

SCOPING MEETING: Help Us Plan the Future of THE MLK DISTRICT

The City of Tacoma is working with residents, businesses and property owners to prepare a MLK Subarea Plan to encourage development and economic revitalization in the MLK District. As part of that plan, the City is preparing a non-project Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate how the subarea plan might impact environmental and infrastructure resources in the area, as well as how those impacts might be mitigated.

One of the first steps in preparing an EIS is to conduct a public scoping process to ask citizens and organizations for their concerns, comments and ideas. The City of Tacoma is hosting a public scoping period to gather public comments on the issues and opportunities that should be the focus of the EIS. The public scoping comment period will last from January 9, 2012 through February 10, 2012. Comments are welcome at the public scoping meeting on January 19, 2012, or any time during the comment period through mail or email.

HOW TO COMMENT:

Attend the public scoping meeting

Date: Thursday, January 19, 2012

Location: Evergreen Tacoma Campus
1210 6th Avenue, Room 105

Time: Public testimony begins at 5:00 pm

Provide written comments via mail

Brian Boudet

City of Tacoma

Community and Economic Development Dept.

747 Market Street, Room 1036

Tacoma, WA 98402

Provide comments via email

planning@cityoftacoma.org

For more information visit the project website:
www.cityoftacoma.org/MLKPlan

Planning the Future of
The MLK District 

What might the future look like?

The City of Tacoma is required to plan for 60,000 new jobs and 70,000 additional people in Tacoma by 2030*. If this growth occurs as projected, it could mean up to 10 million square feet of new floor space in the MLK District that will bring additional housing, employment opportunities, new infrastructure, open spaces, and transportation options. What might this look like?

*Puget Sound Regional Council Vision 2040

MLK Business District Core Area



Conceptual illustration of the maximum build out allowed in the MLK Business District Core Area. Includes a mix of commercial and residential uses and urban density levels with maximum building heights up to 85 feet and minimal to no setbacks.

McCarver Neighborhood Area



Conceptual illustration of the maximum build out allowed in the McCarver Neighborhood Area. Includes primarily residential uses and some commercial space, particularly along MLK Way, with urban density levels. Maximum building heights of 60-65 feet and minimal to no setbacks.

St. Joseph Medical Center Area



Conceptual illustration of the maximum build out allowed in the St. Josephs Medical Center Area. Includes primarily medical uses and some residential and other commercial space. Urban density levels with maximum building heights of 150 feet and minimal to no setbacks.

Tacoma General/Mary Bridge Medical Center Area



Conceptual illustration of the maximum build out allowed in the Tacoma General/Mary Bridge Medical Center Area. Includes primarily medical uses and some residential and other commercial space. Urban density levels with maximum building heights of 150 feet and minimal to no setbacks.

The general illustrations above are representative of the maximum building envelope that will be allowed under the proposed plan, and not any particular project or proposal.

For more information visit the project website:
www.cityoftacoma.org/MLKPlan

Planning the Future of
The MLK District 



Determination of Significance, Notice of Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Public Scoping¹ and Public Scoping Meeting

Proponent: City of Tacoma

Project Name: MLK Subarea Plan

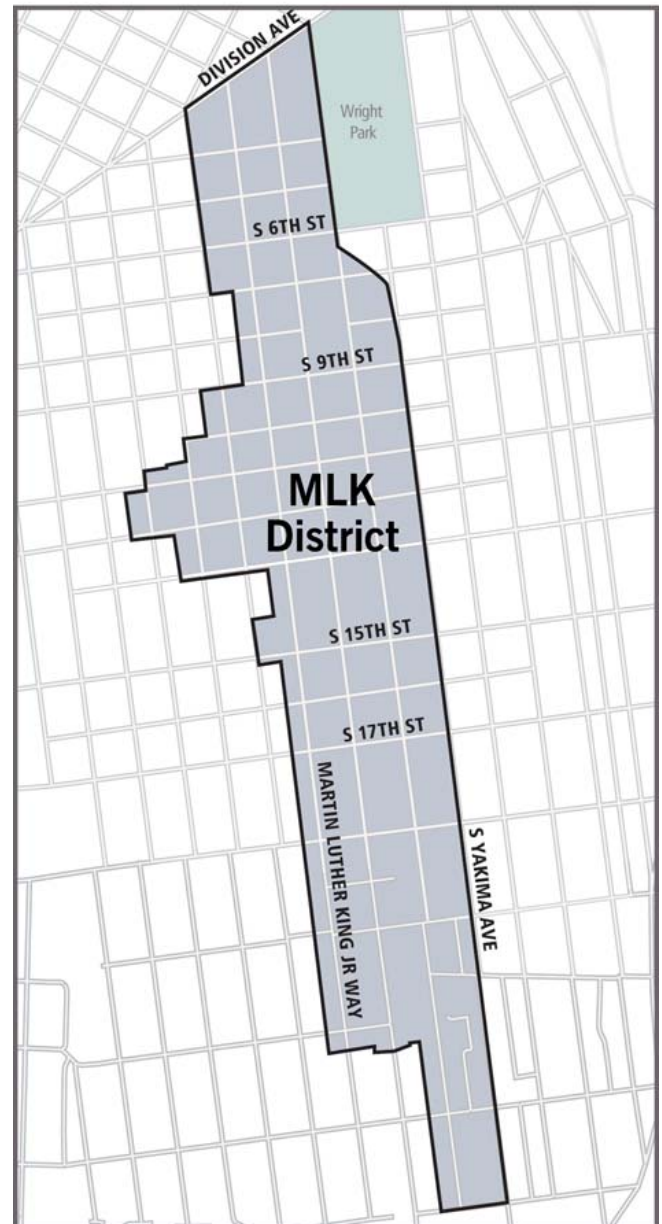
Background:

