



AGENDA

MEETING: Regular Meeting
TIME: Wednesday, June 3, 2015, 4:00 p.m.
LOCATION: Room 16, Tacoma Municipal Building North
733 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402

A. Call to Order and Quorum Call

B. Approval of Agenda

C. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting of May 20, 2015

D. Discussion Items

1. Housing Conditions Report

Review the Existing Conditions Report exploring issues of residential infill development in Tacoma produced by a graduate student planning group from the Portland State University. (See "Agenda Item D-1"; Stephen Atkinson, 591-5531, satkinson@cityoftacoma.org)

2. 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update

Review key policy issues. (See "Agenda Item D-2"; Stephen Atkinson, 591-5531, satkinson@cityoftacoma.org)

3. Billboards Regulations

Review the proposed sign code amendments concerning billboards. (See "Agenda Item D-3"; John Harrington, 279-8950, jharrington@cityoftacoma.org)

4. Tacoma Mall Subarea Plan

Discuss updated project schedule, staff and consultant project team, and public involvement plan. (See "Agenda Item D-4"; Elliott Barnett, 591-5389, elliott.barnett@cityoftacoma.org)

5. Nomination of Officers for 2015-2016

Nominate candidates for the Chair and Vice-Chair positions for one-year term from July 2015 to June 2016, and conduct the election at the next meeting. (Lihuang Wung, 591-5682, lwung@cityoftacoma.org)

E. Communication Items & Other Business

- (1) **Planning Commission Positions Available** – Applications are being accepted to fill the "Architecture, Historic Preservation and/or Urban Design" position which is currently vacant with an unexpired term through June 30, 2016, and the Council Districts 2, 3 and 5 positions that will be available on July 1 for a 3-year term through June 30, 2018. Applications are due to the City Clerk's Office by June 5, 2015. To apply, please visit www.cityoftacoma.org > "Government" > "Committees, Boards and Commissions".



- (2) Infrastructure, Planning and Sustainability Committee meeting, June 10, 2015, 4:30 p.m., Room 16; agenda includes: License Plate Recognition System; Transportation Master Plan Outreach Update; and Plastic Bag Policy Outreach Update.
- (3) Planning Commission Meeting, June 17, 2015, 4:00 p.m., Room 16; agenda includes Sound Transit 3 – Regional Transit Long-Range Plan Update; Proposed Narrowmoor Addition Conservation District; Work-Live and Live-Work Code Amendments; and Affordable Housing Planning Work Program Phase 3

F. Adjournment



MINUTES (Draft)

TIME: Wednesday, May 20, 2015, 4:00 p.m.
PLACE: Room 16, Tacoma Municipal Building North
733 Market Street, Tacoma, WA 98402
PRESENT: Chris Beale (Chair), Scott Winship (Vice-Chair), Donald Erickson, Meredith Neal,
Anna Petersen, Stephen Wamback
ABSENT: Benjamin Fields, Erle Thompson

A. CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM CALL

Chair Beale called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m. A quorum was declared.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Staff requested modifying the agenda by moving up discussion item D4. Work-Live and Live-Work Code Amendments to be D2. The agenda was approved as revised.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the regular meeting on May 6, 2015 were reviewed. Commissioner Erickson noted that the second sentence of page 2 needed clarification on the percentages regarding housing diversity. The minutes were approved as amended.

D. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Proposed Narrowmoor Addition Conservation District

Brian Boudet, Planning Services Division Manager, provided an update on the proposed Narrowmoor Addition Conservation District, which had been under review by the Landmarks Preservation Commission since May 2014 and would be before the Planning Commission in June to be considered as part of the 2015 Annual Amendment package. Mr. Boudet reported that there had been significant public outreach including a survey sent out to the community that had received feedback expressing support overall for the proposal. Mr. Boudet commented that one of the things that made the Narrowmoor area unique is that the character included site design and layout. He noted issues not addressed in the current design guidelines that might warrant consideration by the Commission including streetscape and trees. Reuben McKnight, Historic Preservation Officer, would provide more detail on the final recommendations of the Landmarks Preservation Commission at a future meeting.

Commissioners had the following comments and questions:

- Commissioner Wamback commented that it would be useful to eliminate any ambiguity in the packet and be clear which recommendations were specifically for the Conservation District and which were intended to be citywide.
- Vice-Chair Winship disclosed that he lives in the Narrowmoor area, adding that he has no direct financial benefit from the district and has no plans to recuse himself.
- Chair Beale requested additional information on issues pertaining to lot size requirements and the potential for future infill development. He expressed concern that they were not going to allow any further short plats or infill and requested more information on the reason for limiting the lot

coverage to 25%. Mr. Boudet responded that the low density was considered part of the neighborhood character and the lot restrictions would very likely restrict infill opportunities.

- Commissioner Neal requested information on the standard lot size.
- Commissioner Petersen requested notes on previous instances when the issue had been before the Planning Commission.

2. Live-Work & Work-Live Code Amendments

Elliott Fitzgerald, Planning Services Division, reviewed the findings and recommendations of a recently completed Work-Live Adaptive Reuse Code Compatibility Study for consideration in regards to potential amendments to the Land Use Regulatory Code. Mr. Fitzgerald reviewed that Live-Work and Work-Live units are a type of mixed-use development that eliminate the need to commute to work, provide affordable work and housing space, and support the creation of new businesses. Code amendments were developed in 2012 to promote these uses with an emphasis on the adaptive reuse of existing buildings in downtown Tacoma and the City's Mixed-Use Centers. The provisions that were adopted permit live-work and work-live units in downtown and Mixed-Use Centers only and limit the applicability to existing buildings. The existing provisions offer development flexibilities like not requiring additional parking and exempting exterior additions from design standards.

A study on the compatibility between the Building Code and the Land Use Regulatory Code had been recently finalized and included code precedents from other jurisdictions and case studies from three existing buildings in downtown Tacoma. The recommended revisions to the Land Use Code included: increasing allowable residential space, allowing "separated" Live-Work uses, eliminating restrictions for 20+ dwelling units, and removing limitations for new construction.

Mr. Fitzgerald discussed the need for a clearer distinction between a home occupation and a Live-Work unit. Staff was proposing a definition for Live-Work as a unit intended predominantly for living space with incidental accommodations for work related activities.

Mr. Fitzgerald reviewed the key issues: Looking at the existing provisions to see where clarification is needed and ensuring consistency with the building code; allowing these uses in new buildings; and allowing these uses in other zoning districts that allow for the associated mix of uses.

Commissioners had the following comments and questions:

- Commissioner Erickson asked why they were proposing removing limitations on new construction. He noted that when initially proposed, Live-Work had been intended as a tool for saving existing older structures where building new structures would otherwise be more cost effective. Mr. Boudet responded that some of the flexibilities in the proposed amendments to the Building Code like phased fire sprinklers and not requiring change of occupancy would be reserved for older buildings. Mr. Fitzgerald added that existing flexibilities in the current Land Use Code like not requiring additional parking and exempting exterior additions from design standards would also be retained exclusively for existing buildings.
- Commissioner Erickson asked if they would require that new spaces be designed with 12 foot ceilings so they could convert from residential to commercial. Mr. Boudet responded that on key streets in downtown areas there would be requirements for design that accommodates the required uses.
- Commissioner Erickson asked if the parking flexibilities would be the same for live-work, work-live, existing buildings, and new construction. Mr. Boudet responded that new buildings would likely be treated differently. Live-work and work-live might be treated differently as well, since adding retail space to a residential building would have a significant parking impact.
- Commissioner Wambach asked what the process would be to make sure a building remains work-live and that the residential use is not abandoned after receiving the benefits of getting to change the use without having to comply with other change of use provisions. Mr. Boudet responded that in the scenario where a commercial building becomes work-live, the amount of

residential space would be limited, it would not require a change of occupancy, and returning to fully commercial would not be an issue. A residential building becoming live-work, then becoming fully commercial would be a change of occupancy, which would trigger additional requirements.

3. 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update

Stephen Atkinson, Planning Services Division, presented a summary of recent outreach efforts. The events in each of the City Council districts were attended by around 98 people with conversations ranging from neighborhood identity to neighborhood scale. He noted other community initiated outreach efforts including the Go Downtown mural, the #IHeartTacoma campaign, and the Shoot the T photo contest. The various outreach efforts shared the major themes of transportation and movement; community interaction; desire for the arts, businesses, and locations where people interact; sense of place; natural setting; and historic character. They were currently looking into how the feedback can provide context to future discussion of policies.

Reema Shakra, ESA Consulting Firm, facilitated a discussion of the rough draft of the proposed Environment and Watershed Health Element for the Commission's consideration. The Element had been developed from the combination of urban forest, open space, and habitat themes as well as the Environment Element. Four basic themes would provide the structure of the chapters: Planning, Protection, Improvement, and Watershed. Policies in the Planning section would look at integrating planning across multiple departments and agencies. Policies in the Protection section would look at protecting environmental assets in development scenarios. The Improvement section would look at aspirational goals and policies for improving environmental quality. The Watershed Planning section would look at policies and goals that improve the overall health of Tacoma's watersheds. The Watershed Basin Plan was an effort to study existing watersheds and look at watersheds at a large scale. Other policies would become part of strategies, actions, and directives that had been included in an action table for consideration to be included in development of regulations, design manuals, and the environmental action plan. Ms. Shakra reviewed the new concepts that had been incorporated into the element including: adapting and responding to climate change; lowering greenhouse gas emissions; hazard management; improving alignments with city functions; and documenting what Tacoma has right now.

The next steps would be adding maps, evaluating the action table to determine where the actions would best fit, and including more background information in the watershed section. Mr. Atkinson reported that he would return to discuss updates including the Design and Development Chapter and the Parks and Recreation Chapter on June 3rd.

Commissioners had the following comments and questions:

- Commissioner Erickson asked for clarification on policies in the Action Table that did not have anything in the action column. Mr. Atkinson responded that the intent was to document existing policies so they could be evaluated in the future.
- Commissioner Wambach commented that he was not sold on the Watershed Planning sub-element as a goal level element equal to the others in the chapter. He suggested that if it goes forward in the current format, they should attempt to treat all watersheds with equal focus.
- Chair Beale commented that given the current critical areas code on geological hazard areas, the policies should be set up to support code amendments in the future.
- Chair Beale requested that he would like to see policy for recognition programs like Tree City USA and that he would like to retain the Evergreen Communities policy language.
- Chair Beale commented that given the FEMA and National Marine Fisheries lawsuit, a policy may be needed to protect 100 year floodplains for habitat.
- Chair Beale commented that he would like to see a policy on significant tree retention.
- Chair Beale asked if they were reopening the RCO certified plan for the Parks and Recreation Element. Mr. Atkinson responded that they were still limitedly certified, but still had work to do on the needs assessment, which was being discussed in conjunction with Metro Parks.

4. Land Use Designation Framework Amendment

Stephen Atkinson, Planning Services Division, facilitated a review of the proposed amendment to the Land Use Designation Framework requested by the North Slope Historic District to determine if the request should be included in the 2015 Annual Amendment process. Mr. Atkinson reviewed the history of the North Slope area, noting that it had been prioritized for growth in the past and that there had been a large amount of infill. The HMR-SRD zoning designation was subsequently created to address the issues of the area. Discussing the proposed amendment, Mr. Atkinson noted that the applicant was concerned about the low-density multi-family allowance and the request was to move the zoning to the single family residential land use designation. Mr. Atkinson reported that as part of the current Comprehensive Plan update, staff would look at some additional policy language to recognize the unique circumstances in the neighborhood and the essence of the application would be taken into consideration.

