



2010 Annual Amendment Application No. 2010-04
Mobility Master Plan

STAFF REPORT

Application #:	2010-04
Applicant:	Community and Economic Development Dept.
Contact:	Diane Wiatr, Mobility Coordinator
Type of Amendment:	Comprehensive Plan Text Change
Current Land Use Intensity:	N/A
Current Area Zoning:	N/A
Size of Area:	N/A
Location:	Citywide
Neighborhood Council area:	All
Proposed Amendment:	Amend the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan to incorporate a new section, the Mobility Master Plan, to provide improved guidance for bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

General Description of the Proposed Amendment:

The proposed new Mobility Master Plan section of the Transportation Element provides a vision, policies, and implementation strategy for how the City of Tacoma can improve conditions for bicycling and walking citywide over the next twenty years. It moves the City towards social, economic and environmental sustainability and serves as a cornerstone for Tacoma's climate action goals. A sustainable non-motorized transportation network is vital for Tacoma to achieve its goal of for a substantial reduction in carbon emissions.

The Mobility Master Plan (MoMaP) section of the Transportation Element envisions an interconnected bicycle and pedestrian network that provides safe routes to neighborhoods, schools, transit, business districts and recreational facilities. Following the MoMaP policies and implementation strategies will improve Tacoma residents' health, enhance their quality of life, help improve and protect the City's natural resources, and be a source of pride for the community.

The Mobility Master Plan section includes an inventory and assessment of Tacoma's current walkway and bikeway networks as well as recommended network expansion and improvements that seek to strengthen multi-modal travel by providing good connections to transit and other destinations throughout the City.

This new section also includes implementation strategies and associated action items that are targeted at efficiently and effectively moving Tacoma to a more balanced transportation system. It outlines implementation costs and provides funding options and includes a list of projects for the expanded and improved pedestrian and bicycle networks. This list was created with the assistance of the MoMaP Steering Committee, a group of residents, advocates and private and public sector representatives, as well as with input from the residents of Tacoma. (Please see the Public Outreach section of this report.) Many

expert voices have helped plan for a comprehensive, equitable, network. The Steering Committee also created the following Vision and Guiding Principles that have informed the focus of the MoMaP:

Vision

Tacoma is a world-class walking and biking community in which pedestrians and bicyclists are top priorities in transportation planning. Streets accommodate bicyclists in greater numbers, sidewalks are user-friendly, and residents share the road safely and are fully mobile without an automobile.

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles were established by the Mobility Master Plan Steering Committee to serve as a statement of values, and to convey the impact they want this Plan to have on Tacoma's future. The principles stand as a guide for policy, development and implementation of this plan – answering the questions of what we do, why we do it, and how we do it.

- **Accessibility** - Make multiple travel modes safe and accessible to all users.
- **Connectivity** - Prioritize projects that connect multi-use residential centers, transportation hubs and activity districts and downtown.
- **People** - Prioritize movement of people as a measure of mobility over movement of cars.
- **Equity** - Establish geographic and modal equity across Tacoma.
- **Safety** – Prioritize the safety and comfort of pedestrians and bicyclists on all Tacoma streets.
- **Sustainability** – Develop a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian network as a critical step in realizing a sustainable and livable Tacoma.

Additional Information:

The proposed amendment is an outcome of a comprehensive analysis undertaken by the City with the assistance of Alta Planning + Design, a consulting firm contracted by the City to evaluate the existing bicycle and pedestrian network, policies, codes and standards, and to recommend strategies for successfully improving and expanding pedestrian and bicycle networks. The proposed amendment is based on the findings of this analysis, which is explained in greater detail in the following chapters of the *2010 Mobility Master Plan Study*:

Needs and Type of Cyclists: There are a wide range of cyclists but they can generally fit into a few categories: strong and fearless, enthused and confident, interested but concerned, and no way, no how! The Mobility Master Plan has targeted its recommendations toward the largest user group which is “interested but concerned” because this group includes about 60% of the population with a large percentage women and children.

Existing Conditions Analyses: The current conditions in Tacoma were analyzed using several different analytical tools including a gap analysis, a Bicycle Quality Index, a Cycle Zone Analysis and Pedestrian Zone Analysis. These tools serve to understand which areas are best suited for strategic investment. We also used public comment to inform on conditions because users have the best knowledge base for where there are barriers and opportunities.

Plan and Policy Review: Current City of Tacoma plans and policies were reviewed to analyze what already exists and what is lacking in the nonmotorized system development in Tacoma. Some of the documents reviewed include: Tacoma's Comprehensive Plan, The Dome District Plan, Trail Linkages Study, Complete Streets Design Guidelines and the new Downtown Plan.

