

# SEPA/GMA INTEGRATED ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT

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*for the proposed*

# ***Tacoma Mixed Use Centers Zoning Code Update:***

***Amendments to the City's  
Land Use Regulatory Code  
Tacoma Municipal Code-Title 13  
And Accompanying Area-Wide Rezones***

File No.: SEP2008-40000116363

**City of Tacoma  
Community and Economic Development Department**

July 2008

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# ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

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## PURPOSE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA)<sup>1</sup>, requires that all governmental agencies consider the environmental impacts of a proposal before the proposal is decided upon. This Environmental Checklist has been prepared in compliance with SEPA; the SEPA Rules, effective April 4, 1984, as amended (Chapter 197-11, Washington Administrative Code (WAC)); and Tacoma's Environmental Code (Chapter 13.12, Land Use Regulatory Code), which implement SEPA.

The purpose of this Environmental Checklist is to identify and evaluate environmental impacts that could result from the proposed action and to identify measures to mitigate those impacts. As such, this Environmental Checklist is a disclosure document. It does not authorize a specific action nor does it recommend for or against a particular course of action, but rather, it is one of several key documents that will be considered in the decision-making process for the proposed amendments to the City's Land Use Regulatory Code and area-wide rezones.

This checklist will assist City staff in determining if the environmental impacts of this proposal are significant. If the impacts are determined to be significant, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be required. If the impacts are determined not to be significant, a Determination of Non-Significance (DNS) will be issued and no additional environmental assessment will be required.

This expanded Environmental Checklist, prepared for the *Mixed Use Centers Zoning Code Update*, is intended to accomplish the objectives set forth in the SEPA/GMA integration rules (WAC 197-11-210 et seq). It is a phase of environmental review that complies with Growth Management Act (GMA)<sup>2</sup> and supplements the City's *Comprehensive Plan* and development regulations. This document identifies the general environmental impacts and mitigation measures associated with adoption of the zoning code revisions. It builds on and is more specific than the analysis prepared for the City's overall *Comprehensive Plan*.

Rules for integrating SEPA compliance with GMA planning were adopted in 1995 (WAC 197-11-210 et seq). Among other things, the rules emphasize that analysis at each stage of the GMA planning process should address the environmental impacts associated with planning decisions at that stage of the planning process (WAC 197-11-210(3)). The purpose of the rules is to produce better-informed decision-making, avoid delays and duplication at the project level, and narrow the scope of environmental review and SEPA mitigation at the project level. These provisions restate the existing rules related to phased environmental review (WAC 197-11-060(5)). The scope and level of detail of analysis should be tailored to the action under consideration. GMA jurisdictions may also modify phased review to track the sequence of GMA actions (WAC 197-11-210(3)).

**Future Projects.** Consistent with the principles applicable to phased review, applicants for future projects may use and not repeat relevant information and analysis in this checklist for purposes of SEPA compliance. A threshold of non-significance using this SEPA Checklist can be attained through an addendum process. Future projects will need to demonstrate that they comply with:

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<sup>1</sup> Chapter 43.21C. RCW

<sup>2</sup> Chapter 36.70A. RCW

- the findings of this checklist and/or those checklists incorporated herein by reference, and the thresholds identified under each element of the environment for this checklist, and
- the policies and regulations of the City, State, and Federal Regulations in effect at the time of the project submittal of which this checklist relies for its determination.

This Environmental Checklist follows the same general format of the environmental checklist that is on file with the City's office of the City Clerk and the SEPA Public Information Center. The Environmental Checklist is organized into four major sections. Section A (starting on page 2) provides background information concerning the proposed action (e.g., proponent/contact person, project description, project location, etc.). Section B (beginning on page 12) contains the analysis of environmental impacts that could result from implementation of the proposed action, based on review of 16 major environmental parameters. This section also identifies possible mitigation measures and thresholds for future projects. Section C (page 44) is the signature of the proponent confirming the completeness of this Environmental Checklist. Section D (page 45) is the Supplemental Sheet for Non-Project Actions.

## **A. BACKGROUND**

### **1. Name of Proposed Project:**

Mixed Use Centers Zoning Code Update: Amending Title 13 of the Tacoma Municipal Code-Land Use Regulatory Code for mixed-use zoning districts (portion of Zoning Code Chapter 13.06)

### **2. Proponent/Applicant – Name and Phone Number:**

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City of Tacoma  
Community and Economic Development Department  
(253) 591-5365

#### **Proponent/Applicant – Address:**

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4. **Date Checklist Prepared:** July 7, 2008
5. **Agency requesting checklist:** City of Tacoma

6. **Proposed Timing or Schedule (including phasing, if applicable):**

This Environmental Checklist accompanies one programmatic action – amending Tacoma’s Land Use Regulatory Code for the mixed use centers regulations and area-wide rezones within the centers, which are located throughout the City. Adoption of the proposal is expected to occur in October 2008.

7. **Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain.**

The action that this Environmental Checklist evaluates is programmatic, involving amendments to the City’s Land Use Regulatory Code and area-wide rezones. This programmatic action is intended to encourage quality compact development at intensities envisioned for the mixed use centers in the City’s *Comprehensive Plan* by revising zoning classifications within the centers, revising the use standards for mixed use centers (X) districts, strengthening the development and design standards, and providing incentives for development in the core center areas. Future development would occur in the context of and be guided by the proposed zoning districts and regulations.

This Environmental Checklist is part of phased environmental review for the City’s GMA planning. Future projects within the area of the code changes and rezones may use all or part of this Environmental Checklist or other City environmental documents to satisfy the requirements of SEPA in whole or part.

8. **List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal:**

The following City planning documents and associated environmental documents contain environmental information related to the proposed Zoning Code Update. The information is referenced as appropriate in this Environmental Checklist and incorporated by reference into this document.

SEPA analyses have been prepared for previous annual *Comprehensive Plan* and Land Use Regulatory Code amendments. These have included the following:

- *SEP2007-40000100366 Adoption of Annual Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code*
- *SEP2006-40000078301 Adoption of Annual Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code*
- *SEP2005-40000053833 Adoption of Annual Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code*
- *SEP2004-40000034459 Adoption of Annual Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code*
- *SEP2003-00067 Adoption of Annual Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code*
- *SEP2002-00062 Adoption of Annual Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code*

- *SEP2002-00001 SEPA/GMA Integrated Environmental Document for the Proposed Tacoma Zoning Code Update, January 2002*
- *SEP2001-00079 Adoption of Annual Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan*
- *SEP2000-00082 Adoption of Annual Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan & Land Use Regulatory Code*
- *Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code - Proposed Amendments for 1999* (Tacoma, 1999b);
- *Draft Stormwater Management Manual Volume I – Design* (Tacoma, 1995d);
- *Final Stormwater Management Manual Volume II – Stormwater Pollution Prevention Manual: A Guide to Best Management Practices for Industries, Businesses and Homeowners* (Tacoma, 1999d);
- *Final Stormwater Management Manual Volume III – Comprehensive Stormwater Management Program* (Tacoma, 1999e);
- *1999 – 2004 Capital Facilities Program* (Tacoma, 1998);
- *Transportation Program* (Tacoma, 1997);
- *Environmental Policy Plan* (Tacoma, 1994);
- *Generalized Land Use Plan* (Tacoma, 1993a);
- *Utilities Plan* (Tacoma, 1993b); and
- *Land Use Management Plan* (Tacoma, 1983) and Amendments.

This proposal is part of Tacoma’s ongoing planning to implement the provisions of GMA and the City’s *Comprehensive Plan*. The environmental analysis that was conducted for the *Comprehensive Plan* addresses the environmental impacts of growth anticipated Citywide and in the areas affected by the portion of the Zoning Code that applies to the mixed use centers. General policies in the *Comprehensive Plan* will continue to apply. Similarly, adopted implementing regulations (e.g., critical areas, stormwater, etc.) will continue to apply to development under the proposed Code Update unless amended by the proposed action.

**9. Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal? If yes, explain:**

It is possible that several public and/or privately-sponsored projects, if currently being considered in the mixed use centers, could be affected by the proposed Land Use Regulatory Code and zoning map amendments. Such projects would be governed by the rules applicable to vesting of projects and submittal of complete applications.

Following City adoption of the zoning code revisions and rezones, all properties and all development subsequently proposed in the mixed use centers would be subject to the revised regulations and rezones.

**10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known:**

The actions that this Environmental Checklist accompanies are programmatic in nature. The only governmental approval that is needed at this time, therefore, is legislative adoption by the Tacoma City Council of the proposed amendments to the City’s Land Use Regulatory Code including the rezones.

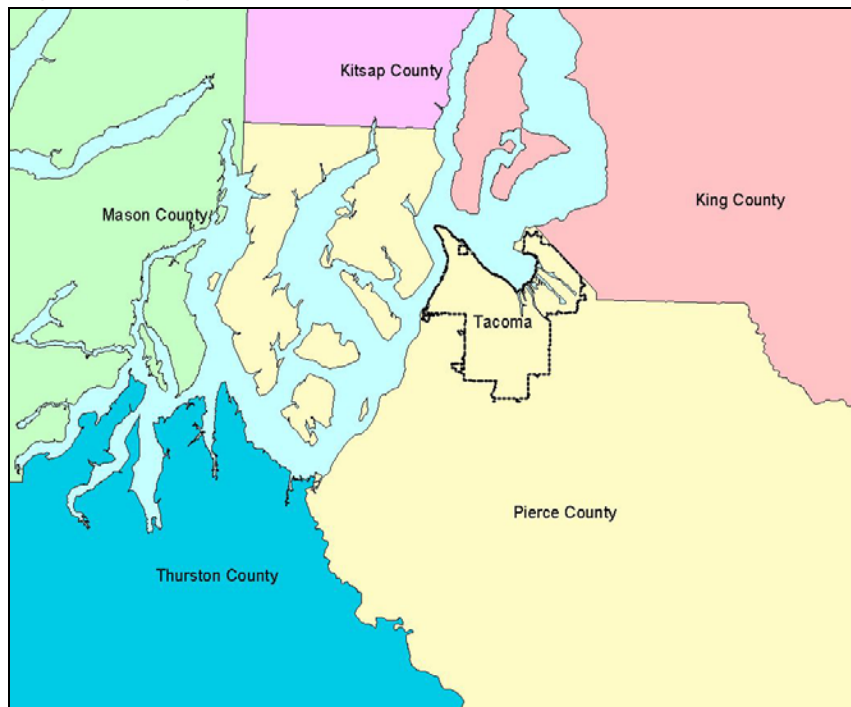
Subsequent project proposals would be subject to project-specific building permits, plan review, and the appropriate level of environmental review. Also, additional engineering analysis (e.g., stormwater runoff, traffic studies, etc.) may be required for specific projects as part of the building permit review process.

11. **Give brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site. There are several questions later in this checklist that ask you to describe certain aspects of your proposal. You do not need to repeat those answers on this page.**

### **Project Description**

The City of Tacoma, shown in Figure 1, first adopted its Zoning Code in 1953. The Code has been revised many times since. Several changes were made after 1993 to ensure that development happened in the manner outlined in the City's *Comprehensive Plan* (the Land Use Management Plan which was effective at the time). A major update to the commercial and mixed use centers portions of the Zoning Code was adopted in 2002. In 2007, the City's *Comprehensive Plan* was amended to strengthen the mixed use centers strategy. The proposed action is a code update that responds to the 2007 *Comprehensive Plan* amendments for the mixed use centers.

