

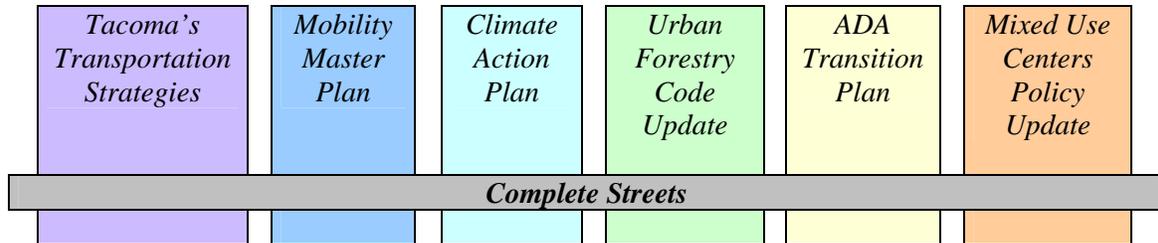
Tacoma Complete Streets Design Guidelines Project

Environment and Public Works Committee – October 14, 2009

Overview

Tacoma's Complete Streets Design Guidelines for Mixed-use Centers and Residential areas are nearing completion. The project team has analyzed public input received on the draft Guidelines, and has developed a list of recommended changes. Staff are seeking concurrence on the changes and direction on our next steps.

Cross-Functional Approach



Process Summary

Internal review and development:

- Project Coordination team: Public Works staff from Traffic, Construction, Environmental Services Divisions, and Planning Division staff; consultant services: AHBL, Inc. and David Evans & Associates
- Full project team: City staff from various departments who work with or utilize public rights-of-way, partner agencies including Pierce Transit and the Tacoma Pierce County Health Department

Public review of drafts (Mixed-use Centers released December 2008, Residential released May 2009):

- Extensive comments were received
- Over 20 public meetings with a broad range of stakeholders, including:
 - 3 Community Workshops*
 - 4 EPW meetings*
 - 2 Planning Commission meetings*
 - City Council Study Session*
 - Community Council*
 - Cross District Association*
 - Tacoma Area Commission on Disabilities*
 - Tacoma Wheelmen*
 - West Tacoma Mall Neighborhood Association*
 - West End Neighborhood Council*
 - Pierce Transit Senior Management Team*
 - Master Builders Association*
 - Edison Community Based Services Area Board*

OUTCOME: The Guidelines, with the recommended changes, are a well-vetted and supported (publicly and internally) approach to achieving Complete Streets objectives in Tacoma.

Staff Recommended Changes—summary of key issues

Bicycles

At the City's Mobility Master Plan effort gets underway, significant expertise and attention are being devoted to bicycle related issues. Key recommendations include: Clarify bike lanes are the preferred treatment; Bike lane width—clarify range is 5-6 feet; clarification on the use of Shared Lanes (Sharrows); pedestrian bulb-outs and bike safety; bike lanes and angled parking (avoid if parking is front-in but favor if back-in angled parking).

Persons with Disabilities

Timely input from the Tacoma Area Commission on Disabilities and the City's ADA Coordinator has enabled the Guidelines to go further to ensure safe and comfortable access. Key recommendations include: More emphasis on this issue; more detailed and thorough guidance—including parking, safe and comfortable travel surface, techniques for safe street crossings (such as Accessible Pedestrian Signals), and more.

Green Stormwater Features

Recommended changes would clarify when green stormwater features should be used; provide clear direction that the City should seek to reduce environmental impacts on all projects; and, make the *Standard Street with Green Stormwater Features* the default for local residential streets.

Street Trees

With the Urban Forestry Policy project moving ahead, new promising approaches have been identified. Changes would reflect the importance of street trees for Complete Streets objectives; reflect that a diverse tree community is desirable; clarify that trees need room to grow; and, incorporate new techniques and examples.

Angled Parking

Recommended changes would indicate that back-in angled parking is preferred to front-in, in most cases (especially on transit streets or bike corridors).

Implementation

Recommended changes would clarify how and when the Guidelines would be used to guide project designs: The Guidelines should be the starting point for project design, but innovation is welcome—other approaches should be supported by documentation that they would meet the Complete Streets objectives. This discussion also provides “threshold” guidance on when an action should be expected to implement the Guidelines.

Other important changes are also recommended—*details are available in the Public Comments Summary and Recommended Changes table (available by request and on the project website).*

Requested Actions

1. Request Direction on the Name of the Design Guidelines

“Complete Streets” has notable advantages: Association with this project; broadly used within the City and elsewhere; ties to a national movement; Tacoma has put its own mark on the term.

Questions raised about “Complete Streets”: Some communities use it more narrowly than Tacoma has (through this process); some have taken the term to mean every street has every type of feature

Other options: “Livable Streets”, “Balanced Streets”, other?

See “Terminology” entry on Summary table for additional background

2. Request Direction on Proposed Changes to the Drafts

See the Public Comments Summary and Recommended Changes table for details

3. Request “Do Pass” Recommendation

Key Dates (tentative):	November 10 th	Study Session
	November 17 th	City Council Resolution

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Website: www.cityoftacoma.org/planning; select the *Complete Streets Design Guidelines Project*