process. New language is shown in blue, and deleted wording is shown in green;
3. Background materials that provide additional supporting information for the element and policies.
  - Excerpt from the “Background Report for the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan Update” (Fehr and Peers, May 2012). The complete Transportation Background Report is available at <http://records.tukwilawa.gov/WebLink8/1/foi/58531/Row1.aspx>
  - Excerpt from “Walk and Roll: The City of Tukwila’s Non Motorized Plan” dated 2009. The complete Plan is available at <http://www.tukwilawa.gov/dcd/walkandroll.html>.

These materials are intended to provide background and encourage discussion.

## **REQUESTED ACTION**

The Planning Commission is asked to hold a hearing on the proposed changes to the Transportation Element, develop a recommended version and forward it to the City Council for final action.