

Tukwila

Tukwila is one of the region’s oldest suburban cities, incorporated in 1908, and had a 2010 population of 19,107. The City of Tukwila is bordered by the cities of Seattle on the north, SeaTac on the west, Renton on the east, and Kent on the south. With its emphasis on both commercial and industrial development, Tukwila has a significant job base, with over 43,000 covered jobs in 2010. The city contains two regional centers: the Tukwila regional growth center, which contains the Westfield Southcenter Mall area, and the North Tukwila manufacturing/industrial center, located at the north end of the city adjoining the Duwamish manufacturing/industrial center in the City of Seattle. Over 70% of the city’s jobs are located within the city’s regional growth center (17,400) and manufacturing center (14,025).

In the past 50 years, the Tukwila regional growth center has evolved from farms, dairies, and nurseries into a major retail shopping and employment center. The heart of the regional growth center is Westfield Southcenter Mall, completed in 1968. The mall is the largest shopping center in the state and, following a major renovation completed in 2008, contains approximately 240 stores and vendors. The center contains a mix of high intensity retail, commercial, industrial, and office uses. Since its opening 45 years ago, the mall has been a magnet for significant development in the area. Retail commercial growth has occurred east and south of the mall, and hotels and restaurants are now located in the vicinity. While the center has seen plenty of commercial, retail, and light industrial growth, it has yet to experience residential development. In addition to these urban developments, the City of Tukwila contains several natural features and amenities, including Tukwila Pond (located across Strander Boulevard from the mall), Minkler Pond, and the Green River. The city’s commercial center is located in the Southcenter area, at the intersection of two of the region’s major freeways: I-5 and I-405.

Acreage, Density & Mix of Activity

Tukwila is a larger regional growth center in terms of total gross acreage (847 acres) with a net developable acreage of 726 acres (86% of gross acres). In terms of its role in the city, the Tukwila regional center contains 14 percent of the city's overall land area, no residents or housing units and 40 percent of the city's employment. Compared to centers as a whole, Tukwila has a medium number of total activity units (17,408), with exclusively employment-oriented activity (100% jobs) and a moderate density of activity (20.6 units per gross acre).

Urban Form

Tukwila's average parcel size is three acres, which is much larger than the average size for growth centers. Tukwila provides a challenging pedestrian environment, with a nearly complete network of sidewalks

2010 Summary Statistics

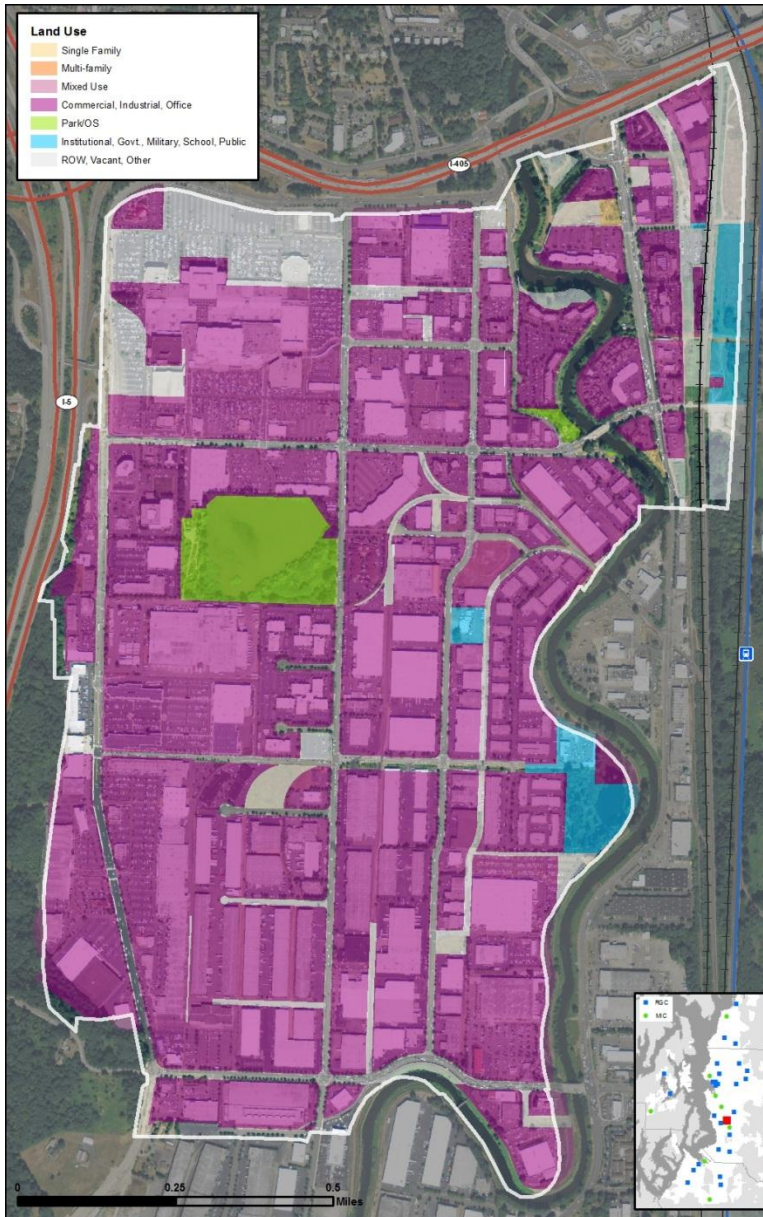
Land Use	
Gross acreage	847
Average block size (acres)	22.7
Average parcel size (acres)	3.0
Mix of Uses	
Population/Employee ratio	n/a
Population+Employee/acre	n/a
Population	
Total population	9
Population density/acre	n/a
Change (2000–2010)	-13
Employment	
Total employment	17,399
Employment density/acre	20.5
Change (2000–2010)	-2,548
Transportation	
Housing access to transit	n/a
Employee access to transit	58%
Work-based mode share	
SOV / HOV	83% • 10%
Walk & Bike / Transit	1% • 6%