Commissioners expressed concern about accepting an application at the current stage of the 2015 Annual Amendment Process and that there did not seem to be a cause for urgency. Commissioner Erickson pointed out that “point rezones” appears to be a potential concern alluded to in the application, while there probably are no known imminent “point rezones” forthcoming in the area. Commissioner Petersen suggested that if the Commission were to reject the application, it should be made clear to the applicant that the issue would be considered in the normal work load. She recommended a letter stating that the issue would be taken into consideration. Commissioner Wamback, while not disagreeing with the intent of the applicant, expressed concerns that the Commission is considering an incomplete application (incomplete response to Question #12), that the Commission is not being consistent in contemplating this application and a previous one for the McKinley Mixed-Use Center (MUC) boundary expansion that had been denied, and that the Commission’s determination on this application is not to be transmitted to the City Council for approval.

Discussion ensued, and concluded with a determination that a response be issued to the applicant, in a similar way in responding to the applicant for the McKinley MUC, with a statement that the request would not be processed as an individual application of the 2015 Annual Amendment, but the essence of the proposal would be considered as part of the work on the 2015 Annual Amendment. Vice-Chair Winship made a motion to that effect, which was seconded by Commissioner Erickson. The motion passed with a vote of five to one, with Commissioner Wamback voting against it.

E. COMMUNICATION ITEMS & OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Boudet updated the Commission on the following items:

1. If the City proceeds with the 2016 Annual Amendment cycle, the deadline for applications for amendments to the Comprehensive Plan would likely be August 1, 2015; if not, citizens’ comments and suggestions would be incorporated into the existing and follow-up discussions of the 2015 Annual Amendment. Announcement will soon be posted on the Planning Services Division’s website.
2. While concern had been expressed about the length of meetings, the Comprehensive Plan Update would necessitate a large number of items on the agenda for several months. Staff would seek to be more strategic with presentations and include more information in the packets.

F. ADJOURNMENT:

At 6:25 p.m., the meeting of the Planning Commission was concluded.



City of Tacoma
Planning and Development Services

**Agenda Item
D-1**

To: Planning Commission
From: Stephen Atkinson, Planning Services Division
Subject: **TachOMEa: Infill Tools For A Happy City – Final Report Preview**
Meeting Date: June 3, 2015
Memo Date: May 28, 2015

At the June 3rd meeting, Portland State University (PSU) Planning Masters students will present a preview of their final report on Tacoma's neighborhoods and residential development patterns. Their PSU Planning Workshop faculty advisors will also be in attendance. Following up on their previous presentation of a draft existing conditions report, the group will present their findings including a definition of Tacoma's residential pattern areas, summarize their public outreach efforts, and initiate a discussion of recommendations for residential infill strategies.

Michael Cynkar, Nicholas Kobel, Anais Mathez, and Hannah Silver worked closely with City staff to develop a scope of work relevant to several ongoing policy discussions. Their work has already been informative for ongoing policy discussions including the Comprehensive Plan updates and the Affordable Housing Planning Work Program. Staff anticipate that the final work product will have lasting value in terms of stimulating future discussions on policy issues pertinent to neighborhoods and residential development.

Attached is a Report Preview of the Final Report to be available June 9th. If you have any questions, please contact me at 591-5531 or satkinson@cityoftacoma.org.

Attachment

c: Peter Huffman, Director



REPORT PREVIEW

Final Report available June 9, 2015

Prepared for: Planning and Development Services, City of Tacoma, Washington

Prepared by: Michael Cynkar, Nicholas Kobel, Anaïs Mathez, Hannah Silver
Portland State University Planning Workshop

OVERVIEW OF PROJECT

Tacoma is a city of neighborhoods. These neighborhoods have distinct natural and built features that make them unique urban places. Despite these differences, Tacoma's neighborhoods each have an instrumental role to play in the collective need to accommodate future growth in the city. The challenge ahead for the City of Tacoma is to meet the needs of its current and future residents in a way that **recognizes evolving needs while still preserving the important qualities that lead to unique and cherished neighborhood character.**

The core of this challenge is the need to accommodate a larger future population as the region continues to grow. As the City of Tacoma updates its Comprehensive Plan, it must plan based on population projections from the Puget Sound Regional Council which indicate that as many as 127,000 new residents will live in Tacoma by 2040, resulting in the need for up to 47,000 new housing units.¹ The City has planned for high-density growth in major centers and along transportation corridors, but less so in existing single-family residential neighborhoods that cover the majority of Tacoma.

Our final report identifies a variety of residential infill development strategies that can help guide housing policy to incorporate better place-making practices to reflect a neighborhood's unique character while also meeting the increased demand for housing citywide. The goals of these recommendations are to promote context-sensitive strategies that provide housing choice and affordability as a means of fostering thriving neighborhoods that meet the diverse needs of Tacoma's current and future residents.

Three key elements serve as the impetus for this study.

- 1. State-mandated review:** The City of Tacoma is required under the Washington Growth Management Act of 1990 (GMA) to periodically update its comprehensive plan to incorporate regional population projections and incorporate long-range planning that fulfills a variety of social, economic and environmental needs. The Housing Element is a mandatory requirement under the GMA and requires that cities plan for sufficient types of housing that meet the needs of all economic segments of society.
- 2. Community concerns:** Tacomans are concerned about trends of development in their city. These concerns often involve new development not fitting in with existing residential development patterns or not meeting community needs of affordability, well-maintained housing or the provision of a variety of housing options.
- 3. Gaps in information:** The City of Tacoma's Planning and Development Services (PDS) department saw the identification of neighborhood design patterns within Tacoma as an important need to inform growth management policy and promote development that was consistent with neighborhood character. PDS submitted a proposal to Portland State University's Master of Urban and Regional Planning program to conduct this analysis to help inform the Housing Element.

¹ Puget Sound Regional Council. (2009). VISION 2040 Growth Management Strategy.

OBJECTIVES

Our approach examines housing policy with the goal of meeting two key objectives: **increasing access to missing middle housing** and **promoting context-sensitive development**.

- *Why the missing middle?*
Zoning regulations have allowed limited housing options of low-density single-family houses or high-density units in limited areas. There is a wide range of underutilized “missing middle” options that could lead to more housing choice for Tacomans.
- *Why context-sensitive development?*
Building upon the defining characteristics of neighborhoods is essential for meeting the unique needs of those neighborhoods. This suggests the need for residential development that not only has similar visual features, but fits **social**, **economic** and **environmental** needs of the city and its residents.



Illustration © 2015 Opticos Design, Inc.

METHODOLOGY

Background research: Through comprehensive investigation and analysis we can understand the broader context in Tacoma for our housing analysis. This was done in three primary ways:

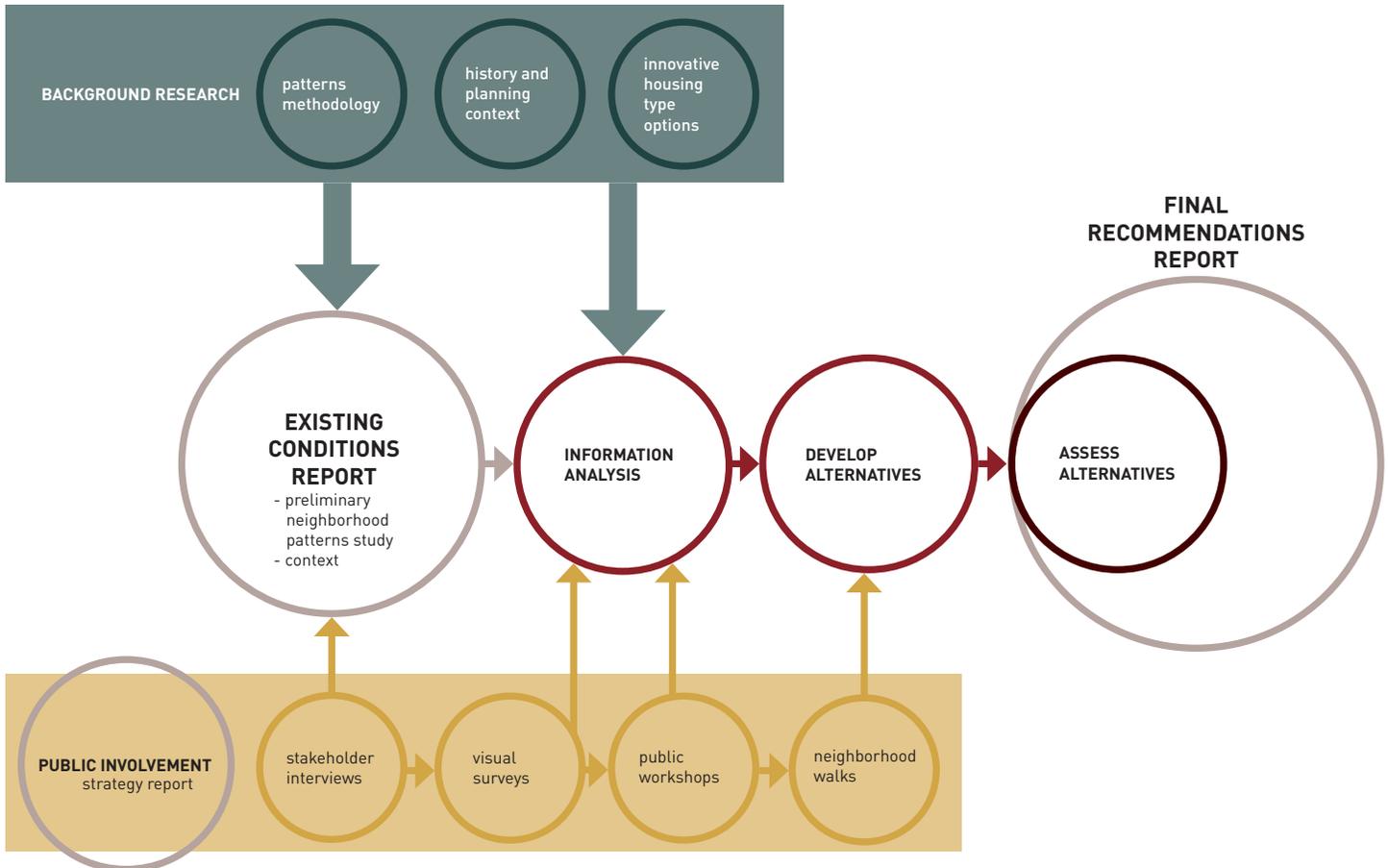
- *Develop a patterns methodology:* Identify built and natural environment characteristics that help inform our understanding of existing residential development.
- *Summarize history and planning context:* Past and present policies and community needs are critical for understanding important issues in Tacoma.
- *Conduct expert interviews:* Collect first-hand knowledge about innovative housing types from those who develop housing and policy language.

Public involvement: Comprehensive Plan updates can transform the social and physical landscape for decades to come. Extensive community engagement can help policymakers identify which policies have broad, lasting community support and reflect diverse community values.

- *Stakeholder interviews:* To identify issues pertinent to housing policy from experts and other key stakeholders.
- *Visual preference surveys:* To identify which types of housing Tacoma residents find most appealing for their neighborhoods.
- *Public workshops:* To give Tacoma residents the opportunity to interact with other community members to envision the direction of their community.
- *Neighborhood walks:* To provide educational opportunities for community members to learn about a variety of residential development patterns and offer feedback.

