



City of Tacoma  
Planning and Development Services

**Agenda Item  
D-3**

**To:** Planning Commission  
**From:** Stephen Atkinson, Associate Planner, Planning Services Division  
**Subject:** **Land Use Designations – Phase 2**  
**Meeting Date:** November 5, 2014  
**Memo Date:** October 29, 2014

In 2013, the Planning Commission recommended and the City Council approved, Phase 1 of an overhaul of the City's land use designations, establishing a framework to shift from a development "intensity" concept to a scheme based on more traditional and understandable land use categories. The proposed new land use designation framework will provide the ability for policy-makers and the community to clearly express the overarching goals and intended character for the various areas while maintaining some of the important flexibility that the existing intensity scheme provides.

The second phase, currently in process, involves complete incorporation of the new framework into the Comprehensive Plan. This will necessitate a comprehensive review of the existing and proposed land use patterns against the new designation framework, as well as substantial re-designation of properties in the City based on the new framework. Based on comments and questions received at the discussion on August 20, 2014, on November 5, it is staff's intent to provide the Commission with a "big picture" presentation on the following topics:

1. Purpose and use of the Generalized Land Use Map
2. Corresponding zoning and maintaining use flexibility
3. General principles for applying the new designation system
4. Overview of the scope of changes being considered

Attached is an excerpt from the Growth Strategy and Development Concept Element of the Comprehensive Plan which includes the Generalized Land Use Map, a chart depicting the relationship between the intensity designations, designated mixed-use and manufacturing/industrial centers and zoning classifications, as well as the framework for applying the new designation classifications. A zoning reference guide may be found at [http://cms.cityoftacoma.org/Planning/Zoning\\_booklet\\_FINAL.pdf](http://cms.cityoftacoma.org/Planning/Zoning_booklet_FINAL.pdf), which provides a general overview of each of the City's zoning districts. If you have any questions, please contact me at (253) 591-5531 or [satkinson@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:satkinson@cityoftacoma.org).

Attachement

c. Peter Huffman, Director



## Section VIII – Shoreline

The city's shoreline areas provide great social, ecological, recreational, cultural, economic and aesthetic value, both at the local and regional level. It is the community's intent to use the full potential of these areas in a manner that is both ordered and diversified, supports the community's ability to enjoy the water and the unique setting it creates, and which integrates water and shoreline uses while achieving a net gain of ecological functions. In addition, these areas are intended to balance the overarching goals outlined in the State Shoreline Management Act:

- To ensure an adequate land supply for water-dependent uses;
- To promote and enhance the public's opportunities to access and enjoy the water; and
- To protect and preserve natural resources.

This designation includes areas that support deepwater port and industrial sites, habitat for a variety of fish and wildlife, archaeological and historical sites, open space, recreation and community activities, and some commercial and residential development. Recognizing the limited nature of this important resource, use and development of the shoreline areas must be carefully planned and regulated to ensure that these values are maintained over time.

The Shoreline Master Program has been developed to provide additional and more detailed policy direction regarding the city's shoreline areas, along with specific zoning and development standards. The Shoreline Master Program utilizes a system of "environment designations" which further guide the character, intensity and use of individual shoreline segments. These classifications include Natural, Shoreline Residential, Urban Conservancy, High Intensity, Aquatic, and Downtown Waterfront and are based on the existing development patterns, natural capabilities and goals and aspirations of the community for its shoreline areas.

## Section IX – Generalized Land Use Plan Map

The *Generalized Land Use Plan Map* applies the *Concentrations and Corridors – Designated Centers* concept and its components. The land use intensity and centers configuration shown would allow for a population of about 300,000 to 350,000, if fully developed. This estimate is based on past trends, future projections, and certain assumptions and is not an absolute number.

