

# MLK Subarea Plan Draft Planned Action Environmental Impact Statement



Tacoma, Washington  
3 December 2012

This document serves as the Draft Planned Action Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the MLK Subarea Plan for Tacoma, Washington and includes descriptions of the existing environment, alternative plan impacts, and mitigation.

The MLK Subarea Plan including plan objectives, action plan elements, and implementation program is described in a separate document.

The draft Plan and DEIS are available for review through the project website ([www.cityoftacoma.org/MLKPlan](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/MLKPlan)), at the Community & Economic Development Department offices, and at all branches of the Tacoma Public Library.

Prepared in compliance with:

The Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) of 1971  
Chapter 43.21C of Revised Code of Washington (RCW) revised 1983

SEPA Guidelines, Effective 16 January 1976 as revised 4 April 1984  
Chapter 197-10, Washington Administrative Code (WAC)

Tacoma's Environmental Code, TMC  
Chapter 13.12

Date issue Draft Environmental Impact Statement: **3 December 2012**

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## Fact Sheet

### **Proposed action**

Adopt and implement the MLK Subarea Plan for Tacoma, Washington in accordance with Chapter 35.63 of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) and the provisions of the Growth Management Act (GMA), Chapter 36.70A of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW).

The proposed plan will augment current Tacoma policies governing the environment, land use, economics, transportation, design resources, parks and recreation, public services, and utilities to implement the MLK Subarea Plan and to conform to GMA requirements.

Implementation program particulars will update zoning, design standards, capital improvement program, and other Tacoma ordinances and regulations to comply with the MLK Subarea Plan's policies and implementing measures.

### **Location of the proposal**

The MLK subarea is centered on Martin Luther King Jr (MLK) Way from Division Avenue to south of South 23rd Street, and to the west of I Street/Yakima Avenue from Division Street to South 27th Street. The MLK subarea extends a half block west from MLK except in the core of the district where it extends west to Sheridan Avenue along South 11th Street. The MLK subarea includes approximately 165.51 acres not including public rights-of-way and public facilities and acts as a major gateway into downtown Tacoma and its historic brewery district.

The MLK subarea contains some major institutions including MultiCare Health System's Mary Bridge Children's and Tacoma General Hospitals on the north between Division Avenue and South 6th Avenue, and the Franciscan Health System's St Joseph Medical Center on South J Street between South 16th and 19th Streets.

### **Purpose of MLK Subarea Plan**

The purpose of the MLK Subarea Plan is to anticipate, promote and guide the long-term redevelopment of the MLK subarea including the district core, hospitals, and residential neighborhoods. The plan will serve as a statement of the city's commitment and direction for these areas and as a resource for potential investors, property owners, the community, and other public agencies.

The MLK Subarea Plan includes the retention of some existing land use activities as well as

recruitment of new and intensified commercial and residential mixed use developments along with pedestrian, bicycle and transit enhancements, roadway reconfigurations, and other infrastructure improvements.

Key objectives include establishing new gateway entries to the MLK subarea as well as between the district, downtown, and city, by refurbishing signage, streetscapes, and other amenities.

### **Action sponsor**

Community & Economic Development  
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City of Tacoma  
747 Market Street, Room 1036  
Tacoma, WA 98402

### **Lead agency**

Community & Economic Development  
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747 Market Street, Room 1036  
Tacoma, WA 98402

### **Proposed date of implementation**

The MLK Subarea Plan's planning period extends 20 years or from 2012 to the year 2032. Implementing actions include proposals to revise zoning, develop form-based urban design guidelines, implement historic transfer development rights (TDR), among others. Implementation will commence beginning with the adoption of the MLK Subarea Plan by the Tacoma City Council.

### **Responsible official**

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### **Required approvals**

The following actions must be approved by Tacoma City Council in order to implement Alternative 2: MLK Subarea Plan:

- The proposed MLK Subarea Plan and all implementing measures including amendments to the Zoning Map and Planned Action Ordinance must be reviewed at public hearings to be conducted by the Tacoma Planning Commission, and thereafter by City Council in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 35.63 and the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) Chapter 36.70A of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW).