Existing conditions report: The culmination of elements of our background research and public involvement into a preliminary document of current conditions in Tacoma.

Development and assessment of alternatives: Through an analysis of our existing conditions report, community engagement and background research we will create various alternatives to meet our project objectives. We will rank these alternatives to make our final recommendations.



DEFINING PATTERN AREAS

WHY DO PATTERN AREAS MATTER?

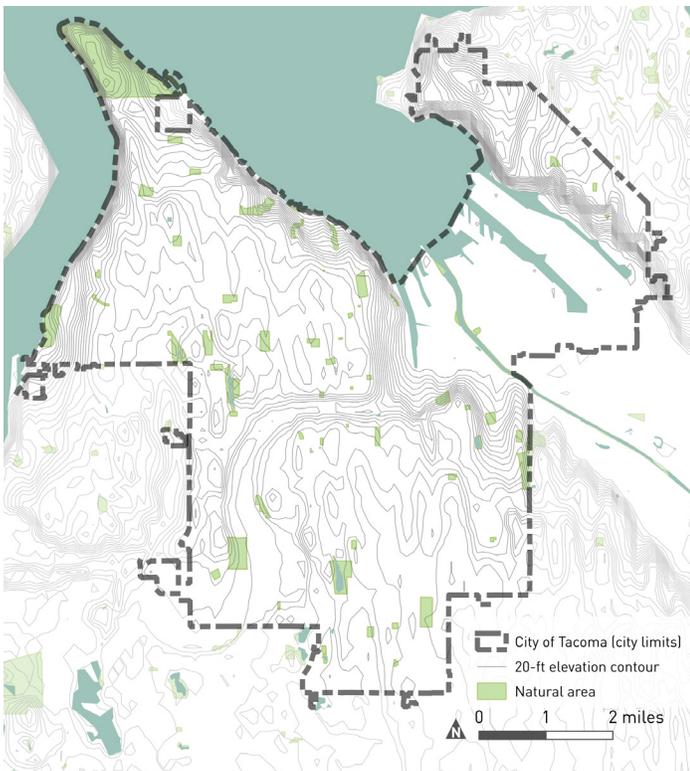
Residents of Tacoma value the unique character of their neighborhoods and districts. But what exactly contributes to neighborhood character and context? The goal of a pattern area mapping exercise is to highlight the features that make each area of the city unique. A pattern area is an area of the city that is linked by its **physical** characteristics—features of both the built and natural environment.

To determine the loose boundaries of the pattern areas in Tacoma, we did an analysis of five major built and natural characteristics: topography, street grid, land improvement ratio, intersection junction density, and era built. These maps are shown here.

TOPOGRAPHY

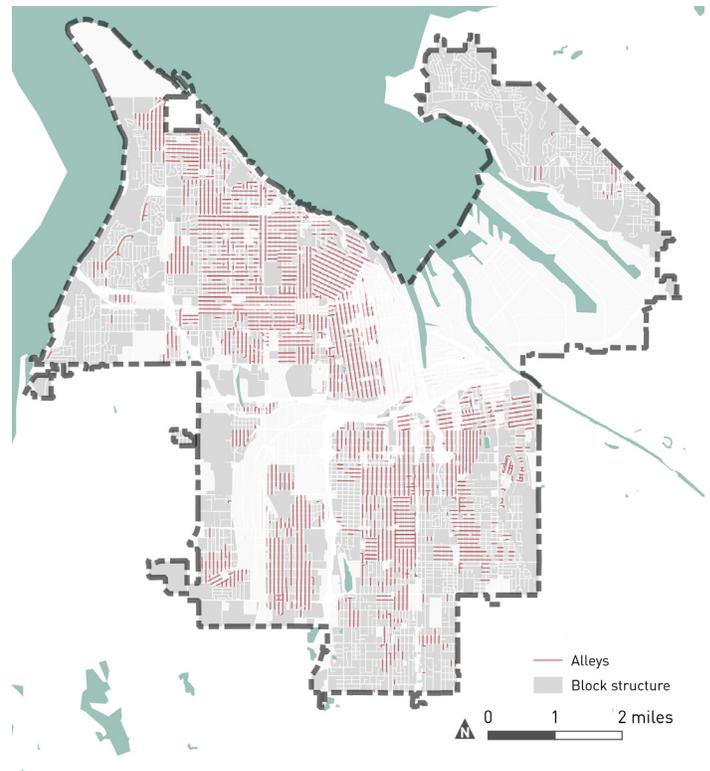
How does topography influence residential development?

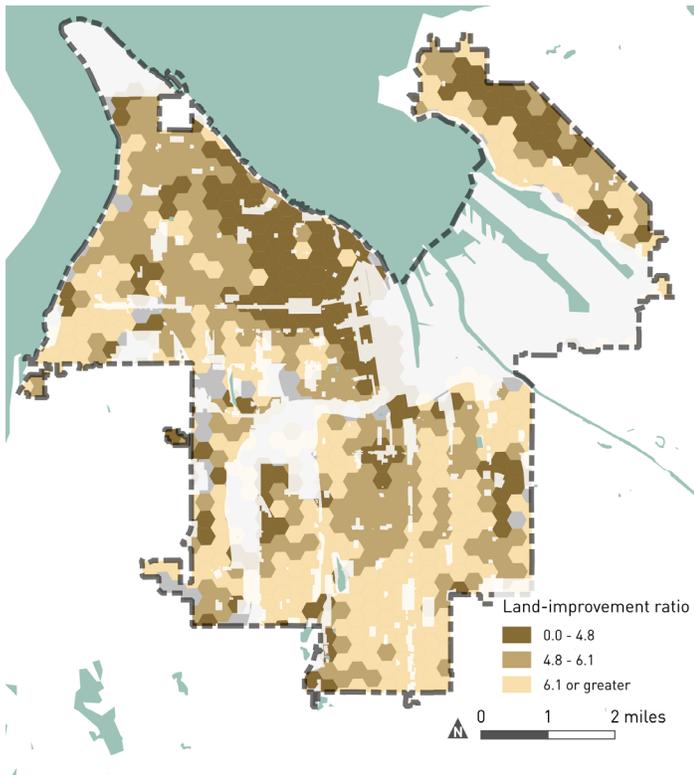
An understanding of the natural features that vary across Tacoma is essential for visualizing the nuances of development in different areas. For example, in areas with major slopes and views, houses are generally built to preserve those views. Additionally, semi-rural development historically happened most often in flatter areas.



STREET GRID

What is important about the street grid? An aerial view of Tacoma's street network highlights the major differences between a more rectilinear (straight), historic network and a more curvilinear (curving) post-war network, which has implications for how neighborhoods look. **Why highlight alleyways?** Alleyways are generally conducive to out-of-sight off-street parking. This usually means that the lack of garages at the front of lots allow for homes and blocks to be more pedestrian- rather than auto-oriented.



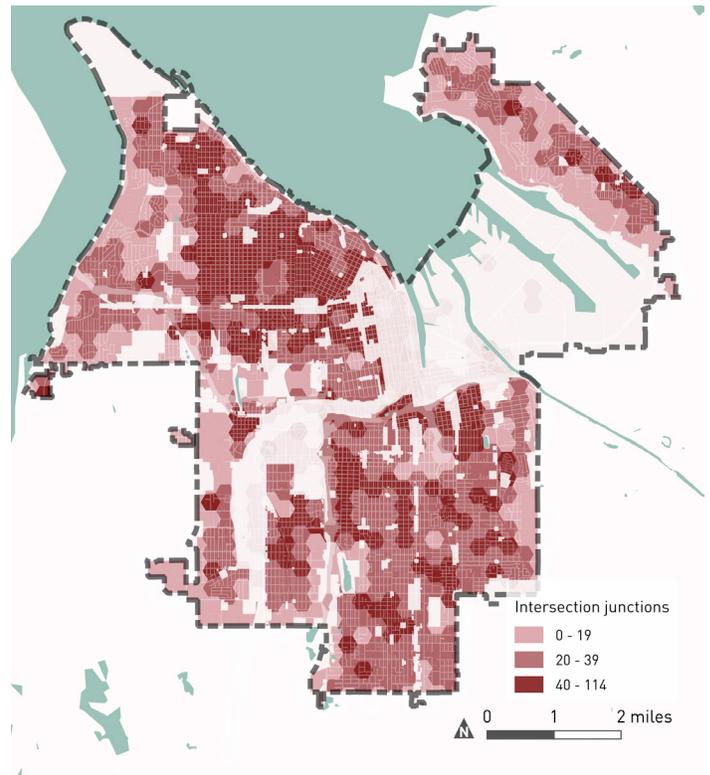


LAND USE INTENSITY

What is land improvement ratio and why is it important? Though the age of housing map can tell us much about the design of a neighborhood, some neighborhoods that were built in the same era exhibit very different land use qualities. Land improvement ratio shows the difference between land available on a lot and actual square foot developed on that lot. Darker areas are where land is more intensively developed, i.e. for a given lot, the residential structure is built up tall, or the footprint of a house takes up much of the lot. Lighter areas can mean that houses are smaller comparatively.

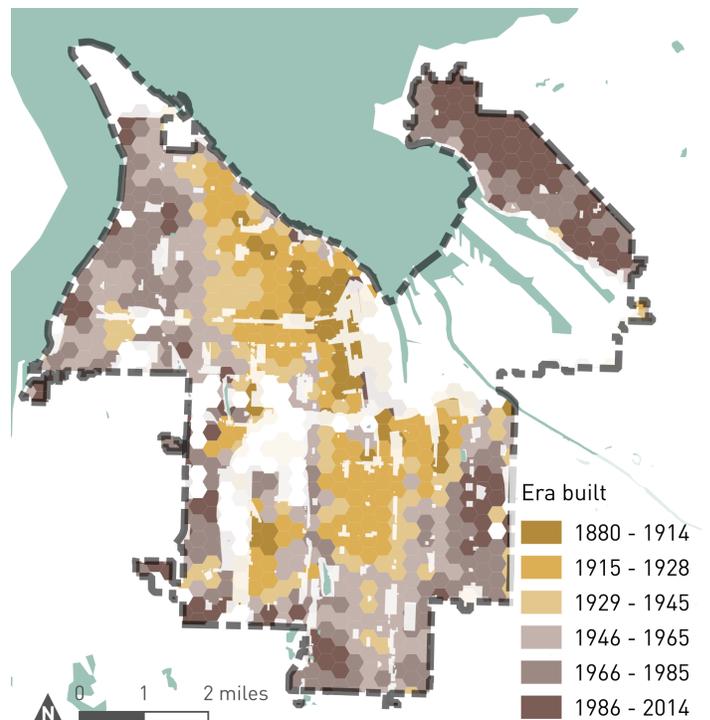
ERA BUILT

Why does it matter when housing was built? This map can give us a sense of what time period that the majority of any given area's housing comes from. Pre-war (approximately pre-1940s) housing was built without many modern amenities and construction techniques, meaning that construction is generally (though not exclusively) harder to the elements, hand-crafted, and more pedestrian-oriented. Post-war housing was developed with more amenities like A/C and the proliferation of cars, so design often reflects that with prominent garages and less expensive materials and labor. Pre-1950s housing was also built prior to the adoption of zoning code, so residential development includes more variety of housing types (duplex, small multifamily, carriage houses, etc).