Urban Amenities

Food & Drink	
Restaurants	67
Grocery	3
Cafes & Bars	16
Home Supplies & Services	
Pet Supplies	2
Laundry & Haircuts	5
Home supplies	18
Clothing & Shoes	74
Banks	14
Arts & Recreation	
Spectator Sports	-
Fitness & Outdoors	7
Electronics & Toys	14
Bookstores & Libraries	5
Arts & Culture	2
Public & Civic Services	
Social Services	7
Schools & Childcare	-
Police, Fire, Postal, City Hall	3
Pharmacy	-
Healthcare	26
Residential Care Centers	-

(91% coverage) but extremely large super-blocks with a 22.7 acre average size.

The presence of amenities is an important aspect of urban form. Tukwila has a somewhat low-density set of urban amenities (261 total amenities / 0.31 amenities per gross acre). Home (41%) and Food/Drink (37%) represent the largest amenity categories, with specific concentrations in Clothing/Shoes, Restaurants and Healthcare.

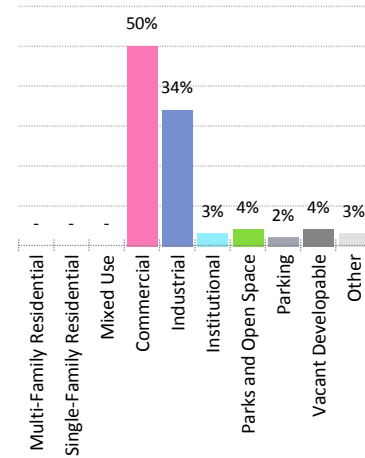


Land Use

Tukwila is dominated by a very limited set of current land uses that are almost exclusively non-residential uses (84%) in terms of total net land area. The major land uses are commercial (50%) and industrial (34%).

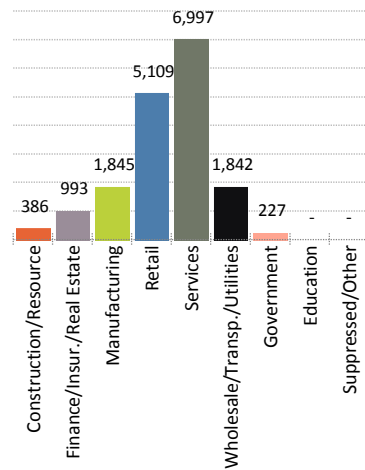
Current Land Use

(726 net acres)



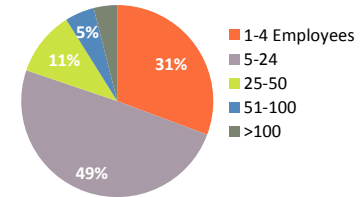
Jobs by Sector

(17,399 jobs)



Size of Businesses

(771 workplaces)



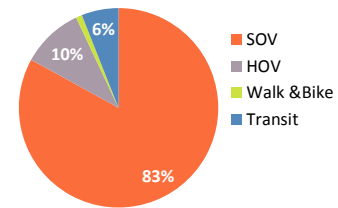
Employment

The total employment in the Tukwila regional growth center is 17,399, decreasing by 2,548 jobs over the past 10 years. The major industry sectors are Services (40%), Retail (29%), Wholesale, Transportation & Utilities (11%) and Manufacturing (11%). The largest employers in the center are the Red Dot Corporation, as well as Macy's and Nordstrom, both located in the Westfield Southcenter Mall.