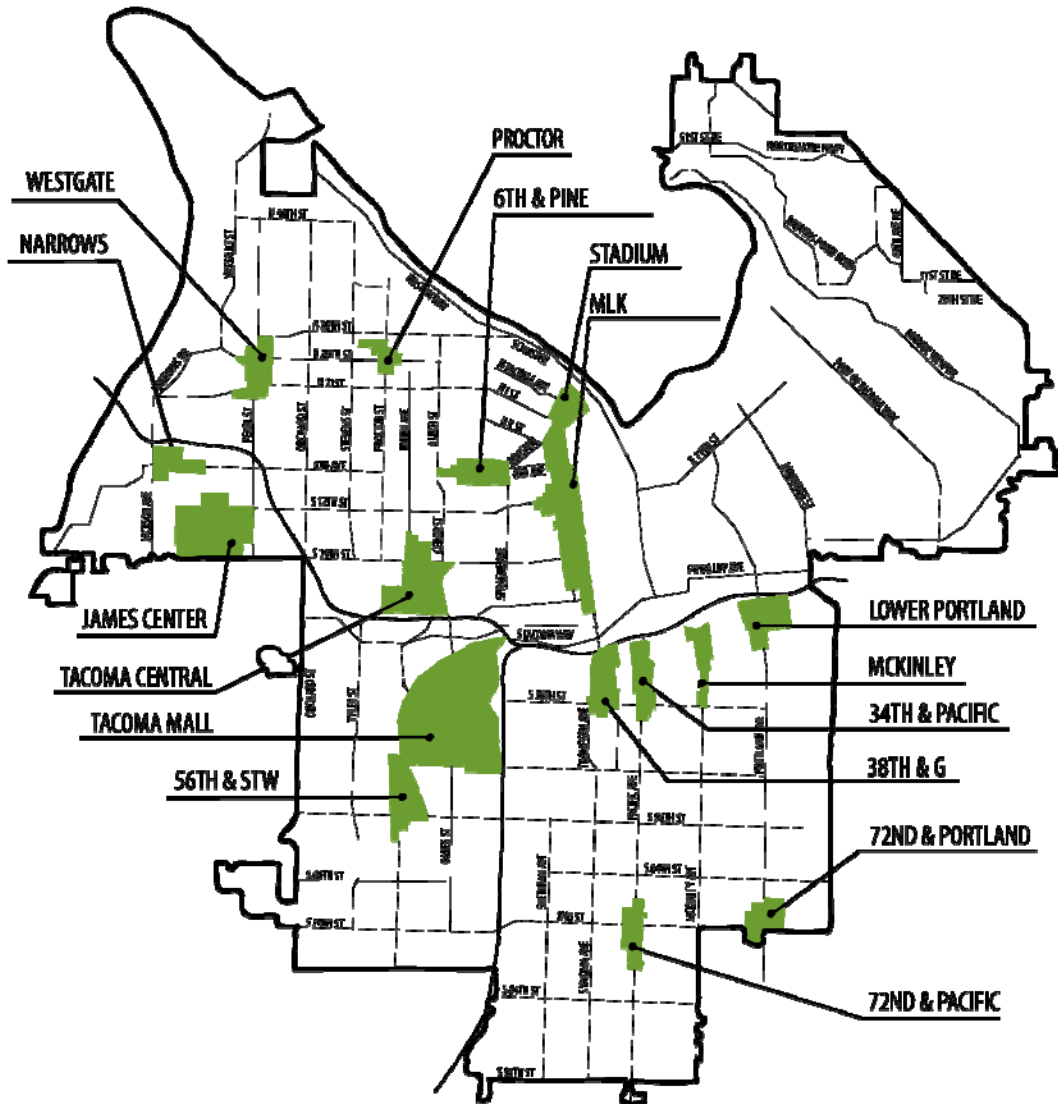
**Figure 1: Regional Map**



This phase of the Code Update involves mixed use center zoning districts (X districts). It also involves moving the Hospital Medical (HM) district regulations to the mixed use centers portion of the Zoning Code and the application of the proposed mixed use center design standards to the HM zone, now to be renamed HMX zone. Area-wide rezones are proposed for properties located within the centers from commercial, residential, industrial and mixed-use zoning districts to mixed-use zoning classifications. The proposal also revises the

boundaries of some mixed-use zoning areas within centers. Figure 2 shows the City's mixed use centers affected by the proposed code amendments and area-wide zoning changes.

**Figure 2: Mixed Use Centers Map**



The goals of the proposed action are to:

- Apply mixed use center (X district) zoning classifications to all land within the centers, except that some areas zoned PRD will remain and the T Street Gulch area located in the Lower Portland Center which will remain R-2;
- Provide regulatory guidance and support for more compact intensive development in the centers consistent with the 2007 *Comprehensive Plan* amendments;
- Strengthen building, design and landscaping standards that apply to X districts to achieve quality development;
- Provide for residential compatibility standards that are appropriate for X districts where they abut residentially zoned districts,

- Revise pedestrian street designations and distinguish core pedestrian streets from other designated pedestrian streets;
- Provide incentives for development along core pedestrian streets; and
- Create and encourage a pedestrian-friendly environment in the centers, with the most pedestrian-oriented features being located on core pedestrian streets.

The Mixed Use Centers Code Update includes:

- Creating two new zones, NRX-Neighborhood Residential and URX-Urban Residential;
- Moving the HM zone regulations to the X-districts portion of the code, renaming the classification HMX and applying the X district design standards to this zone;
- Revisions to development, design, residential compatibility, landscaping and buffering, parking, and pedestrian and bicycle support standards for the X zones;
- Revisions to the designation of pedestrian streets and designation of core pedestrian streets;
- Creation of a height bonus program in the X district development standards; and
- Rezones within the centers so that all land within a center has an appropriate mixed-use center zoning designation.

A more detailed summary of these changes is provided below. Maps of the zoning changes in each mixed use center can be found in Appendix A, and the acreages of zoning changes are shown in Appendix B. Additional detail on the proposed Code amendments is available in Appendix C.

### **Summary of Proposed Mixed Use Centers Zoning Code Update**

#### *Background*

The proposed amendments are outcomes of the 2007 Mixed Use Centers analysis jointly undertaken by the City and Pierce Transit to study the mixed-use centers. They are also the outcome of the Design Review Project undertaken by the City starting in 2006 and which will continue through 2009, to study and update design standards. The proposed amendment will revise various portions of the Land Use Regulatory Code as it applies to the mixed-use centers to facilitate future growth and development. There are currently 17 mixed use centers within the City; however, one of these is Downtown Tacoma which was not included in the 2007 study and is not addressed by the proposed actions. Included in the centers addressed by the proposed amendments are three centers that were designated in 2007. The previously designated and the “new” centers (designated in 2007) affected by the proposed amendments are:

#### **Previously Designated Centers**

6<sup>th</sup> & Pine  
 56<sup>th</sup> & STW  
 Proctor  
 72<sup>nd</sup> & Pacific  
 James Center  
 Tacoma Central  
 Tacoma Mall

38<sup>th</sup> & G  
 MLK  
 Stadium  
 72<sup>nd</sup> & Portland  
 Lower Portland  
 Westgate

#### **Centers Designated in 2007**

34<sup>th</sup> & Pacific  
 McKinley  
 Narrows

The proposed text amendments to the Land Use Regulatory Code apply to the centers as a whole, although there are a small number of specific height exceptions for individual centers.

#### *Area-Wide Rezones*

Zoning in the new and previously existing centers will be changed to be consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan*. The mixed-use centers currently include X zones (NCX, CCX, RCX, UCX, and CIX), which were developed for the mixed use centers in 1996, as well as other zones such as R2, R2-SRD, R2-PRD, R3, R3-PRD, R4, R4L, R4L-PRD, R5, R5-PRD, HM, T, C1, C2, and M2. With the proposed amendments, all land within mixed-use centers will be classified within an X zone classification, with the exception of some areas zoned PRD and the T Street Gulch area located in the Lower Portland Center which will remain R-2. The PRD zone is a residential zone intended to provide for greater flexibility in large scale residential developments and to promote a more desirable living environment than would be possible through the strict regulations of conventional zoning.

Because the three new mixed-use centers were designated in 2007 and do not currently include X zones, their locations and existing zones are described below. For existing zoning in the other centers, see Appendix A.

- **34<sup>th</sup> & Pacific:** This new Community Center is located along the border of the South End and Eastside Neighborhood Council districts, just south of Downtown and the Port Manufacturing/Industrial Center. It is primarily centered on Pacific Avenue and is bounded generally by South D Street to the west, South Crandall Lane and East A Street to the east, South 40<sup>th</sup> St to the south, and South 32<sup>nd</sup> St and I-5 to the north. Existing zoning districts within this area include R2-SRD, R3, R4L, R4, R5, T, C1, and HM.
- **McKinley:** This new Neighborhood Center is located in the Eastside Neighborhood Council district just south of I-5 and the Port Manufacturing/Industrial Center. It is primarily centered on McKinley Avenue, and is roughly bounded by East G Street and East G Street Alley to the west, East McKinley Avenue Alley and East I to the east, Upper Park to the north, and extends approximately 150 feet south of East 38<sup>th</sup> Street. Existing zoning districts within this area include R2, R2-SRD, R3, R4L, C1, C2, and T.
- **Narrows:** This new Neighborhood Center is located in the West End Neighborhood Council district just south of State Route 16. It is primarily centered on 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue. It is bounded by Jackson Street to the west, North 9<sup>th</sup> Street to the north, Mildred Street to the east, and South 8<sup>th</sup> Street to the south. However, from South Meyers Street in the south and North Skyline Drive in the north, the center narrows to approximately 270 feet north and south of 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue as it extends east to Mildred Street. Existing zoning districts within this area include R1, R2, R4L, R4-PRD, R5-PRD, C1, and C2.

#### *Text Amendments*

Table 1 summarizes the proposed zoning code text amendments. More detail is provided in Appendix C.

**Table 1: Summary of Proposed Zoning Code Text Amendments**

Topic	Summary of Amendments
<u>Mixed Use Center Core Areas and Designated Pedestrian Streets</u>	Each center will contain one or more designated pedestrian streets. Specific segments of the Designated Pedestrian Streets will comprise the core of each center and will be called Core Pedestrian Streets. Within the NCX and CCX zones, the Core Pedestrian Streets will be the focus of incentives for more intensive mixed-use development, as well as stricter standards to ensure a pedestrian-friendly and transit-oriented environment. See Appendix C for more detail.
<u>Building Heights and Minimum Densities</u>	<p>The proposed amendments will reduce allowable height in portions of the centers near single-family zones. Portions of the NCX and CCX zones along core pedestrian streets will be eligible for a height bonus. Height will be increased somewhat in the CCX zone. No change to the height limit in the UCX zone is proposed.</p> <p>Higher minimum densities are proposed for the RCX, NCX, CCX and UCX zoning districts. A minimum residential density that is consistent with the recommended increases also is proposed for the new URX zone. See Appendix C for more detail.</p>
<u>Bonus Program</u>	Bonus heights will be available within 200' of the centerline of a Core Pedestrian Street. A height bonus of up to 20' may be achieved by providing one or more features or facilities that benefit the centers, the public and/or achieve community goals. See Appendix C for more detail.
<u>Changes to Allowed Uses in X Zones</u>	The proposed amendments will prohibit certain uses from mixed use centers, including golf courses and new single-family residential uses (except new single-family uses will be allowed in the NRX district); restrict additional uses from locating along the Core Pedestrian Streets, including building materials and services, self-storage, and vehicle service and repair; and provide additional standards for drive-throughs and gas stations located along Designated Pedestrian Streets.
<u>New URX Zone</u>	The new URX zone is envisioned as an urban residential zone, allowing for townhouses and low-rise multifamily residential dwellings, adult family homes, retirement homes, family daycare, and similar uses, but not allowing for commercial uses.
<u>New NRX Zone</u>	The new NRX zone, which will apply to a limited area near South 8th Street & South I Street area in the MLK mixed use center, will allow one-family dwellings; family day care homes; special needs housing; foster homes; duplexes and triplexes lawfully in existence at time of rezone; new duplexes, triplexes and townhouses with approval of a Conditional Use Permit and multi-family dwellings lawfully in existence at time of rezone.
<u>Additional Building Envelope Standards</u>	Additional building envelope standards include maximum setbacks for non-residential uses in X zones; and standards for the URX and NRX zones. The proposed changes also include a conditional exemption to the maximum setback standards for large public facilities.
<u>Building Design Standards</u>	<p>Proposed amendments will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise exemptions to building design standards so that only single-family detached homes are exempt from design standards.</li> <li>• Add specific design standards for duplex and triplex developments. These will include covered entry, windows on the street side, garage design standards, and standards for corner buildings and through-lots.</li> <li>• Add specific design standards for townhouse developments. These will include a maximum of 6 units per building, minimum 10-foot separation between buildings, required ground floor pedestrian entries, emphasized pedestrian entries, and address garage configurations (not facing a street, building articulation, and</li> </ul>

Topic	Summary of Amendments
	<p>repetition with variety).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replace current Mass Reduction features with a new “toolbox” approach for articulation features for both residential and non-residential buildings. The toolbox approach will better address perceived bulk and provide more flexibility in achieving this goal. Allowed features will include windows, awnings, roofline changes, building material changes, building modulation and lighting/landscape features.</li> <li>• Add upper floor setback requirements along Designated Pedestrian Streets. These are 8’ setbacks on the 4th floor in RCX, on the 5th floor in other zones where right-of-way (ROW) width is less than 100’, and on the 6th floor where ROW is wider than 100 feet.</li> <li>• Add a maximum façade width standard for upper stories of larger/wider buildings. Upper story façades of multi-story buildings that are greater than 120 feet in width will be required to incorporate a significant modulation of the exterior wall through all floors except the ground floor.</li> <li>• Add new requirements for building details, window/trim detailing, and street corner design to add visual interest, depth and integrity to buildings.</li> <li>• Remove the existing exemption from transparency for residential buildings, and add a requirement of 15% transparency for upper levels.</li> <li>• Clarify existing standards to ensure appropriate results.</li> <li>• Increase required pedestrian weather protection from 25% to 50% for buildings not located on Pedestrian Streets.</li> <li>• Add a height limitation for fences in front yards and require terracing for tall retaining walls, to enhance the pedestrian environment along streets and enhance safety.</li> <li>• Provide a tiered system for how building design standards apply to additions and remodels to existing, non-conforming structures.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Residential Compatibility Standards</u></p>	<p>Standards will be refined where X zones are adjacent to or abutting single-family zones. The proposed standards require:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upper story setbacks above a height of 25’ where the mixed use center parcel abuts an alley or rear or side property line, and above a height of 35’ where the parcel abuts a street. Stepbacks must be equal to 10’ back for each 10’ in height, up to the maximum height allowed by the zone.</li> </ul>
<p><u>Parking Standards</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate off-street parking requirements for new development within 200 feet of the Core Pedestrian Streets (height bonus area).</li> <li>• Provide a parking credit program to allow a reduction to off-street parking requirements within other portions of the centers. Reductions will be allowed for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sites located within 500 feet of a transit stop.</li> <li>○ Developments that create and implement a site-specific Trip Reduction plan and program.</li> <li>○ Developments that provide a dedicated parking stall(s) for a locally operating car sharing program.</li> <li>○ Residential/commercial mixed-use projects.</li> <li>○ Provision of additional on-street public parking.</li> <li>○ Provision of bicycle parking beyond the standard requirement.</li> <li>○ Provision of motorcycle/scooter parking</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Revise location standards for large developments to encourage broken-up parking areas and interconnected pedestrian activity.</li> <li>• Require alley access where available (prohibit street driveways when an alley is available).</li> </ul>