INTERSECTIONS

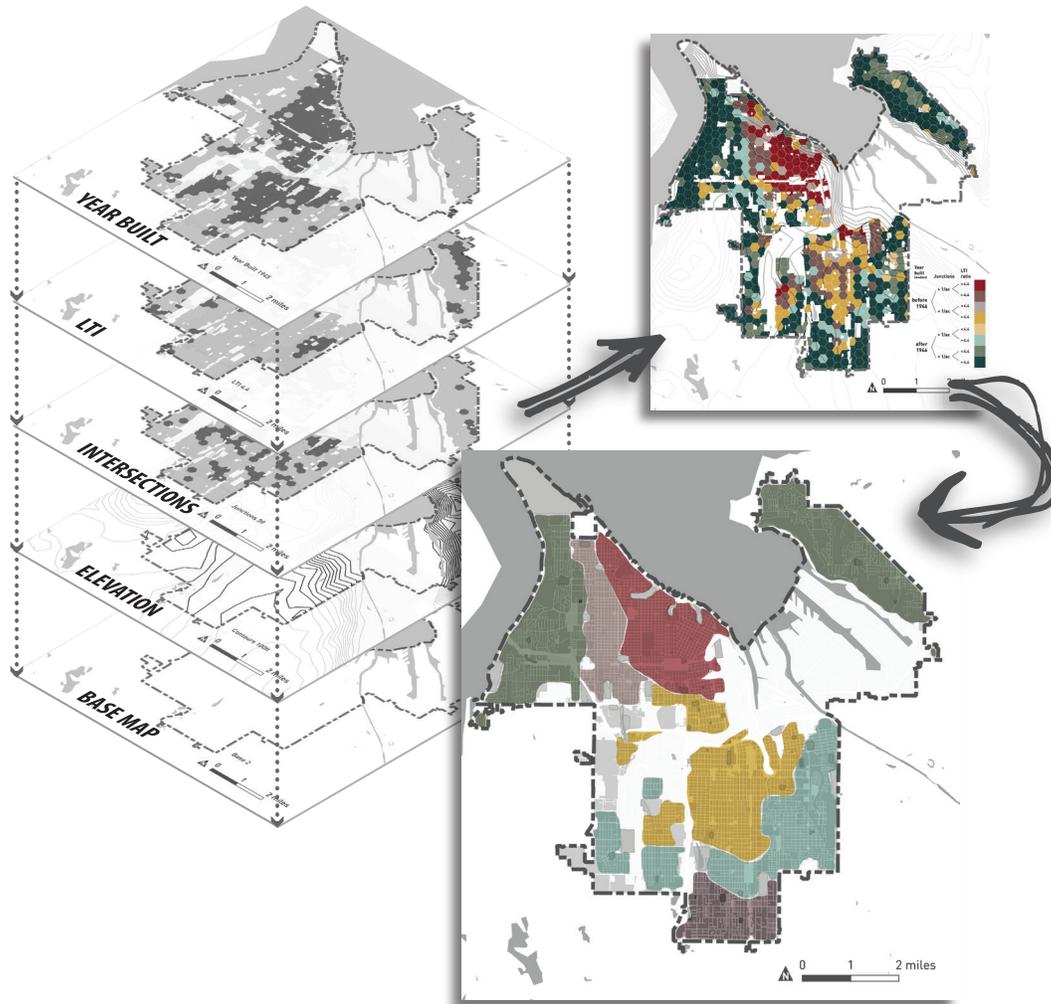
Why intersection junction density? By showing the cumulative number of intersection junctions (places where streets intersect) under each hexagon, we can visualize where neighborhoods are permeable or not. "Permeable" means that travel through them is easy because of a complete street network. This map gives us a sense of what the pedestrian experience is like in any given area.



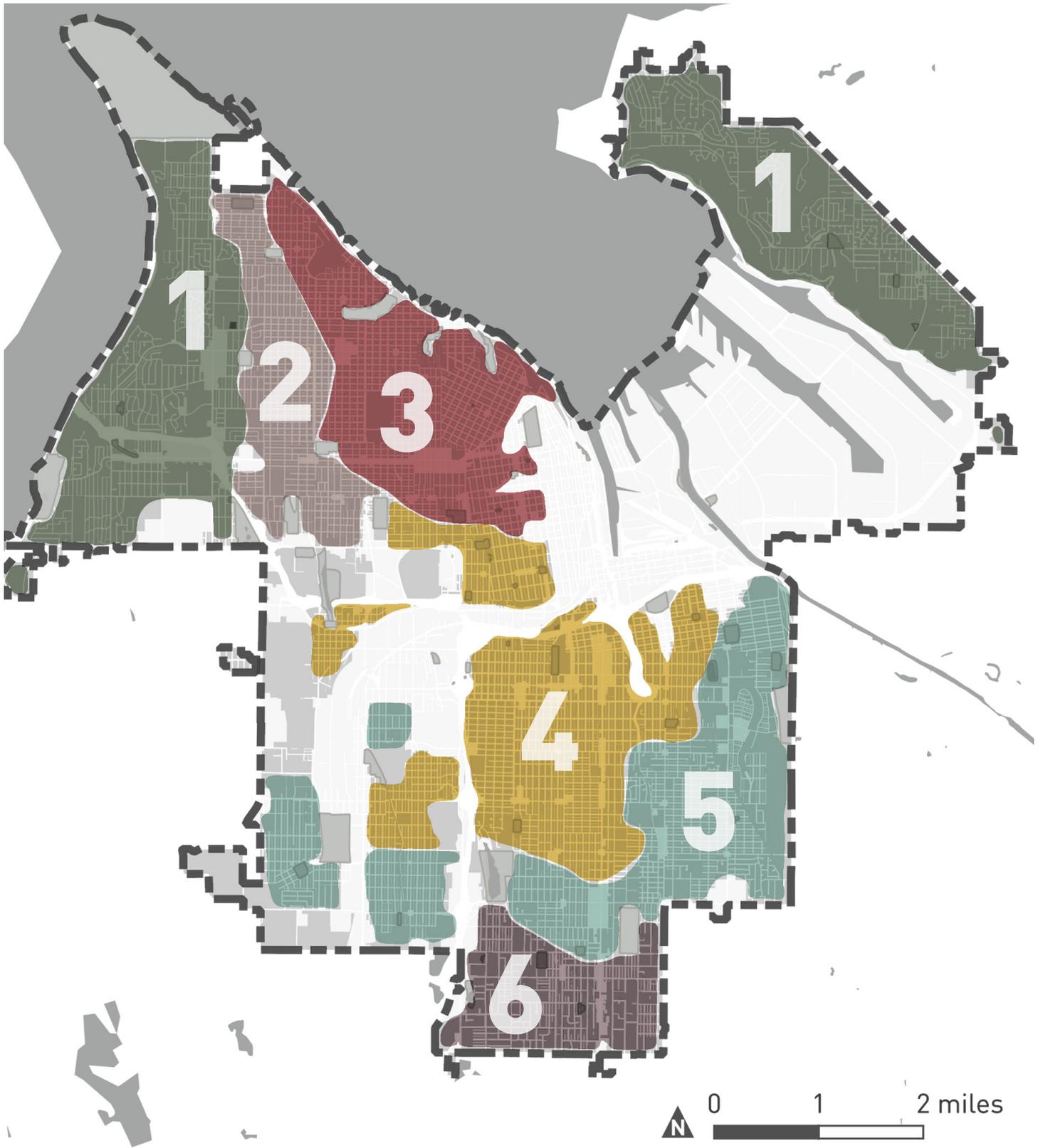
Data source: Pierce County Assessor-Treasurer. (2014). Tax parcel records.

TACOMA'S SIX RESIDENTIAL PATTERN AREAS

By simplifying and overlaying the preceding five maps, our team identified the six patterns areas shown in the map on the next page. Each of the six patterns is described in the pages following.



The residential pattern mapping exercise reveals that **one size does not fit all**. Tacoma's conventional approach to residential zoning does not adequately distinguish the nuances of residential development across the city. Identifying pattern areas is a first step in developing and refining policies, investments and regulations that are sensitive to neighborhood context. Pattern areas can help the city and its residents manage change in ways that enhance community identity by defining what the broader neighborhood context is.



1 POST-WAR SLOPES

These discontinuous but very similar areas were primarily developed post-war and represent a societal shift that favored auto use and more insular neighborhoods. This is evidenced by the dominance of garages, curvilinear (curvy) streets, and cul-de-sac development. This disrupted street grid limits walkability but lends itself to a sense of privacy and security within neighborhoods. Houses tend to be ranch, double-ranch, or more contemporary building styles, often with garages front-and-center, facing the street, as alleyways are rare. Many homes have long frontages and are 1-1.5 stories, as much of the area includes view overlays.

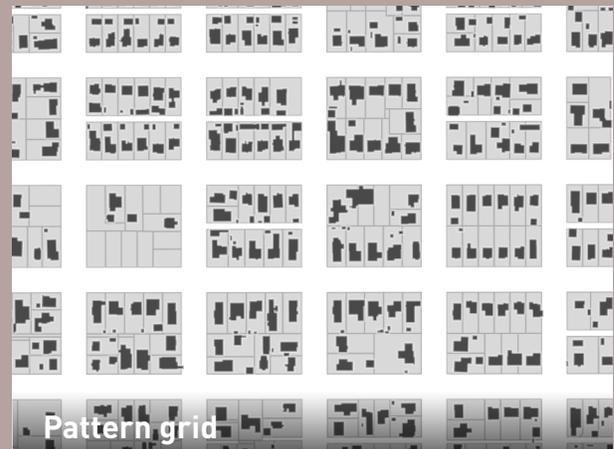


PATTERN 1 STATS:

- TOPOGRAPHY: SLOPED
- BLOCK STRUCTURE: CURVILINEAR
- INTERSECTION DENSITY: DISCONNECTED
- ERA OF DEVELOPMENT: POST-WAR
- LAND USE: LOW INTENSITY

2 MIXED-ERA TRANSITION

Though this area shares many street grid characteristics with Pattern 3, sidewalks are sometimes undeveloped. This area contains a generous mix of pre-war and post-war housing, including a fair bit of mid-century homes, which tend to be more auto-oriented than pre-war. However, much of the area includes alleyways, meaning that homes often hide garages at the rear. This area is slightly less compact than Pattern 3 and also holds far fewer large or land-use intensive homes.

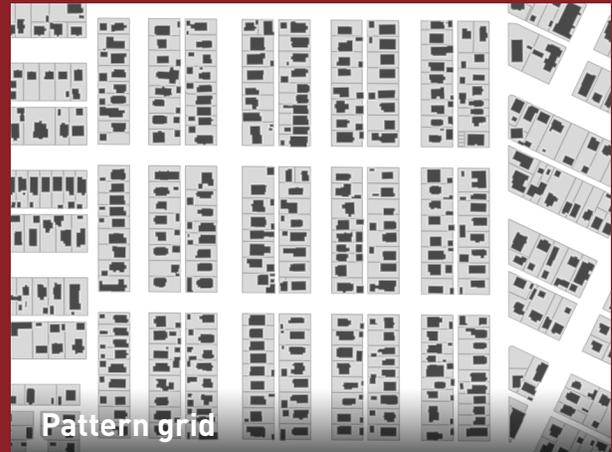


PATTERN 2 STATS:

- TOPOGRAPHY: FLAT
- BLOCK STRUCTURE: MIXED
- INTERSECTION DENSITY: CONNECTED
- ERA OF DEVELOPMENT: PRE-WAR
- LAND USE: MEDIUM INTENSITY

3 PRE-WAR COMPACT

This is Tacoma's most historic section of residential development, containing homes from pre-1900 but ranging through current era. The street grid is very connected and blocks tend to be fairly short, creating walkable neighborhoods. This area has a variety of pre-zoning non-conforming lot sizes, lots of alleyways, many large historic homes, and a mix of non-residential uses blended within it. A significant portion of this area is built on dramatic slopes and home designs emphasize views of the Puget Sound.