The *Generalized Land Use Plan Map* illustrates the City's intended future land use pattern through the geographic distribution of three levels of land use intensities, the designation of mixed-use and manufacturing/industrial centers, as well as shoreline and single-family detached designations. This illustrated form was a result of analysis of the development concept, existing land use and zoning, development trends, anticipated land use needs and desirable growth and development goals. Various types of zoning and land use may be permitted within each of the intensity areas. The focus on intensities of land use supports the belief that perceived nuisances, impacts and other concerns are to a significant degree a product of the intensity of land use rather than the type of land use. The *Generalized Land Use Plan Map* is not a land use map in the normal sense in that it does not differentiate between the various uses of land, but rather depicts the intended future development pattern through the geographic distribution of three levels of land use intensities. A fourth level for established single-family areas also is depicted on the map for areas that are predominately developed with single-family residences. The map is to be used in conjunction with the adopted policies of the Comprehensive Plan for any land use decision.

The designation and boundaries of the land use intensity areas, shoreline designation, and the designations and boundaries for the mixed-use and manufacturing/industrial centers are established by adoption of the Comprehensive Plan and amendments thereof. The *Generalized Land Use Plan Map* is the official land use map of the City, and is maintained as such by the Community and Economic

Development Department in an electronic format to facilitate its accurate use and implementation. The *Generalized Land Use Plan Map* depicted in this document, on a citywide basis and by Neighborhood Council area, is generated from the official, *Generalized Land Use Plan Map* electronic map file.

The *Generalized Land Use Plan Map* is intended to provide a firm basis for land use and zoning decisions. Policies should be considered and interpreted in accordance with the geographic characteristics of the mapped areas.

Areas of the city should develop and redevelop in accordance with the intensity configuration depicted on the *Map*. Generalized intensities have also been developed for Tacoma's urban growth areas. These designations are based on current information and reflect anticipated future patterns of development. However, as more detailed planning efforts take place, these urban growth area intensities may be modified. Land use intensities and a generalized intent for the City's urban growth area can be found in the Land Use chapter of this plan.

Development both in and out of the city should be consistent with these designations; however, in some instances lower intensity developments may occur in higher intensity areas. Some supporting reasons for such lower intensity development include physical site limitations, surrounding area characteristics, environmental constraints and prematurity of higher intensity development.

The boundaries of the intensity areas were located on the map based upon existing and proposed land use and zoning patterns. These boundaries often correspond with readily identifiable features such as freeways, streets, alleys, topographic breaks, land use changes, and other physical features normally associated with land use separation. Where no readily identifiable feature was available, a determination was made to locate the boundary edge to provide a logical separation and transition of intensity areas. The boundary edge could coincide with the boundary of a zoning classification, the pattern of adjacent development or the extension of an imaginary line representing the logical and desired pattern of future development.

It is recognized that some areas of the city may not be zoned to support the intensity levels shown on the map. Areas that may need to be rezoned will undergo separate study to determine the appropriate zone changes. The Planning Commission or City Council will normally initiate these studies with the actual zone changes accomplished by established area-wide rezoning procedures. Private property owners or developers also may initiate rezoning requests. Such requests must be consistent with the *Generalized Land Use Plan Map* and adopted policies of the Comprehensive Plan and will be subject to appropriate development controls as determined in established site specific rezoning procedures.

