



Verna Seal Urbanist Questionnaire 2025

Tukwila City Council, Position 1

What are your top three priorities to achieve in your term?

Sustainable budget, housing, and economic development

How will you boost housing options, particularly for families of all incomes to live where they work? How will you engage the public for new shelters, transitional housing, emergency housing, permanent supportive housing? How do you weigh community objections with the housing goals for your jurisdiction, while encouraging engagement from neighbors?

Tukwila's Comprehensive Plan is essential for guiding the city's growth, but there are several areas where it can be improved to better serve our community. During my tenure, I would advocate for the plan to more deeply prioritize affordable housing, sustainability, and equity.

To address the ongoing housing crisis, I would push for policies that promote affordable and workforce housing development. This includes expanding inclusive zoning, offering density bonuses, and incentivizing developers to build affordable units. We must also protect existing affordable housing and support housing stability programs to prevent displacement.

Sustainability is another key area for improvement. I would push for more ambitious goals for green spaces, climate resilience, and sustainable transportation options, including expanding public transit and bike infrastructure. Encouraging green



building practices and energy efficiency in new developments should be integral to the plan.

Equity must be at the heart of Tukwila's growth. I will advocate for policies that ensure vulnerable communities, including low-income residents, immigrants, and communities of color, are engaged in decision-making processes. The Comprehensive Plan should set measurable goals for economic inclusion, reduce displacement risks, and create a more just and equitable city.

By focusing on these priorities, we can shape a Tukwila that is affordable, sustainable, and inclusive for all residents.

Do you support adding progressive revenue sources? Which ones would you support to fund your priorities? Or what cuts would you make to balance budgets facing increasing strain under Trump?

To ensure Tukwila can continue delivering essential services and meet the needs of our diverse, growing community, I support exploring progressive revenue sources, especially given the uncertainty of federal funding. I believe it's important to balance funding needs without burdening low-income residents. Some options I would explore include:

Transportation Benefit Districts with equitable fee structures to support public transit and infrastructure improvements.

Public-private partnerships to bring in outside investments for key projects, such as affordable housing, transportation, and sustainability.



Actively seeking state and regional grants to offset potential losses from federal funding cuts.

If budget cuts become unavoidable, I will prioritize protecting core services that directly support vulnerable populations, like housing assistance, public health, and emergency services. My approach will start with identifying administrative efficiencies, delaying non-essential capital projects, and phasing out outdated programs before considering cuts to services that directly impact the well-being of our community.

Throughout this process, I will ensure transparency, encourage public input, and uphold a strong focus on equity to ensure that decisions reflect the needs of all Tukwila residents, particularly those most at risk.

What do you think is the most important strategy your jurisdiction can pursue to limit cost increases and make the region affordable to live in? How would you go about implementing that strategy?

As a Tukwila City Council member, I believe the most effective strategy to limit cost increases and improve affordability is to expand access to diverse and affordable housing options. Housing is often the largest expense for families, and by increasing the supply of affordable and workforce housing, we can help stabilize costs and reduce transportation burdens, allowing residents to live closer to their workplaces.

To achieve this, I would support zoning and land use reforms that allow for a wider variety of housing types, including duplexes, townhomes, and mixed-use developments in appropriate areas. I would also advocate for incentives for developers to build affordable units and work to preserve existing affordable



housing to prevent displacement. Collaboration with regional partners, nonprofits, and housing agencies will be crucial to finance and develop these projects.

Community engagement will be a priority to ensure residents are involved in decisions about where and how new housing is built. Affordability must also be addressed holistically, with investments in transit, childcare, and job access to create a more livable and economically inclusive Tukwila. By focusing on these strategies, we can create a city where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Traffic deaths are rising across Washington state, with pedestrians composing an increasing share statewide. What is your approach to making our streets safer for all users?

Traffic safety is a crucial issue, particularly as pedestrian fatalities continue to rise across Washington. In Tukwila, making our streets safer for all users—pedestrians, cyclists, drivers, and transit riders—is a top priority. I fully support the city's recently completed 2025 Local Road Safety Plan, adopted by the City Council in April 2025. This data-driven, equity-focused plan aims to reduce traffic-related injuries and fatalities, prioritizing the safety of vulnerable road users. My approach aligns with the plan's key strategies, including improving street lighting, enhancing crosswalk visibility, and calming traffic in high-risk areas. I will advocate for prioritizing infrastructure improvements in neighborhoods with higher pedestrian and cyclist activity, ensuring these areas receive the attention they need. I also support expanding Safe Routes to School programs to make it safer for children to walk or bike to school. Community engagement will be vital in identifying high-risk locations and ensuring solutions are tailored to the needs of residents. By investing in safer street design, supporting traffic safety enforcement, and promoting education efforts, we can reduce accidents and fatalities. Together, we can work toward a future where our roads are safe for everyone, regardless of how they travel.



What is your approach to improving public safety over the next five years? How will you actualize it?

As a Tukwila City Council member, my progressive approach to public safety prioritizes prevention, community trust, and equitable investment. Public safety is not just about policing—it's about ensuring all residents feel safe in their homes, neighborhoods, and public spaces through responsive services and community-centered support. Over the next five years, I will advocate for a comprehensive public safety strategy that includes expanding mental health crisis response teams to reduce the need for police involvement in non-violent situations. I will push for increased investment in youth programs, violence prevention, and after-school activities to address the root causes of crime and provide positive alternatives. I will support community policing and ensure officers are well-trained in de-escalation, anti-bias practices, and culturally responsive service to strengthen trust between law enforcement and the community. Additionally, I will work to improve lighting, sidewalks, and street design in neighborhoods, using environmental design to increase safety and reduce crime. My approach will prioritize equitable resource allocation and encourage data-driven solutions, ensuring that every community has the support it needs. By combining investments in both safety and social services, we can build a safer, more resilient Tukwila for all.

