

## Members

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Ryan Petty, Director  
Peter Huffman, Planning Division Manager

## Public Works Department

Charles Solverson, P.E., Building Official

## Tacoma Public Utilities

Heather Pennington, Water Representative  
Cathy Leone-Woods, Power Transmission & Distribution Assistant Manager



# Agenda

## Tacoma Planning Commission

747 Market Street, Room 1036, Tacoma, WA 98402-3793  
Phone (253) 591-5365; FAX (253) 591-2002  
[www.cityoftacoma.org/planning](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/planning)

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**MEETING:** Regular Meeting and Public Hearing

**TIME:** Wednesday, October 1, 2008, 4:00 p.m.  
(Public Hearing begins at approximately 5:00 p.m.)

**PLACE:** Tacoma Municipal Building, City Council Chambers  
First Floor, 747 Market Street, Tacoma, WA

### A. CALL TO ORDER

### B. QUORUM CALL

### C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – N/A

### D. GENERAL BUSINESS

#### 1. Capital Facilities Program 2009-2014

Description: Complete the review of the proposed amendment to the program  
Actions Requested: Review; Authorization for public distribution; Setting a date for public hearing  
Support Information: See "Agenda Item GB-1"  
Staff Contact: Greg Klump, 594-7903, [gklump@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:gklump@cityoftacoma.org)

#### 2. 2008 Annual Amendment

Description: Review the draft "Issues and Staff Observations Report" which summarizes and responds to comments received from the September 3, 2008 public hearing and through the comment period ending September 12, 2008  
Actions Requested: Review, Discussion, Direction  
Support Information: See "Agenda Item GB-2"  
Staff Contact: Donna Stenger, 591-5210, [dstenger@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:dstenger@cityoftacoma.org)



**3. Mixed-Use Center Code Revisions**

Description: Continue discussion from last meeting concerning options to respond to public hearing comments on (1) variance and enforcement issues; (2) affordable housing; and (3) individualization of mixed-use center zoning

Actions Requested: Review, Discussion, Direction

Support Information: Previously distributed with last agenda

Staff Contact: Donna Stenger, 591-5210, [dstenger@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:dstenger@cityoftacoma.org)  
 Brian Boudet, 573-2389, [bboudet@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:bboudet@cityoftacoma.org)

**E. PUBLIC HEARING**

**1. Downtown Plan Update**

Description: Conduct a public hearing on the proposed Downtown Element of the Comprehensive Plan

Actions Requested: Receive testimony; Keep record open through October 10, 2008

Support Information: See “Agenda Item PH-1”

Staff Contact: Peter Huffman, 591-5373, [phuffman@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:phuffman@cityoftacoma.org)

**F. COMMUNICATION ITEMS**

1. Land Use Administrator’s Reports and Decisions – “Agenda Item C-1”
2. Hearing Examiner’s Reports and Recommendations – “Agenda Item C-2”
3. Announcement – The Planning Commission is accepting applications for amending the Comprehensive Plan or Land Use Regulatory Code for consideration in 2009. Application deadline is Wednesday, December 31, 2008, 5:00 p.m. ([www.cityoftacoma.org/planning](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/planning) > “2009 Annual Amendment”)

**G. COMMENTS BY PLANNING DIVISION**

**H. COMMENTS BY PLANNING COMMISSION**

**I. ADJOURNMENT**



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

**Agenda Item**  
**GB-1**

TO: Planning Commission  
FROM: Peter Huffman, Manager, Planning Division  
SUBJECT: Capital Facilities Program 2009-2014  
DATE: September 25, 2008

At the Planning Commission's meeting on October 1<sup>st</sup>, staff from the Budget and Research Division of the Finance Department will present the draft document of the Capital Facilities Program (CFP) for 2009-2014. At the conclusion of the presentation, staff intends to request the Commission to authorize the document for distribution and public review, and to set Wednesday, October 15, 2008, as the date for a public hearing to receive public comments.

The annual amendment to the CFP is required by the State Growth Management Act and City of Tacoma ordinances. This year, the format remains basically the same from the previous document, except that external entities' capital projects are not included in the document; instead, they are incorporated by reference to their respective CFPs. As the Commission learned at the last meeting on September 17<sup>th</sup>, this change was made based on the recommendation from an assessment conducted of the CFP by the International City/County Manager's Association Leadership 2008 program.

The CFP document has also incorporated all the proposed changes as reviewed by the Commission on September 17<sup>th</sup>, including project deletions, additions, and consistency correlations ("tie-ins") with the Comprehensive Plan.

Attached is the draft CFP for 2009-2014, which is also available online at:

<http://www.cityoftacoma.org/Page.aspx?nid=427>, or

[www.cityoftacoma.org](http://www.cityoftacoma.org) > City Hall > Departments > Finance Department > Budget & Research

If you have any questions please contact the following staff at the Finance Department:

Greg Klump, 591-5818, [gklump@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:gklump@cityoftacoma.org)

Cindy Cusick, 594-7954, [ccusick@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:ccusick@cityoftacoma.org)

PH:gk

c. Amy Palmer

Attachment





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

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Peter Huffman, Manager, Planning Division

SUBJECT: 2008 Annual Amendment Package

DATE: September 25, 2008

The Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on September 3, 2008, concerning the proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code for 2008. The proposed amendments consist of the following applications:

- #2008-04: Puget Sound Avenue – Area-wide Rezone
- #2008-05: Browns Point Boulevard N.E. – Intensity Change
- #2008-06: Open Space Habitat and Recreation Plan
- #2008-07: Urban Design Policies
- #2008-08: Transportation Element
- #2008-09: South Tacoma Manufacturing/Industrial Center
- #2008-11: Residential Development Regulations

At the Commission's meeting on October 1<sup>st</sup>, staff will present a summary of comments from the public and options to revise the draft proposals based upon these comments. Attached is a draft "Issues and Staff Observations Report" which summarizes the public testimony and provides a staff response and/or recommendation where appropriate. Also attached is a Discussion Outline to facilitate the Commission's review of key issues and discussion of policy options.

The Commissioners should bring their copies of the draft *Proposed Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code for 2008* (a.k.a. the "green book") and the *Written Comments* (a.k.a. the "blue book").

Staff is seeking direction on modifying the draft amendments. The Commission is scheduled to make a recommendation to the City Council at the meeting on October 15, 2008.

If you have any questions, please contact Donna Stenger at 591-5210 or [dstenger@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:dstenger@cityoftacoma.org).

PH:ds

Attachments (2)



**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND LAND USE REGULATORY CODE  
PROPOSED AMENDMENTS FOR 2008**

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**Key Issues – Discussion Outline  
September 25, 2008**

**APPLICATION #2008-04:  
South Puget Sound Avenue (S. 64<sup>th</sup> – S. 72<sup>nd</sup> Streets) Area-wide Rezone**

**Public Testimony**

**1.-- Zoning Change**

**Should these four blocks be rezoned as requested (to C-2) or as proposed (to R-4L)?**

- There was public testimony on two sides of this issue; some indicating that commercial use in the most viable for this area, and some agreeing with the proposal to proactively rezone the area to low-density multi-family.

**APPLICATION #2008-05:  
Browns Point Boulevard (53<sup>rd</sup> Street NE) Intensity Change**

**Public Testimony**

**1.-- Intensity Change**

**Should the intensity change be approved, as proposed?**

- There was public testimony on both sides of this issue; some indicating that the proposed intensity change would allow for a positive development in the area and some indicating that only single-family homes should be allowed.

**APPLICATION #2008-06:  
Open Space Habitat and Recreation Element**

**Public Testimony**

**1. Management of City properties within Habitat Corridors**

- Staff recommends clarifying the OSHRP intent by indicating that ongoing maintenance, alterations and redevelopment of currently developed sites is acceptable, but that new development of previously undeveloped habitat lands is strongly discouraged.

**2. Delineate Natural Lands within Habitat Corridors**

- Staff recommends adding a policy to work with the Green Tacoma Partnership and other partners to delineate and designate all lands with high natural habitat values within the corridors.

**3. Park-like Streets within Mixed-Use Centers**

- Staff recommends adding a policy to seek opportunities to create a park-like environment within public rights-of-way in Mixed-Use Centers, incorporating features such as widened sidewalks, street amenities and furniture, and landscape planting.

#### **4. Transfer of Development Rights within Centers**

- The City does not have a TDR program and will be considering policy options in 2009. However, the plan includes a policy noting that open space areas designated in the OSHRP are appropriate sending sites for a TDR program if one is developed. To further clarify the intent to explore TDR, staff recommends modifying the policy concerning open space in mixed-use centers to include exploring funding mechanisms, along with other approaches.

#### **5. Harvesting of Secondary Forest Products**

- Staff recommends adding a policy for City-owned open space lands that:
  - Limits harvesting for personal use only;
  - Prohibits harvesting that has significant negative habitat impacts; and
  - Prohibits commercial harvesting.

#### **6. Technical Corrections, Clarifications, Organization Improvements**

- Staff recommends numerous edits to wording, background information and plan organization that help to clarify the intent, ensure that background information is accurate, and improve the plan's overall presentation and organization.

### **Issues From Staff and Commission Analysis**

#### **1. City's Open Space Inventory**

- Staff recommends adding a policy that would make the inventory official and establish its function. Properties on the inventory, whenever feasible, would be:
  - Permanently conserved for open space purposes
  - Managed according to the policies of the OSHRP
- Properties would not be removed from the inventory unless:
  - They were added in error or do not provide significant open space benefits
  - They are being transferred to another party which will maintain them in permanent conservation
  - They will be replaced by the addition of lands of greater habitat value.

#### **2. Remove Wright Park from the Habitat Corridor Designation**

- Staff recommends removing Wright Park from the Habitat Corridor designation. The park was included in recognition of the value of its mature trees and landscaping. However, the park is clearly a location for active recreational use and access rather than for passive, low-impact access. Removal from the Habitat Corridor map would in no way diminish the value placed on Wright Park, which will remain designated as recreational land. The distinction would relate to habitat-related activities and any future regulations or other programs developed for the Corridors.

#### **3. Create a Connected Identity for Habitat Corridors**

- Staff recommends adding a policy to engage in and encourage activities that improve environmental connectivity, enhance the profile of, and encourage public access to Habitat Corridors, such as:
  - Converting landscaped areas on developed sites within Corridors to native planting
  - Expanding planted areas on developed sites within Corridors
  - Improving visibility and pedestrian access to and within Corridors through interpretive signage and thematic streetscape design features.

