

Tukwila Economic Development Strategy Community Engagement Report

October 30, 2023

INTRODUCTION

Background and Purpose

The City of Tukwila is creating an economic development strategy as a part of its upcoming update to the City’s Comprehensive Plan. A vital part of the economic development strategy is equitable and inclusive engagement with stakeholders throughout Tukwila to inform strategy recommendations to advance the City’s economic goals and objectives. This document provides a summary of engagement activities undertaken and findings gathered and synthesized thus far from October 2022 through July of 2023. The activities, findings and recommendations described in this document will be thoroughly integrated into ongoing analyses and become a core driver of the economic development strategies and actions at the heart of this work.

Organization of This Report

Methodology provides a description of the strategies implemented as part of the engagement process.

Summary of Findings serves as a comprehensive overview of feedback received thus far throughout the engagement process.

Findings by Engagement Type summarizes stakeholder engagement activities feedback by engagement activity.

Appendix contains detailed engagement activity content and individual responses, as well as technical analyses.

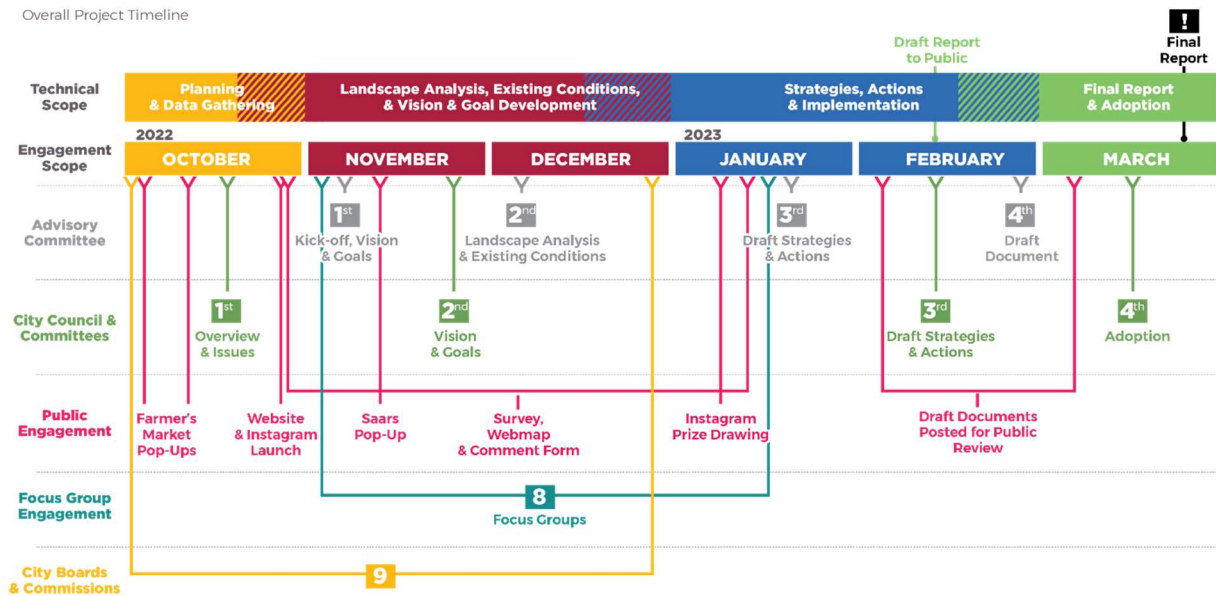
METHODOLOGY

The engagement plan for the City of Tukwila’s economic development strategy included City Council and advisory committee meetings, a project website and interactive map with branded graphic content, listening sessions, contracts with local organizations, interviews, focus groups, and an online survey. Participants for these were identified with the support of City of Tukwila staff. These engagement activities provided participants with an opportunity to provide detailed, unique, and in-depth perspectives on the city, and region.

The stakeholders consisted of residents, property owners, renters, public and private sector workers, business owners and managers, members of City boards and commissions, and individuals from similar community or industry interests

and/or diverse representation to speak to common issues. Interview participants were selected that had a unique perspective on economic development in Tukwila and the region. In addition, five focus groups solicited additional detailed feedback on specific key topics including economic diversification, workforce development, retail and entertainment, identity and marketing, and small business and entrepreneurship.

In the early months of the project, a graphic timeline was created to visually summarize planned engagement activities and their coordination with EDS data analyses and plan development phases. The project was paused in February, extending or delaying some activities, including the focus groups.



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Key findings represent the diverse and interconnected priorities of the Tukwila community, providing valuable insights into the city's economy and community. They are aggregated across engagement type and listed below.

- Tukwila's status as a retail destination, with various strong anchors, is a driving force behind its economic vitality.** Diverse retail and entertainment offerings in Tukwila draw a significant volume of traffic and position the city as a regional retail hub in South King County. Additionally, the city's strategic location near Seattle and major transportation arteries, including I-5 and the airport, further enhances its attractiveness to businesses. Tukwila's inventory of industrial space also stands out as a compelling factor, attracting enterprises in warehousing and wholesaling sectors. Residents also identify tourism, large employers and Tukwila's United States Citizenship and Immigration Services office as major economic strengths.

- **Tukwila's welcoming, multi-cultural, and multi-generational community is an opportunity to build upon what people already love about Tukwila.** Tukwila's community is described as tight-knit, diverse, multi-cultural, welcoming, inter-generational, and family-friendly. Many participants wished to expand upon Tukwila's family-friendly atmosphere by investing in family-oriented benefits and activities.
- **Establishing a clear identity for Tukwila, encompassing more than its shopping malls, is considered essential for sustainable economic development.** Initiatives like tax increment financing (TIF) were suggested by stakeholders as a potential way to connect the city's assets, including the river, businesses, and parks, creating a more cohesive community and business environment. Tukwila is also urged to explore new sectors and markets, such as food processing or general service industries, to take advantage of its central location and proximity to the Kent Valley. Attracting tech companies and high-end multifamily projects is contingent on addressing concerns related to identity, market appeal, and zoning options. Residents in Tukwila wished to **expand upon Tukwila's family-friendly atmosphere** by investing in family-oriented benefits and activities and suggested bringing in more attractions and events to Tukwila.
- **Engagement efforts highlight the importance of building trust with communities of color through consistency, collaboration with trusted community stakeholders, and ensuring equitable opportunities.** Effective engagement strategies included the use of QR codes, translation of surveys, and collaboration with community-based organizations. There was also a call for dedicated sections on equity in city plans. Suggested ways to further engage and build trust with communities of color included translation services, cultural competency, and collaboration with community-based organizations were suggested.
- **The business and residential community in Tukwila describe the importance of intentional land use and housing development for future economic vitality in Tukwila.** Stakeholders feel that future development in Tukwila is dependent on residential growth that will support business activity. Concerns about housing affordability and displacement were highlighted as stakeholders expressed desire for more affordable and workforce housing, protection against residential displacement, and housing for different demographic groups.
- **Housing affordability and residential anti-displacement strategies were top concerns for Tukwila residents.** Residents in Tukwila describe a need for more affordable and workforce housing in Tukwila. Larger housing units, such as those with 3 or 4 bedrooms are particularly in demand, as is housing for artists, and trailer park units. Displacement, a major concern especially near Tukwila School District, is also an equity concern for underserved communities, refugees and immigrants.
- **The business community in Tukwila desires to improve the city's image as a business-friendly environment when compared to**

neighboring cities. Attracting and retaining businesses through a supportive environment is a priority to businesses in Tukwila. Tukwila's inherent advantages, such as its strategic location, robust infrastructure, and substantial daytime population, are identified as key assets that can be leveraged to bolster its appeal to businesses. However, concerns about the competitive landscape for financial resources, such as taxes and bonds, cast a shadow over the city's ability to support for-profit developers. Other topics of importance for supporting the local business community were diversifying types of available land and adopting flexible land use policies.

- **Small businesses in Tukwila face a unique set of challenges, including the affordability of commercial rent and limited space options.** Small businesses in Tukwila stress the importance of affordable, small commercial spaces for local businesses to prevent commercial displacement, especially for minority-owned businesses and mom-and-pop retail. Stakeholders call for strategic support for small businesses to prevent commercial displacement and to assist navigation of regulations and ordinances. This could involve more comprehensive education and outreach programs to help these businesses adapt, as well as considering potential exemptions from certain regulations to ensure their sustainability. Entrepreneurs, particularly in the food industry, sought support in navigating bureaucracy.
- **The business community in Tukwila also describes challenges associated with the city's permitting processes and regulatory efficiency.** Of particular concern are issues related to inspectors' activities and the timing of responsibilities for tenants and landlords. Delays and miscommunication during permitting can lead to significant resource wastage, ultimately hampering economic development efforts within the city.
- **Tukwila employers grapple with the challenges of finding and retaining skilled labor.** High cost of business coupled with a labor shortage poses significant hurdles across various sectors. Stakeholders highlight the importance of increasing Tukwila's residential population and developing a robust workforce pipeline for the city's economic growth. The business community suggests that enhancing collaboration between the school system and businesses, particularly through programs like CorePlus Aerospace, could prove instrumental in supporting Tukwila's economic development initiatives. Opportunities for adult education, job training, and certifications programs were deemed important for connecting existing residents with higher-paying jobs while language barriers and financial literacy were identified as challenges for some of Tukwila's labor force.
- **Workforce development that connects residents with higher paying jobs, or prepares refugees and immigrants to enter the labor force, was a strong priority for many residents in Tukwila as well.** There is a desire for adult education, job training, apprenticeships or internships, certifications programs, and other, even more ambitious suggestions. Youth in Tukwila expressed a strong interest in more educational and recreational opportunities, such as teen centers, community centers, and job fairs.

- **At the same time, Tukwila’s communities of color, including immigrants, are concerned with underemployment and show a significant desire to engage in entrepreneurship.** POC workers describe discrimination at work, language barriers, inaccessible government jobs, and qualification barriers. Minority entrepreneurs also face challenges when navigating the business licensing, permitting, and financial landscape. Community members often seek flexible funds that can be used for various business activities. The POC community describes a need for more low level-of-entry jobs, jobs for artisans, support for family businesses, and jobs for teens.
- **Public safety in Tukwila is a concern to local businesses and residents alike, with theft and violence posing substantial challenges.** The need to enhance the overall perception of Tukwila as a safe and attractive community is a recurring theme in the business and residential community. Residents supported more social services in Tukwila, shelters for the homeless, and mental and behavioral health programs, while also discussing the importance of cross-cultural competency in healthcare services. Along with addressing homelessness, drug use, and crime, stakeholders expressed a desire to make Tukwila “feel” more safe, through beautification strategies. These included addressing building disrepair, addressing vacant and unsafe buildings, urban design concepts, and city cleanup efforts.
- **Tukwila residents emphasized the need for wrap-around services including social service agencies, health care facilities, and grocery stores, as well as community support such as social service agencies and community gathering spaces.** Residents across engagement platforms describe a desire for more community gathering spaces in Tukwila. These spaces could serve various purposes, including cultural events, meetings, and activities for different age groups. Health care and urgent care was also a particularly poignant desire from residents in Tukwila. For groceries, residents describe a need for fresh, affordable, and organic options and many wish for a full-service grocer.
- **Tukwila residents also desire additional investment in infrastructure, including transportation improvements and park and recreation enhancements.** Requests for bus stop shelters, pedestrian crosswalks, and addressing issues related to car speeds and dangerous intersections were collected. Young Tukwila residents also expressed interest in better transit connectivity and improvements in the city's buses and light rail. Also popular were improvements to Crystal Springs Park, with requests for lighting, expansion, and ADA accessibility. Community gardens and the need for more parks and recreational spaces, including soccer fields and basketball courts, were also mentioned.
- Tukwila’s POC community in particular prioritizes **increasing the number of school buses, supporting grocery stores that serve multi-cultural food, investing in cultural centers and open spaces near apartments, increasing street lights, programs to help communities of color**

navigate social and economic systems, affordable child care, and targeted employment support.

- On economic trends and development opportunities in Tukwila, stakeholders mention trends towards **higher quantities of electric vehicles**, the **development** of the former Boeing Longacres area, and the potential for **investment in Tukwila South**.

FINDINGS BY ENGAGEMENT TYPE

The following section lists key themes from various stakeholders, organized by the engagement activity.