Topic	Summary of Amendments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For sites abutting multiple streets, require access from the lowest designated street.</li> <li>• Revise parking garage standards along street frontages.</li> <li>• Add new multi-family parking design standards.</li> </ul>
<u>Pedestrian and Bicycle Support Standards</u>	Proposed changes will revise walkway standards to ensure provision of internal walkway circulation within large developments; and add internal pedestrian paths and circulation requirements for large sites with multiple buildings to improve internal pedestrian-orientation and connectivity.
<u>Landscaping and Buffering Standards</u>	<p>Proposed changes will revise the format of the landscaping section of the code, as it applies to X zones, to include a list of “landscaping/buffer types,” each with its own specific standards. The various types would be utilized depending on the buffer scenario. Changes will also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase landscaping quantity requirements to better ensure the human-oriented design of the centers and support the City’s overall sustainability and environmental goals.</li> <li>• Provide additional guidance on appropriate trees and plants.</li> </ul> <p>Modify the existing landscaping exemptions. This will eliminate the exemption for duplex and triplex uses; revise landscape exemption for small parking lots behind buildings to a threshold of 15 stalls or less (currently 20); and remove the exemption for additions that more than double the square footage of the applicable use or where the addition/remodel is valued at two times the value of the existing structure.</p>
<u>Hospital Medical (HM) Zone</u>	<p>The proposed changes include moving the HM zone to the mixed use (X) zones portion of the code and renaming it Hospital Medical Mixed Use (HMX). Changes to HM with the application of mixed use zone design and development standards include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New golf courses and single-family homes will be prohibited in HMX. However, other permitted use standards for HMX will be the same as for HM, and the existing 7,000 square foot limit on eating/drinking establishments, retail and personal service uses within this zone will remain.</li> <li>• Additional building envelope standards</li> <li>• Building design standards</li> <li>• Residential compatibility standards</li> <li>• Revised parking standards (parking credits will apply)</li> <li>• Revised pedestrian and bicycle support standards</li> <li>• Revised landscaping and buffering standards</li> </ul> <p>Changes to HM with the application of mixed use zone design and development standards that are not described above include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum setbacks where HMX abuts an R district will not apply; residential compatibility standards will apply instead.</li> </ul> <p>Maximum setback standards for non-residential buildings will be consistent with those of the UCX and CIX zones. This means 20 feet maximum front and corner side setback from the property lines at the public right of way for 50 percent of front and corner side façade.</p>

### ***Implementation of future development projects***

This Mixed Use Centers Zoning Code Update Environmental Checklist includes an analysis of non-project actions. It references regulations and their environmental documentation as support for the determination of non-significance. Future project-level actions will be allowed to reference this checklist when completing a project-level checklist.

Through adoption of the Mixed Use Centers Zoning Code Update SEPA determination, future project submittals can rely on a Determinations of Non-Significance (DNS) if they meet the thresholds set out in this checklist and comply with adopted City, State, and Federal regulations. In other words, if project-level impacts are determined to be below the thresholds established in this environmental checklist, no additional studies would be required. Further, it is the City's intent to use addendums to the DNS issued for the Mixed Use Centers Zoning Code Update rather than issuance of new DNS for projects that fall within the scope of this environmental review.

The goal of this effort is to identify consistent thresholds of significance, reduce redundancy of review and to minimize the need for unnecessary analysis for projects that meet all current regulatory requirements. The developers' timeline will be reduced by elimination of the comment period followed by the appeal period. This approach to SEPA review supports the GMA and may facilitate and stimulate investment while continuing to protect the natural and built environments.

- 12. Location of the proposal. Give sufficient information for a person to understand the precise location of your proposed project, including a street address, if any. If a proposal would occur over a range of area, provide the range or boundaries of the site(s).**

The proposed area of the Mixed Use Centers Zoning Code Update, which is the subject of this proposed action, encompasses an area of approximately 2,345 acres, or about 10% of the city. The areas are depicted in Figure 2 and in Appendix A.

- 13. Assessor Parcel Number:**

Because the project area encompasses approximately 2,345 acres, numerous assessor parcels are affected. Assessor parcel numbers are identified on the mailing list for the Official Notice of the July 23, 2008 Informational Meeting and August 6, 2008 Public Hearing, available at the City of Tacoma's Community and Economic Development Department.

## **B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS**

### **1. LAND USE**

- a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties?**

The amendments address all of the mixed-use centers with the exception of Downtown. The centers contain a mix of land uses, including:

- General commercial
- Office
- Retail and services

- Single-family residential
- Duplexes, triplexes and townhouses
- Multi-family residential
- Public facility uses
- Parks
- Schools
- Hospital and medical office uses
- Institutional uses
- Industrial uses

The areas that will experience the greatest change in zoning are the three new mixed-use centers (designated in 2007). Land uses in those centers are as follows:

- The McKinley center contains office, retail, institutional, multi-family residential, single-family residential uses, and park uses.
- The 34<sup>th</sup> & Pacific center contains office, retail, institutional, multi-family residential and single-family residential uses.
- The Narrows center contains institutional, office, retail, park, multi-family residential and single-family residential uses.

**b. Has the site been used for agriculture? Describe.**

The subject areas have not been utilized for agriculture uses within the last 50 years. Portions of the city and mixed use centers have been used for agricultural purposes prior to that but there are no indications of recent agricultural uses and there are no significant commercial agricultural uses currently operating in the city or mixed-use centers.

**c. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what**

No specific structure would be demolished as a result of the code update. Site specific development that is conducted under the updates may involve demolition and would be analyzed at that time.

**d. What is the current zoning classification of the site?**

Current zoning districts within mixed use centers include R1, R2, R2-SRD, R2-PRD, R3, R3-PRD, R4, R4L, R4L-PRD, R5, R5-PRD, HM, T, C1, C2, M2, RCX, NCX, CCX, CIX, and UCX.

Areas for which a change in zoning is proposed are zoned: R1, R2, R2-SRD, R3, R4, R4L, R5, T, C1, C2, RCX, NCX, CCX, M2 and CIX. Within the three new mixed use centers, the existing zoning is as follows:

- The McKinley center contains R2, R2-SRD, R3, R4L, C1, C2, and T.
- The 34<sup>th</sup> & Pacific center contains R2-SRD, R3, R4L, R4, R5, T, C1, and HM.
- The Narrows center contains R1, R2, R4L, R4-PRD, R5-PRD, C1, and C2.

Zones for which text amendments are proposed include RCX, NCX, CCX, UCX, HM, CIX and UCX-TD (UCX-TD and CIX are addressed only for the purpose of maintaining consistency with the other mixed use "X" zones).

Appendix A contains maps showing the existing and proposed zoning in each center, and Appendix B contains tables for each center showing the existing and proposed zoning and associated acreage.

e. **How are land use character, compatibility and degree/intensity affected by the proposal?**

***Character and Intensity***

The proposed amendments are intended to bring the future developed intensity of the mixed-use centers in line with their land use intensity designations. All of the centers are designated Medium Intensity, except for the Tacoma Mall, Downtown and portions of the MLK center which are designated High Intensity. In addition, the T Street gulch area in the Lower Portland Avenue center retains Single-Family Intensity. The proposed amendments will contribute toward a compact, mixed-use character within the mixed-use centers, particularly along core pedestrian streets. However, the proposed amendments will strengthen design and landscaping standards to increase the visual attractiveness of development and the pedestrian environment. Improvements will also increase comfort and safety for pedestrians.

The current character in the centers is varied, including single-family uses, auto-oriented commercial, older and more urban commercial and mixed use buildings, and a range of multifamily residential uses. The character is expected to change and become more cohesive as centers develop under the proposed amendments. Low-rise multifamily uses will be focused at the edges of the centers. Uses at the edges adjacent to single-family zones will have residential compatibility features such as lower building height at the edge consistent with single-family zoning, upper story setbacks and landscape buffering.

The core areas are envisioned as denser environments with a mix of uses to support an active, urban streetscape that is appealing to pedestrians. These changes are also intended to bring about the desired level of transit use. Commercial growth in the center core areas will be urban and pedestrian-oriented in form and character. It will include attractive retail, restaurants, and services that reduce the need for people living in and near the centers to drive. The residential density within the centers will support the envisioned type of commercial growth.

Increased density will support walkability and active living, as well as supporting environmental sustainability, encouraging compact development and reducing the need for automobile travel, contributing to improved air quality and reducing sprawl. As densities increase in the mixed use centers, so do opportunities for active and visually interesting streetscapes, which improve pedestrian orientation and overall livability.

The proposed amendments will also contribute toward the Tacoma Mall Mixed Use Center, a designated Regional Growth Center (RGC) per the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) and Pierce County County-wide Planning Policies (CPP), meeting activity levels that are envisioned for RGCs based on established multicounty criteria. Increases in activity levels in this center will also result in a higher quality pedestrian environment, particularly on designated pedestrian streets.

Additionally, the proposed amendments create design standards for new townhouse and duplex/triplex uses in the mixed use centers. Previously, these have been exempt from

design standards. The goal of these amendments is to create a high-quality, visually attractive environment where people will want to live. In general, the proposed amendments are intended to help the mixed-use centers transition from their current, varied character, into more cohesive centers of activity surrounded by compact residential uses.

### ***Compatibility with Adjacent Properties***

Proposed changes to the code are intended to improve compatibility between areas within the centers and adjacent properties that are zoned for single-family uses. Refinements to the existing requirements will ensure compatibility while balancing the need to encourage investment within the centers. The proposed changes will apply when a center boundary is adjacent to single-family zoning, but not where the adjacent use within the single-family zone is a park, permanent open space or undevelopable steep slope, public or quasi-public facility, or freeway. The proposed standards require upper story setbacks above a height of 25' where the center parcel abuts an alley or rear or side property line and above a height of 35' where the parcel abuts a street. These heights are consistent with single-family zoning. New design and landscape standards also apply. Design standards limit building bulk, require modulation and transparency, reduce blank walls, etc. Additionally, the new URX zone will be applied in areas where adjacent single-family zones are most likely to be affected. URX will include only residential uses and will provide a transition between the center edges and more intensive mixed-use portions of the centers. Finally, the NRX zone will be established to encourage the preservation of a unique area in the MLK center in the vicinity of South 8th Street & South I Street, with targeted types of development and preservation of the existing character of a mix of predominately residential uses.

**f. What is the current Comprehensive Plan designation of the site?**

The Tacoma Mall and Downtown centers are designated High Intensity. All other mixed-use centers are designated Medium Intensity with the exception of some areas in the MLK center which are designated High Intensity and the T Street gulch area in the Lower Portland Avenue center which is designated Single Family Intensity. The overall effect of the proposed zoning map and text revisions will be to ensure that future development in the mixed-use centers occurs with appropriate land uses and appropriate land use intensities, consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan*. The proposed zoning code and zoning map changes support the mixed-use centers *Comprehensive Plan* amendments adopted in 2007.

**g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?**

Not applicable. The subject zoning classifications and properties proposed for rezones are not within the City's shoreline management area.

**h. Has any part of the site been classified as an "environmentally sensitive" area? Specify.**

These are non-project actions and specific impacts to critical areas associated with development will be assessed at the project review and approval stage. The James Center contains some probable wetland area. The Lower Portland center, 72<sup>nd</sup> & Pacific center, and 56<sup>th</sup> & STW center may contain streams and known or potential wetland areas according to the Wetlands and Streams maps in the Environmental Policy Element of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

**i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?**

The proposal is a non-project action that would not directly result in increased population or employment.