**APPLICATION #2008-07:  
Urban Design Goals and Policies**

**Issues From Staff and Commission Analysis**

**1. Clarification of intent regarding future consideration of a design review program**

- The proposed text for LU-MUD-1 (page 115 in the “green book”) should be modified to be consistent with the overall intent and other policies, that the City should “explore” the creation of a design review process (instead of “create,” which it currently states).

**APPLICATION #2008-08:  
Transportation Element and Commute Trip Reduction Regulations**

**Public Testimony**

**1. Lincoln Avenue Bridge**

- Staff recommends adding the “Lincoln Avenue Bridge over the Puyallup River” (bridge repair, replacement and/or new construction) to the Unfunded Project List (per Port of Tacoma)

**Issues From Staff and Commission Analysis**

**1. Complete Streets**

- Staff recommends adding a new policy pertaining to “Complete Streets” (per Public Works Department)

**APPLICATION #2008-11:  
Residential Code Amendments**

**Public Testimony**

**1. Detached ADUs**

- Consider not allowing detached ADUs at all, or not in some zoning classifications (such as HMR-SRD, or in R-1 and R-2 districts)

**Modify the maximum size**

- Staff recommends the Commission consider additional size limitations, such as
  - *Detached units limited to 10% of the lot size. This would be in addition to the other limitations, that it can be no larger than 66% of the size of the main dwelling and, under no circumstances, can it be larger than 1,000 sq. ft.*

**Modify the maximum height**

- Staff recommends the Commission consider reducing maximum height from 25 feet to 18 feet (consistent with the proposal for other detached accessory structures), and
- Consider allowing up to 25 feet only through a permit process, either a CUP or variance (which would then allow for public notice and comment and a more site- and situation-specific review); and
- Clarify that the height limit for detached ADUs in VSD areas is 15 feet, the same as for other accessory structures.

## **2. HMR-SRD District**

- Correct the following inadvertent errors in the proposed regulations for the HMR-SRD districts:
  - Revise HMR-SRD establishment statement to be consistent with current language.
  - Reinsert the existing provision indicating that when conflicts arise, the regulations of the historic district shall prevail.
  - Correct the listed conditional uses to be consistent with the allowed uses in the current code.

## **3. Small-lot Design Standards – Roofline Orientation**

- Consider modifying the roofline provision to allow the primary roofline to be parallel to the street in instances where a roofline change is being used as one of the methods to meet the requirement that project that involve multiple homes provide variation on the front façade.

### **Issues From Staff and Commission Analysis**

#### **1. Maximum size of Accessory Structures**

- Staff recommends the Commission consider additional size restriction that takes into account lot size, such as
  - *Total sq. ft. of accessory buildings can not exceed 15% of the lot size. (current proposal is 1,000 sq. ft., regardless of lot size, and up to 1,500 sq. ft with detached ADU)*

#### **2. Clarify limitation on in-line additions in the side yard setback:**

- Staff recommends additional direction on what is considered a “minor” addition in the side yard, such as:
  - *The size of the addition shall be limited to an additional wall surface area within the required side setback area of no more than 200 square feet.*

#### **3. Clarify driveway and front yard parking limitation:**

- Staff recommends additional direction on the front yard access and parking limitations, such as:
  - *Add reference to TMC 10.14.150 (Driveway Ordinance), which includes standards limiting driveway widths to between 10 and 30 feet and no more than 50% of a site frontage.*
  - *Clarify provision requiring access from the rear when available and that when access is not available from the rear, driveways shall be limited to occupying no more than 50% of a front or corner side yard.*



## 2008 ANNUAL AMENDMENT ISSUES AND STAFF OBSERVATIONS REPORT

October 1, 2008

	ISSUE/OBSERVATION	SOURCE(S)	RESPONSE
<b>Detached ADUs</b>			
1.	Opposed to allowing detached ADU's. City has designated mixed use centers and downtown to accommodate increased growth. Further "infill" is not necessary.	Philips 2, Bjornson 2, Strom Copland, Phillips 1, Mann, Rosner, Bjornson 1	Opposition noted.
2.	Detached ADUs are not compatible with North Slope Historic District.	Turner, Bates, Turner 2, McClintock 5, Johnson 2, Tomberg, McClintock 2	Opposition noted.
3.	A 1,500 sq ft detached ADU would destroy the character of single family neighborhoods.	Philips 2, Bjornson 2, Phillips 1, Rosner, McClintock 3	The maximum size of the detached ADU is proposed to be 1,000 sq. ft., not 1,500 sq ft. 1,500 sq ft is the maximum size of a detached ADU and garage combined.
4.	There are large areas that are undeveloped and underdeveloped in the City. Allowing detached ADUs could detract from development in these more appropriate places.	Philips 2	With the exception of some parks, wetlands, gulches and steep slopes, the City does not have a lot of large undeveloped areas. The City is mostly developed, with about six per cent vacant land. In addition, staff research of other jurisdictions where detached ADUs are permitted indicates that, even if the City allows detached ADUs, it is unlikely that they would be constructed in significant numbers. Detached ADUs are not intended to meet growth needs but are a way to provide additional housing choice and flexibility.
5.	Should have additional community input before going forward.	McClintock-5 Tooley,	Citizens can provide testimony to the City Council at their public hearing as wells as at first and second reading of the adopting ordinance.
6.	Detached ADUs will decrease open space and increase run off.	McClintock-5, Strom Copland, McClintock 1, Mann	While allowing detached ADUs could result in the construction of some additional detached structures, residential properties would still be subject to the same yard space requirements as lots without ADUs. It should also be noted that the City does not have impervious surface limitations for residential properties.

	ISSUE/OBSERVATION	SOURCE(S)	RESPONSE
7.	In 2006, a variance was recommended as a requirement for detached ADUs to help address issues that may negatively impact neighbors. This has disappeared from the new draft code. Please retain the variance.	McClintock 5, Philips 2, Winters 1, Tomberg, Winters 2, McClintock 3	Comment noted. An earlier proposal did include a requirement for a variance for detached ADUs seeking 25 ft. in height. After further review, the draft proposal was modified to allow 25-ft. detached ADUs outright.
8.	All single-family neighborhoods will effectively become multifamily.	Bjornson 2, McClintock 1, Phillips 1, Rosner, Johnson 2, Mann, Martin, Bjornson 1	ADUs are specifically an “accessory” use. There are a number of limitations to ensure that they do not significantly affect the desired single-family character of a neighborhood. It should be noted that accessory dwelling units are already permitted in all single-family areas and the City is required to allow them by State law.
9.	Allowing detached ADUs will encourage absentee owners, especially around the University of Puget Sound. The rental swaths are the areas most likely to have ADUs and once they are placed they are not going away. This will create a slum-like condition with almost tenement style housing without even requiring a variance.	Phillips 1, Mann, Price	The ADU restrictions include a provision that the property owner must live on the site (either in the main home or the ADU). This is one of the significant distinctions between an ADU and a second home and prevents “absentee owners” from having an ADU on their property.
10.	Detached ADUs will compound parking problems and increase noise. This will bring an influx of people with no services – fire, water, noise, police services, etc.	Strom Copland, McClintock 1, Turner 1, Johnson 1, Johnson 3	ADUs are currently allowed in all single-family areas. The current proposal would not modify the existing parking requirement for ADUs. While detached units could have some different issues/concerns, these generally do not include a significant difference in the demand on municipal services.
11.	ADUs won’t improve affordable housing.	Price	Comment noted.
12.	There is an upside to ADUs in some neighborhoods. Land use reflects the fabric of our community and the relationship between renter and landlord and there is no better form than that of the ADU. It is costly to provide ADUs, it is difficult to profit from the ADU.	Tooley	Comments noted.
13.	Staff Report states that ADUs are a state requirement, not true.	Cade 2	The Washington Housing Policy Act, passed by the legislature in 1993, established goals of reducing housing costs and improving housing quality for people in all income groups. Encouraging the development and placement of ADUs in single-family homes was recognized as an important part of these goals. RCW 43.63A.215 required that, by December 31, 1994, local governments incorporate in their zoning regulations provisions for accessory apartments in areas zoned for single-family use.. The Growth Management Act incorporates this requirement by reference.

	ISSUE/OBSERVATION	SOURCE(S)	RESPONSE
14.	Enforcement of the DADU regulations have not been thought out or explicitly identified and will be very difficult to enforce.	McClintock 1, Mann, McClintock 3	The proposed regulations for detached ADUs are very similar to the existing standards for attached ADUs. The existing standards have not created a significant code enforcement issue.
15.	Density is not the only goal of the GMA. Other goals include historic preservation and retention of open space.	McClintock 1, Winters 1,	GMA includes 14 goals which are intended to be balanced in managing future growth and development. One of these goals is to “Encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of the state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock.”
16.	Allowing DADUs will force a new role on the LPC.	McClintock 1	Yes, proposals for detached ADUs in historic districts or on historic properties will be subject to review and approval by the Landmarks Preservation Commission. This could increase the workload of the LPC, although, based upon staff analysis, the number of applications for detached ADUs City-wide is unlikely to be significant.
17.	MBA is in support of allowing detached ADUs as an accessory to single family homes	Alexander 1, Alexander 2	Support noted.
18.	Is it the intention to allow 25 foot, 2-story ADU’s in R-1 and R-2VSD neighborhoods?	Bell	The current draft proposal is to allow 25-foot tall, two-story detached ADUs in all residential districts, including R-1 and R-2 districts. However, the proposal is not intended to allow additional height in view sensitive districts. Unfortunately, the draft language did not clearly indicate that the additional height (up to 25 feet) was not intended to apply in the VSD areas. Staff will propose clarifying this provision with the Commission.
<b>PRD</b>			
19.	<p>Opposed to PRD revisions for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of notification</li> <li>• Reduction of Open Space requirement</li> <li>• Reduced lot sizes</li> <li>• Reduced setbacks</li> <li>• Regulations just put in place a year ago</li> <li>• NE Tacoma is a “low density residential district”</li> <li>• New regulations should not apply to existing PRDs</li> <li>• Increased impact to schools and buses</li> <li>• Limited amount of land</li> <li>• Impacts to roads</li> <li>• Violates the Open Space Habitat and Recreation Plan</li> <li>• Should not be allowed in the HMR-SRD zoning category</li> </ul>	Lyons 2, McCandliss, Austin, Babers, Barnes, Cooper, Dolan, Dukehart, Durgan, Fennell, Helt, Lyons 1, MacDonald, Murdock, Ness, Phillips, Radford 1, Radford 2, Reed, Stagliano, Tunstall, McClintock 1, Tomberg, Blaylock	The Commission, at its meeting on September 17, 2008, voted to remove the proposed modifications to the PRD standards from the 2008 Annual Amendment package due to an oversight in notification of the public hearing. The PRD regulations will be the subject of a separate review process, which is intended to begin later this year. These and all of the other issues that have been raised as part of this process will be considered and included in that review. Citizens that commented as a part of the 2008 annual amendments and those that previously commented during the PRD moratorium will be notified of future public meetings concerning any proposed revisions to the PRD regulations.