Advisory Committee & City Council and Committee Meetings

A Tukwila Economic Development Strategy Advisory Committee (AC) was convened and met three times in order to provide high-level direction to the development of the strategy and review in-progress work and engagement activities. The members of the Advisory Committee reflect multiple backgrounds and experiences with close ties to Tukwila such as residents, shopping center owner/developer, multi-family residential management, Chamber of Commerce, workforce development, youth, and a former city councilmember. The members are:

- Keith Hubrath
- Annie McGrath
- Dennis Bao Nguyen
- Verna Seal
- Ginney To
- Leshya Wig

The Advisory Committee was asked to provide general oversight to ensure the creation of the Economic Development Strategy was not missing important components or stakeholders. The Committee was not asked to approve or reach consensus on the Strategy's vision, goals, strategies and actions. The Advisory Committee has contributed insights, ideas, and direction to the planning process for the Tukwila EDS and raised specific issues, such as public safety and the need for specific types and locations of housing, for consideration and incorporation. In addition, the AC helped develop and refine the five goals, and craft their language, that will drive forthcoming strategy development.

In addition to the Advisory Committee, the Planning and Community Development (PCD) Committee of the Tukwila City Council has met twice – in October and December of 2022 – to hear progress on the project and submit questions and comments about the process. Many of the PCD Committee's questions and comments were around common, related themes, including: how to set the City apart from others; how to invest in and leverage Tukwila's diversity;

how to strengthen Tukwila’s infrastructure; how to make the City’s finances – especially revenue – more sustainable; how to improve and communicate public safety; how to support workers; how to expand housing units and types; and how to enhance public spaces to the benefit of the economy.

Online Survey

Early in the project timeline, an online survey was drafted by CAI, in collaboration with the City, to gather high-level, strategic perceptions and ideas related to Tukwila’s economy and industries. The survey was made publicly accessible from October of 2022 through July of 2023 via the project website and / or a QR code posted in public places (actual QR code at right), including at pop-up and other engagement events facilitated by City of Tukwila staff. It contained questions pertaining to Tukwila’s current economy, as well as visions for its economic future. Survey questions were translated with different language options available, including Spanish, French, Amharic, Burmese, Nepali, Chinese, Somali, Swahili, and Vietnamese. To access alternate translations, users would click a link with the name of the language, written in that language. The ten survey questions were:



Survey Questions

1. How could we improve Tukwila to better support our businesses and workers?
2. How could we improve Tukwila to attract new businesses, workers, and/or job opportunities?
3. What types of businesses would you like to see more of in Tukwila?
4. What types of businesses would you like to see less of in Tukwila?
5. What are the strengths of Tukwila's business economy? What specific opportunities should the City pursue?
6. What are the weaknesses of Tukwila's business economy? What specific challenges might be holding the City's economy back?
7. What are your ideas for increasing Tukwila's tax revenue?
8. What kind of jobs would you like to see more of in Tukwila? What are the barriers keeping people from these jobs?
9. What are the greatest needs in terms of skills development, education, or job training for Tukwila's workers?
10. What are Tukwila workers' greatest challenges, issues, or needs? (For example, income, housing, childcare, or transportation.)

In addition to surveying residents’, workers’, and business owners’ thoughts around Tukwila’s economy, the survey offers users the option to provide information about themselves. The following respondent demographic summary describes the respondents:

Respondent Demographics and Information

- The majority of survey respondents were aged between 25 and 60 years old, with only 10% of respondents being younger than 25 and 11% being older than 60.
- Of the 80 respondents, 79 used English and 1 respondent used Spanish.
- More than half of respondents live in Tukwila and more than a third of respondents work in Tukwila.
- Respondents come from neighborhoods all over, with the most represented neighborhoods being Foster and Tukwila Hill at 19% representation and 13% respectively. McMicken, Riverton, Tukwila Urban Center, and Cascade View made up a combined 29% of respondents, while 36% of respondents came from neighborhoods that were not listed.
- When asked about their favorite businesses, the business that received the most mentions was the Somali Health Board (SHB) (25%).¹ Other notable mentions include Spice Bridge (10%) and Southcenter Mall (5%).

Final analysis of the survey explored all 80 responses gathered and summarized takeaways below. Full graphs describing the responses are included in the appendix of this document. Takeaways from analysis of the survey closely track comments received in subsequent focus group sessions. The takeaways reflect the responses and are not necessarily our recommendations.

Summary of Survey Responses

- To support existing businesses and workers, Tukwila must reduce crime, improve transit access, improve public image of the city, reduce taxes & regulations, and produce more affordable housing.
- To attract new businesses, workers, and job opportunities, Tukwila must clean and beautify, reduce crime, have more events & destinations, pay better wages, and produce more affordable housing.
- More sought-after businesses in Tukwila include small / cultural / ethnic businesses, grocery stores, other retail and services, restaurants and cafes, and community and arts spaces and theatres.
- Less sought-after businesses in Tukwila include fast food and convenience stores, chain stores, large format / strip retail, manufacturing and distribution, and casinos and gambling establishments.
- Strengths and opportunities for Tukwila's business economy include its multiculturalism and diversity, Southcenter Mall and experiential retail offerings, its location and Sea-Tac Airport, and the Sounder and mass transit options.
- Weaknesses and challenges for Tukwila's business economy include crime, homelessness and drug use; low wages / high cost of living; auto-reliance; lack of support for immigrants and minorities; burdensome taxes, and permitting and regulation.

¹ Note: The City contracted with the Somali Health Board to promote the survey.

- To make Tukwila's tax revenues more sustainable, the City should, cut taxes / reduce spending; tax larger businesses more; attract more new businesses; increase housing supply; and grow small businesses.
- More sought-after jobs in Tukwila include higher-paying / higher-skill employment, tech jobs, small business / startups, healthcare jobs, cultural / arts sector jobs, and food business jobs.
- The greatest workforce development needs for Tukwila are better access to educational opportunities, adult learning opportunities, language training, technology / STEM training, business skill training, and trades and apprenticeships.
- Tukwila's greatest economic challenges, issues, or needs include providing more affordable housing, high wage jobs, better transit / transportation options, better public safety, more parking, and more homeless shelters / social services.

Popup Installation

City staff facilitated and staffed a number of in-person engagement events that were utilized to introduce the project and either collect surveys or direct stakeholders to the online survey via graphics and a QR code. While a detailed schedule can be found in the Appendix, these events included Tukwila Farmer's Markets, commission and board meetings, as well as community events like National Night Out and See You In the Park. The posters and graphics shown right and below were among those created for these events.



Project Website & Interactive Map

A project website (and project graphic, at right) was created by Community Attributes with the assistance of the City of Tukwila to



introduce the project, link to in-progress work, status updates, and engagement tools – including an interactive webmap allowing users to place geographic comments and the online survey. The project website was integrated into the the City of Tukwila Economic Development Division’s page and is hosted and maintained by the City. The website is located here: <https://www.tukwilawa.gov/departments/economic-development/economic-development-strategy/>

Accessible via the project website, an interactive map was also created by CAI to solicit insights and ideas related to economic development in Tukwila by specific location. It was posted online for public viewing and comment starting in October of 2022. An analysis of responses received by August of 2023 reviews 16 responses.

The website and map provided links to translation to multiple languages, including Spanish, French, Amharic, Burmese, Nepali, Chinese, Somali, Swahili, and Vietnamese. Users would click a link with the name of the language, written in that language, to access a version of the website and map translated in its entirety.

Key Takeaways

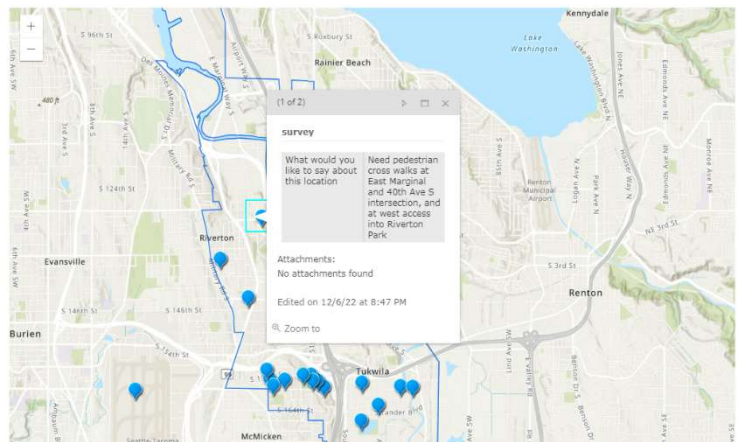
- Participants identified some of Tukwila’s key assets on the interactive map, including the Seattle- Tacoma international airport, Westfield Southcenter, and the Green River. Some included opportunities to further improve these assets, such as “Would love to see a large lounge-style cafe in the Southcenter area! Our only coffee shops outside the mall is Starbucks” and “Utilize the river as an amenity for businesses and residents throughout Southcenter... Enhance trail connections, water

SHARE YOUR IDEAS

We want to hear from you! Whether you’re a resident, recent arrival, own a business, or work in Tukwila, your ideas will be critical to the success of this strategy. Do you have ideas for a business or service or insights about a particular corner of the City? [Add your input](#) to the interactive map below. Have a few minutes to give detailed feedback about doing business in the City, or want to discuss a particular challenge? Take or share our [Online Survey](#).

Use the links below to view the survey in other languages.

| [English](#) | [Español](#) | [中国人](#) | [አማርኛ](#) | [Soomaali](#) | [kiswahili](#) | [Tiếng Việt](#) | [Français](#) | [नेपाली](#) | [မြန်မာစာ](#)



access, open space, floodplain and habitat; include an 'art walk' and interpretive signage about habitat, culture and history.”

- The majority of comments on the interactive map pertain to transportation concerns associated with all manner of modes. One comment identified a bus stop near Rivercrest cemetery that is in need of a shelter. Another requests pedestrian cross walks at East Marginal and 40th Ave S intersection, and at the west access into Riverton Park.
- Several comments related to transportation improvements for S 160th St. These included adding curb paint for parking delineation, managing abandoned cars, and decreasing car speeds. Two intersections were identified as dangerous for pedestrians and drivers along this road, one at S 160th St and 51 Ave S, and another at S 160th St and 53rd Ave S.
- Another common topic of comments in the interactive map was Crystal Springs Park. One comment asks for lighting to be added to this park. Another suggests the city purchase the parcel directly to the southeast of the park for expansion. And another asks that improvements on the upper park connecting to the lower park be made ADA accessible.
- Two comments point out locations for community gardens, one in Crestview Park, and another in an abandoned home on the corner of S 158th St and 42nd Ave St.
- Finally, one comment advises that Alliance Residential plans to build new apartments on the corner of Baker Blvd and Andover Park E.

Listening Sessions

City staff held listening sessions at the City’s boards, commissions, and committee meetings. A list of all twelve sessions with notes is included in the appendix. The key findings from the listening sessions closely match themes heard in the surveys, interviews, and focus groups. Key findings below represent feedback from the listening sessions and not necessarily our recommendations.

Key Findings for Building on Tukwila’s Assets

- **Tukwila's welcoming, multi-cultural, and multi-generational community is an opportunity to build upon what people already love about Tukwila.** Participants in listening sessions described strengths and assets of Tukwila’s community as tight-knit, diverse, multi-cultural, welcoming, inter-generational, and family-friendly. Because of its comfortable community, some participants described feelings of safety in Tukwila. Some suggestions for ways to further lean into this identity included creating spaces for grandparents and grandkids, launching a cultural festival to celebrate Tukwila’s diversity, and finding ways to highlight the Ukrainian language.
- **Many participants wished to expand upon Tukwila’s family-friendly atmosphere by investing in family-oriented benefits and activities.** This included items such as increasing funding for local schools and teachers, locating restaurants, a teen center, and other

student- oriented activities within walking distance of Foster High School. Some type of youth or community center that includes meeting spaces, activity spaces, and programs for different age brackets was very popular, such as a Boys and Girls Club. Investing in recreation space, such as open access soccer fields or basketball courts was also a popular suggestion, with a particular angle towards providing recreation spaces for youth in apartments. The TIB area surfaced several times as an ideal location for investment of these types.