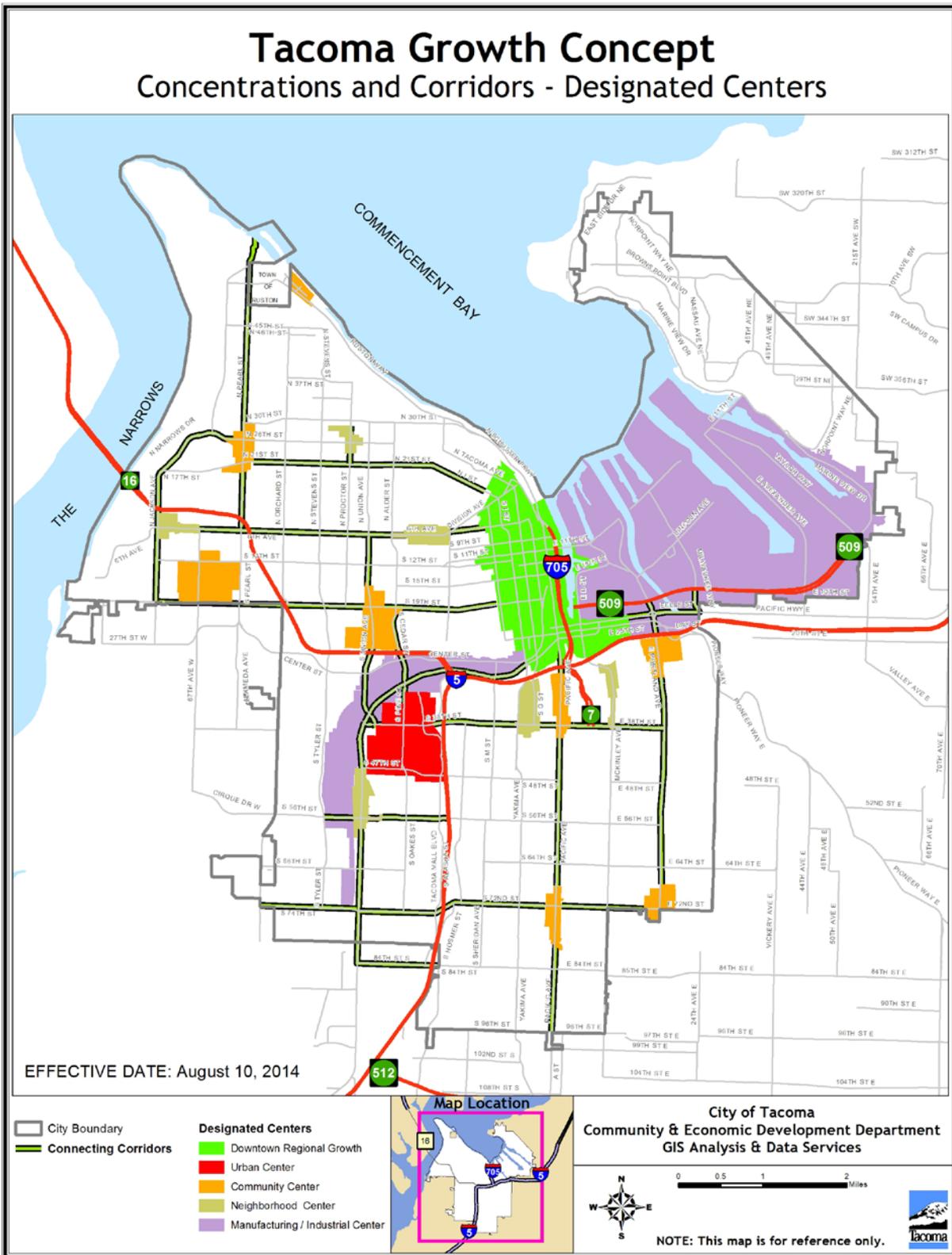
The following chart depicts the relationship between intensity designations, designated mixed-use and manufacturing/industrial centers and zoning classifications. Some zoning classifications may be appropriate in more than one intensity designation.