	ISSUE/OBSERVATION	SOURCE(S)	RESPONSE
20.	PRD must stay true to original purpose, which is to allow for innovative and better use of the land, despite noncompliance with standard code. Supports density bonus for LID, but warns that City of Tacoma does not have adequate training on LID techniques or maintenance and that some code still prohibits LID techniques such as installation of impervious concrete and sidewalk.	Alexander 1, Alexander 2	Comments noted. See response above.
<b>HMR-SRD</b>			
21.	Preserve the single family nature of the HMR-SRD district.	Bardwil	The HMR-SRD district is, by definition and regulations, a “mixed-residential” zoning classification and not a single-family classification. The current standards for this district prohibit new construction multi-family housing but existing multi-family uses are permitted. New duplexes, triplexes and a number of other types of residential housing are also allowed with a conditional use permit.
22.	This update puts back conditional uses into the HMR-SRD zone which previously were excluded, such as retirement communities, educational and philanthropic institutions, student housing, etc. These uses are destructive to the neighborhood.  Do not remove the narrative that makes HMR-SRD fit the needs of historic neighborhoods and in particular, the last sentence that makes clear that historic preservation guidelines take precedence over zoning in the case of a conflict.  The proposed changes to HMR-SRD zone will discourage other areas of the City from seeking similar zoning.	Bardwil, Turner 1, Johnson 3, Johnston 1, Johnston 2, Mann, Turner, Bates, Cade 2, McClintock 1, Winters 1, Johnson 1, Johnson 2, Johnson 4. Tomberg, Bjornson 1, Winters 2, Cade 1	Staff regrets the errors that were in the draft proposal and thanks the community members for reviewing the proposed amendments in detail and noting these inadvertent modifications. The reorganization and reformat of the residential section of the Land Use Regulatory Code was not intended to change the provisions of the HMR-SRD district. The draft proposal will be revised to include the original intent statement, the provision regarding conflicts with historic preservation guidelines, and a corrected list of allowed conditional uses, as previously adopted by the City Council.
<b>Residential Zoning Code</b>			
23.	The Chart (pp 19-24) portrays Conditional Uses as though they were permitted, adding confusion to the code.	McClintock 1, Tomberg	While there are some errors in what is shown as “conditional” in the HMR-SRD district, the chart correctly displays the different ways in which the various uses are or are not allowed in the various districts (permitted, not permitted, permitted by CUP, permitted by TUP, etc.) This is the same standard convention used in the other zoning use tables.

	ISSUE/OBSERVATION	SOURCE(S)	RESPONSE
24.	The 2008 Residential Code update degrades the HMR-SRD. Specifically, building envelope standards, small lot development standards, typical single family development standards, and general residential development standards. HMR-SRD should be exempt.	Tomberg	Comments noted.
25.	MBA is in support of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing the setback for SF homes on standard lots;</li> <li>• In-line additions into the side yard setbacks</li> </ul>	Alexander 1, Alexander 2	Support noted.
26.	Support the 10% smaller lot size. Would like to see this applied citywide.	Teitge	The current proposal would apply to all residential zoning districts. Generally, commercial, mixed-use and industrial districts (in instances where single-family homes are allowed) do not have the same type of minimum lot size requirements.
27.	With regards to the small-lot design standards, the code says rooflines shall run perpendicular to the street, but the examples in the material are in conflict with the code. Does the stated reason for roofline orientation depend more on house orientation to the sun more than the street?	Teitge	The intent of the roofline orientation provision is to help preserve views in view areas, as the primary view is often perpendicular to the streets, and to minimize shading and shadow impacts on neighboring properties. The issue of whether the roofline limitation should be relaxed for projects that are incorporating multiple homes (so that it can be used to meet the façade variety requirement for multiple-home projects) will be discussed with the Planning Commission.
28.	The open space requirement of 10% contiguous area in the rear yard on a 25-foot wide lot, when combined with porch and front door requirements, will drastically limit the building pad and will be economically infeasible.	Teitge	Concern noted. In recognition of the difficulty of providing the standards yard space requirement on small lots, the Commission included a provision in the draft code reducing the minimum dimensional requirement from 15 feet to 12 feet for lots that are less than 3,500 sq. ft. in area.
29.	Are height limits in VSD neighborhoods still 25 feet overall?	Bell	Yes, the proposed amendments do not modify the height limits in VSD areas.
30.	Are there any changes being proposed to eliminate VSD designations in R2 zones?	Bell	No.

	ISSUE/OBSERVATION	SOURCE(S)	RESPONSE
31.	<p>The Hardship test in the variance request is inadequately defined as to what constitutes “hardship.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This leaves too much subjectivity</li> <li>• It is unfair as to height and yard setbacks, that allow grandfathered nonconforming homes that then seek “in-line” variances</li> <li>• We need a cap on the number of variances any one home may obtain</li> <li>• If a home is flanked on three sides by nonconforming 35-foot tall homes, why continue to penalize the one home in the middle that is conforming?</li> <li>• Private vegetation should not be allowed to be used as a weapon to support a variance process.</li> </ul>	Bell	<p>“Hardship” is a term commonly used in zoning law to justify the grant of a variance from zoning regulations. In order to meet the “hardship” test, an applicant must demonstrate that the application of the regulation to property greatly decreases or practically destroys its value for any permitted use, so as to deprive the owner of the land of all beneficial use of the land. The following generally must be proven to show an unnecessary hardship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The deprivation resulting from application of the ordinance [was] so great as to effectively prevent the owner from making any reasonable use of the land;</li> <li>• That the alleged hardship relating to the property in question is unique, and does not apply to a substantial portion of the district or neighborhood;</li> <li>• That the requested variance, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood; and</li> <li>• That the alleged hardship has not been self-created</li> </ul> <p>Financial considerations or inconvenience are not considered a “hardship.”</p>
32.	<p>What is the rationale for the proposed elimination of ‘side yard averaging’ provisions in single family neighborhoods and simultaneous reduction in side yards from 7.5 feet to 5 feet as of right? Does this apply only to new PRD’s or other new construction in single family neighborhoods and VSDs?</p>	Bell	<p>The proposed elimination of the side yard averaging provision and the reduction in the standard side yard setbacks applies in all residential zoning districts, including VSD areas (except the R-1 district, where the 7½-foot setback would remain). PRDs do not have standard side yard setback requirements. The rationale for both changes is to bring the City’s code into conformance with current industry standards regarding side yard setbacks, provide additional flexibility for homeowners, and simplify the code.</p>
33.	<p>I am supportive of the side yard setback reduction, but think we should provide flexibility by retaining a simplified version of side yard averaging.</p>	Bell	<p>Comment noted. The current averaging provision allows portions of the home to be as close as 5 feet. If the City were to maintain the averaging provision while also reducing the setback, as proposed, it would allow homes to be within 3½-feet of the side property line.</p>
<b>South Tacoma M/IC</b>			
34.	<p>The designation of the M/IC will be a source of wealth generation and job creation. The new designation does not allow anything that is not currently allowed. This area houses businesses that were crowded out by Port expansion. The designation will be beneficial to retain businesses that support our tax base.</p>	Brackett	<p>Support noted.</p>

	ISSUE/OBSERVATION	SOURCE(S)	RESPONSE
<b>Open Space Habitat and Recreation Plan</b>			
35.	In support of plan and of conserving and enhancing open space in Tacoma.	Kyer 1 and 2, Pow 1 and 2, Valbert, Hansen 2, Apling, Loop, Mirra, Charbonnel, Peachey	Support noted.
36.	Our population is growing rapidly and as it continues, Tacoma is required to accommodate more people. Making Tacoma more attractive and providing outdoor recreation activities, green places, street trees will attract more people to live in the city. In order to accomplish this goal we need to involve members of the community and this plan will give them an additional tool. Urban natural areas do not take care of themselves but require active management to remain healthy.	Kyer 1 and 2	Support noted.
37.	The plan is a true product of a multi-agency partnership. This is the first opportunity to put forward a plan that balances recreation and habitat needs and is aligned with the Metro Parks plan.	Pow 1 and 2	Support noted.
38.	Given plans and tools to accomplish stated goals, volunteers will come forth. The OSHRP makes opportunities important to our residents possible and accomplishable. The most important way to improve the built environment is to put it into the hands and control of the most immediate users.	Valbert	Support noted.
39.	The City should dedicate more resources to implementing the OSHRP.	Kyer 1 and 2	Comment noted.

	ISSUE/OBSERVATION	SOURCE(S)	RESPONSE
40.	We need not just a plan but an implementation program.	Kyer 1& 2	<p>The comments received indicate that there is a significant interest in open space issues and, generally, support for the current draft OSHRP, albeit with some changes and technical corrections. A number of the comments relate to how the plan is to be implemented. Implementation will be an ongoing and evolving process which will begin after the plan is adopted and staff will continue to work with all the open space stakeholders.</p> <p>The OSHRP project has two phases—the first phase consists of setting Tacoma’s open space vision, goals and policies, as well as direction for implementing those policies. The second phase consists of carrying out the plan through a number of implementation steps, including the development of a Strategic Action Program and supporting documents to guide staff in implementing the plan. The Strategic Action Program will be a planning tool shared by the City, Metro Parks, the Green Tacoma Partnership and other partners, intended to help prioritize and coordinate open space activities over the next two year period. Supporting documents will include technical reports for use in assessing and ranking potential habitat-related open space projects, and Best Management Practices to guide ongoing management of habitat lands.</p> <p>The OSHRP sets clear policy guidance for implementation, including an implementation section with specific direction regarding the development of the Strategic Action Program, including ongoing progress reporting, volunteer coordination and management, education and outreach, ongoing review and updates to the Strategic Action Program.</p>