- **Young participants showed a particular interest in transit and wished to see investment for more interconnectedness in Tukwila.** Young participants listed Tukwila’s buses and light rail as some of Tukwila’s biggest assets, but they mentioned difficulty using transit through the VIA app, which they report does not show TCC or allow connections to light rail. Other participants wanted to see more connectivity between parks and trails in the city.
- **Other strengths of Tukwila listed by participants included;** Tukwila’s location near the airport, major highways, and Seattle; diverse and plentiful retail and entertainment offerings; tourism for travelers; large employers such as Amazon and Prologist; and Tukwila’s USCIS office.

Key Findings on Services

- **Many participants wished to see more investment in social service agencies in Tukwila.** While participants recognized and appreciated the existing programs serving all different types of groups in Tukwila, such as the library program for incoming immigrants, many wanted to see even more programs. Suggested focuses for new programs included shelter for those experiencing homelessness, shelter for domestic abuse survivors, mental and behavioral health programs, incarceration transition assistance, a SeaTac and Tukwila joint-managed animal control services, translation services for immigrants and refugees, and math assistance programs for students with low English-speaking ability. Other suggestions included increasing wages for service providers such as case workers and increasing funding for community organizations.
- **The desire to attract more grocery stores was repeated seven times through the twelve sessions.** The type of stores suggested ranged from Safeway to Albertsons, Wholefoods, Amazon Fresh, and even neighborhood markets, such as Fred Meyer in Burien. Multiple sources qualify that the need is for full-service grocers, and one suggestion specifically placed a grocery store near Allenton or East Marginal Way at Boeing Access Road.
- **Many participants listed the need for Health Care in Tukwila.** Participants asked for more community clinics, especially those with cross-cultural competency, more urgent care especially on TIB, for mental health services in elementary schools, and for a teen health center in high

schools or at HealthPoint Future Wellness Center on TIB. Still others suggested building a new hospital in Tukwila, and to bring health care into the Southcenter district.

- **Bringing in more attractions and events to Tukwila was a priority to many participants.** Types of activities suggested included placing a skating rink, selfie museum, driving range, and a dinner theater, while types of events included a concert series, Bark in the Park, free events, and more events like the Ru Paul Drag Race show that was at Westfield Mall and Juneteenth. Still other suggestions for this type of strategy included surveying residents on where they like to go in their off hours to determine ways those services can be provided locally, investing in walkability in one area of town to designate it as the downtown space where people can park and walk to multiple activities, and converting a big box development into a large food hall.
- **Desire for investment in a central and accessible community-building gathering place was a common theme in the listening sessions.** Whether it would be a hall space to rent for cultural events, conference rooms for local businesses to rent, a teen center, a senior center, or even spaces for each neighborhood, participants want to see more community gathering spaces in Tukwila.
- **Every listening group described a desire for further diversifying the local restaurant scene in Tukwila.** Many participants touched on the way food diversity builds connections and wished to lean in to more fresh and culturally diverse food spots such as Congolese restaurants, food truck courts or rallies, and mom and pop restaurants. Participants asked for diversity in food offerings as well, wanting to see more healthy, fresh, vegetarian, and vegan options. Specific types requested included a pizza place, a live music pub, a brewery, local coffee shops, and a breakfast spot.
- **Participants wished to promote and improve parks in Tukwila.** Access to parks of all sizes from all kinds of neighborhoods is important to participants as it makes Tukwila more family friendly, spruces up the community, and allows community members to lead healthier lives. Participants also suggested prioritizing protecting natural areas such as along the river and creating natural points of interest in Tukwila, such as a park around Tukwila Pond.

Key Findings for Addressing Concerns in Tukwila

- **Housing Affordability and Residential Anti-displacement strategies were top concerns for many participants.** Participants describe the need for more affordable and workforce housing in Tukwila. Displacement is a major concern for many participants as well. Strategies suggested to combat displacement trends included ensuring that revenue growth goals do not result in displacement, building affordable housing in Tukwila School District so that students do not have to move away, ensuring the economic development strategy takes into account equity for

underserved communities and avoids displacement, and increase public relations on livability for families in Tukwila. As Tukwila's housing becomes more expensive, it becomes less accessible for refugees and immigrants. Larger housing units, such as those with 3 or 4 bedrooms are particularly in demand, as is housing for artists, and trailer park units.

- **Similarly, participants advocated for more support for local businesses and commercial anti-displacement strategies.** Many participants outlined the importance of affordable, small commercial spaces for local businesses in the city to prevent commercial displacement, especially for BIPOC businesses and mom and pop retail. Some examples given of places participants want to see more of included Medina Mall at Tukwila Village and Mall of Africa in SeaTac. Small local businesses could also benefit from creative work spaces, assistance programs to help small businesses navigate permitting and processes, and funding mechanisms to help small businesses afford commercial rents. Refugees and immigrants in particular represent a population of potential business owners, but require some assistance or support.
- **Participants identify homelessness, drug use, building disrepair, and vacancies as some of Tukwila's weaknesses or threats moving forward.** Participants wish to see dilapidated, vacant, and unsafe buildings addressed, along with poorly maintained apartment complexes. Strategies to beautify and clean up the city were suggested, including a volunteer program to pick up litter, especially along Gillam Creek, and focusing city cleanup efforts around bus stops.
- **Similarly, several participants felt that improving Tukwila's reputation is an essential strategy.** Participants would like the world to be more aware of Tukwila's community, for more development and investment to be attracted to the city, and for more families to be attracted to the city for its livability.
- **Many participants listed strategies to engage in workforce development in Tukwila in order to connect residents with higher paying jobs or prepare refugees or immigrants to enter the labor force.** Opportunities for adult education, job training, apprenticeships or internships, and certifications programs are important to participants. Some ambitious suggestions included building a college in Tukwila, hosting a community or technical college extension, creating training centers or job centers, designing an ESL course, or collaborating with education institutions to run night classes, or business classes for entrepreneurs.

Key Findings on Development in Tukwila

- **Many participants listed more development and business attraction as an essential strategy for Tukwila.** Redevelopment on TIB was praised, especially development that offers high paying jobs, offers needed services in the area, and improves the area's appearance.

Some mentioned that there is opportunity in Tukwila to draw in more high employers by building upon Tabor 100, and by providing campus environments businesses operating under a hybrid work model. Several participants asked the city streamline permitting processes to further attract developers. Types of development participants would like to see include mixed-use business, mixed-use hotels or condos, businesses near the greenbelt, businesses that will generate net tax revenues such as auto dealerships, casinos, or sports betting. Still others said that casinos, pawn shops, fast food, and liquor and tobacco are all undesirable types of development in Tukwila. One interesting comment suggested to help people learn how to become developers to develop the types of space they want to see.

- **While some saw development as desirable, others wanted to carefully consider the type of development allowed in Tukwila and continue to lean in to Tukwila’s small community feel moving forward.** Some participants voiced that growth for its own sake may not be in Tukwila’s best interests, and that the effect of development on the surrounding community should always be considered. The types of preferred development in this vein include prioritizing walkable neighborhoods, prioritizing affordable housing, and good paying jobs.

Key Findings on Upcoming Opportunities in Tukwila

- **When it comes to Tukwila’s engagement and equity, participants had positive feedback as well as some suggestions.** QR codes are identified as a very successful way to expand survey participation and translation of engagement surveys and other engagement programming has been essential. Engagement to different groups could be achieved more successfully through collaboration with different community-based organizations such as nonprofits, faith-based organizations, and student associations. Finally, participants suggested a section be dedicated to Equity in the City’s Economic Development Strategic Plan or the Comprehensive Plan.
- **Participants identified several current event issues that Tukwila should consider in its future plans.** The first is the need to find common ground between low income and high income groups in areas of safety, access, and affordability. The next is the trend of a new influx of electric vehicles in the city, especially for transportation logistics at ProLogis. Another consideration is how Tukwila may be affected by development of the former Boeing Longacres area in Renton with proposed housing office uses. And finally, participants with an eye for development pointed out Tukwila South as a “sleeping giant” that may be an area of investment and development in the future.

Contracted Engagement

In order to engage in a diverse, equitable, and inclusive manner, the City issued a Request for Interest (RFI) to local community-based organizations and contracted with six of them to conduct engagement with specific communities. Those organizations are: African Community Housing and Development, Debonair barbershop, Growing Contigo, Riverton Park United Methodist Church, Seattle Southside Chamber of Commerce, Somali Health Board, and Talitha Consults. Key findings below represent feedback from the listening sessions and not necessarily our recommendations.

African Community Housing and Development (ACHD)

ACHD is a community founded and –led organization that builds prosperity for the African Diaspora immigrant and refugee community in King County. ACHD surveyed their businesses and residents in 2022 to create a Report on Small Business Support and Workforce Development Programs. Key findings from this report are outlined below.

- **Deep-seated mistrust in communities of color towards government programs demands trust building as an essential first step to engagement.** Building trust through partnerships with community organizations, offering resources and programs in multiple languages, hiring culturally competent staff, and providing interpretation and translation services are all important ways to begin engagement with these groups. Mistrust of bureaucratic entities and programs often prevents clients from applying for government benefits and grants. Funds allocated to trusted messengers and organizations that are embedded in and represent the communities served can help overcome this barrier.
- **A significant number of immigrants in Seattle are entrepreneurs, and there is a desire to support and foster entrepreneurship within these communities.** The African Diaspora immigrant and refugee community in particular value entrepreneurship.
- **Addressing underemployment and creating opportunities for stable employment are key concerns.** Many community members face underemployment with low-wage jobs that do not adequately support their families. Some turn to the gig economy for income but encounter similar challenges.
- **Chefs and owners of small catering and market-based prepared food businesses in Tukwila seek support to navigate the bureaucratic processes involved in food business permitting.** They also express a need for grant writing assistance, web development, digital marketing, and branding support.
- **Community members often seek flexible funds that can be used for various business activities.** The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the demand for funds to cover fixed expenses such as rent and utilities. Cultural

considerations, such as the Muslim faith's prohibition on interest, pose unique challenges in accessing financial support.

- **Recent immigrants with limited English language skills face challenges when navigating the business licensing, permitting, and financial landscape.** Websites and official documents that are primarily available in English present barriers. Clients need outreach, education, and support to overcome these challenges.
- **Financial literacy is a recurring need among business owners, particularly in industries with clients who may not have traditional financial records or credit scores.** Courses and instruction offered in clients' native languages are essential to bridge this gap.
- **There is a need for increased access to housing programs, including rental assistance and lower-cost or subsidized permanent housing.** Additionally, clients seek opportunities for paid training, certifications, English language learning classes, and assistance with transportation to support workforce development.

Debonair Barber

Debonair is a barbershop located on Southcenter Parkway in Tukwila. The City contracted with Debonair to promote the online survey to their customers and also to engage other barbershops to promote the online survey.

Growing Contigo

Growing Contigo staff conducted direct in-person outreach to four businesses identified as Spanish speaking operating in the City of Tukwila. Each identified business received an introductory visit dropping off a paper survey, flier with invitation to fill out the survey directly online, and a secondary visit to either help them complete the survey or answer any questions they may have. Neighboring businesses also received a visit from our team with a flier dropoff inviting them to participate in the online survey. In total, 15 businesses were visited, but only 1 filled out a paper survey with Growing Contigo's help. Growing Contigo also engaged in an online social media campaign. Key findings from their engagement are listed below.

- Businesses were hesitant at first to engage. **Repeat visits are the most impactful way of establishing trust and having a successful engagement with small businesses.**
- The online **social media campaign was successful** in reaching intended audience. High post engagement and re-shares demonstrates an interest in more information being provided in this way.
- The paper survey filled out at El Pollo Real echoes many concerns identified in the online survey and focus group sessions. Some unique answers include the request for more children's hospitals in Tukwila, and identifying low customer traffic as a major problem that is related to public safety concerns in Tukwila.