The Growth Management Act requires that Tacoma plan for 20 years of population growth based on its share of the 20-year population projection made for Pierce County by the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) and then disaggregated by Pierce County. Tacoma's required 20-year population growth targets have been established in a countywide process and adopted by Pierce County. The current target is a population of 255,240 in the year 2022, which means growth of 55,640 over the 2006 population of 199,600 (Pierce County Buildable Lands Report 2007 Errata Sheet, December 12, 2007). The Buildable Lands Report also includes an employment target of 147,092 through 2022, a growth of 35,683 jobs over the 2006 amount of 111,409.

The proposed code revisions in this update would allow for appropriate scaled development including additional residential development in new projects within the mixed use zones with greater density than currently required by the zoning code. New employment uses would also likely occur under the proposed amendments, primarily in the CCX, UCX, and HMX zones.

The specific number of people that would reside or work in future projects located with these revised zoning districts cannot be determined at this time. However, it is appropriate to assume that with the height bonuses, increased minimum density requirements, and design standards that support quality multifamily and townhouse development that the City's population and employment would increase as projected in the *Comprehensive Plan*.

Based on an analysis by AHBL Inc. and the City of Tacoma in 2007 as part of the mixed-use centers analysis, the existing capacity for population in the centers is approximately 2,950 residents. With the proposed amendments, the capacity for new population would be expected to range from approximately 18,000 to 33,000 residents. This is within the City's population growth target, and consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan* growth strategy to direct much of the City's growth toward its mixed-use centers.

Based on the same 2007 analysis, under existing zoning, employment within Tacoma's mixed-use centers is expected to grow by close to 7,500 full time employees between now and 2020; whereas, under proposed rezones and zoning code text amendments, employment growth within the mixed-use centers would be expected to be just over 7,600. The main reason for the difference in employment growth is due to the addition of the 34th and Pacific mixed-use center. Rezones and zoning code text amendments are not expected to affect significantly the rate of employment growth. However, this growth is within the City's 20-year growth target.

**j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?**

None. Proposals are non-project actions. Displacement could occur depending on future development proposals. Lower intensity single and multifamily uses could be displaced within some mixed-use center areas by more intensive development allowed under the proposed changes. Market forces will determine the likelihood of development. However, because the proposed amendments encourage more intensive development within the

mixed-use centers, it is likely that new development would include significantly more housing units than those that would be displaced.

**k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts**

No specific measures are needed or proposed at this time. This issue would be reviewed at time of proposed site specific development, and is dependent upon what existing housing is present at each site at the time development is proposed.

One of the purposes of this rezone/code update is to support the City's goal of providing housing, while also meeting the need for greater overall development density in its mixed use centers. By providing regulations that encourage increased residential density in these areas while requiring quality design features and pedestrian-orientation, these zoning code revisions will assist in meeting the population growth target established under the requirements of the GMA.

**l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land use and plans.**

The proposed amendments have been reviewed for consistency with the *Comprehensive Plan*. The Growth Management Act requirements exist to help ensure consistency between the *Comprehensive Plan* elements and to ensure that implementing regulations are consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan*.

The proposed amendments are intended to increase the consistency of the Land Use Regulatory Code and Official Zoning Map with the *Comprehensive Plan* and regional plans. In particular, text amendments would increase the consistency of the regulations related to the Tacoma Mall Urban Center, a designated Regional Growth Center (RGC), with multi-county criteria for RGCs adopted by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) and with the Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies. Additionally, the amendments aim to improve the compatibility of the centers with adjacent single-family areas by providing zoning and revising development and design standards such as height limits, setbacks, building massing and scale, visual treatment of building facades, landscaping, and location and screening of parking and driveways to address compatibility and aesthetics.

**m. Are there impact thresholds under this analysis that could be applied during project-level development review that would support a finding of non-significance for land use:**

The following conditions, if fully met, would support a finding of non-significance relative to land use at the project phase. If any of the following are not met, additional analysis under SEPA may be required.

1. *The project is a permitted use under the Land Use Regulatory Code, including under revisions to TMC 13.06.300.*
2. *The project conforms to the Design Standards, Residential Compatibility Standards, Landscaping and Buffer Standards, Pedestrian and Bicycle Support Standards, and Parking Standards, including new standards in TMC 13.06.500, 13.06.501, 13.06.502, 13.06.510, and 13.06.512.*

3. The project ensures, if there are on-site critical areas, that those critical areas or sensitive areas are analyzed and, if necessary, appropriate mitigation/protection is provided as required by TMC.13.11 (See Animals and Plant Sections 10 and 11).
4. The project does not require a discretionary land use permit.

## 2. HOUSING

### a. Approximately how many units would be provided? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

The proposed zoning map and text amendments would not directly provide new residential units. However, the proposed code revisions and related property rezones would encourage the inclusion of more intensive residential uses in mixed-use center zoning districts. Future mixed-use and/or single-use residential developments on specific sites in these zones could add a significant number of new units to the City's housing inventory. The proposed changes also include a height bonus for provision of mixed-income housing in the core mixed use center areas.

The tables below show an estimated range for the number of new housing units that could potentially be constructed based on existing mixed-use center zoning (Table 2; the three new mixed use centers are not included because they currently do not include X district zoning), and in the existing and new centers with proposed changes to zoning (Table 3). These tables are based on the 2007 analysis conducted for the 2007 Mixed Use Centers *Comprehensive Plan* updates. Proposed 2008 amendments to the mixed use centers code and zoning map are consistent with and follow from the 2007 *Comprehensive Plan* updates.

**Table 2: Housing and Population Capacity under Existing Zoning**

Mixed Use Center	Dwelling Unit Capacity (du)	Population Capacity
<b>Neighborhood Centers</b>		
38th and G	8.9	17.1
56th and STW	47.5	87.9
6th Avenue and Pine Street	94.9	175.5
Martin Luther King	672.2	1,243.7
Proctor	1.5	2.8
Stadium	157.5	291.3
<b>Community Centers</b>		
72nd and Pacific	8.3	15.4
72nd and Portland	31.1	73.1
James Center	3.7	10.1
Lower Portland	9.3	17.2
Tacoma Central	32.3	83.0
Westgate	0.0	0.0
<b>Urban Centers</b>		
Tacoma Mall	503.6	931.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,571</b>	<b>2,949</b>

Source: 2007 Mixed Use Center Analysis

**Table 3: Housing and Population Capacity under Proposed Zoning**

Mixed Use Center	Dwelling Unit Capacity (du)		Population Capacity	
	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max.</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max.</i>
<b>Neighborhood Centers</b>				
38th and G	242	440	448	814
56th and STW	398	684	736	1,266
6th Avenue and Pine Street	314	598	582	1,106
Martin Luther King	901	1,630	1,667	3,015
Proctor	354	546	656	1,009
Stadium	427	677	789	1,252
McKinley (new)	177	345	327	638
Tacoma Narrows (new)	56	113	104	209
<b>Community Centers</b>				
72nd and Pacific	645	1,108	1,194	2,050
72nd and Portland	1,099	1,845	2,033	3,413
James Center	294	492	545	910
Lower Portland	417	875	772	1,618
Tacoma Central	2,622	4,382	4,851	8,107
Westgate	1,450	2,425	2,682	4,486
34th & Pacific (new)	699	1,211	1,293	2,241
<b>Urban Centers</b>				
Tacoma Mall	454	636	840	1,176
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,550</b>	<b>18,005</b>	<b>19,518</b>	<b>33,309</b>

Source: 2007 Mixed Use Center Analysis

Under existing zoning, Tacoma’s mixed-use centers would have capacity for an additional 1,571 dwelling units or 2,949 in population (Table 2), whereas under proposed rezones and zoning code text amendments, Tacoma’s mixed-use centers would have capacity for an additional 10,550 to 18,005 dwelling units or 19,518 to 33,309 in population (Table 3). Proposed rezones include mixed-use center district zoning in the three new mixed-use centers. These amounts are within the City’s 20-year targeted population growth of 55,640 in new population. The amounts are also consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan* strategy to direct much of the City’s growth toward its mixed use centers.

New design/development standards for development in the mixed-use centers zones will reduce impacts on abutting residentially zoned properties, with revised residential compatibility standards, new design standards that increase requirements for building modulation and transparency, and revised landscaping standards.

The overall impact on housing would be to encourage an increase in the number of residential units in mixed-use center zoning districts. The Mixed Use Centers Zoning Code Update would also protect the City’s existing inventory of housing by improving the design of all new mixed-use center development located adjacent to residential zoning districts.

**b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.**

The Mixed Use Centers Zoning Code Update would not directly contribute to the elimination of any existing housing units. However, with redevelopment under the proposed zoning amendments, some existing housing units could be eliminated in the mixed-use centers.

New housing units would likely be redeveloped at greater densities than currently exist, particularly within the three new centers.

**c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts.**

The revised development standards will provide new opportunities, incentives and flexibility to encourage construction of market rate and affordable housing units in mixed-use centers. They also provide mitigation by further protecting adjoining residentially-zoned property. Specific measures that will be implemented through this update will:

- 1) Encourage more housing units in the mixed-use centers by raising minimum densities.
- 2) Encourage quality design of new housing units by strengthening design and landscaping standards for the mixed-use centers zones.
- 3) Encourage mixed income housing by allow a height bonus in the core area of the mixed-use center when affordable housing is provided.
- 4) Provide design, landscape and buffering, and residential compatibility standards that will limit impacts on single-family zones abutting mixed-use centers.
- 5) Create a new URX zone that will be applied to center areas with the greatest potential to affect abutting single-family zones.
- 6) Preserve existing single-family housing within the vicinity of South 8<sup>th</sup> Street & South I Street within the MLK center through application of the new NRX zone.

**d. Are there impact thresholds under this analysis that could be applied during project-level development review that would support a finding of non-significance for housing:**

The following condition, if met, would support a finding of non-significance at the project phase. If not met, additional analysis under SEPA may be required.

- *The project conforms to minimum densities and height limits of the district and, if adjacent to single-family residentially zoned areas, to the residential compatibility standards applicable to the mixed-use center districts, including new standards in TMC 13.06.300, 13.06.500, 13.06.501, 13.06.502, and 13.06.503.*

**3. RECREATION**

**a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?**

Various recreational opportunities exist throughout the city including parks, trails, playfields, shorelines and cultural facilities. These are described in the *Comprehensive Plan* Recreation and Open Space Facilities Plan Element. These sites range in size from regional parks to neighborhood scale parks and playgrounds and also include schools and various indoor recreational facilities such as swimming pools, gymnasiums and community centers.

**b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? Describe.**

It is not anticipated that any existing public parks or other public recreation facilities would be displaced by the types of development enabled by the Mixed Use Centers Zoning Code Update.

**c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation opportunities.**

Public park and recreation planning standards are primarily based on a combination of city-wide and defined sub-area population and or service levels. The proposed update is intended to accommodate population growth consistent with the City's growth targets and the *Comprehensive Plan*. The potential new residents associated with the residential component of future mixed-use developments allowed by the update have already been anticipated by the City's planning under GMA.

Additionally, the proposed amendments include yard/open space requirements for new multifamily housing and townhouse uses within the mixed-use centers. Further, the proposed amendments allow for a height bonus in the core areas of the mixed-use centers in exchange for provision of public open space such as a public plaza.

**d. Are there impact thresholds under this analysis that could be applied during project-level development review that would support a finding of non-significance for recreation:**

The following conditions, if fully met, would support a finding of non-significance at the project phase. If any of the following are not met, additional analysis under SEPA may be required.

1. *A landscaping plan would be submitted during permit review that is in compliance with the landscape requirements in the Land Use Regulatory Code, including new standards in TMC 13.06.502. If not, further analysis is needed during SEPA review.*
2. *The project will not be developed on property designated as open space or public recreation area. If the project is to be developed on land that is currently designated as open space or a public recreation area, appropriate analysis and suggested mitigation/protection measures must be proposed.*
3. *The project complies with the design and development standards of the mixed-use centers zoning districts, including provision of open space within residential developments.*

**4. TRANSPORTATION**

**a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site and describe the proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.**

There are over 15 major north-south arterials and over 17 east-west arterials that provide access throughout the City of Tacoma and the area covered by the proposed Mixed Use Centers Zoning Code Update. These arterials provide primary access to a complete grid of minor arterials and local access roadways as well as to major regional freeways including two interstate freeways I-5 and I-705, as well as four State Routes including SR-509, SR-16, SR-167, and SR-7. More detailed descriptions of the City's roadway system can be found in the Transportation Plan element of the City of Tacoma's *Comprehensive Plan*.

**b. Is the site currently served by public transit? If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?**

Local and regional transit services are available citywide, through Pierce Transit and Sound Transit. Pierce Transit provides local bus service throughout the areas affected by the proposed amendments. Approximately 30 Pierce Transit bus routes provide access throughout Tacoma and between Tacoma and Lakewood, Parkland, Steilacoom, Puyallup, Sumner, Buckley, Bonney Lake, Federal Way, SeaTac International Airport, Auburn, Olympia, and Seattle. Sound Transit's Regional Express, Link Light Rail, and Sounder Commuter Rail also operate in Tacoma. Within the City of Tacoma there are five transit centers including: Tacoma Community College, Tacoma Mall, Downtown Tacoma, Tacoma Dome Station, and 72nd & Portland. Sound Transit is implementing new commuter rail service south from Tacoma (at Tacoma Dome Station) to a new station in South Tacoma (near S 58th Street) and on to a terminus station in Lakewood.