	ISSUE/OBSERVATION	SOURCE(S)	RESPONSE
41.	<p>What is the intent of the references in the draft to creating an integrated open space system? To connect, to purchase? Numerous inferences can be made.</p>	Alexander 1 & 3	<p>The Introduction to the draft OSHRP states the following: “The OSHRP is Tacoma’s vision and plan for an integrated network of open space lands and facilities, including parks, habitat areas, trails, community gardens, shorelines and landscaped boulevards, as well as habitat connections provided by trees planted city-wide. The key premise of the OSHRP is that, irrespective of their ownership, Tacoma’s open space lands and facilities are complementary to each other, serve multiple functions, provide numerous community benefits and form a cohesive system. The many public agencies, private parties and citizens managing open space in Tacoma can benefit from an integrated open space planning perspective.”</p> <p>The primary purpose of the above characterization relates to how the open space system can best be managed. In Tacoma, open space lands are owned by many separate public agencies as well as private parties. In an urban setting most open space lands have more than one valuable function, such as habitat, active or passive recreation, space for natural stormwater functions or constructed utility features, buffering between different land uses, and avoiding steep slope or flood-prone areas. Given the multiple land owners and multiple functions being provided by open space lands, it becomes helpful to approach management from the perspective that these lands are part of a single open space system. This allows for a consistent and coordinated approach for all ownerships while avoiding the need to assign a single category to each and every area.</p> <p>In addition, the OSHRP emphasizes the benefits of creating and enhancing connections between separated open spaces. Connectivity of natural features has benefits for habitat functions. The OSHRP has policies calling for acquisition of habitat lands that are contiguous and part of a Habitat Corridor, as well as for planting trees and landscaping along streets adjacent to or connecting Habitat Corridors. Connectivity in terms of public access has benefits in terms of encouraging active use of sites. The OSHRP also calls for creating and enhancing connectivity for pedestrians and bicycles by developing trails and paths within and between open space areas.</p>

	ISSUE/OBSERVATION	SOURCE(S)	RESPONSE
42.	According to the Buildable Lands analysis Tacoma will be 17,000 units short of accommodating housing needs. This plan will further reduce the buildable lands available to achieve that goal. Tacoma should not reduce development potential by setting aside lands from development.	Alexander 1, 2 & 3	<p>It should be noted that the OSHRP would not restrict the development of private lands in any way. Only City-owned properties identified as valuable open space assets would be restricted and managed according to the policies of the OSHRP.</p> <p>The OSHRP identifies the areas of the City which contain the most valuable natural lands by including them in proposed “Habitat Corridors”. The Habitat Corridors are not a regulatory approach, but instead are a tool to help identify areas for potential acquisition, habitat restoration and voluntary conservation measures. In the future, some additional incentive-based or regulatory approach could be developed based upon the Habitat Corridors to support the intent of the OSHRP. Draft Policy OS-HA-11 calls for a review to identify potential regulatory and/or incentive-based approaches to providing greater protection for habitat lands located within the designated Habitat Corridors. This review will likely take place over the course of next year(s) and will provide all stakeholders the opportunity to participate.</p> <p>In addition, while the Growth Management Act (GMA) does direct growth to urban areas like Tacoma, the GMA also requires that open space corridors be identified within and between urban areas, that cities plan for parks and recreation, and that protections be adopted for environmentally sensitive lands and features. The Comprehensive Plan outlines a growth strategy based on the concept that parks and open spaces within the City will increase livability and help attract residents and economic investment.</p> <p>A final point is that a large percentage of land within the draft Habitat Corridors contains steep slopes, wetlands, streams, shorelines or other critical areas. To a large extent these are lands that already have a reduced development potential, in addition to a high habitat value. Avoiding development within these areas would have a smaller impact on the City’s development potential than an equal acreage without these features.</p>

	ISSUE/OBSERVATION	SOURCE(S)	RESPONSE
43.	Section III, Residential Development seems beyond the scope of open space and should be considered in relation to the Mixed-Use Centers and Residential Code updates.	Alexander 3	<p>There is no Residential Development section or residential development policy discussion in the OSHRP.</p> <p>The commenter is referring to changes that are proposed to the Generalized Land Use Element for consistency with new OSHRP policies related to tree pruning for purposes of view enhancement. Two existing policies in the Generalized Land Use Element and two policies in the Environmental Policy Element are redundant and slightly inconsistent with the new policies. The proposal is to delete those other policies in order to provide consistent and clear guidance on this issue.</p>
44.	The OSHRP should take an entirely voluntary approach and clearly state that there is no intent to increase regulations on private property owners.	Alexander 2	The OSHRP approach is designed to support and encourage voluntary actions by private land owners and other public agencies. The plan is directed primarily toward City-owned open space lands, and seeks support of other parties through education and outreach, incentive-based approaches, restoration grants, and steps to foster community habitat restoration activities. As discussed above, the OSHRP does contain policies that call for a review to ensure that regulations are consistent with the long-term sustainability of habitat lands. While it is possible that a regulatory approach could be adopted by the City Council in the future, currently there is no regulatory function to the OSHRP.
45.	Keep the natural area near the Heidelberg/Cheney area designated as valuable open space and as a Habitat Corridor. The area contains valuable natural and geologic features.	Apling, Loop	The Heidelberg/Cheney area is located within a proposed Habitat Corridor. While the OSHRP indicates that Habitat Corridors contain the City's most valuable natural habitat areas, not all the lands within Corridors are habitat lands. The Corridors are a macro level tool intended to help target conservation and restoration efforts. Therefore, the OSHRP does not provide specific policy direction for individual sites. However, the fact that the area is located within a proposed Habitat Corridor would provide policy support for conducting that review, and conserving habitat lands that are identified within the Corridor.
46.	Number of clarifications and minor improvements.	Batten, Hansen 1, Pow 1	Staff concurs with many of the comments and is recommending numerous technical corrections and clarifications in response to the detailed comments received.
47.	The plan should include a separate policy for fostering planting on private property.	Batten	Staff concurs and recommends that a new policy be added calling for development of an incentive and/or outreach program to encourage voluntary planting and maintenance of native and climate-adapted trees and plants on private property. While the intent is already present in the draft plan, a separate policy will clarify that intent.

	ISSUE/OBSERVATION	SOURCE(S)	RESPONSE
48.	Recommend adding a discussion of hazard tree removal.	Hansen	While staff agrees that hazard tree removal is an important issue, staff does not concur with the recommendation to add a separate policy on the subject. The draft OSHRP contains a policy (Policy OS-LF-3) calling for the development of Best Management Practices for open space management, which will include guidance for hazard tree removal. These BMPs will be developed over the coming months to implement the OSHRP, and will incorporate consideration of public comments received to date and after development of the BMPs. In addition, the City's Street Tree Ordinance, currently under review, addresses hazard tree removal.
49.	Move the trail components and discussion to the Transportation Element.	Hansen	The plan incorporates trails in recognition of their recreational function, although trails also play an important non-motorized transportation role. Additional discussion of trails can be found in the Transportation Element.
50.	The OSHRP should be giving habitat conservation and restoration more importance rather than the current approach which incorporates human wants and desires. The OSHRP is too protective of private views at the expense of habitat conservation which is a greater public benefit.	Hansen 1 & 2	<p>During the public outreach, one of the most frequent sentiments expressed was that Tacomans value not only natural lands but also parks, schools, trails, street trees, trees planted next to highways, and other features. Therefore, the OSHRP adopted a vision for an integrated network of open space lands and facilities, including parks, habitat areas, trails, community gardens, shorelines and landscaped boulevards, as well as habitat connections provided by trees planted city-wide.</p> <p>While the OSHRP seeks the appropriate balance between habitat, recreation and other functions of open space lands, it nonetheless represents a new emphasis on conservation and restoration of habitat lands, providing specific guidance and new policy tools to facilitate this.</p> <p>The OSHRP recognizes that limited tree pruning for view maintenance may be appropriate. The plan indicates that a balance must be struck between maintaining views and maintaining healthy trees and habitat lands. Draft Policy OS-LF-10 provides for some limited tree pruning for private views, but restricts such pruning to a level that doesn't threaten the health of the tree being pruned. Policy OS-LF-11 indicates that public views may be maintained, if such views are designated through a public process.</p>

	ISSUE/OBSERVATION	SOURCE(S)	RESPONSE
51.	More work is needed on the Corridors—they should connect across the whole City as well as go around it. All public open space, including Tacoma Public Utilities, Tacoma School District and other publically-owned lands should be included, which would help establish corridors across the City.	Hansen 1 and 2, Peachey	<p>The Habitat Corridors represent the desired potential open space system, rather than representing current property ownership. They contain properties owned by many different parties including Tacoma Public Utilities (TPU) and Tacoma School District (TSD). TPU has been closely involved in the development of the OSHRP.</p> <p>While they may be supportive of open space goals, special purpose agencies like TPU and TSD must consider their primary mission first and typically cannot take actions unless those actions support that primary mission. For example, TPU operates within certain legal parameters. TPU properties, as well as General Government properties owned by utilities, must be managed according to the requirements of the State Accountancy Act (RCW 43.09.210), as well as the requirements of the City Charter (specifically, Charter Section 4.5). These legal requirements are set up to protect the interests of the utility rate payers. One requirement is that properties owned as part of an enterprise fund must be utilized for their specified purpose (e.g., provision of utilities), rather than for an unrelated public purpose. Also, properties may not be transferred to another City department or party without compensation to the utility.</p> <p>In evaluating potential open space actions, TPU, Public Works utilities providers would need to determine whether benefits would result that would facilitate their primary mission. The Tacoma School District, and other special purpose public agencies, would need to make a similar determination.</p>
52.	In order to properly review the OSHRP, we need to see the written Strategic Action Program and the Best Management Practices, to ensure that implementation components match up to policy direction. The Puget Creek Watershed Management Plan (draft) would be a useful example in developing implementation.	Hansen	A preliminary draft Strategic Action Program which has been presented at public meetings. Considering both policy direction and implementation steps at the same time has been a very useful approach that has helped to refine the draft OSHRP. The Strategic Action Program will be finalized after adoption of the OSHRP to begin implementation in 2009.