Funding - The City of Tacoma has been awarded a grant from the Washington State Department of Commerce (DOC) funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under assistance agreement PO-00J093-01-0.

Planned-Action Environmental Review – As part of the subarea planning process, the City will prepare a non-project environmental impact statement (EIS) for the MLK Subarea Plan. Completing a non-project EIS presents a cumulative impact analysis for the entire subarea, rather than piecemeal analysis of the environmental impacts and mitigation on a project-by-project basis. As a result, the environmental impacts and mitigation are comprehensively evaluated at the subarea-wide level. The non-project EIS also eliminates the need for subsequent environmental review associated with project-specific development proposals that are consistent with the subarea’s development regulations. As such, the non-project EIS provides certainty and predictability for urban development proposals; thereby, streamlining the environmental review process within the subarea and encouraging the goals of SEPA² and the State’s Growth Management Act (Chapter 36.70A RCW).

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

MLK Study Area



¹ Scoping is the first major step in preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS). It involves identifying the alternatives and the range of environmental issues that are to be analyzed in the EIS.

² SEPA is the **State Environmental Policy Act** (Chapter 43.21C RCW). Regulations that implement SEPA are called the SEPA Rules (Chapter 197-11 WAC).

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

Planned-Action Outreach Requirements – This optional EIS process has several community outreach components, notably:

- A community meeting on the proposed subarea plan must be held prior to issuance of the EIS Scoping notice for the proposed EIS;
- Notice of the proposed community meeting and notice of the EIS Scoping meeting must be mailed to all:
 - Taxpayers of record within the subarea;
 - Taxpayers of record within 400 feet of the boundaries of the subarea;
 - Affected federally-recognized tribal governments whose ceded area is within one-half mile of the boundaries of the subarea;
 - Agencies with jurisdiction³ over future development within the subarea;
 - Small businesses, as defined in RCW 19.85.020, and
 - All community preservation and development authorities established under chapter 43.167 RCW, TMC 13.12.560(D)(2).
- notice of the community meeting must include general illustrations and descriptions of buildings that are generally representative of the maximum building envelope that will be allowed under the subarea plan; and
- the notice must be posted on major travel routes within the subarea within seven days of the mailing of the meeting notice.

Description of the Proposal: The proposed project involves development of an innovative, area-wide subarea plan for Tacoma’s **MLK Mixed-Use Center** (the project study area), which will become an optional element of the City’s Comprehensive Plan. Together with the subarea plan, a non-project EIS is being prepared that will evaluate the probable adverse environmental impacts associated with various alternatives that are part of the subarea plan and identify measures that will be used to mitigate the impacts identified.

Specifically, the EIS will analyze the impacts associated with future development in the MLK Subarea, including additional development that is being planned to occur over approximately the next 20 years, as well as potential increases in employment and population that are being planned for in this area. Preliminary growth targets for the area include 10,000 new jobs and 10,000 additional people by 2030. This new development could represent a maximum of approximately 10 million square feet of new floor area. To accommodate the projected growth, the City is in the process of completing a transfer of development rights feasibility study, consistent with RCW 43.21C.420(g). As noted previously, the goal

³ For SEPA compliance, an agency with jurisdiction is an agency with authority to approve, veto, or finance all or part of a project (see WAC 197-11-714 for more details).

of this EIS is to evaluate potential environmental impacts on an area-wide basis, thus eliminating the need for additional environmental analysis in conjunction with development and redevelopment that occurs on individual sites within the MLK Subarea. This environmental review is intended to serve as a catalyst for redevelopment and an incentive for property owners and developers to favorably consider Tacoma's MLK Subarea when locating a business or investing in the community.