The *2010 Mobility Master Plan Study* builds on these documents.

Cost Calculations: Costs are determined for the bicycle and pedestrian networks based on calculations from other jurisdictions currently implementing similar infrastructure and amenities. Costs are explained in detail for various applications for bicycle and pedestrian improvements and totals provided on charts for short, medium and long-term build-out throughout the City.

Funding Sources: There are a wide array of funding sources available to implement the Plan including federal, state, regional, grants, and the private sector as well as city dedications. This chapter outlines the options and the City Council will need to determine the best financial strategy.

Benchmarking and Measurement Baseline Data: Pedestrian and bicycle counts and attitudes have not historically been taken in Tacoma. Monitoring the number of nonmotorized users is necessary to to gauge trends and track activity. This information will help the City measure progress toward achieving its bicycle and pedestrian goals as well as understanding the benefits of investment in infrastructure.

These study documents are available for review and inspection in the Community and Economic Development Department and on the planning website at www.cityoftacoma.org/planning.

The *2010 Mobility Master Plan Study* was initiated after the 2008 Green Ribbon Task Force's Climate Action Plan recommended bicycle and pedestrian master planning in an effort to reduce future carbon emissions from transportation modes. One of the Climate Action Plan's highest priorities was for the City of Tacoma to reexamine transportation priorities to focus on how to move people and goods more efficiently, to reduce reliance on single-occupancy vehicles, and to reduce the overall need for driving.

The *2010 Mobility Master Plan Study* resulted in three components: the Comprehensive Plan amendment described above, the Mobility Master Plan Program, which includes implementation strategies and how they can be advanced, and Design Guidelines for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure for the City to use during implementation phases.

The Design Guidelines provide a set of tools for implementing best practices for infrastructure design. The draft Guidelines are being provided to the public for review and comment as part of the package of amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Regulatory Code. The guidelines are a major component of the Mobility Master Plan Study, are a primary implementation tool, and are closely tied to achieving the goal of an improved pedestrian and bicycle network. By circulating both the Plan amendment and implementing guidelines for public comment together, citizens have an opportunity to understand the intended use and outcomes of the proposed policies in the Comprehensive Plan.

The Design Guidelines are intended to be adopted the City Council as an amendment to the Complete Streets Design Guidelines for Mixed Use Centers and Residential areas, which are the conceptual framework for balancing transportation infrastructure design among all users. The Complete Streets Design Guidelines were adopted last year by the City Council. Although not a part of the Comprehensive Plan, the Pedestrian and Bike Design Guidelines implement the policies in the Comprehensive Plan and provide greater detail on how streets, sidewalks, and pathways are to be designed, built, and maintained to assure that cyclists and pedestrians can move safely and efficiently.

Public Outreach:

The Mobility Master Plan's public outreach approach was designed to accommodate multiple methods of public involvement and facilitate the creation of a shared vision for the bicycle system throughout Tacoma. The Mobility Master Plan team engaged agencies, stakeholders, and the general public from across the City to develop the plan. Components of the public involvement process to this point include:

- **Steering Committee:** Ten Steering Committee meetings were held from April 2009 to June 2010. The Steering Committee for this project was comprised of members of the Tacoma Wheelmen, Foothills Trail Coalition, and Transportation Choices Coalition, along with representatives from Metro Parks, Tacoma Pierce County Chamber of Commerce, Tacoma Streetcar, Department of Revenue, Sound Transit, Pierce County, and the City of Tacoma. The Steering Committee guided the direction of the master plan throughout its development.
- **Tacoma in Motion Survey:** The Tacoma in Motion survey was conducted by Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department as part of the its obesity prevention efforts. The survey was used to determine general needs and concerns surrounding biking and walking.
- **Public Workshops Series #1:** – September 2009 - The open houses in South Tacoma and at UPS were well attended, while the open house in Northeast Tacoma had fewer attendees. During the open houses, citizens were encouraged to draw directly on maps to identify opportunities, constraints, and priorities to improve the existing system. Participants were also asked to rank prioritization criteria and to identify what type of pedestrian or cyclist they were.
- **Tacoma Planning Commission Presentations:** The Planning Commissioners were presented an overview and update on the progress and status of the project at key points.
- **Pierce Transit Coordination:** The project team was engaged in the Pierce Transit planning effort through meetings, phone calls, and e-mails.