	ISSUE/OBSERVATION	SOURCE(S)	RESPONSE
53.	What are the components of the Progress Report Card and who will develop and critique it?	Hansen 1	<p>The draft OSHRP, Section V Implementation, contains the following guidance for what will be incorporated in the Progress Report Card approach:</p> <p>“A “progress report card” approach will be used to measure success and effectiveness in implementing OSHRP goals for habitat areas. The report card will summarize the most important outcomes, i.e., acres of habitat areas placed in conservation status, acres of habitat areas restored, and provision of low-impact recreation and access to habitat areas. The progress report card will also report on achievement of city-wide green infrastructure strategies, trail development and other goals. Finally, the progress report could also report on achievements in developing the Open Space Program’s organizational capacity, including development of partnerships, education and outreach efforts, and new or leveraged sources of funding.”</p>
54.	Do not develop a wetland mitigation fee-in-lieu program. The Wetland Mitigation Fund was never beneficial and in fact was removed from the Critical Areas Preservation Ordinance (CAPO) because it was not fulfilling GMA requirements. It did not generate sufficient funds to offset the impacts to wetlands permitted.	Hansen 1 and 2	<p>The CAPO requires that activities that have impacts on wetlands or streams mitigate those impacts. However, mitigation options are often limited if the site is small or disconnected from other wetlands or streams. A fee-in-lieu program would allow mitigation to occur offsite by collecting a fee which will be used to pay for mitigation in a pre-designated site within the Habitat Corridors. The intent is to facilitate results that are ultimately more positive for the functions of critical areas.</p> <p>The primary reason the previous fee-in-lieu program was discontinued was that work needed to be done to identify appropriate sites. If the OSHRP is adopted, staff would begin a process to develop a new fee-in-lieu program that would address the limitations of the previous program. Including the identification of high value streams and wetlands where mitigation would be most valuable, and establishing appropriate fees relative to the degree of impacts occurring elsewhere.</p> <p>To ensure the intent is achieved, staff recommend that the language of Policy OS-CAPO-2 be revised to explicitly state that funds collected shall be adequate to mitigate permitted impacts, and commensurate with those impacts.</p>
55.	More emphasis should be put on shoreline restoration.	Hansen	<p>The OSHRP policies related to open space in shoreline areas are intended to support and supplement the policies in the Shoreline Master Program (SMP), which contains additional guidance on open space issues in these areas. The SMP is being updated and one of the new State requirements is the development of a shoreline restoration element.</p>

	ISSUE/OBSERVATION	SOURCE(S)	RESPONSE
56.	The tree ordinance should be part of the OSHRP as well. Coordinate with the Street Tree Ordinance update.	Hansen, Gillard	The OSHRP contains several policies on tree maintenance and related issues. These policies are being considered in the current effort to update the City's tree ordinances.
57.	The Tacoma Housing Authority thanks the City for the joint effort to restore the First Creek, aka the T Street Gulch.	Mirra	Comment noted.
58.	Incorporating pedestrian bridges across First Creek into the OSHRP to make New Salishan even friendlier to pedestrians, to recapture the ravine as a safe and appealing place, to attract people to the area. Bridges are an important part of the Salishan Shine Project.. THA commits to a joint effort on the bridges.	Mirra	The comment relates to a possible implementation step, rather than to the adoption of the OSHRP. The draft OSHRP contains policies supportive of providing low impact access to habitat lands through provision of pedestrian and bicycle pathways. City staff are available to engage in discussions with THA on specific projects supported by those policies.
59.	It's not easy to strike a balance between habitat and recreation needs. OSHRP currently does not adequately provide policy guidance for striking that balance. The intention is to allow ongoing maintenance, alterations and even redevelopment of currently developed sites, but to discourage development of undeveloped habitat areas. Make that clear in policies. Recommend joint delineation of natural lands to better accomplish the intent.	Pow 1	Staff concurs with these recommendations to further clarify the intent of the OSHRP regarding how lands within the Habitat Corridors are intended to be managed. Staff recommends adding language indicating that, for public properties located within Habitat Corridors, ongoing maintenance, alterations and redevelopment of currently developed sites is acceptable, but that new development of previously undeveloped habitat lands is strongly discouraged and should be considered only if other feasible alternatives are not available.  Staff also concurs with adding a policy calling for further delineation of natural lands with high natural habitat values located within the Corridors, working with the Green Tacoma Partnership and other partners.
60.	The Strategic Action Program should primarily focus on habitat related activities, and secondarily on recreation related open space efforts, while referencing MPT's Strategic Plan as the primary guidance document for that purpose.	Pow 1	Staff concurs with the suggestion to clarify the intent of the Strategic Action Program, and propose the following language be added:  "While the <i>Strategic Action Program</i> will incorporate activities related to the full range of open space goals, the primary focus of the City's Open Space Program is on habitat-related efforts. The <i>Action Program</i> will be coordinated with MPT's Strategic Plan, which serves as the primary guidance for implementation of recreation-related goals."

	ISSUE/OBSERVATION	SOURCE(S)	RESPONSE
61.	Add policy calling for development of urban parks and amenities within public rights-of-way within Mixed Use Centers.	Pow 1	Staff concurs with the suggestion, which conforms with the intent of the OSHRP and with policies for Mixed-Use Center development. Staff recommends the addition of a policy calling for the City to seek opportunities to create a park-like environment within public rights-of-way, incorporating features such as widened sidewalks, street amenities and furniture, as well as landscape planting. For this policy to be implemented, significant additional planning, including the designation of appropriate streets will likely be required.
62.	Add policy in support of utilizing TDR to achieve open space goals within Mixed Use Centers. TDRs could be transferred from sending sites within Centers.	Pow 1	<p>The draft OSHRP contains a policy indicating that lands meeting the City's criteria for conservation which are located within the designated Habitat Corridors, and lands achieving other open space goals of this Plan, are appropriate "sending areas" for the transfer of development rights (TDR) to other locations in the City, county and region.</p> <p>At this time, the City does not have a TDR program, although a policy analysis will likely begin in early 2009 on the subject. A TDR program could be structured in many ways depending on community priorities. Therefore, at this time it seems premature to indicate specifically that TDR will be utilized for open space goals within the Mixed Use Centers.</p> <p>That being said, the intent of the OSHRP is to support exploring additional options to achieve open space goals. Generally, the policy support is already in place to allow further review of such an approach and to support it should the City Council direct that one be created. Staff recommends one change to further ensure that the OSHRP is open to the TDR option: amend draft Policy OS-MUC-3, currently titled Zoning Incentives to Create Open Space, to Mechanisms to Create Open Space, and indicate that innovative funding options should also be explored.</p>
63.	Ensure that plantings that occur within public rights-of-way, and in particular on utility properties or corridors, are carefully chosen to minimize or avoid potential conflicts with utility provision.	Gillard, Porter	The intent of the draft tree planting policies was never to encourage planting that would interfere with utility features or operations. To prevent any confusion on this issue, staff recommends that additional language be added indicating that trees and landscaping should be appropriate to the location and conditions, and should seek to avoid or minimize conflicts with infrastructure and utility facilities.

	ISSUE/OBSERVATION	SOURCE(S)	RESPONSE
64.	The plan should question whether mown grass is a tenable ground cover, when it is often not the most appropriate ground cover. Policies should call for replacing grass with appropriate native landscaping in areas besides playfields. The plan should advocate residential landscaping and maintenance practices as well. It is important to decrease Tacoma's carbon footprint.	Peachey	The draft OSHRP already contains several policies calling for the encouragement of native and climate-adapted plantings throughout the City.
65.	Request continued notices to Tacoma Power of changes along utility rights-of-way for all developments and open space.	Porter	The OSHRP will have no affect on public notice requirements or practices. Staff will make every effort to ensure that communication is free and open with all departments on future open space projects.
66.	Suggest including a stance on harvesting of specialized forest products from open space lands, such as mosses, salal, huckleberry, sword fern fronds, mushrooms, brush from Douglas Firs, etc. All commercial harvesting should be forbidden. Some harvesting should be allowed for personal use only.	Pierce	The OSHRP intent clearly supports limiting activities that could have negative impacts on habitat health, while allowing reasonable access to and use of habitat lands. Therefore, staff recommends that a policy be added indicating that harvesting of forest products from City-owned open space lands shall be for personal use only, that any harvesting that has a significant negative impact on habitat health is prohibited, and that commercial harvesting on City-owned land is prohibited.
<b>Urban Design Goals and Policies</b>			
67.	MBA feels strongly that the City avoid adopting any policies that would slow or stop the progress being made in redeveloping Tacoma.	Alexander 1, Alexander 2	The proposed policies are intended to clarify, reinforce and update the urban design policies in the Comprehensive Plan. These policies are not intended to "slow or stop" development and would have no direct regulatory affect. They do, however, help set the groundwork for a continued discussion on how best to ensure that new development is consistent with these updated policies.
68.	Administrative review is preferable to the creation of a review board that adds to the unpredictability already being experienced.	Alexander 1, Alexander 2	The second phase of this project (expected to occur in 2009) will be focused on examining the most appropriate regulatory mechanisms to promote good urban design, consistent with these policies. That process will include an in-depth discussion regarding the pros and cons of the various processes that can be utilized to address urban design.
69.	The goals should also be clear in the current draft. Instead of expressing what the City hopes to avoid, the goals should express what the City hopes to achieve.	Alexander 1, Alexander 2	The purpose of these amendments to the Comprehensive Plan is to provide clearer guidance on the City's urban design goals and vision. Staff feels that the proposed policies do express what the City hopes to achieve, both in the design of the City and in the regulatory method used to promote that vision.
70.	Support New Urbanism design principles to encourage pedestrian friendly streetscapes.	Winters 2	The proposed urban design policies include a renewed and increased emphasis on pedestrian-orientation being a principle goal for new public and private development and streetscape improvements.

	ISSUE/OBSERVATION	SOURCE(S)	RESPONSE
71.	The residential code proposals should acknowledge the existing massing and scale of the city’s historic business districts and neighborhoods.	Winters 2	
72.	Establish a design review commission to ensure development project are sensitive to massing and scale of the individual MUC.	Winters 2	
<b>Transportation Element</b>			
73.	The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) suggests a feasibility study to determine the need and feasibility for siting the proposed President’s Ridge Trail on WSDOT right-of-way. Any proposed facilities within the I-5 freeway corridor are subject to State Highway limited access rules, design standards and WSDOT airspace property lease requirements. Access breaks along I-5 corridor are reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis.	Jones	It is the “feasibility study for trail and nonmotorized access” that is being proposed for the President’s Ridge Trail, as indicated on page 2 of the Assessment Report for Application #2008-08. If and when funding becomes available, a feasibility study will be conducted. Pending the result of the feasibility study and the availability of further funding, the design, right-of-way acquisition and construction of the project may proceed. WSDOT’s concerns would be properly addressed throughout various development stages of the project.
74.	Lincoln Avenue Bridge – The Port of Tacoma requests adding to the Unfunded Project List a project to replace the current Lincoln Avenue Bridge with a new 5-lane bridge over the Puyallup River. Currently, the Port is completing funding for the Lincoln Avenue Grade Separation (LAGS) project that will build a 3-lane overpass over Milwaukee Avenue and current and future railroad tracks. The LAGS is equipped for additional 2 lanes as container traffic volumes increase. Along with this overpass there is the need to increase the capacity in the corridor to include the Lincoln Avenue Bridge.	Mannelly	<p>The proposed Lincoln Avenue Bridge project would be needed to complement the Lincoln Avenue Grade Separation project, and as a result, the two projects would optimize the Lincoln Avenue corridor’s capability of accommodating freight mobility in the Port industrial area.</p> <p>The Port area is the largest and most intensively developed industrial area in the city and is a designated Manufacturing/Industrial Center (M/IC) for the Central Puget Sound region. It is the intent of the Comprehensive Plan that M/ICs are well-served by adequate transportation facilities, as noted in various provisions in the Growth Strategy and Development Concept (“GD”), Generalized Land Use (“LU”) and Transportation (“T”) elements. In addition, as part of the 2008 Annual Amendment, revisions are being proposed to the GD, LU, T, and Capital Facilities (“CF”) elements that address transportation and other relevant issues concerning M/ICs.</p> <p>Adding the proposed Lincoln Avenue Bridge project to the Unfunded Project List in the Transportation Element would be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Staff recommends that the project “Lincoln Avenue Bridge over the Puyallup River”, with the improvement type of “bridge repair, replacement and/or new construction”, be added to the Unfunded Project List under the “Miscellaneous Projects” category.</p>