How have federal funding cuts impacted your jurisdiction and how do you plan to address those impacts?

Federal funding cuts have had a significant impact on Tukwila, particularly in areas supporting our most vulnerable residents, including affordable housing, transportation, public health, and immigrant services. These reductions have strained the city's ability to maintain and expand critical programs, forcing us to stretch limited resources at a time when community needs are growing.



To address these challenges, I will focus on diversifying our revenue sources and strengthening partnerships. This includes actively pursuing state and regional grants, leveraging public-private partnerships, and exploring progressive local funding options such as Transportation Benefit Districts and targeted development fees. I will also advocate for budget priorities that protect essential services, ensuring funding decisions are informed by equity and community input.

Moreover, I will collaborate with regional coalitions and advocacy groups to push back against harmful federal policies and advocate for the restoration of funding to critical programs. Tukwila deserves stable, fair funding to meet the needs of our residents and build a more inclusive, sustainable future. Through strategic partnerships and a focus on equity, we can continue to strengthen our community, even in the face of federal funding uncertainty.

What are your views on the SeaTac Sustainable Airport Master Plan and how will it impact your jurisdiction? What plans do you have to address the impacts of the airport on your community?

As a Tukwila City Council member with strong progressive values, I believe the SeaTac Sustainable Airport Master Plan must be carefully reviewed through the lens of environmental justice, community health, and equitable development. While airport growth brings economic opportunities, it also brings significant impacts—especially to neighboring communities like Tukwila, which already experience high levels of air and noise pollution, traffic congestion, and environmental stress.

I am deeply concerned about how increased air traffic and expanded airport operations could worsen health disparities and quality of life for Tukwila residents,



particularly those in lower-income and immigrant communities who are often most affected and least heard in these decisions.

To address these impacts, I will advocate for:

Stronger noise and air pollution mitigation efforts, including better soundproofing for homes and schools.

Transparent, inclusive community engagement in all planning stages.

Investments in green infrastructure and transit improvements to offset environmental damage.

Partnerships with regional and state agencies to hold the Port of Seattle accountable for sustainable, equitable growth.

Tukwila deserves to benefit from regional development—not bear the burdens. I will continue to fight for policies that prioritize public health, environmental sustainability, and community voice in shaping our future.

King County has good policies and codes designed to protect agricultural, forest and rural lands, including our natural areas, waterways, and small rural communities. However, these policies and codes are too often not upheld and enforced. How will you ensure that rural lands are protected, and that violators are subject to enforcement?

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expansion brings economic opportunities, it also impacts neighboring communities like Tukwila, which already face high levels of air and noise pollution, traffic congestion, and environmental strain. I am particularly concerned about how increased air traffic and expanded airport operations could worsen health disparities and reduce quality of life for Tukwila residents, especially in low-income and immigrant communities that are often the most affected and least represented in decision-making processes. To address these challenges, I will advocate for: Stronger noise and air pollution mitigation, such as improved soundproofing for homes and schools. Transparent, inclusive community engagement throughout the planning process. Investments in green infrastructure and transit to offset environmental damage. Partnerships with regional and state agencies to hold the Port of Seattle accountable for ensuring sustainable, equitable growth. Tukwila deserves to benefit from regional development, not bear its burdens. I will continue fighting for policies that prioritize public health, environmental sustainability, and community input in shaping our shared future.

Do you support camping bans or sweeps? If elected, how would you adapt or change current law/policies to protect and support our neighbors?

I firmly believe that banning camping and conducting sweeps do not address the root causes of homelessness. These measures only create temporary, harmful disruptions for those in need. Instead, I advocate for compassionate, supportive, and long-term solutions to help our unhoused neighbors.

First, I will push for expanding access to shelter and transitional housing, ensuring safe, dignified spaces are available with necessary services like mental health support, addiction treatment, and job training. This includes creating more safe parking areas and safe camping zones, equipped with adequate resources for those unsheltered.



I also support enhancing outreach programs by increasing funding for mobile support teams—social workers, medical professionals, and housing navigators who can provide direct services to individuals living outside and help them transition into stable housing.

Additionally, I will advocate for policies that prioritize housing-first approaches, ensuring that individuals are provided housing before being asked to meet other conditions like sobriety or employment.

Finally, I will work closely with local nonprofits, the King County Regional Homelessness Authority, and other regional partners to ensure collaboration and effective resource use. Together, we can offer our neighbors the help and support they need, rather than criminalizing their struggles.

In what ways could your city's comprehensive plan go further, and what would you push for to improve it during your tenure?

Tukwila's Comprehensive Plan is a key guide for the city's growth, but I believe it can better address the evolving needs of our community, particularly in affordable housing, sustainability, and equity.

First, I would advocate for stronger commitments to affordable housing. The plan should prioritize the creation of more affordable and workforce housing options through strategies like inclusive zoning, density bonuses, and developer incentives. Preserving existing affordable housing and investing in housing stability programs must also be key priorities.



Second, the plan should integrate environmental sustainability more robustly. I would push for ambitious goals around green spaces, climate resilience, and sustainable transportation options—expanding public transit and bike lanes. We should incorporate green infrastructure and strengthen energy efficiency standards for new developments to promote a sustainable future as Tukwila grows.

Finally, I would ensure greater community engagement in the planning process, particularly with vulnerable populations like low-income residents, immigrants, and people of color. The plan should include measurable goals for addressing displacement risks and promoting economic inclusion.

By prioritizing affordability, sustainability, and equity, we can ensure that Tukwila remains a livable, inclusive, and resilient city for all residents.