- Tacoma City Council must complete public hearings, consider the recommendations of the Planning Commission and public, and adopt a final MLK Subarea Plan, implementing measures including zoning map amendments, and Planned Action Ordinance.

Commencing with the City Council's adoption of a final MLK Subarea Plan, implementing measures including zoning map amendments and Planned Action Ordinance, various Tacoma agencies will initiate the specific actions consistent with the provisions of Chapter 35.63 and 36.70A of the RCW.

- Prior to Tacoma action, the Washington State Department of Commerce (DOC) will coordinate state agency review of legislature proposals.

Following City Council action, the likely permits to be acquired by individual development proposals include but are not limited to:

- Land use permits
- Construction permits
- Building permits
- Street use permits

### **Planned Action EIS & Ordinance**

Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) provides for a Planned Action process to allow quality environmental review early in the planning process and with public input to shape decisions. The intent is to provide more detailed environmental analysis during the formulation of planning proposals, rather than at the project permit stage.

The basic steps in designating planned action projects are to:

- Prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS),
- Designate the planned action projects by ordinance, and
- Review permit applications for consistency with the designated planned action.

The Planned Action designation indicates that adequate environmental review has been completed and further environmental review under SEPA, for each specific development proposal or phase, will not be necessary if it is determined that each proposal or phase is consistent with the development levels specified in a Planned Action Ordinance. Although future proposals that qualify as Planned Actions are not subject to additional SEPA review, they are subject to application notification and permit process requirements.

This non-project EIS is proceeding under RCW 43.21C.420. Recognizing that RCW 43.21C.420(5)(a) and (b) include a sunset provision, the City is also proceeding under RCW 43.21C.031 (planned action) and RCW 43.21C.229 (infill exemption), providing the City with additional SEPA tools that the City may use if provisions in RCW 43.21C.420(5)(a) and (b) expire.

Of note, for a non-project EIS completed under RCW 43.21C.420, the SEPA-based appeal opportunity occurs only in conjunction with issuance of the non-project Final EIS. Consistent with RCW 43.21C.420, a proposed development will not be subject to project-specific SEPA-based administrative or judicial appeals if the proposed development is (1) proposed within 10 years of the issuance of the subarea Final EIS, (2) situated within the subarea, and (3) consistent with the adopted subarea plan and development regulations. Similarly, there are no SEPA noticing requirements for subsequent, site-specific

development or redevelopment within the subarea that is consistent with the subarea plan.

The Subarea Plan and EIS are expected to encourage redevelopment and revitalization within the MLK subarea. Property owners and potential developers will be encouraged to redevelop in the MLK subarea as a result of the streamlined development process that takes place under a planned action process. This DEIS will help Tacoma identify impacts of development and specific mitigation measures that developers will have to meet to qualify for a Planned Action project.

**Cost and availability of the Draft Planned Action Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)**

Copies of the MLK Subarea Plan and Draft Planned Action Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) are available for public review at:

- The Community & Economic Development Department, 747 Market Street, Room 1036; and
- All branches of the Tacoma Public Library.

The DEIS is also available for review through the project website  
([www.cityoftacoma.org/MLKPlan](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/MLKPlan))

**Date of issue of Draft Planned Action Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)**

3 December 2012

**Comments due on Draft Planned Action Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)**

17 January 2013

**Date of issue of Final Planned Action Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)**

Tentative 1 March 2013

**Cost of DEIS document**

The complete MLK Subarea Plan and Appendices with implementing measures, Draft Planned Action Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and Appendices can be downloaded from the Tacoma website at  
[www.cityoftacoma.org/MLKPlan](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/MLKPlan).

The document may also be acquired on CD from the Community & Economic Development Department. Physical copies can be acquired for the cost of reproduction from any reproduction or copy business by download from the city website or from a CD copy.