Riverton Park United Methodist Church

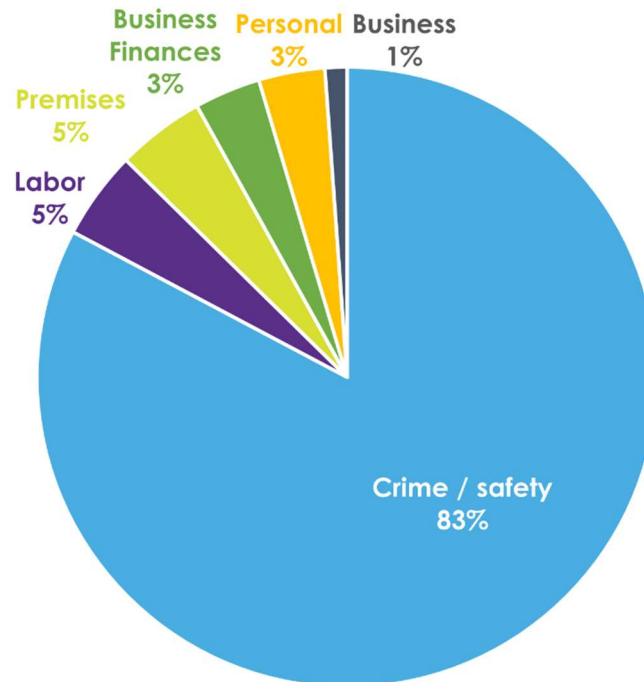
Riverton Park United Methodist Church operates a food bank on site, provides space for unhoused people to camp, and now host a tiny homes village on site. They were contracted to engage unhoused persons to complete the online survey. Through their engagement, 13 unhoused people completed the survey via the online portal.

Seattle Southside Chamber of Commerce

The local chamber of commerce made door-to-door visits, “ambassador walks”, to businesses on three occasions in September, October, and December. The first two ambassador walks were visiting 50 businesses in the Southcenter District, and the December ambassador walk visited 14 businesses along Tukwila International Boulevard. The project website and online survey were promoted, as they became available, and responses to the question “What keeps you up at night?” were collected.

When asked “What keeps you up at night?” 83% of responses from businesses engaged through the Tukwila Chamber of Commerce on ambassador walks were related to crime and safety concerns in Tukwila. Some notable quotes include “I report theft to the police daily” and “Business is great, but customers are dissatisfied departing to see their vehicle has been damaged or stolen”.

Exhibit 1. Business Responses Grouped by Larger Category, Tukwila, 2023

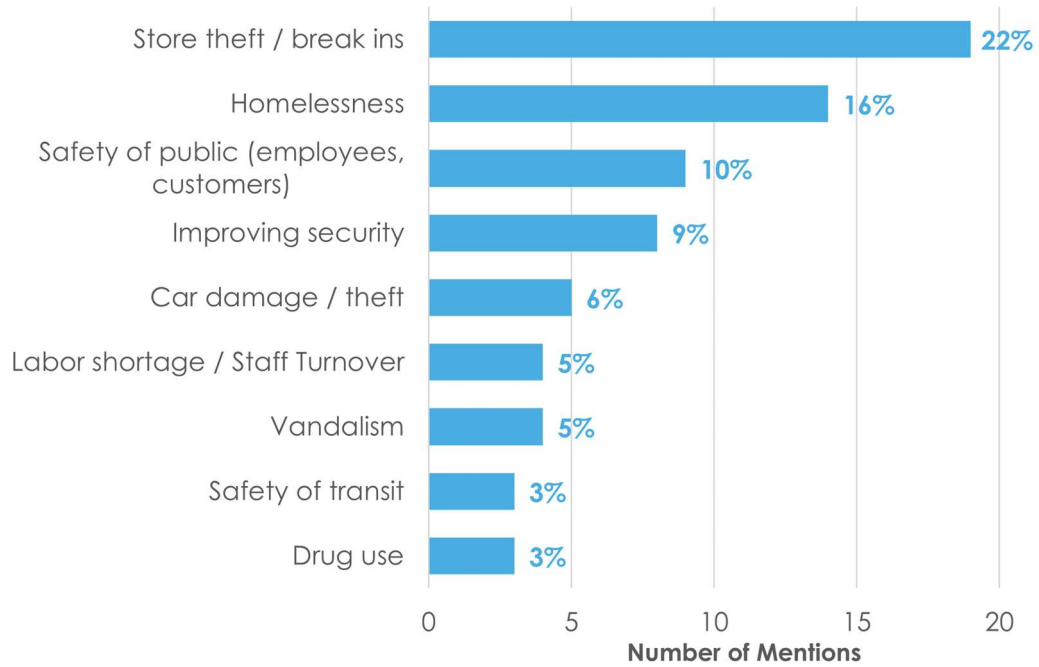


Sources: Tukwila Chamber of Commerce 2022; CAI 2023.

Breaking up these categories into individual common responses, store theft and break ins make up 22% of all responses. This is closely followed by homelessness,

public safety concerns, and the need for improved security. Of the top 9 responses by businesses, only 1 is not related to crime and safety concerns – Labor shortage and employee turnover, which was mentioned 6% of the time.

Exhibit 2. Common Responses by Businesses Engaged in Chamber of Commerce Ambassador Walks, Tukwila, 2023



Source: Tukwila Chamber of Commerce 2022; CAI 2023.

Less common responses included:

- Landscaping issues
- Increasing customer traffic
- Lack of property owner and property manager accountability
- Safety at night
- Rent increases
- Mental health resources
- Arsen
- Shopping carts (stolen)
- Garbage / trash around the city
- Parking lot space / parking violations
- The B/O tax
- Language barrier

Somali Health Board

The Somali Health Board was contracted to encourage people to fill out the online survey. They promoted the online survey through social media, flyers, and

an email blast. They also held three in-person visits to prominent locations and helped people submit surveys.

Talitha Consults

Using questions from the Online Survey, Talitha Consults conducted surveys with 50 residents from two apartment complexes, Ridge Cliff & Ridge Spring apartments. They also held a listening session with 10 students from a Foster High School special education class. In total, the survey was conducted in 7 languages and received responses from 60 participants. While many of the key findings mirror those received in the Online Survey, some new feedback emerged from this more diverse audience and has been summarized below.

- **Targeted outreach was effective in engaging with a diverse group and uncovering new feedback on the survey questions.** In the future, similar research on the geographic and demographic target should be conducted to inform engagement efforts. For example, the Talitha team reached out to trusted community messengers, including property managers and educators, and identified the need to translate the survey into Dari. In the end, over 20% of the survey participants spoke Dali.
- When asked about Tukwila's strengths, participants listed **bus-stops, discounted heating, and internet** for income eligible residents & businesses.
- When asked about what business they'd like to see more of, participants listed **libraries, English language centers, and affordable organic products and vegetarian food.**
- Participants suggested several unique items to better support Tukwila businesses and residents, including **more indoor sports in Tukwila, such as gyms and wellness facilities, better transit options, more street lights and patrol, and more health care facilities.** Most survey takers go to Burien, Tacoma and Seattle for medical appointments. For transit dependent residents, the community center is difficult to access.
- When asked about what specific opportunities the City of Tukwila should pursue, participants listed **increasing the number of school buses, supporting grocery stores that serve Asian food, investing in cultural centers and open spaces near apartments, increasing street lights, programs to help Latino communities navigate social and economic systems, affordable child care, and more targeted support for culturally specific groups.** For example, job fairs for targeted communities.
- **Participants identified discrimination at work (by race, age and ethnicity), language barriers, inaccessible government jobs, and personal barriers, such as qualifications and education, as the major barriers to attaining desired jobs.** They also indicate difficulty in understanding Laws and knowing where to report existing discrimination at work.

- When asked about what types of jobs they'd like to see in Tukwila, participants described the need **for low level-of-entry jobs**, such as manufacturing, factory, warehouse, construction jobs, and trades. Another common response was jobs for artisans, such as tailoring, carpet weaving, dress making and beauty salons and including "tailoring (dressmaking) and hand crafts, especially for the Afghan women". Finally, participants also desired diverse jobs for family businesses and more jobs for teens.

Interviews

Key stakeholders were identified by the City and individual interviews were conducted during month of July. Interview questions surrounded the topic of economic development strategies, strengths, and weaknesses in the City of Tukwila. Findings from the interviews closely match findings collected via other forms of engagement, especially focus groups and the online survey. The key findings below have been aggregated across interviewees and summarized by topic.

Key Findings

- **Interviewees describe challenges related to Tukwila's permitting processes and outline the importance of regulatory efficiency.** The efficiency of regulatory processes, including permitting and approvals, was noted as a factor that can affect businesses and economic development. Interviewees specifically mentioned issues with inspectors and the timing of tenant and landlord responsibilities. Delays and miscommunication in permitting can result in wasted resources, impacting economic development efforts.
- **The minimum wage and the difficulty in finding skilled labor were noted as factors affecting businesses in Tukwila while workforce development opportunities were highlighted.** Lack of available and qualified local labor pool is a challenge in many sectors, highlighting the importance of education and the workforce pipeline for economic development. The potential for the school system to serve as a conduit for the community and businesses was highlighted and collaboration between schools and businesses, particularly programs like CorePlus Aerospace, was discussed as a potential way to support economic development efforts.
- **Interviewees were very positive on the City's engagement and economic development efforts.** Many expressed appreciation for community engagement and cohesive development planning in Tukwila, while also describing the importance of having a clear mission and strategy for economic development.
- **Interviewees would like economic development in Tukwila to improve the perception of Tukwila as a business-friendly environment, compared to other neighboring cities, and focus on attracting and retaining businesses through a supportive environment.** Tukwila's advantages such as location, infrastructure, and daytime population were

highlighted. The competitive landscape for financial resources, such as taxes and bonds, was mentioned as a concern. There is a limited availability of funds in Tukwila and for-profit developers face challenges in accessing them.

- **Public safety concerns and their impact on businesses, including issues like theft and violence, were a major concern to interviewees.** The need to improve the perception of the area as a residential community was also mentioned.
- **The need for housing development and redevelopment in Tukwila was emphasized, as interviewees discussed incentives for affordable housing, land availability for different types of businesses, and the impact of land use policies on economic development.** Participants noted the potential for improvement in underutilized properties and the importance of creating a more attractive residential community. Encouraging affordable housing through incentives, ensuring a diverse range of land types are available for various types of businesses, and instituting flexible and adaptive land uses are each mentioned as important strategies to consider.

Focus Groups

Five (5) focus group discussions were conducted, with each focused on a different aspect of Tukwila's economy. Stakeholders for focus group discussions were identified in partnership with city staff. The following contains key findings from these meetings. The key findings reflect responses received, not necessarily our recommendations.

Economic Diversification Focus Group

- **Tukwila's status as a retail destination, driven by mall anchors and big box stores, attracts significant traffic and positions it as a retail hub for south King County.** Retail and hospitality industries have capitalized on this advantage, benefiting from the influx of customers who visit Tukwila for shopping and comparison shopping. The City's advantageous location and infrastructure, including its proximity to I-5, and the airport, further supports its appeal to businesses. Tukwila's inventory of industrial space is another appealing factor, attracting businesses in the warehousing and wholesaling sectors.
- **While Tukwila boasts a notable concentration of Asian-based businesses, there is a need for more marketing and outreach to support this segment.** These businesses, located particularly around Westfield Mall and Southcenter Blvd., contribute to the City's identity. Expanding the presence and awareness of Asian-based businesses, as well as catering to different Asian markets, could further enhance Tukwila's economic diversity and appeal.
- **Locating smaller businesses in certain neighborhoods, such as the retail district near the mall and beyond in the valley, poses challenges due to higher commercial rent and larger spaces.**

Tukwila's small residential community coexists with a massive business district, creating disparities in the availability of spaces for small and independent family businesses compared to other shopping and dining facilities.

- **Small businesses can benefit from the flexibility and responsiveness of Tukwila as a smaller municipality.** Strategic decision-making regarding business requirements and regulations is crucial to avoid overwhelming small businesses and to promote a more supportive environment. This might include more education and outreach programs for small businesses to navigate changing regulations and compliance with local ordinances, or considering partial exemptions for small businesses from certain regulations, such as minimum wage or the new business and occupation (B&O) tax requirements.²
- **Establishing a clear identity and destination beyond Southcenter Mall is essential for economic development.** Through initiatives like utilizing tax increment financing (TIF), Tukwila could connect the river, businesses, and parks to create a more cohesive community as well as business environment. Attracting tech companies and higher-end multifamily projects requires addressing concerns related to identity, market appeal, and zoning options. Tukwila should also explore new sectors and markets to attract such as food processing or general service industries, which would benefit from Tukwila's central location and proximity to Kent Valley.
- **Infrastructure investment is crucial for the growth of industries in Tukwila, particularly in manufacturing, industrial, and research and development (R&D) sectors.** The City's industrial center faces challenges due to a lack of community investment and support, hindering the recruitment and provisioning of future businesses. Multi-jurisdictional utility provision poses challenges but also presents opportunities for cost sharing, facility districting, and accessing grants/loans. Enhancing connectivity and regional transit requires demonstrating density and demand, while also exploring collaboration and cost-sharing opportunities with rural and regional efforts.