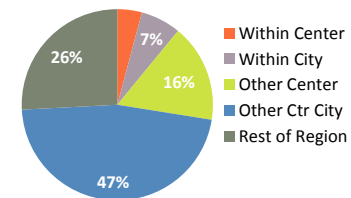
Transportation

For work-based trips, the Tukwila regional center's travel characteristics are different from the region as a whole, with more single-occupant vehicle (SOV) and fewer transit trips. The region's SOV share is 76 percent, while the center's share is 83 percent. The region's non-SOV mode share is 24 percent, with 10 percent in transit and 5 percent in walk/bike. The center's non-SOV share is 17 percent, with 6 percent in transit and 1 percent in walk/bike.

Mode Shares



Trip Destinations



The total daily trips from Tukwila are moderately focused on destinations in regional centers (21% of all trips); this includes trips that stay within the center (4%) and trips that go to other centers (17%).

In terms of employee access to transit, Tukwila has partial access, with 58 percent of employees within a 1/4 mile walk of transit. For the 1/2 mile walkshed, the center has complete levels of employee access to transit (99%).

Plan Overview

The Tukwila Urban Center element was last updated in 2008 as a chapter in the city's comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan element addresses goals and policies for the regional growth center, which includes community vision and policies addressing land use, urban development, and transportation and circulation. Tukwila has developed a draft *Southcenter Subarea Plan*, revised development regulations, updated comprehensive plan element, and design guidelines for its Southcenter regional growth center to be considered for adoption in 2013. The draft subarea plan includes detailed discussion of community intent, existing conditions, vision for the center, redevelopment strategy and recommended city actions.

The current adopted plan encourages a broader mix of uses, provides more opportunities for housing in proximity to amenities and transit, establishes specific pedestrian oriented areas, links open spaces, amenities, and activity areas, improves internal circulation, reduces congestion, and promotes transportation alternatives. The plan will break up the existing mega-blocks to relieve congestion, create smaller, more pedestrian friendly blocks, and provide improved internal traffic flow. The plan will build connections between the regional growth center and Sound Transit's commuter and light rail stations and create a multi-modal transit center.

Comparison to Center Plan Checklist

The city's primary center planning document was reviewed to evaluate the extent to which the plan addresses topics in the PSRC Regional Center Plan Checklist. This policy-level review of the 2008 adopted Tukwila Urban Center comprehensive plan element is intended both to provide preliminary assessment of consistency of the plan with center guidelines and to evaluate the Regional Centers Checklist for any potential improvements.

The element addresses many aspects of the Regional Growth Center Plan Checklist. The plan includes a vision and provides an overview of relationship to adopted King countywide planning policies (CPPs). The

comprehensive plan element includes a table of centers criteria established in the CPPs and the approach the city has taken to meet those expectations. The plan includes provisions to protect and improve Tukwila Pond, increase parks and open space, and support design standards to encourage pedestrian-friendly, transit-oriented development. The plan includes a defined shape and boundary, mix of uses and policies and implementation strategies to increase housing opportunities in the center. The plan describes the key regional economic role of the Southcenter mall area. The plan addresses Transportation 2040 physical design guidelines, including designing for pedestrians and bicyclists, providing usable open spaces and managing parking. The element also addresses some additional transportation issues, such as developing an integrated multimodal network and working with transit agencies.

The plan addresses many of the existing expectations of the Regional Growth Center Plan Checklist, though there are aspects that the element does not address or that could be strengthened in future updates. The city states that several topics not directly addressed in the center plan are addressed at a city-wide level through other planning documents. Residential and employment growth targets and mode split goals have not yet been incorporated into the center plan. A stronger emphasis on the environment could be incorporated in the plan -- this could include policies addressing stormwater, air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Discussion of housing is limited, and could be strengthened with discussion of implementation strategies and monitoring. Finally, information on public service improvement financing and projects could be included to address aspects of the checklist.

Planning Challenges

As noted in its January 2011 presentation to the Growth Management Policy Board, the Tukwila center's challenges include a lack of any existing housing in the urban center, existing suburban pattern of development, lack of publicly-owned land for the city to instigate new projects, and, at the time, declining strength of the retail market. Further, the city identified challenges encouraging new catalyst projects and addressing competing land use, transportation and funding priorities.