## Acronyms

ACS	American Community Survey	gpcd	gallons per capita per day
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act	gpm	gallons per minute
ADD	average daily demand	HAI	Housing Affordability Index
ADF	average daily flow	HES	Hazard Elimination Safety Program
ADT	average daily traffic	HOV	high-occupancy vehicle
AMHI	Average Median Household Income	HSS	Highways of Statewide Significance
BACT	Best Available Control Technology	HUD	US Department of Housing & Urban Development
BMPs	best municipal practices	ICC	Interstate Commerce Commission
BNSF	Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad	IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
Btu	British thermal unit	ISO	Insurance Services Office
CAFÉ	Corporate Average Fuel Economy	kV	kilovolt - 1000 volts
CAFR	Comprehensive Annual Financial Report	kW	kilowatt - 1000 watts
CAO	Critical Areas Ordinance	L&I	WA Department of Labor & Industries
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant Program	LDN	Day-Night Level of sound
Census	US Bureau of the Census	LEED	Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design
CFP	Capital Facilities Plan	Leq	equivalent sound level
CHAS	Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy	LID	Local Improvement District
CHDO	Community Housing Development Organizations	LOS	level of service
CIF	Capital Improvement Fund	MCI	Mass Causality Incident
CIP	Capital Improvement Program	MFI	Median Family Income
CLG	Certified Local Government	mg	million gallons
CO	carbon monoxide	mgd	million gallons per day
Corps	US Army Corps of Engineers	mph	miles per hour
CTR	Commute Trip Reduction	MSA	Metropolitan Statistical Area
CWPP	(Pierce) County-Wide Planning Policies	MSATs	Mobile Source Air Toxics
DAHP	WA Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation	MTCA	Model Toxics Control Act of Washington
dB	decibel	MTSO	Mobile Telephone Switching Office
dba	A-weighted decibel	MVFT	Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax
DNR	WA Department of Natural Resources	NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
DOC	WA Department of Commerce (formerly CTED)	NAC	Noise Abatement Criteria
DOE	US Department of Ecology	NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
Ecology	WA Department of Ecology	NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
EDNA	environmental designation for noise abatement	NO <sub>2</sub>	nitrogen dioxide
EIS	environmental impact statement	NO <sub>x</sub>	nitrogen oxides
EMS	Emergency Medical Services	NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
EPA	US Environmental Protection Agency	NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
ERA	equivalent residential unit	NRPA	National Park & Recreation Association
ESA	Endangered Species Act	OFM	WA Office of Financial Management
FAA	Federal Aviation Authority	OSPI	Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
FCC	Federal Communications Commission	PCC	Pierce County Council
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency	PDD	peak daily demand
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration	PM10	fine particulate matter 10 microns or less
FTA	Federal Transit Administration	PM2.5	fine particulate matter 2.5 microns or less
FTE	Full-time Equivalent Employee	PSRC	Puget Sound Regional Council
GHG	greenhouse gas	PVC	polyvinyl chloride
GMA	WA Growth Management Act	PWTF	Public Works Trust Fund



RCO	WA Recreation & Conservation Office
RCW	Revised Code of Washington
RTIP	Regional Transportation Improvement Program
REET	Real Estate Excise Tax
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
RTPO	Regional Transportation Planning Organization
SAFETEA-LU	Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: Legacy for Users
SEPA	State Environmental Policy Act
SO <sub>2</sub>	sulfur dioxide
SO <sub>x</sub>	sulfur oxides
SOV	single-occupancy vehicle
SR	state route
SWAC	Solid Waste Advisory Committee
TAZ	traffic analysis zone
TDM	Transportation Demand Management
therm	British thermal unit = 100,000 btu of energy
THA	Tacoma Housing Authority
TIA	Transportation Improvement Account
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TMDL	total maximum daily demand
TNM	traffic noise model
TOD	transit-oriented development
TPS	Tacoma Public Schools
TSP	total suspended particulars
TSP	Transportation Systems Plan
UAP	Urban Arterial Program
UATA	Urban Arterial Trust Account
UCP	Urban Corridor Program
UGA	Urban Growth Area
UP	Union Pacific Railroad
USFWS	US Fish & Wildlife Service
V/m	Volts per meter
VMT	vehicle miles traveled
VOC	volatile organic compound
WAC	Washington Administrative Code
WASIST	WA intersection screening tool
WCRER	WA Center for Real Estate Research
WDFW	WA Department of Fish & Wildlife
WSDOT	WA Department of Transportation
WTP	Water Treatment Plant
WUTC	Washington Utilities & Transportation Commission
WWTP	Wastewater Treatment Plant