	ISSUE/OBSERVATION	SOURCE(S)	RESPONSE
75.	<p>Complete Streets – In light of the Mayor’s Green Ribbon Climate Action Task Force and discussions with the Environment and Public Works Committee, Public Works Department staff suggest including a policy related to the support of Complete Streets in the Transportation Element. The policy will support future updates to the Design Manual and engineering standards, realizing that the concept of Complete Streets may not be appropriate or financially feasible for all transportation projects.</p>	Kammerzell	<p>According to the National Complete Streets Coalition, a movement is growing to “Complete the Streets” – to fundamentally change the way most streets and roads are designed in the United States. Complete streets are designed and operated to enable safe and convenient access for all users. Not only all modes of transportation, but people of all ages and abilities must be able to safely move along and across a complete street.</p> <p>The Mayor’s Green Ribbon Climate Action Task Force recommends that the design standards for Public Works projects should be evaluated to incorporate applicable “Complete Streets” principles. The Complete Streets guiding principle is already incorporated in the Comprehensive Plan. For example, the policy intent of the Multimodal System policy category in the Transportation Element states “An efficient multimodal system is designed to accommodate the needs for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.” The Complete Streets concept is also reflected in a number of policies in the Generalized Land Use (“LU”) and Transportation (“T”) elements, such as LU-MUD-6 Pedestrian and Bicycle Design, LU-MUUC-5 Street Networks, LU-MUUC-9 Tacoma Mall Subarea Planning, LU-RDG-12 Adequate and Safe Circulation Facilities, T-TSM-2 Street System Design, T-TSM-3 Traffic Calming Measures.</p> <p>Staff suggests that it is appropriate to make the Comprehensive Plan more explicitly supportive of the Complete Streets principle, by adding a policy to the Transportation Element, in the Multimodal System category, as follows:</p> <p>T-MS-10 Complete Streets  Apply the Complete Streets guiding principle<sup>(1)</sup>, where appropriate, in the planning and design for new construction, reconstruction and major transportation improvement projects<sup>(2)</sup>, to appropriately accommodate all users, moving by car, truck, transit, bicycle, wheelchair, or foot to move along and across streets. The Complete Streets guiding principle shall also be used to evaluate potential transportation projects, and to amend and revise design manuals, regulations, standards and programs as appropriate to create over time an integrated and connected network of complete streets that meets user needs while recognizing the function and context of each street.</p> <p>(1) The Complete Streets guiding principle is to design, operate and maintain streets to enable safe and convenient access and travel for all users – pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and people of all ages and abilities, as well as freight and motor vehicle drivers – and to foster a sense of place in the public realm.  (2) Major transportation improvement projects include but are not limited to street and sidewalk construction; street and sidewalk lighting; street trees and landscaping; street amenities; drainage, pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements; access improvements for freight; access improvements, including compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act; and public transit facilities accommodation including, but not limited to, pedestrian access improvements to transit stops and stations.</p>

	ISSUE/OBSERVATION	SOURCE(S)	RESPONSE
<b>Puget Sound Avenue</b>			
76.	We desire to limit the expansion of commercial zoning onto Puget Sound Avenue and believe that this rezone is the best opportunity to preserve the historic residential character of the street. We support the rezone proposed by the City, not the applicants' proposal.	Miles 2, Edison Community Action Team, Miles 1	Support noted.
77.	Further north of the rezone area there is a jig saw puzzle of residential and commercial properties. Neighbors across the street are looking at empty parking lots, lighting, fences, and junk vehicles. This patchwork is not consistent with good urban design and planning.	Miles 2	Comment noted.
78.	Empty lots along this street have very few options. If you build a house, then you will have too much invested; if you build with the intention of renting, the prevailing rents are too low for the financing to work. The only viable option is a commercial use; however, I don't feel that this rezone is the proper way to address this area. There should be careful, lot specific planning.	Henrickson	Opposition noted.
79.	It is in the best interests of the City to make this area C-2. One property is already zoned C-2 and that should open up the whole block between 66 <sup>th</sup> and 68 <sup>th</sup> to also be C-2.	Zimmermann	Support noted.
80.	Concerned that a rezone could affect property taxes.	Christiansen	Property taxes are levied by and controlled by the Pierce County Assessor, not the City of Tacoma. Property taxes are, in large part, dependent on property values, which are generally determined by property sales. Rezones in and of themselves do not generally affect property values or property taxes. However, if the property is rezoned and new development occurs in the area it is likely that property values, and thus property taxes, could increase.
81.	Rezone should not include the block between 70 <sup>th</sup> and 72 <sup>nd</sup> , which has always been single family residential.	Christiansen	While the existing development on this half-block is and has been single-family residential, it is located within an area that has been designated for Medium Intensity development, such as multi-family, commercial and some industrial uses, by the City Council. This intensity was reviewed by the City Council in 2004 and was confirmed. The proposed rezone is consistent with the intensity designation set by the City Council.

	ISSUE/OBSERVATION	SOURCE(S)	RESPONSE
82.	Concerned about increased traffic as a result of the rezone (as proposed by the applicants). Entrances to business should be off South Tacoma Way.	Christiansen	The potential location of business entrances on South Puget Sound Avenue, and the corresponding increase in traffic, was one of the significant issues discussed by the Commission and was one of the reasons why the Commission elected to consider multi-family zoning instead of the commercial zoning proposed by the applicants. However, either rezone proposal could result in increased traffic levels on South Puget Sound Avenue if new development occurs.
<b>Brown's Point Blvd. Intensity Change</b>			
83.	The church has not always consulted with neighbors on their plans. My concern is views and planting Douglas fir trees. They are not an appropriate planting. They get to be 80 feet tall.	Milne 1	Staff notes that tree heights and locations are not at issue in the current proposal.
84.	Single-family housing is what is appropriate in this area. Mixing density levels will devalue our property. I am opposed to the dormitory style manor housing complex in the middle of a single family neighborhood.	Milne 1 & 2	Opposition noted.
85.	The public notice was the first time we had heard about this. If the Methodist Church wanted our input they would have set up community meetings before this.	Milne 1	Review of this proposal followed all procedural requirements for proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments. City staff and a representative of the applicant presented the proposal at a meeting of the Northeast Tacoma Neighborhood Council.
86.	There is a need for senior housing and services in the neighborhood and it will be growing We (Wesley Homes) provide a quality project and service and whatever we build we own forever. We will provide open spaces, trails, community spaces, and height will not be an issue, because anything we will construct will not be higher than the current church. The proposed facility will be compatible and a benefit to the community. In response to traffic impacts, a senior community there is approximately one trip per day as opposed to ten for typical residential property.	Anderson	Comments noted.

	ISSUE/OBSERVATION	SOURCE(S)	RESPONSE
87.	The increase in intensity could allow multifamily housing and increase the diversity of housing types. If Wesley Homes does not work out, what else could happen in the future?	Cummings	The current application for a land use intensity change is not tied to any specific development proposal. If the intensity change were granted, a future application could be submitted for a rezone appropriate to the Low Intensity designation. Any future rezone would be required to meet the requirements of all pertinent policies in the Comprehensive Plan. The proposed intensity change is accompanied by two new policies one of which would prohibit rezones for commercial or industrial zoning classifications. The second policy calls for the preservation of trees and slopes to the maximum extent practicable to retain a buffer to adjacent single-family homes.
88.	Concerned about the fate of 52 <sup>nd</sup> Street, currently a dead end. The Harbor Ridge Elementary school children use this street as a way to Browns Point Elementary, instead of using busy Norpoint Way. If the development goes in it needs to address the fact that there is no sidewalk on the side of the street they wish to build on.	Morrison	City requirements for any street or sidewalk improvements will be formulated at the time a permit application is submitted for a specific development proposal.
89.	There is a need for a retirement community in this area, but there is one across the street from the Centre at Norpoint less than 1 mile away.	Morrison	Comments noted.

## 2008 Annual Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code

### Lists of Comment Providers

#### Oral Testimony on September 3, 2008

Last Name	First Name	Affiliation	Address	City	State	Zip	E-mail Address
Alexander-3	John	Master Builders Association	1120 Pacific Ave., Suite 301	Tacoma	WA	98402	
Anderson	Kevin	Wesley Homes	815 S. 216 <sup>th</sup> St.	Des Moines	WA	98198	kanderson@wesleyhomes.org
Bardwil	Mark	North Slope Historic District	1501 N. 5 <sup>th</sup> St.	Tacoma	WA	98403	
Bjornson-2	Erik		711 Court A, Suite 114	Tacoma	WA	98402	
Brackett	Gary	Chamber of Commerce	950 Pacific Ave., Suite 300	Tacoma	WA	98401	garyb@tacomachamber.org
Cade-2	Deborah	North Slope Historic District	908 N. M St.	Tacoma	WA	98403	dlcade@comcast.net
Chapman	Lois		711 E. Wright Ave.	Tacoma	WA	98404	
Cummings	Bill		5418 Ridge Dr. NE	Tacoma	WA	98422	
Hansen-2	Scott	Puget Creek Restoration Society	702 Broadway, Suite 101	Tacoma	WA	98402	pugetcreek@yahoo.com
Kyer-2	Krystal	Tahoma Audubon Society	2917 Morrison Rd. W.	University Place	WA	98466	kkyer@tahomaaudubon.org
Loop	Maureen	Central Neighborhood Council	1418 S. Ferdinand Dr.	Tacoma	WA	98405	maureen@harbornet.com
Lyons-2	Jim	SaveNETacoma	4230 40 <sup>th</sup> Ave. NE	Tacoma	WA	98422	reneeandjimlyons@yahoo.com
McClintock-5	Marshall		701 N. J St.	Tacoma	WA	98403	
Miles-2	John	Edison Community Action Team	5606 S. Junett St.	Tacoma	WA	98409	
Milne-2	Ken		5410 Ridge Dr. NE	Tacoma	WA	98422	Kenneth.Milne@ge.com
Philips-2	Jonathan		2522 N. Proctor St., PMB #418	Tacoma	WA	98406	
Pow-2	Amy		4702 S. 19 <sup>th</sup> St.	Tacoma	WA	98405	amyp@tacomaparks.com
Price	Kyle	North End Neighborhood Council	1112 N. 5 <sup>th</sup> St.	Tacoma	WA	98403	
Strom Copland	Mary Jo	North End Neighborhood Council	2602 N. Proctor St.	Tacoma	WA	98407	
Tooley	Douglas		422 S. Wright Ave.	Tacoma	WA	98418	
Turner-2	Jay	North Slope Historic District	817 N. J St.	Tacoma	WA	98403	
Valbert	Charlotte		7618 McKinley Ave. E	Tacoma	WA	98404	