Location: The geographic area that is the focus of *MLK Subarea Plan* is shown in the map on the front page. Generally, the boundaries extend from Division Avenue on the north to South 27th Street on the south and from South L Street on the west to Yakima Avenue on the east, except between South 10th and 13th Streets where the west boundary extends to about South Sheridan Street. This subarea is commonly known as and locally designated as the MLK Mixed-Use Center. The approximately 275-acre area encompasses numerous significant community facilities, including Tacoma General & Mary Bridge Children's Hospitals, St Joseph Medical Center, and McCarver Elementary School. The City of Tacoma intends to designate this MLK Subarea as an environmentally reviewed subarea under the provisions of RCW 43.21C.420, or RCW 43.21C.031 and RCW 43.21C.229 if provisions in RCW 43.21C.420(5)(a) and (b) expire.

Alternatives: The EIS may also analyze several alternatives as part of the *MLK Subarea Plan*. These potential alternatives would be based on variations of such factors as transportation, utilities, development phasing, and/or focus areas within the subarea that exhibit different mixes of land use and intensities of development. The alternatives may also include less intensive development within the study area.

In addition, this EIS will evaluate impacts associated with a No Action – or business as usual -- Alternative. For purposes of the No Action Alternative, it is assumed that development would occur within the MLK Subarea based on existing zoning and environmental review procedures. Any such development or redevelopment that is proposed within the MLK Subarea in conjunction with the No Action Alternative would undergo environmental review on a project-by-project basis. Such projects would be subject to site-specific mitigation and appeal potential.

Lead Agency: The City of Tacoma is lead agency for SEPA compliance; the City of Tacoma will serve as the nominal⁴ lead agency.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Requirement: The City of Tacoma has determined that the *MLK Subarea Plan* is likely to have a significant adverse environmental impact on the environment. An EIS under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c) will be prepared. This decision was made after a review of information that is on-file with the City. Preliminary indications are that the following environmental parameters will be evaluated in this EIS:

- Earth;
- Air Quality (greenhouse gas emissions);
- Water;
- Plants and Animals;
- Environmental Health (contamination and hazardous materials);
- Noise;

⁴ A nominal lead agency is the public agency responsible for complying with the duties of lead agency (WAC 197-11-944) and complying with SEPA's procedural requirements (WAC 197-11-758).

- Land Use (adjacent land uses and consistency with plans, policies and regulations);
- Population and Housing;
- Historic and Cultural Resources;
- Aesthetics;
- Transportation, Circulation and Parking;
- Public Utilities; and
- Public Services.

EIS Scoping: Agencies, affected tribes, and members of the public are invited to comment on the scope of this proposed EIS. You may comment on the alternatives, probable significant adverse impacts, proposed mitigation measures, and licenses or other approvals that may be required. Methods for presenting your comments are described below. Please note that the City of Tacoma does not discriminate on the basis of disability in any of its programs, activities, or services. To request this information in an alternative format or a reasonable accommodation, please contact the City Clerk's Office at 253-591-5505. TTY or speech-to-speech users please dial 711 to connect to Washington Relay Services.

All comments are due no later than **5 PM, Friday, February, 10, 2012.**

- **EIS Public Scoping Meeting** – An EIS Scoping meeting is scheduled for **5 pm to 7 pm, Thursday, January 19, 2012** at the Evergreen State College Tacoma Campus (1210 6th Avenue). The purpose of the meeting is to learn more about the proposed project and to provide an opportunity to comment orally on the scope of the proposed EIS. Written comments will also be accepted at this meeting (comment forms will be available).
- **Submittal of Written Comments via Mail** – Written comments may be submitted to the Project Manager via mail, fax or e-mail, as follows:

Project Manager: Brian Boudet

Title: Urban Planner, Long-Range Planning Division

Address: City of Tacoma
 Community and Economic Development Dept.
 747 Market Street, Room 1036
 Tacoma, WA 98402

Phone #: 253.573.2389

Fax #: 253.591.2002

E-mail Address: planning@cityoftacoma.org

Responsible Official: Ryan Petty

Position/Title: Director, Community and Economic Development Department

Date: January 6, '12 **Signature:** 