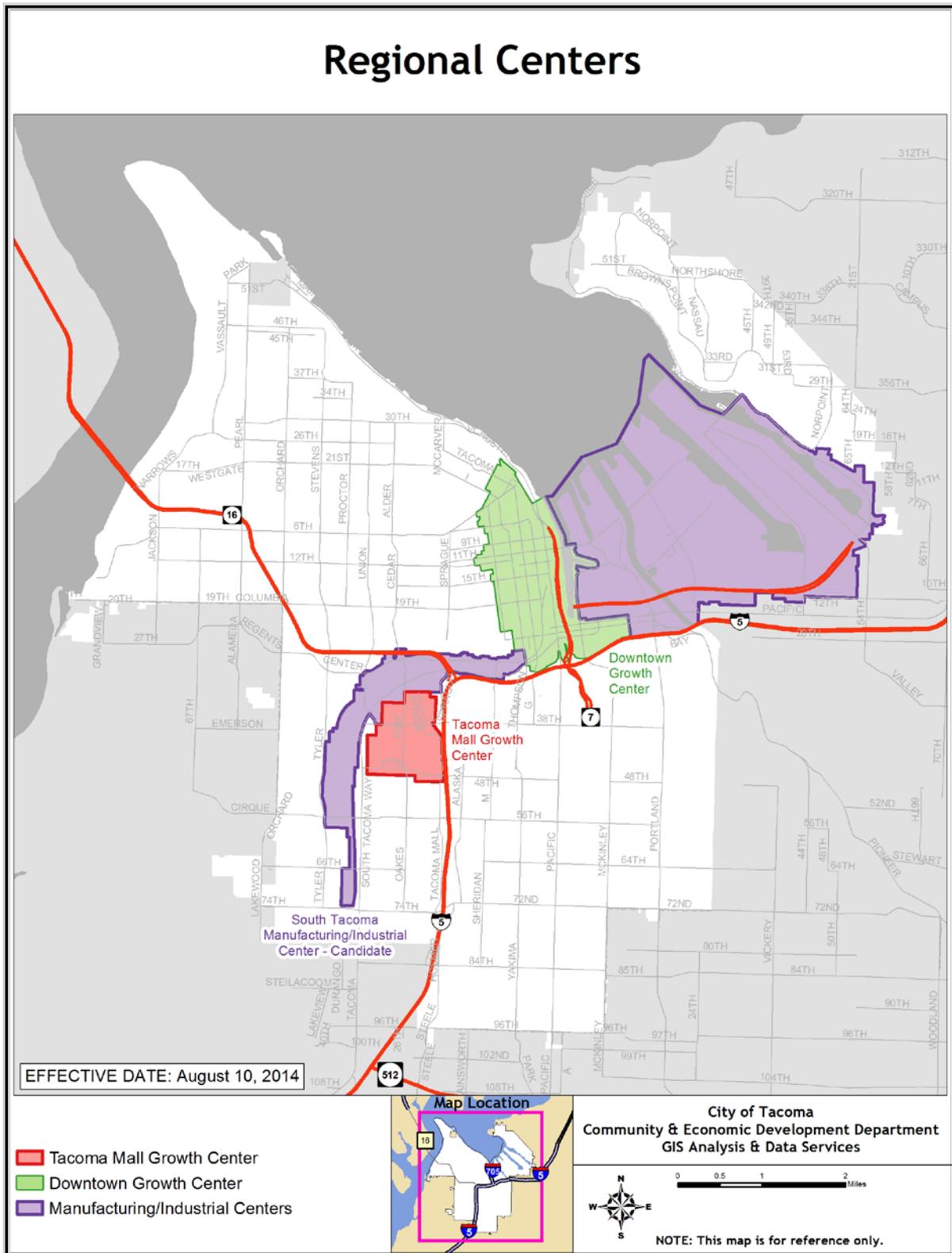
(Chart shown on next page)