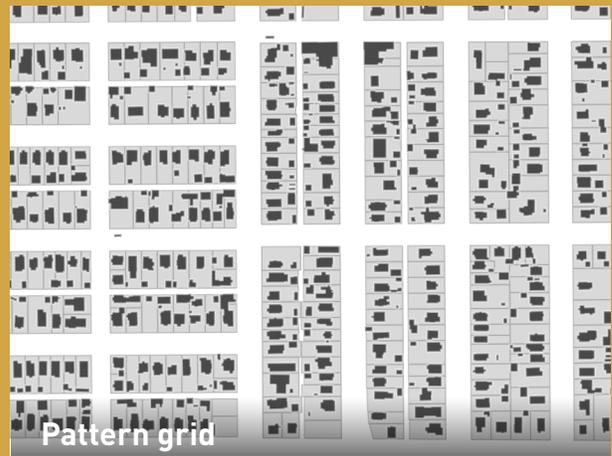


PATTERN 3 STATS:

- TOPOGRAPHY: SLOPED
- BLOCK STRUCTURE: STRAIGHT
- INTERSECTION DENSITY: CONNECTED
- ERA OF DEVELOPMENT: PRE-WAR
- LAND USE: HIGH INTENSITY

4 PRE-WAR EXPANSION

This area contains a fair share of historic homes, though they are generally smaller than in Pattern 3. Homes in this area are primarily bungalow style or reference this type of modest residential design. Land is developed less intensely than in Pattern 3, and though neighborhoods are walkable within themselves, they tend to be discontinuous, as they are edged by large, busy thoroughfares. Blocks are slightly longer than in other historic areas. This development is on fairly flat land, and the prominence of alleyways allows for hidden garages. Some neighborhoods also push powerlines into alleyways, creating a fairly clear line of sight.



PATTERN 4 STATS:

- TOPOGRAPHY: FLAT
- BLOCK STRUCTURE: STRAIGHT
- INTERSECTION DENSITY: MIXED
- ERA OF DEVELOPMENT: POST-WAR
- LAND USE: MEDIUM INTENSITY

5 MID-CENTURY EXPANSION

This area contains a general mix of residential styles, though mid-century homes are fairly common. These post-war homes frequently emphasize garages, and though alleyways exist throughout to some extent, they are less used than in other areas. The street grid begins to shift in this area, and blocks become longer in many places.



PATTERN 5 STATS:

- TOPOGRAPHY: MIXED
- BLOCK STRUCTURE: STRAIGHT
- INTERSECTION DENSITY: MIXED
- ERA OF DEVELOPMENT: POST-WAR
- LAND USE: LOW INTENSITY

6 SUBURBAN FRINGE

This area is comprised of a fairly disrupted street grid. In some cases, blocks are 3-4 times the sizes of those adjacent, and many times the size of blocks in compact historic areas. While there are some historic homes interspersed in this area, much of the development is post-war. Some residents benefit from large, nearly-rural lots. Some blocks have been developed as PRDs (Planned Residential Developments), with new, similar-looking, closely developed homes. This area has some flag lot and pipe stem development to make use of space within extremely deep blocks. This area tends to be fairly auto-oriented due to its less-connected streets.



PATTERN 6 STATS:

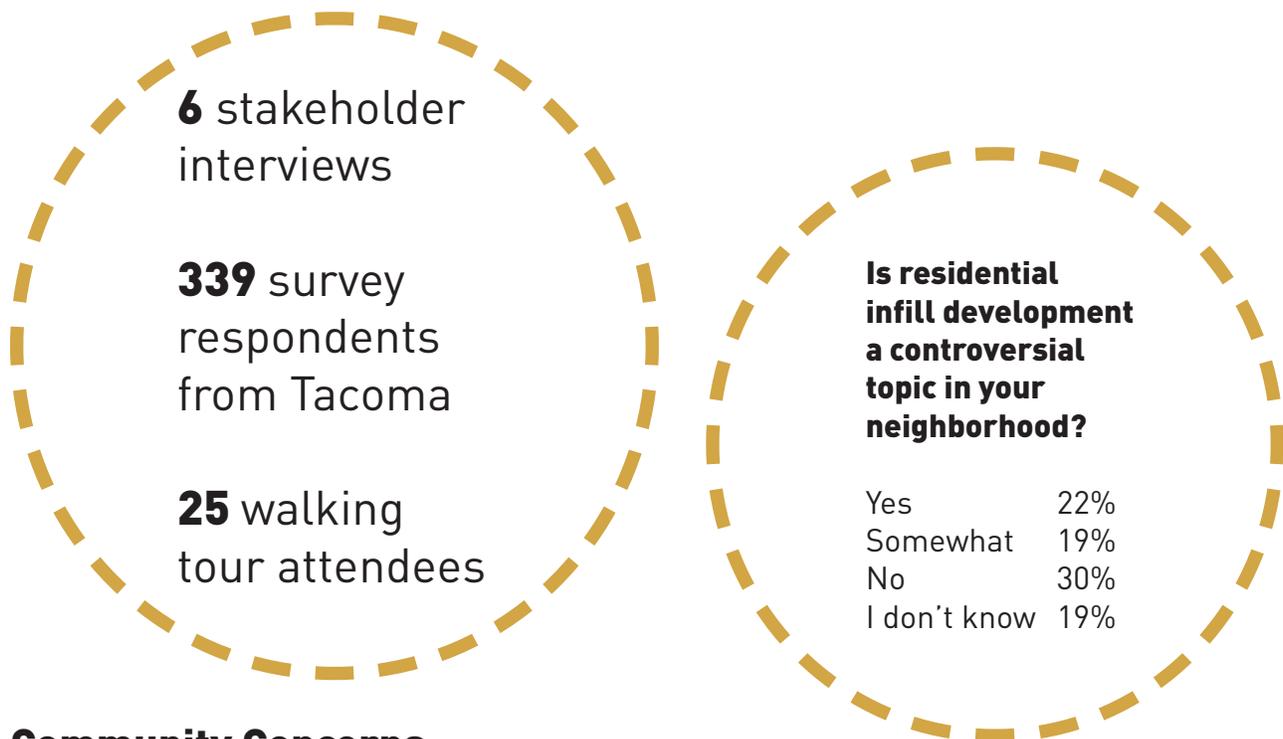
- TOPOGRAPHY: FLAT
- BLOCK STRUCTURE: STRAIGHT
- INTERSECTION DENSITY: DISCONNECTED
- ERA OF DEVELOPMENT: POST-WAR
- LAND USE: LOW INTENSITY

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TAKEAWAYS

What are the qualities that lend to the distinct identities of Tacoma's neighborhoods?

Community concerns over the direction of growth and development is one of the three guiding forces behind the purpose of this project. A key objective of this report is to identify the qualities that make Tacoma's neighborhoods unique so that new residential development reflects the patterns and scale of Tacoma's neighborhoods. Examining the concerns, perceptions and design preferences related to residential infill development helps calibrate physical patterns with neighborhood character.

Our team designed a public outreach and community engagement process to gather input from a wide range of key stakeholders, including City staff, planning experts, property owners, developers, community leaders, and Tacoma residents. Overall, nearly 400 people were reached through this project.



Community Concerns

While opinions regarding compatibility vary widely, issues of scale, look and function drive the concern over infill development. As controversial as the topic can be, conversations with the community indicated that "duplexing the neighborhood" and the perceived impacts of traffic and noise were embedded within issues of deteriorating infrastructure, residential blight and distrust towards public service providers. However, the sentiments shared with our team point to a sense of neighborhood pride and reveal an overarching commitment to supporting improvements in their communities.

What are the most important design and development priorities?



Design Preferences

Both through the online survey and open house meetings for the Comprehensive Plan Update, community members were asked to respond to images of different housing types and designs. A visual preferences survey asked participants to state the extent to which they thought the overall design of the house would be a positive or negative addition to the character of their neighborhood. Overall, responses show that the greatest proportion of survey respondents preferred housing designs that depict the classic Pacific Northwest architectural style, with front porches, hidden garages and orientation towards the street. Those designs with the least amount of support were garage-centric, with little architectural detail or landscaping. Respondents did not show a clear preference for any particular type of housing (i.e. how many units a structure holds).

What were the top-ranked homes in the visual preference survey?



duplex



single family



duplex



duplex



PRD

Image number	Total responses	Pattern area					Age group		Renter/owner	
		Post-war slopes	Mixed-era transition	Pre-war compact	Pre-war expansion	Mid-century expansion	Under 36	36 or older	Rent	Own
18	95%	88%	96%	96%	98%	95%	93%	96%	91%	96%
7	93%	92%	100%	94%	95%	100%	89%	94%	90%	94%
22	85%	85%	81%	84%	85%	95%	82%	86%	86%	84%
11	83%	92%	92%	78%	89%	95%	82%	84%	84%	84%
28	83%	77%	81%	78%	94%	85%	83%	83%	83%	83%

What were the bottom-ranked homes in the visual preference survey?



attached



alley flats



single family



duplex



triplex

Image number	Total responses	Pattern area				Mid-century expansion	Age group		Renter/owner	
		Post-war slopes	Mixed-era transition	Pre-war compact	Pre-war expansion		Under 36+	Over 35+	Rent+	Own+
15	46%	50%	36%	35%	50%	60%	52%	43%	62%	41%
30	45%	46%	33%	39%	56%	60%	46%	45%	60%	41%
2	44%	42%	58%	33%	49%	63%	49%	41%	55%	41%
19	34%	46%	38%	16%	55%	50%	33%	35%	44%	32%
10	24%	35%	15%	9%	36%	53%	22%	25%	28%	23%

Next Steps

The information gleaned from survey data, interviews and conversations will provide considerable opportunities for understanding community values and assessing the challenges and opportunities of residential development. Analysis of this information will look at the differences between pattern areas regarding design preferences, development priorities and the perception of neighborhood qualities.

FORMING RECOMMENDATIONS

The tacHOMEa team is currently in the process of finalizing its recommendations and will present these to the Planning Commission at the June 3rd meeting. These recommendations will offer context-sensitive strategies for increasing missing middle residential infill development. Our approach evaluates context-sensitivity through economic, social and environmental lenses to evaluate how well it meets community needs, as determined through research and community engagement. Each individual recommendation receives a score in each of the following categories:

Economic

“Housing that allows for profit maximization and cost savings by developers that in turn helps spur development.”

Social

“Housing that promotes equal access to opportunities for a higher standard of living, community revitalization and housing security.”

Environmental

“Housing that limits the consumption of scarce natural resources, reduces pollution and helps to protect existing environmental features.”

The recommendations are ranked in each of these three categories on a scale of 1-3. The scale represents:

“3” score = High opportunity for achieving goals.