Identity, Marketing, Promotion and Image Focus Group

- **Tukwila offers many assets upon which to build a unique identity, however, it faces some challenges in lack of regional awareness and in reputation of crime.** Tukwila offers a thriving one-stop-shopping retail scene with free parking, which is not commonly found in other

² Note: the minimum wage was enacted by voter initiative and the City does not have the authority to change it.

shopping districts. It also has public artwork and art programs, such as the utility box art program, which enhance its visual appeal, and outdoor recreational amenities such as beautiful parks, the Lake to Sound trail, and the Green River. Participants also brought up the abundance of recreational activities for families and children in Tukwila, such as trampoline parks, arcades, bowling, and movie theaters. However, outside the Southcenter area, many attractions and offerings in Tukwila are not well highlighted, leading to limited awareness of the City's diverse range of experiences. Further, Tukwila is often perceived as a distant and potentially unsafe place, mainly due to publicized incidents like shootings in the mall. Its potential as a regional transportation hub and its cultural diversity are often overlooked in discussions about the city.

- **Tukwila can enhance its marketing and promotion by engaging in events, sponsorships, and splashy ad campaigns to generate positive attention.** Maintaining cleanliness (reducing litter), engaging in beautification, and focusing on environmental sustainability are important ways to boost Tukwila's image. The City should also capitalize on its proximity to the airport by providing activities or services for layover travelers. Finally, the City should find a way to host attractions, whether it be events (such as the local refugee and immigrant farmer's market), sponsorships (such as an annual 5k), a destination (like Starfire), or a collection of unique businesses in order to make Tukwila a destination rather than just a pass-through location.
- **While Tukwila is known for specific attractions or facilities, such as shopping, logistics, or the Museum of Flight, a challenge lies in establishing Tukwila as a cohesive and vibrant community.** Increased densification, infrastructure investment, and transportation connectivity are important investments for Tukwila to build up a cohesive local community that will attract young professionals and future business. Densifying the Southcenter market area, through transit-oriented development or incentives like the Multi-Family Tax Exemption (MFTE) program and parking exemptions, as well as improving connectivity and regional transit services through collaboration with rural and regional efforts. Improving walkability and transportation within the City would also create a more inviting environment for visitors and community members alike.
- **Tukwila should engage in proactive planning when it comes to sites to prepare for upcoming opportunities.** Conducting a comprehensive analysis of available development sites in advance and ensuring their readiness can facilitate swift action and allow the City to capitalize on favorable prospects as they arise.

- **Tukwila's industrial center requires infrastructure investment and community support to maximize its potential and recruit future businesses.**

Retail, Dining and Entertainment Focus Group

- **The need for diversification and increased residential presence in Tukwila to support retail.** Tukwila's economic development should focus on diversifying industries beyond retail and industrial to create more employment opportunities and more housing. Participants cited the need for “rooftops” or captured market to support existing retail and retail growth. Southcenter was identified as a high potential candidate for a new urban center in the region. Through encouraging mixed-use development and increasing housing options in areas like Southcenter, as well as promoting walkability and community spaces within Tukwila's retail core, the City can enhance the overall experience and create a stronger sense of community. Hosting cultural events, festivals, and highlighting local attractions like the recent circus event can attract both residents and visitors, fostering a stronger sense of place in Tukwila.
- **Tukwila's retail, dining, and entertainment offerings are major draws to the City and strong economic assets; however, public safety concerns affect perceptions and investment in the city.** Large shopping centers like Westfield Mall, diverse dining options, and entertainment venues such as Starfire Sports Complex all come together to create a compelling shopping district that attracts visitors from Tukwila and beyond. Addressing public safety issues in Tukwila, particularly in areas like Southcenter, is crucial for fostering a positive environment and attracting investment. Improving safety and security measures will positively impact businesses, customers, and the overall reputation of Tukwila as a desirable destination.
- **Highlighting Tukwila's diversity and cultural experiences and leveraging Tukwila's location advantages.** Tukwila's diverse population presents an opportunity to showcase a wide range of ethnic and cultural dining options. Promoting and supporting small businesses, such as the various Asian and Mexican restaurants in the Southcenter area, can attract customers and enhance Tukwila's identity as a culturally rich community. Another asset is Tukwila's strategic location near the airport, major roads, and regional employers like Boeing. Emphasizing the convenience of easy access, ample parking availability, and the comprehensive shopping and entertainment experience at locations like the Westfield Southcenter can appeal to a broad customer base.
- **Tukwila's messaging to the local business community should create a positive business environment and showcase appreciation**

for local businesses. Smaller businesses can be stifled by burdens related to permitting, policy, and regulations. The City of Tukwila should improve communication and show support for the retail, dining, and hospitality industries and address challenges related to permitting, inspections, and other bureaucratic processes to streamline efforts of small or local businesses.

- **Signage restrictions can pose a hindrance to advertising efforts for entertainment venues in Tukwila.** Relaxing signage restrictions within these areas could significantly benefit businesses by providing them with enhanced advertising opportunities.

Vibrant, Thriving Community and Quality of Life Focus Group³

- **The Public Works Department maintains low service rates while facing increasing workloads, challenges in staffing, and increasing construction costs.** While working to manage and maintain underground utilities, sidewalks, roads, bridges, and traffic signals, Tukwila’s aging infrastructure continues to require ever more expensive upkeep and replacement. Public Works’ goals for the future include supporting multi-modal transportation, walkability, and livability as well as creating a more sustainable financial structure for the department, but lack of funding for ongoing utility service and infrastructure maintenance is a concern. Collaboration with neighboring jurisdictions, state agencies, and the Port is an avenue to explore sharing resources and some of the City’s maintenance load.
- **The Community Development Department is preparing for the upcoming Comprehensive Plan update while taking on regulatory changes.** Focused on urban development patterns, including mixed-use growth and affordable housing strategies, the Community Development Department is juggling many moving pieces. Tukwila’s subarea plans, the upcoming changes to the Tukwila South development agreement, and other zoning concerns in the City lie at the forefront; however, issues of climate change, equity analysis, and housing quality are also considerations.
- **The Police Department’s number one priority over the next year is to increase staffing, as low staffing creates challenges in addressing crime and allowing Tukwila’s residential and retail communities to feel safe.** Crime issues in Tukwila include speeding vehicles, burglaries, violent crime, and drug-related activities. Limited

³ Note: this focus group consisted of the directors of city departments

resources and staffing shortages affect response times and community safety – as well as perceptions of safety.

- **The Parks and Recreation Department faces a lack of resources, but has goals in the upcoming year to increase access to parks and trails in Tukwila, enhance connectivity between neighborhoods, and encourage events in Tukwila.** There are three areas in the City that don't have access to a park within a ten- minute walk. Strategies to increase park access focus on these areas. Other projects to improve public wellness and livability include city beautification efforts and upcoming contributions to the City's strategic planning efforts. Future opportunities also exist along special event permitting and encouraging events through a centralized coordinated approach to bringing in economic development.
- **The Administrative Services Department is working on operationalizing equity policies and addressing language access and disparities.** They are researching an equity index, racial equity toolkit, and equitable outreach toolkit to promote equitable access and engage diverse communities. The connection between equity initiatives and economic development is emphasized.
- **The City of Tukwila faces financial challenges, including a structural deficit, and is working on a financial sustainability plan.** Issues such as using one-time grant money for ongoing efforts, sales tax equalization, and increasing costs impact the City's ability to maintain services and infrastructure. Exploring partnerships with neighboring jurisdictions, private entities, and regional organizations is suggested to address common challenges, share resources, and promote regional development. Collaborative efforts in areas such as parks, emergency services, and law enforcement are discussed.
- **Tukwila has many opportunities for development, including the potential for an urban center in the Southcenter district.** Expanding recreational spaces, utilizing the riverfront, improving access to the airport, and creating destination amenities are discussed. Collaboration, regionalization of services, and leveraging ethnic diversity for economic development were mentioned as potential strategies.
- **The City faces challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified staff due to competitive salaries and high living costs in the region.** The impact of staffing shortages on public safety and service delivery is highlighted. The City aims to improve the workplace environment and employee relationships to attract and retain talent.

- **Tukwila’s school district has seen significant turnover in leadership and lacks important relationships with the business community for effective workforce development.**
- **Building trust with the community and ensuring effective use of funding are crucial for successful initiatives.** Public perception and trust play a role in securing support and resources. Effective messaging and transparency are needed to address public concerns and inspire community involvement, especially in concerns revolving around public safety.
- **Tukwila has many assets through which economic development can unfold and develop.** Options mentioned by participants included leaning in to Tukwila’s multicultural diversity, investing in the creation of destination spots, or capitalizing on proximity to the airport. Further development of sports fields, expansion of hotel options, and building upon multicultural businesses are also considered as opportunities for growth. While these options exist, the city’s departments each have urgent needs and goals that capture their attention and time.

Workforce Development and Access to Opportunity Focus Group

- **While Tukwila is served by many organizations participating in workforce development, the network between them can be strengthened.** Connections between different workforce development groups, such as educational institutions, community-based organizations (CBOs), Faith-based organizations (FBOs) and local businesses, can facilitate information sharing and collaboration in workforce development efforts.
- **The workforce development network in Tukwila would greatly benefit from a clearinghouse listing organizations and opportunities surrounding workforce development in the city and region.** Lack of awareness about available resources and programs in workforce development is a common challenge. A centralized platform, directory, or information hub that consolidates relevant information and organizations would further connect the workforce development network as well as assist students and adults seeking workforce development assistance. This information should be shared in a culturally and linguistically sensitive way, ensuring resources and support are available to Tukwila’s diverse community, including refugees.
- **Foster High School has successfully implemented various CTE programs, such as construction, manufacturing, environmental science, culinary arts, biotech, and business management administration.** These programs, accompanied by after-school leadership clubs, have been highly popular and have contributed to increased

enrollment and budget allocation. While this program prepares Foster High School's students for Tukwila's in-demand industries such as aviation, aerospace, maritime, and healthcare, it is difficult to follow what industries students enter when they graduate.

- **Students express interest in exposure to more hands-on opportunities such as competitive career clubs and internships.** Foster High School students have opportunities to take college credit classes (with the most common classes being computer science and biology), as well as receive credit for working a job outside of school. However, they express difficulty in finding internships that offer practical experience in desired fields. Foster High School's leadership clubs were highly praised by students and were identified as an area for further investment, especially those that contained a competitive element.
- **Lack of connections between leadership in education and in the business community places the burden of networking and finding opportunities on individual students or teachers.** Due to the long-term networking diligence of one of Foster High School's science teachers, more students each year are connected to internships. But the burden of finding and paving pathways for these opportunities is substantial.
- **Addressing the gap in environmental career opportunities requires attention in Tukwila.** Despite the popularity of environmental science programs at Foster High School, there appears to be a lack of opportunities pertaining to the environment within the city as well as a lack of investment city-wide in sustainability.
- **Enhancing the engagement of City staff and fostering collaboration with schools is vital for the success of workforce development initiatives.** Presently, there is limited involvement of City staff in school programs, internships, and career development efforts. Strengthening partnerships between City staff, educators, and students will amplify the effectiveness of these initiatives, and lead to better outcomes.

Small Business and Entrepreneurship Focus Group

- **Many small businesses in Tukwila struggle to regain pre-COVID revenues due to increasing labor costs and decreasing access to capital.** Small businesses face challenges accommodating higher wage rates, lease rates, and the cost of goods without pushing their prices too high. In addition, as the banking sector tightens due to economic conditions, businesses must meet stricter guidelines for loan approvals, which can be especially burdensome for small businesses.