**Written Comments by September 12, 2008**

Last Name	First Name	Affiliation	Address	City	State	Zip	E-mail Address	Submittal Type & Date
Alexander-1	John	Master Builders Association	1120 Pacific Ave., Suite 301	Tacoma	WA	98402		Letter, 9-3-08
Alexander-2	John	Master Builders Association	1120 Pacific Ave., Suite 301	Tacoma	WA	98402		Letter, 9-12-08
Apling	Steve	Central Neighborhood Council	1401 S. 14 <sup>th</sup> St.	Tacoma	WA	98405		Letter, 8-31-08
Austin	Eve						ebgolf@msn.com	E-mail, 9-6-08
Babers	Charles						theostrich1@comcast.net	E-mail, 9-5-08
Barnes	John & Mary						John.barnes7@comcast.net	E-mail, 9-10-08
Bates	Jillian Lamont						Jillian@nventure.com	E-mail, 9-8-08
Batten	Leslie						battenelli@yahoo.com	Letter, 8-27-08
Bell	Maryanne						lovesabba@msn.com	Letter, 8-23-08
Bjornson-1	Erik		711 Court A, Suite 114	Tacoma	WA	98402		Letter, 8-30-08
Blaylock	Sharon						dshlock@comcast.net	E-mail, 9-7-08
Cade-1	Deborah						dlcade@comcast.net	E-mail, 9-12-08
Charbonnel	Brianna						bcharbo@rei.com	E-mail, 9-12-08
Christiansen	Beryl & George		3415 S. 72 <sup>nd</sup> St.	Tacoma	WA	98409		Letter, 8-28-08
Cooper	Lois						loiscooper@harbornet.com	E-mail, 9-12-08
Curtis	George & Carla						tallinn222@aol.com	E-mail, 9-8-08
Dolan	Mary						mdolan@harbornet.com	E-mail, 9-6-08
Dukehart	Rodger						duker37@comcast.net	E-mail, 9-8-08
Durgan	Shirley						Irishquilter@aol.com	E-mail, 9-6-08
Edison Community Action Team								Letter, 9-3-08
Fennell	Gary						gfenn777@comcast.net	E-mail, 9-11-08
Gillard	Jeff	Tacoma Water					jgillard@cityoftacoma.org	E-mail, 9-12-08
Hansen-1	Scott	Puget Creek Restoration Society	702 Broadway, Suite 101	Tacoma	WA	98402	pugetcreek@yahoo.com	Letter, 9-12-08
Helt	Ray & Kathy						ray@hksalesllc.com	E-mail, 9-10-08
Henrickson	Ross		6648 S. Puget Sound Ave.	Tacoma	WA	98409		Letter, 9-8-08
Johnson-1	Bryan & Betsy						bnbjohnson1@mac.com	E-mail, 9-5-08
Johnson-2	Chad & Kate						Chad_Johnson@sumner.wednet.edu	E-mail, 9-8-08
Johnson-3	Kate						kcjohnson@nventure.com	E-mail, 9-2-08
Johnson-4	Roger						rockyraipjb@wamail.net	E-mail, 9-6-08
Johnston-1	Bill						wfjohnston@wamail.net	E-mail, 9-3-08
Johnston-2	Kelli						kelli@zakster.com	E-mail, 9-2-08
Jones	Robert	WSDOT	P.O. Box 47440	Olympia	WA	98504-7440		Letter, 9-16-08
Kammerzell	Jennifer	Public Works Department					jkammerzell@cityoftacoma.org	E-mail, 9-11-08
Kyer-1	Krystal	Tahoma Audubon Society	2917 Morrison Rd. W.	University Place	WA	98466	kkyer@tahomaaudubon.org	Letter, 9-3-08

Lyons-1	Jim						reneeandjimlyons@yahoo.com	E-mail, 9-10-08
MacDonald	Sandra						aspmacdonald@msn.com	E-mail, 9-12-08
Mann	Charles						charlesmann2@gmail.com	E-mail, 9-11-08
Mannelly	Brian	Port of Tacoma	P.O. Box 1837	Tacoma	WA	98401-1837		Letter, 9-12-08
Martin	Von & Judith						NorthwestMusher@aol.com	E-mail, 9-3-08
McCandliss	Bruce & Marcie		3611 44 <sup>th</sup> St. Ct. NE	Tacoma	WA	98422		Letter, 9-9-08
McClintock-1	Marshall	North Slope Historic District	701 N. J St.	Tacoma	WA	98403		Letter, 8-25-08
McClintock-2	Marshall	North Slope Historic District	701 N. J St.	Tacoma	WA	98403		Letter, 8-30-08
McClintock-3	Marshall	North Slope Historic District	701 N. J St.	Tacoma	WA	98403		Letter, 9-2-08
McClintock-4	Marshall	North Slope Historic District	701 N. J St.	Tacoma	WA	98403		Letter, 9-8-08
Miles-1	John	South Tacoma Neighborhood Council	7634 S. Fife	Tacoma	WA	98409		Letter, 9-3-08
Milne-1	Ken						Kenneth.Milne@ge.com	E-mail, 9-12-08
Mirra	Michael	Tacoma Housing Authority	902 S. L St., Suite 2A	Tacoma	WA	98405		Letter, 9-10-08
Morrison	Kurt		1827 52 <sup>nd</sup> St. NE	Tacoma	WA	98422		Letter, 9-11-08
Murdock	Greg & Mary Anne						GMurdock@cdcseattle.com	E-mail, 9-12-08
Ness	Mike & Dee Dee						legendssports@msn.com	E-mail, 9-9-08
Peachey	Ken						ken.peachey@gmail.com	E-mail, 8-24-08
Phillips-1	Jonathan	North End Neighborhood Council	2522 N. Proctor St., PMB #418	Tacoma	WA	98406		Letter, 9-5-08
Phillips-3	Scott & Kathy						fastlanephillips@comcast.net	E-mail, 9-10-08
Pierce	Ramie	Public Works Department					rpierce2@cityoftacoma.org	E-mail, 8-25-08
Porter	Hal	Tacoma Power					hporter@cityoftacoma.org	E-mail, 9-5-08
Pow-1	Amy	MetroParks Tacoma	4702 S. 19 <sup>th</sup> St.	Tacoma	WA	98405	amyp@tacomaparks.com	Letter, 9-11-08
Radford-1	Dave						david.radford@diebold.com	E-mail, 9-4-08
Radford-2	Dave						david.radford@diebold.com	E-mail, 9-5-08
Reed	Jonathen & Jennifer						jenn.reed@comcast.net	E-mail, 9-8-08
Rosner	Daniel		2802 N. Puget Sound Ave.	Tacoma	WA	98407	rosner@cascadepg.com	Letter, 9-11-08
Stagliano	N. J.						NStag@aol.com	E-mail, 9-11-08
Teitge	Carl						teitge@comcast.net	E-mail, 9-12-08
Tomberg	Ralph						rtomberg@nventure.com	E-mail, 9-9-08
Tunstall	Elisabeth M.						bntunstall@comcast.net	E-mail, 9-8-08
Turner-1	Julie & Jay		817 N. J St.	Tacoma	WA	98403		Letter, 9-2-08
Turner-3	Susie						sjturner@live.com	E-mail, 9-6-08
Winters-1	Sharon	Historic Tacoma	P.O. Box 7664	Tacoma	WA	98417		Letter, 9-9-08
Winters-2	Sharon	Historic Tacoma	P.O. Box 7664	Tacoma	WA	98417		Letter, 9-10-08
Zimmermann	Kurt						pricedritecars@aol.com	E-mail, 8-20-08





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

**Agenda Item**  
**PH-1**

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Peter Huffman, Manager, Planning Division

SUBJECT: Downtown Plan Update

DATE: September 25, 2008

The Planning Commission is scheduled to conduct a public hearing on October 1, 2008 on the proposed amendment to *Destination Downtown*, which is the downtown element of the City's Comprehensive Plan. The proposed amendment is a part (i.e., Application No. 2008-10) of the *Proposed Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code for 2008*, but has been conducted on a separate track.

Notice of the public hearing has been widely distributed and posted on the City's website ([www.cityoftacoma.org/planning](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/planning)). A public review document has been compiled, containing the draft Downtown Plan, a staff analysis report, as well as the associated environmental determination. The public review document, printed with a light purple cover (a.k.a. the "Purple Book"), has also been disseminated for required review, posted on the City's website, and made available at all branches of the Tacoma Public Library. Commissioners should bring their copy of the Purple Book to the next meeting for use and reference at the public hearing.

An Informational Session was conducted on September 24<sup>th</sup>, at 5:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers, to provide interested citizens an opportunity to learn more about the proposed amendment.

Attached is a staff report which summarizes the proposed amendment, review criteria and process, public participation and the notice provided for the public hearing. If you have any questions, please contact Peter Huffman at 591-5373 or [phuffman@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:phuffman@cityoftacoma.org).

PH:ds

Attachment





**2008 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS  
TO THE  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND LAND USE REGULATORY CODE**

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STAFF REPORT  
TACOMA PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING  
OCTOBER 1, 2008

**A. SUBJECT:**

Adoption of an amendment to the City of Tacoma's Comprehensive Plan by updating and modifying the downtown element, *Destination Downtown*. (Application No. 2008-10).

**B. BACKGROUND:**

Each year, proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and/or Land Use Regulatory Code are considered by the Planning Commission and City Council. Tacoma's Comprehensive Plan is the City's official statement concerning future growth and development. The Growth Management Act (GMA), with few exceptions, requires that all proposed Plan amendments be reviewed concurrently and no more frequently than once each year. This is usually referred to as the "annual amendment" whereby individual Comprehensive Plan amendments are considered together.