In addition, the following elements will be part of the public outreach strategy moving forward:

- **Draft Plan Circulation:** The full draft plan will be posted on the City’s website for review by the public, neighborhood groups, and other affected stakeholders. The draft pedestrian and bicycle design guidelines also will be posted. Notice of the Planning Commission and City Council public hearings will be sent to those who attended the public open houses (and provided addresses), informing them of the draft plan completion and location on the website. The draft plan will also be presented to the Tacoma City Council’s Environment and Public Works Committee. All comments received will be tabulated and reviewed to determine how they can be incorporated into the plan.
- **Public Workshops Series #2:** The draft plan will be presented at two open houses on February 11th. Citizens will be encouraged to suggest modifications and improvements to the draft bicycle network by drawing directly on maps provided at the open house.
- **Public Safety Coordination:** Meetings will be held with police and fire personnel to identify areas of concern, as well as areas of cooperation, regarding non-motorized transportation.

Applicable Provisions of the Growth Management Act (and other state laws):

The addition of the Mobility section to the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan is consistent with the following provisions of the GMA:

“The transportation element shall include the following sub-elements pedestrian and bicycle component to include collaborative efforts to identify and designate planned improvements for pedestrian and bicycle facilities and corridors that address and encourage enhanced community access and promote healthy lifestyles.” [RCW 36.70A.070(6)(a)(vii)]

“Wherever possible, the land use element should consider utilizing urban planning approaches that promote physical activity.” [RCW 36.70A.070(1)]

Applicable Provisions of the Comprehensive Plan:

The existing Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan has a solid multimodal focus. It currently includes a Multimodal section, Nonmotorized section, as well as Complete Streets policy. The new Mobility Master Plan section in the Transportation Element will largely expand on the Nonmotorized Transportation section that it will be replacing. All of the existing Nonmotorized policies will be covered by the new MoMaP policy section but in considerably greater detail. It is important to state that existing policies in the Transportation Element do not conflict with the new Mobility Master Plan section, even though it introduces new policies.

Specific proposed changes to the Transportation Element include:

1. The Mobility Master Plan section will replace the existing Nonmotorized Transportation section and its related policies: T-NT-1 through T-NT-9 (policy T-NT-10 – Minimize Conflicts in Manufacturing/Industrial Centers will be moved to the Multimodal section). The Mobility Master Plan section includes policies equivalent to T-NT- 1 through 9 while providing considerably more detail. In addition, the Mobility Master Plan section will introduce new policies that broaden the scope of the old Nonmotorized Transportation section.
2. The outdated Nonmotorized Network map (p. T-19) will be replaced with updated maps including:
 - Existing Conditions Map
 - Short-term Network, Medium-term Network and Long-term Network Bicycle Maps
 - Pedestrian Network Map
3. The existing “Bike and Paths” projects on the Unfunded Project List on pages T-33 to T-37 will be updated and replaced with the new Mobility Master Plan lists of unfunded bike and pedestrian facilities, which reflect input from the community, the Steering Committee and staff.

Some of the text in the Transportation Element will be slightly modified to better support the intent of the Mobility Master Plan section and to create better ties between various policies, and some of the existing policies will be revised with small terminology changes to create consistency and clarity between sections. The changes will improve overall flow between the sections of the Transportation Element but not change intent.

Amendment Criteria:

Applications for amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code are subject to review based on the adoption and amendment procedures and the review criteria contained in TMC 13.02.045.G. Proposed amendments are required to be consistent with or achieve consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and meet at least one of the eleven review criteria to be considered by the Planning Commission. The following section provides a review of each of these criteria with respect to the proposal. Each of the criteria is provided, followed by staff analysis of the criterion as it relates to this proposal.

- 1. There exists an obvious technical error in the pertinent Comprehensive Plan or regulatory code provisions.**

Staff Analysis: Not applicable.

- 2. Circumstances related to the proposed amendment have significantly changed, or a lack of change in circumstances has occurred since the area or issue was last considered by the Planning Commission.**

Staff Analysis: Not applicable.

- 3. The needs of the City have changed, which support an amendment.**

Staff Analysis: The needs of the City have changed with the advent of the Climate Action Plan and Complete Streets policy. They have both helped precipitate the inception of the Mobility Master Plan.

The *2010 Mobility Master Plan* was funded after the 2008 Green Ribbon Task Force's Climate Action Plan recommended bicycle and pedestrian master planning in an effort to reduce carbon emissions from transportation. One of the Climate Action Plan's highest priorities was for the City of Tacoma to reexamine the way it determines transportation priorities by creating a study document, policies and implementation strategies that would shape and enhance the City's nonmotorized networks.

On November 17, 2009, the City Council adopted Resolution Number 37916: "A Resolution relating to the City's street design; endorsing the creation and ongoing development of Tacoma's Complete Streets Design Guidelines; and directing the City Manager to implement the Mixed-use Centers Complete Streets Design Guidelines and the Residential Complete Streets Design Guidelines."