“2” score = Medium opportunity for achieving goals

“1” score = Low opportunity for achieving goals

These three scores are bundled to create a composite score for each recommendation. Coupled with an analysis of **economic and political feasibility, ease of implementation,** and **consideration for pattern area characteristics,** this composite score allows us to prioritize recommendations for the City of Tacoma to consider for updates to zoning code and planning policy.



City of Tacoma
Planning and Development Services

**Agenda Item
D-2**

To: Planning Commission
From: Stephen Atkinson, Planning Services Division
Subject: **2015 Comprehensive Plan Update – Policy Element Overview**
Meeting Date: June 3, 2015
Memo Date: May 28, 2015

At the June 3 Planning Commission meeting, staff will be presenting an overview of the proposed Comprehensive Plan elements and a summary of the policy direction and key policy shifts for each chapter as well as chapters not proposed for amendment and topics to be addressed in future work programs.

The Commission has previously discussed topics related to Housing, Environment, Land Use Designations, Transportation, and Mixed-Use Centers. The focus of this presentation will be those elements of which the Planning Commission has not yet fully reviewed or discussed, including the Vision and Introduction, Economic Development, Parks and Recreation, Urban Form, Design and Development, and the Public Engagement, Administration and Implementation chapters. Attached is a summary of each element.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (253) 591-5531 or satkinson@cityoftacoma.org.

Attachments (1)

c: Peter Huffman, Director



Overview of Proposed Comprehensive Plan Elements and Policy Directions

The following topics represent proposed policy elements of the Comprehensive Plan and a brief discussion of the proposed policy directions and key policy shifts related to these elements.

Vision and Introduction

Key updates:

- Core Values of Tacoma 2025 and integration of Focus Areas.
- Regional planning context and Tacoma's role within the region.
- Setting the stage for growth and development – the sustainable cities model.

***NEW* Urban Form – Replacing the Growth Strategy and Development Concept Element**

Key updates:

- Emphasize the importance of urban design at the neighborhood/community scale
- Centers – Describe role of centers in anchoring complete neighborhoods
 - Fully incorporate Stadium and Hilltop as subareas of the Downtown Regional Growth Center
 - Simplify the centers typology
 - Identify implementation actions for mixed-use centers
 - Recognize and promote Convenience Corners
- Apply new Land Use Designation framework
 - Address inconsistencies between designations and zoning (assess/verify correct land use designations to set stage for compatible rezoning as part of 2016 Annual Amendment)
 - Promote additional land supply for multi-family along corridors
 - Implement new "Parks and Open Space" designation
 - Create and implement new "Major Institutional Campus" designation
- Describe Historic Neighborhood Pattern Areas based on physical characteristics and recognize the diverse uses and housing types within established residential neighborhoods
- Promote "Patterned Corridors" that support diverse uses and vibrant urban places
- Emphasize the importance of better integrated land use and transportation planning

***NEW* Design and Development – Replacing Generalized Land Use Element**

Key Policy Updates:

- Emphasize the importance of design at the project/site/building scale
- Expand scenic resource policies to include architectural and cultural resources
- Integration of policies related to public art and creative place-making
- Promote sustainability through design – hazard resilient design, resource efficient design and designing with nature
- Promote access to healthy food



Housing Element

Key Policy Updates:

- Incorporate new housing targets and data
- Incorporate countywide 25% affordable housing goal
- Strengthen policies supporting mixed-income communities throughout city
- Support full range of housing types (including the “missing middle”) and where (density in proximity to centers and corridors)
- Housing programs and funding should support the City’s growth strategy.
- Include prioritization principles and criteria for reviewing projects to ensure consistency with Comprehensive Plan.

Environment and Watershed Health

Key Policy Updates:

- Co-locate and reorganize policies related to the City’s critical areas, watersheds, Open Space Corridors, and tree canopy.
- Planning for protection of City’s environmental assets – consideration of climate change, need for data collection, monitoring and inventory of environmental assets and quality throughout City.
- Preserving existing environmental assets – Avoid and minimize impacts, fully mitigate, apply approach more broadly to protect Open Space Corridors.
- Use Watersheds as a core framework for policies, analysis, and mitigation approaches
- Watershed plans – promote the development of watershed basin plans based on the best available science.
- Discourage development in hazard prone areas.
- Promote the development of hazard mitigation.

***NEW* Parks and Recreation – Extracted from current Open Space, Habitat and Recreation Element**

Key Policy Updates:

- Stronger recognition of the shared responsibility for meeting recreational needs (traditional parks + schools + open spaces + trails + complete streets + community facilities + private facilities)
- Stronger focus on equitable distribution and access to parks and recreation facilities
- Park and recreation level of service that is tied to both proximity to parks as well as population density
- Updated inventory and goals for recreation (to meet RCO requirements)



***NEW* Public Facilities and Services – Replacing Capital Facilities Element and Utilities Element**

Key Policy Updates:

- Consider equity in the provision of new public facilities and services.
- Provision of public facilities and services should support the City's growth strategy.
- Simplification of Level of Service standards – remove Level of Service where not required for concurrency and replace with other performance measures.
- Include a forecast of future facility and service needs from all major facility and service providers.
- Include prioritization principles and criteria for reviewing projects to ensure consistency with Comprehensive Plan.

Economic Development – First update since 2001.

Key Policy Updates:

- Update employment and economic trends since 2000.
- Situate Tacoma's economy within the regional context.
- Incorporate employment targets and promote jobs within proximity to housing.
- Diversify and expand Tacoma's employment base.
- Connect people to economic opportunities.
- Promote investments in employment centers to stimulate development.
- Identify key industries to promote and expand.
- Attract firms that provide living wage jobs.
- Economic development programs and funding should support the City's growth strategy.
- Include prioritization principles and criteria for implementation programs to ensure consistency with Comprehensive Plan.

***NEW* Public Engagement, Administration and Implementation**

Key Policy Updates:

- Focus on equity and outreach to traditionally underserved communities.
- Focus on proactive outreach in all phases of planning.
- Address coordination and joint planning with other agencies, organizations and jurisdictions.
- Outline Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code amendment procedures
- Describe the relationship of Comprehensive Plan policies to other program and implementation strategies, including the relationship between Land Use Designation and Zoning.

No proposed change this year

- Downtown Element
- Historic Preservation Program Element
- Subarea Plans
- Container Port Element



Elements proposed to be rescinded as stand-alone elements of the Comprehensive Plan

- Arts and Culture (*incorporated into multiple elements*)
- Neighborhood Element (*Projects should be incorporated into Capital Facilities Program in 2016; Some specific policy issues are addressed generally in the Plan or are integrated into Neighborhood Pattern Areas; Neighborhood Actions Strategies should be updated or reconceived*)
- Tacoma Dome Area Plan (*replaced by South Downtown Subarea Plan*)
- Community Facilities Plan (*incorporated into Public Facilities and Services*)
- MLK Design Plan (*effectively replaced by Hilltop Subarea Plan*)
- South 38th Street Design Plan (*to be replaced by Lincoln Revitalization Plan*).
- Sixth Avenue Design Plan

For 2016 work program and beyond

- Consider an update to the Neighborhood Action Strategies or an appropriate way to continue neighborhood based planning initiatives.
- Zoning and development regulation amendments to bring zoning classifications into consistency with land use designations, to address pedestrian-oriented development standards, and to modify use allowances.
- Amendments to Downtown Element and Subarea Plans to address potential inconsistencies in policies and references. Fully incorporate street typology networks and design concepts into the subarea plans.
- Partner with Environmental Services to conduct a climate risk assessment, develop the Environmental Action Plan, and support the development of watershed basin plans.
- Begin implementation of identified Mixed-use Center work program recommendations.



City of Tacoma
Planning and Development Services

**Agenda Item
D-3**

To: Planning Commission
From: John Harrington, Development Services Division
Subject: **Billboard Regulations**
Meeting Date: June 3, 2015
Memo Date: May 28, 2015

At the next meeting on June 3, 2015, the Planning Commission will receive a briefing on the proposed code amendments concerning billboards, including background information, the intended approach and the timeline for the project (attached).

The City is exploring amendments to the special billboards regulations in the Tacoma Municipal Code, Section 13.06.521.M. The main objective is to continue to reduce the number of billboards in the City and move billboards which adversely impact neighborhoods, protected districts and land uses to more acceptable areas. This process is part of an effort to successfully end a legal “standstill” agreement between the City of Tacoma and Clear Channel Outdoor (CCO) regarding the City’s efforts to enforce its billboard regulations. CCO is the owner and operator of all but a few of the billboard faces in the City.

The amendment process follows the work of the Billboard Community Working Group (CWG), which made a presentation of regulatory alternatives in March to City Council after several months of meetings. A copy of the CWG Final Report was provided to the Planning Commission in February. The report and relevant information are available on the Planning Services Division’s website at www.cityoftacoma.org/planning (and click on “Billboard Community Working Group”). Based on the CWG recommendations, this proposal may add a significant number of zoning districts where billboards are permitted and modify some of the existing development regulations addressing buffers, dispersion and design characteristics for billboards.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 253-279-8950 or jharring@cityoftacoma.org.

Attachment

c: Peter Huffman, Director



Billboard Regulations

(Proposed Revisions to TMC 13.06.521 General Sign Regulations)

RECENT HISTORY – AND WHERE WE ARE TODAY

(partial excerpt from the CWG Final Report)

Billboard regulations have been a highly contentious issue in Tacoma for decades. Although the CWG was expressly "not charged with rendering an opinion on current city codes or deliberating whether that code should be enforced," it was necessary for us to understand how Tacoma, its citizens, billboard owners and advertisers arrived at this point. This section of our report summarizes this context with a brief re-cap of recent history and the current billboard situation in Tacoma.

The City's billboard codes have evolved substantially over time. Whereas we understand from the Planning Department that it is reasonable to assume that nearly all billboards in the City were, at the time they were initially installed, compliant with code, changes over time mean that today, only 3 of the 311 billboard faces in the City comply with code. These 308 billboards are considered "nonconforming" - because they are not consistent with the code.

The City first adopted comprehensive billboard regulations in 1988, which sought to limit the number of billboards to those in place in April of that year, ban billboards from all parts of the City excepting Industrial and some commercial zones, and adopt other regulations. That code was significantly revised in 1997, adding provisions that made many more existing billboards nonconforming, and adopting an amortization provision that required nonconforming billboards to be brought into compliance or removed, at the cost of the owner, within 10 years. The rationale behind amortization was that the owner of the billboard structure would have been able to fully recoup its capital investment in the structure over the course of a decade. Clear Channel has owned nearly all of the billboards in the City since the early 2000s.

When, in 2007, the City sought to enforce the 1997 code amortization provisions, Clear Channel Outdoor sued, leading to a Settlement Agreement in 2010. The Settlement Agreement recognized Clear Channel's vested rights in its conforming and legally nonconforming signs and relocation permits, and included an exchange program that would allow digital billboards. After community opposition to digital billboards, the City did not pass a digital ordinance as contemplated by the Settlement Agreement, but instead passed the 2011 Code⁴ (also referred to in this Report as "Current Code") which revived the prior 10-year amortization provision as a way to reduce the number of billboards, the 2011 Code also banned digital billboards, expanded buffer and dispersal requirements, and instituted a number of design requirements. The City then filed a declaratory judgment action asking the Court to declare that the Settlement Agreement was not binding. In response, Clear Channel countersued the City over the 2011 Code, which led to the current Standstill Agreement.