**C. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND LAND USE REGULATORY CODE AMENDMENT PROCESS:**

Periodic review and evaluation are important in order that the Comprehensive Plan and the implementing development regulations maintain their effectiveness. Changing conditions and community needs may necessitate amendments. Amendments can include modification to the existing policies of the Plan, the addition of new policies or the deletion of policies within the Plan as well as changes to the narrative text. Changes to development regulations can include text revisions, the addition or deletion of regulations and changes to zoning classifications for certain properties on an area-wide basis. As new Plan elements are developed, amendments to previously adopted plan elements also may be necessary. All amendments to the Comprehensive Plan are reviewed simultaneously so that the cumulative effect can be considered.

Amendments may be proposed by City staff, the City Council, private individuals, Neighborhood Councils, and other organizations or entities. The deadline for submitting an application for amendment is the last business day of the year for consideration in the following year; however, applications are accepted at any time.

One application for an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan was submitted in 2007 by a private party. In addition, five other Comprehensive Plan amendments were initiated by City staff (primarily from the Planning Division of the Community and Economic Development Department) including the proposal to update the Downtown element (Application No. 2008-10). The other amendments to the Comprehensive Plan were the subject of a separate public hearing held on September 3, 2008. The proposed amendments to the Downtown element that are the subject of this hearing are summarized in Section D of this report.

In accordance with the adoption and amendment procedures in the Tacoma Municipal Code (Chapter 13.02.045), the following criteria are used by the Planning Commission in determining if a Plan amendment or a change in development regulations is warranted:

- An obvious technical error exists in the pertinent Comprehensive Plan or regulatory code provisions;

- The amendment is consistent, or will achieve consistency, with the Comprehensive Plan's goals or policies;
- 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;
- The needs of the City have changed which support an amendment;
- The amendment is compatible with existing or planned land uses and the surrounding development pattern;
- Growth and development, as envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan, is occurring faster, slower or is failing to materialize;
- The capacity to provide adequate services is diminished or increased;
- Plan objectives are not being met as specified, and/or the assumptions upon which the Plan is based are found to be invalid;
- Transportation and/or other capital improvements are not being made as expected;
- Substantial similarities of conditions and characteristics can be demonstrated on abutting properties that warrant a change in land use intensity or zoning classification; or
- A question of consistency exists among the elements of the Comprehensive Plan or between the Comprehensive Plan and RCW 36.70A (Growth Management Act), the *County-wide Planning Policies for Pierce County* or multicounty planning policies, or the development regulations of the City.

The Planning Commission may also consider other factors as warranted including if additional information has become available since the Plan element or development regulation was last adopted or amended.

Proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan are developed pursuant to the procedures and requirements of Chapter 13.02 of the Tacoma Municipal Code as summarized above. Once an amendment has been determined to be warranted by the Planning Commission using the above criteria and other factors, Planning Division staff, under direction of the Planning Commission, conduct needed analysis and prepare the draft amendments for public review and comment.

Proposed amendments are subject to the requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act and the Growth Management Act. The amendments to the Comprehensive Plan receive detailed review by the Planning Commission and public hearing(s) are held to receive citizen comment. After further review, the Commission makes a recommendation to the City Council. The Council will review the proposed amendments, hold a public hearing, make modifications as may be necessary and adopt, or decline to adopt, the proposed amendments.

**D. SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT:**

Following is a brief summary of the proposed update to the Downtown element (Application No. 2008-10).

Amendment Application No. 2008-10 proposes revisions to the text describing the vision for the downtown area and updates goals, policies and graphics in the downtown element of the Comprehensive Plan. Specifically, the Destination Downtown overall goals and general policies as set forth in Chapter 12 of the City's Comprehensive Plan are to be replaced in their entirety.

However, the District policies as set forth in Chapter 12 of the City Comprehensive Plan need to remain in place to provide a planning foundation for the current downtown zoning districts and their implementing development regulations. Downtown zoning districts and their implementing regulations will be reviewed and most likely amended in 2009 to better implement the new goals policies and recommended actions. The District policies may be rescinded or amended at that time. The new goals and policies have been determined to be consistent with the existing District policies, providing additional detail as appropriate.

The proposed amendment is intended to facilitate future development of the Downtown mixed-use center consistent with the growth strategy outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. The downtown area has experienced a period of significant public and private investment that has been described as a renaissance of the area. While these investments have spurred tourism and renewed interest in living, working, shopping, dining and playing downtown, there is still a need to attract large scale employers and vibrant retail and develop better transportation alternatives. The proposed update provides a working tool to clarify the vision for downtown and to use the vision for overarching guidance for implementation strategies, projects and ongoing initiatives. The proposed amendment seeks to bring together a myriad of interdependent actions and planning to create the necessary synergy for a healthy, vibrant downtown.

The downtown plan update is intended to:

- Coordinate land use, transportation, economic development and parking strategies
- Create a walkable downtown through application of best practices such as “complete streets”
- Establish urban design principles with an emphasis on the public realm
- Link economic vitality and environmental quality through an awareness of the regional effects of growth management, land use and transportation decisions
- Link land use policy and economic revitalization strategies
- Define “character areas” and opportunities within them for catalyst projects and near term actions
- Suggest zoning and regulatory changes for future consideration
- Lay the groundwork for responsibly increasing density while creating a high quality environment that retains downtown Tacoma’s character

The updated Downtown Plan is organized around four chapters each on a separate theme. The four themes are: A Balanced Healthy Economy, Achieving Vitality Downtown, Sustainable City, and a City of the Arts. Each chapter includes goals and policies as well as implementation actions which are to be considered in the near, mid and long term. A strong emphasis is placed on circulation and mobility throughout the document. The draft Plan proposes street typologies which could serve as the basis for future street design and streetscape improvements. A focus on the pedestrian is strongly recommended to create a walkable downtown that is safe, clean, attractive and inviting. Finally the draft Plan identifies “character areas” and proposes a vision for each of these areas along with policies, actions and design principles that are in concert with the unique character found in each area. The character areas are:

- the **Commercial Core** where the emphasis would be on the International Financial Services Area and improvements that would activate the street edge to create a more friendly pedestrian environment in concert with new high rise development

- the **St. Helens** neighborhood where policies would support the emerging retail corridor and proposed revisions to the height and FAR bonus would support the growing high density residential neighborhood
- the **Union Station** area where greater integration of the campus is proposed and opportunities are indentified to capitalize on the Prairie Line/Water Ditch trail as well as the reuse of City property in the area
- the **Brewery/Nob Hill District** where emphasis is on retaining the historic, eclectic character using new tools for preservation and support is given for the emergence of a new gateway area, Nob Hill, at southern most edge of downtown
- the **Hillside** area, sandwiched between Yakima and Tacoma Avenue, should redevelop as a transition area between downtown and Upper Tacoma with predominately mid-rise residential uses.

## **E. GENERAL INFORMATION:**

### **1. Evaluation of Plan Amendments**

The proposed changes to the Downtown element amending the Comprehensive Plan were reviewed using factors contained in the Tacoma Municipal Code and as set forth in summary in Section C herein. Other information also was used including the Downtown Economic Strategic Plan produced by AngelouEconomics for the City this year, past planning documents including the Downtown Streetscape Study, the 1998 R/UDAT report, the Thea Foss Design and Development Plan, and the Tacoma Dome Area Plan, current studies and initiatives including the Tacoma City Center Parking and Mobility Strategy, the Mixed Use Center and Urban Design Review projects and the master plan update for the UWT campus. The Commission also received a summary of comments from two community meetings concerning the proposed update to the Downtown element.

### **2. Environmental Evaluation**

Pursuant to WAC 197-11 and Tacoma's SEPA procedures, a Preliminary Determination of Environmental Nonsignificance was issued on September 10, 2008. This preliminary determination, SEPA File Number: SEP2008-40000119984 was made based upon a review of a completed environmental checklist. The City will reconsider the preliminary determination based on timely public comments regarding the checklist that are received by October 10, 2008 and unless modified, the preliminary determination will become final on October 17, 2008.

### **3. Public Review Process**

During the development of the draft Plan, interviews were conducted with individuals and stakeholder groups which were coordinated with the consultants developing Downtown Economic Strategic Plan. These interviews included residents, business owners, employers, non profit organizations, development interests, cultural organizations and others. Follow-up meetings also occurred as the draft plan took shape.

A joint Open House for the Downtown Plan Update and the Downtown Economic Strategic Plan was held on June 24, 2008. The purpose of the open house was to inform the public about the planning process and engage in a dialogue about first ideas. A second Open House was held on July 30, 2008 to receive feedback on policy choices for transportation strategies, urban form, design, sustainability, housing and others. Public comments from these meetings were shared with the Commission.

The proposed update to the Downtown element was presented to and discussed by the Planning Commission at their meetings, which are open to the public. The Commission reviewed the proposed changes and authorized the distribution of the Downtown Plan Update for public review and comment on September 3, 2008. The draft Downtown Plan Update, the staff report which analyzes the proposed amendment for consistency with the criteria listed in Section C herein and a copy of the preliminary environmental determination and completed checklist were compiled into a single document. This document was made available for public review at all branches of the public library and at the office of the Community and Economic Development Department. The document was also posted on the City's website and made available on CD-ROM upon request.

An informational public meeting was held on September 24, 2008. The purpose of this meeting was to provide a more detailed explanation of the draft Downtown Plan Update and to answer any questions about the proposed changes. Notice of this meeting was included in the public hearing notice and advertised in *The News Tribune* on September 17, 2008.

#### **4. Notification**

Notice of the Planning Commission's public hearing was distributed to Neighborhood Council board members, other neighborhood groups, business district associations, civic organizations, environmental groups, development interests, adjacent jurisdictions, the Puyallup Tribe, other government agencies, major employers and institutions, City and State departments, and other known interested individuals or groups. Notice was also provided to taxpayers of record for properties within the downtown study area. In addition, the notice could also be viewed and downloaded at the Planning Division's website ([www.cityoftacoma.org/planning](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/planning)).

The notice stated the purpose of the public hearing, information pertaining to the environmental determination and where additional information could be obtained. Advertisement of the public hearing was published in *The News Tribune* on September 17, 2008.

#### **F. COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission accept all oral and written testimony and hold the record open until **5:00 p.m. on Friday, October 10, 2008** and that the Commission evaluate all testimony given at the public hearing and any written comments received as part of the record prior to making a recommendation to the City Council.