**c. How many parking spaces would the complete project have? How many would the project eliminate?**

The proposal is a non-project action and does not include the direct construction or removal of parking. However, the proposed amendments include regulations covering:

- 1) The location of parking within developments,
- 2) The elimination of off-street parking requirements for new developments along core pedestrian streets in the mixed use centers, and
- 3) Allowances for reduced off-street parking requirements in exchange for inclusion of features and/or measures that reduce parking demand, such as: location near a transit stop, provision of a dedicated parking stall for a locally operating car-sharing program, a site-specific trip reduction program, mixed-use development, bicycle parking beyond the standard requirement, and motorcycle/scooter parking.
- 4) Additional clarification of parking standards for uses not previously listed in the MUC parking table, including industrial and institutional uses.

The specific need for and location of parking to serve future individual development proposals will be determined during the project review and approval stage based on the Zoning Code.

**d. Will the proposal require any new roads or streets, or improvements to existing roads or streets, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).**

The proposal is a non-project action and no new roads, streets or improvements to existing roads or street would be directly required. Improvements to existing roads or streets may be required depending on future development proposals and will be determined at project development stage. Traffic impact studies may be required depending on future development proposal's size and scope. If studies are required, specific impacts and improvement requirements for such development would be determined through the SEPA review process.

- e. **Will the project use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.**

None of the changes proposed by the Mixed Use Centers Zoning Code Update are expected to directly affect water, rail, or air transportation facilities in Tacoma. Future impacts by specific project actions will be evaluated at the development proposal stage and mitigation required in accordance with City ordinances.

- f. **How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur.**

The proposed Mixed Use Centers Zoning Code Update would not directly generate new trips. However, the proposed rezones and zoning text amendments will increase the development potential of the subject land parcels, and future development under the amended regulations would likely result in increased daily and peak hour vehicle trips, potentially above what could occur under existing zoning classifications and regulations. Since all development would continue to be subject to site-specific traffic impact review per City of Tacoma guidelines, no significant adverse impacts would occur due to the proposed amendments.

Additionally, the biggest increases in development capacity would likely occur in the core areas of the mixed-use centers, where development regulations will encourage a pedestrian and transit orientation, and compact development would likely result in reduced dependency on single-occupant vehicles. Considerable increases in capacity will also occur in the three new centers. However, the compact, mixed development that will be encouraged by the revised regulations could help to mitigate potential transportation impacts.

- g. **Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:**

New development would continue to be subject to traffic impact analysis and review per City of Tacoma guidelines. Site-specific mitigation for such development would continue to be determined through the SEPA review process. However, the proposed amendments include regulations that could help reduce or control transportation impacts, such as providing incentives for compact development and requiring design features that enhance the pedestrian environment, thereby making walking and transit more viable transportation options; and allowing reduced parking in exchange for features that reduce vehicle trips. The proposed amendments also encourage measures that reduce parking demand, such as providing bicycle parking beyond the required amount, providing a dedicated space for a car-sharing organization, and other features.

The City of Tacoma continually improves its transportation system through its long-range Transportation element of the *Comprehensive Plan* and its Six-Year Comprehensive Transportation Program. In addition, the City evaluates transportation levels of service to maintain GMA concurrency.

Additionally, *Comprehensive Plan* Policy LU-MUP-3 supports the development of center-specific parking management plans that address pricing, enforcement, parking duration and turnover, strategies for preventing spillover into surrounding residential areas (such as Residential Parking Zones), revenue and cost sharing options, and that identify SEPA

mitigation opportunities. As such plans are developed for the various centers, these will provide additional measures to reduce and/or mitigate potential parking impacts.

**h. Are there impact thresholds under this analysis that could be applied during project-level development review that would support a finding of non-significance for transportation:**

The following conditions, if fully met, would support a finding of non-significance at the project phase for traffic/transportation and parking. If any of the following are not met, additional analysis under SEPA may be required.

1. *The development proposal and traffic study have been previously (within the last year) reviewed and approved by the City's traffic engineer, the project has not been found to increase traffic or to exceed LOS restrictions at local intersections and major corridors, or to change access; or*
2. *If the project would not increase daily traffic on the adjacent street by more than 10% (confirmed by a licensed engineer or the City's traffic engineer); or*
3. *If a licensed engineer, with training in transportation/traffic analysis, concludes that no significant effects from the project are expected and a study is submitted and approved by the City's traffic engineer.*
4. *The project complies with applicable standards for off-street parking, transit supportive facilities, and pedestrian and bicycle support standards, including new standards in TMC 13.06.510, 13.06.511, and 13.06.512.*
5. *The project is consistent with the center-specific parking management plan that applies to the center in which the project is located, if such a plan has been developed, and complies with applicable mitigation measures shown in that plan.*

**5. AIR**

**a. What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal (i.e., dust, automobile, odors, and industrial wood smoke) during construction and when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if known.**

The proposed Mixed Use Centers Zoning Code Update would not result in an increase of direct emissions of any air contaminants. Land uses that would be allowed under the proposed zoning are currently allowed. Future development may result in localized increases in air pollution due to construction activity and vehicular traffic. However, the proposed amendments provide greater support for compact development that would reduce dependence on single-occupant vehicles and increase support for pedestrians, thereby encouraging reductions in auto use and associated emissions.

Some commercial uses are direct sources of air pollutant emissions (e.g., dry cleaners, some restaurants, etc.); however, all major sources of such pollution are subject to registration and inspection under the jurisdiction of the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA). These individual sources would continue to be subject to registration and permit conditions by PSCAA. In addition, commercial developments proposed under the modified code would still be subject to individual environmental reviews that would preclude

detrimental environmental impacts from such developments. Consequently, the proposed zoning code revisions and rezones would have minor implications for air quality within the affected area.

**b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe.**

There are many air pollution sources in the area covered by the proposed Mixed Use Centers Zoning Code Update including numerous motor vehicles, a variety of commercial and industrial sources, and emissions associated with residential space heating. Carbon monoxide has historically been a consideration for downtown Tacoma, but current levels are below Federal standards. None of these emission sources would have any direct bearing on the fundamental soundness or result of the proposed action.

**c. Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any:**

Development proposals will be reviewed concerning the applicability of local and state regulations regarding emissions. Proposed amendments related to the mixed-use centers are intended to support transition of these areas toward more compact development that supports greater use of transit and non-motorized transportation. This could ultimately have a positive effect on air quality.

**d. Are there impact thresholds under this analysis that could be applied during project-level development review that would support a finding of non-significance for air:**

The following conditions, if fully met, would support a finding of non-significance at the project phase. If any of the following are not met, additional analysis under SEPA may be required.

1. *Verification from PSCAA of registration for commercial developments that are major direct sources of air pollution (e.g., dry cleaning plants, coffee roasters, etc.). The PSCAA review process is designed to prevent air quality problems. Therefore, such sources should be exempt from City review as to potential air quality impacts with verification of such registration, except to the extent the proposal would affect the transportation system (as explained below).*
2. *Transportation thresholds for proposed developments reviewed in relation to the general requirements of the transportation conformity rule by complying with the following.*
  - *The proposal does not require a traffic impact study.*
  - *The proposal would not cause the peak-hour level of service (LOS) at any signalized intersection to degrade to LOS "D" or worse. Compared with either existing conditions or with the No Action Alternative, the proposal would not result in a worse LOS (i.e., a higher weighted average delay) at an intersection where the LOS is already "D" or worse. If either threshold is exceeded, at least a SEPA-level air quality review (see below) is required. If an air quality engineer or specialist conducts the review and submits a letter/report supporting that the project will meet all applicable requirements and guidelines additional analysis is not required; AND*

- *Proposed traffic mitigation measures do not require structural modifications at any signalized intersection.*
- *The affected intersection(s) identified above is not on either a state-controlled route or a major arterial. If it is, a complete transportation air quality conformity review is required.*

## **6. NOISE**

### **a. What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project (for example: traffic, equipment, and operation, other)?**

Noise sources in the area affected by the proposed Mixed Use Centers Zoning Code Update include traffic on a large number of major highways, arterials, and minor roads; aircraft; and a large variety of commercial and industrial uses.

### **b. What types and levels of noise would be created by or associated with the project on a short-term or a long-term basis (for example: traffic, construction, and operation, other)? Indicate what hours noise would come from the site.**

The proposed zoning code changes would have little potential to result in noise impacts to nearby properties because the currently allowed uses would remain similar as at present. The exception to this is within and adjacent to the three new mixed use centers, where land uses may intensify with development under the proposed amendments. Future noise levels would be typical of those with residential and mixed-use development, and would be associated primarily with traffic and the activity of residents and employees. Short term noise would be associated with construction of new developments within the centers. Thus, the types of noise stemming from construction or traffic or commercial operations allowed under the updated code would generally be similar to that under the existing code, although the levels may be somewhat higher due to greater activity levels. Developments allowed under present and proposed updated zoning classifications are subject to review to ensure applicable noise limits would be met. For that reason, the potential short- and long-term environmental noise implications of the proposed code update are minimally affected compared with the existing code.

It is worth noting that the requirements of the existing energy/building code can at times reduce the transmission of noise into and out of buildings, and between spaces within a building. For example, double-paned windows reduce the transmission of noise through walls with windows primarily by adding mass to a portion of the partition. While adding insulation in walls or between walls does not provide much noise attenuation because it does not add much mass, partitions or floors that add mass and/or that physically isolate one structure from another (e.g., a double-walled partition) provide more effective obstructions to “through-partition” noise transmission. So in general, more energy efficient walls and windows tend to reduce noise transmission.

### **c. Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any:**

Noise impacts will be evaluated at the development proposal stage and mitigation required in accordance with the City’s recently adopted noise ordinance. The proposed amendments include text amendments to mixed-use center zoning to address residential compatibility,

including noise, through development standards such as height limits; landscape buffers; placement of vehicle access, refuse collection areas and loading areas; etc.

Further, the proposed amendments will encourage the most intensive uses to concentrate in the core areas of the mixed-use centers, along core pedestrian streets in the most urban portions of the mixed-use centers. While the potential for increased noise is greater along core pedestrian streets, these are considered the most urban portions of the centers where greater levels of pedestrian activity are consistent with the goal of compact growth. This concentration in the center core areas will reduce potential impacts on single-family neighborhoods at the periphery of the mixed use centers.

With the adequate enforcement of the applicable noise rules, no additional noise control measures are warranted.

**d. Are there impact thresholds under this analysis that could be applied during project-level development review that would support a finding of non-significance for noise:**

***Background information on thresholds***

Many noise sources within the city are subject to noise limits established in the City's noise ordinance. Notable exceptions include noise generated by traffic traveling on public roads. Environmental noise impacts may result from both sources subject to the state limits and those that are exempt from the limits.

For a given noise source, factors affecting the sound transmission from the source, which affect the potential noise impact, include distance from the source, the frequency of the sound, the character of the sound, the absorbency of the intervening ground surfaces, the presence or absence of obstructions and their absorbency or reflectivity, and the duration of the sound. The degree of impact on humans also depends on who is listening, their sensitivity to noise in general and to the specific noise in question, and on existing sound levels at the receiver location.

*Construction Noise.* Noise related to construction of future projects developed under the updated zoning code has the potential to negatively impact nearby receivers, especially when those receiving locations are residential uses. The levels of noise from construction equipment and activities varies widely, and the total amount of noise generated on a construction site depends on the number pieces of equipment operating, and/or the number of noisy activities occurring at the same time.

While construction work is limited by TMC 8.122.090 and shall generally not be performed between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. on weekdays or between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m. on weekends and federal holidays, the primary means of controlling/reducing the potential for noise impacts from construction when it does occur are listed below. Employing these sorts of mitigation measures would greatly reduce the potential for noise impacts.

1. Increase the distance between the source(s) and the receiver(s). In simple terms, locate the noise source(s) as far as possible from any sensitive receiver(s). For example, for many construction activities, noise impacts can often be avoided by maintaining distances of 200 feet or more between sources and receivers.

2. Obstruct the sound path between the source(s) and the receiver(s). In the event it is not possible to provide distance to buffer noise, temporary noise barriers (e.g., plywood walls) should be placed around noise sources if the noisy equipment must be operated within about 200 feet of a sensitive receiver.
3. Decrease the duration of the noisy event(s). Turn off any unused, idling equipment.
4. Decrease the sound energy (the loudness) of the noisy event(s). Only use equipment with mufflers in good repair. Use noise-dampening technology (e.g., rubber truck bed liners) to reduce noise produced on the site.
5. Control the timing of noisy activities to avoid periods when people are trying to sleep or when they might otherwise be especially sensitive to noise (e.g., the early morning and evening).
6. Avoid particularly intrusive noise as much as possible, especially during periods of the day when people are likely to be most sensitive.
7. In the event it is necessary to conduct especially noisy activities for long durations or during periods when people may be sensitive to the effects of this noise, forewarn the neighbors.