**Relationship of Comprehensive Plan Designations and Zoning Classifications**

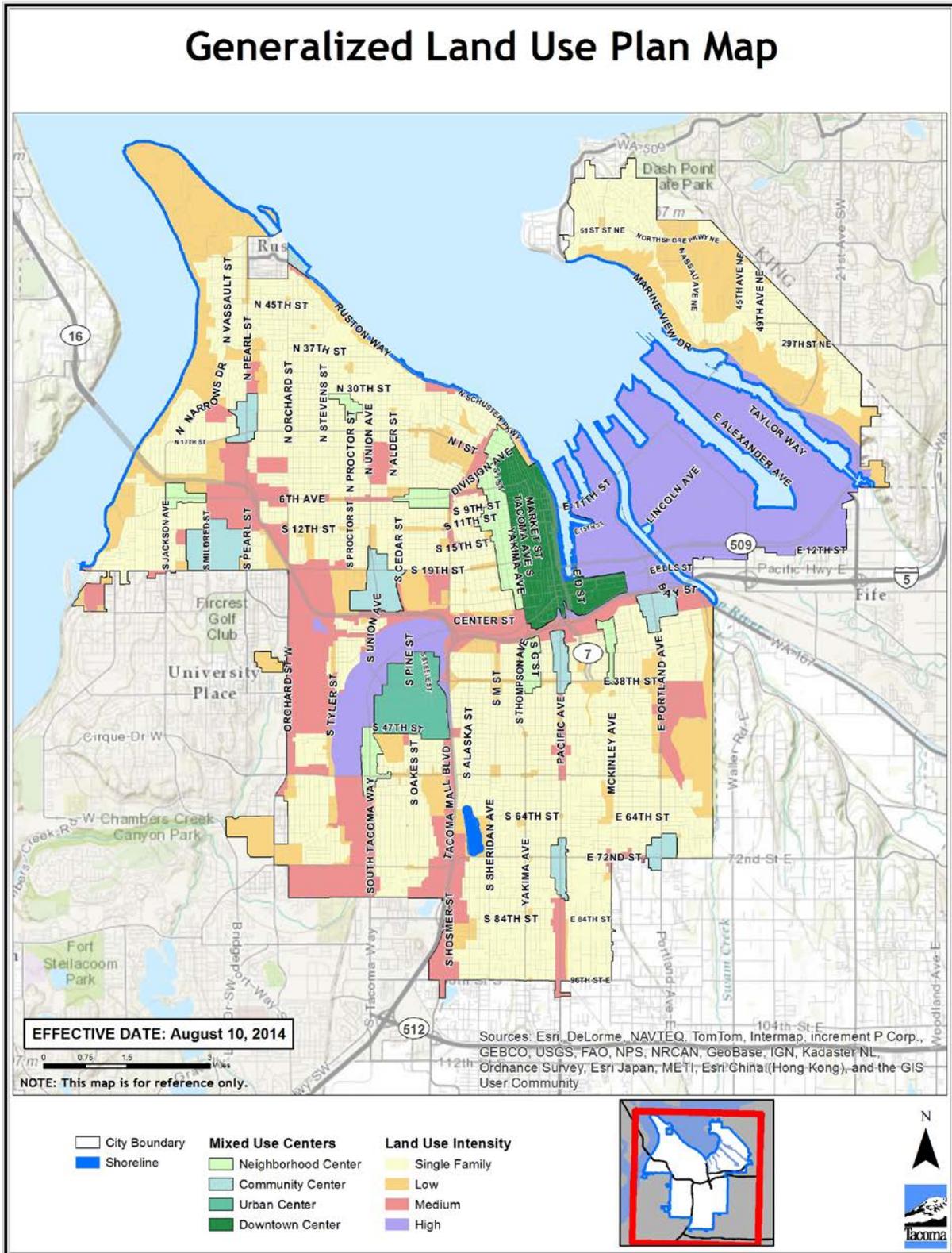
<b>Comprehensive Plan Designations</b>	<b>Typical Zoning Classifications*</b>	
High Intensity	R-5 HM	Multiple Family Dwelling District Hospital Medical District
Medium Intensity	R-4L R-4 C-2 PDB M-1 M-2	Low-Density Multiple Family Dwelling District Multiple Family Dwelling District General Community Commercial District Planned Development Business District Light Industrial District Heavy Industrial District
Low Intensity	R-3 R-4L HMR-SRD T C-1	Two Family Dwelling District Low-Density Multiple Family Dwelling District Historic Mixed Residential District Transitional District General Neighborhood Commercial District
Single Family Detached Housing Area	R-1 R-2 R-2SRD	One-Family Dwelling District One-Family Dwelling District Residential Special Review District
Downtown Mixed-Use Center	DR DMU WR DCC UCX-TD	Downtown Residential Downtown Mixed-Use Warehouse Residential Downtown Commercial Core Urban Center Mixed-Use District – Tacoma Dome
Urban Mixed-Use Center	UCX RCX URX	Urban Center Mixed-Use District Residential Commercial Mixed-Use District Urban Residential Mixed-Use District
Community Mixed-Use Center	CCX RCX HMX URX	Community Commercial Mixed-Use District Residential Commercial Mixed-Use District Hospital Medical Mixed-Use District Urban Residential Mixed-Use District
Neighborhood Mixed-Use Center	NCX RCX CIX HMX URX NRX	Neighborhood Commercial Mixed-Use District Residential Commercial Mixed-Use District Commercial Industrial Mixed-Use District Hospital Medical Mixed-Use District Urban Residential Mixed-Use District Neighborhood Residential Mixed-Use District
Manufacturing / Industrial Center	PMI M-2 M-1	Port Maritime and Industrial District Heavy Industrial District Light Industrial District
Shoreline	S1 – S14	Shoreline Zoning Districts

\* This chart does not include overlay zoning districts. Other zoning classifications may be present in the designated areas due to a number of factors including non-conforming use rights.