- **Participants expressed the need for a centralized source of technical help that can provide guidance at the federal, state, and local levels.** Grant applications, taxation requirements, and tax credits in Tukwila are complex and the latest guidance from the Treasury and infrastructure bills is not written in an accessible manner. This highlights the need for publicly available and user-friendly technical assistance through a website, one-on-one services, or some other channel, to facilitate access to relevant information. Tukwila can also upscale existing technical assistance providers to better support businesses through sharing available resources, such as those offered by Evergreen Business Alliance and WEDA, with community organizations who have established relationships and trust within the communities they serve.
- **Tukwila’s immigrant-owned businesses in particular face challenges in navigating the banking system and obtaining capital due to their business structures.** Many immigrant-owned small businesses never receive a grant or loan in Tukwila. They require additional technical support to understand tax payment and managing operating costs, to find loan products that align with their faith-based requirements, and to find and apply for grants.
- **Many small business owners and entrepreneurs in Tukwila could benefit from business resources and support, including education in topics such as financing, operations, planning, and goal setting.** While a great starting point, online resources alone can be restrictive and inflexible. Participants expressed desire for a physical place or a clear contact to which business owners can take questions and challenges and receive assistance.
- **Participants expressed willingness to collaborate to fill coordination gap identified between businesses, government agencies, and the various organizations working to help small businesses.** Small businesses face challenges in identifying the right channels for addressing their concerns, exacerbated by a lack of communication and coordination among various levels of government. They express the desire for more proactive outreach from government agencies. Similarly, a coordination gap exists among the organizations dedicated to supporting small businesses. Participants suggested various solutions to improve the strength and coordination of this network, including the establishment of a centralized clearinghouse, a mailing list, or a dedicated website to consolidate and disseminate valuable information such as upcoming events and workshops.
- **Tukwila should prioritize investing in physical public spaces and enhancing access to community spaces as a means to bolster support for local businesses.**

- **There is untapped potential in Tukwila in exploring partnerships and opportunities for workforce development programs that can mutually benefit businesses and young students searching for internships.**

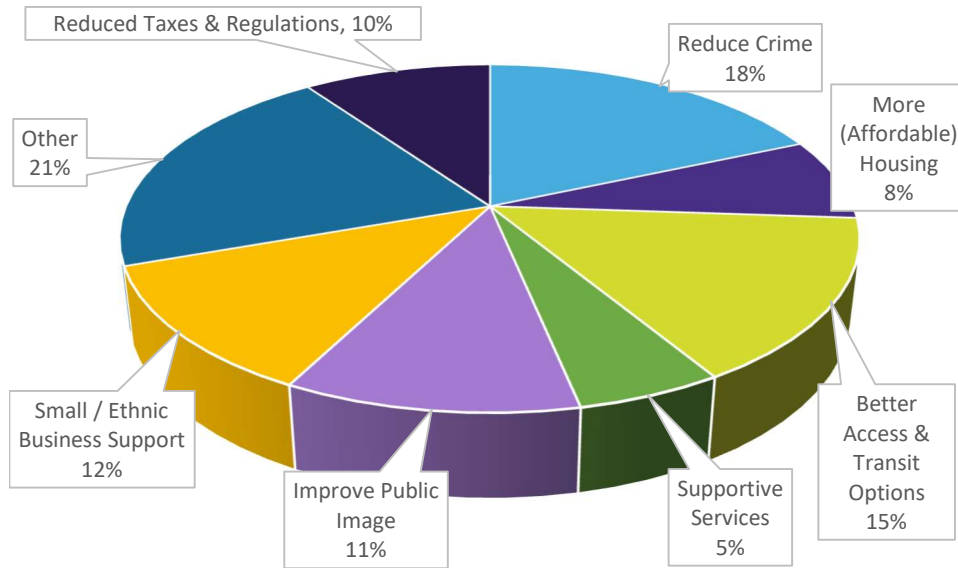
APPENDIX

Detailed Online Survey Analysis

The following includes the questions included in Tukwila’s online survey as well as graphs depicting analysis of results.

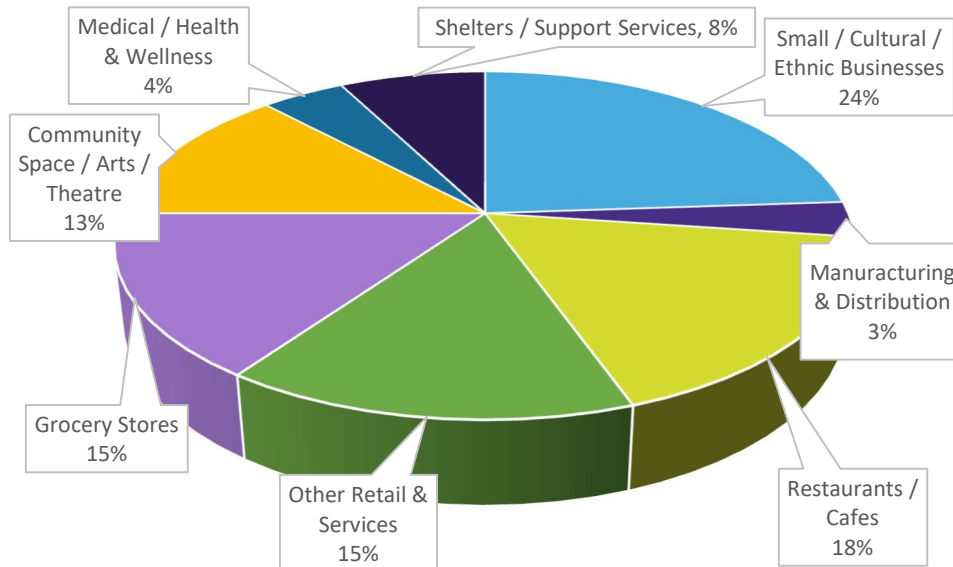
Survey Questions

1. How could we improve Tukwila to better support our businesses and workers?



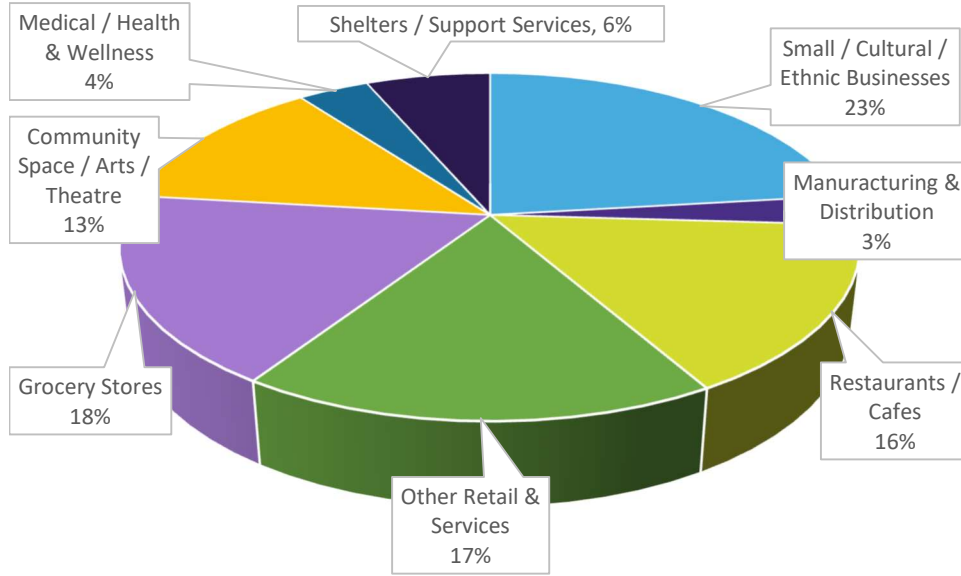
Source: CAI 2023.

2. How could we improve Tukwila to attract new businesses, workers, and/or job opportunities?



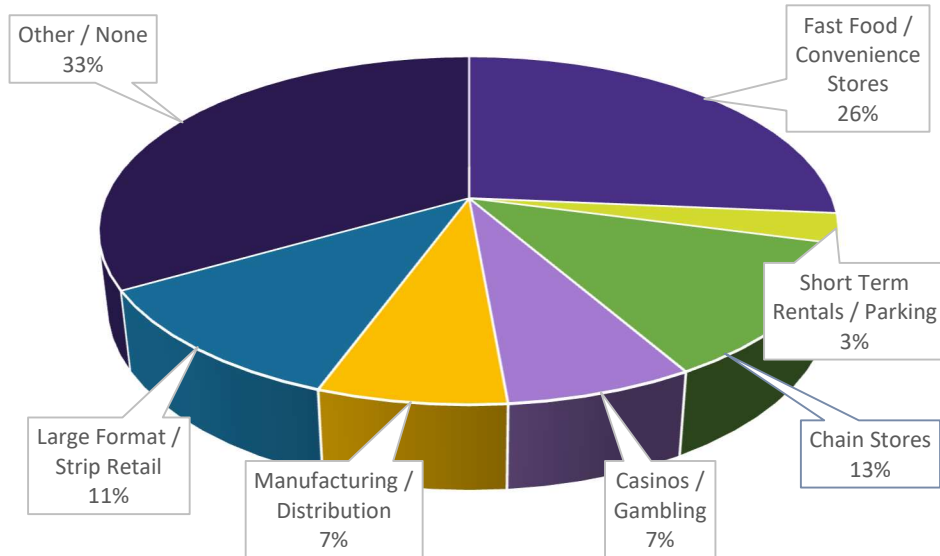
Source: CAI 2023.

3. What types of businesses would you like to see more of in Tukwila?



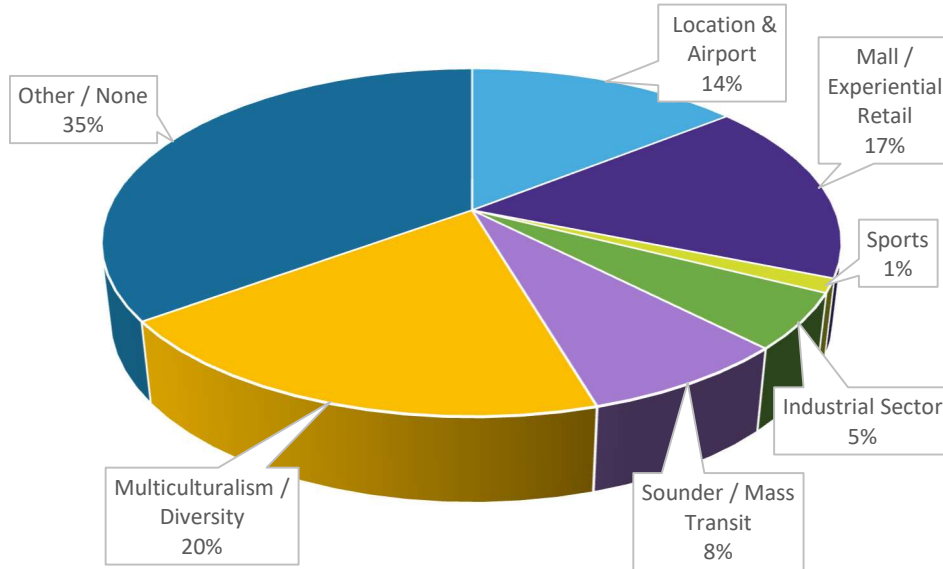
Source: CAI 2023.

4. What types of businesses would you like to see less of in Tukwila?



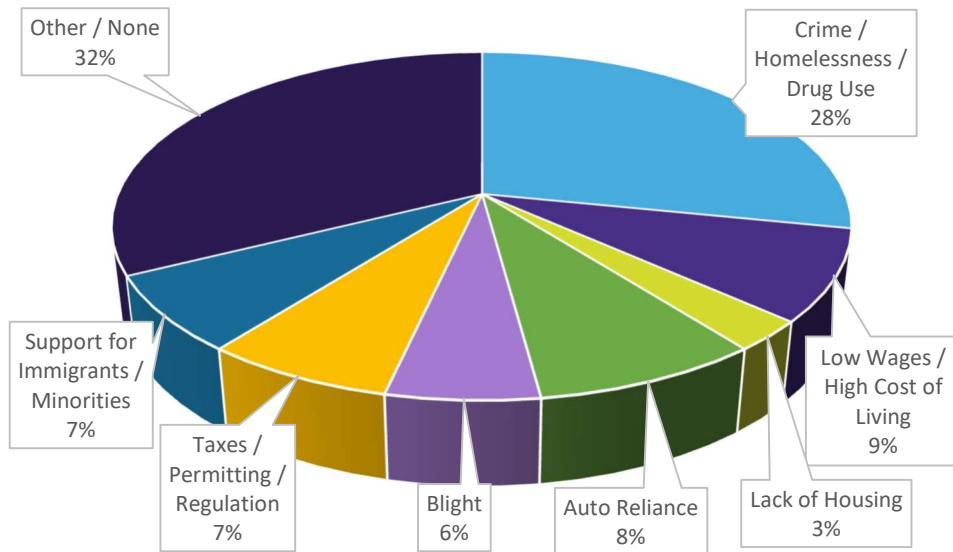
Source: CAI 2023.