*Operational Noise.* Noise from the operation of any commercial facilities developed under the updated code would be subject to the City's noise ordinance (TMC 8.122). Whether such noise requires an in-depth assessment should depend primarily on the proximity of the expected noise sources to off-site receivers, especially if the receivers are residential uses. Noise sources of potential concern include heating and ventilation (HVAC) units, truck docks, and any other sorts of loud or continuous noise sources.

In addition to the compliance with the City's noise ordinance, another issue is the potential overall impact associated with adding a new noise source in a relative quiet environment. Assessing this sort of situation requires knowledge of the existing acoustic environment that would be affected. This in turn can require sound levels measurements to document existing levels, unless it is clear that some existing source(s) dominate the existing situation to the degree that any new sources would be unlikely to be considered a major new source. For example, any developments within several hundred feet of a freeway or a busy highway would likely be dominated by traffic noise. Similarly, for some developments in locations near loud industrial sources it may be clear that noise is not likely to be an issue.

*Traffic Noise.* Noise from traffic along public roads is exempt from the City's noise ordinance, but such noise may nonetheless negatively impact some uses adjacent to the road.

The following conditions, if fully met, would support a finding of non-significance at the project phase. If any of the following are not met, additional analysis under SEPA may be required.

1. *The project complies with the City's noise ordinance (TMC 8.122).*
2. *The project does not propose construction activities to occur within 200 feet of a residence, park, or hospital.*
3. The project does not propose construction activities to occur within 1,000 feet of a residence, hospital or require construction either before 7:00 A.M. or after 9:00 P.M.

4. *The project would not employ an HVAC unit, truck loading/unloading facility, or other potentially intrusive noise source at an exterior location or exposure to the outdoors that would be located within 200 feet of an off-site sensitive receiver. Conversely, the project would not allow development of a residential use within 200 feet of a noise source with the potential to intrude on residential uses where there would be an expectation of quiet (e.g., a sleeping or outdoor use area use?)*

## **7(a). AESTHETICS (VIEWS)**

- a. **What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas: what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?**

*Building Height.* Since this is a non-project action, there are no proposed structures; however, the new code will allow increased building heights in a few of the zoning classifications. The proposed rezones will also result in increased allowable height in some areas, but will reduce height in others.

The proposed amendments would increase allowable building height in areas being upzoned (primarily the three new centers). The proposed amendments would also increase the base height limit (without bonus) in the CCX zone from 60' to 65' and for the NCX zone in the MLK center from 45' to 65'. Additionally, the proposed amendments would also designate core pedestrian streets along which NCX and CCX zoned properties are eligible for a height bonus. The majority of the core pedestrian streets are already designated pedestrian streets. On core pedestrian streets, the maximum height with bonus would be 65' in NCX (where 45' is currently allowed), and 85' in CCX (where 60' is currently allowed). The area eligible for the height bonus is within 200' of a core pedestrian street. In the Stadium and MLK centers, the base height of the NCX zone would be 65 feet (reduction of 10 feet in the Stadium center) and within the height bonus area, the maximum height would be 85 feet. Further, proposed changes to design standards would require mass reduction techniques, and proposed changes to residential compatibility standards would limit heights adjacent to single-family zones.

*Proposed Exterior Building Materials.* This is a non-project action and no materials on structures are specifically proposed; however, proposed changes to design standards provide guidelines for exterior building appearance, such as exterior materials, modulation, windows and other features to break up large extents of facades. This can include changes in building materials. The aim is quality design and attractive visual character within the mixed use centers.

- b. **What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?**

View impacts will be evaluated at the development proposal stage and mitigation required in accordance with City ordinances. With future development, the visual character of the mixed-use centers will change. While this will be a change to greater intensity, it is expected that proposed design standards will result in an attractive visual quality of future development.

Tacoma has many views that are considered desirable (mountains, water, and port); however, the proposed zones which have increased allowable heights are not located in the view sensitive overlay zoning district.

**c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts if any:**

The new code contains numerous policies, guidelines, and standards aimed at improving and enhancing the visual environment throughout the mixed-use centers, and one goal of the proposed amendments is to improve the visual and aesthetic character of future development in the centers. While existing landscaping, residential compatibility, building design and landscaping standards provide some mitigation for the aesthetic impacts from new projects, the proposed amendments to development, design, and landscaping standards are generally more stringent than existing standards. The proposed amendments focus on the quality of the pedestrian and visual environment in the mixed-use centers by addressing residential compatibility (through a height transition requirement), building massing and transparency, landscaping, and placement of vehicle access, refuse collection areas and loading areas.

Standards are also proposed that will apply specifically to townhouses within the mixed-use centers, and specifically to duplex and triplex uses within the centers. Previously, structures of four or fewer residential units were exempt from design standards, unless the structure contained a mix of uses.

Additionally, the proposed URX zone will be applied in areas with the greatest potential to affect single-family zoned areas outside of mixed-use centers. The proposed URX zone is limited to residential uses with a maximum height of 45'. Design standards will apply. The proposed NRX zone also provides mitigation for aesthetic conditions within the vicinity of South 8th Street & South I Street in the MLK center, by limiting future new uses in this area to those that are most similar to existing uses in terms of use, height, structure size, and setbacks.

**d. Are there impact thresholds under this analysis that could be applied during project-level development review that would support a finding of non-significance for aesthetics/views:**

The following condition, if fully met, would support a finding of non-significance relative to the aesthetic (view) considerations of SEPA. If not met, additional analysis under SEPA may be required.

- *The project would meet the land use requirements, development standards, building standards, landscaping and design standards applicable to the zone in which it is located, including the new requirements of TMC 13.06.300, 13.06.500 13.06.501, 13.06.502, and 13.06.503.*

**7(b). AESTHETICS (LIGHT AND GLARE)**

**a. What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?**

Light and glare will not be produced per se from the zoning code changes. However, with future development, additional lighting will result from exterior building lighting, parking area lighting, interior building lighting visible through windows, and vehicles associated with increased activity at new development.

Further, the proposed amendments call for somewhat greater pedestrian lighting along designated and core pedestrian streets, and greater building transparency in these locations, when redevelopment occurs. This will increase light during early morning hours and evening in the core portions of the mixed-use centers. However, such lighting and transparency will be focused on creating an attractive and safe pedestrian environment.

**b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?**

Future development will be regulated by the City's land use and building codes and is not expected to result in adverse light or glare impacts such as safety hazards or interference with views.

**c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?**

Future development proposals may need to address light and glare from existing sources such as stationary sources (street lights, lighting associated with surface parking lots and exterior security lighting around buildings) and mobile sources (motor vehicles operating on streets adjacent to the proposed development).

**d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any:**

Existing City ordinances regulate light and glare hazards and require mitigation, if needed. As stated above, increases in lighting directly associated with the proposed amendments to design standards will be focused on creating an attractive and safe pedestrian environment.

**e. Are there impact thresholds under this analysis that could be applied during project-level development review that would support a finding of non-significance for light and glare:**

The following condition, if fully met, would support a finding of non-significance relative to light and glare for future proposed project. If not met, additional analysis under SEPA may be required.

- *The project meets the applicable lighting requirements of and standards of the Land Use Regulatory Code, including new standards in TMC 13.06.500, 13.06.501, 13.06.503, and 13.06.512.*

**8. HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL PRESERVATION**

**a. Are there any places or objects listed on, or proposed for, national, state, or local preservation registers known to be on or next to the site? If so, generally describe.**

The proposals are non-project actions. However, there are over 1,100 sites, structures, properties and buildings listed on the national, state, and Tacoma Registers of Historic Places as either individual properties or within one of Tacoma's six historic and conservation districts, some of which are located within mixed-use centers. Approximately 130 of the properties are individually listed. The North Slope Historic District is listed on the national, state, and Tacoma historic registers and contains approximately 900 properties (the boundaries of the local and national districts differ slightly). The Old City Hall District is listed on the national, state, and Tacoma registers of historic places and contains approximately 60

individual properties (approximately 47 buildings). The Union Station District is listed on the national, state and Tacoma registers of historic places and contains approximately 51 individual properties (approximately 32 buildings). The Union Station Conservation District is listed on the Tacoma register of historic places and contains approximately 70 individual properties (approximately 50 buildings). The Salmon Beach Historic District is listed on the state historic register.

**b. Generally describe any landmarks or evidence of historic, archaeological, scientific, or cultural importance known to be on or next to the site.**

The proposals are non-project actions. Landmark buildings in Tacoma vividly depict the history of the city from the 1880s to the present. Architectural surveys conducted between 1981 and the present have identified approximately 1,600 properties that are potentially eligible for listing within the City, some of which are located within mixed-use centers.

The area in which the City of Tacoma is located also has many locations of ethnographic, scientific and cultural importance. Archaeological site records for the Tacoma area are maintained by the Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. The Archeological Resources Survey of the City of Tacoma, July 31, 1996, lists sensitive archeological resource locations by address.

**c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts, if any:**

The proposals are non-project actions. However, future development would have similar potential to affect historic or cultural resources with or without the proposed amendments, and the proposed amendments do not affect the City's regulations regarding historic structures except by providing an incentive for retention, renovation and incorporation of an existing designated or listed historic structure.

Additionally, the City of Tacoma is a Certified Local Government that maintains an active Landmarks Commission, professional historic preservation staff, a historic preservation ordinance that governs the treatment of historic properties, and provides public access and educational outreach. The City actively updates its architectural survey data. Local and federal tax incentives for historic preservation are available for building renovations and preservation. Designated buildings and properties within designated local districts are subject to design approval for exterior modifications by the Landmarks Preservation Commission. The Historic Preservation Office serves as a consulting party for Section 106 review and SEPA review.

Tacoma has three local historic special review districts and one conservation district. The Historic Special Review District, an overlay zoning district, is intended to protect the historic character through design review and the application of requirements for exterior building modifications, new structures, and streetscape elements.

As described above, the proposed amendments promote preservation of historic structures by allowing for a height bonus on core pedestrian streets in exchange for retention, renovation and/or incorporation of an existing designated or listed historic structure with approval of the Landmarks Commission.

- d. **Are there impact thresholds under this analysis that could be applied during project-level development review that would support a finding of non-significance for cultural and historical resources:**

The following conditions, if fully met, would support a finding of non-significance at the project phase. If any of the following are not met, additional analysis under SEPA may be required.

1. *The building or development is not located within or adjacent to the City's historic special review districts, a designated historic building or known archeological site.*
2. *The building is not required to gain Landmarks Commission approval.*
3. *A signed letter from a historian and/or archeologist with expertise in these resources states that there are no known or suspected resources on or adjacent to the proposed project area.*
4. *Studies have recently been conducted in the area of the project that would substantiate no resource exists on or adjacent to the project site.*

## 9. WATER

### a. Surface water:

- 1) ***Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (including year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands)? If yes, describe type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into.***

Tacoma is a peninsula surrounded on the west by portions of Puget Sound, including the Narrows, and on the east by Commencement Bay. Additionally there are several lakes, including Wapato Lake, Snake Lake, and China Lake; numerous streams and rivers such as the Puyallup River, Swan Creek, Puget Creek and Hylebos Creek; and a significant number of seasonal and perennial streams and wetlands.

Within the mixed-use centers, the James Center contains some probable wetland area. The Lower Portland center, 72nd & Pacific center, and 56th & STW center are located in the vicinity of and may contain streams and known or potential wetland areas, according to the Wetlands and Streams maps in the Environmental Policy Element of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

- 2) ***Will the project require any work over, in, or adjacent to (within 200 feet) the described waters? If yes, please describe and attach available plans.***

No work over, in or adjacent to any surface water features would be associated directly with the changes to the zoning code. However, work would occur during development construction under the updated zoning code. Types of construction activities could be the same under both the current and proposed zoning codes, but may be more likely to happen in the near future with the proposed amendments. No significant impacts are expected from the zoning code changes.

**3) Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of fill material.**

No fill or dredge material would be placed in or near any surface water features due to the specific changes in the zoning code. The same grading activities could occur at the subsequent project-level under either the current or proposed zoning codes, but may be more likely to happen in the near future with the proposed amendments. No significant impacts are expected from the zoning code change.

**4) Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.**

No surface water withdrawals or diversions are proposed or anticipated as a result of this Mixed Use Centers Zoning Code Update, as the proposal is a non-project action.