Per the Standstill Agreement, the 2011 Code remains in place, but is not enforced: the 1997 code applies, except the amortization provisions are not enforced. Under the 2011 Code, all but three of the current 311 billboard faces in the City are nonconforming, most for multiple reasons. Nearly ninety percent of the billboards do not comply with the buffer requirements in the current code.

SUMMARY OF TACOMA BILLBOARD REGULATION HISTORY

(partial excerpt from the CWG Final Report)

Table 1: Overview of the Evolution of Billboard Regulations in Tacoma⁶

<i>Item</i>	<i>2011 Code (Current Code)</i>	<i>1997 Code/1988 Code if different</i>
Zones	Billboards (BB) permitted in C-2, M-1, M-2, and PMI zones	Zone names were different. BB permitted in C-1 ⁷ , C-2, C-3, B, M-1, M-2, PMI/ <i>Zone names different; territory approximately the same</i>
Design	Max 2 faces per structure	Not addressed
	Faces must be back to back and within 5 degrees of perpendicular with road.	Not addressed
	No offset or cantilevered construction of structure	Not addressed
	May not project above adjacent building	Not addressed
	No rooftop construction	Same as current code
	Must have facing to cover back bracing and framework	Same as current code.
	Max 10 foot setback from street	Not addressed
	No new BB if existing on-site pole sign	Not addressed
Landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screen base of support from pedestrian view. • Alteration of street trees requires prior city approval 	Not addressed
Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be directed toward sign and use cut-off shield. • Internal illumination prohibited. 	Indirect or internal lighting only, no flashing signs
Digital Signs	Prohibited	Not addressed
Height	30 ft., except 45 ft. in PMI	Same as current code (PMI used to be M-3)/ 35 ft., except 45 ft. in M-3
Size	300 sq. ft. max. (no "Premier" or "Bulletin" sizes allowed). Cut outs and extensions may add 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as current code/672 sq. ft. max with face max of 25 ft. tall and 50 ft. wide • Faces over 300 sq. ft. must locate on arterials with 2 lanes going each way.
Dispersal	500 ft. minimum between BB structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 100 feet between BB structures. • Max 4 faces on 2 structures within 1000/660 ft. • Must have 300 ft. of proper zone to locate BB on that side of street, 600 ft. for second BB. Property across street must also be zoned to permit BB.
Buffering	No billboard within 500 ft. of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential, mixed use or shoreline districts. • Special uses/areas (schools, churches, public open space, playgrounds, parks, historic and conservation districts, registered historic properties) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not within 250/100 ft. of residential district. • Not allowed within 250/100 ft. of special use/ areas (same list as under current code) • Shoreline setback requirement same as current code (375/150 ft.)

⁶ Information prepared by City Planning Department.

⁷ Minority Statement: CWG member Doug Schafer disputes the Planning Department conclusion that billboards were allowed in C-1.

PROJECT APPROACH

A set of draft amendments to the City’s billboard regulations will be developed through extensive outreach efforts. Based on Council and Planning Commission direction, the CWG report recommendations, on-going feedback from CCO and community meetings with interested Councils and Business District Associations, a set of regulations will be drafted for consideration by the Planning Commission. The Commission will then hold a public hearing and after considering testimony finalize a recommendation to the City Council for their final review and action. At appropriate junctures throughout the review process, periodic updates will also be provided to, and feedback solicited from, the City Council.

The most significant segment of community outreach for this amendment has been completed through the work of the Tacoma Billboards Community Working Group. This group was made up of a wide cross-section of the community, including billboard opponents and members that were favorable to billboards. The group included members of neighborhood and business organizations, CCO and other advertising industry representatives, as well as Historic Tacoma and Scenic Tacoma. This group worked for five months and submitted a final report with recommendations to City Council in February.

Staff plans to continue outreach by consulting with Tacoma Community Council and Cross District Association regarding the recommendations from the CWG and to gather more input about specific perceived good and bad impacts/effects of billboards on neighborhoods and businesses.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

(as of May 28, 2015)

Date	Event
March 24	City Council – Resolution No. 39145
May – Sept.	Discussions with Clear Channel
June – Sept.	Community Outreach – Stakeholders, Billboards Community Working Group, Neighborhood Councils, Business District Associations, interested parties
June – August	Planning Commission - Review
August 11	City Council – Study Session
August 15	Standstill Agreement – Existing expires but automatically extends
September 16	Planning Commission – Public Hearing
September	IPS Committee – Status update
October 21	Planning Commission - Recommendation
November 17	City Council – Study Session and Public Hearing
November	IPS Committee – Recommendation
December 1	City Council – First reading of ordinance to adopt amendments
December 8	City Council – Final reading of ordinance to adopt amendments



City of Tacoma
Planning and Development Services

**Agenda Item
D-4**

To: Planning Commission
From: Elliott Barnett, Planning Services Division
Subject: **Tacoma Mall Regional Center Subarea Plan and EIS**
Meeting Date: June 3, 2015
Memo Date: May 28, 2015

At the June 3rd meeting, staff will present updates on the project as we begin substantive analysis, and public and stakeholder engagement efforts. The presentation will cover the final project team, the overall project schedule, and proposed public and stakeholder outreach and engagement strategies. Staff seek to inform the Commission of the overall approach in order to provide ample opportunity for engagement, and also welcome the Commission's guidance on the all aspects of the effort. The Commission will also discuss options for a tour of the area, as previously requested.

Building on the success of the three downtown Subarea Plans/EIS's, the City is now initiating a similar planning and environmental review effort for the 485-acre Tacoma Mall Regional Growth Center. This project will bring much-needed attention and resources to this important area, focused around a community-driven process to develop a vision, goals and actions to achieve the area's potential as a thriving, multi-modal growth center. The effort will result in programmatic environmental approval that will help catalyze development in the area, and will fulfill Tacoma's obligation under Vision 2040 to plan for designated Regional Centers. This work is being funded by a \$250,000 National Estuaries Program Watershed Protection Grant, administered jointly by the State Departments of Ecology and Commerce.

The Subarea Plan and EIS will be a community forum to collaboratively develop a vision, goals and strategies to guide growth and development, identify environmental impacts up-front on an area-wide basis, and target mitigation measures and other implementation steps.

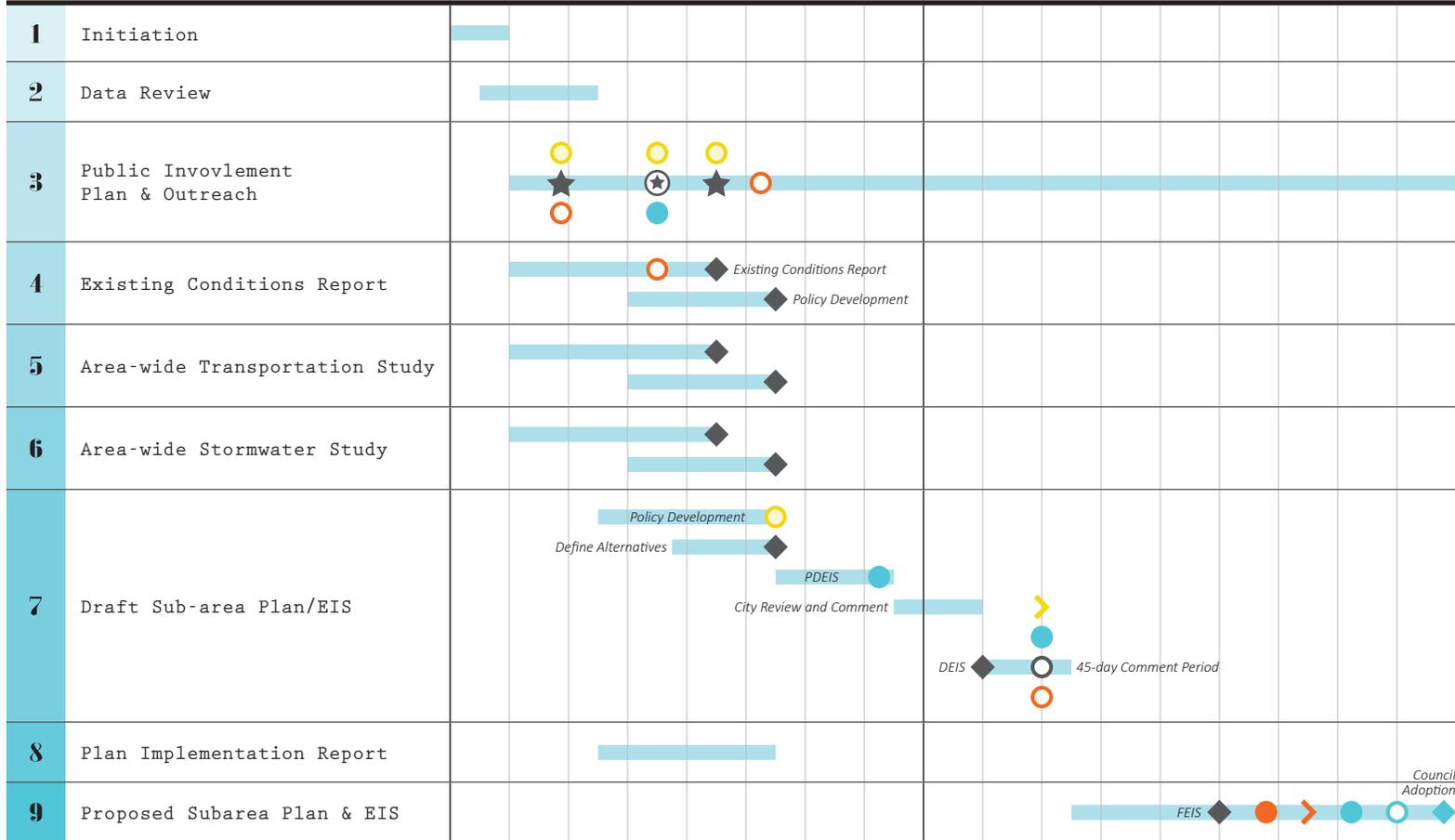
Attached are drafts of the project schedule, public involvement plan, and a project team and key stakeholders chart. If you have any questions, please contact me at 591-5389 or elliott.barnett@cityoftacoma.org.

Attachments (3)

c: Peter Huffman, Director

TASKS

MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP



- ◆ Project Milestones
- Planning Commission Meeting
- City Council Meeting
- Stakeholder Group Meeting
- ★ Public Design Workshop
- Planning Commission Public Hearing
- City Council Committee
- > Stakeholder Group Action
- ★ EIS Scoping Meeting
- > Planning Commission Action
- ◆ City Council Adoption
- DEIS Comment Meeting



PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

JUNE 3, 2015 DRAFT

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The City of Tacoma is launching a major policy initiative to develop a subarea plan and complete an Environmental Impact Statement for the Tacoma Mall Regional Growth Center. The Subarea Plan will focus on the fact that the Tacoma Mall Mixed-Use Center is a Regional Growth Center designated in Vision 2040. City and regional plans call for accommodating a substantial share of regional growth within centers served by existing infrastructure, transportation and neighborhood services and amenities. The 485-acre Tacoma Mall Subarea has seen substantial growth since its 1995 Mixed-Use Center designation, is one of the City's largest concentrations of retail activity and home to a Super Regional Mall with more than 1 million square feet, and has significant and well documented capacity for additional density and access to multi-modal transportation.