5. What are the strengths of Tukwila's business economy? What specific opportunities should the City pursue?



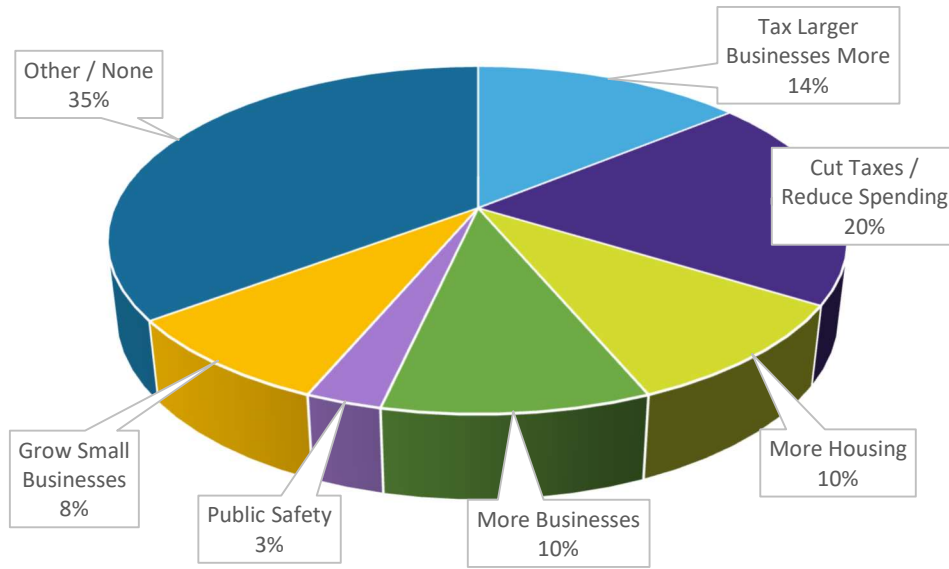
Source: CAI 2023.

6. What are the weaknesses of Tukwila's business economy? What specific challenges might be holding the City's economy back?



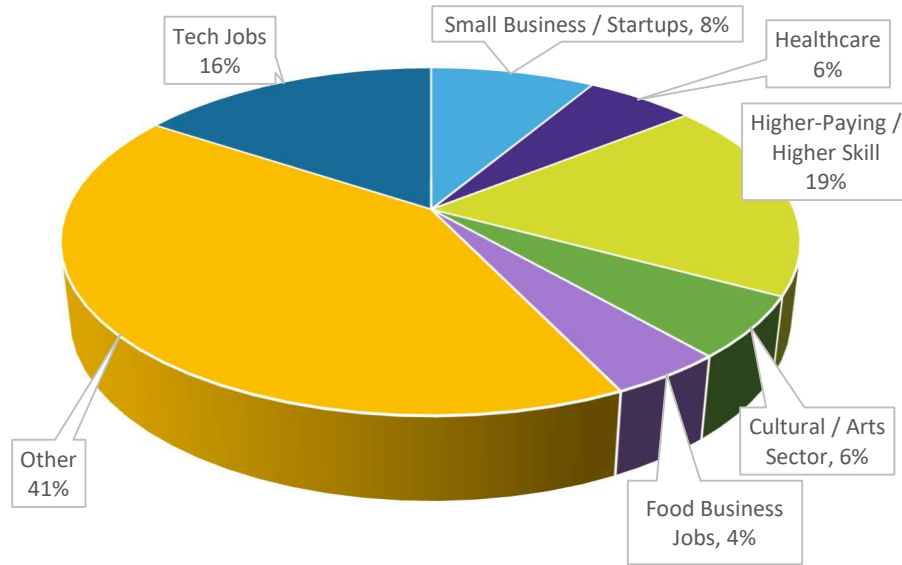
Source: CAI 2023.

7. What are your ideas for increasing Tukwila's tax revenue?



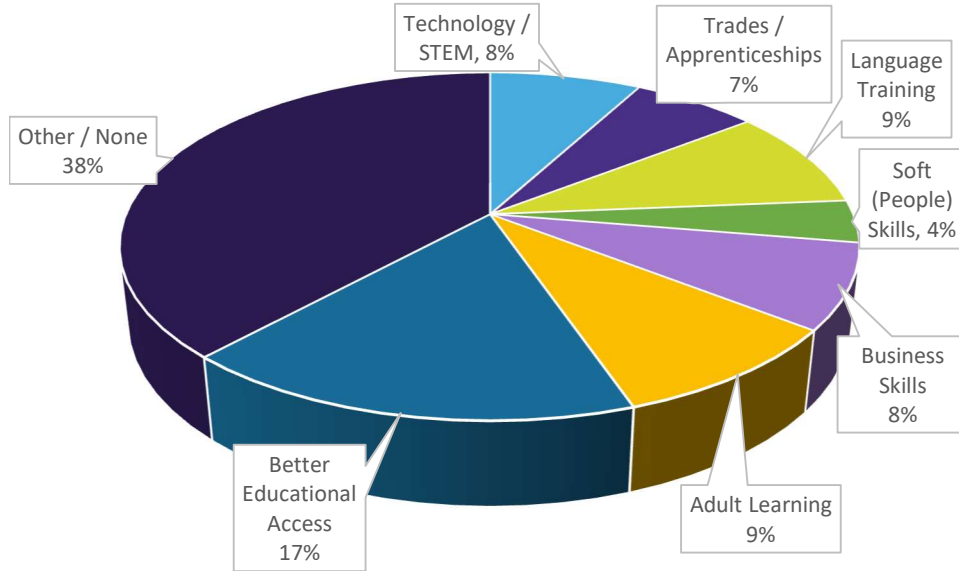
Source: CAI 2023.

8. What kind of jobs would you like to see more of in Tukwila? What are the barriers keeping people from these jobs?



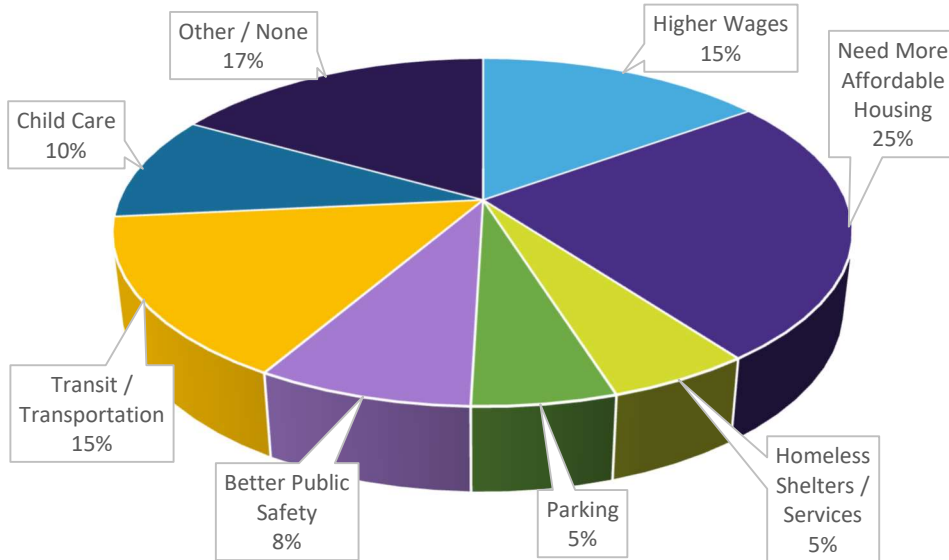
Source: CAI 2023.

9. What are the greatest needs in terms of skills development, education, or job training for Tukwila's workers?



Source: CAI 2023.

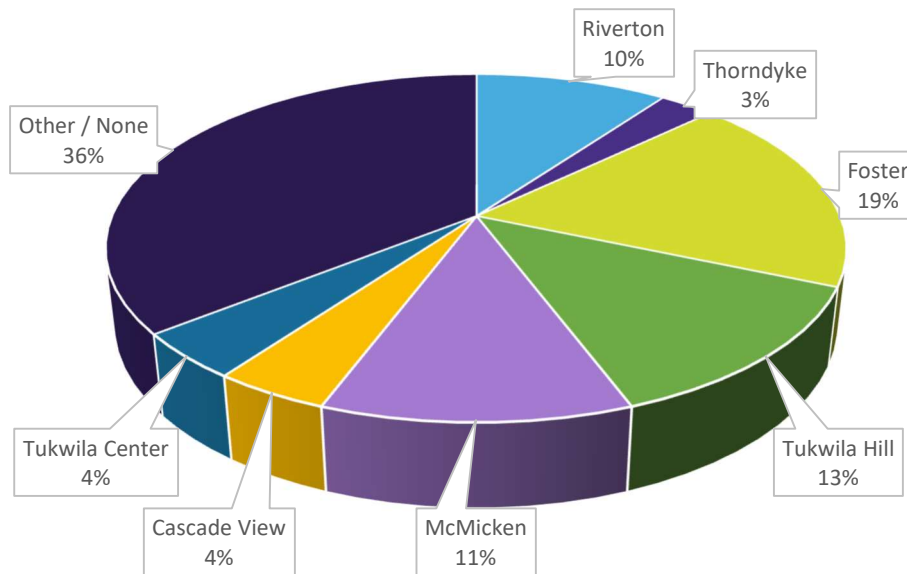
10. What are Tukwila workers' greatest challenges, issues, or needs? (For example, income, housing, childcare, or transportation.)



Source: CAI 2023.

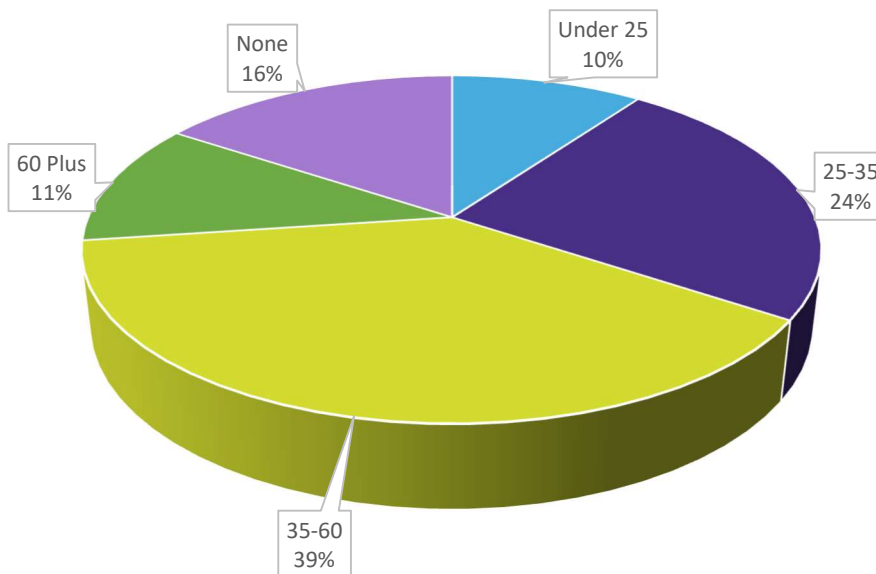
About You Questions

1. Respondent Neighborhood



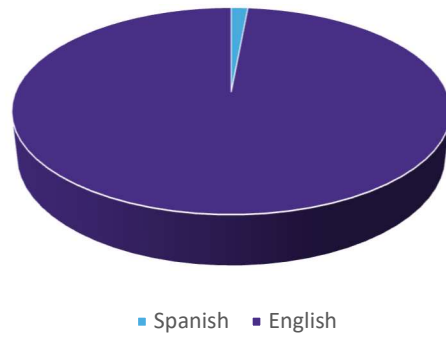
Source: CAI 2023.