**5) Does the proposal lie within a 100-year floodplain? If so, note location on the site plan.**

The 100-year flood plain within the city includes the following areas: Puyallup River; an area of tideflats near SR-509 and Portland Ave.; a tideflat area near Taylor Way, Alexander Ave. and SR-509; the creek area east of Portland Ave. between I-5 and S. 56th St.; the Larchmont Playground area near S. 84th St. and Pacific Ave.; the area near S. 84th and S. Hosmer streets; the Wapato Lake area near S. 72nd St. and Sheridan Ave.; the Flett Creek area near S. Tacoma Way and S. 74th St.; the China Lake Park area near S. 19th St. and SR-16; and the Titlow Park area near 6th Ave. and the BNSF and UP railroad tracks. The proposed non-project actions would have very little if any impact on future development in areas within the 100-year flood plain.

**6) Does the proposal involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters? If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge.**

The proposed action would not directly involve any discharges of waste material to surface waters. Drainage impacts will be evaluated at time of development review of site-specific proposals. Existing federal, state and local laws are expected to mitigate potential impacts. Any project related impacts will be mitigated in accordance with City ordinances and the *City of Tacoma Stormwater Management Manual*.

**b. Groundwater:**

**1) Will groundwater be withdrawn, or will water be discharged to groundwater? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.**

No groundwater withdrawals or discharges would occur directly as a result of this Zoning Code Update. However, the City of Tacoma has a municipal water system, and there is a large groundwater aquifer, the South Tacoma Aquifer System, that is a significant drinking water source in the city. The system is protected by the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District, an overlay zoning district that is approximately 25 percent of the City's area.

There is no specific proposal to discharge surface water into groundwater through future development projects. Any future projects would comply with City ordinances and the *City of Tacoma Stormwater Management Manual*.

**2) Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources, if any (for example: Domestic sewage; industrial, containing the following chemicals ...; agricultural; etc.). Describe the general size of the system, the number of such systems, the number of houses to be served (if applicable), or the number of animals or humans the system(s) are expected to serve.**

No waste from septic systems or other sources are proposed to be discharged directly due to the Zoning Code Update. With future development, sanitary waste would be discharged into the City's sanitary sewer system. Projects developed under the proposal would comply with all applicable federal, state and local regulations regarding discharge of waste material.

**c. Surface water runoff (including stormwater):**

**1) Describe the source of runoff (including stormwater) and method of collection and disposal, if any (include quantities, if known). Where will this water flow? Will this water flow into other waters? If so, describe.**

Stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces is currently being directed to the City's storm drainage system, which includes curbs, gutters, catch basins, storm drain pipes, culverts, ditches, holding basins, and outfalls. The Mixed Use Centers Zoning Code Update will not directly change the collection, conveyance or discharge of stormwater to major water bodies such as Commencement Bay, Puget Sound, or the Puyallup River; however, the new code requirements could potentially reduce the overall impervious area during future project development due to greater landscaping requirements. There are five major sub watersheds including Northeast Tacoma, Tideflats, Lower Puyallup, Thea Foss Waterway, Flett Creek, Leach Creek, and Western Slopes. Each of these watersheds contains areas affected by the rezones.

Much of the area subject to zoning code changes (approximately 2,345 acres) is currently paved or covered by buildings. The storm drainage system impacts from development proposals that occur will be evaluated at the time of development proposal(s). Mitigation may be required in accordance with City regulations including the City of Tacoma Stormwater Management Manual. No significant change in runoff is expected as a result of any of the proposed amendments.

**2) Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters? If so, generally describe.**

No. City sanitary sewer hook-up would be required at the time of future development proposals. Stormwater runoff would need to comply with City regulations including the City of Tacoma Stormwater Management Manual.

**d. Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground, and runoff water impacts, if any:**

City ordinances require hook-up to sewer and any proposed development will be required to ensure that stormwater discharge will meet the City's stormwater requirements found in the

City of Tacoma Stormwater Management Manual, including applicable Department of Ecology Best Management Practices (BMPs).

Further, the proposed amendments include height bonuses on the core pedestrian streets in exchange for sustainable stormwater management features such as green roofs and Low Impact Development (LID), which could have positive impacts on management of stormwater runoff.

- e. Are there impact thresholds under this analysis that could be applied during project-level development review that would support a finding of non-significance for water resources:**

The following conditions, if fully met, would support a finding of non-significance at the project phase. If the following is not met, additional analysis under SEPA may be required.

- 1. The project proposes to meet or exceed the requirements of the current and any future revisions to the City of Tacoma Stormwater Management Manual.*
- 2. The project will not impact a FEMA floodplain/flood hazard area.*
- 3. The proposed project will not infiltrate stormwater in the Aquifer Recharge Area.*

## **10. EARTH**

- a. General description of the site (circle one): Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other.**

The topography of the mixed-use centers includes all types of terrain, from flat to steep slopes. Most of the area has been substantially graded and urbanized. There are steep slopes in and near some of the centers.

- b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)?**

The slopes range from 0% to greater than 40%.

- c. What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them and note any prime farmland.**

The rezone areas lie within the Puget Sound Basin, a north-south oriented lowland located between the Olympic and Cascade Mountain ranges. There are thick glacial deposits and alluvial, unconsolidated sediments. Most of the soils are coarse loams and are heavily modified by past development. Based on U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service data, the typical soil classification for the area is Sinclair, gravelly fine sandy loam rolling. This soil type is found in areas of moderate slope (6-15 percent), has very slow permeability and often contains cemented till at a depth of 2-3 feet. Soil characteristics are expected to vary throughout the rezone areas.

- d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe.**

Tacoma is designated as a Zone 3 Seismic Hazard Zone, as is the entire Puget Sound region. This designation is based on life safety and the potential for property damage as a result of seismic activity. Zone 1 includes those areas that are least likely and Zone 4 includes those that are most likely to experience injury and/or building damage as a result of a seismic event. The City's geologically hazardous areas are generally mapped in the Environmental Policy element of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

- e. Describe the purpose, type, and approximate quantities of any filling or grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.**

As properties within the rezone area develop or redevelop, site-specific topographic modifications may be necessary. Quantities of fill and grading cannot be estimated at this time. Filling or grading controls will be monitored by the City at the time of permit approval and construction. Much of the affected area is already developed, and the street grades and general topographic features are not expected to be dramatically altered. Excavation and terracing normally associated with construction will occur on parcels to be developed.

- f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe.**

Future growth could result in localized erosion from construction. Erosion controls based on the City's adopted stormwater manual and development codes will be required by the City at the time of permit approval and construction. With the use of BMPs and compliance with stormwater requirements, no significant erosion is anticipated during or after development.

- g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)?**

Proposed changes to zoning within the existing and new mixed use centers, and in particular, text revisions to the Land Use Regulatory Code to raise required minimum densities in center zoning districts (X zones), allowance for bonus heights along core pedestrian streets, and rezones that include upzoning (upzoning would occur primarily in the three new centers) could lead to future development of more intensive uses than currently exist. However, much of the land within the centers is already urbanized and covered with impervious surface. Additionally, in some commercial portions of these mixed-use center areas, substantial impervious surface area already exists in the form of surface parking lots. With compact development and enhanced landscaping it is possible that, over time, a small overall reduction in the total impervious surface area of existing commercial uses in the centers could occur. Further some rezones will be from RCX to the new URX or NRX zones, both of which will reduce the allowed intensity in those specific areas.

- h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any:**

There would be no significant difference in impacts to earth resources between the existing and proposed zoning code because construction would likely be similar to what could occur without the changes and the same restrictions would apply. Future development proposals will be required to meet the grading and erosion control requirements of the City of Tacoma at the time of development.

**i. Are there impact thresholds under this analysis that could be applied during project-level development review that would support a finding of non-significance for earth:**

The following conditions, if fully met, would support a finding of non-significance at the project phase. If any of the following are not met, additional analysis under SEPA may be required.

- 1. Proposed project or its associated fill or excavation is not within an area regulated by the Critical Areas Ordinance.*
- 2. The project proposes to comply with all regulations including the Building Code Section 2.02 of the TMC, the City's Land Use Regulatory Code, including Title 13.11, and all adopted Best Management Practices (BMPs).*
- 3. Filling of up to a six-inch layer of gravel, rock, or other types of soils for the purpose of providing erosion control on a site provided the quantity of fill does not exceed 5,000 cy and filling does not occur within an area regulated by the Critical Areas Ordinance.*
- 4. An excavation which is less than two feet in depth or does not create a cut or fill slope greater than five feet in height and steeper than two horizontal to one vertical, provided the quantity of fill does not exceed 5,000 cy and filling does not occur within an area regulated by the Critical Areas Ordinance.*

**11. ANIMALS**

**a. Birds and animals, which have been observed on or near the area or are known to be on or near the area:**

The following have been observed or are known on or near land contained within the City limits:

**birds:** hawk, heron, bald eagle, songbirds, **other:** seagulls

**mammals:** deer, **other:** squirrel, raccoon, opossum, rabbit  
Southern Resident Killer Whales (Southern Resident Orcas)

**fish:** salmon, trout, shellfish

The mixed use centers are generally already urbanized and support limited wildlife.

**b. List any threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the area.**

There are no known threatened or endangered species on sites where zoning changes are proposed. Affected geographic areas are predominately developed. Threatened and endangered species, flora and fauna, can be found on the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Priority Habitat and Species maps.

The following discussion pertains to land contained within the City limits and its immediate vicinity:

Bald Eagles were first protected by the Bald Eagle Protection Act of 1940 and later listed as endangered under the ESA of 1973. In 1978 the eagle was reclassified as threatened in five states, including Washington. Bald Eagles use Commencement Bay as a foraging area and

the surrounding shoreline areas are possibly used for wintering and nesting. On June 28, 2007, Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne announced the removal of the bald eagle from the list of threatened and endangered species.

Commencement Bay and its waterways support populations of salmon species. In May 1999, the National Marine Fisheries Service declared Chinook salmon and several other species of native fish as endangered species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

In addition, on November 15, 2005 NMFS/NOAA Fisheries listed the Southern Resident population of killer whales as endangered under the ESA. Southern resident Orca Whales occur in the marine waters throughout Washington and regularly occur within Puget Sound are most likely to take advantage of chum and Chinook salmon runs (Krahn et al. 2004). Southern Resident Orcas are present in Commencement Bay; however, that presence appears to be limited. Additional species, flora and fauna, can be found on the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Priority Habitat and Species maps.

**c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain.**

The City of Tacoma is within the Pacific Flyway for migratory birds. Migrating species of geese and ducks can be found in Wapato Lake, other lakes, ponds, wetlands and waterways of Tacoma, as well as the Puyallup River. Juvenile salmon migrate along the shorelines of Commencement Bay, Puyallup River and Port waterways. Adult salmon, including listed Puget Sound Chinook and Bull trout, migrate along the shorelines and within Commencement Bay to the Puyallup River, port waterways, Hylebos Creek, Puget Creek, Wapato Creek and Leach Creek.

**d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any:**

The proposed zoning code revisions are not expected to significantly change existing disturbance levels within the project area. Therefore disturbance impacts to threatened, endangered, or sensitive species are not expected.

Development proposals would be reviewed for compliance with City ordinances including the Critical Areas Protection Ordinance. A Habitat Zone map is established in the Environmental Policy element. Also wetlands and streams of local significance are established in the TMC and the Environmental Policy Element. The intent is to use the habitat zone maps and wetlands and streams of local significance, to focus on those undeveloped areas which are also providing high habitat function and value.

**e. Are there impact thresholds under this analysis that could be applied during project-level development review that would support a finding of non-significance for animals:**

The following conditions, if fully met, would support a finding of non-significance at the project phase. If any of the following are not met, additional analysis under SEPA would be required.

1. *The proposed project does not contain critical areas and will not directly discharge stormwater to critical areas; and*
2. *All applicable regulations including current stormwater management regulations equivalent to Ecology regulations would be implemented; and*
3. *No federal nexus exists that would require a biological assessment or evaluation; and*

4. *The project would comply with the Critical Areas Ordinance.*

## 12. PLANTS

### a. Types of vegetation found within the area of zoning code changes.

- deciduous tree: alder, maple, aspen, other
- evergreen tree: fir, cedar, pine, other
- shrubs
- grass
- pasture
- crop or grain
- wet soil plants: cattail, buttercup, bullrush, skunk cabbage, other
- water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other
- other types of vegetation

### b. What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered?

Land within the mixed-use centers has already been greatly modified by human activity. Native plant cover is generally limited to small, often steep-sloped or marshy areas. Outside of the fragmented areas of native vegetation, most of the existing vegetation is the result of landscaping. Full development buildout, consistent with the land use code changes, may increase the amount of impervious surface in the area subject to zoning code changes. However, this increase could be offset by the new landscaping requirements.

### c. List threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site.

There are no known threatened or endangered species on sites where zoning changes are proposed. Affected geographic areas are predominately developed. Threatened and endangered species, flora and fauna, can be found on the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Priority Habitat and Species maps.

### d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation in the area, if any:

Screening and other landscaping to address land use conflicts and site aesthetics will be required at time of development consistent with proposed changes to landscaping standards applicable to the mixed-use centers. There will be increased landscaping requirements to support the City's overall sustainability and environmental goals and to improve the aesthetic quality of the centers.