To achieve the full growth potential of the Subarea, the City must plan ahead to effectively address growth impacts, provide appropriate infrastructure and services, and take steps to make the area attractive for residents and businesses. In addition to issues which will be identified through public engagement, this involves addressing several known issues. The Subarea is located within two sensitive watersheds and has identified transportation challenges, particularly for pedestrians and bicycles, requiring the development of area-wide stormwater management and transportation strategies. In addition, scarce parks and open space, a concentration of low-income residents and perceived crime issues have been identified.

This effort will utilize advanced environmental review tools available under Washington State law, including RCW 43.21.031 Planned Action, RCW 43.21C.229 Infill Exemption, and RCW 43.21C.420 Programmatic Review. These laws create the framework to proactively plan for growth within designated urban centers, identify impacts and mitigation methods, and provide for robust public engagement and comment. This approach provides a method to address issues on an area-wide scale, and thus grant advanced approval under the provisions of the State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA) for projects consistent with the resulting plan. This approach has been used effectively in Downtown Tacoma and other communities in Washington to catalyze community development that implements sound planning and community engagement principles.

PROJECT APPROACH

- Develop a draft Sub-Area Plan for the Tacoma Mall Regional Growth Center
- Develop an environmental impact statement (EIS) identifying impacts and mitigation steps
- Initiate a range of Implementation Strategies

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- Promote sustainable growth within the 485-acre Tacoma Mall Regional Growth Center
- Set the stage for a transition from an auto-centric regional shopping area and adjacent residential areas, into a compact, complete community
- Promote development consistent with VISION 2040, the Puget Sound Action Agenda, and Tacoma's Comprehensive Plan
- Foster equity and empowerment for area residents and workers
- Leverage public and private partnerships and investment to stimulate large-scale population and employment growth within the Center that:
 - Focuses new jobs and housing in areas with transportation choices
 - Promotes equity and housing affordability
 - Promotes salmon recovery and reduces stormwater impacts
 - Contributes to a healthy economy
 - Accelerates regional conservation as a Transfer of Development Rights receiving area
 - Contributes to a unique, vibrant and attractive urban center

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY - SUMMARY

The public and stakeholders in the Tacoma Mall Subarea will be invited to participate in all phases of the development of the Tacoma Mall Subarea Plan and EIS process. This effort will be comprehensive in scope, focused on the particular geography of the Tacoma Mall Regional Growth Center. The effort will incorporate robust community engagement, supported by targeted technical analysis and consultation with individuals and agencies with pertinent technical expertise or purview.

This public engagement strategy has been crafted in order to effectively engage with the broad and diverse range of stakeholders including area residents, businesses and property owners, community organizations, public entities and agencies, visitors, potential developers or investors, and the broader planning and scientific communities. The City will provide multiple ways in which stakeholders can participate, including online, social media, public workshops and meetings, stakeholder interviews, and focus groups. This effort will also incorporate a robust public notification and engagement strategy in order to meet the public engagement requirements pertaining to programmatic environmental review.

This effort builds on multiple prior planning efforts including Mixed-Use Centers policy development, Puget Sound Regional Council's Vision 2040 and designation of the Tacoma Mall Regional Growth Center, multiple pertinent recent City policy initiatives, and the ongoing community engagement conducted through recent City planning initiatives including the 2015 Annual Amendments and the 2014 Strategic Plan development.

1. COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS & FORUM

The City will convene two community design workshops intended to engage stakeholders and the public in identifying important aspects of the subarea identity, establishing key character areas, envisioning how these areas can connect, identifying significant public and transportation corridors. The workshops will generate a shared vision for the subarea as a dense, multimodal neighborhood, identify design opportunities and challenges, and identify implementation actions that can bring this vision closer to reality. The workshops will also provide a forum to develop alternative scenarios for future growth, supported by a thorough understanding of the urban systems and changes thereto required for each scenario, and to assess community support and response to each.

2. FORMAL SEPA OUTREACH

This effort will utilize up front environmental review approaches available under RCW 43.21.031, RCW 43.21C.229, and RCW 43.21C.420. The public engagement strategy will fully comply with the procedural and public engagement requirements of these statutes. Required steps include holding at least one community meeting, a formal scoping meeting, and a formal public hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. For each public meeting, public notification will be broad including notification of all property owners within the area and within 150 feet of its boundaries, as well as signs posted at major thoroughfares through the area.

3. STAKEHOLDERS GROUPS

In order to solicit community stakeholder input to guide this effort, the City will convene a Community Stakeholders Group. The City will endeavor to ensure that the perspectives of residents, businesses, property owners, community groups, and public and private entities with significant stakes in the Subarea are represented in a balanced manner. The Community Stakeholders Group is intended to engage at each stage of the project to represent the perspectives and priorities of their constituency or interest group, to act as a liaison from the project team back to their interest group, to help identify significant issues, to guide and inform policy development, and to identify and prioritize implementation steps. In addition the Community Stakeholders Group is intended to advocate for the plan and its implementation.

In addition, the City will convene a Technical Stakeholders Group including City departments and public agency partners with purview over issues, infrastructure or services within or of significance to the area. The Technical Stakeholders Group will also engage at every stage of the project in much the same manner as the Community Stakeholders Group. In addition, the Technical Stakeholders Group will provide pertinent data, assist in development of technical aspects of the plan as appropriate, represent their department or agency, and help to ensure consistency between the Subarea Plan and the plans and strategies of their departments or agencies.

4. EXHIBITS AROUND THE COMMUNITY

A set of exhibits will be developed to provide basic information about the project, pose questions and identify the web page as an information resource. Staff and stakeholders will bring the exhibits to meetings and community events along with fact sheets, the FAQ and comment cards. Between events, the exhibits will be displayed in high traffic areas within the Subarea such as within the Tacoma Mall, in nearby schools and community centers, within larger residential buildings, and in other locations with high pedestrian traffic. Materials will also be displayed outside the Subarea in locations such as city hall, public libraries and community centers.

5. FACT SHEET, FAQ & COMMENT CARD

A fact sheet will provide general information about the update process, identifying key issues and options. An FAQ will be developed and maintained in response to comments, questions and issues raised throughout the process. A comment card will be designed for use throughout the life of the project. All of these materials will be posted on the project web site and distributed at meetings, presentations and at events and locations where exhibits are displayed.

6. WEB PAGE

A well developed and maintained website will describe the comprehensive plan update process, providing timely updates and draft documents for review. The site will seek public opinion via comment forms, surveys and moderated discussion boards.

7. PROJECT IDENTITY & TEMPLATES

A consistent graphic look and set of templates will guide the design of public information about the Tacoma Mall Subarea Plan. A unique project identity will increase visibility and awareness of the planning process to promote active public participation.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS & PRESS RELEASES

The City of Tacoma's existing communication networks will be employed to expand awareness. Event notices will be sent to agency staff for distribution to those involved in recent community planning efforts. The City's media outlets will be supplied with news releases, community calendar announcements and editorial board briefings. Exit 113 and other community blogs will be asked to post information of interest to their audience. The City will utilize social media forums including the City's twitter and Facebook accounts.

9. PROJECT CONTACT DATABASE

A database containing contact information for all project participants will be created and regularly updated. Press releases, announcements and project updates will be distributed to those in the database. In addition, a database including all property owners within the Subarea or within 150 feet of its boundary will be maintained per the requirements of the SEPA process.

10. YOUTH OUTREACH PROGRAM

The City will strive to engage youth in development of this plan by providing child-focused activities at the two design workshops, through outreach to area schools and community centers, and through children-oriented visioning activities. In addition, the City will seek to recruit a youth member of the Community Stakeholder Group.

11. KEY STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

The City will conduct up to 10 interviews with key stakeholders representing distinct perspectives or constituencies of significance within the subarea. These interviews will seek to develop a deeper understanding of the needs, priorities and concerns of the business community and of area residents.

12. COMMUNITY/NON-TRADITIONAL OUTREACH

The City will partner with the Tacoma Pierce County Health Department to enhance the emphasis on engaging with individuals representing groups that are often under-represented in public dialogues, including lower income households, seniors and non-native English speakers. TPCHD will facilitate two to three focus groups intended to bring these perspectives to the effort and to foster ongoing community engagement in the Subarea.

13. TACOMA BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

This effort will be guided by the Tacoma Planning Commission and the City Council at their Study Session meetings. In addition, the project team will actively engage with other City commissions and boards at key milestones, including the City Landmarks Preservation Committee, Sustainability Commission and Transportation Commission, the South Tacoma Neighborhood Council, and Metro Parks Tacoma and Tacoma Public School Boards or commissions as appropriate.

14. SCIENTIFIC AND PUBLIC HEALTH COMMUNITIES

The City will seek opportunities to engage with entities with expertise or purview over technical aspects of the planning effort, such as stormwater management and groundwater protection. In addition, the City will solicit input from the perspective of public health professionals in regards to issues affecting the health and wellbeing of area residents.

15. ENGAGEMENT THROUGH CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS

The City will seek opportunities to invite or facilitate community events within the Subarea during the project that can help to increase engagement and awareness of the area. For example, the City will contact Tacoma biking, walking and running organizations to suggest that they organize events in the area. Another possibility is to engage with the public arts community to help to enrich and broaden the reach of the visioning process.



City Council

DRAFT as of 05-26-15

Planning Commission:

Provides overall project guidance,
Formulates recommendation to Council

City Council Study Session:

Provides high level direction

Stakeholder Committee:

1. Residents
2. South Tacoma Neighborhood Council
3. Planning Commission
4. Youth
5. Neighborhood groups
6. Simon Corporation
7. Commercial property owners/managers
8. Residential property owners/managers
9. Multifamily/mixed-use developer
10. Industrial transition area
11. Public health community
12. Healthy Food Access
13. Urban Design
14. Active Transportation
15. City business community
16. Housing issues
17. Sustainability/Land conservation
18. Arts and Culture

CORE TEAM

PDS: Brian Boudet, **Elliott Barnett**
Env Services: Jessica Knickerbocker
Office of Sustainability: Diane Wiatr
Public Works: Mazedur Hossain, Dana Brown
CED: Pat Beard, Shari Hart
CBS: Allyson Griffith
Equity and Empowerment: Tina McLeod
GIS: Nancy Grabinski

Partner Agencies:

TPCHD: Amy Pow
TSD: Rob Sawatzky
MPT: Doug Fraser
Pierce Transit: Ben Han
Sound Transit: Eric Chipps, Chelsea Levy
Safe Streets: Traci Kelly

Consultant Team:

Julia Walton, 3 Square Blocks
 Community Attributes Incorporated
 ESA
 Seth Harry
 Fehr & Peers
 Robinson Noble

Technical Committee:

1. WSDOT
2. TPCHD – STGPD and contamination staff
3. Scientific community (stormwater)
4. Scientific community (public health)
5. COT Permitting
6. COT Streets Operations Division
7. COT Fire Department
8. COT Real Property Services
9. COT Housing Division
10. COT Historic
11. COT Tacoma Police Department
12. TPU Power
13. TPU Water
14. TPU Solid Waste
15. TPU Waste Water

Coordination/consultation:

COT Landmarks Committee
 COT Sustainability Committee
 COT Arts Commission
 COT Transportation Commission
 COT Infrastructure Team
 COT DIRT Committee
 TPU Boards/Committees
 MPT Boards/Committees
 TSD Boards/Committees

Major property owners/managers:

Simon Corp
 Michaels Plaza
 Costco
 Dobbler Management
 Tucci family
 Vintage at Tacoma