2. Respondent Age Group



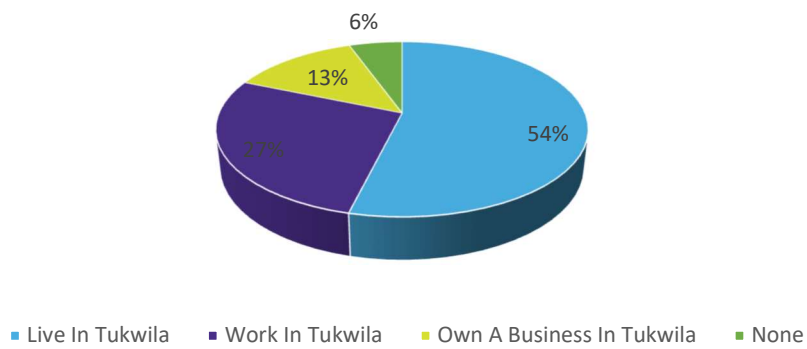
Source: CAI 2023.

3. Respondent Language Used



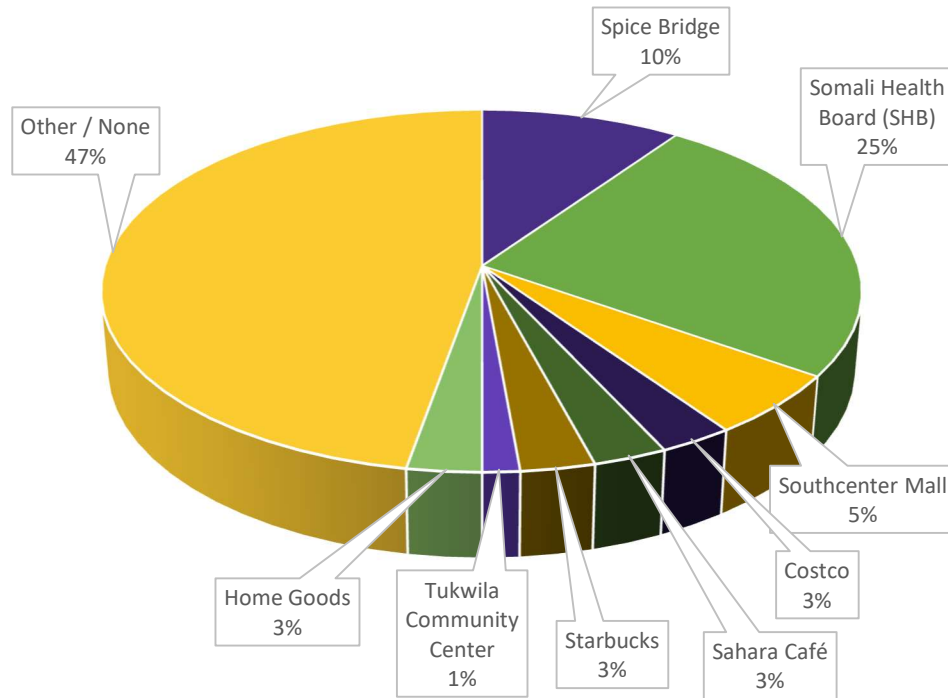
Source: CAI 2023.

4. Select all that apply; I live in Tukwila, I work in Tukwila, I own a business and/or manage in Tukwila



Source: CAI 2023.

5. What is your favorite business in Tukwila?



Source: CAI 2023.

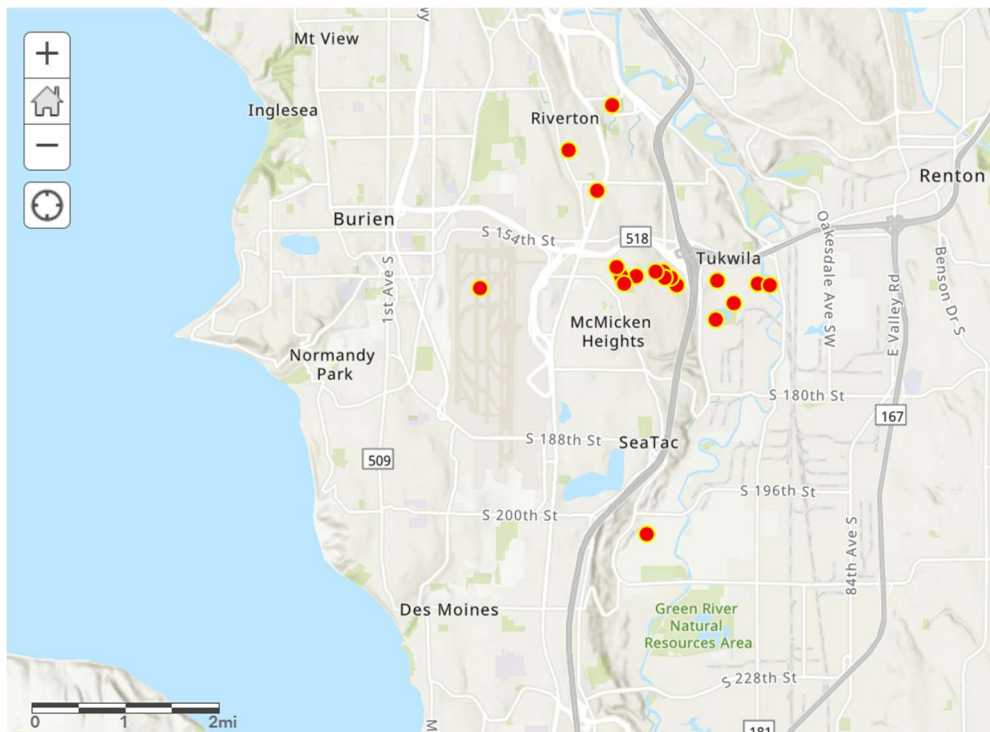
List of Popup Installations and Listening Sessions

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Activity</u>
7/28/2022	6:30 PM	Committee	Planning Commission
8/2/2022	6:30 PM	Committee	Library Advisory Board
8/4/2022	5:30 PM	Committee	Equity and Social Justice Commission
8/11/2022	6:30 PM	Committee	Community Oriented Policing Advisory Board
8/12/2022	11:30 AM	Committee	Lodging Tax Advisory Board
8/25/2022	6:00 PM	Committee	Arts Commission
-	5:00 PM	Committee	Civil Service Commission
10/4/2022	6:30 PM	Committee	Library Advisory Board
10/13/2022	6:30 PM	Committee	Community Oriented Policing Advisory Board
10/25/2022	10:00 AM	Committee	Human Services Advisory Board
11/30/2022	6:00 PM	Committee	Arts Commission
12/14/2022	5:30 PM	Committee	Parks Commission
6/22/2023	6:30 PM	Committee	Planning Commission
7/6/2023	5:30 PM	Committee	Equity and Social Justice Commission
9/28/2023	6:30 PM	Committee	Planning Commission
10/20/2022	-	CBO	SeaTac Tukwila Community Coalition
11/10/2022	-	CBO	Rotary
12/2/2022	-	CBO	STCC Community Leaders

12/8/2022	-	CBO	Black Student Union at Foster High
7/27/2022	8:00 - 11:00 PM	General Public	See You in the Park @ TCC (movie)
8/2/2022	5:00 - 8:00 PM	General Public	National Night Out
8/3/2022	4:00 - 7:00 PM	General Public	Tukwila Farmers Market
8/10/2022	6:00 - 8:00 PM	General Public	See You in the Park @ Riverton (Park-A-Lympics)
8/10/2022	4:00 - 7:00 PM	General Public	Tukwila Farmers Market
8/17/2022	4:00 - 7:00 PM	General Public	Tukwila Farmers Market
8/24/2022	6:00 - 8:00 PM	General Public	See You in the Park @ Crestview (Bark in the Park)
8/24/2022	4:00 - 7:00 PM	General Public	Tukwila Farmers Market
8/31/2022	4:00 - 7:00 PM	General Public	Tukwila Farmers Market
10/5/2022	4:00 - 7:00 PM	General Public	Tukwila Farmers Market
10/12/2022	4:00 - 7:00 PM	General Public	Tukwila Farmers Market
12/13/2022	-	General Public	Saar's Supersaver Grocery Store
-	-	General Public	Tukwila Pantry
-	-	General Public	TCC Spraypark

Online Interactive Map Comments & Pin Locations (Last Accessed July 17, 2023)

Exhibit X. Interactive Survey Comments Map



Sources: ESRI 2023; City of Tukwila, 2022; Community Attributes, Inc., 2023.

1. Great to have a supermarket in Tukwila
2. Alliance Residential plans to build new apartments on this corner.

3. The bus stop needs a bus shelter for customers to wait for the bus.
4. Utilize the river as an amenity for businesses and residents throughout Southcenter. This will attract people to establish businesses and to live in Tukwila. It is well known that employers seek out attractive locations to set up business in order to attract their workforce. Enhance trail connections, water access, open space, floodplain and habitat; include an 'art walk' and interpretive signage about habitat, culture and history.
5. Need pedestrian cross walks at East Marginal and 40th Ave S intersection, and at west access into Riverton Park
6. The airport is an asset that brings visitors to our region.
7. Would love to see a large lounge-style cafe in the Southcenter area! Our only coffee shops outside the mall is Starbucks.
8. It is unclear where appropriate parking is along this stretch of road. Having the curb painted to delineate that would be very helpful. Also, there has been an abandoned car sitting there for over three weeks and no one will do anything about it.
9. Very dangerous intersection. Needs to have either three way stop or traffic light installed. Not safe for the dozens of pedestrians that walk the area.
10. 160th is subject to excessive speeding. The speed bumps do not make any impact on people's speed. Dangerous for the neighborhood which is full of walkers and young children.
11. City should purchase this land, as it is attached to the park.
12. Improvements on the upper park connecting to the lower park should be made ADA, it is impossible to get down to the lower park with a stroller or if a person were in need of a modified walking situation. The street is too steep and requires you to navigate very dangerous intersections.
13. Very dangerous intersection - three way stop or traffic light needs to be placed. Not safe for drivers or pedestrians.
14. Community Garden would be amazing here.
15. Would be great to add lighting to the park.
16. Abandoned home - good location for park, community garden, small coffee house.

Focus Group Questions

The following questions formed the basis of focus group topics of discussion.

Economic Diversification Focus Group

1. What assets does Tukwila offer to prospective businesses, and which industries have historically seen these as most advantageous?
2. Which industries that have not traditionally landed in Tukwila, but which are (or will be) present in the region, might also see value in these assets?
3. What specific things can the City of Tukwila do to attract these and other businesses?

Identity, Marketing, Promotion and Image Focus Group

1. What is Tukwila currently known for throughout the region? How do perceptions of Tukwila vary across audiences?
2. Which of Tukwila's best qualities are least well known throughout the region?
3. How can Tukwila improve its image and level-up its marketing and promotion efforts?

Retail, Dining and Entertainment Focus Group

1. What are the biggest assets and attractions in Tukwila, and are any of them under-leveraged?
2. Which demographic segments of the regional market would find a lot to do in Tukwila? Which wouldn't?
3. What gaps exist in Tukwila's current offerings? Are there specific facilities or events that could make Tukwila a more attractive destination?
4. What specific investments, policy changes, etc. could the City of Tukwila make to improve its offerings across retail, dining and entertainment?

Vibrant, Thriving Community and Quality of Life Focus Group

1. What are the big 1- and 3-year priorities for your department? How do those relate to economic development for Tukwila?
2. What challenges, concerns or requests do you hear most often from Tukwila residents, employees, or business owners?
3. What are the biggest constraints you have in achieving your department's goals?
4. What are some creative ideas you or your staff have had for fostering greater quality of life in Tukwila?

Workforce Development and Access to Opportunity Focus Group

1. Who are Tukwila's primary education, workforce development, and skills training partners, and what roles do each play?
2. What gaps exist between these partners and their roles?
3. How well do opportunities for education and training align with in demand industries and occupations in Tukwila and south King County?
4. What career pathways are of interest and are there adequate opportunities for the requisite education and training?

Small Business and Entrepreneurship Focus Group

1. From your perspective, what are the biggest economic issues facing you, your business, or your sector now? Did that change during the pandemic?
2. What was the biggest challenge you had in starting your business? Was it technical support, access to capital, marketing, finding staff, etc.?
3. What is the city doing well to support small businesses and entrepreneurship?
4. What services, support, or other actions do you wish the city would undertake to support small businesses and entrepreneurship?