# Generalized Land Use Plan Map



Plot Date: 7/23/2014

File Name: \\Geobase-win\CED\GADS\R2014\R298\GLUP.mxd

Created By: CEDD, GIS ANALYSIS & DATA SERVICES

## Appendix

### Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designation Framework

The City has embarked on a multi-phase, multi-year project intended to revise and update the Comprehensive Plan's land use designation approach, from the *Land Use Intensities* system to a more simplified and easily understood classification system.

The first phase has been accomplished as part of the 2013 Annual Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan adopted by the City Council on June 25, 2013, per Ordinance No. 28158.

This first phase amended the Growth Strategy and Development Concept Element of the Comprehensive Plan by:

1. Creating separate land use designations for the four different types of mixed-use centers (neighborhood, community, urban and downtown);
2. Adding a new land use designation for Shoreline areas;
3. Modifying the land use designation for properties within the mixed-use centers and shoreline areas based on these new designations (effectively removing the "underlying" intensity designations in these areas, recognizing the more detailed and specific policy guidance already provided for the shoreline areas and mixed-use centers); and
4. Creating a new land use designation framework to guide subsequent phases of the project, including a comprehensive review of the land use patterns and substantial redesignation of properties in the City. The new Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designation Framework includes the following designations:
  - Single-Family Residential
  - Multi-Family (low-density)
  - Multi-Family (high-density)
  - Neighborhood Commercial
  - General Commercial
  - Downtown Mixed-Use Center
  - Urban Mixed-Use Center
  - Community Mixed-Use Center
  - Neighborhood Mixed-Use Center
  - Light Industrial
  - Heavy Industrial
  - Parks and Open Space
  - Shoreline

The following chart outlines the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designation Framework, along with the general intent statement for each of the designations and the corresponding zoning classifications that would commonly fit within each plan designation.

Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designations	Corresponding Zoning
<p><b>Single Family Residential</b></p> <p>Qualities associated with single-family residential neighborhoods that are desirable include: low noise levels, limited traffic, large setbacks, private yards, small scale buildings, and low-density development. Much of the city's land is strongly committed to single-family development and has been determined to be deserving of special protection from incompatible land uses. Community facilities, such as parks, schools, day cares, and religious facilities are also desirable components of single-family neighborhoods. Limited allowances for other types of residential development are also provided with additional review to ensure compatibility with the desired, overarching single-family character.</p>	<p><b>R-1</b> Single-Family Dwelling District  <b>R-2</b> Single-Family Dwelling District  <b>R-2SRD</b> Residential Special Review District</p>
<p><b>Multi-Family (low-density)</b></p> <p>This district enjoys many of the same qualities as single-family neighborhoods such as low traffic volumes and noise, larger setbacks, and small-scale development, while allowing for multi-family uses and increased density (generally up to 15 dwelling units/net acre) along with community facilities and institutions. The Multi-Family (low-density) district can often act as a buffer between the single-family designation and the greater density and higher intensity uses that can be found in the Multi-Family (high density designation) or commercial or mixed-use designations.</p>	<p><b>R-3</b> Two-Family Dwelling District  <b>R-4L</b> Low-Density Multiple-Family Dwelling District  <b>HMR-SRD</b> Historic Mixed Residential Special Review District</p>
<p><b>Multi-Family (high-density)</b></p> <p>This designation allows for a wide range of residential housing types at medium and higher density levels, along with community facilities and institutions, and some limited commercial uses and mixed-use buildings. It is characterized by taller buildings, higher traffic volumes, reduced setbacks, limited private yard space, and greater noise levels. These areas are generally found in the central city and along major transportation corridors where there is increased access to public transportation and to employment centers.</p>	<p><b>R-4</b> Multiple-Family Dwelling District  <b>R-5</b> Multiple-Family Dwelling District</p>
<p><b>Neighborhood Commercial</b></p> <p>This designation is characterized primarily by small-scale neighborhood businesses with some residential and institutional uses. Uses within these areas have low to moderate traffic generation, shorter operating hours, smaller buildings and sites, and less signage than general commercial or mixed-use areas. There is a greater emphasis on small businesses and development that is compatible with nearby, lower intensity residential areas.</p>	<p><b>C-1</b> General Neighborhood Commercial District  <b>T</b> Transitional District</p>

Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designations	Corresponding Zoning
<p><b>General Commercial</b></p> <p>This designation encompasses areas for medium to high intensity commercial uses which serves a large community base with a broad range of larger scale uses. These areas also allow for a wide variety of residential development, community facilities, institutional uses, and some limited production and storage uses. These areas are generally located along major transportation corridors, often with reasonably direct access to a highway. This designation is characterized by larger-scale buildings, longer operating hours, and moderate to high traffic generation.</p>	<p><b>PDB</b> Planned Development Business District</p> <p><b>HM</b> Hospital Medical District</p> <p><b>C-2</b> General Community Commercial District</p>
<p><b>Downtown Mixed-Use Center</b></p> <p>The downtown center is the highest concentration of urban growth found anywhere in the city. It is the focal point for the city, the center of government, cultural, office, financial, transportation and other activities. This variety of day and night activities attracts visitors from throughout the city and region. The interstate freeway, major arterials, provides access and the center has both local and regional transit connections. Larger, often historic, buildings fronting on the sidewalk characterize the area. Pedestrian orientation is high. Parking is found along the street and within structures.</p>	<p><b>DR</b> Downtown Residential District</p> <p><b>DMU</b> Downtown Mixed-Use District</p> <p><b>WR</b> Warehouse/Residential District</p> <p><b>DCC</b> Downtown Commercial Core District</p> <p><b>UCX-TD</b> Downtown Mixed-Use District</p>
<p><b>Urban Mixed- Use Center</b></p> <p>The urban center is a highly dense self-sufficient concentration of urban development. Buildings can range from one to twelve stories and activity is greater than in most areas of the city. It is an area of regional attraction and a focus for both the local and regional transit systems. Many major city arterials connect to the urban center and nearby freeway access is present. Parking is provided both in surface lots and within structures. Internal streets and pathways provide connections among the developments within the center.</p>	<p><b>UCX</b> Urban Center Mixed-Use District</p> <p><b>RCX</b> Residential Commercial Mixed-Use District</p> <p><b>URX</b> Urban Residential Mixed-Use District</p>
<p><b>Community Mixed- Use Center</b></p> <p>The community center is a concentration of commercial and/or institutional development that serves many nearby neighborhoods and generally includes a unique attraction that draws people from throughout the city. Some residential development may already be present, and there is a goal to have more residential development. It is directly accessible by arterials and local transit. Pedestrian accessibility is important within the center, but because of its focus on larger scale commercial development, the community center continues to provide for automobile parking, preferably within structures.</p>	<p><b>CCX</b> Community Commercial Mixed-Use District</p> <p><b>RCX</b> Residential Commercial Mixed-Use District</p> <p><b>HMX</b> Hospital Medical Mixed-Use District</p> <p><b>URX</b> Urban Residential Mixed-Use District</p>

Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designations	Corresponding Zoning
<p><b>Neighborhood Mixed- Use Center</b></p> <p>The neighborhood center is a concentrated mix of small- to medium-scale development that serves the daily needs of center residents, the immediate neighborhood, and areas beyond. Development contains a mix of residential and commercial uses, and the majority of parking is provided within structures. Buildings are generally up to six stories along the commercial corridors, up to three stories at the periphery of the centers near single-family districts, and up to four stories in areas between the core and the periphery. They are designed with a compatible character to adjacent residential neighborhoods. The design of the neighborhood center encourages pedestrians and bicyclists and its location on a major arterial makes it a convenient and frequent stop for local transit. The regional transit network also may directly serve some neighborhood centers.</p>	<p><b>NCX</b> Neighborhood Commercial Mixed-Use District</p> <p><b>RCX</b> Residential Commercial Mixed-Use District</p> <p><b>CIX</b> Commercial Industrial Mixed-Use District</p> <p><b>HMX</b> Hospital Medical Mixed-Use District</p> <p><b>URX</b> Urban Residential Mixed-Use District</p> <p><b>NRX</b> Neighborhood Residential Mixed-Use District</p>
<p><b>Light Industrial</b></p> <p>This designation allow for a variety of industrial uses that are moderate in scale and impact, with lower noise, odors and traffic generation than heavy industrial uses. This designation may include various types of light manufacturing and warehousing and newer, clean and high-tech industries, along with commercial and some limited residential uses. These areas are often utilized as a buffer or transition between heavy industrial areas and less intensive commercial and/or residential areas.</p>	<p><b>M-1</b> Light Industrial District</p>
<p><b>Heavy Industrial</b></p> <p>This designation is characterized by higher levels of noise and odors, large-scale production, large buildings and sites, extended operating hours, and heavy truck traffic. This designation requires access to major transportation corridors, often including heavy-haul truck routes and rail facilities. Commercial and institutional uses are limited and residential uses are generally prohibited.</p>	<p><b>M-2</b> Heavy Industrial District</p> <p><b>PMI</b> Port Maritime &amp; Industrial District</p>

Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designations	Corresponding Zoning
<p><b>Parks and Open Space</b></p> <p>This designation is intended to conserve and enhance open, natural and improved areas valuable for their environmental, recreational, green infrastructure and scenic character and the benefits they provide. The designation encompasses public and private parks and open space lands, with lands set aside for these purposes by the City of Tacoma and the Metropolitan Parks District forming the core of the designation. As more land is placed in conservation status by these agencies as well as other public and private entities, the extent of the designation will be expanded to include them.</p> <p>The designation supports Tacoma’s vision of an integrated parks and open space system that defines and enhances the built and natural environment, supports and nurtures plant and wildlife habitat, enhances and protects trees and the urban forest, preserves the capacity and water quality of the stormwater drainage system, offers recreational opportunities, and provides pedestrian and bicycle connections. Lands within this designation include both natural open space areas and active use parks and recreational areas. Natural open space is intended to be conserved and enhanced through habitat restoration and vegetation management to maximize its environmental and stormwater benefits, along with low-impact public access such as natural area trails and viewpoints, when appropriate. Parks and recreation lands are intended to provide opportunities for active recreation such as playfields and sports facilities, and urban amenities such as plazas, pocket parks and community gardens.</p> <p>Additional, more specific policy direction regarding these types of areas is contained within the Open Space Habitat and Recreation Element.</p>	<p>This designation is appropriate in all zoning classifications.</p>

Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designations	Corresponding Zoning
<p><b>Shoreline</b></p> <p>The city’s shoreline areas provide great social, ecological, recreational, cultural, economic and aesthetic value, both at the local and regional level. It is the community’s intent to use the full potential of these areas in a manner that is both ordered and diversified, supports the community’s ability to enjoy the water and the unique setting it creates, and which integrates water and shoreline uses while achieving a net gain of ecological functions. In addition, these areas are intended to balance the overarching goals outlined in the State Shoreline Management Act:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure an adequate land supply for water-dependent uses;</li> <li>• To promote and enhance the public’s opportunities to access and enjoy the water; and</li> <li>• To protect and preserve natural resources.</li> </ul> <p>This designation includes areas that support deepwater port and industrial sites, habitat for a variety of fish and wildlife, archaeological and historical sites, open space, recreation and community activities, and some commercial and residential development. Recognizing the limited nature of this important resource, use and development of the shoreline areas must be carefully planned and regulated to ensure that these values are maintained over time.</p> <p>The Shoreline Master Program has been developed to provide additional and more detailed policy direction regarding the city’s shoreline areas, along with specific zoning and development standards. The Shoreline Master Program utilizes a system of “environment designations” which further guide the character, intensity and use of individual shoreline segments. These classifications include Natural, Shoreline Residential, Urban Conservancy, High Intensity, Aquatic, and Downtown Waterfront and are based on the existing development patterns, natural capabilities and goals and aspirations of the community for its shoreline areas.</p>	<p><b>S1 – S14</b> Shoreline Zoning Districts</p>