While the existing Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan emphasizes the importance of a multimodal system, the Nonmotorized Transportation section is fairly general. Additionally, the Complete Street Design Guidelines specifically call for the development of additional bike and pedestrian guidelines through the Mobility Master Plan process.

The proposed Mobility section updates and expands the bicycle and pedestrian policies, which will better enable the City to implement the Complete Streets goal of creating streets that are safe and comfortable for all users.

- 4. The amendment is compatible with existing or planned land uses and the surrounding development pattern.**

Staff Analysis: Not applicable.

- 5. Growth and development, as envisioned in the Plan, is occurring faster, slower, or is failing to materialize.**

Staff Analysis: Not applicable.

- 6. The capacity to provide adequate services is diminished or increased.**

Staff Analysis: Not applicable.

- 7. Plan objectives are not being met as specified, and/or the assumptions upon which the plan is based are found to be invalid.**

Staff Analysis: The stated goal of the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan is to “achieve a multimodal transportation system that efficiently moves people and goods with optimum safety and speed, maximizes the conservation of energy, and minimally disrupts the desirable features of the environment.”

The addition of the Mobility section to the Transportation Element will provide the bicycle and pedestrian policies and implementation strategies necessary to move towards a multimodal transportation system.

8. Transportation and and/or other capital improvements are not being made as expected.

Staff Analysis: While the goal of the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan is to “achieve a multimodal transportation system...,” transportation infrastructure in the City of Tacoma is predominantly geared towards cars.

The Commute Trip Reduction Plan has goals for more employees to bike and walk to work. In order for this goal to be met, safe and adequate infrastructure needs to be in place.

The policies in the Mobility Master Plan section of the Transportation Element will provide the specific guidance needed to achieve a multimodal transportation system.

9. For proposed amendments to land use intensity or zoning classification, substantial similarities of conditions and characteristics can be demonstrated on abutting properties that warrant a change in land use intensity or zoning classification.

Staff Analysis: Not applicable.

10. A question of consistency exists between the Comprehensive Plan and its elements and RCW 36.70A, the County-wide Planning Policies for Pierce County, Multi-County Planning Policies, or development regulations.

Staff Analysis: The Puget Sound Regional Council’s Transportation 2040 Plan has a strong multimodal and nonmotorized emphasis. The Mobility Master Plan goals and policies are consistent with Transportation 2040’s goals to increase travel by foot and bicycle in the region.

Economic Impact Assessment:

The *2010 Mobility Master Plan* outlines many options for funding the implementation of the Plan. Ultimately, it will be up to the City Council to set funding priorities and determine the best means for financing this program. At this point, all projects listed in the new MoMaP section of the Transportation Element are unfunded.

The total approximate implementation cost of the Tacoma Mobility Master Plan is estimated at approximately \$12.2 million. Short-term (1-5 years) recommendations account for approximately \$2 million. Medium-term (6 – 10 years) costs are approximately \$6.3 million and long-term (11-20 years) approximately \$3.8 million. See Table 5.1 on the following page.

Table 5.1 Summary of Construction Costs for Recommended Projects

Facility Type	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Total
Bicycle Boulevards	\$1,194,000	\$902,000	\$283,000	\$2,379,000
Bike Lanes	\$887,000	\$953,000	\$539,000	\$2,379,000
Shared Lane Markings	\$17,000	\$152,000	\$0	\$169,000
Sidewalks	\$2,405,500	\$2,405,500	\$0	\$4,811,000
Intersection Improvements	\$4,000	\$71,000	\$576,000	\$651,000
Shared Use Paths	\$205,000	\$881,000	\$4,278,000	\$5,364,000
Total	\$4,712,500	\$5,364,500	\$5,676,000	\$15,753,000

Costs do not include projects programmed in the FY 2010-2015 Capital Facilities Program, including the Historic Water Ditch Trail and Pipeline Road Trail.

On-going maintenance is important for continued safety and comfort of the pedestrian and bicycle networks. Table 1, below, provides an estimate of maintenance costs for the recommended projects. Maintenance costs do not include sweeping and other repair that is part of regular street maintenance activities.

Table 1 Summary of Maintenance Costs for Recommended Projects

Facility Type	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
Bicycle Boulevards	\$11,200	\$20,000	\$23,100
Bike Lanes	\$19,700	\$40,200	\$51,800
Shared Lane Markings	\$500	\$4,900	\$4,900
Shared Use Paths	\$453,000	\$140,000	\$679,000
Total	\$31,400	\$65,100	\$79,800

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the proposed amendment be forwarded for public review and comment.

Exhibits:

- A. Draft Revisions to the Transportation Element
- B. Draft Pedestrian and Bicycle Design Guidelines