### e. Are there impact thresholds under this analysis that could be applied during project-level development review that would support a finding of non-significance for plants:

The following conditions, if fully met, would support a finding of non-significance at the project phase. If any of the following are not met, additional analysis under SEPA would be required.

1. *The project would meet the applicable landscaping and buffer requirements of the Land Use Regulatory Code, including new standards in 13.06.502.*
2. *The proposed project does not contain critical areas and will not directly discharge stormwater to critical areas.*

3. *All applicable regulations including current stormwater management regulations equivalent to Ecology regulations would be implemented (See Water Section 9 of this Checklist).*
4. *No federal nexus exists that would require a biological assessment or evaluation.*
5. *The project would comply with the Critical Areas Ordinance.*

### **13. ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

- a. What kinds of energy (electric, natural gas, oil, wood stove, solar) will be used to meet the completed project's energy needs? Describe whether it will be used for heating, manufacturing, etc.**

Future developments will require energy under existing regulations or the proposed amendments. Energy demand of future development proposals will be typical of urban residential and commercial buildings.

- b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? If so, generally describe.**

Future development projects consistent with the proposed amendments could restrict solar access to adjacent properties. However, the proposed design standards address solar access to new buildings. Specific impacts would be considered during permit review and if needed, mitigating conditions may be attached to approvals.

- c. What kinds of energy conservation features are included in the plans of this proposal? List other proposed measures to reduce or control energy impacts, if any?**

Proposed amendments are intended to provide regulatory guidance for transition of the mixed-use centers toward more compact development that supports greater use of transit and non-motorized transportation. This could ultimately have a positive effect on energy conservation.

Further, the proposed amendments include height bonuses on the core pedestrian streets in exchange for sustainable features such as solar power generation, energy efficiency, or a green roof (which could reduce heating and cooling needs). These features would have positive impacts on energy conservation.

- d. Are there impact thresholds under this analysis that could be applied during project-level development review that would support a finding of non-significance for energy and natural resources:**

The following condition, if fully met, would support a finding of non-significance at the project phase. If the following is not met, additional analysis under SEPA would be required.

- *The project complies with the City of Tacoma's Energy Code.*

**14. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

- a. Are there any environmental health hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, risk of fire and explosion, spill, or hazardous waste, that could occur as a result of this proposal? If so, describe.**

None. Proposals are non-project actions. Specific hazards will be assessed at the project development stage.

- b. Describe special emergency services that might be required.**

None. Proposals are non-project actions. It is not anticipated that special services would be required beyond what is normally required for any development project.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any:**

Existing federal, state and local laws are expected to mitigate potential environmental health hazards from site specific developments that would occur under the proposed revised regulations. In addition, SEPA allows the City to attach mitigation measures at time of development proposal, if needed.

- d. Are there impact thresholds under this analysis that could be applied during project-level development review that would support a finding of non-significance for environmental health:**

The following conditions, if fully met, would support a finding of non-significance at the project phase. If any of the following are not met, additional analysis under SEPA would be required.

1. *The project complies with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations.*
2. *Due diligence studies indicate that no recognized environmental conditions are identified at the project site or surrounding adjacent properties.*
3. *If there is a known source of contamination, soil and/or groundwater remediation will be performed in concurrence with the planned development and remediation and monitoring will be performed in accordance with Ecology's guidelines and Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP) review.*
4. *There are no enforcement orders from Ecology attached to the site.*

**15. PUBLIC UTILITIES**

- a. Check utilities currently available at the site:**

Most of the affected parcels are served by all of the services listed below or can be connected at the time of development.

- |              |                |
|--------------|----------------|
| <u>  X  </u> | Electricity    |
| <u>  X  </u> | Natural Gas    |
| <u>  X  </u> | Water          |
| <u>  X  </u> | Refuse Service |
| <u>  X  </u> | Telephone      |
| <u>  X  </u> | Sanitary Sewer |

- Septic System
- Other: Cable Television, Telecommunications
- Storm Drainage

**b. Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity, which might be needed.**

- Electrical Power ..... Tacoma Power, a division of Tacoma Public Utilities;
- Natural Gas ..... Puget Sound Energy;
- Water ..... Tacoma Water, a division of Tacoma Public Utilities;
- Solid Waste ..... Solid Waste Utility, a division of the Tacoma Public Works Department;
- Telephone/Communications .. Qwest Communications, CommSouth, Integra Telcom, McLeod USA, ReCONEX, Comcast, OrbitCom, Inc., Rainier Connect, Telnet, Inc., Time Warner Telecom, Trinsic Communications, Inc., WTI, XO Communications and Click! - a division of Tacoma Public Utilities;
- Sewer ..... City of Tacoma Environmental Services, a division of the Tacoma Public Works Department;
- Storm Drainage ..... City of Tacoma Environmental Services, a division of the Tacoma Public Works Department.

Utilities in Tacoma (municipal railroad, electricity, sanitary sewer, stormwater, solid waste, telecommunications, and water) that are managed by the City are consistent with the City's long-range (20-year) *Capital Facilities and Utilities* plan elements and the City's short-range (6-year) *Capital Facilities Program*. The *Capital Facilities Program* is updated annually to ensure consistency with the *Comprehensive Plan*. Subsequent updates would reflect changes associated with the Mixed Use Centers Zoning Code Update.

The proposed Mixed Use Centers Zoning Code Update would not generate new utility demand; however, the update could change development potential of some parcels throughout the City.

The increased residential and mixed-use capacity that would result from the proposed amendments could result in an increase in utility demands compared to existing zoning.

**c. Are there impact thresholds under this analysis that could be applied during project-level development review that would support a finding of non-significance for public utilities:**

The following condition, if fully met, would support a finding of non-significance at the project phase. If the following is not met, additional analysis under SEPA would be required.

- *Project concurrency certification (permit review) or an appropriate mitigation will be completed at the permit review stage.*

**16. PUBLIC SERVICES**

- a. **Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example: fire protection, police protection, health care, schools, other)? If so, generally describe.**

The proposed changes will not adversely affect City public facilities and services. However, at the time of a project application, public services should be evaluated in accordance with service levels established in the City's Capital Facilities Element.

- b. **Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any.**

Proposals are non-project actions. Specific impacts will be assessed at the project stage. However, proposed amendments facilitate compact development, which can result in the ability to provide urban services more efficiently.

- c. **Are there impact thresholds under this analysis that could be applied during project-level development review that would support a finding of non-significance for public services:**

The following conditions, if fully met, would support a finding of non-significance at the project phase. If any of the following are not met, additional analysis under SEPA would be required.

1. *The project complies with applicable off-street parking standards and emergency vehicle circulation requirements.*
2. *The project, if a designated public facility, complies with the objectives of the City of Tacoma Capital Facilities Plan.*

**C. SIGNATURE**

The above answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand the lead agency is relying on them to make its decision.

**Signature of Proponent/Applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **D. SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NONPROJECT ACTIONS**

*(Do not use this sheet for project actions.)*

Because these questions are very general, it may be helpful to read them in conjunction with the list of the elements of the environment.

When answering these questions, be aware of the extent the proposal, or the types of activities likely to result from the proposal, would affect the item at a greater intensity or at a faster rate than if the proposal were not implemented. Respond briefly and in **general** terms.

### **1. How would the proposal be likely to increase discharge to water; emissions to air; production, storage, or release of toxic or hazardous substances; or production of noise?**

Adoption of the proposed Land Use Regulatory Code and Official Zoning Map amendments would not directly affect discharges, emissions, hazardous substances, or noise.

The rezones associated with the three new mixed use centers (34th/Pacific, McKinley, and Narrows) and the text amendments and some rezones in the existing centers would allow more intensive development. These could increase traffic noise and emissions associated with traffic in the local areas.

#### **Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:**

Existing City, State and Federal regulations will be applied at the time of a development project approval, and projects will be reviewed for consistency with the thresholds contained in this checklist.

Proposed amendments address the compatibility of development in the mixed-use centers with adjacent single-family residential areas. This includes the use of the new URX zone in areas most likely to affect single-family neighborhoods, and the new NRX zone in the South 8th Street & South I Street area of the MLK center. The application of these zoning classifications would help to address potential noise concerns. The URX zone would not allow commercial uses and provides a lower level of height and intensity than other X districts, more compatible with single-family uses.

Proposed amendments are enhancements to regulations that will guide transition of the centers toward more compact development that supports greater use of transit and non-motorized transportation. This could mitigate the potential increases in noise and pollution associated with traffic, and could ultimately have a positive effect on air quality.

Refer also to the discussion of Water, Air, and Environmental Health contained in this Environmental Checklist.

### **2. How would the proposal be likely to affect plants, animals, fish, or marine life?**

Adoption of the proposed amendments would not have a significant impact on plants, animals, fish or marine life.

#### **Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:**

Each project developed under the proposed amendments will be reviewed at time of permit application and if required, mitigation for impacts to natural areas (streams, wetlands and associated buffers) will be part of the approval process. Each project developed under the

proposed amendments will be reviewed at time of permit application for consistency with applicable regulations and the thresholds contained in this checklist, and if required, mitigation for impacts to natural areas (streams, wetlands and associated buffers) will be part of the approval process.

Refer to the discussion of *Plants and Animals* contained in this Environmental Checklist.

**3. How would the proposal be likely to deplete energy or natural resources?**

Future development proposals allowed under the amended Land Use Regulatory Code may require more energy than current land uses require due to increased development intensity.

**Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:**

Existing City ordinances require energy efficient buildings and limitations on the use of unnecessary power for lighting. Additionally, projects will be reviewed based on the thresholds contained in this checklist.

Proposed amendments are enhancements to regulations that will guide transition of the centers toward more compact development that supports greater use of transit and non-motorized transportation. This could ultimately have a positive effect on energy conservation. The proposed height bonus program for core mixed use center areas also encourages the use of green building and energy conserving techniques.

Refer also to the discussion of *Energy and Natural Resources* contained in this Environmental Checklist.

**4. How would the proposal be likely to use or affect environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated (or eligible or under study) for governmental protection; such as parks, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, threatened or endangered species habitat, historic or cultural sites, wetlands, floodplains, or prime farmlands?**

The proposed amendments would not directly affect environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated for governmental protection, nor would they change existing regulations or environmentally sensitive area designations.

**Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:**

The Tacoma Land Use Regulatory Code includes standards to protect environmentally sensitive areas when development is proposed. Additionally, state and federal regulations may apply. Development proposals will be reviewed concerning the applicability of local, state and federal regulations, and will also be reviewed based on the thresholds contained in this checklist.

Refer also to the discussion of *Earth, Land and Shoreline Use, Plants, Animals, Historic/Cultural, and Water* contained in this Environmental Checklist.

**5. How would the proposal be likely to affect land and shoreline use, including whether it would allow or encourage land or shoreline uses incomparable with existing plans?**

The proposed amendments have the potential to change existing land uses but would not affect shoreline jurisdiction areas.

The amendments are consistent with the City's *Comprehensive Plan* center strategy. There would be potential for land use incompatibilities where more intensive development is located adjacent to single-family uses. However, the proposed amendments address the potential for these incompatibilities by providing development and design standards to reduce incompatibilities. The new URX and NRX zones will also reduce the potential for incompatibilities.

The proposed amendments are intended to increase the consistency of the Land Use Regulatory Code with the *Comprehensive Plan* and regional plans. In particular, regulations related to the Tacoma Mall Urban Center, a designated Regional Growth Center (RGC) would increase the consistency with multi-county criteria for RGCs adopted by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) and with the Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies.

**Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:**

Consistency with the City's *Comprehensive Plan* and development regulations will be determined during project-level review, and projects will also be reviewed based on the thresholds contained in this checklist.

The proposed amendments aim to improve the compatibility of the centers with adjacent single-family zoned areas by providing changes to the zoning map and text amendments requiring techniques such as height transitions, setbacks, building massing and scale, visual treatment of building facades, landscaping, and location and screening of parking and driveways. Proposed design and landscaping standards for the mixed use centers would be more stringent than existing standards.

**6. How would the proposal be likely to increase demands on transportation or public services and utilities?**

As new developments occur and the intensity of developments increase, demands on transportation, public services and utilities are likely to increase as well.

**Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:**

Concurrency review and normal evaluation of development proposals for compliance with City requirements are required for transportation and utility impacts. Development proposals will also be reviewed based on the thresholds contained in this checklist.

See the discussion of impacts for Public Services and Transportation.

**7. Identify, if possible, whether the proposal may conflict with local, state, or federal laws or requirements for the protection of the environment.**

The proposal would not conflict with local, state, or federal laws or requirements. Portions of the proposal are intended to ensure greater consistency with the Growth Management Act.

Refer also to the discussion of *Earth, Air, Water, Plants, Animals, Energy and Natural Resources, Environmental Health, Land and Shoreline Use, Housing, Aesthetics, Light and Glare, Recreation, Historic/Cultural Preservation, Transportation, Public Services, and Utilities* contained in this Environmental Checklist.